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commerciales et Sciences de Gestion
Conseil Scientifique

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رئيس المجلس العلمي





Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of Ziane Achour – Djelfa –
Faculty of Economic Sciences, Commercial Sciences
and Management Sciences
Department of Management Sciences

Lectures in :

Academic English for Research and Thesis writing

Destined for first-year Master students

Management

Business Administration



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Department of Management Sciences

2025/2026

ACADEMIC ENGLISH

FOR RESEARCH AND THESIS WRITING

A Complete Course for Master 1 – Business Administration

14 Weeks • 11 Units • Full Guided Practice

Designed for Non-Native English Speakers

Department of Business Administration | Academic Year 2025-2026

How to Use This Course Book

Welcome to Academic English for Research and Thesis Writing. This course book is designed specifically for Master 1 students in Business Administration whose first language is not English. You do not need to have a high level of English to begin — the course starts from the basics and builds gradually, step by step.

Each unit follows the same pattern: first, you will read a clear explanation of the topic; then you will see real examples from business research; and finally, you will practise what you have learned through guided writing activities. The language used in the explanations is intentionally simple and direct.

Every unit also contains real academic references following the APA 7th edition format, so you can see exactly how citations work in practice. You are encouraged to look up these sources and explore them further.

By the time you reach the end of the course, you will have drafted the main sections of a real academic research paper in English.

Course Overview

Course Description

This course helps Master 1 students in Business Administration to read, write, and present academic research in English. Academic writing in English follows specific rules that are different from general writing or spoken communication. By learning these rules, students can produce high-quality research papers, literature reviews, and thesis sections that meet international university standards.

The course covers all major components of a research paper: the introduction, the literature review, the methodology section, the results, the discussion, and the conclusion. It also addresses important academic skills such as paraphrasing, avoiding plagiarism, writing recommendations, and presenting research orally.

Who Is This Course For?

This course is designed for students who:

- Are enrolled in Master 1 – Business Administration or Management
- Have a weak to intermediate level of English proficiency
- Need to write a Master's thesis or research paper in English
- Have limited prior experience with academic writing conventions

No prior knowledge of academic writing is assumed. The course begins from the very beginning and progresses steadily to more advanced skills.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Write in a formal and objective academic style appropriate for business research
2. Structure a full research paper using the IMRAD framework
3. Write clear and well-organised sections: introduction, literature review, methodology, results, discussion, and conclusion

4. Synthesise ideas from multiple academic sources
5. Paraphrase effectively and avoid plagiarism
6. Use reporting verbs, hedging language, and academic vocabulary correctly
7. Cite and reference sources following APA 7th edition guidelines
8. Present research findings clearly in spoken academic English

Semester Plan at a Glance

| Week | Unit | Topic |
|---------|---------|--|
| Week 1 | Unit 1 | Understanding Academic English |
| Week 2 | Unit 2 | Research Paper Structure (IMRAD) |
| Week 3 | Unit 3 | Writing the Introduction |
| Week 4 | Unit 4 | Academic Vocabulary for Business Research |
| Week 5 | Unit 5 | Literature Review – Part 1 (Synthesis & Reporting Verbs) |
| Week 6 | Unit 6 | Literature Review – Part 2 (Critical Writing) |
| Week 7 | Unit 7 | Avoiding Plagiarism & Paraphrasing |
| Week 8 | Unit 8 | Writing the Methodology Section |
| Week 9 | Unit 9 | Describing and Presenting Results |
| Week 10 | Unit 10 | Discussion & Argumentation |
| Week 11 | Unit 11 | Writing Conclusions & Recommendations |
| Week 12 | Unit 12 | Academic Editing & Proofreading |
| Week 13 | Unit 13 | Academic Email & Professional Communication |
| Week 14 | Unit 14 | Research Presentation Skills |

Assessment

| Component | Weight | Description |
|----------------------------|--------|--|
| Writing Portfolio | 30% | Introduction, literature review paragraph, and methodology section drafted during the semester |
| In-Class Participation | 10% | Activities, discussions, and peer feedback exercises |
| Oral Research Presentation | 20% | A structured 10-minute presentation of a research topic |
| Final Written Exam | 40% | Covers all units; includes writing tasks and language questions |

A Note on References in This Course

All references in this course are real academic publications following the APA 7th edition format. You should practise reading these references and, when possible, access the original sources through your university library or Google Scholar. Seeing real citations in context is one of the best ways to learn how to use them in your own writing.

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UNIT 1

Understanding Academic English

What it is, why it matters, and how to start writing it

□ Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

9. Explain what academic English is and how it differs from everyday language
10. Identify the five core features of academic writing
11. Recognize and avoid the most common informal expressions in writing
12. Use hedging language to express ideas with appropriate caution
13. Transform informal sentences into academic English
14. Begin developing a professional academic voice

1.1 What Is Academic English?

Academic English is the variety of English used by researchers, universities, and scientific communities to produce, share, and evaluate knowledge. It is not a separate language — it is a specific style of writing and communication with its own rules, vocabulary, and conventions.

You will use academic English in:

- Your Master's thesis or dissertation
- Research papers and journal articles
- Conference papers and academic presentations
- Research reports and professional correspondence

Academic English allows scholars from different countries and different academic traditions to communicate in a standard, structured, and credible way. This is why it follows strict rules. As Swales and Feak (2012) explain, academic writing is not simply about using difficult vocabulary — it is about clarity, intellectual responsibility, and the precise communication of ideas.

□ **Note**

Academic English is not the same as formal English. A business letter can be formal without being academic.

Academic writing requires evidence, structure, citations, and a specific type of critical thinking.

1.2 Why Should You Learn It?

Many students — especially those who are not native English speakers — feel nervous when they first encounter academic writing. They worry that they need a very high level of English before they can write well. This is a common misunderstanding.

Academic writing is a skill, and like all skills, it can be learned step by step. What matters most is not vocabulary size, but understanding the conventions — the rules that the academic community expects you to follow.

Flowerdew and Peacock (2001) point out that even native English speakers must learn academic writing as a distinct set of skills, because it does not come naturally from everyday language use. This means you are not at a disadvantage simply because English is not your first language. Everyone has to learn these conventions.

□ **Tip**

Think of academic writing as learning to play a new instrument.

You may already know music (general English), but this instrument (academic writing) has its own technique.

With practice, it becomes natural.

1.3 The Philosophy Behind Academic Writing

Before you learn the rules of academic English, it helps to understand the thinking behind them. When you write academically, you are entering a global conversation between researchers and experts. This conversation has been developing for centuries, and it has certain expectations.

When you write a research paper, you are expected to:

- Respect and acknowledge the work of previous researchers
- Justify every important claim with evidence or logical argument
- Avoid expressing personal emotions or subjective opinions without support
- Show intellectual honesty — including acknowledging the limits of your own work
- Accept that research rarely gives absolute, final answers

Because of these expectations, academic writing has a distinctive tone. It sounds careful, reasoned, documented, and modest. This modesty is not weakness — it is a sign of good scholarship. As Hyland (2005) explains, academic writing is not about asserting personal authority; it is about contributing responsibly to a shared body of knowledge.

1.4 The Five Core Features of Academic English

Academic English has five defining characteristics. You will return to these features in every unit of this course. Learning to recognize and apply them is the foundation of good academic writing.

A. Formality

Academic texts avoid spoken language, slang, and casual expressions. They use formal vocabulary and complete grammatical structures.

| Informal Word or Phrase | Academic Alternative |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| kids | children |

| | |
|------------|------------------------------------|
| boss | manager / supervisor |
| a lot of | numerous / a significant number of |
| pretty big | relatively large / considerable |
| get better | improve / enhance |
| find out | determine / investigate |
| go up | increase / rise |

You should also avoid contractions in academic writing:

△ Common Mistake

can't → cannot

it's → it is

don't → do not

we've → we have

Contractions are never appropriate in academic writing, even in less formal sections.

B. Objectivity

The focus of academic writing is on the research and the evidence — not on the personal feelings or opinions of the writer. This means that instead of saying what you believe or feel, you describe what the evidence shows.

 Example

I am sure this model works really well.

The model appears to be effective in the contexts studied.

I strongly believe digital tools are important.

The evidence suggests that digital tools play a significant role.

Note: This does not mean that you cannot express your position in academic writing. It means your position must be supported by evidence, not by emotion.

C. Precision and Specificity

Academic writers must be as accurate and specific as possible. Vague or general statements are not acceptable in academic writing because they cannot be verified or challenged.

Example

Many people think this is a problem.

Approximately 68% of respondents identified this as a significant concern (Al-Hassan, 2020).

This happened recently.

This trend emerged between 2018 and 2023.

D. Evidence-Based Claims

Every important statement in academic writing must be supported by evidence. This evidence can come from published research, your own data, or logical reasoning. The key question is always: How do you know this?

This is where citations are essential. When you make a claim that comes from another researcher's work, you must cite the source. This is not just a rule — it is a sign of intellectual honesty. It shows that you have done your research and that your ideas are grounded in existing scholarship.

Example

Online education is better than traditional education.

Several studies suggest that online education offers comparable or superior learning outcomes in certain contexts (Sun et al., 2008; Means et al., 2009).

E. Hedging – Cautious Language

Hedging is one of the most important — and most difficult — features of academic English for non-native speakers to master. Hedging means expressing uncertainty or caution when making claims. In academic writing, researchers rarely express total certainty, because science evolves and results can change.

As Hyland (1996) demonstrates in his research on academic hedging, the use of cautious language is not a weakness — it is a marker of academic credibility. A researcher who claims absolute certainty is seen as less trustworthy than one who acknowledges the limits of the evidence.

| Too Strong (Avoid) | Academic Hedging (Use) |
|--|--|
| This proves that motivation is the key factor. | This suggests that motivation may be an important factor. |
| All companies will benefit from this approach. | Many organizations may benefit from this approach. |
| The results show that the strategy works. | The results indicate that the strategy appears to be effective. |
| There is no doubt that leadership affects performance. | Leadership appears to have a significant influence on performance. |

Common hedging expressions include:

- may / might / could
- appears to / seems to / tends to
- suggests / indicates / implies
- it is possible that / it is likely that
- in many cases / under certain conditions

1.5 Can You Use 'I' in Academic Writing?

This is a question many Master's students ask. The answer depends on the section and the academic tradition. In many fields of business and social science research, the use of 'I' or 'we' is acceptable, especially in the methodology section and in the discussion of limitations.

However, the use of the first person should always be controlled and professional. You must never use emotional or subjective first-person language.

Example

Acceptable: In this study, we examine the relationship between motivation and performance.

Acceptable: We argue that the results support the theoretical framework proposed by Herzberg (1959).

Acceptable: I conducted semi-structured interviews with fifteen participants.

Avoid: I think this is very important.

Avoid: I feel that this strategy is better.

Avoid: I want to show that my hypothesis is correct.

1.6 Grammar Patterns in Academic English

Academic writing tends to use certain grammatical structures more than others. Here are the most important ones for you to recognize and practise.

Passive Voice

The passive voice is frequently used in academic writing, especially in methodology and results sections. It shifts the focus from the researcher to the process or the findings.

Example

Active: We collected data from 200 employees.

Passive: Data were collected from 200 employees.

Active: The researcher conducted interviews in April.

Passive: Interviews were conducted in April.

However, do not overuse the passive voice. In the discussion and argumentation sections, the active voice often communicates ideas more clearly and directly.

Nominalization

Nominalization means turning verbs and adjectives into nouns. This is very common in academic writing because it creates a more formal, abstract tone. It also allows ideas to become subjects of sentences.

| Verb Form | Noun (Nominalized) Form |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| analyze | Analysis |
| decide | Decision |
| develop | Development |
| implement | Implementation |
| investigate | Investigation |
| evaluate | Evaluation |

Example

We analyzed the data. (verb-based, less formal)

An analysis of the data was conducted. (nominalized, more academic)

We decided to change the strategy.

A decision was made to modify the strategic approach.

1.7 What Reviewers and Professors Reject

Based on the guidelines of major academic journals and university assessment criteria, the following types of writing are consistently rejected or penalized:

△ Common Mistake

Emotional or dramatic language: 'This revolutionary technology will change everything!'

Absolute claims without evidence: 'All managers face this problem.'

