

Contents

Part I Writing Skills

1	Planning and Preparation	3
1.1	Why should I publish? How do I know whether my research is worth publishing?	4
1.2	Should I write the initial draft in my own language rather than writing it directly in English?	5
1.3	Which journal should I choose?	7
1.4	How do I know what style and structure to use?	8
1.5	What preparation do I need to do?	9
1.6	How can I create a template?	10
1.7	Writing style: how do I keep the referees happy?	11
1.8	In what order should I write the various sections?	12
1.9	How can I highlight my key findings?	13
1.10	How can I improve the chances of my paper not only being published, but also being read, understood and cited?	14
1.11	I know that the recommendations in this book about writing simply and clearly will improve the readability of my paper, but my professor	15
1.12	Summary	17
2	Word order and sentence length	19
2.1	Basic word order in English: subject + verb + object + indirect object	20
2.2	Place the subject before the verb	21
2.3	Keep the subject and verb close to each other	22
2.4	Avoid inserting parenthetical information between the subject and the verb	23
2.5	Don't separate the verb from its direct object	24
2.6	Put the direct object before the indirect object	25

2.7	Don't use a pronoun (it, they) before you introduce the noun that the pronoun refers to	25
2.8	Locate not before the main verb, but after auxiliary and modal verbs	26
2.9	Locate negations near the beginning of the sentence.	26
2.10	Deciding where to locate an adverb.	28
2.11	Put adjectives before the noun they describe	28
2.12	Deciding where to put new and old information within a sentence	29
2.13	Analyse why and how long sentences are created	30
2.14	Learn how to break up a long sentence	31
2.15	Summary	35
3	Structuring Paragraphs	37
3.1	Elegance vs Effectiveness	38
3.2	Choose the most relevant subject to put it at the beginning of a sentence that opens a new paragraph	39
3.3	First paragraph of a new section – begin with a mini summary plus an indication of the structure	40
3.4	Deciding where to put new and old information within a paragraph	42
3.5	Link each sentence by moving from general concepts to increasingly more specific concepts	44
3.6	Present and explain ideas in the same (logical) sequence	45
3.7	Break up long paragraphs	46
3.8	How to structure a paragraph: an example.	48
3.9	Summary	50
4	Being Concise and Removing Redundancy	53
4.1	Being concise is not just an option	54
4.2	Write less and you will make fewer mistakes in English, and your key points will be clearer	55
4.3	Cut any unnecessary generic words.	55
4.4	Consider deleting abstract words and phrases	56
4.5	Prefer verbs to nouns	57
4.6	Choose the shortest expressions.	59
4.7	Cut redundant adjectives	60
4.8	Cut pointless introductory phrases and unnecessary link words	61
4.9	Be concise when referring to figures and tables	63
4.10	Consider reducing the length of your paper.	63
4.11	Summary	64
5	Avoiding ambiguity, repetition, and vague language	65
5.1	Use a simple and accessible style	66
5.2	Beware that pronouns are probably the greatest source of ambiguity	68

5.3	Avoid replacing key words with synonyms and clarify ambiguity introduced by generic words.	70
5.4	Restrict the use of synonyms to non-key words.	72
5.5	Be as precise as possible	73
5.6	Choose the least generic word	74
5.7	Use punctuation to show how words and concepts are related to each other.	75
5.8	Defining vs non defining clauses: <i>that</i> vs <i>which</i> / <i>who</i>	76
5.9	Clarifying which noun you are referring to when <i>which</i> , <i>that</i> , <i>who</i> and the <i>-ing</i> form	78
5.10	<i>-ing</i> form vs. subject + verb	79
5.11	Avoiding ambiguity with the <i>-ing</i> form: use <i>by</i> and <i>thus</i>	80
5.12	Uncountable nouns.	82
5.13	Definite and indefinite articles	83
5.14	Referring backwards: the dangers of <i>the former</i> , <i>the latter</i>	84
5.15	Referring backwards and forwards: the dangers of <i>above</i> , <i>below</i> , <i>previously</i> , <i>earlier</i> , <i>later</i>	85
5.16	Use of <i>respectively</i> to disambiguate.	86
5.17	Distinguishing between <i>both ... and</i> , and <i>either ... or</i>	86
5.18	Talking about similarities: <i>as</i> , <i>like</i> , <i>unlike</i>	87
5.19	Differentiating between <i>from</i> and <i>by</i>	88
5.20	Be careful with Latin words.	88
5.21	False friends.	89
5.22	Be careful of typos.	90
5.23	Summary	90
6	Clarifying and Highlighting	93
6.1	Why is it so important highlight and differentiate my findings in relation to the findings of other research groups?	94
6.2	Check your journal's style – first person or passive.	95
6.3	How to form the passive and when to use it	95
6.4	Use the active form when the passive might be ambiguous	96
6.5	Consider starting a new paragraph to distinguish between your work and the literature.	98
6.6	Ensure you use the right tenses to differentiate your work from others, particularly when your journal prohibits the use of <i>we</i>	98
6.7	For journals that allow personal forms, use <i>we</i> to distinguish yourself from other authors	100
6.8	Make good use of references	100
6.9	Avoid long blocks of text.	102
6.10	When you have something really important to say, make your sentences shorter than normal	103
6.11	Other means of attracting the reader's eye and keeping their attention	104

