

The Oxford Phrasal Academic Lexicon™

The Oxford Phrasal Academic Lexicon (OPAL) is a set of four word lists that together provide an essential guide to the most important words and phrases to know in the field of English for Academic Purposes (EAP). This list gives the 1200 most important words in academic writing, divided into twelve sublists of 100 words each, with the most important words in Sublist 1.

Written single words

Sublist 1

activity *n.*
affect *v.*
analysis *n.*
apply *v.*
approach *n.*
area *n.*
associate *v.*
available *adj.*
based *adj.*
behaviour *n.*
between *prep.*
case *n.*
change *n., v.*
community *n.*
compare *v.*
condition *n.*
context *n.*
country *n.*
cultural *adj.*
culture *n.*
data *n.*
define *v.*
develop *v.*
development *n.*
difference *n.*
different *adj.*
economic *adj.*
effect *n.*
environment *n.*
environmental *adj.*
example *n.*
factor *n.*
form *n., v.*
function *n., v.*
global *adj.*
group *n., v.*
growth *n.*
high *adj.*
human *adj.*
identify *v.*
important *adj.*
increase *v., n.*
individual *n., adj.*
information *n.*
interaction *n.*
international *adj.*
issue *n.*
law *n.*
level *n.*
likely *adj., adv.*
low *adj.*
may *modal v.*
measure *n., v.*
method *n.*

model *n., v.*
national *adj., n.*
number *n.*
occur *v.*
organization *n.*
particular *adj., n.*
policy *n.*
population *n.*
practice *n.*
process *n., v.*
product *n.*
provide *v.*
rate *n., v.*
reduce *v.*
region *n.*
relation *n.*
relationship *n.*
require *v.*
research *n.*
resource *n.*
result *n., v.*
risk *n.*
role *n.*
sample *n., v.*
significant *adj.*
social *adj.*
specific *adj.*
state *n., v.*
strategy *n.*
structure *n., v.*
study *n., v.*
such *det.*
suggest *v.*
system *n.*
term *n., v.*
terms *n.*
theory *n.*
therefore *adv.*
thus *adv.*
treatment *n.*
type *n.*
use *n., v.*
value *n.*
variable *n., adj.*
whether *conj.*
within *prep.*

Sublist 2

application *n.*
appropriate *adj.*
argue *v.*
aspect *n.*
assess *v.*
assessment *n.*
basis *n.*

benefit *n., v.*
care *n.*
category *n.*
characteristic *n., adj.*
common *adj.*
complex *adj., n.*
component *n.*
concept *n.*
consider *v.*
control *n., v.*
current *adj., n.*
decision *n.*
definition *n.*
demand *n.*
depend *v.*
describe *v.*
determine *v.*
discuss *v.*
distribution *n.*
due *adj.*
effective *adj.*
element *n.*
energy *n.*
evidence *n.*
examine *v.*
exist *v.*
extent *n.*
finding *n.*
generate *v.*
however *adv.*
identity *n.*
impact *n., v.*
include *v.*
indicate *v.*
intervention *n.*
involve *v.*
key *adj.*
knowledge *n.*
means *n.*
mechanism *n.*
nature *n.*
negative *adj.*
network *n.*
observe *v.*
often *adv.*
outcome *n.*
output *n.*
participant *n.*
pattern *n.*
per *prep.*
per cent *adj., n.*
perspective *n.*
physical *adj.*
positive *adj.*
possible *adj.*
potential *adj., n.*

pressure *n.*
primary *adj.*
principle *n.*
problem *n.*
procedure *n.*
produce *v.*
production *n.*
programme *n.*
public *adj., n.*
quality *n.*
range *n., v.*
recent *adj.*
refer *v.*
related *adj.*
relative *adj., n.*
relatively *adv.*
relevant *adj.*
report *v., n.*
represent *v.*
response *n.*
rule *n.*
scale *n., v.*
section *n.*
sector *n.*
sequence *n.*
show *v.*
similar *adj.*
site *n.*
size *n.*
solution *n.*
source *n.*
technology *n.*
test *n., v.*
total *adj., n.*
unit *n.*
variation *n.*
whereas *conj.*

