

Access Reading Transitioning to University study

About me

- Name: Lilla
- 2nd year undergraduate
- Course: BSc Environmental Management and Sustainability
- Hobbies and interests: Nature and hiking
- Something I wish I known about about studying at university before enrolling:

”You have much more choice about your learning at university but also more responsibility over it too.”



How is studying at university different than school?



Teaching styles



Writing styles



Researching*

*collecting information for an assignment

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Researching

Teaching styles at university



- Can be quite varied depending on your course
- Lessons can be larger and longer
- More informal than lessons in school
- Require more input from students and independent work



Lectures



- Presentation by a lecturer or professor
- More formal and less discussion based
- Often held in large lecture theatres with lots of other people
- Student are required to listen and take notes



Seminars



- Smaller group sessions
- Classrooms similar to school
- Interactive and discussion based
- Preparation: read chapter before class, create a small presentation



Practicals



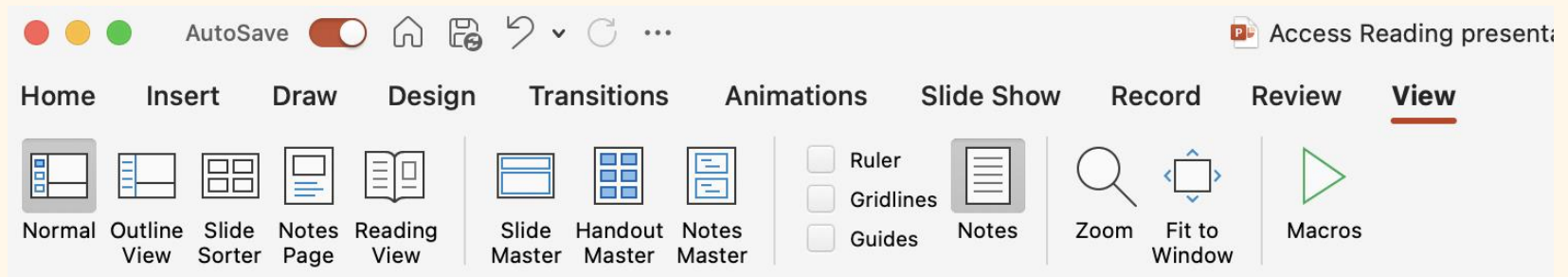
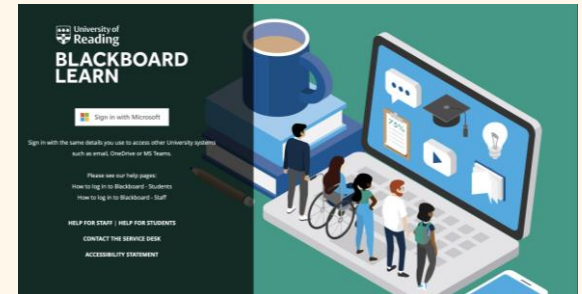
- Lab work
- Workshops
- Field work or field trips
- Computer sessions



How do students take notes?



- You can choose how you like to take notes:
 - Pen and paper
 - Tablet or Laptop (Word document, annotation)
 - PowerPoint notes
- Might not take notes
- Focus on lecture and create notes later
 - Lecture recordings
 - PowerPoint/pdf/lecture resources available on Blackboard



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Writing styles



Researching

Writing styles



How is writing at university different than in school?



True or False

Writing styles



1. You will have to include where you sourced your information in assessments



True

- Your will have to reference your sources in your assignments
- Referencing is acknowledging the sources of information you used to make your arguments
- Different departments require different methods
- Usually need to put a citation in the text and a bibliography (list of sources at the end of your assignment)

Writing styles



2. The essays you write at university are similar to the ones you write at school

Yes and No

- Similar structure (Introduction, Main arguments, Conclusion)
- Might be asked to use new structures
- Have to use academic writing
- Formal, clear and precise, third person
- More in-depth analyses and critical evaluation
- Wide range of evidence and sources

Writing styles



3. You might have to write about your own experiences and evaluate them



True

- Reflective writing is a type of academic writing
- Involves analysing your past practical experiences and applying what you learnt into the future
- More personal - can write in first person
- Might be part of an assignment (end of a laboratory report)
- Reflective account of a placement

Writing styles



4. You are expected to know how to write at university level when you enroll



False

- First year is about learning academic skills including academic writing
- Different styles and elements are taught (referencing, analytical writing)
- Assessment briefs include how you are expected to write in an assignment
- Libguides online resources and library workshops

Writing styles summary



- At university you have to write in an academic writing style
- Formal, precise, 3rd person (except in reflective writing)
- Analyses and critically evaluate your points more deeply
- Have to use a wide range of evidence and reference them in your essays/reports
- There are resources at the university to help you learn these skills

How is studying at university different than school?



