



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.

| List/sequence words: <i>orders the information in a sequence</i> | Effect/results: <i>something brought by a cause</i> | Emphasis: <i>special importance or significance</i> |
|---|---|---|
| first | so | undoubtedly |
| firstly | as a result | indeed |
| secondly | as a consequence | obviously |
| the second/third, etc. | therefore | generally |
| next | thus | admittedly |
| last | consequently | in theory |
| the next | hence | in fact |
| the last | due to | particularly |
| finally | as a result of | especially |
| in addition | as a consequence of | clearly |
| moreover | resulting in | |
| also | | |
| one (reason/problem/factor) | | |
| Addition: <i>adds to what was previously stated</i> | Cause/reason: <i>responsible for an action or result</i> | Elaboration/qualification: <i>extends the meaning of an idea</i> |
| in addition | for | frequently |
| furthermore | because | occasionally |
| also | since | usually |
| and | as | especially |
| as well as | because of | in fact |
| additionally | to cause | in particular |
| | the cause of | actually |
| | the reason for | specifically |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Conclusion/summary: <i>generalising or summing up</i> | Restatement/ explanation: <i>referring back</i> | Alternative: |
| in conclusion | in fact | otherwise |
| to summarise | indeed | or |
| in brief | that is | if |
| in short | in other words | unless |
| in general | | |
| Concede a point: <i>indicates a surprising statement in view of previous comments</i> | Build towards climax: | Narrow the focus: |
| it is true that | more/most importantly | specifically |
| of course | more/most significantly | more to the point |
| no doubt | above all | looking more closely at |
| | primarily | |
| | essentially | |
| Comparison: <i>indicates the similar relationship between things</i> | Contrast: <i>indicates the different relationship between things</i> | Example: <i>illustrating the point</i> |
| similarly | however | for example |
| likewise | nevertheless | for instance |
| also | although | that is |
| too | (even) though | such as |
| as | but | including |
| and | yet | to illustrate |
| just like | in contrast | namely |
| similar to | in comparison | |
| the same as | whereas | |
| not only...but also | on the other hand | |
| compared to/with | on the contrary | |
| | despite | |
| Time - moving forward | Time - moving backward: | Time - simultaneous: |
| then | previously | meanwhile |
| later | earlier | in the meantime |
| next | before that | simultaneously |
| after that | prior to that | at the same time |
| finally | formerly | at the moment |

| Time - moving forward | Time - moving backward: | Time - simultaneous: |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| at long last | initially...but now | concurrently |
| in time | | |
| eventually | | |
| subsequently | | |

Other ways of ensuring coherence

1. Use internal referent words (or pronouns):

These words refer back to something that has already been mentioned. They are used to link ideas, repeat the reference, avoid an unclear reference, and to avoid unnecessary repetition of subject/object.

| | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| this/that | the...(noun or noun phrase) | it/they/them |
| these/those | her/his/its | its/their |

N.B.: Be careful that the reader can clearly identify what noun the pronoun is substituting.

2. Repeat phrases and key words:

Repeating an idea will help your reader stay focused on your writing.

3. Reporting words:

These words are useful for integrating references into your writing.

N.B.: Usually these words are used in the **present tense** because the **publication still exists**

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| address(es) | focus(es) (on) | promote(s) |
| suggest(s) (that) | define(s) | establish(ed) |
| argue(s) (that) | conclude(s) (that) | assert(s) (that) |
| according (to) | state(s) (that) | claim(s) (that) |
| found (that) | maintain(s) (that) | report(s) (that) |
| outline(s) | mention(s) (that) | |

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