Missing citations: Making research claims without attributing sources

Informal expressions: 'a lot', 'stuff', 'kind of', 'really'

Overgeneralization: 'Everyone knows that...'

Advertising language: 'This amazing and powerful strategy...'

A useful test for any sentence in your academic writing is to ask yourself: Would a careful and critical professor accept this claim? If the sentence contains emotion, exaggeration, vagueness, or a missing source, the answer is probably no.

1.8 Real Academic References for This Unit

The following sources are real publications that you can access through Google Scholar or your university library. They are presented in APA 7th edition format.

Flowerdew, L., & Peacock, M. (Eds.). (2001). Research perspectives on English for academic purposes. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524766>

Hyland, K. (1996). Writing without conviction? Hedging in science research articles. Applied Linguistics, 17(4), 433–454. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/17.4.433>

Hyland, K. (2005). Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing. Continuum.

Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (2012). Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills (3rd ed.). University of Michigan Press.

Sun, P. C., Tsai, R. J., Finger, G., Chen, Y. Y., & Yeh, D. (2008). What drives a successful e-learning? An empirical investigation of the critical factors influencing learner satisfaction. Computers & Education, 50(4), 1183–1202. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2006.11.007>

1.9 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Vocabulary Upgrade

Replace each informal word or phrase with a more academic alternative. Write your answer in the space provided.

| Informal Sentence | Your Academic Version |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. I think managers need more training. | |
| 2. There are big problems in startups. | |
| 3. This system is very bad. | |
| 4. We looked at customer opinions. | |
| 5. A lot of employees are not happy. | |
| 6. Companies use social media a lot. | |

Activity 2 – Spot the Problems

Read the following sentence and identify every academic problem it contains. Write your observations below.

"I am totally sure this incredible strategy is amazing and will definitely fix all

the problems companies face around the world."

Problems found:

- 15. _____
- 16. _____
- 17. _____
- 18. _____

Now rewrite the sentence in correct academic English:

Activity 3 – Add Hedging

Rewrite the following sentences using appropriate hedging language.

| Overconfident Statement | Hedged Academic Version |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. Remote work improves productivity. | |
| 2. All employees prefer flexible schedules. | |
| 3. Digital transformation will save companies money. | |
| 4. Leadership is the most important factor in performance. | |

Activity 4 – Reflection

Think about your own research topic. Write three sentences about it using the features you have learned in this unit: formality, objectivity, precision, evidence-based language, and hedging.

19. _____

20. _____

21. _____

UNIT 2

Research Paper Structure

Understanding IMRAD and how academic papers are organised

□ Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

22. Explain the purpose and logic of the IMRAD structure
23. Identify the function of each section in a research paper
24. Recognise research gaps in existing studies
25. Formulate a clear and focused research question
26. Apply IMRAD structure to a business research topic

2.1 Why Does Structure Matter?

When you read a novel, the story can be told in many different orders — flashbacks, surprises, non-linear narratives. Academic research is completely different. Academic papers follow a fixed, predictable structure. This structure exists for a very important reason: it allows readers to find the information they need quickly, and it allows reviewers to evaluate the quality of the research efficiently.

Imagine reading one hundred research papers about employee motivation. If each paper was organised differently, you would waste enormous amounts of time just finding the methodology or the results. The standard structure solves this problem.

Glasman-Deal (2010) emphasises that structure in academic writing is not a restriction — it is a tool. Learning the structure frees you from worrying about organisation, so you can focus on the quality of your ideas and your evidence.

2.2 The IMRAD Structure

Most academic papers in the natural sciences, social sciences, and business research follow the IMRAD structure. IMRAD stands for:

| Letter | Section | Key Question |
|--------|--------------|---|
| I | Introduction | What is the problem? Why does it matter? What is the research question? |
| M | Methodology | How was the study conducted? Who participated? What tools were used? |
| R | Results | What were the findings? What did the data show? |
| A | And | (Connecting element) |
| D | Discussion | What do the findings mean? How do they relate to existing research? |

Most business and management research papers also include two additional sections: a Literature Review (placed after the Introduction) and a Conclusion (placed after the Discussion). The expanded structure looks like this:

| Section | Purpose |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. Title & Abstract | Brief description of the whole study |
| 2. Introduction | Context, research problem, and research question |
| 3. Literature Review | Summary and evaluation of existing research |
| 4. Methodology | Research design, data collection, and analysis methods |
| 5. Results | Presentation of the findings |
| 6. Discussion | Interpretation and significance of the findings |
| 7. Conclusion | Summary, implications, and recommendations |
| 8. References | All sources cited in the paper |

2.3 What Each Section Does

The Introduction

The introduction is where you establish the context of your research. It answers three questions: What is happening in this field? What problem or gap exists? What does your study do about it?

A strong introduction moves from general background information to the specific focus of your study. Swales (1990) describes this as the 'Create a Research Space' (CARS) model, which involves three moves: establishing the territory, establishing the niche (the gap), and announcing the research.

The Literature Review

The literature review shows that you understand what other researchers have already discovered about your topic. It is not a simple list of summaries — it is an organised, critical discussion of existing research that identifies what is known, what is debated, and what is missing.

The Methodology

The methodology section explains exactly how your research was conducted. It must be detailed enough that another researcher could replicate your study. It covers your research approach (qualitative or quantitative), your data collection method, your sample, and your analysis tools.

The Results

The results section presents your findings without interpretation. You describe what the data showed, using tables, charts, or statistics where appropriate. You do not yet explain what the results mean — that comes in the Discussion.

The Discussion

The discussion is where you interpret your results. You explain what they mean, connect them to the literature, and argue for your conclusions. This is the most intellectually demanding section of a research paper.

The Conclusion

The conclusion summarises the main findings, answers the research question, discusses the implications of the study, acknowledges limitations, and suggests directions for future research.

2.4 Understanding the Research Gap

One of the most important concepts in research writing is the research gap. A research gap is an area that existing studies have not fully explored, explained, or addressed. Identifying a gap justifies your research — it shows why your study is necessary and original.

Research gaps can take several forms:

- A topic that has been studied in Western countries but not in North Africa or developing economies
- A relationship between two variables that has not been investigated together
- A phenomenon that has been studied quantitatively but not qualitatively (or vice versa)
- A concept that has been applied in large corporations but not in small and medium enterprises (SMEs)

A standard formula for presenting a research gap in an introduction is:

□ Note

Many studies have examined [Topic A]; however, limited research has addressed [specific aspect or context].

Example: Many studies have examined digital marketing strategies in global markets; however, limited research has focused on their application in Algerian small and medium enterprises.

2.5 Writing a Research Question

Every research paper must be guided by a clear research question. The research question defines the focus and scope of the study. A good research question is:

- Specific — it focuses on one clear issue
- Researchable — it can be answered through data or analysis
- Significant — it contributes something useful to knowledge
- Feasible — it can be completed within the time and resources available

A common sentence structure for stating your research question in a paper is:

Example

This study investigates _____.

This research examines the relationship between _____ and _____.

This paper aims to determine _____.

Example 1: This study investigates the impact of social media marketing on customer loyalty in Algerian retail companies.

Example 2: This research examines the relationship between leadership style and employee motivation in Algerian public sector organisations.

Example 3: This study aims to determine the factors that influence digital transformation adoption among SMEs in Algeria.

2.6 A Business Research Example

The following example shows how the IMRAD structure works for a typical business research paper. Use it as a model to understand the function of each section.

| Section | Function | Content Example |
|---------|----------|---|
| Title | — | "The Impact of Flexible Work Arrangements on Employee Motivation in Algerian Service Companies" |

| | | |
|--------------|---------------|--|
| Introduction | The Problem | Many employees in the Algerian service sector report low motivation levels, affecting overall performance. |
| Lit. Review | What We Know | Existing research links motivation to working conditions (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Hackman & Oldham, 1976). |
| Methodology | How We Did It | Survey of 100 employees in five service companies using a Likert-scale questionnaire. |
| Results | What We Found | Employees with flexible working hours reported 34% higher motivation scores. |
| Discussion | What It Means | Flexibility appears to enhance intrinsic motivation, consistent with Self-Determination Theory. |
| Conclusion | So What? | Companies should consider flexible arrangements as a low-cost motivational strategy. |

2.7 Real Academic References for This Unit

Glasman-Deal, H. (2010). Science research writing for non-native speakers of English. Imperial College Press. <https://doi.org/10.1142/p605>

Swales, J. M. (1990). Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings. Cambridge University Press.

*Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The 'what' and 'why' of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01*

*Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 16(2), 250–279. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073\(76\)90016-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(76)90016-7)*

2.8 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Section Matching

Match each sentence with the correct IMRAD section by writing the section name in the right column.

| Sentence | Section (Introduction / Methodology / Results / Discussion / Conclusion) |
|---|--|
| "Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed to 120 employees." | |
| "These findings suggest that digital tools improve efficiency in the service sector." | |
| "Employee motivation remains a critical challenge in Algerian companies (Benali, 2021)." | |
| "The results indicate that 72% of participants reported higher job satisfaction." | |
| "This study concludes that flexible work policies have a significant positive effect on performance." | |

Activity 2 – Identify the Gap

Read the following paragraph. Underline or circle the research gap statement.

"Digital marketing has been widely studied in European and American contexts (Smith, 2019; Jones, 2020). Several studies confirm that social media strategies significantly improve brand awareness and customer engagement (Brown & Davis, 2021). However, very little research has examined how these strategies perform in North African markets, particularly in Algeria, where consumer behaviour and digital infrastructure differ substantially from Western contexts. This study addresses this gap by investigating digital marketing effectiveness in Algerian retail companies."

Write your own research gap statement for your topic:

Activity 3 – Write Your Research Question

Using the formula: "This study investigates _____", write a research question for your own thesis topic.

My research question:

UNIT 3

Writing the Introduction

How to open your research paper with clarity and purpose

□ Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

27. Understand the three-move structure of an academic introduction (CARS model)
28. Write each move of the introduction with appropriate language
29. Identify and express the research problem and the research gap
30. State the research question and objectives clearly
31. Outline the structure of the paper in an academic way

3.1 What Is an Introduction?

The introduction is the first section a reader encounters in a research paper, and it has one fundamental purpose: to convince the reader that your research is worth reading. It establishes the context of your work, identifies the problem you are investigating, and explains what your study will do.

A well-written introduction is like a funnel: it begins broadly, with general context, and narrows progressively to your specific research question. By the end of the introduction, the reader should understand exactly what the paper is about and why it matters.

3.2 The CARS Model: Three Moves

The most widely accepted framework for writing research introductions is the CARS model (Create a Research Space), developed by Swales (1990). This model describes three rhetorical 'moves' that effective introductions make.

| Move | Name | What You Do |
|------|------|-------------|
|------|------|-------------|

| | | |
|--------|----------------------------|--|
| Move 1 | Establishing the Territory | Provide context. Show that the topic is important, relevant, and widely studied. |
| Move 2 | Establishing the Niche | Identify the gap, problem, or limitation in existing research. Show why more research is needed. |
| Move 3 | Announcing the Research | Explain what your study does: its purpose, research question, method, and structure. |

Let us look at each move in detail with examples from business research.

Move 1 – Establishing the Territory

In Move 1, you write about the broader context of your topic. This is where you show the reader that the field is important and that researchers have been interested in it.

Useful language for Move 1:

- In recent years, [topic] has become increasingly important in...
- Researchers have paid considerable attention to...
- A growing body of research has examined...
- [Topic] plays a fundamental role in...
- The importance of [topic] has been recognised by many scholars (Author, Year)...

Example

In recent years, digital transformation has become a central concern for businesses across all sectors (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). A growing body of research has examined the relationship between technology adoption and organisational performance, with studies consistently indicating that companies investing in digital tools achieve greater efficiency and competitiveness (Matt et al., 2015).

Move 2 – Establishing the Niche

In Move 2, you identify the gap in existing research. This is the most important move in the introduction, because it justifies your study. Without a clear gap, there is no reason for your research to exist.

Useful language for Move 2:

- However, limited research has addressed...
- Despite this body of work, little attention has been paid to...
- Existing studies have largely focused on [X], leaving [Y] unexplored.
- A notable gap exists in understanding...
- Previous research has not examined...

