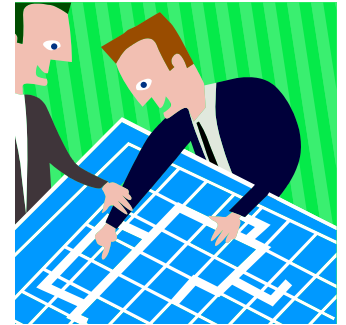




INFO5990 Professional Practice in IT

Lecture 04A



Writing to convince and persuade
For IT Professionals

Your writing assignment



In Class completion for those who have not

The screenshot displays a web browser window with the URL https://elearning.sydney.edu.au/webapps/blackboard/content/listContentEditable.jsp?content_id=_3621093_1&course_id=_60406_1&mode=reset. The page header includes the University of Sydney logo and navigation links: My Units of Study, eCommunities, Staff, and SEAMS. The main content area is titled 'Mid-Semester Survey' and features a sub-header with tabs for Build Content, Assessments, Tools, and Partner Content. A document icon precedes the title 'Mid-semester Survey'. The announcement text states: 'Availability: Item is not available. It will be available after 15/08/2016 1:30 AM. You are required to complete this survey during Week 4 and 5 by the deadline of 5pm Friday 26th August 2016 (Please do not use word document to copy and paste when answering these questions.)'. The left sidebar contains a yellow navigation menu with links for 2016 Semester 2 - INFO5990 Professional Practice in IT (Normal (lecture/lab/tutorial) evening), Mid-Semester Survey, Notifications, Unit of Study Content, Info5990 Readings, Quizzes, Assignments, Web Links, Announcements, Groups, Chat, Discussions, Mail, My Grades, and Lecture Recordings. Below this is a 'UNIT OF STUDY MANAGEMENT' section with a 'Control Panel' containing links for Files, Unit of Study Tools, Evaluation, Grade Centre, and Users and Groups. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the system clock as 9:41 AM on 13/08/2016.

Reminder

Quiz 1

- 60 minutes / 10 marks
- 25 questions – pace your self
- Open book / use your slides, only 1st 4 weeks lectures
- 1 attempt to answer questions – otherwise it is too easy
- Random questions – cant copy your mates answer !
- Closes 21st August 2016
- **Make sure you complete in 1 GO – STRICTLY NO REPEATS**
- **Answers will be given to you on the 21st August 11pm**



41 slides common sense coming up !

By the end of this lecture you will be able to:

- Appreciate the value of good writing
- Understand some of the basics of good writing
- Recognise correct paragraph structure
- Avoid common pitfalls in writing
- Find the Learning Centre resources which can help you with writing skills
- Get started on your writing assignment

Importance of Communicating

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kifvarhspIw>



Good writing skills are **essential** for professionals in IT

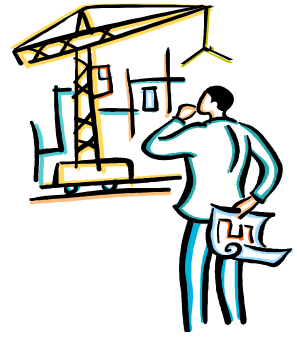
Writing is part of being a professional

- project proposals,
- requests for funding,
- progress reports,
- user documentation,
- legal procedures,
- job applications,
- requests for promotion





Poor writing can hurt you!



- Your message may be misunderstood
- A badly written report won't convince its audience and will be rejected or ignored
- If your application, request or proposal is poorly expressed it won't succeed



Question 1

Why is being able to write well so important for a professional in IT?

- (A) Professionals like to write books
- (B) Writing well enhances professional skills
- (C) Writing well helps when trying to get funding
- (D) Writing well helps when applying for a new job
- (E) BOTH (C) and (D)



Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Score / 6
A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	

Two things that help make writing clear

<http://sydney.edu.au/library/skills/>

Structure

the organization of ideas



Cohesion

the presence of a clear and logical flow of ideas



Characteristics of professional writing

- Clarity
 - Clear structure. Logical argument
 - Simple but complete explanations
- Precision
 - No ambiguity or confusion
 - Uses words with precise meaning
- Objectivity
 - Statements supported by evidence
 - Avoids exaggeration or emotive statements
- Brevity
 - Effective and efficient
 - Avoids being 'longwinded', stating the obvious



$$E = mc^2$$



Examples in industry ?

Communication of wider issues ?

Presenting written documentation for project progress ?



