



# Academic Writing in English

Introductory Lecture  
Animal Science Production  
4 February 2015

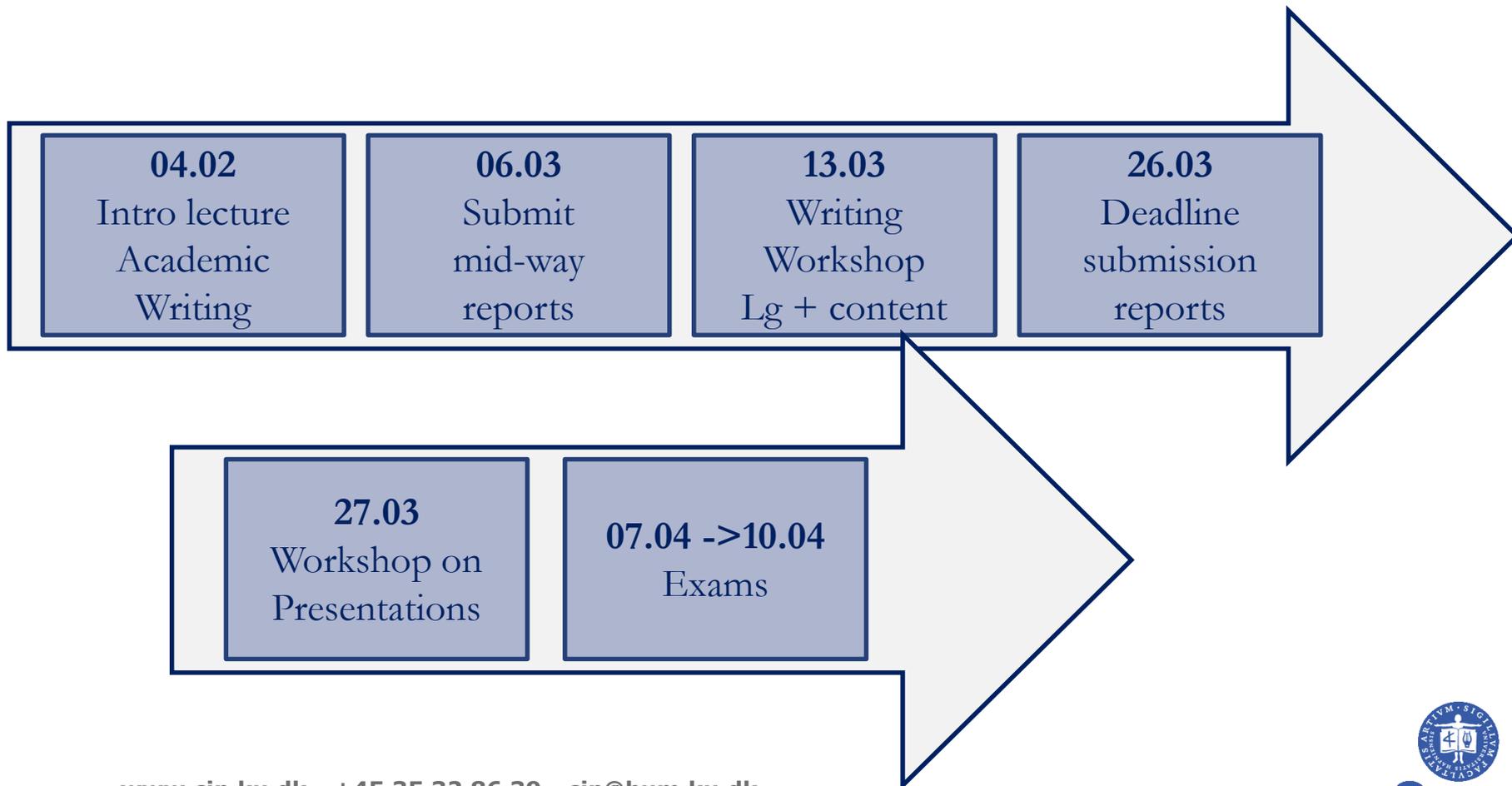
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1. Getting Started
2. Process Writing
3. Strategies for Team Writing
4. Structure of the Report
5. The Paragraph
6. Academic Style
7. The Most Common Errors
8. Presentation
9. References & Toolbox



# 1. Getting Started



What are your experiences with  
writing in English?



