Top ten tips for academic style

1. Avoid first person ‘I’ or ‘we’. Use passive instead. Eg. I think = It could be argued/I asked people to = Participants were invited to...

2. Avoid contractions (eg. don’t, it’s, isn’t) = do not, it is, is not

3. Be precise (eg. way = method, thing = object, person = participant)

4. Avoid run on expressions (etc, and so on, and suchlike…)

5. Avoid subjective or emotive language (eg. nice, incredible, awesome) Be objective and detached instead (eg. useful, appropriate, helpful)

6. Use complete sentences (Each must have a main verb and make complete sense standing alone).

7. Avoid direct questions with question marks. Eg. Why is this? = There are several underlying reasons for this: firstly...

8. Use clearly referenced supporting evidence (in text and reference list)

9. Use cautious language for speculation, opinion, unsupported evidence. Eg. This may be because…there could be a link between…this could lead to...

10. Avoid colloquialisms – eg laid back, comfort zone, kids, dad, mum…