Teaching styles



Writing styles



Researching

Researching



You have been asked to write an essay, report or create a presentation on a topic for an assignment. But how do you go about researching the topic?



Think back to a time when you had to research something for a project in school. Where did you get your information from?

How would this be different from university?

How is researching for assignments different at university?



In 6th form/college/school

- Websites (Wikipedia, blogs)
- Educational websites (Bitesize)
- Books and textbooks

University

- Academic literature (journal articles or books)
- Government/ Company reports/Laws
- **Sources are reliable and objective**

Academic literature example - Journal article

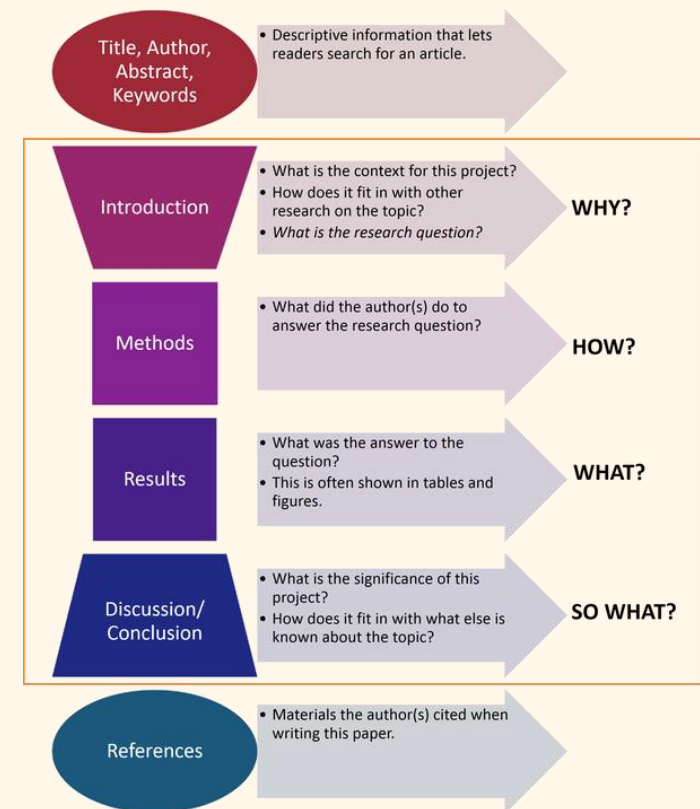
- Research done by others published in an academic journal
- Academic journals (peer reviewed journals where researchers can share their work to other academics)
- Online article databases or research platform eg Google scholar



How is researching for assignments different at university?



- Academic literature eg journal articles
- Focused reading
 - Don't need to read the entire text every time
 - Articles have specific structure and need to include specific things eg aims and hypothesis
 - Only need to read certain section first – abstract, introduction, conclusion
 - If these are useful you could read the rest – method, result, discussion
- Synthesize and critically evaluate information
 - Find common themes
 - Assess the usefulness and credibility of findings
 - Don't just describe what you have read



Questions about researching

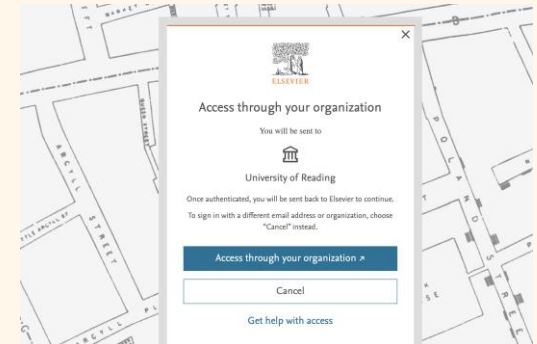


When do students need to research topics?

- For most assignments (essays, reports, presentations)
- Dissertation
- Literature review
 - Finding out what has already been researched in your topic
 - Reading, analysing common themes, identifying gaps and writing
 - Separate assignment or part of a bigger project

Where to find sources for researching?

- Online article databases or research platform
 - Web of Science, Google Scholar and others
 - University pays for subscription
- Library and academic librarians for each department



Summary

Talked about the differences between studying at university and school:

- You can have different types of lessons
 - Main ones are lectures, seminars or practical lessons
- Academic writing style
 - Clear and concise, referenced and critical
- Have to use academic literature such as journals or other credible sources to research information for assignments

Thank you for listening!