Sublist 3

above *adv., adj., n.*
access *n., v.*
according to *prep.*
achieve *v.*
action *n.*
additional *adj.*
address *v.*
analyse *v.*
argument *n.*
assume *v.*
assumption *n.*
basic *adj.*
central *adj.*
communication *n.*
conflict *n., v.*
consequence *n.*

contain *v.*
content *n.*
contrast *n., v.*
criterion *n.*
critical *adj.*
cycle *n.*
decrease *v., n.*
demonstrate *v.*
derive *v.*
differ *v.*
direct *adj., v.*
discussion *n.*
domain *n.*
education *n.*
ensure *v.*
estimate *v., n.*
event *n.*
experience *n., v.*
express *v.*
external *adj.*
feature *n., v.*
flow *n., v.*
focus *v., n.*
framework *n.*
gender *n.*
general *adj., n.*
generally *adv.*
government *n.*
hence *adv.*
imply *v.*
importance *n.*
improve *v.*
influence *v., n.*
input *n.*
internal *adj.*
interpretation *n.*
interview *n., v.*
language *n.*
legal *adj.*
less *adv., det., pron.*
limit *v., n.*
literature *n.*
local *adj.*
major *adj.*
material *n., adj.*
meaning *n.*
media *n.*
multiple *adj.*
necessary *adj.*
need *n.*
note *v.*
obtain *v.*
order *n.*
overall *adj., adv.*
perform *v.*
performance *n.*
period *n.*
phase *n.*
present *adj., v., n.*
probability *n.*
project *n., v.*
question *n.*
ratio *n.*
reaction *n.*
reduction *n.*
reference *n.*
reflect *v.*
requirement *n.*
researcher *n.*
right *n.*

service *n.*
set *n.*
significantly *adv.*
society *n.*
standard *n., adj.*
status *n.*
survey *n.*
technique *n.*
tend *v.*
text *n.*
traditional *adj.*
understanding *n.*
useful *adj.*
vary *v.*

Sublist 4

account *n., v.*
alternative *adj., n.*
among *prep.*
amount *n., v.*
arise *v.*
association *n.*
average *adj., n., v.*
belief *n.*
capacity *n.*
century *n.*
certain *adj.*
challenge *n., v.*
characterize *v.*
claim *n., v.*
climate *n.*
comparison *n.*
competition *n.*
concern *v., n.*
conduct *v., n.*
consideration *n.*
consist *v.*
consistent *adj.*
constitute *v.*
consumption *n.*
create *v.*
difficult *adj.*
dimension *n.*
equal *adj., v.*
error *n.*
essential *adj.*
ethnic *adj.*
evaluate *v.*
evolution *n.*
experiment *n.*
explore *v.*
field *n.*
formation *n.*
functional *adj.*
fundamental *adj.*
goal *n.*
history *n.*
hypothesis *n.*
illustrate *v.*
implement *v.*
indeed *adv.*
independent *adj.*
initial *adj.*
integration *n.*
interpret *v.*
item *n.*
large *adj.*
learning *n.*
loss *n.*

majority *n.*
modern *adj.*
moreover *adv.*
most *det.*
natural *adj.*
notion *n.*
object *n.*
objective *n., adj.*
observation *n.*
operate *v.*
operation *n.*
opportunity *n.*
origin *n.*
particularly *adv.*
perceive *v.*
phenomenon *n.*
point *n.*
possibility *n.*
power *n.*
predict *v.*
proportion *n.*
protection *n.*
purpose *n.*
rather *adv.*
regard *v., n.*
regional *adj.*
regulation *n.*
representation *n.*
respect *n.*
respectively *adv.*
rise *n.*
select *v.*
selection *n.*
sexual *adj.*
similarly *adv.*
situation *n.*
stage *n.*
target *n., v.*
theoretical *adj.*
tool *n.*
transition *n.*
trend *n.*
typically *adv.*
underlying *adj.*
variety *n.*
various *adj.*
view *n., v.*