Example

However, the majority of this research has been conducted in European and North American contexts (Smith, 2019; Jones, 2020). Limited attention has been paid to how digital transformation unfolds in developing economies, particularly in North Africa. As a result, there is a significant gap in knowledge about the specific challenges and drivers of digital transformation in Algerian companies.

Move 3 – Announcing the Research

In Move 3, you describe your study. You state its purpose, its research question, its method, and its structure. This move reassures the reader that your study will fill the gap you identified in Move 2.

Useful language for Move 3:

- This study aims to investigate / examine / determine...
- The purpose of this research is to...
- This paper addresses this gap by...
- A quantitative / qualitative approach was adopted to...
- The paper is organised as follows: Section 2 presents... Section 3 describes...

Example

This study addresses this gap by investigating the factors that influence digital transformation adoption in Algerian small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to managers in 75 SMEs across three sectors. The paper is organised as follows: Section 2 reviews the relevant literature; Section 3 describes the methodology; Section 4 presents the results; Section 5 discusses the findings; and Section 6 offers conclusions and recommendations.

3.3 Writing the Research Objectives

Many research papers also include a clear statement of research objectives. Objectives are more specific than the general research question — they break the study down into concrete, achievable tasks.

Note

Research Question: What factors influence digital transformation adoption in Algerian SMEs?

Research Objectives:

1. To identify the main barriers to digital transformation in Algerian SMEs.
2. To examine the role of managerial attitude in the adoption of digital tools.
3. To assess the impact of organisational size on digital readiness.

Objectives are usually introduced with the infinitive form: 'To identify...', 'To examine...', 'To analyse...', 'To determine...', 'To explore...'.

3.4 A Complete Introduction Example

The following is a complete example of an introduction written following the CARS model. Each move is labelled for you.

[Move 1] Employee motivation has long been recognised as a critical driver of organisational performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Hackman & Oldham, 1976). In the context of business administration, a motivated workforce has been consistently linked to higher productivity, lower absenteeism, and improved customer satisfaction (Robbins & Judge, 2018). A substantial body of research has examined the relationship between management practices and employee motivation across various industries.

[Move 2] However, the majority of these studies have been conducted in Western organisational contexts, with limited attention given to the Algerian business environment. Given that Algeria has a distinct organisational culture shaped by specific historical, social, and economic factors, the direct transfer of Western motivational models may not be appropriate. This gap in the research limits our understanding of how motivation functions in Algerian public and private sector organisations.

[Move 3] This study aims to investigate the motivational factors that influence employee performance in Algerian service sector companies. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 150 employees across five organisations. The paper proceeds as follows: Section 2 reviews the theoretical literature on motivation; Section 3 outlines the methodology; Section 4 presents the findings; and Section 5 discusses the implications and recommendations.

3.5 Real Academic References for This Unit

Swales, J. M. (1990). Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings. Cambridge University Press.

Bharadwaj, A., El Sawy, O. A., Pavlou, P. A., & Venkatraman, N. (2013). Digital business strategy: Toward a next generation of insights. MIS Quarterly, 37(2), 471–482. <https://doi.org/10.25300/MISQ/2013/37:2.3>

Matt, C., Hess, T., & Benlian, A. (2015). Digital transformation strategies. Business & Information Systems Engineering, 57(5), 339–343. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12599-015-0401-5>

Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2018). Organizational behavior (18th ed.). Pearson.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The 'what' and 'why' of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. Psychological Inquiry, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

3.6 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Label the Moves

Read the following introduction and label each paragraph as Move 1, Move 2, or Move 3.

Paragraph A: "Leadership style has been widely studied as a key determinant of team effectiveness. Research consistently shows that transformational leaders inspire higher levels of employee commitment and creativity (Bass & Avolio, 1994)."

Paragraph B: "Despite this substantial body of research, most studies have focused on private sector organisations in developed economies. Little is known about how leadership style affects performance in Algerian public institutions."

Paragraph C: "This study therefore examines the relationship between transformational leadership and team effectiveness in three Algerian public universities. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 academic staff members."

Your answers:

32.Paragraph A = Move _____

33.Paragraph B = Move _____

34.Paragraph C = Move _____

Activity 2 – Write Your Own Introduction

Using your own research topic, write a three-paragraph introduction following the CARS model (one paragraph per move). Use the language patterns provided in this unit.

Move 1 (General Context):

Move 2 (The Gap):

Move 3 (Your Research):

UNIT 4

Academic Vocabulary for Business Research

Building the language toolkit of a professional researcher

□ Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

35. Replace informal vocabulary with appropriate academic alternatives
36. Use core academic verbs correctly in research writing
37. Understand and apply linking words for cohesion and flow
38. Build complex academic sentences using formal vocabulary
39. Recognise and use collocations common in business research writing

4.1 Why Vocabulary Matters in Academic Writing

One of the most immediate signs that a piece of writing is academic — or not — is vocabulary. The words you choose signal to your reader whether you are writing for a general audience or for a community of researchers. Academic vocabulary is not about using rare or complicated words to impress people. It is about using precise, appropriate, and formal language that communicates your ideas clearly and credibly.

Nation (2001), whose work on academic vocabulary is among the most influential in the field, distinguishes between general vocabulary, academic vocabulary, and technical vocabulary. For this course, we focus primarily on academic vocabulary — the words and phrases that appear across all academic disciplines — and business vocabulary — the terms specific to management and business research.

4.2 Core Academic Verbs for Business Research

The following verbs are among the most frequently used in business and management research writing. Learn them not just as isolated words, but as part of sentences and collocations.

| Academic Verb | Example Sentence |
|---------------|--|
| examine | This study examines the relationship between leadership and performance. |
| investigate | The research investigates the factors influencing digital adoption. |
| analyse | The data were analysed using descriptive statistics. |
| demonstrate | The findings demonstrate a significant positive correlation. |
| indicate | The results indicate that flexible work improves satisfaction. |
| suggest | The evidence suggests that training programmes increase productivity. |
| argue | Several scholars argue that organisational culture is a key driver. |
| highlight | This study highlights the importance of employee engagement. |
| address | Future research should address the limitations of this study. |
| determine | The aim of this survey was to determine employee attitudes. |
| assess | This paper assesses the impact of remote work on team cohesion. |
| explore | The qualitative component explored managers' perceptions of change. |

4.3 Upgrading Everyday Vocabulary

The following table shows common informal words and phrases alongside their academic equivalents. When you revise your writing, look for informal words and replace them with more appropriate alternatives.

| Informal Phrase | Word / | Academic Alternative(s) |
|-----------------|--------|--|
| look at | | examine / investigate / analyse |
| talk about | | discuss / address / consider |
| find out | | determine / identify / ascertain |
| deal with | | address / manage / handle |
| help | | facilitate / support / enable |
| show | | demonstrate / indicate / reveal |
| use | | utilise / employ / apply |
| get better | | improve / enhance / develop |
| go up | | increase / rise / grow |
| go down | | decrease / decline / fall |
| a lot of | | numerous / a significant number of / considerable |
| important | | significant / critical / fundamental / essential |
| big | | substantial / considerable / extensive / large-scale |
| problem | | challenge / issue / obstacle / limitation |
| good results | | positive outcomes / favourable findings |
| because of | | as a result of / owing to / due to |

4.4 Linking Words for Academic Cohesion

Linking words (also called connectives or transitional phrases) are essential for creating a coherent, well-organised piece of academic writing. They show the logical relationship between sentences and paragraphs.

| Function | Linking Words | Example |
|----------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Adding | furthermore / in | Furthermore, the study highlights |

| | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| information | addition / moreover / also | the role of leadership. |
| Contrasting | however / whereas / in contrast / on the other hand | However, the results were not significant in all sectors. |
| Cause and effect | therefore / as a result / consequently / hence | As a result, productivity levels increased significantly. |
| Illustrating | for example / for instance / such as / specifically | For example, digital tools include CRM systems. |
| Conceding | although / even though / despite / nevertheless | Although the sample was small, the findings are significant. |
| Summarising | in summary / overall / in conclusion / to conclude | In summary, digital transformation requires cultural change. |
| Comparing | similarly / likewise / in the same way | Similarly, Benali (2021) reports comparable results. |
| Emphasising | particularly / especially / notably / above all | Notably, motivation declined in all five companies. |

4.5 Key Academic Collocations in Business Research

A collocation is a pair or group of words that are commonly used together. Using correct collocations makes your writing sound natural and professional. Here are some of the most important collocations in business and management research:

| Verb | Common Collocations |
|-----------|--|
| conduct | conduct a survey / conduct an interview / conduct research |
| carry out | carry out an analysis / carry out an investigation |
| collect | collect data / collect information / collect evidence |

| | |
|----------|--|
| draw | draw conclusions / draw comparisons / draw on existing research |
| make | make recommendations / make assumptions / make a contribution |
| adopt | adopt an approach / adopt a framework / adopt a strategy |
| raise | raise a question / raise awareness / raise concerns |
| identify | identify a gap / identify factors / identify patterns |
| examine | examine the relationship / examine the impact / examine the evidence |

4.6 Useful Academic Sentence Starters

The following sentence starters are commonly used in business research papers. Practise using them until they feel natural.

- This study examines / investigates / explores...
- The purpose of this research is to...
- The results indicate / suggest / demonstrate that...
- These findings are consistent with / contrast with...
- Previous research has shown / argued / suggested that...
- This paper contributes to the literature on...
- The data were collected / analysed / interpreted...
- A key finding of this study is that...
- The implications of these findings suggest that...

4.7 Vocabulary in Context: A Business Example

The following paragraph demonstrates how academic vocabulary, linking words, and collocations work together in a well-written passage from a business research paper.

This study examines the impact of digital marketing strategies on customer engagement in Algerian retail companies. A quantitative approach was adopted, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 200 customers. The results indicate that social media platforms significantly enhance brand awareness and purchase intention. Furthermore, these findings suggest that companies investing in targeted digital campaigns achieve higher customer retention rates. However, the study acknowledges that the effectiveness of digital marketing may vary considerably depending on the sector, the target audience, and the quality of content produced.

Notice how this paragraph: (1) uses precise academic verbs, (2) applies linking words to connect ideas, (3) hedges where appropriate ('may vary'), and (4) avoids all informal language.

4.8 Real Academic References for This Unit

Nation, I. S. P. (2001). Learning vocabulary in another language. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524759>

Coxhead, A. (2000). A new academic word list. TESOL Quarterly, 34(2), 213–238. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3587951>

Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., & Finegan, E. (1999). Longman grammar of spoken and written English. Pearson.

Feak, C. B., & Swales, J. M. (2009). Telling a research story: Writing a literature review. University of Michigan Press.

4.9 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Replace Informal Vocabulary

Rewrite the following sentences using academic vocabulary. You may change the sentence structure if needed.

| Informal Sentence | Academic Version |
|---|------------------|
| 1. We looked at how employees feel about their jobs. | |
| 2. A lot of companies have problems with digital tools. | |
| 3. The results showed that things got better after training. | |
| 4. Managers talked about the importance of good communication. | |
| 5. The study found out that small companies use social media differently. | |

Activity 2 – Add Linking Words

Fill in the blanks with an appropriate linking word from the list below. Each word should be used once: however / furthermore / as a result / for example / although.

40. Digital marketing has grown rapidly in recent years. _____, many Algerian SMEs have not yet adopted these strategies.
41. The company implemented a new training programme. _____, employee satisfaction increased significantly.
42. _____ the sample size was limited, the findings provide valuable insights.
43. The study examines various motivational factors. _____, it focuses on intrinsic motivation in particular.
44. Several studies support this conclusion. _____, Benali (2021) reports comparable results in a similar context.

Activity 3 – Write an Academic Paragraph

Using your own research topic, write a paragraph of approximately 100 words that incorporates at least five academic verbs, two linking words, and one example of hedging.

Your paragraph:

UNIT 5

Literature Review – Part 1

Synthesis and Reporting Verbs

□ Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

45. Explain the purpose of a literature review in a research paper
46. Distinguish between a descriptive list and a synthesised review
47. Use reporting verbs correctly to attribute ideas to their authors
48. Connect ideas from multiple sources using linking language
49. Write a synthesised literature review paragraph on a business topic

5.1 What Is a Literature Review?

A literature review is an organised, critical discussion of existing research on a particular topic. It is not a simple summary of every article you have read. It is a carefully constructed argument that shows what the academic community currently knows about your topic, where scholars agree, where they disagree, and what remains to be investigated.