Structuring each paragraph

Topic sentence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● State the main idea/point● Preview kinds of information● Link back
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Elaborate the idea or point: evidence, analysis, persuasion, qualification, quantification
Concluding sentence [optional]	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Round off,● Qualify,● Link to next paragraph

Topic Sentences

“There is no form of prose more difficult to understand and more tedious to read than the average scientific paper,” wrote Francis Crick in his 1994 book *The Astonishing Hypothesis*. The observation is a caution to lay readers tempted to delve into the papers referenced in the book. But the co-discoverer of the structure of DNA was also acknowledging what everyone in science knows: research papers can be a nightmare to read.


It wasn't always so. Crick and others of his generation writing scientific papers in the 1940s, have witnessed a transformation of scientific prose. A form that was as clear as the average newspaper has, in some fields, become a jargon that even those familiar with the territory cannot understand.

Topic sentence	State the main idea/point
Development	Elaborate
Concluding sentence	Round off, Link to next paragraph

Jonathan Knight, "Clear as mud", Nature, Vol 423, 22 MAY 2003

Question 2

The best explanation of a topic sentence is that

- (A) It summarizes the whole paragraph
- (B) It follows on from the previous paragraph
-  (C) It introduces what the rest of the paragraph is going to be about
- (D) It removes any chance of surprise
- (E) It is usually rather short and to the point

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Score / 6
A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	

Question 3

Which of the following should never be a characteristic of good professional writing?

- (A) Clarity
- (B) Precision
- (C) Boring
- (D) Objectivity
- (E) Brevity



Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Score / 6
A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	

How do I know when my paragraph is right?

Everything in the paragraph should relate to the same idea, the one spelt out in the topic sentence.

- Is my paragraph too short?
 - Is there a significant new idea introduced?
 - Is the idea continued in the next paragraph?
- Is my paragraph too long?

Several ideas crammed into one paragraph?
Too much information all together?

 - Break the paragraph into two or more distinct ideas.
 - Decompose information into series of ideas

Example: This paragraph too long

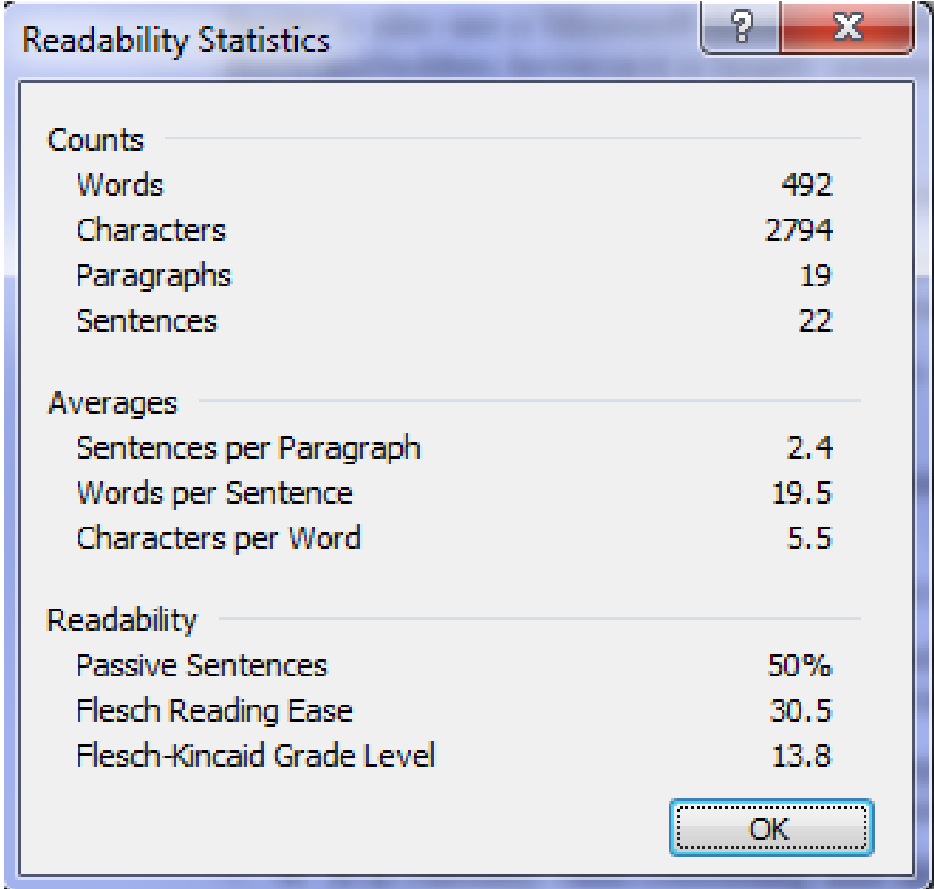
Jonathan Knight, "Clear as mud", Nature, Vol 423, 22 MAY 2003