6.12	Show your paper to a non-expert and get them to underline your key findings	106
6.13	Summary	106
7	Discussing your limitations	109
7.1	What are my limitations? Should I mention them?	110
7.2	Recognize the importance of ‘bad data’	111
7.3	How to avoid losing credibility	112
7.4	Be constructive in how you present your limitations.	113
7.5	Clarify exactly what your limitations are.	114
7.6	Anticipate alternative interpretations of your data.	115
7.7	Refer to other authors who experienced similar problems	115
7.8	Tell the reader that with the current state-of-the-art this problem is not solvable	116
7.9	Explain why you did not study certain data.	117
7.10	Don’t end your paper by talking about your limitations	117
7.11	Summary	118
8	Readability	119
8.1	You are responsible for enabling your readers to understand what you have written	120
8.2	Basic rules of readability	121
8.3	Place the various elements in your sentence in the most logical order possible: don’t force the reader to have to change their perspective.	121
8.4	Don’t force readers to hold a lot of preliminary information in their head before giving them the main information	122
8.5	Try to be as concrete as possible as soon as possible	123
8.6	When drawing the reader’s attention to something use the least number of words possible	124
8.7	State your aim before giving the reasons for it	125
8.8	Be as specific as possible.	125
8.9	Avoid creating strings of nouns that describe other nouns	127
8.10	Be careful how you use personal pronouns and avoid stereotyping	128
8.11	Summary	129
9	Chatbots	131
9.1	What are the key things I need to know about chatbots?	133
9.2	What prompts (instructions) can I use to get a chatbot to fulfill my request?	133
9.3	How can I see the changes that the bot has made? What can I learn from the list of changes generated?	134
9.4	What good corrections do chatbots make?	136
9.5	What can’t GPT do? Is it a good idea to pre-edit my original text that I wrote in English?	138

9.6	What kinds of grammar mistakes does a bot currently fail to correct?	139
9.7	What kinds of errors will a bot probably never be able to correct?	140
9.8	What the most dangerous errors that chatbots make when revising a text in English?	141
9.9	What are the dangers of modifying the chatbot's version? Is there a solution?	142
9.10	What decisions do I need to make before rejecting a change made by GPT?	142
9.11	Will a chatbot negatively affect my writing style?	143
9.12	How can I assess whether the bot's version is actually better than my original version?	144
9.13	Using AI to generate a rebuttal letter and other types of email	145
9.14	When not to use a bot to generate / correct an email	146
9.15	How easy is it to tell that a text has been generated by artificial intelligence?	147
9.16	Is using a chatbot an act of plagiarism?	148
9.17	Summary	149
10	Automatic translation	151
10.1	How does this chapter differ from the chapter on translation in the companion volume on <i>Grammar, Usage and Style</i> ?	152
10.2	Should I use machine translation? Which application?	153
10.3	Pre-editing: how to improve the chances of getting an accurate automatic translation.	154
10.4	Grammar and vocabulary areas where MT may be more accurate than you	156
10.5	Typical areas where automatic translators may make mistakes in English if your language is not a major language	158
10.6	Areas where machine translation will not help you even if your language is a major language	160
10.7	The dangers of using machine translation	162
10.8	How can I combine my use of machine translation with a chatbot?	163
10.9	Will I still improve my level of English if I use machine translators and chatbots?	164
10.10	Do NOT use an automatic translator to check your English	166
10.11	A note for EAP teachers	166
10.12	Summary	167