- Consider constraints:
  - time at your disposal (approx. one month to teacher review)
  - length requirements (15 pages )
- Create an outline of your report into a clear pattern of organisation. (as you go along!)
- On the basis of the outline - > Design a work / time plan
- Start writing early – do not delay!
- Collect material and keep track of your sources and notes!
- ”Role-model” reports in your discipline?



## 2. Process Writing

### In theory:

- Berkeley University – > 70s
- Most effective writing method for foreign/second language writers.
- Writing is a process -> various stages of composition ->based on several drafts.
- Allow time for writing!
- Not too much attention to language correctness in the beginning of the process.
- All great writers write and rewrite continuously.



## In practise:

- **Goal:** spot strenghts and weaknesses in each other's writing
- Read the draft several times
- Write notes in the margin
- Explain the problems fully – suggest corrections – do not rewrite
- Be positive
  - Do not pay too much attention to the language
  - Pay attention to structure and intelligibility
  - Clarity of discussion
  - Coherence and transitional elements
- Rewrite on the basis of the revision – share again
- Repeat this process until the structure of the report emerges and the text becomes intelligible
- Try to finish your structure and content before the midway teacher revision.
- Collect questions and bring them to the workshop
- Language editing at workshop (punctuation, vocabulary, conciseness...)
- Based on midway teacher revision and workshop revision -> rewrite & finalise



## 3. Strategies for Team Writing

- Create an outline
- Organise a schedule of key dates and divide the responsibilities.
  - to discuss the information
  - to review the rough drafts.
  - to review the final draft
- Plan the information search (for books, articles, etc.).
- Set up a style guide ([stylesheets](#) and [style guides](#)).
- Keep a journal/log of the work done

## 4. Structure of the Report

Structure is students' choice - answer 5 questions for 5 factors

- Coverpage
- Table of contents
- General introduction
  - Short and arouses interest (relative to length of text)
  - Offers sufficient background information to orient the reader
  - Presents the reason for which you undertake the study
  - Indicates main results
- Short presentation of the herd
- Body
- Conclusion
- References
- Appendix



## 1. Sows

### 1.1 Insemination unit

- 1.1.1. Factor buildings
- 1.1.2. Factor feeds
- 1.1.3. Factor labor and management
- 1.1.4. Factor animals
- 1.1.5. Factor veterinarian and medicine

### 1.2. Gestation unit

- 1.2.1. Factor buildings
- 1.2.2. Factor feeds
- 1.2.3. Factor labor and management
- 1.2.4. Factor animals
- 1.2.5. Factor veterinarian and medicine

### 1.3. Farrowing unit

- 1.3.1. Factor buildings
- 1.3.2. Factor feeds
- 1.3.3. Factor labor and management
- 1.3.4. Factor animals
- 1.3.5. Factor veterinarian and medicine

## 2. Weaners

- 2.1. Factor buildings
- 2.2. Factor feeds
- 2.3. Factor labor and management
- 2.4. Factor Animals
- 2.5. Factor veterinarian and medicine

## 3. Finishers

- 3.1. Factor buildings
- 3.2. Factor feeds
- 3.3. Factor labor and management
- 3.4. Factor Animals
- 3.5. Factor veterinarian and medicine