The balkanization of science into sub-disciplines, each with its own vocabulary, is largely to blame. Many journals are trying to tackle this, producing easy-to-read summaries of papers, and linking online papers to web-based glossaries. But these approaches tend to have a limited impact, whereas addressing other factors - notably writing style - could transform many papers. Writing takes practice, yet it is not part of standard scientific training. So could science become readable again if researchers went back to school and took writing lessons? **Readability itself is not easy to quantify.** Microsoft's Word program features the Flesch Reading Ease scale, which measures the average length of words and sentences to calculate the number of years of education needed to comprehend a document. But such tools fail on several counts. For one, a long sentence that walks the reader down a path to its conclusion can be easier to follow than a muddled short sentence. And common words can be relatively long - technological or professor, for example - whereas many technical terms are short, such as meson, genome or glycan.

~~professor, for example - whereas many technical terms are short, such as meson, genome or glycan.~~

Flesch Reading Ease

- 100-point scale.
- The *higher* the score, the easier it is to understand the document.
- For simple writing the score will be between 60 and 70.



The screenshot shows a window titled 'Readability Statistics' with a standard Windows-style title bar (blue with a question mark and close button). The window contains three sections: 'Counts', 'Averages', and 'Readability'. Each section lists a metric and its corresponding value. At the bottom right, there is an 'OK' button.

Readability Statistics	
Counts	
Words	492
Characters	2794
Paragraphs	19
Sentences	22
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	2.4
Words per Sentence	19.5
Characters per Word	5.5
Readability	
Passive Sentences	50%
Flesch Reading Ease	30.5
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	13.8
OK	

Readability 'Sportico' Case Study

Checking spelling, grammar and readability in Word

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Word interface with the 'Review' tab selected. The 'Spelling & Grammar' button is visible in the ribbon. A 'Readability Statistics' dialog box is open, displaying the following data:

Readability Statistics	
Counts	
Words	4092
Characters	22952
Paragraphs	384
Sentences	159
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	1.5
Words per Sentence	18.4
Characters per Word	5.3
Readability	
Passive Sentences	22%
Flesch Reading Ease	35.8
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	12.8

An arrow points to the 'Readability' section of the dialog box. The background document text includes sections for 'Submission' and 'Assessment'.

Reading ease and readability

- **Reading ease** refers to the words and sentence structure
- **Readability** depends on the font size, colour and layout (see next lecture).
The art of layout is called *typography*

Typography

- Involves
 - selection of typefaces for text and headings
 - font size
 - line length (no more than 66 characters)
 - line spacing (leading)
 - white space
 - spaces between groups of letters (tracking)
 - space between pairs of letters (kerning)
 - placement of tables, figures and footnotes
 - bullets and numbering (enumeration)
- “The art and technique of arranging type in order to make language visible”.

Using the 'right' word helps

- Don't use 'wooly' words,
 - fairly, roughly, approximate, lots of
- Don't exaggerate
 - huge, massive, minute, infinitesimal, enormous, earth shattering, fabulous
- Avoid inexact words
 - many, several, hardly any, mostly
- Find the word that is **exactly right** for the idea you are wanting to express
 - Use a thesaurus

Get rid of distractions

- Spelling errors, Wrong grammar
- Bad *typography* (layout or font choice)
- Unusual, or little known words, (balkanization), or jargon (periapse)
- Inflammatory or biased statements, e.g. ‘any student from the University of Sydney would know that ...’

Avoid Acronyms and Initialisms (1)

- Abbreviations formed from the initial components of a phrase or word

ATM machine: Automated Teller Machine machine

PIN number: Personal Identification Number number

- You can find out what an acronym means at <http://www.acronymfinder.com/>

Defined but never
used again!

ole: A student

What is BOINC?
Maybe defined
somewhere else?

