

MECHANICS AND CONVENTIONS OF ACADEMIC WRITING

UNIT : VI

Sub: Academic
Writing
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Objectives

- ▶ To examine the two major conventions of academic writing: Punctuation and documentation styles.
- ▶ To understand why punctuation is important in academic writing .
- ▶ To understand the rules of using punctuation .
- ▶ To examine the essential punctuation marks commonly employed in academic writing.
- ▶ To explore the use of style guides in academic writing.
- ▶ To know the importance of maintaining academic integrity while writing.

Key Points

- ▶ Academic writing is different in a certain way.
- ▶ Academic writing follows some rules.
- ▶ Academic writing becomes perfect when its mechanics and conventions are followed
- ▶ appropriately.
- ▶ Formal tone and objectivity are the two important qualities of academic writing.
- ▶ Adhering to rules of punctuation and following a specific style guide are essential in academic writing

Punctuation : key points

- ▶ A bunch of marks or signs used to bring clarity of expression in writing .
- ▶ Punctuation helps the writer clearly convey the message.
- ▶ Brings accuracy in writing.
- ▶ Strengthens the arguments.
- ▶ Helps emphasize the major idea discussed in the paper/ article.
- ▶ Wrong use of punctuation makes the ideas vague and complicates meaning.

Comma (,)

- ▶ Commas are the most frequently used punctuation marks.
- ▶ Use a comma after certain introductory words or phrases.
- ▶ Use commas to separate words and word groups in a series of three or more items.
- ▶ Use a comma to separate two adjectives when the adjectives are interchangeable.
- ▶ In sentences where two independent clauses are joined by connectors such as and, or, but, etc., put a comma at the end of first rules.
- ▶ To set off a quote from the rest of the sentence.
- ▶ To list nouns in a sentence .
- ▶ To separate interrupting words and expressions in a sentence .

Semicolon (;)

- ▶ Use a semicolon to separate two sentences when there is no coordinating conjunction such as and, but, or, nor, for .
- ▶ If the two sentences are joined by a conjunctive adverb, such as however, consequently, therefore, or moreover, use a semicolon before the conjunctive adverb and a comma after it .
- ▶ Use a semicolon to separate two sentences joined with a coordinating conjunction when commas are contained within either of the sentences.
- ▶ Use a semicolon to separate items in a series if there are commas within the items.
- ▶ A semicolon can also be used to replace a period

Colon (:)

- ▶ To introduce a series of items in a list.
- ▶ To introduce explanations.
- ▶ To begin or introduce a quotation.
- ▶ To separate two independent clauses where the first introduces or explains the second.

Double Quotation Mark (“”)

- ▶ To quote something.
- ▶ To show quotations inside quotations.
- ▶ To set off titles of essays, journal, and magazine articles, poems and short stories.

Single Quotation Mark('')

- ▶ To emphasize a word or a term.
- ▶ To show a quotation inside a quotation.

Apostrophe (')

- ▶ To show contractions and possession.
- ▶ Use an apostrophe to show omissions.
- ▶ Contractions are not common in academic writing.

Paranthesis or Brackets ()

- ▶ To enclose information that clarifies the meaning of the preceding or following sentence.
- ▶ To expand abbreviations and to insert dates.
- ▶ In academic writing parentheses are used to give in-text citation.
- ▶ Brackets are used to insert a clarification, a translation, parenthesis within parenthesis, a change in capitalisation.

Dash (---

- ▶ It is also known as 'em dash'.
- ▶ It is slightly different from en dash, and the hyphen.
- ▶ Dash is three times longer than a hyphen.
- ▶ A comma, colon, and parenthesis can be replaced by a dash.
- ▶ It is used to indicate a break in a sentence and also to give some additional information.
- ▶ A dash is also used to indicate inclusive pag

Hyphen(-)

- ▶ Put the hyphen between two parts of a compound word
- ▶ Insert a hyphen before a suffix or after the prefix.
- ▶ Compound numbers less than 100 are split with a hyphen.

Period(.)

- ▶ Use a period at the end of a statement.
- ▶ Use a period after an abbreviation
- ▶ Sentences ending with question marks(?) or exclamation marks(!) do not require periods.
- ▶ In sentences ending with parenthesis the period is placed outside parenthesis.
- ▶ If parenthesis contains a full sentence the period is placed inside parenthesis.

Capitalisation

- ▶ Capitalise the title of a book.
- ▶ Capitalise the initial letters of the words in the title of an article or essay, chapters of a book , and titles of journals.
- ▶ Prepositions and coordinating conjunctions are not capitalised unless they are the first word in a title.
- ▶ Capitalise the first word after a period or a full-stop.
- ▶ Capitalise proper nouns and adjectives derived from proper nouns.
- ▶ Capitalise days of the week and months of the year, brand names, historical events, name of institutions, nicknames, races, nationalities, and religions.