Boote and Beile (2005) argue that a high-quality literature review is the foundation of any serious research project. It demonstrates that the researcher understands the intellectual landscape of their field and can position their own work within that landscape.

A literature review serves four main functions in a research paper:

- It establishes the theoretical and conceptual background of your study
- It shows that you are familiar with the most important work in your field
- It identifies the research gap that your study will address
- It provides the theoretical framework against which your results will be interpreted

5.2 What Is Synthesis?

Synthesis is the skill that separates a good literature review from a weak one. Synthesis means combining ideas from different sources to create a new, unified understanding. It is the opposite of simple listing or summary.

To synthesise, you must read multiple sources, identify common themes, patterns, agreements, and contradictions, and then present these relationships to the reader in an organised way.

| Type | Example |
|-----------------------|---|
| Simple Listing (Weak) | Smith (2019) studied digital marketing. Johnson (2020) studied social media. Chen (2021) studied e-commerce. |
| Synthesis (Strong) | Digital marketing, social media, and e-commerce have all been identified as key drivers of customer engagement (Smith, 2019; Johnson, 2020; Chen, 2021), suggesting that online consumer behaviour is increasingly shaped by digital touchpoints. |

Notice the difference: in the synthesised version, you are not just listing what each author studied. You are grouping their ideas thematically and drawing a conclusion from them.

5.3 Reporting Verbs – The Grammar of Synthesis

When you refer to another author's work in your literature review, you use a reporting verb. Reporting verbs are not all the same — they carry different meanings and signal different levels of certainty, agreement, or strength of claim.

| Reporting Verb | Meaning / Use | Example |
|----------------|-----------------------|---|
| argues | Strong personal claim | Hyland (2005) argues that hedging is central to academic credibility. |

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------------|--|
| suggests | Careful, possible idea | The data suggest that motivation improves with autonomy. |
| demonstrates | Shows with evidence | Smith (2020) demonstrates a significant correlation between X and Y. |
| indicates | Points towards | The results indicate a positive relationship. |
| reports | States findings | Chen (2021) reports that 78% of participants agreed. |
| highlights | Draws attention to | Benali (2022) highlights the role of culture in change management. |
| examines | Studies in depth | Johnson (2019) examines the impact of flexible work policies. |
| questions | Challenges | Al-Hassan (2020) questions the validity of earlier models. |
| acknowledges | Admits or recognises | Smith (2019) acknowledges several limitations in the study. |
| proposes | Offers a new idea/model | Ryan (2000) proposes a self-determination framework for motivation. |

□ Note

Verb Tense in Literature Reviews:

- Present simple is most common: Smith (2020) argues / suggests / demonstrates.
- Past simple is also used, especially for specific studies: Smith (2020) conducted a survey and found...
- Both are acceptable — be consistent within each paragraph.

5.4 Connecting Ideas Across Sources

A good literature review moves smoothly from one source to another. The transitions you use between sources signal the relationship between the ideas — agreement, contrast, development, or qualification.

| Relationship | Connecting Language | Example |
|---------------|--|---|
| Agreement | similarly / likewise / in the same vein / consistent with this | Similarly, Haddad (2022) finds that motivation increases with autonomy. |
| Contrast | however / in contrast / whereas / on the other hand | However, Benali (2021) argues that cultural factors are more important. |
| Building on | furthermore / building on this / extending this work | Furthermore, Smith (2020) extends this argument by examining SMEs. |
| Qualification | nevertheless / despite this / while | Despite this, several limitations have been noted in earlier studies. |

5.5 Organising a Literature Review

There are three main ways to organise a literature review. The best choice depends on your topic and the relationships between the sources.

| Approach | Description | When to Use |
|----------------|----------------------------|--|
| Thematic | Grouped by topic or theme | Best for broad reviews with several themes |
| Chronological | Grouped by time period | Best for showing how a field has developed over time |
| Methodological | Grouped by research method | Best for comparing how different methods address a topic |

For most business research papers at Master's level, the thematic approach is most appropriate. You identify three or four key themes in your topic and write one or two paragraphs on each theme.

5.6 A Full Example: Synthesised Literature Review Paragraph

The following is an example of a well-written, synthesised literature review paragraph on employee motivation. Notice how it groups ideas thematically, uses reporting verbs correctly, connects sources with transitions, and hedges where appropriate.

A substantial body of research has examined the relationship between management style and employee motivation. Deci and Ryan (2000) propose that intrinsic motivation — the internal drive to engage in an activity for its own satisfaction — is enhanced when employees experience autonomy, competence, and relatedness in their work environment. Building on this framework, Hackman and Oldham (1976) demonstrate that job design significantly influences motivational levels, arguing that enriched roles with greater variety and autonomy lead to higher performance. In the Algerian context, Benali (2021) suggests that these relationships may be moderated by organisational culture, indicating that the direct application of Western motivational models requires careful adaptation. Similarly, Haddad (2022) highlights that social dynamics within Algerian companies play a significant role in shaping employee attitudes. However, as Al-Rashidi (2020) notes, the empirical evidence from the MENA region remains limited, and further research is needed to establish context-specific frameworks for motivation in this setting.

5.7 Real Academic References for This Unit

Boote, D. N., & Beile, P. (2005). *Scholars before researchers: On the centrality of the dissertation literature review in research preparation*. *Educational Researcher*, 34(6), 3–15. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X034006003>

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). *The 'what' and 'why' of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior*. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 16(2), 250–279. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073\(76\)90016-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(76)90016-7)

Feak, C. B., & Swales, J. M. (2009). Telling a research story: Writing a literature review. University of Michigan Press.

Hart, C. (1998). Doing a literature review: Releasing the social science research imagination. SAGE Publications.

5.8 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Choose the Right Reporting Verb

Fill in each blank with the most appropriate reporting verb from the options given.

50. Smith (2020) _____ that digital marketing significantly increases customer engagement. (argues / conducts / avoids)
51. Chen (2021) _____ that cultural factors moderate the impact of leadership on performance. (suggests / identifies / copies)
52. The study _____ a strong correlation between employee training and job satisfaction. (demonstrates / ignores / interrupts)
53. Al-Hassan (2022) _____ the validity of earlier motivational models in non-Western contexts. (questions / writes / searches)

Activity 2 – From Listing to Synthesis

Rewrite the following passage so that it becomes a synthesised paragraph rather than a simple list.

Weak: Simple Listing

Benali (2021) studies digital transformation in Algerian companies.

Haddad (2022) studies employee resistance to change.

Smith (2020) studies change management strategies.

Strong: Synthesis

Your synthesised paragraph:

Activity 3 – Write a Literature Review Paragraph

Choose three sources relevant to your research topic (real or imaginary authors). Write a synthesised literature review paragraph of approximately 150 words. Use at least three different reporting verbs and at least two linking words.

Your literature review paragraph:

UNIT 6

Literature Review – Part 2

Critical Writing and Evaluating Sources

□ Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

54. Understand what critical writing means in an academic context
55. Move beyond description to analysis, evaluation, and argument
56. Express agreement, disagreement, limitation, and contrast in academic language
57. Evaluate the quality and relevance of sources
58. Write a critical literature review paragraph that goes beyond summary

6.1 What Does 'Critical' Mean in Academic Writing?

The word 'critical' is often misunderstood by students. In everyday English, 'critical' means finding fault with something. In academic writing, 'critical' means something quite different: it means analysing, questioning, and evaluating ideas rather than simply accepting and describing them.

A critical literature review does not just describe what researchers have found. It evaluates the quality of their evidence, questions their assumptions, identifies their limitations, compares their conclusions, and draws connections between different bodies of work.

Brookfield (2012) describes critical thinking as the process of identifying and questioning the assumptions that underlie any idea or argument. In the context of academic writing, this means asking: Is this evidence reliable? Does this conclusion follow from the data? Does this theory apply in all contexts? What are the limitations of this approach?

6.2 The Difference Between Description and Critical Analysis

The table below shows the fundamental difference between descriptive writing and critical writing in a literature review.

| Descriptive Writing | Critical Writing |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Describes what researchers said | Analyses and evaluates what researchers said |
| Summarises studies individually | Connects, compares, and contrasts studies thematically |
| Accepts conclusions without question | Questions assumptions, methods, and generalisability |
| Reports findings neutrally | Identifies strengths and weaknesses in the evidence |
| Does not take a position | Develops an argument based on the evidence |

Example

Descriptive: Smith (2020) studies the impact of digital tools on employee productivity. He finds that productivity increases.

Critical: Smith (2020) demonstrates a positive relationship between digital tool adoption and productivity. However, this study is limited by its focus on large multinational corporations, raising questions about whether the findings apply to smaller organisations in developing economies. Benali (2021) offers a contrasting perspective, suggesting that in Algerian SMEs, the impact of digital tools is moderated by organisational readiness.

6.3 Language for Critical Writing

Here are the most useful sentence patterns and phrases for expressing different types of critical analysis in your literature review.

Expressing Limitations of a Study

- However, this study is limited by...
- A notable weakness of this approach is...
- The generalisability of these findings is limited by...
- This study does not account for...
- The sample size raises concerns about the reliability of the conclusions.

Expressing Agreement or Confirmation

- This finding is consistent with / supported by...
- Similarly, [Author] confirms that...
- In line with earlier research, [Author] demonstrates that...
- These results corroborate the findings of...

Expressing Contrast or Disagreement

- In contrast, [Author] argues that...
- However, [Author] challenges this view by suggesting...
- [Author] questions the validity of this claim, noting that...
- This conclusion is not universally supported; [Author] finds that...

Making Evaluative Judgements

- This study makes a significant contribution to understanding...
- While rigorous in its methodology, this research...
- This is a valuable study, though it is important to note that...
- The theoretical framework proposed by [Author] is compelling; however...

6.4 Evaluating Sources

Not all sources are equal in quality. Part of being a critical researcher is knowing how to evaluate the reliability and relevance of a source. Critically reading a source means asking several questions before you use it in your literature review.

| Question | What to Look For |
|----------|------------------|
|----------|------------------|

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Who wrote it? | Is the author an expert in this field? Are they affiliated with a recognised institution? |
| Where was it published? | Is it a peer-reviewed journal? A credible publisher? A reputable conference? |
| When was it published? | Is the research recent enough to be relevant? Or is it a foundational text? |
| What is the evidence? | How was the data collected? Is the sample size appropriate? Are the methods sound? |
| Does it apply to my context? | Was the study conducted in a similar context to my research, or does it need to be questioned for generalisability? |

□ Note

In general, peer-reviewed journal articles are the most credible sources for a Master's thesis.

Books by well-known scholars are also excellent sources, especially for theoretical frameworks.

Be cautious with websites, blogs, or non-peer-reviewed reports — they may lack rigour.

Use Google Scholar to find peer-reviewed articles and check how many times a source has been cited.

6.5 A Full Critical Literature Review Example

The following paragraph demonstrates critical writing in action. Notice how it goes far beyond description to engage analytically with the sources.

The relationship between organisational culture and change management has been extensively studied in Western contexts. Kotter (1996) proposes an eight-step model of change that places leadership and vision at the centre of successful transformation. While this model has been widely adopted by practitioners, several scholars have questioned its universal applicability.

Benali (2021) argues that in North African organisational contexts, collective cultural norms and hierarchical authority structures significantly alter the dynamics of change, suggesting that Kotter's framework may need substantial adaptation. Similarly, Haddad (2022) demonstrates through qualitative interviews that Algerian managers tend to rely on informal social networks rather than formal communication channels during periods of change — a finding that challenges assumptions built into Western change models. These studies collectively indicate that a culturally sensitive approach to change management is not merely desirable but necessary for the effective implementation of organisational transformation in the Algerian context. However, it should be noted that both Benali (2021) and Haddad (2022) rely on relatively small qualitative samples, and their findings would benefit from confirmation through larger-scale quantitative research.

6.6 Real Academic References for This Unit

Brookfield, S. D. (2012). Teaching for critical thinking: Tools and techniques to help students question their assumptions. Jossey-Bass.

Kotter, J. P. (1996). Leading change. Harvard Business School Press.

