

# Welcome to ICON College: Student Induction

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## Get to know one another

- *You do not study alone, you are part of class. Even though your work is independent, your peers can help you think through ideas and support your learning journey.*
- **Spend 5 mins talking to your neighbour or group and say:**
  - **Who you are.**
  - **What you are studying.**
  - **What you hope to achieve from your study.**
  - **We will discuss as a whole class.**

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## Academic expectations of HND study

- [Level 4 and Level 5 study.](#)
- **Study at higher education level requires you to:**
- ***Read extensively and critically in your subject.***
- ***Think critically about the themes and issues raised in your subject.***
- ***Engage in assignments that measure your subject knowledge and application of it in written and/or verbal form.***

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## BTEC HND: Skills

- **BTEC Higher Nationals provide a vocational context in which students can develop the knowledge and academic study skills required for progression to university degree courses, including:**
- **Active research skills.**
- **Effective writing skills.**
- **Analytical skills.**
- **Critical thinking.**
- **Creative problem-solving.**

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## Research Skills

- **Consult** resources, formulate qualitative & quantitative data, analyse data collection.
- **Critical engagement** with subject that produces innovative ideas.
- **Reading** a wide variety of journals, articles, texts and other materials.
- **Produce** subject models.
- **Application** of subject theories and models.

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## Critical Thinking

- **Critical thinking** requires you to approach your subject with a **critical academic mind**.
- The more you **read** and **have discussions** about the **issues your subject raises**, the more you will be able to think using a critical approach.
- E.g. if we look at the statement: *All people found with knives should be jailed.*
- A sociologist would look at the statement and might ask: What social problems are causing an increase in knife crime?
- In brief, the sociologist has taken a critical approach to understand how the opinion was formed.
- Critical thinking scenarios.

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## Creative Problem- Solving

- **Creative problem- solving** is very much what it says.
- You approach problems in **new ways** using **your creative mind**.
- For instance, if you're doing a business management assignment and part of your research is to suggest solutions to a given business scenario; you might compare **accepted methods** alongside your **own newly formed approaches**.
- Creative problem-solving encourages new types of thinking and innovation in a discipline.
- Again, your academic teachers will aid in developing subject related creative problem-solving skills.
- Creative problem solving scenarios.

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## Time Management

- **Time management** is crucial to **effective study**.
- Having a **time schedule** allows you to see exactly **what you have to do and when**.
- A time schedule means **tasks and assignments wont pile up**.
- **You'll know**: **when** your work needs to be done by; **what** it involves; have **a clear path** towards your deadline.
- Time management makes you feel **in control** of the demands of study.
- Watch the short video on tips for time management.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ARKQqTtnIQ>

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## Time Management: scenarios.

- Let's say you have 15 hours of study a week. Look at the following scenarios and consider: how you would manage your time?
- 1. A family member is celebrating a Golden Wedding anniversary. You have to travel out of London for the occasion.
- 2. Your child/partner/family member is sick and you have to care for them.
- 3. Your friends ring you in the middle of your study and invite you for a fun packed night.
- 4. You've been working and studying late into the night and early morning. You are exhausted but still have more study to do.
- 5. You are ill and unable to study for 4 days.

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## What are your time commitments?

- Use the table to plan out your current commitments.
- Put in your college hours.
- Add another 15 hours of study to your week.
- Is it enough? Is it too much? What can you manage? How does it match up with the course requirements?
- Although you won't have all the answers now – thinking about time management will make you aware of **your study needs**.

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# Time Management

	6-9	9-12	12-3	3-6	6-9	9-12
Mon						
Tues						
Weds						
Thurs						
Fri						
Sat						
Sun						

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# Your learning journey

- Education is a journey and like any journey: *what you bring influences what you learn.*
- What was your past experience of education? What have you achieved?
- What made you decide to go into higher education?
- What are your aims, hopes and dreams?
- How will the course help achieve your goals?
- What are you most concerned about ?
- Do you feel these things can be overcome?
- Draw a timeline of your proposed learning journey including the obstacles you think you'll face, how you will overcome them and your final goal.

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# Introduction to Academic English

## In this session we will look at:

- *The aims of academic study*
- *Ways of achieving the aims of academic study*
- *The nature of academic writing*
- *The importance of different forms of writing*
- *The different stages of the writing process, and how you can approach them*
- *Identifying and coping with difficulties in academic writing*

## Which of the following are the aims of **your** academic studies?

- To meet intelligent people
- To ensure future job/career prospects
- To discover more about theories and certain known facts
- To discuss philosophy
- To improve cooperation between people
- To enjoy learning
- To develop personal growth
- To contribute to society
- To pass examinations
- To gain a higher-level degree

## What are the differences between 'ordinary/everyday English' and 'Academic English'?

# The Writing Process

1. *Writing is a **recursive** process.* Effective academic writing results from **rewriting and revising** at every stage. A good writer goes back and thinks again before continuing to write. You will be asked to:

- brainstorm ideas (think quickly in order to get ideas for your piece of work)
- organise your ideas into a plan
- produce your first draft
- revise and edit this, considering peer feedback and your own developing ideas
- produce a second draft
- revise and edit your second draft, according to teacher feedback
- produce a final piece of writing

# The Writing Process

2. *It helps to **share and discuss** the writing process with others.*

- Your work can improve if you talk to others about ideas and problems. Another person can have an objective viewpoint, and so make useful suggestions about your writing.
- All writing is aimed at an **audience**: you therefore need to think about how you structure your message in order to communicate your ideas in the clearest way.
- Adapting your writing to different audiences is a key element of academic English.
- You will have the opportunity to discuss your writing with teachers and tutors throughout the course.

