

# COHERENCE: LINKING WORDS AND PHRASES

To make your work more readable and meaningful, ideas and paragraphs must be **linked**. Linking words are essential in developing coherent logical arguments and discussion in your assignments. They show the relationships between the ideas and are the glue that holds your assignment together. The table below provides an overview of commonly-used linking words.

<b>List/Sequence words:</b> orders the information in a sequence first, firstly, the first ... second, secondly, the second third, etc next, last the next, the last finally in addition moreover furthermore also one ... (reason / problem / factor)	<b>Effect /Results:</b> something brought about by a cause so as a result as a consequence therefore thus consequently hence due to as a result of as a consequence of result in	<b>Emphasis:</b> special importance or significance undoubtedly indeed obviously generally admittedly in theory in fact particularly especially clearly
<b>Addition:</b> adds to what was previously stated in addition furthermore also and as well as	<b>Cause / Reason:</b> responsible for an action or result for because since as because of to cause the cause of the reason for	<b>Elaboration / Qualification</b> frequently occasionally usually especially in fact in particular actually specifically
<b>Conclusion / Summary:</b> generalising or summing up in conclusion to summarise in brief in conclusion in short in general	<b>Restatement / Explanation:</b> referring back in fact indeed that is in other words	<b>Alternative:</b> otherwise ... or if unless
<b>Concede a point:</b> indicates a surprising statement in view of previous comments it is true that of course no doubt	<b>Build towards climax:</b> more / most importantly more / most significantly above all primarily essentially	<b>Narrow the Focus:</b> specifically more to the point looking more closely at

<b>Comparison:</b> indicates the similar relationship between things similarly likewise also too as and just like similar to the same as not only...but also compared to/with	<b>Contrast:</b> indicates the different relationship between things however nevertheless although (even) though but yet in contrast in comparison whereas on the other hand on the contrary despite	<b>Example:</b> illustrating the point for example for instance that is such as including to illustrate namely
<b>Time – Moving Forward:</b> then later next after that finally at long last in time eventually subsequently	<b>Time – Moving Backward:</b> previously earlier before that prior to that formerly initially ... but now	<b>Time – Simultaneous</b> meanwhile in the meantime simultaneously at the same time at that moment

## Other ways of ensuring coherence

1. **Use internal referent words (or pronouns):** These words refer back to something that has been mentioned already. They are used to link ideas, to repeat the reference, to avoid an unclear reference, to avoid unnecessary repetition of subject/object

this / that  
these / those

the ... (noun phrase)  
her / his / its

it / they/ them  
its / their

**N.B.** Be careful that the reader can clearly understand what they refer to.

2. **Repeat phrases and key words:** Repeating an idea will help your reader stay focussed on your writing.

3. **Reporting Words:** These words are useful for integrating references into your writing.

**Note:** Usually these words are used in the **present tense** because the **publication still exists**

address(es)  
suggest(s) (that)  
argue(s) (that)  
according (to)  
found (that)  
outline(s)

focus(es) (on)  
define(s)  
conclude(s) (that)  
state(s) (that)  
maintain(s) (that)  
mention(s) (that)

promote(s)  
establish(ed)  
assert(s) (that)  
claim(s) (that)  
report(s) (that)