Sublist 5

ability *n.*
actual *adj.*
adopt *v.*
advantage *n.*
age *n.*
agreement *n.*
allow *v.*
although *conj.*
article *n.*
attitude *n.*
authority *n.*
bias *n., v.*
broad *adj.*
can *modal v.*
choice *n.*
circumstance *n.*
clear *adj.*
combination *n.*
combine *v.*
commonly *adv.*

complexity *n.*
conclude *v.*
conclusion *n.*
construct *v., n.*
core *n.*
debate *n.*
degree *n.*
design *n., v.*
directly *adv.*
distinct *adj.*
distinction *n.*
distinguish *v.*
dominant *adj.*
efficiency *n.*
emerge *v.*
emphasis *n.*
emphasize *v.*
empirical *adj.*
enable *v.*
enhance *v.*
establish *v.*
evaluation *n.*
exchange *n.*
exclude *v.*
expectation *n.*
explanation *n.*
facilitate *v.*
fact *n.*
failure *n.*
female *n., adj.*
financial *adj.*
further *adj.*
future *adj., n.*
highly *adv.*
implementation *n.*
impose *v.*
index *n.*
indicator *n.*
interest *n.*
investigate *v.*
investigation *n.*
judgement *n.*
lack *n., v.*
limitation *n.*
limited *adj.*
link *v., n.*
location *n.*
main *adj.*
maintain *v.*
male *n., adj.*
many *det.*
mental *adj.*
mode *n.*
movement *n.*
necessarily *adv.*
norm *n.*
other *adj.*
participation *n.*
perception *n.*
prevent *v.*
prior *adj.*
propose *v.*
regime *n.*
relate *v.*
rely *v.*
resistance *n.*
secondary *adj.*
seek *v.*
simple *adj.*
single *adj.*

specifically *adv.*
specify *v.*
stress *n., v.*
subject *adj., n., v.*
supply *n., v.*
support *n., v.*
task *n.*
transfer *n., v.*
urban *adj.*
via *prep.*

Sublist 6

absence *n.*
agent *n.*
approximately *adv.*
below *adv., prep.*
cause *v., n.*
chain *n.*
channel *n.*
clearly *adv.*
code *n., v.*
conception *n.*
constant *adj., n.*
constraint *n.*
contribute *v.*
contribution *n.*
correlation *n.*
correspond *v.*
decade *n.*
decline *n., v.*
dependent *adj.*
detail *n.*
detailed *adj.*
difficulty *n.*
discrimination *n.*
diverse *adj.*
diversity *n.*
divide *v.*
early *adj.*
educational *adj.*
effectively *adv.*
effectiveness *n.*
effort *n.*
employ *v.*
entry *n.*
ethical *adj.*
evolve *v.*
existence *n.*
expand *v.*
expansion *n.*
experimental *adj.*
extend *v.*
force *n.*
formal *adj.*
furthermore *adv.*
gain *n., v.*
generation *n.*
highlight *v.*
identification *n.*
image *n.*
improvement *n.*
including *prep.*
induce *v.*
inequality *n.*
insight *n.*
instance *n.*
integrate *v.*
introduce *v.*
maximum *adj., n.*

might *modal v.*
migration *n.*
minority *n.*
modify *v.*
must *modal v.*
new *adj.*
offer *v.*
option *n.*
part *n.*
participate *v.*
percentage *n.*
potentially *adv.*
preference *n.*
presence *n.*
previous *adj.*
previously *adv.*
primarily *adv.*
psychological *adj.*
qualitative *adj.*
quantity *n.*
reasonable *adj.*
responsibility *n.*
restrict *v.*
restriction *n.*
science *n.*
scope *n.*
sense *n.*
shift *n.*
should *modal v.*
significance *n.*
space *n.*
spatial *adj.*
stability *n.*
stable *adj.*
statement *n.*
statistical *adj.*
structural *adj.*
sufficient *adj.*
technological *adj.*
treat *v.*
violence *n.*
welfare *n.*
world *n.*