## 1. Factor Buildings

### 1.1. Sows

1.1.1. Insemination unit

1.1.2. Gestation unit

1.1.3. Farrowing unit

### 1.2. Weaners

### 1.3. Finishers

## 2. Factor Feeds

### 2.1. Sows

2.1.1. Insemination unit

2.1.2. Gestation unit

2.1.3. Farrowing unit

### 2.2. Weaners

### 2.3. Finishers

## 3. Factor Labor and Management

### 3.1. Sows

3.1.1. Insemination unit

3.1.2. Gestation unit

3.1.3. Farrowing unit

### 3.2. Weaners

### 3.3. Finishers

## 4. Factor Animals

### 4.1. Sows

4.1.1. Insemination unit

4.1.2. Gestation unit

4.1.3. Farrowing unit

### 4.2. Weaners

### 4.3. Finishers

## 5. Factor Veterinarian and Medicine

### 5.1. Sows

5.1.1. Insemination unit

5.1.2. Gestation unit

5.1.3. Farrowing unit

### 5.2. Weaners

### 5.3. Finishers



# 5. The Paragraph

- A paragraph is a group of related sentences that discuss one main idea (**unity**).
- The main idea of the paragraph is expressed by one sentence (**topic sentence**).
- The following (**supporting**) sentences will then **develop** this main idea.
- There are several kinds of specific supporting details: **examples, statistics, and quotations.**



## A. The Three parts of a Paragraph

1. A topic sentence
2. Supporting sentences
3. A concluding sentence (usually for stand-alone paragraphs only)



TS

(1) *Gold, a precious metal, is prized for two important characteristics.*

(2) First of all, gold has a lustrous beauty that is resistant to corrosion.

(3) Therefore, it is suitable for jewelry, coins, and ornamental

purposes. (4) Gold never needs to be polished and will remain

beautiful forever. (5) For example, a Macedonian coin remains as

untarnished today as it was 25 centuries ago. (6) Another

important characteristic is its usefulness to industry and

science. (7) For many years, it has been used in hundreds of industrial

applications, such as photography and dentistry. (8) The most recent

use of gold is in astronauts' suits. (9) Astronauts wear gold-plated heat

shields for protection when they go outside spaceships in space.

(10) *In conclusion, gold is prized for its beauty but also for its utility.*

Supporting sentences

Concluding sentence



## 1. *The topic sentence:*

- states the main idea of the paragraph + creates a map for the reader;
- limits the topic of the paragraph to one specific area which is to be discussed in the single space of a paragraph;
- is a complete sentence (at least one subject and one verb);
- is usually the first sentence in the paragraph.

(1) **Gold**, a precious metal, is prized for two important characteristics.

topic  
sentence



## 2. *Supporting sentences:*

- develop the topic sentence, and thus the main idea, further;
- could be examples, statistics, quotations, etc.

*(2) First of all, gold has a lustrous beauty that is resistant to corrosion.*

*(6) Another important characteristic of gold is its usefulness to industry and science.*

*(8) The most recent use of gold is in astronauts' suits.*

The supporting sentences that further develop the topic sentence about perception.



### *3. The concluding sentence:*

- signals the end of the paragraph and leaves the reader with important points to remember by summarizing the main points of the paragraph or repeating the TS in different words;
- is customary for stand-alone paragraphs;
- end-of-paragraph signals: *finally, in brief, in conclusion, indeed, in short, lastly, therefore, thus, to sum up, the evidence suggests, these examples show that...*

*(10) In conclusion, gold is treasured not only for its beauty but also for its utility.*



### 3.1 Attributes of the utility function

A general characteristic of an attribute is that it directly influences the farmer's subjectively defined welfare and, therefore, is an element of the very purpose of production. This may be illustrated by a few examples. The average milk yield of the cows of a dairy herd is not an attribute of a utility function, because such a figure has no direct influence on the farmer's welfare. If, however, he is able to sell the milk under profitable conditions he will experience a monetary gain, which certainly may increase his welfare and, therefore, may be an attribute. In other words, the purpose of production from the farmer's point of view could never be to produce a certain amount of milk, but it could very well be to attain a certain level of monetary gain.

