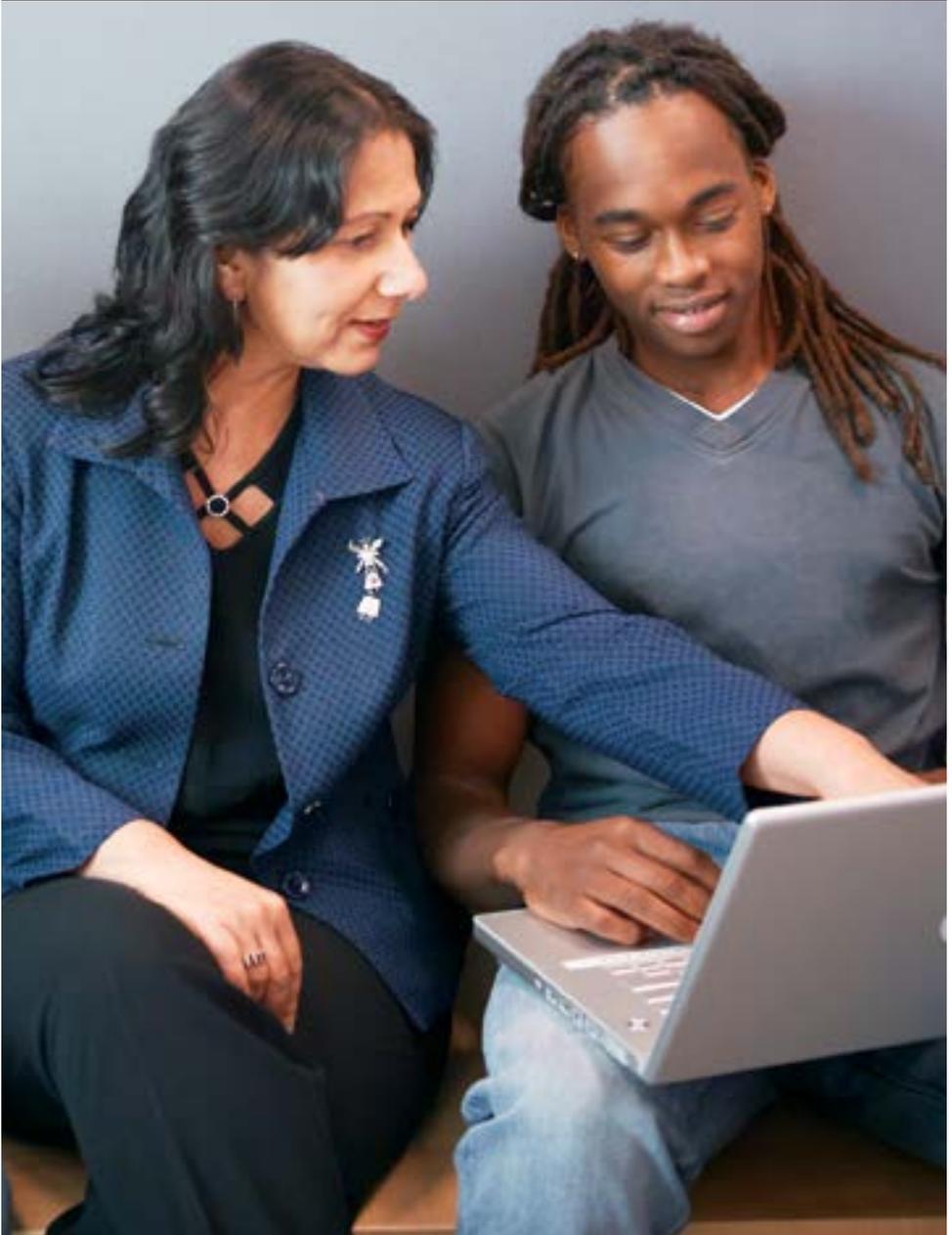


Top tips for academic writing



Top tips for academic writing

1. Understand the assignment requirements.

You will find the assignment requirements and grading criteria in a rubric, an assessment tool that clearly indicates marking criteria. Print off the rubric and use it to ensure you understand the assignment, when it is due and the grade weighting for each component of the assignment.

2. Be aware of your audience, purpose and tone.

Your audience is the person(s) who will read your essay or report. Adjust your writing to suit your audience and the academic and professional standards of your discipline. In academic writing, you generally write to inform or persuade your audience and your writing style must suit your purpose. College-level academic writing should have a scholarly, formal, professional and respectful tone. Being aware of your audience, purpose and tone will ensure your writing is well received.

3. Keep your writing focused.

Academic writing is typically a focused, in-depth examination of a specific topic. Each point must clearly relate to your thesis. Resist the urge to add interesting but off-topic information.

4. Organize your writing.

Generally, academic writing has an introduction with a thesis, body paragraphs arranged in a logical and compelling order and a conclusion. An essay outline template, available from Student Academic Learning Services (SALS) or in SALS ONLINE, can help you determine the best order for your main points and supporting details. Use transition words or phrases to show the connection between your points.

5. Use credible, up-to-date sources.

When writing for academic purposes, you must consult credible sources to support your position. Use the resources available at the Campus Library to get the most up-to-date and scholarly information demanded by your topic.

6. Cite all the sources you have used.

It is essential that you carefully document where you get your information from, both in the text and on a references/works cited page at the end of your paper. The rubric will indicate which citation style is required.

7. Use academic vocabulary.

Use a thesaurus and a Canadian dictionary to ensure you are using correct terminology and academic vocabulary.

8. Revise your writing.

There is no such thing as a perfect paper. You may need to revise your work several times to ensure you are communicating your message clearly and effectively. Use the rubric and an essay checklist to keep yourself on track.

9. Edit your work for correct grammar, punctuation and format.

Use a proofreading checklist to help you self edit your writing. Consider your most common errors from previous assignments and concentrate on correcting them. Consult the rubric for any special formatting instructions.

10. Use the academic supports available.

Visit SALS to attend a workshop or meet with a peer writing tutor or writing specialist if you need help at any stage of the writing process.