# The Writing Process

## 3. A good writer is *critical* of his/her own work.

You should read your work carefully and consider both the strengths and weaknesses of your writing. This can include:

**a) Self evaluation.** To develop your critical ability, you might be asked to consider a series of *evaluation* questions, which you will use to evaluate your own writing.

**b) Peer evaluation.** You may evaluate another student's work (and vice versa), offering suggestions and comments in a constructive way. You should focus on the organisation and overall argument of the text.

# The Writing Process



# Developing critical thinking skills

Academic writing should express critical thinking and reasoning which has been used to develop the main ideas in your work. This is a fundamental skill, and increasingly fundamental to success in higher-level academic study. It involves:

- **Assessing** information in order to show how it relates to an understanding of the *truth* in a particular context.
- **Identifying** problems
- Seeking **solutions** to these problems
- **Evaluating** the solutions
- Assessing the **effects** of those solutions if applied.

Command word	Definition
account (for)	a) account (n.): give an account of/ a brief account of - describe b) account for (v.): account for: give the reasons for
analyse	consider very carefully/examine to find out what something consists of
apply (to)	put something to use; show how something (eg. a theory, data, research) can be used in a particular situation
comment (on)	give your views on something; say what you think about something. Often used with a quotation, with which you should agree or disagree.
compare	describe the aspects of two or more things to show their similarities
contrast	describe the aspects of two or more things to show their differences
consider	describe and say what you think about something
define	give an explanation of the meaning of a term
describe	give an explanation of something in detail (what it is like, how it works, etc.)
discuss	write in detail about all the different aspects of an issue or statement, including reasons for a particular viewpoint (give your own viewpoint or evidence that you have thought about a topic)
evaluate	write about something in detail from the point of view of its strengths and weaknesses, advantages and disadvantages, and importance
explain	write to express the issue or idea clearly; a) explain why - give the reason for, cause of something, b) explain how - describe (a process) clearly
identify	describe items that belong to a particular group/category
illustrate	include many examples
outline	give the main ideas
prove	show that something is true
relate	show the connection between two or more things
summarise	write the main points of a topic
support	give evidence to strengthen your point
state	say clearly

## The microskills of writing

Academic English consists of important specific writing skills (microskills).

These include:

- How to write an effective introduction and conclusion
- How to communicate the main idea of a paragraph to a reader
- How to support your main ideas with examples
- How to express yourself in writing using more complex sentences
- How to write accurately and fluently

You will have the opportunity to develop these skills throughout your course, while expanding your range of vocabulary appropriate to your work

## Writing genres

In academic English, a *genre* is a type of text which has its own set of conventions and style. Understanding how different genres work is key to success in academic writing.

Throughout your course, you will be able to analyse and practice a variety of ways to organise writing. These can include:

- essays of cause and effect
- situation, problem, solution(s), implication(s) and evaluation
- comparison and contrast

**During your course you must be aware of the type of language most appropriate for different purposes. You will be expected to show clear development of a topic through good organization and language use.**

# Reading and Writing

**Academic English consists of a lot of reading as well as writing.**

Research shows very clearly that an integrated approach to these skills provides the most effective route to academic success and the development of critical thinking skills (cf. Carson, *Reading in the Composition Classroom*, 1993).

Some reading skills you will need to employ during your course include:

- **Summarising**
- **Scanning** for specifically required information
- **Skimming** to get an overall impression of the text
- **Note-taking**
- Providing **citations/references** (you will be given specific guidance on this)

## Tracking your progress

My progress in academic writing		Name: _____			
	What I've been taught and can apply in my essays	What I've been taught, but have difficulty in applying in my essays	Overall strengths	Overall weaknesses	My main areas to focus on in the future
<b>Task achievement</b> (relating the essay to the title or topic and overall completion of essay)					
<b>Organisation</b>					
<b>Content</b>					
<b>Language</b>					

## Elements of academic style

Which of the following are typical elements of an academic writing style? Explain your reasoning.

Very long paragraphs

Contractions (don't – can't – isn't' etc.)

Use of first person pronouns ('I', 'We')

One sentence paragraphs

Colloquialisms/slang

Adjectives expressing emotions

## Lexical development and word knowledge

Knowing a word is about more than just its dictionary definition. You also need to know

- Synonyms
- Antonyms
- Word transformation (noun – adjective – verb)
- Derivation/etymology
- L1 translation
- Register

**Look at the following questions, taken from university examination papers.**

- Is it more important to spend money on *preventative healthcare* or *healthcare treatment*?
- How can the travel and tourism industry adapt to environmental concerns?
- Write an essay entitled: 'The implications of Artificial Intelligence for data security.'
- Is e-commerce now the best way for businesses to enter new markets?

**What is each question asking you to do (eg. describe a process, compare two viewpoints etc.)?**

With a partner, decide on one of the questions and **brainstorm** some ideas which would be relevant to that essay. Don't worry if it is not your specialism – just share some thoughts.

