

Useful Phrases for Academic Writing

1. INTRODUCTION

- This essay will deal with the following aspects of the question...
- The aim of this essay is...

2. GIVING AN OVERVIEW OF THE ESSAY CONTENT

- In order to link... with..., the background to... will be briefly outlined.
- The first part of the discussion will examine...
- The second part of this essay will consider...
- The final level of the analysis consists of...

3. MAKING A POINT

- It is clear/noticeable that...
- It is necessary/ important/ useful/ interesting/ to note/ point out/ highlight/ emphasise that

4. EMPHASIS MARKERS

Show clearly what you think is the most important but allow you to avoid personal language such as 'I think'

- **Adjectives:** main, crucial, important, significant, key, essential
- **Nouns:** focus, element, concept, theory, aspect, part, idea, point, argument, discussion, debate
- **Verbs:** to emphasise, to summarise, to focus, to highlight
 - The key aspect of this argument is
 - The most crucial point made so far
 - It is worth noting that

5. INTRODUCING A NEW IDEA

- Turning now to the question of
- Having considered (X), the discussion will now examine (Y)

6. HEDGING

The group of 11 words called modals can help you avoid over-generalisation as they express degrees of certainty and possibility; thereby avoiding making statements which claim too much or suggest you know everything about a subject. The 11 modals are:

- CAN
- MAY
- COULD
- MIGHT
- WILL
- WOULD
- SHALL
- SHOULD
- OUGHT TO
- MUST
- NEEDN'T

By far the most useful modal verbs are CAN, MAY, COULD, and MIGHT. If you say something IS true you may well be guilty of over-generalisation. If you say something MAY or MIGHT be true you avoid this problem.

- It could/might be said that...
- It seems/appears...
- It is generally thought/considered...
- Some/many people think/believe...

7. GIVING EXAMPLES

- For example/instance
- In this situation/case
- To illustrate

8. ADDING INFORMATION

- Again/ besides/ equally important/ in addition/ further/ furthermore/ moreover
- It must also be noted/ remembered that

9. DISCUSSION MARKERS

- Although it may be true that... however
- Whilst it is generally agreed that
- There exists a contradiction between... and...
- Those in favour of/ supporters/ advocates of...
- Those opposed to/ critics of

10. RE-PHRASING

- In other words
- To put it another way
- That is to say

11. EVALUATIVE LANGUAGE

This is used to show more clearly what you think about different points.

- **Positive adjectives:** remarkable, innovative, complex, interesting, profound, comprehensive, powerful, rigorous, systematic, useful, sensitive, reliable, logical
- **Negative adjectives:** flawed, modest, unsatisfactory, inadequate, limited, restricted
- **Nouns:** synthesis, survey, topic, study, review, history, concept, area, theme, overview, analysis, system
- **Verbs:** explain, discuss, study, present, describe, bring into focus, consider, explore, illuminate, introduce, analyse, constitute

Examples:

- The UNO has published an interesting survey...
- It presents a useful concept...

- However, the study is limited in that...

12.REPEATING

In general, DON'T! Try to organise your writing so that you stick to one point at a time. But if you must, you can use phrases such as:

- To return to an earlier point
- As noted before/above

13.SUMMING UP

- Briefly, it can be said that...
- In general what this means/ suggests/ indicates is
- It is clear from the above that

14.CONCLUSION

- To conclude/ In conclusion,