Sublist 7

act *n., v.*
adaptation *n.*
aim *n., v.*
alter *v.*
animal *n.*
author *n.*
availability *n.*
awareness *n.*
balance *n., v.*
barrier *n.*
base *n., v.*
capability *n.*
commercial *adj.*
commitment *n.*
composition *n.*
consequently *adv.*
construction *n.*
contemporary *adj.*
continuous *adj.*
conventional *adj.*
cooperation *n.*
correlate *v.*
corresponding *adj.*
crucial *adj.*

description *n.*
device *n.*
duration *n.*
dynamic *n., adj.*
encourage *v.*
entity *n.*
equivalent *adj., n.*
especially *adv.*
essentially *adv.*
evolutionary *adj.*
examination *n.*
exception *n.*
exercise *n., v.*
expression *n.*
facility *n.*
federal *adj.*
formula *n.*
frequently *adv.*
gap *n.*
incorporate *v.*
increasingly *adv.*
instrument *n.*
intensity *n.*
interact *v.*
interval *n.*
justify *v.*
largely *adv.*
located *adj.*
logic *n.*
medical *adj.*
monitor *v.*
motivation *n.*
namely *adv.*
online *adj.*
orientation *n.*
original *adj.*
position *n., v.*
poverty *n.*
prevention *n.*
private *adj.*
professional *n., adj.*
profile *n.*
rapid *adj.*
rational *adj.*
reality *n.*
recently *adv.*
recognition *n.*
recognize *v.*
rural *adj.*
scenario *n.*
second *adv.*
security *n.*
segment *n.*
sex *n.*
share *v., n.*
skill *n.*
software *n.*
subsequent *adj.*
summarize *v.*
survival *n.*
systematic *adj.*
theme *n.*
thereby *adv.*
topic *n.*
training *n.*
transformation *n.*
transport *n., v.*
typical *adj.*
uncertainty *n.*
undergo *v.*

unique *adj.*
universal *adj.*
validity *n.*
visual *adj.*
working *n., adj.*
yield *v., n.*

Sublist 8

absolute *adj.*
academic *adj., n.*
adapt *v.*
adequate *adj.*
agricultural *adj.*
anxiety *n.*
apparent *adj.*
arrangement *n.*
background *n.*
beyond *prep.*
burden *n.*
causal *adj.*
centre *n., v.*
classification *n.*
classify *v.*
column *n.*
compete *v.*
comprehensive *adj.*
comprise *v.*
confirm *v.*
connect *v.*
consensus *n.*
consent *n.*
correct *adj.*
creation *n.*
currently *adv.*
desire *n., v.*
discipline *n.*
distribute *v.*
document *n., v.*
dominate *v.*
during *prep.*
efficient *adj.*
eliminate *v.*
emotional *adj.*
engage *v.*
equally *adv.*
exceed *v.*
excess *n.*
explain *v.*
govern *v.*
identical *adj.*
introduction *n.*
involvement *n.*
isolated *adj.*
latter *n.*
line *n.*
list *v., n.*
maximize *v.*
medium *n.*
member *n.*
minimize *v.*
minimum *adj., n.*
nevertheless *adv.*
normal *adj.*
organize *v.*
outline *v.*
partial *adj.*
permit *v.*
personal *adj.*
practical *adj.*

practitioner *n.*
priority *n.*
promote *v.*
promotion *n.*
quantitative *adj.*
random *adj.*
reason *n.*
reasoning *n.*
reject *v.*
responsible *adj.*
reveal *v.*
root *n.*
sampling *n.*
satisfy *v.*
scheme *n.*
separate *adj., v.*
separation *n.*
shape *v., n.*
similarity *n.*
simply *adv.*
so-called *adj.*
solve *v.*
substance *n.*
sum *n.*
sustain *v.*
technical *adj.*
tendency *n.*
transform *v.*
transmission *n.*
transmit *v.*
ultimately *adv.*
utility *n.*
utilize *v.*
variance *n.*
version *n.*
website *n.*
weight *n.*
whole *n.*
widely *adv.*

Sublist 9

acceptable *adj.*
acceptance *n.*
accuracy *n.*
accurate *adj.*
active *adj.*
addition *n.*
adjust *v.*
adjustment *n.*
agenda *n.*
avoid *v.*
cite *v.*
classical *adj.*
commit *v.*
communicate *v.*
comparable *adj.*
comparative *adj.*
conceptual *adj.*
connection *n.*
considerable *adj.*
contact *n.*
coverage *n.*
deal *v.*
denote *v.*
determinant *n.*
differentiate *v.*
differentiation *n.*
digital *adj.*
distance *n.*