Animal welfare may in some cases be an attribute of the utility function. Whether or not it is in the individual case depends on the farmer's reasons for considering this aspect. An argument could be that animals at a high level of welfare probably also produce at a higher level and thereby increase the monetary gain. In that case, animal welfare is just considered as a shortcut to higher income, but it is not considered to be a quality by itself. Accordingly, it should not be considered to be an attribute. If, on the other hand, the farmer wants to increase animal welfare even if it, to some extent, decreases the levels of other attributes like monetary gain or leisure time then it is certainly relevant to consider it to be an attribute of the utility function.



### 3.1 Attributes of the utility function

Leading sentence at the beginning of the §

A general characteristic of an attribute is that it directly influences the farmer's subjectively defined welfare and, therefore, is an element of the very purpose of production. This may be illustrated by a few examples. The average milk yield of the cows of a dairy is not an attribute of the utility function, because such a figure has no direct influence on the farmer's welfare. To sell the milk under profitable conditions he will experience a monetary gain, which certainly may influence his welfare and, therefore, may be an attribute. In other words, the purpose of production from the farmer's point of view could never be to produce a certain amount of milk, but it could very well be to attain a certain level of monetary gain.

Supporting information

Animal welfare may in some cases be an attribute of the utility function. Whether or not it is in the reasons for considering this aspect. An argument could be that a farmer may possibly also produce at a higher level and thereby increase the monetary gain. In that case, animal welfare is just considered as a shortcut to higher income, but it is not considered to be a quality by itself. Accordingly, it should not be considered to be an attribute. If, on the other hand, the farmer wants to increase animal welfare even if it, to some extent, decreases the levels of other attributes like monetary gain or leisure time then it is certainly relevant to consider it to be an attribute of the utility function.

Supporting information



## B. Problems in Paragraphs

Paragraph problems often arise from two difficulties:

1. Lack of unity -> one logically developed idea per paragraph
2. Lack of coherence -> the logical linking of ideas (flow)



## *Linking within Sentences*

and, but, so  
which, who, what, that  
when, where, after, before, until, while  
because, since, as  
if, unless  
although, however

## *Linking between Sentences*

Repetition of a word  
A noun with a pronoun  
Using a synonym  
Using a comparison



### 3.1 Attributes of the utility function

#### Idea 1

*A general characteristic of an attribute is that it directly influences the farmer's subjectively defined welfare and, **therefore**, is an element of the very purpose of production. **This** may be illustrated by a few examples.*

The average milk yield of the cows of a dairy herd is not an attribute of a utility function, because such a figure has no direct influence on the farmer's welfare. If, **however**, he is able to sell the milk under profitable conditions he will experience a monetary gain, which certainly may increase his welfare and, **therefore**, may be an attribute. **In other words**, the purpose of production from the farmer's point of view could never be to produce a certain amount of milk, but it could very well be to attain a certain level of monetary gain.

*Animal welfare may in some cases be an attribute of the utility function.* Whether or not it is in the individual case depends on the farmer's reasons for considering this aspect. An argument could be that animals at a high level of welfare probably also produce at a higher level and **thereby** increase the monetary gain. **In that case**, animal welfare is just considered as a shortcut to higher income, but it is not considered to be a quality by itself. **Accordingly**, it should not be considered to be an attribute. If, **on the other hand**, the farmer wants to increase animal welfare even if it, to some extent, decreases the levels of other attributes like monetary gain or leisure time then it is certainly relevant to consider it to be an attribute of the utility function.