Most existing scheduling policies that are used to distribute work-units (**WUs**) in **VC** (Volunteer Computing) environments are based on simple heuristics. Up to now there are two different policies: the First-Come-First-Serve (**FCFS**) policy commonly used in **BOINC** projects and the fixed threshold-based policy. Both policies use Homogeneous Redundancy (**HR**) for the distribution of multiple work-unit instances (**WUIs**). **HR** distributes instances of the same **WU** to volunteer computers that are computationally equivalent, meaning that that they have the same operating system and processor vendor (e.g. Intel or **AMD**). This yields bit-identical successful results for

Why not **MWUIs**? ons.

Usually stands for
“Human Resources”

This is what it sounds like when you read it!

The project scope statement and project management plan are the primary input for creating a **Work Breakdown Structure**. The main tools and techniques include using **Work Breakdown Structure** templates, as described below, and using decomposition or subdivision. The outputs of the process are the **Work Breakdown Structure** and the project management plan.

Boring !

What do **Work Breakdown Structures** look like? A **Work Breakdown Structure** is often depicted as a task-oriented family tree of activities, similar to an organization chart. A project team then organizes the **Work Breakdown Structure** around products or phases. Many people like to create a **Work Breakdown Structure** in chart form first. Figure 1 shows two different starting points for **Work Breakdown Structures**. etc. etc.

Why not make it as interesting as you can


The project scope statement and project management plan are the primary input for creating a **Work Breakdown Structure**. The main tools and techniques include using **work breakdown** templates, as described below, and using decomposition or subdividing project deliverable into smaller pieces. The outputs of the process are the **structure** itself, the **its** dictionary, a scope baseline and a scope management plan.

What do **these structures** look like? **They** are often depicted as a task-oriented family tree of activities, similar to an organization chart. A project team then organizes the **work breakdown** around products or phases. Many people like to create a **breakdown structure** in chart form first. Figure 1 shows two different starting points.

The **structures** shown in Figure 1 seem easy enough to construct, but it is actually quite difficult to create a good **work breakdown**.

Question 4

Which of the following statements about acronyms is most accurate?

- (A) They are OK so long as they are defined first
- (B) You can use them if they are in the dictionary
-  (C) They should be avoided wherever possible
- (D) They tend to make articles more compact and therefore easier to read
- (E) They are OK if replacing really long phrases or expressions

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Score / 6
A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	

Summary - Remember the 3 Cs

- Clarity

- Good structure, straight forward language, precise words

- Coherence

- Topic sentences tell the reader what to expect
- Links between paragraphs give flow
- Logical progression of content (argument)

- Consistency

- language level, typography

Question 5

What is the first thing you need to do to produce a good report?



- (A) Find an IT project you admire
- (B) Create an outline using *Word*
- (C) Make sure the article is of professional interest
- (D) Get a friend to read your first draft

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Score / 6
A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	

For more information

“The Art of Good Writing”