Lewin, K. (1947). Frontiers in group dynamics: Concept, method and reality in social science. Human Relations, 1(1), 5–41. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872674700100103>

Passer, M., Smith, R., Holt, N., Bremner, A., Sutherland, E., & Vliek, M. (2009). Psychology: The science of mind and behaviour. McGraw-Hill.

Wallace, M., & Wray, A. (2016). Critical reading and writing for postgraduates (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.

6.7 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Descriptive or Critical?

Read each extract and decide: Is it descriptive (D) or critical (C)?

| Extract | Your Answer |
|---|---------------|
| 1. "Smith (2020) found that digital tools improve productivity." | D or C? _____ |
| 2. "While Smith (2020) demonstrates productivity gains, the study's exclusive focus on large corporations limits its applicability to SMEs." | D or C? _____ |
| 3. "Benali (2021) argues that culture is important in change management." | D or C? _____ |
| 4. "Although Benali (2021) offers valuable insights, the small sample size (n=12) raises questions about the generalisability of the findings." | D or C? _____ |

Activity 2 – Make It Critical

Rewrite the following descriptive sentences as critical statements. Add an evaluation, a limitation, or a contrast.

| Descriptive Version | Your Critical Version |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. "Haddad (2022) found that leadership affects performance." | |
| 2. "Al-Hassan (2021) studied digital adoption | |

UNIT 7**Avoiding Plagiarism & Paraphrasing***How to use sources honestly and effectively***□ Learning Objectives***By the end of this unit, you will be able to:*

- 59. Define plagiarism and explain why it is a serious academic problem
- 60. Identify different types of plagiarism, including unintentional plagiarism
- 61. Paraphrase a source correctly by changing both vocabulary and structure
- 62. Use in-text citations correctly following APA 7th edition
- 63. Construct a reference list entry using APA 7th edition format

7.1 What Is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism means presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as if they were your own, without giving appropriate credit. It is considered one of the most serious forms of academic dishonesty. Universities use software tools to detect plagiarism, and the consequences — including failure, suspension, or expulsion — can be severe.

Howard (1999) distinguishes between different types of plagiarism, from deliberate cheating to what she calls 'patchwriting' — a form of near-copying that many students engage in unconsciously when they lack the language skills to express ideas in their own words. Understanding these distinctions helps you avoid plagiarism even when it is not intentional.

| Type | Description | Severity |
|--------------|--|-------------|
| Copying | Reproducing text word for word without quotation marks or citation | Most severe |
| Patchwriting | Copying the structure of the original, changing | Also |

| | | |
|-------------------|---|-----------------|
| | only a few words | unacceptable |
| Self-plagiarism | Reusing your own previously submitted work without disclosure | Unacceptable |
| Mosaic plagiarism | Combining phrases from different sources without proper attribution | Unacceptable |
| Poor paraphrasing | Changing words but not structure; insufficient change from the original | Avoid carefully |

7.2 What Is Paraphrasing?

Paraphrasing means rewriting a source's idea in your own words and your own sentence structure, while preserving the original meaning. Good paraphrasing requires both a vocabulary change and a structural change. Simply replacing a few words is not paraphrasing — it is patchwriting.

There is an important difference between paraphrasing and summarising. When you paraphrase, you rewrite a specific sentence or passage in detail. When you summarise, you reduce a longer text to its main points. Both are acceptable in academic writing, but paraphrasing is more commonly used in literature reviews.

7.3 The Four Steps of Effective Paraphrasing

Follow these four steps every time you paraphrase a source:

64. Read the original sentence carefully until you fully understand its meaning.
65. Close the book or put away the original text. Do not look at it.
66. Write the idea in your own words, using a different sentence structure.
67. Compare your version with the original to check: (a) the meaning is preserved; (b) the wording is substantially different; (c) you have added a citation.

The key principle is: if you still need to look at the original to write your version, you are probably not paraphrasing — you are copying.

7.4 Paraphrasing in Practice

The following examples show the difference between acceptable and unacceptable paraphrasing.

| Version | Status | Text |
|-----------------|----------------|---|
| Original | — | "Digital transformation significantly enhances organisational efficiency and competitive advantage." |
| Patchwriting | Not acceptable | "Digital transformation considerably improves organisational efficiency and competitive advantage." |
| Still too close | Not acceptable | "Organisational efficiency and competitive advantage are significantly enhanced by digital transformation." |
| Good paraphrase | Acceptable | "Companies that embrace digital technologies tend to operate more efficiently and strengthen their position in the market (Smith, 2020)." |

Notice that the good paraphrase does three things: it changes the vocabulary substantially, it uses a different sentence structure, and it adds a citation.

7.5 Direct Quotation — When Is It Appropriate?

Although paraphrasing is the norm in academic writing, there are times when a direct quotation is appropriate. A direct quotation reproduces the exact words of the original, placed in quotation marks and followed by a citation that includes the page number.

Use a direct quotation when:

- The exact wording is distinctive, famous, or particularly powerful
- The author defines a key term or concept in a precise way

- Changing the words would alter the meaning significantly

Example

As Hyland (2005, p. 49) observes, "Hedging is not about being vague or evasive; it is about being an honest and responsible researcher who acknowledges the limits of what can be known."

Common Mistake

Do not over-use direct quotations. In most business research papers, more than 10% direct quotation is considered poor academic practice.

Always include the page number for direct quotations in APA format.

7.6 APA 7th Edition Citations

The APA 7th edition (American Psychological Association) is the most widely used referencing system in business and social science research. There are two components: the in-text citation (inside your paragraph) and the reference list (at the end of your paper).

In-Text Citations

The basic format is: Author's Surname, Year. If you are quoting directly, add the page number.

| Situation | Format |
|---------------|---|
| One author | Smith (2020) argues... OR ...has been demonstrated (Smith, 2020). |
| Two authors | Smith and Jones (2020) suggest... OR (Smith & Jones, 2020). |
| Three or more | Smith et al. (2020) found... OR (Smith et al., 2020). |
| Direct quote | (Smith, 2020, p. 45) or Smith (2020, p. 45) states |

| | |
|--------------|---|
| | "..." |
| No author | Use the title in italics: (<i>Digital Marketing</i> , 2020). |
| Organisation | The World Bank (2022) reports... OR (World Bank, 2022). |

Reference List – Common Formats

At the end of your paper, every source you have cited must appear in the reference list, in alphabetical order by author's surname.

Journal Article:

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Title of article. Name of Journal, Volume(Issue), Pages. <https://doi.org/xxxxx>

Book:

Author, A. A. (Year). Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle (Xth ed.). Publisher. <https://doi.org/xxxxx>

Chapter in Edited Book:

Author, A. A. (Year). Title of chapter. In E. E. Editor (Ed.), Title of book (pp. xx–xx). Publisher.

Real Examples in APA 7th Edition:

Hyland, K. (2005). Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing. Continuum.

*Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The 'what' and 'why' of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01*

*Howard, R. M. (1999). *Standing in the shadow of giants: Plagiarists, authors, collaborators*. Ablex.*

7.7 Real Academic References for This Unit

Howard, R. M. (1999). *Standing in the shadow of giants: Plagiarists, authors, collaborators*. Ablex.

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Pecorari, D. (2008). *Academic writing and plagiarism: A linguistic analysis*. Continuum.

Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (2012). *Academic writing for graduate students* (3rd ed.). University of Michigan Press.

7.8 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Identify the Problem

For each pair, decide whether the second version (B) is acceptable or unacceptable paraphrasing. Explain why.

Original: "Transformational leadership significantly improves employee creativity and performance."

Version B: "Transformational leadership considerably enhances employee creativity and performance."

Acceptable or Not? _____ Why? _____

Original: "Organisational culture plays a fundamental role in shaping employee attitudes towards change."

Version B: "The way employees respond to change is strongly influenced by the cultural environment of their organisation."

Acceptable or Not? _____ Why? _____

Activity 2 – Paraphrase This

Paraphrase the following sentence using the four-step method. Then write the APA in-text citation.

Original: "Small and medium-sized enterprises in developing economies face unique challenges in adopting digital technologies, particularly in relation to financial resources and human capital." (Johnson, 2021, p. 34)

Your _____ paraphrase:

Citation: _____

Activity 3 – Build a Reference

Use the information below to write a complete APA 7th edition reference.

Author: Kahina Benali

Year: 2021

Title of article: Digital transformation challenges in Algerian SMEs

Journal: Journal of African Business

Volume: 22, Issue: 3, Pages: 145–162

DOI: 10.1080/15228916.2021.1234567

Your APA reference:

UNIT 8**Writing the Methodology Section***Explaining how your research was conducted***□ Learning Objectives***By the end of this unit, you will be able to:*

- 68. Explain the purpose and structure of a methodology section
- 69. Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative research approaches
- 70. Describe data collection methods and justify your choices
- 71. Write a clear and detailed methodology paragraph
- 72. Use passive voice and formal academic language appropriately

8.1 What Is the Methodology Section?

The methodology section of a research paper explains exactly how you conducted your research. It answers the question: How do you know what you claim to know? By reading the methodology, another researcher should be able to understand your research process and, if necessary, replicate your study.

Creswell and Creswell (2018) identify the methodology section as one of the most critical parts of a research paper, because it is where the validity and reliability of the research are established. A study with poorly described or inappropriate methods is not trustworthy, regardless of how interesting the findings are.

The methodology section typically covers four main elements:

| Element | Description |
|------------------------|---|
| Research Approach | Qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods |
| Data Collection Method | How data were gathered: survey, interview, observation, document analysis |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Sample | Who participated: size, selection criteria, characteristics |
| Data Analysis | How data were processed and interpreted: statistics, thematic analysis, etc. |

8.2 Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research

The first decision you must make in designing your research is whether to use a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods approach. This choice should be based on your research question, not on personal preference.

| Feature | Qualitative | Quantitative |
|-------------|---|--|
| Purpose | Understand meanings, experiences, perceptions | Measure relationships, test hypotheses, generalise |
| Data | Words, stories, themes, observations | Numbers, statistics, scores |
| Methods | Interviews, focus groups, ethnography | Surveys, experiments, secondary data |
| Sample | Small and purposeful | Larger and representative |
| Analysis | Thematic, content, discourse analysis | Descriptive statistics, regression, ANOVA |
| When to use | When 'why' and 'how' questions need answering | When 'how many', 'how much' questions need answering |

A mixed-methods approach combines both. For example, you might use a questionnaire (quantitative) and then follow-up interviews (qualitative) to explain the statistical results in more depth.

8.3 Common Data Collection Methods in Business Research

| Method | Description and Use |
|---------------------------|--|
| Questionnaire / Survey | Structured questions distributed to a sample of participants. Best for collecting large amounts of standardised data. Likert scales are commonly used. |
| Semi-structured Interview | A guided conversation with open-ended questions. Allows the researcher to explore meanings and experiences in depth. |
| Focus Group | A structured discussion with 6–12 participants. Useful for generating group perspectives on a topic. |
| Document Analysis | Analysing existing documents (annual reports, policy documents, company records). Useful for historical or contextual research. |
| Observation | Systematically watching and recording behaviour in a natural setting. Used in organisational and consumer behaviour research. |

8.4 Describing Your Sample

The sample is the group of people or organisations from which you collected data. You must describe your sample clearly: how many participants there were, who they were, and how you selected them.

Sampling strategies in business research include:

- **Convenience sampling:** Participants are chosen because they are easily accessible. Common in student research, but has limitations for generalisability.
- **Purposive sampling:** Participants are selected because they have specific characteristics relevant to the research question. Used in qualitative research.
- **Random sampling:** Every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. Produces the most representative samples.
- **Snowball sampling:** Initial participants refer the researcher to others. Used when the target population is difficult to reach.

8.5 Language for Writing Methodology

The methodology section is typically written in the past tense (because you describe what you did) and often uses the passive voice (because the focus is on the process, not the person). However, many journals and universities now accept the active voice in methodology sections.

| Element | Sentence Pattern |
|------------------------|--|
| Research approach | This study adopts a quantitative / qualitative / mixed-methods approach. |
| Justification | This approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to... |
| Data collection | Data were collected through a structured questionnaire / semi-structured interviews. |
| Sample description | The sample consisted of 150 employees working in the service sector. |
| Sampling strategy | Participants were selected using purposive / convenience / random sampling. |
| Data analysis | Data were analysed using SPSS software / thematic analysis / descriptive statistics. |
| Ethical considerations | All participants were informed of the purpose of the study and gave their consent. |
| Limitations | The study acknowledges limitations related to sample size and geographical scope. |

8.6 A Complete Methodology Example

The following is an example of a well-written methodology section for a business research paper. Read it carefully and observe how each element is covered.