#### Idea 2

## *Linking Words and Phrases*

*(see Charts of Connecting Words and Transition Signals , Alice Oshima and Ann HogueWriting Academic English, Longman 2006)*

- **Time**: At first, next, later, in the end, eventually...
- **Comparison**: in comparison, in contrast, similarly...
- **Contrast**: but, still, however, yet, nevertheless, on the other hand, on the contrary, in spite of this...
- **Addition**: what is more, moreover, furthermore, in addition, also, nor...
- **Reason**: for this reason, owing to this, therefore...
- **Result**: as a result, consequently, so, therefore, thus, accordingly...
- **Order**: first, second, in the first place, firstly, to begin with, secondly, lastly, finally
- **Example**: for example, for instance, thus...
- **Explanation**: in other words, that is to say...
- **Attitude**: naturally, of course, certainly, strangely enough, oddly enough, luckily, (un)fortunately, admittedly, undoubtedly...
- **Summary**: finally, in conclusion, in short, to sum up...



# An example from an Animal Production Science report on pigs



## 2.1 Quarantine section

**First §.** (1) General introduction to reason for quarantine

(1) With traces of African swine fever in wild boars in Poland and outbreaks in swine herds in Russia, extra awareness of biosecurity is extremely important. (2) The recommended quarantine-time for the animals is approximately 8 weeks (Hvolgaard, 2013) because the analysis of the blood samples, which are needed to establish presence of diseases, may take up to six weeks and results may only be finalized after an additional two weeks. (3) Since 2004, the quarantine section Østervang, with four pens each measuring 12.3m, has been located in the new building, and is designed to avoid transfer of possible diseases from newly bought animals to the animals in the production. (4) The required area for gilts between 85-110 kg is 0.65 m per gilt (Order no. 323 of 6th of May 2003, § 4) which means the capacity of the quarantine section is 18 gilts per pen and 72 in total. (5) Nevertheless, every fifth week, only 44 new gilts at an age of 22 weeks and with a minimum weight of 70 kg are bought. (6) As opposed to the recommended eight-week quarantine, the newly bought gilts remain in quarantine for only five weeks until they are 27 weeks old and weigh approximately 95 – 110 kg. (7) Then they are moved to the gilts pens.

(2) General procedure for quarantine in DK (?)

Specific situation: Østervang

(5) Contradictory behavior farmer Østervang

The owner of Østervang is aware of the recommendations but claims that based on correct gilt management in terms of longevity, there is only capacity for 44 gilts in the quarantine section and therefore decides not to follow the recommended quarantine period. As a result, an increased risk of transfer of diseases exists. However, the risk might not be that high because the providing herd of the bought gilts has a red SPF status which means that blood samples are taken every month, and the health status of the herd is always recently updated.

**New §.**  
Transition sentence to previous § + explanation for contradictory behavior. Explanation complete?

On the day of the arrival, the gilts are injected with three vaccines, Gripovac (2 ml), Myg Ingelvac (1ml) and Parvo Porcellis (2ml), to generate antibodies for Influenza, Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae, Swine Erysipelas and Poarvovirus (PPV). Four weeks after the first vaccinations, the gilts are vaccinated with Gripovac (2ml) and Toxicol (5ml) to generate antibodies for Influenza again, but also for E.coli and Necrotic Enteritis.

**New §.**  
Information on vaccines

As mentioned above, the gilts are vaccinated against Mycoplasma. This is due to the fact that the bacteria exists in the herd. The owner, however, has no plans to eradicate the bacteria because of the high expense as well as the high risk for (re?)infection. The Mycoplasma, which establishes in the respiratory tract of the anima, spreads either through direct contact with infected animals or through aerosols from infected animals. These aerosols are airborne and transmission may occur with distances up to 3.2 km if the ventilation outlet from another infected herd, the wind and/or temperature allows it (Taylor, 2006). As it appears from the GIS map (Appendix D) two of the three closest pig productions (at 1.2 and 2.2 km distance) are also infected with Mycoplasma. Consequently, the risk for infection is quite high. However, the wind in Denmark mostly blows from the west in an eastward direction, and these two production herds are located east of Østervang, which consequently diminishes the risk of transmission of the aerosols. The closest pig production is placed only 752 m to the west of Østervang and its health status is unknown by the SPF system. However, the owner at Østervang claims the herd used to be infected, but the production closed. If the owner at Østervang would plan to eradicate the Mycoplasma, the risk of reinfection through air transmission from surrounding herds would therefore be relatively small.