division *n.*
ecological *adj.*
emergence *n.*
ethic *n.*
expect *v.*
expert *n., adj.*
explicit *adj.*
explicitly *adj.*
extension *n.*
extensive *adj.*
extreme *adj., n.*
fail *v.*
flexibility *n.*
flexible *adj.*
fully *adv.*
fund *n., v.*
funding *n.*
ideal *adj., n.*
immediate *adj.*
inclusion *n.*
indirect *adj.*
initially *adv.*
initiate *v.*
initiative *n.*
instruction *n.*
intention *n.*
label *v., n.*
leadership *n.*
margin *n.*
matter *n.*
methodology *n.*
mix *v.*
mobility *n.*
net *adj.*
ongoing *adj.*
optimal *adj.*
ordinary *adj.*
parallel *adj., n.*
precise *adj.*
precisely *adv.*
prediction *n.*
progress *n.*
proposition *n.*
protect *v.*
race *n.*
recommend *v.*
record *v., n.*
replace *v.*
resolution *n.*
resolve *v.*
review *n.*
safety *n.*
scientific *adj.*
series *n.*
specialist *n.*
statistic *n.*
statistically *adv.*
store *v.*
strongly *adv.*
substantial *adj.*
substantially *adv.*
successful *adj.*
suitable *adj.*
summary *n.*
threat *n.*
threshold *n.*
unlikely *adj.*
valid *adj.*
versus *prep.*
vertical *adj.*

volume *n.*
widespread *adj.*

Sublist 10

accordingly *adv.*
accumulation *n.*
acknowledge *v.*
acquisition *n.*
administrative *adj.*
alternatively *adv.*
analytical *adj.*
annual *adj.*
applicable *adj.*
assert *v.*
assign *v.*
attribute *n., v.*
beneficial *adj.*
conservation *n.*
continuity *n.*
convention *n.*
convert *v.*
coordination *n.*
dependence *n.*
deviation *n.*
disadvantage *n., v.*
distinctive *adj.*
donor *n.*
elevate *v.*
elsewhere *adv.*
encode *v.*
encounter *v., n.*
ethnicity *n.*
evident *adj.*
exclusion *n.*
exploit *v.*
expose *v.*
favour *v.*
formulation *n.*
generalize *v.*
geographical *adj.*
guidance *n.*
harm *n.*
hierarchy *n.*
horizontal *adj.*
independently *adv.*
indication *n.*
infer *v.*
inference *n.*
inherent *adj.*
integrated *adj.*
intermediate *adj.*
interviewer *n.*
intrinsic *adj.*
justification *n.*
meaningful *adj.*
mediate *v.*
methodological *adj.*
modelling *n.*
motivate *v.*
neutral *adj.*
novel *adj.*
observer *n.*
occupation *n.*
occurrence *n.*
otherwise *adv.*
overlap *v., n.*
overview *n.*
pose *v.*
precede *v.*

presentation *n.*
problematic *adj.*
proportional *adj.*
protocol *n.*
rapidly *adv.*
readily *adv.*
recovery *n.*
regardless of *prep.*
reinforce *v.*
release *n.*
relevance *n.*
reliability *n.*
reliable *adj.*
removal *n.*
representative *adj., n.*
resident *n.*
selective *adj.*
sensitive *adj.*
simultaneously *adv.*
socially *adv.*
specialized *adj.*
specification *n.*
sphere *n.*
stimulate *v.*
stock *n.*
subjective *adj.*
substitution *n.*
sufficiently *adv.*
tension *n.*
territory *n.*
traditionally *adv.*
undertake *v.*
upper *adj.*
voluntary *adj.*
wealth *n.*

Sublist 11

abnormal *adj.*
abnormality *n.*
absent *adj.*
accept *v.*
accessible *adj.*
accountability *n.*
achievement *n.*
actively *adv.*
additionally *adv.*
analyst *n.*
appear *v.*
appropriately *adv.*
arguably *adv.*
behave *v.*
beneficiary *n.*
broadly *adv.*
categorize *v.*
character *n.*
characterization *n.*
conceive *v.*
conceptualize *v.*
conditional *adj.*
consistency *n.*
consistently *adv.*
consume *v.*
creative *adj.*
culturally *adv.*
descriptive *adj.*
determination *n.*
differently *adv.*
direction *n.*
dominance *n.*