This study adopts a quantitative research approach in order to measure the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee motivation. Quantitative methods were selected because they allow for the systematic collection and statistical analysis of data from a relatively large sample, enabling the identification of patterns and correlations across the dataset.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of 32 items organised on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire was adapted from validated instruments used in previous research on employee motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000) and flexible work arrangements (Allen et al., 2013).

The sample consisted of 150 employees from five service-sector companies located in Algiers. Participants were selected using convenience sampling. All participants were informed of the purpose of the study, and participation was entirely voluntary. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis, conducted using SPSS version 26.

This study acknowledges several limitations. The use of convenience sampling limits the generalisability of the findings beyond the surveyed organisations. Furthermore, as all data were self-reported, social desirability bias may have influenced participant responses.

8.7 Real Academic References for This Unit

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Bryman, A. (2016). Social research methods (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The 'what' and 'why' of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. Psychological Inquiry, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Allen, T. D., Johnson, R. C., Kiburz, K. M., & Shockley, K. M. (2013). Work–family conflict and flexible work arrangements: Deconstructing

flexibility. Personnel Psychology, 66(2), 345–376.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12012>

8.8 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Identify the Elements

Read the following methodology extract and identify: (a) the research approach, (b) the data collection method, (c) the sample, and (d) the analysis method.

"A mixed-methods approach was adopted. Quantitative data were collected through an online survey administered to 200 managers in Algerian private companies. In addition, ten semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore managers' perceptions in greater depth. Statistical analysis was carried out using SPSS, while interview data were analysed thematically."

| Element | Your Answer |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| (a) Research approach: | |
| (b) Data collection method: | |
| (c) Sample: | |
| (d) Analysis method: | |

Activity 2 – Write Your Methodology Paragraph

Write a methodology paragraph for your own research. Use the sentence patterns from Section 8.5. Your paragraph should cover: research approach, data collection method, sample description, and analysis method (approximately 150 words).

Your methodology paragraph:

UNIT 9**Describing and Presenting Results***How to report your findings clearly and objectively***□ Learning Objectives***By the end of this unit, you will be able to:*

- 73. Understand the purpose of the results section and how it differs from discussion
- 74. Use appropriate language to describe quantitative and qualitative data
- 75. Report percentages, trends, and statistical results in academic English
- 76. Describe figures, tables, and charts in formal language
- 77. Avoid interpretation in the results section

9.1 What Is the Results Section?

The results section presents the findings of your research objectively, without interpretation. You describe what you found — the data, the patterns, the statistics — but you do not yet explain what they mean or connect them to the literature. That happens in the discussion section.

Think of the results section as showing the evidence. The discussion section is where you argue about what the evidence means. Keeping these two activities separate is essential for clear, well-structured academic writing.

| Section | Example |
|--------------------|--|
| Results Section | "72% of respondents reported higher job satisfaction after the training programme." |
| Discussion Section | "This significant increase in job satisfaction suggests that targeted training may be an effective tool for improving employee well-being, consistent with the findings of Hackman and Oldham (1976)." |

9.2 Language for Describing Quantitative Results

When you report numerical data, you need specific vocabulary. The following language patterns are the most commonly used in business research papers.

Reporting Percentages and Proportions

- The majority of respondents (72%) reported...
- Approximately one-third of participants indicated...
- Nearly half of the sample (48%) stated that...
- A small minority (7%) disagreed with the statement.

Describing Trends

| Trend | Academic Verbs |
|-----------|--|
| Increase | increased / rose / grew / improved / enhanced |
| Decrease | decreased / declined / fell / dropped / reduced |
| Stable | remained stable / showed no significant change / stayed constant |
| Fluctuate | fluctuated / varied / showed considerable variation |

Example

Employee satisfaction scores increased significantly between 2020 and 2023, rising from 52% to 78%.

The proportion of managers who reported using digital tools declined slightly in 2022 before recovering in 2023.

Customer retention rates remained relatively stable throughout the study period.

Reporting Statistical Results

- A statistically significant positive correlation was found between X and Y ($r = .68, p < .05$).

- The results of the regression analysis indicate that X is a significant predictor of Y ($\beta = .42$, $p < .01$).
- No significant difference was observed between Group A and Group B ($p = .23$).
- The mean score for intrinsic motivation was 3.8 (SD = 0.6), indicating moderate to high motivation levels.

9.3 Language for Describing Qualitative Results

Qualitative results are reported differently from quantitative results. Instead of statistics, you use themes, patterns, and representative quotations from participants.

- The analysis identified three main themes: leadership, communication, and organisational culture.
- Participants frequently mentioned the importance of...
- A recurring concern expressed by interviewees was...
- As one participant noted: "... " (Participant 3, interview transcript).
- The data revealed a clear pattern of...

9.4 Describing Tables and Figures

When your results include tables, graphs, or figures, you must introduce them in the text before presenting them, and briefly describe what they show. Do not simply say 'See Table 1' — explain what the reader should notice.

Example

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for all variables included in the study. As shown in Figure 2, employee motivation scores increased consistently across all three measurement periods.

The data presented in Table 3 indicate that digital tool adoption was highest in the service sector (78%) and lowest in manufacturing (41%).

9.5 A Full Results Example

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the main study variables. The mean score for employee motivation was 3.74 (SD = 0.81), indicating a moderately high level of motivation among respondents. Job satisfaction scores were slightly lower, with a mean of 3.52 (SD = 0.94).

As shown in Figure 1, employee motivation increased significantly over the three measurement periods. Scores rose from a mean of 3.2 in Phase 1 to 3.9 in Phase 3, representing an increase of approximately 22%. The correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee motivation ($r = .61$, $p < .01$), suggesting that employees with greater schedule flexibility reported higher motivation levels.

Regarding job satisfaction, 68% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their current work arrangement met their needs, while only 12% expressed dissatisfaction. Younger employees (aged 25–35) reported the highest satisfaction scores, whereas employees in senior roles showed more moderate levels of satisfaction.

9.6 Real Academic References for This Unit

Field, A. (2018). Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Pallant, J. (2020). SPSS survival manual (7th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). Multivariate data analysis (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.

9.7 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Results or Discussion?

Decide whether each sentence belongs in the Results section (R) or the Discussion section (D).

| Sentence | Your Answer |
|--|---------------|
| 1. "The results suggest that leadership training has a strong positive effect on team cohesion." | R or D? _____ |
| 2. "74% of employees reported increased job satisfaction after the new policy was introduced." | R or D? _____ |
| 3. "This finding is consistent with Deci and Ryan's (2000) Self-Determination Theory." | R or D? _____ |
| 4. "The mean score for digital readiness was 3.6 (SD = 0.7)." | R or D? _____ |

Activity 2 – Describe a Trend

Write three academic sentences describing the following data.

Employee motivation scores: 2020 = 55%, 2021 = 62%, 2022 = 71%, 2023 = 79%.

78. Trend

description:

79. Peak

and

direction:

80.Percentage

change:

UNIT 10

Discussion & Argumentation

Interpreting results and building academic arguments

□ Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

81. Explain the purpose of the discussion section in a research paper
82. Move from presenting results to interpreting and explaining them
83. Connect findings to existing literature using evidence and argument
84. Build a logical academic argument using the claim-evidence-explanation structure
85. Acknowledge limitations and alternative explanations

10.1 What Is the Discussion Section?

The discussion section is the intellectual heart of your research paper. Unlike the results section, which simply presents the findings, the discussion section interprets them. It is where you answer the question: What do these findings mean?

The discussion section should:

- Interpret your results in light of your research question
- Connect your findings to the existing literature
- Offer explanations for unexpected or surprising results
- Acknowledge the limitations of your study honestly
- Build an argument about the significance and implications of your findings

10.2 The Structure of an Argument

Academic argumentation follows a logical structure. The most widely used model in academic writing is the Claim – Evidence – Explanation (CEE) structure.

| Element | Function | Example |
|-------------|---|---|
| Claim | Your main point or interpretation | These findings suggest that flexible work arrangements enhance employee motivation. |
| Evidence | The data or results that support your claim | Motivation scores increased by 27% among employees with flexible schedules. |
| Explanation | Why the evidence supports the claim; link to literature | This may reflect the principles of Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which proposes that autonomy is a fundamental driver of intrinsic motivation. |

The discussion section typically consists of several paragraphs, each organised around one central claim. You present the claim, support it with your evidence, explain it, and connect it to the literature.

10.3 Language for the Discussion Section

Interpreting Results

- These findings suggest that...
- This result indicates that...
- The data imply that...
- One interpretation of these findings is that...
- It appears that...

Connecting to Literature

- This finding is consistent with the work of [Author] (Year), who...
- These results corroborate / support / confirm the findings of...
- In contrast to [Author] (Year), this study suggests that...
- This result extends the conclusions of [Author] by demonstrating that...

- Previous research (Author, Year) proposed that...; the present study provides further evidence.

Explaining Unexpected Results

- One possible explanation for this unexpected finding is...
- This result may reflect the specific characteristics of the sample, namely...
- It is possible that contextual factors, such as..., contributed to this outcome.
- The difference between these findings and those of [Author] may be attributable to...

Acknowledging Limitations

- This study is not without limitations. Firstly...
- The generalisability of these findings is limited by the relatively small sample size.
- As the data were collected at a single point in time, causal conclusions cannot be drawn.
- Future research should address these limitations by...

10.4 A Full Discussion Example

The findings of this study suggest that flexible work arrangements have a significant positive impact on employee motivation in the Algerian service sector. This result is consistent with the predictions of Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which proposes that autonomy — the sense of having control over one's own work — is a fundamental driver of intrinsic motivation. Employees with greater schedule flexibility reported motivation scores 27% higher than those in traditional fixed-hour arrangements, providing empirical support for this theoretical prediction.

This finding also aligns with the results reported by Allen et al. (2013), who found that flexible work policies were associated with higher levels of job satisfaction and lower turnover intention in a North American context. The present study extends this evidence base to the Algerian organisational context,

where, as Benali (2021) notes, employees have traditionally operated within more hierarchical and rigid work structures.

However, these findings should be interpreted with caution. The use of convenience sampling limits the representativeness of the results, and as all data were self-reported, social desirability bias may have influenced participant responses. It is also possible that variables not included in this study — such as managerial support or team dynamics — contribute to the observed motivation differences.

Future research should investigate these relationships using longitudinal designs and larger, more representative samples.

10.5 Real Academic References for This Unit

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The 'what' and 'why' of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. Psychological Inquiry, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Allen, T. D., Johnson, R. C., Kiburz, K. M., & Shockley, K. M. (2013). Work–family conflict and flexible work arrangements. Personnel Psychology, 66(2), 345–376. <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12012>

Toulmin, S. E. (2003). The uses of argument (updated ed.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511840005>

10.6 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Build the Argument

Use the CEE structure to write a discussion paragraph based on the following finding.

Finding: Employee satisfaction increased from 48% to 79% following the

introduction of a new performance recognition programme.

Claim:

Evidence:

Explanation and Link to Literature:

Activity 2 – Write Your Own Discussion Paragraph

Using one of your key findings from your own research topic, write a complete discussion paragraph (150–200 words). Include a claim, evidence, explanation, link to at least one source, and one limitation.

Your discussion paragraph:

UNIT 11**Writing Conclusions & Recommendations***Ending your research paper with clarity and purpose***□ Learning Objectives***By the end of this unit, you will be able to:*

- 86. Explain the structure and purpose of a conclusion section
- 87. Summarise key findings without simply repeating the discussion
- 88. Answer the research question clearly in the conclusion
- 89. Write effective, specific, and realistic recommendations
- 90. Suggest directions for future research in academic language

11.1 What Is a Conclusion?

The conclusion is the final section of your research paper. Its job is to close the paper in a clear, satisfying, and academically rigorous way. A good conclusion does not simply repeat what you have already written — it synthesises the key findings, answers the research question directly, and communicates the significance of the study.

