

How to Write Brilliant Essays: Writing Elegantly

I'm an academic based at Royal Holloway University of London I created these videos for ambitious students who want to write brilliantly not just okay this video will help you to make your essay writing more elegant there are plenty of great videos out there on YouTube for the basics here grammar punctuation formalizing your prose if you're writing in your second or third language or you're just starting out with university essays I advise you to take a look at them first this video is for people who already know they need to spell and punctuate correctly and want to move on and write brilliantly one of the training wheels students use when they're starting out is signposting that is saying what you've been asked to ask saying what you're going to say saying it and then saying what you've said it's helpful for speakers to signpost a bit because it's hard to keep all the content in your head at once the audience might get lost and the signposts help them to stay on track but in a student essay of 1,500 2,000 or 3,000 words excessive signposting is wasteful and boring to read if you've laid out your argument in brief in the introduction you don't need lots of signposts some of the worst offenders are things like this it is important to find the key terms first I'm going to define the key terms and then I'm going to consider which definition is most appropriate and then I'm going to assess whether the title quote is true or not the last paragraph argued that probably the most common comment I have when I mark students [trusted essay writing service](#) is just do it don't spend ages saying you need to define this or that just define them right there and save yourself a whole load of boring words if you've got a logical structure there's no need to say what you said in your previous paragraph I just read it excessive signposting can sometimes seem like a sign of low confidence another manifestation of a lack of confidence is compulsive hedging words like arguably comparatively to a certain degree to some extent relatively these phrases are meaningless in themselves and they make the writer seem vague and cowardly a really brilliant essay is confident in tone that means instead of hedging qualify rather than leaving yourself an escape hatch which leaves the reader unsure about whether you really mean it convey the magnitude of the effect and the degree of certainty explicitly so for example rather than Republicans are united to some extent and Democrats are somewhat divided say Republicans are united and energized by cultural conservatism as measured by survey items tapping support for building war on the Mexican border respect for the American flag and concerns about discrimination against whites Democrats are more divided by these cultural questions than Republicans are but they united by support for activist government rather than arguably Supreme Court justices are relatively constrained say the court enjoys greater implementation power in vertical cases those involving criminal and civil liability than in lateral cases that is all others finally remember not to get drawn into normative arguments if you're writing a piece of analysis leave a motive language out of your essay such as disgusting despicable laudable excellent groovy remember you're making an analytical argument in social science politics history geography or whatever discipline you're in you're making a convincing empirical case if you feel strongly about the subject matter good for you we all do research because we care about this stuff but leave the emotive stuff for your blog or comments below the line work out your feelings elsewhere and focus on making a convincing case instead so to recap don't excessively signpost just do it get on with it get rid of the compulsive hedging instead spell out the circumstances in which the statement does and does not hold and don't get drawn into normative arguments keep it analytical in tone thanks for watching this video if you found it useful please like the video and subscribe to my youtube channel where you can find other videos to help you write truly brilliant essays you