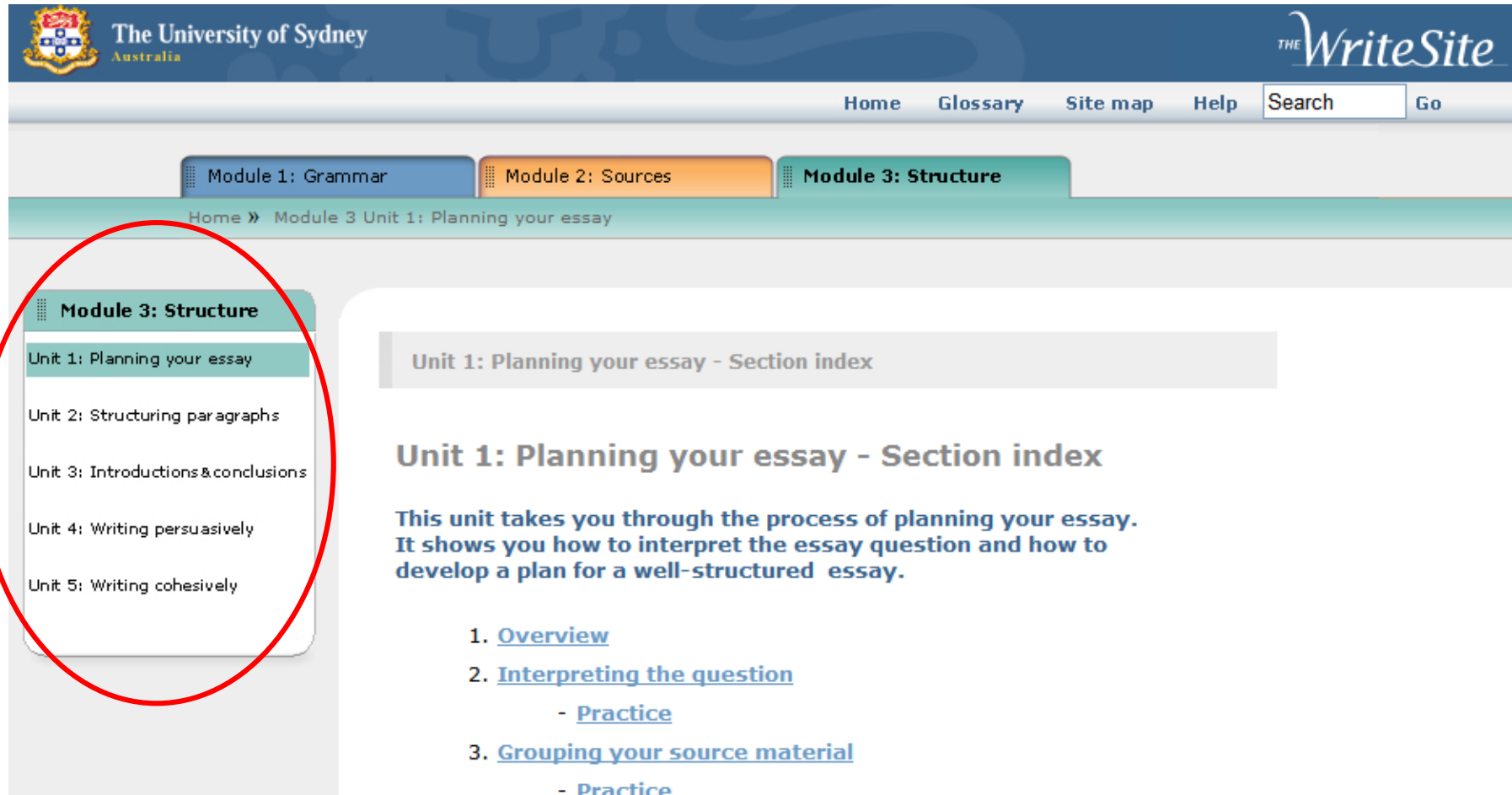
Check out the Sydney Uni Learning Centre “WriteSite”



<http://writesite.elearn.usyd.edu.au/>

**The Write Site provides online support to help you
develop your academic and professional writing skills.**

What does the  look like?



The screenshot shows the THE WriteSite interface. At the top is the University of Sydney logo and the site name. Below this is a navigation bar with links for Home, Glossary, Site map, Help, and a Search box. A secondary navigation bar contains three tabs: Module 1: Grammar, Module 2: Sources, and Module 3: Structure. The main content area is titled 'Home » Module 3 Unit 1: Planning your essay'. On the left, a sidebar menu for 'Module 3: Structure' is circled in red, listing five units: Unit 1: Planning your essay, Unit 2: Structuring paragraphs, Unit 3: Introductions & conclusions, Unit 4: Writing persuasively, and Unit 5: Writing cohesively. The main content area displays the 'Unit 1: Planning your essay - Section index' with a descriptive paragraph and a list of three sections: Overview, Interpreting the question (with a Practice link), and Grouping your source material (with a Practice link).

The University of Sydney
Australia

THE WriteSite

Home Glossary Site map Help Search Go

Module 1: Grammar Module 2: Sources Module 3: Structure

Home » Module 3 Unit 1: Planning your essay

Module 3: Structure

- Unit 1: Planning your essay
- Unit 2: Structuring paragraphs
- Unit 3: Introductions & conclusions
- Unit 4: Writing persuasively
- Unit 5: Writing cohesively

Unit 1: Planning your essay - Section index

Unit 1: Planning your essay - Section index

This unit takes you through the process of planning your essay. It shows you how to interpret the essay question and how to develop a plan for a well-structured essay.

1. [Overview](#)
2. [Interpreting the question](#)
 - [Practice](#)
3. [Grouping your source material](#)
 - [Practice](#)

Question 6

Which of the following describes the best approach for professionals working in Australia whose first language is not English?

- (A) The same standards apply as to English speakers
- (B) Get an English speaker to read your first draft
- (C) Careful use of spell check will solve the problem
- (D) Keep the language simple and no one will notice
- (E) BOTH (A) and (B)



Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6	Score / 6
A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	A B C D E	

30 sec stretch