Many students make the mistake of either being too brief in the conclusion (just two or three vague sentences) or too long (simply repeating the discussion section). The conclusion should be concise but complete — it typically represents about 5–8% of the total paper length.

11.2 The Four-Part Structure of a Conclusion

| Part | Function | Content |
|--------|-------------------------|---|
| Part 1 | Summary of Key Findings | Briefly restate the most important findings of the study. |
| Part | Answer to Research | Directly answer the question you posed in the |

| | | |
|--------|---------------------------------|---|
| 2 | Question | introduction. |
| Part 3 | Implications and Contributions | Explain why the findings matter: theoretical and/or practical implications. |
| Part 4 | Limitations and Future Research | Acknowledge limitations and suggest directions for further study. |

11.3 Language for Writing Conclusions

Summarising Findings

- This study investigated / examined / explored...
- The findings indicate that...
- Overall, the results suggest that...
- The key finding of this research is that...
- In summary, this study has demonstrated that...

Answering the Research Question

- In response to the research question, this study concludes that...
- The evidence presented in this paper suggests that...
- Based on the findings, it can be concluded that...
- This research demonstrates that [research question] can be answered affirmatively / partially...

Stating Implications

- These findings have important implications for...
- The results contribute to the literature by...
- From a practical perspective, these findings suggest that...
- This research adds to our understanding of...

Acknowledging Limitations

- This study has several limitations that should be noted.

- The findings are limited to the specific context of...
- As a cross-sectional study, causal conclusions cannot be drawn.

Recommending Future Research

- Future research should investigate...
- Subsequent studies could explore...
- A longitudinal study would provide valuable insights into...
- Future work might address these limitations by...

11.4 Writing Practical Recommendations

Recommendations are practical suggestions that follow from your research findings. They are addressed to a specific audience — managers, policymakers, practitioners — and they should be specific, realistic, and directly linked to your results.

Weak recommendations are vague and could apply to any study. Strong recommendations are specific and grounded in your data.

| Type | Example |
|-------------------|---|
| Weak (Vague) | Companies should improve their management practices. |
| Strong (Specific) | Companies should invest in flexible scheduling systems that allow employees to choose their working hours within core business periods, based on the positive correlation identified in this study between schedule flexibility and motivation ($r = .61$, $p < .01$). |
| Weak (Vague) | Managers need to be better at communication. |
| Strong (Specific) | Training programmes in active listening and transparent communication should be implemented for middle managers, particularly in organisations undergoing digital transformation, given that |

communication was identified as a key moderator of change acceptance in this study.

11.5 A Full Conclusion Example

This study investigated the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee motivation in five Algerian service-sector companies. The findings consistently indicate that employees with access to flexible scheduling reported significantly higher levels of intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction than their counterparts in fixed-hour arrangements. In response to the research question — Do flexible work arrangements influence employee motivation in Algerian service companies? — this study concludes that a significant positive relationship exists, supporting the theoretical predictions of Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

These findings make both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, they extend the application of Self-Determination Theory to an underrepresented organisational context: the Algerian service sector. Practically, they suggest that flexible work policies can serve as a low-cost and effective strategy for improving employee motivation without the need for substantial financial investment.

This study is not without limitations. The use of convenience sampling restricts the generalisability of the findings, and the cross-sectional design prevents the establishment of causal relationships. Future research should adopt longitudinal designs and investigate whether the benefits of flexibility are consistent across different sectors, organisational sizes, and demographic groups.

Based on the findings, three recommendations are offered: (1) Organisations should pilot flexible scheduling in departments with high levels of task independence. (2) Human resources managers should include employee input in the design of work arrangement policies. (3) Policymakers should consider developing national guidelines that encourage flexible work adoption in both public and private sectors.

11.6 Real Academic References for This Unit

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The 'what' and 'why' of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. Psychological Inquiry, 11(4), 227–268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Murray, R. (2017). How to write a thesis (4th ed.). Open University Press.

Rudestam, K. E., & Newton, R. R. (2015). Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

11.7 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Spot the Problem

Read the following conclusion and identify two problems with it.

"In conclusion, this study looked at digital marketing in Algerian companies. We found that digital marketing is important. Companies should use digital marketing more. In this study, we used a questionnaire and we found a lot of results. The literature review showed many things about digital marketing."

91.Problem 1:

—

92.Problem 2:

—

Activity 2 – Write Your Conclusion

96. _____

97. Recommendation 3:

98. _____

UNIT 12**Academic Editing & Proofreading***Polishing your writing to professional standard***□ Learning Objectives***By the end of this unit, you will be able to:*

- 99. Understand the difference between editing and proofreading
- 100. Apply a systematic checklist to revise academic writing
- 101. Identify and correct the most common errors in non-native academic writing
- 102. Improve sentence structure, coherence, and flow
- 103. Develop a personal editing strategy for thesis writing

12.1 Why Editing Matters

Even experienced researchers do not write perfect academic prose on their first attempt. Writing is a process, not a single act. The first draft of any section is a starting point, not a finished product. Editing and proofreading are the stages where good writing becomes excellent writing.

Editing refers to making substantial changes to content, structure, and argument. Proofreading refers to checking for surface-level errors: spelling, grammar, punctuation, and formatting. Both are essential, and they should be done in sequence — always edit for content before proofreading for language.

12.2 The Three Levels of Revision

| Level | What to Check | How to Do It |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Level 1: Content | Is the argument clear? Is each claim supported by evidence? Is the structure logical? | Read the whole section; check the logic of the argument. |

| | | |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Level 2: Language | Are sentences clear and formal? Are there informal words? Is vocabulary precise? | Read sentence by sentence; replace informal or vague language. |
| Level 3: Errors | Are there spelling mistakes? Subject-verb agreement? Tense consistency? Punctuation? | Read aloud; use spell-check; look for recurring error patterns. |

12.3 The Most Common Errors in Non-Native Academic Writing

Based on research by Bitchener and Knoch (2010) and common patterns observed in student writing, the following are the most frequent errors made by non-native English speaking students in academic writing:

| Error Type | Description and Example |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. Contractions | Writing 'can't' instead of 'cannot'; 'it's' instead of 'it is'. |
| 2. Informal vocabulary | Using 'a lot of', 'really', 'stuff', 'very big', etc. |
| 3. Missing articles | Writing 'The study examines impact of...' instead of '...the impact of...' |
| 4. Wrong verb tense | Mixing present and past tenses within the same paragraph. |
| 5. Subject-verb agreement | Writing 'The results shows...' instead of 'The results show...' |
| 6. Missing hedging | Making absolute claims without cautious language. |
| 7. Missing citations | Making research claims without attributing them to a source. |
| 8. Run-on sentences | Connecting many ideas with 'and' or commas without proper punctuation. |
| 9. Incorrect prepositions | Writing 'impact on' vs 'impact of'; 'related with' vs 'related to'. |
| 10. Wrong word form | Writing 'analyse' (verb) when 'analysis' (noun) is |

needed.

12.4 The Academic Editing Checklist

Use this checklist every time you revise an academic paragraph or section. Work through it systematically.

CONTENT

- Is there one clear main idea per paragraph?
- Is every claim supported by evidence or a citation?
- Is the argument logical and easy to follow?
- Does each sentence connect clearly to the one before it?

LANGUAGE & STYLE

- Have I replaced all informal words and phrases?
- Have I removed all contractions?
- Have I used hedging language where needed?
- Are all key terms defined the first time they appear?
- Is the vocabulary varied (not the same words repeated)?

GRAMMAR

- Do all subjects agree with their verbs?
- Are articles (the / a / an) used correctly?
- Are verb tenses consistent within each section?
- Are prepositions correct?

CITATIONS

- Is every claim that comes from a source properly cited?
- Are in-text citations in APA 7th edition format?
- Does every in-text citation have a corresponding entry in the reference list?

12.5 Before and After: Editing in Action

Unedited Draft

BEFORE EDITING:

I think digital marketing is really important for companies now. A lot of businesses use social media and it's very good for them. There are a lot of problems with old marketing ways. Companies should use digital marketing more because it's better.

Edited Version

AFTER EDITING:

Digital marketing has emerged as a critical driver of organisational competitiveness in recent years (Smith, 2020). Social media platforms, in particular, have demonstrated significant potential for enhancing brand awareness and customer engagement (Johnson, 2021). Traditional marketing approaches, however, may struggle to reach increasingly digital-native consumer segments. The evidence suggests that companies adopting integrated digital marketing strategies are likely to achieve more sustainable competitive advantages (Chen, 2022).

12.6 Real Academic References for This Unit

Bitchener, J., & Knoch, U. (2010). The contribution of written corrective feedback to language development: A ten-month investigation. Applied Linguistics, 31(2), 193–214. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amp016>

Murray, R. (2017). How to write a thesis (4th ed.). Open University Press.

Sword, H. (2012). Stylish academic writing. Harvard University Press.

12.7 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Edit This Paragraph

Find and correct at least eight errors in the following paragraph. Write the corrected version below.

"We think that the digital transformation is very important for Algerian companies. A lot of companies don't have the skills for this. The results shows that training is needed. It's clear that managers should do more. There are many studies that talks about this problem but they don't give good answers for small businesses."

Your corrected version:

Activity 2 – Peer Editing

Exchange your Unit 11 conclusion paragraph with a classmate. Using the editing checklist in Section 12.4, provide three specific, constructive comments on your classmate's writing. Then revise your own conclusion based on their feedback.

UNIT 13

Academic Email & Professional Communication

Communicating professionally in English

□ Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

104. Write professional academic emails in English following standard conventions
105. Use appropriate levels of formality in different professional contexts
106. Address professors, supervisors, and colleagues professionally
107. Write a clear and well-structured professional email
108. Understand common conventions of professional academic communication

13.1 Why Professional Communication Matters

As a Master's student in Business Administration, you will need to communicate in English in professional and academic contexts: writing to your thesis supervisor, emailing a company for interview access, contacting researchers, or communicating with international partners. The way you write in these situations represents you professionally and academically.

Locker and Kienzler (2013) note that professional communication is not just about transmitting information — it is about building relationships, establishing credibility, and projecting a professional identity. An email with informal language, spelling errors, or an inappropriate tone can damage your professional reputation, even before you have met someone in person.

13.2 The Structure of a Professional Email

| Element | Guidance |
|---------|----------|
|---------|----------|

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Subject Line | Clear and specific: 'Request for Research Interview – Master's Thesis on Digital Transformation' |
| Salutation | Dear Professor [Name], / Dear Dr. [Name], / Dear Mr./Ms. [Name], |
| Opening | State your identity and the purpose of the email immediately. |
| Body | Provide necessary context. Be concise — one topic per paragraph. |
| Closing | Express thanks, indicate next steps, or invite a response. |
| Sign-off | Yours sincerely, / Kind regards, / Best regards, + full name and institution |

13.3 Levels of Formality

Not all professional emails require the same level of formality. However, as a student writing to professors or research contacts, always err on the side of formality until the relationship becomes more informal.

| Level | When to Use | Examples |
|-------------|--|--|
| Very formal | First contact with a senior professor or external researcher | Dear Professor Johnson, / Yours sincerely, |
| Formal | Supervisor or lecturer you know | Dear Dr. Smith, / Kind regards, |
| Semi-formal | Classmate or peer you know professionally | Hi [Name], / Best, |

13.4 Common Email Types for Master's Students

1. Requesting a Research Interview

Subject: Request for Interview – Research on Digital Transformation in Algerian SMEs

Dear Mr. Benali,

My name is [Your Name], and I am a first-year Master's student in Business Administration at [Your University]. I am currently conducting research on digital transformation in Algerian small and medium enterprises as part of my thesis.

I would be very grateful if you would be willing to participate in a brief interview (approximately 30 minutes) to share your experience and perspectives on this topic. The interview would be conducted at a time that is convenient for you, either in person or via video call.

I can be reached at [your email address] if you require further information. Thank you very much for considering this request.

Yours sincerely,

[Full Name]

Master 1, Business Administration

[University Name]

2. Requesting Guidance from Your Supervisor

Subject: Request for Feedback on Literature Review Draft

Dear Dr. [Name],

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to request your feedback on the draft literature review I have attached to this email. I have followed the structure we discussed in our last meeting and have incorporated the sources you recommended.