**New §.**  
 Explanation  
 why owner  
 does not  
 want to  
 eradicate  
 Mycoplasma  
 +  
 explanation  
 how  
 Mycoplasma  
 spreads  
 +  
 Expalantion  
 why there is  
 no real  
 threat



Mycoplasma can be eradicated in two ways. Firstly, all animals are culled and new animals from a non-infected herd are inserted. This is a very expensive approach. The other option is a partial eradication where only animals under the age of 10 months are culled. Every empty section should then be cleaned and disinfected. A 14-day period without any farrowing is inserted, and all animals should be medicated with an antibiotic against the Mycoplasma bacteria on a daily basis. After 14 days, the production may proceed as usual.

**New §.**  
Explanation  
how  
Mycoplasma  
can be  
eradicated  
in two ways

As mentioned above, biosecurity in quarantine is of the utmost importance, and, consequently, there is no physical contact between gilts and stable personnel the first week after arrival. Instead, a window from the stable to the quarantine section makes the daily monitoring possible. One week after arrival, and every second day in the evening, an employee checks the quarantine gilts, treats potential injuries or illnesses and provides the section with straw. The quarantine gilts are floor fed and their feeding system is connected to the one in the gilts pen. Twice a day, the quarantine gilts are fed simultaneously with the gilts pens. Twice a week, the gilts are provided with monocalcium phosphate to prevent joint problems.

**New §.**  
Transition sentence  
which links this  
last paragraph to  
the previous  
paragraphs and  
the introduction.  
Explanation on  
how new gilts are  
treated in terms of  
biosecurity.

## 6. Academic Style

Academic writing -> precise, formal, impersonal and objective.

Focus -> on presenting information clearly and accurately.

*'A lot of people think that the weather is getting worse. They say this has been going on for quite a long time. I think that they are quite right. Research has shown that we now get storms etc. all the time.'*



A lot of people think...	<i>'a lot' is imprecise</i>
...the weather...	<i>'weather'=short-term=imprecise</i>
...getting worse...	<i>informal</i>
They say...	<i>personal pronoun=informal</i>
...going on...	<i>informal phrasal verb</i>
...quite a long time...	<i>imprecise</i>
I think...	<i>informal</i>
...we now get...	<i>informal</i>
...storms etc....	<i>vague</i>
...all the time...	<i>overgeneralization</i>



It is widely believed that the climate is deteriorating. It is claimed that this process has been continuing for nearly 100 years. This belief appears to be supported by McKinley (1997) who shows a 55% increase in the frequency of severe winter gales since 1905.

A lot of people think that the weather is getting worse. They say this has been going on for quite a long time. I think that they are quite right. Research has shown that we now get storms etc. all the time.



# A. Vocabulary

## 1. Do not use colloquial vocabulary

kid(s)	→	child(ren)
huge	→	significant, extensive
ok	→	acceptable, well, permission, safe
like	→	such as, for instance, for example
A bit low	->	not sufficient, insufficient