economically *adv.*
efficacy *n.*
efficiently *adv.*
essence *n.*
estimation *n.*
exclusive *adj.*
exclusively *adv.*
explanatory *adj.*
exploration *n.*
fundamentally *adv.*
generalization *n.*
governmental *adj.*
historically *adv.*
hypothesize *v.*
hypothetical *adj.*
implicit *adj.*
implicitly *adv.*
importantly *adv.*
inappropriate *adj.*
inconsistent *adj.*
independence *n.*
indirectly *adv.*
inform *v.*
informed *adj.*
insufficient *adj.*
integral *adj.*
interactive *adj.*
intervene *v.*
interviewee *n.*
investigator *n.*
leader *n.*
legally *adv.*
localized *adj.*
locally *adv.*
mobile *adj.*
mobilize *v.*
modernity *n.*
modernization *n.*
necessity *n.*
negatively *adv.*
normally *adv.*
operational *adj.*
originally *adv.*

originate *v.*
positively *adv.*
predominantly *adv.*
procedural *adj.*
productive *adj.*
projection *n.*
proposal *n.*
reconstruct *v.*
reconstruction *n.*
recording *n.*
reflection *n.*
remove *v.*
reporting *n.*
respond *v.*
secondly *adv.*
sexuality *n.*
simplify *v.*
systematic *adj.*
systematically *adv.*
terminology *n.*
usage *n.*
valuable *adj.*
varied *adj.*
viewer *n.*
wide *adj.*

Sublist 12

accumulate *v.*
accurately *adv.*
acquire *v.*
adaptive *adj.*
adequately *adv.*
administer *v.*
administration *n.*
alteration *n.*
approximation *n.*
assertion *n.*
aware *adj.*
capable *adj.*
causation *n.*
centralize *v.*
certainty *n.*

classic *adj.*
conservative *adj.*
conserve *v.*
considerably *adv.*
constrain *v.*
constructive *adj.*
conversion *n.*
cooperative *adj.*
coordinate *n., v.*
correction *n.*
correctly *adv.*
critically *adv.*
criticize *v.*
cumulative *adj.*
desirable *adj.*
empirically *adv.*
empower *v.*
equivalence *n.*
establishment *n.*
excessive *adj.*
exemplify *v.*
expertise *n.*
exploitation *n.*
favourable *adj.*
formulate *v.*
frequent *adj.*
harmful *adj.*
hierarchical *adj.*
ideally *adv.*
inability *n.*
inadequate *adj.*
individually *adv.*
induction *n.*
initiation *n.*
instability *n.*
intend *v.*
intensive *adj.*
irrelevant *adj.*
isolation *n.*
logical *adj.*
migrate *v.*
minimal *adj.*
minor *adj.*

naturally *adv.*
occupy *v.*
orient *v.*
partially *adv.*
partly *adv.*
precision *n.*
progression *n.*
progressive *adj.*
quantify *v.*
randomize *v.*
randomly *adv.*
rating *n.*
rationale *n.*
rationality *n.*
reasonably *adv.*
rejection *n.*
reliance *n.*
replacement *n.*
resistant *adj.*
restrictive *adj.*
satisfaction *n.*
sensory *adj.*
separately *adv.*
simultaneous *adj.*
stabilize *v.*
stimulation *n.*
strength *n.*
strengthen *v.*
substantive *adj.*
substitute *v.*
successfully *adv.*
theoretically *adv.*
transportation *n.*
ultimate *adj.*
unclear *adj.*
undertaking *n.*
unrelated *adj.*
unstable *adj.*
utilization *n.*
validate *v.*
validation *n.*
visible *adj.*

OPAL has been created with reference to the following corpora: the Oxford Corpus of Academic English (OCAE), the fiction subcorpus of the Oxford English Corpus (OEC), the spoken element of the British National Corpus (BNC) and a subset of the British Academic Spoken English (BASE) corpus, developed within the University of Warwick and for which relevant permissions have been obtained. BASE was developed at the Universities of Warwick and Reading under the directorship of Hilary Nesi and Paul Thompson. Corpus development of BASE was assisted by funding from BALEAP, EURALEX, the British Academy and the Arts and Humanities Research Council.