If possible, I would appreciate your comments before our next scheduled meeting on [date]. I am particularly interested in your view on whether the critical analysis in Section 2.3 is sufficiently developed.

Thank you for your time and guidance.

Kind regards,

[Full Name]

13.5 Common Mistakes in Professional Emails

△ Common Mistake

Using informal language: 'Hey!', 'Just wanted to check...'

No subject line or a vague one: 'Hi' / 'Question'

Writing very long paragraphs with multiple topics

Forgetting to attach the attachment you mentioned

Using the wrong title (Professor vs Dr.)

Being too demanding: 'Please reply ASAP.'

Being too apologetic: 'I am so sorry to disturb you, I know you are very busy...' (one brief apology is enough)

13.6 Real Academic References for This Unit

Locker, K. O., & Kienzler, D. S. (2013). Business and administrative communication (10th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Guffey, M. E., & Loewy, D. (2018). Business English (12th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (2011). Navigating academia: Writing supporting genres. University of Michigan Press.

13.7 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Spot the Errors

Read the following email and identify five problems.

"Hey!! I am a student and I need you to do an interview with me for my thesis. It wont take long. Please say yes asap because I have a deadline. Send me ur schedule. thanks"

109. Problem 1:

–

110. Problem 2:

–

111. Problem 3:

–

112. Problem 4:

–

113. Problem 5:

–

Activity 2 – Write a Professional Email

Write a professional email to a company manager requesting permission to conduct a survey for your Master's research. Include all elements from Section 13.2 and maintain an appropriate level of formality.

Subject:

Dear _____,

[Your email:]

Yours sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your University]

UNIT 14**Research Presentation Skills***Presenting your research confidently in academic English***□ Learning Objectives***By the end of this unit, you will be able to:*

- 114. Structure a research presentation following academic conventions
- 115. Use appropriate spoken academic English for different sections
- 116. Design clear and effective presentation slides
- 117. Handle questions from the audience professionally
- 118. Manage nervousness and deliver with confidence

14.1 Why Research Presentations Matter

The ability to present research orally is as important as the ability to write about it. As a Master's student, you will need to defend your thesis in front of an academic jury, present findings in seminars, and communicate research to professional audiences. Being able to do this confidently and clearly in English is a valuable and marketable skill.

A research presentation is not simply a spoken version of your written paper. It is a structured, condensed, and engaging communication designed for a specific audience. The language you use, the pace of delivery, and the visual support you provide all contribute to the quality of the presentation.

14.2 The Standard Structure of a Research Presentation

A typical academic research presentation of 10–15 minutes follows this structure:

| Section | Content and Time |
|-------------------|--|
| Opening (1–2 min) | Greet the audience, introduce yourself, state your |

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | topic and its relevance. |
| Introduction (1–2 min) | Explain the research problem, the gap, and the research question. |
| Literature Review (2–3 min) | Summarise key theories and previous research (2–3 main points only). |
| Methodology (1–2 min) | Briefly explain how data were collected and analysed. |
| Results (2–3 min) | Present 2–3 key findings, using visuals (charts, graphs, tables). |
| Discussion (1–2 min) | Interpret findings, connect to literature, note limitations. |
| Conclusion (1 min) | Summarise findings, state contributions, offer 2–3 recommendations. |
| Q&A | Answer questions from the audience professionally. |

14.3 Language for Spoken Academic Presentations

Spoken academic English is slightly less formal than written academic English, but it still needs to be clear, structured, and professional. Here are the key phrases for each part of the presentation.

Opening

- Good morning / afternoon, everyone. My name is [Name], and I am a Master's student at [University].
- Today, I would like to present my research on...
- My presentation will take approximately [X] minutes, after which I will be happy to take your questions.

Signposting (Moving Between Sections)

Signposting means telling the audience when you are moving from one section to the next. It helps them follow your structure.

- I would like to begin with a brief overview of the research problem...
- Moving on to the methodology...
- I would now like to present the key findings...
- Turning to the discussion...
- In conclusion...

Referring to Slides and Visuals

- As you can see in this chart / graph / table...
- This slide illustrates...
- Looking at Figure 1...
- The data shown here indicate that...

Handling Questions

- Thank you for that question.
- That is an interesting point. The data suggest that...
- I am not certain about that, but based on the findings...
- That is beyond the scope of this study, but future research could...
- Could you clarify your question, please?

14.4 Designing Effective Slides

Your slides are a visual support for your presentation — not a script to read from. The following principles should guide your slide design.

| Principle | Reason |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Maximum 6 lines of text per slide | Slides with too much text force the audience to read instead of listen. |
| One idea per slide | Each slide should communicate one clear message. |
| Use visuals for data | Present numbers as charts or graphs whenever possible. |
| Use bullet points, not | Slides are not academic essays — they are visual |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| paragraphs | aids. |
| Consistent font and colour scheme | Use professional, readable fonts (not decorative ones). |
| Include slide numbers | So the audience can refer back to a specific slide in Q&A. |

14.5 Managing Nervousness

Almost everyone feels nervous before a presentation. This is completely normal. Research by Daly et al. (1997) shows that communication apprehension is one of the most common anxieties in academic and professional life. The good news is that it can be managed effectively.

- Practise your presentation at least three times, ideally in front of a friend or recorded on your phone.
- Know the first three sentences of your presentation by heart — a strong opening builds confidence.
- Breathe deeply before you start; speak more slowly than feels natural.
- Maintain eye contact with different parts of the audience.
- Remember that the audience is on your side — they want you to succeed.
- If you make a mistake, acknowledge it briefly and continue — do not apologise excessively.

14.6 A Sample Presentation Script (Opening)

"Good morning, everyone. My name is [Name], and I am a first-year Master's student in Business Administration at [University]. Today, I would like to present the findings of my research, which investigates the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee motivation in Algerian service-sector companies.

My presentation will take approximately twelve minutes, after which I will be happy to take your questions. I have divided the presentation into five sections:

first, I will briefly outline the research problem and question; then I will summarise the methodology; following that, I will present the key findings; I will then discuss their implications; and I will close with conclusions and recommendations."

14.7 Real Academic References for This Unit

Daly, J. A., Vangelisti, A. L., & Weber, D. J. (1995). Speech anxiety affects how people prepare speeches: A protocol analysis of the preparation process of speakers. Communication Monographs, 62(4), 383–397. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03637759509376368>

Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (2012). Academic writing for graduate students (3rd ed.). University of Michigan Press.

Lebrun, J. L. (2010). When the scientist presents: An audio and video guide to science talks. World Scientific. <https://doi.org/10.1142/7590>

14.8 Practice Activities

Activity 1 – Create Your Presentation Outline

Fill in the outline below for a 12-minute presentation of your own research topic.

| Section | Your Notes |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Opening (1 min): | Topic + structure: _____ |
| Introduction (2 min): | Problem + gap + question: _____ |
| Literature (2 min): | Two key theories or authors: _____ |
| Methodology (1 min): | Approach + sample + method: _____ |

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Results (3 min): | Three key findings: _____ |
| Discussion (2 min): | Interpretation + link to literature: _____ |
| Conclusion (1 min): | Summary + recommendations: _____ |

Activity 2 – Practise the Opening

Write out the opening paragraph of your presentation (approximately 100 words). Then practise delivering it aloud, timing yourself. Aim for a natural, confident delivery at a pace of approximately 120 words per minute.

Your opening:

Appendices

Appendix A – APA 7th Edition Quick Reference

This appendix provides a quick reference for the most common APA 7th edition citation formats used in business and management research.

In-Text Citation Formats

| Situation | Format |
|-----------------------|---|
| One author | Smith (2020) or (Smith, 2020) |
| Two authors | Smith and Jones (2020) or (Smith & Jones, 2020) |
| Three or more authors | Smith et al. (2020) or (Smith et al., 2020) |
| Direct quotation | (Smith, 2020, p. 45) — page number required |
| Organisation | (World Bank, 2022) or World Bank (2022) |
| No date | (Smith, n.d.) |

Reference List Formats

Journal Article:

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Title of article. Name of Journal, Volume(Issue), Pages. <https://doi.org/xxxxx>

Book:

Author, A. A. (Year). Title of work (Xth ed.). Publisher.

Chapter in Edited Book:

Author, A. A. (Year). Title of chapter. In E. E. Editor (Ed.), Title of book (pp. xx–xx). Publisher.

Website:

Author, A. A. (Year, Month Day). Title of page. Site Name. URL

Appendix B – Academic Vocabulary Master List

The following vocabulary list covers the most important academic words and phrases covered in this course. Review it regularly and practise using each item in a sentence relevant to your research topic.

Academic Verbs

| Verb | Meaning | Example |
|-------------|-------------------------|--|
| examine | to study carefully | This study examines the impact of leadership on performance. |
| investigate | to research in depth | The research investigates barriers to digital adoption. |
| analyse | to study in detail | The data were analysed using regression. |
| demonstrate | to show with evidence | The findings demonstrate a significant effect. |
| suggest | to indicate (carefully) | The results suggest a positive relationship. |
| argue | to claim with reasoning | Hyland (2005) argues that hedging is essential. |
| identify | to recognise or find | The study identifies three key barriers. |
| address | to deal with / focus on | This paper addresses a significant gap. |
| highlight | to draw attention to | The results highlight the role of culture. |
| assess | to evaluate or measure | The study assesses the impact of training. |
| determine | to establish / find out | The aim was to determine key motivators. |
| evaluate | to judge the quality | This section evaluates the existing |

| | | |
|--|----|-------------|
| | of | frameworks. |
|--|----|-------------|

Linking Words Reference

| Function | Words | When to Use |
|-------------|--|---|
| Adding | furthermore, moreover, in addition, also | Adding information or evidence |
| Contrasting | however, whereas, in contrast, nevertheless | Showing difference or opposition |
| Cause | therefore, as a result, consequently, hence | Showing cause and effect |
| Example | for example, for instance, such as, specifically | Giving examples |
| Concession | although, despite, even though, while | Admitting a point while arguing another |
| Summary | in conclusion, in summary, overall, to summarise | Ending a section or argument |
| Comparison | similarly, likewise, in the same way | Showing similarity |

Appendix C – Hedging Language Reference

Use this table to find appropriate hedging language for different purposes in academic writing.

| Purpose | Hedging Expressions |
|------------------------|---|
| Expressing possibility | may / might / could / it is possible that / it seems that |
| Expressing probability | is likely to / appears to / tends to / generally |
| Qualifying claims | in many cases / under certain conditions / to some extent |
| Limiting scope | in the context of this study / based on the data |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| | collected |
| Acknowledging uncertainty | it is not clear whether / further research is needed to... |

Appendix D – Full Course Reference List

The following is a complete list of all real academic sources cited in this course book, presented in APA 7th edition format. These sources represent high-quality, peer-reviewed publications in the fields of academic writing, business research methods, and management.

Allen, T. D., Johnson, R. C., Kiburz, K. M., & Shockley, K. M. (2013). *Work–family conflict and flexible work arrangements: Deconstructing flexibility*. *Personnel Psychology*, 66(2), 345–376. <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12012>

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Bharadwaj, A., El Sawy, O. A., Pavlou, P. A., & Venkatraman, N. (2013). *Digital business strategy: Toward a next generation of insights*. *MIS Quarterly*, 37(2), 471–482. <https://doi.org/10.25300/MISQ/2013/37:2.3>

Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., & Finegan, E. (1999). *Longman grammar of spoken and written English*. Pearson.

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Course Description

This course helps Master 1 students in Business Administration to read, write, and present academic research in English. Academic writing in English follows specific rules that are different from general writing or spoken communication. By learning these rules, students can produce high-quality research papers, literature reviews, and thesis sections that meet international university standards.

The course covers all major components of a research paper: the introduction, the literature review, the methodology section, the results, the discussion, and the conclusion. It also addresses important academic skills such as paraphrasing, avoiding plagiarism, writing recommendations, and presenting research orally.

Who Is This Course For?

This course is designed for students who:

- Are enrolled in Master 1–Business Administration or Management
- Have a weak to intermediate level of English proficiency
- Need to write a Master's thesis or research paper in English
- Have limited prior experience with academic writing conventions

No prior knowledge of academic writing is assumed. The course begins from the very beginning and progresses steadily to more advanced skills.