## 2. Use vocabulary accurately

less/amount	vs	few/number
affect	vs	effect
economic	vs	economical



### 3. Know your vocabulary

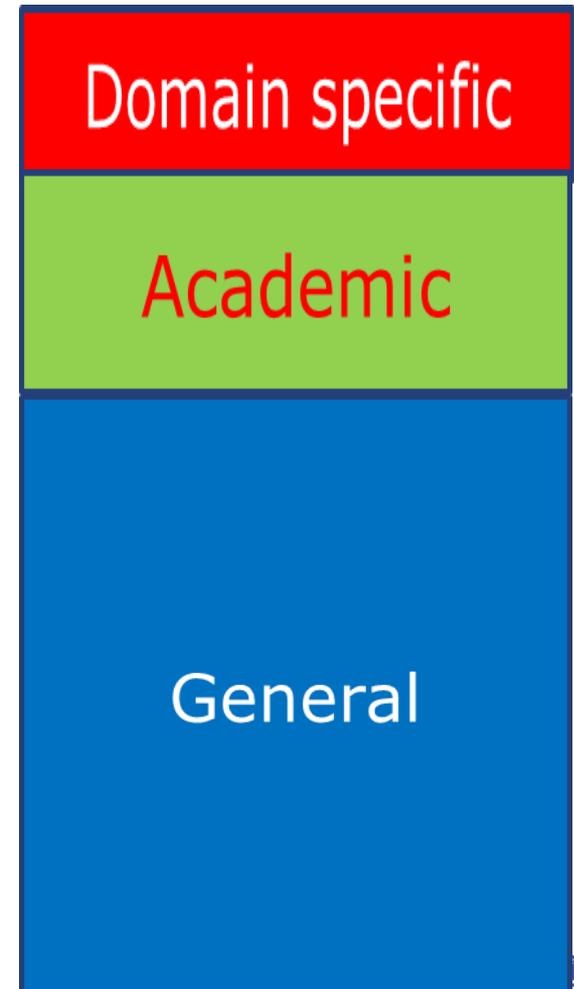
- General words – most common 3,000 *e.g. herd, cow, pig, management...*
- Domain-specific terms *e.g. gilts, barrows, gestation crate, milking cups, stag...*
- Academic Word List (AWL) *e.g. analysis, deviate, abandon, confirm*

Check words on OALD:

<http://oald8.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com>

Academic Word List link:

<http://www.uefap.com/vocab/select/awl.htm>



## 4. Weak vs. strong verbs

Multi-word verbs are weaker and more colloquial than their more formal and more precise single-word counterparts:

...so when the liquid is getting out (= expelled) from the needle...

...X goes into (= enters) the cell...

...that he tries to give on to his employees (= share, offer)

...we do not look at the farm from a single animal level (= consider)

...the milking cups are put on... (= attached)



- Can you think of suitable one-word synonyms for the following multi-word verbs:

get better/worse	→	improve/deteriorate
put up with	→	tolerate
do away with	→	abolish
get rid of	→	eliminate
throw out	→	evict
turn down	→	reject/refuse
cut back on	→	economise
go; carry on	→	proceed
set up; start	→	establish



## B. Clarity and conciseness

At the moment there are four employees at Østervang, besides one of the owners who also works part time in the stable and one who helps some hours in the weekends.

*Currently, Østervang counts four fulltime employees, one owner who works part-time in the stable and an assistant who helps out a few hours in the weekend.*

The gilts are fed at the same time as ... and two times a week....

*The gilts are fed simultaneously...and twice a week...*

As far as the older cows are concerned, they start to be inseminated 27 days after calving.

*Insemination for the older cows begins 27 days after calving.*



Because the calves are feed with left over milk, and need to get the milk as fast as possible so the temperature of the milk is correct one person might be away for small intervals, feeding the calves.

*It is essential that the calves are fed with leftover milk at the correct feeding temperature. Therefore, one employee may be gone for short periods of time.*

The first person then goes back and puts the milking cups on.

*The first person then returns, and attaches the milking cups.*



## C. Fixed expressions and prepositions

### Fixed expressions:

on the whole, with respect to, in the case of, in terms of, for the most part, with the exception of, to some extent, with regard to, a great deal of, a wide range of, as a rule, from the point of view of...

### Prepositions:

eligible **for**, delay **in**, solution **to**, dissuade **from**, approve **of**, depend **on**, respond **to**, spend money **on**, attend **to**, convince **of**, approach **to**, equip **with**, account **for**...



## Some examples from your work:

This other words, the purpose of this assigent is to describe a professional animal production farm...

