



Increasing your academic vocabulary

Introduction

Increasing your vocabulary will help you to improve the quality of assignments. The following are some useful ways in which you can expand your academic vocabulary.

Further information

The Learning Resources Study Hub provides a range of opportunities (such as workshops and drop-ins) for you to enhance your academic skills. For more information visit:

lrweb.beds.ac.uk/studyhub



To do....	Why
<p>Read</p>	<p>The best way to increase your academic vocabulary is through extensive reading.</p> <p>Try and read material that is aimed at an academic audience, such as, academic journals or broadsheet newspapers. Reading these sources will expose you to new words that are acceptable in academic writing.</p> <p>TIP: If you don't want to buy a daily newspaper or an academic journal you will probably be able to find articles from online for free.</p>
<p>Use a dictionary to look up words you don't know</p>	<p>If you encounter a word you don't recognise, you should initially guess its meaning in context. If this is not possible, look it up in a dictionary. This will help you to clarify its meaning and learn in what contexts it can be used.</p> <p>TIP: When you read academic sources you may find a lot of words you don't know. Don't panic - you don't have to look all of these up! Initially most people find it easiest to only look up unknown words that appear most regularly. Based on words you already know you should be able to understand the gist of the source even if there are some occasional unknown words.</p>
<p>Use a subject specific dictionary</p>	<p>Most academic disciplines will have subject specific dictionaries. These include a list of common terminology used within a discipline and what it means. These will include citations that you may not find in a normal dictionary.</p>
<p>Use a thesaurus</p>	<p>You will be able to enrich your writing through varying the words and phrases that you use. If you keep using the same words when you write, your work can become repetitive, predictable and boring. If you think there are words that you overuse, look them up in a thesaurus. In a thesaurus you will find details of other words that mean the same thing (synonyms) and how these should be used, some of which you may be able to incorporate into your writing.</p>