*In other words, ...*

As far as the older cows are concerned...

*In terms of the older cows,...*

The begin to drink out of the bowl...

*They begin to drink from the bowl...*

All this means that the energy and nutrient content given in the diet description...

*As a result, ...*

When it comes to handling of the animals in quarantine...

*In terms of dealing with quarantined animals....*

The young gilts receive 5.5 liters feed divided by two meals a day which is equal to 3.3 FU sow per day3.3FU sow .

*...divided into two meals ...*



# 7. The Most Common Errors

A. Punctuation

B. Subject-verb agreement

C. Overusage of the ing-form



## A. Correct punctuation – focus on the comma

### Comma splice

Once a week the feeding dispensers are regulated, a sow in good body condition is, as mentioned before, given 2,5 liters per meal, 5 liters a day.

*Once a week the feeding dispensers are regulated. A sow in good body condition is, as mentioned before, given 2,5 liters per meal, 5 liters a day.*

*Once a week the feeding dispensers are regulated; a sow in good body condition is, as mentioned before, given 2,5 liters per meal, 5 liters a day.*

The insemination rate for heifers could possibly be improved if there were a heat time transponders available for every heifer, thereby none of them would go undetected, except due to technical problems.

*The insemination rate for heifers could possibly be improved if there were a heat time transponders available for every heifer. Thereby none of them would go undetected, except due to technical problems.*

*The insemination rate for heifers could possibly be improved if there were a heat time transponders available for every heifer; thereby none of them would go undetected, except due to technical problems.*



## Comma after an introductory element in the beginning of the sentence

In the future the herd should prepare for construction in the mating unit...

*In the future, the herd should prepare for construction in the mating unit...*

When it comes to handling of the animals in quarantine it is important to be aware of biosecurity as mentioned before.

*When it comes to handling of the animals in quarantine, it is important to be aware of biosecurity as mentioned before.*

In the gilts pens straw is provided on the floor.

*In the gilts pens, straw is provided on the floor.*

## Transition signal

They can however do what they wish.

*They can, however, do what they wish.*

However the time where they are moved to the mating unit...

*However, the time where they are moved to the mating unit...*

## Two main clauses connected by a coordinating conjunction

It would be expensive and the possibility for staying uninfected might not be so great.

*It would be expensive, and the possibility for staying uninfected might not be so great.*

## Serial comma

For breakfast I have toast jam juice and butter.

*For breakfast I have toast, jam, juice and butter.*

## Appositive

Sarah King Britain's oldest woman will be 112 next week.

*Sarah King, Britain's oldest woman, will be 112 next week.*

## Non-defining clause

The Alps which are located between Italy and France are the highest mountains in Western Europe.

*The Alps, which are located between Italy and France, are the highest mountains in Western Europe.*

## B. Subject-verb agreement

Subjects and verbs must agree in number:

Two, at the moment three, works in the farrowing unit...

works → **work**

At Brunbjerggaard, there are an average of 171 year-cows...

are → **is**

The insemination of first parity cows begin 26 days after calving.

begin → **begins**



## C. Overuse of the –ing form

When asking one of the owners, he said that they had not analysed the grain from 2013.

*When we asked one of the owners, he claimed...*

When feeding young gilts, the recommendations depend on the weight of the animals.

*When young gilts are fed, the ....*

*The recommendation for feeding young gilts depend on....*

If checking the given content of amino acids anyway, it is higher than the recommendations.

*When we check the given content ...*

When discussing the animals in the mating unit it is obvious to talk about reproduction results...

*When the animals in the mating unit are discussed...*

*When we discuss the animals...*



## 8. Presentation

Tolerance for small errors, but...

Errors that could have been avoided by proofreading are considered less acceptable:

- incorrect homophone (too/to/two);
- subject-verb agreement (The results shows....);
- misspelled words.

If the flow of ideas is good, small errors may not be noticed, so focus more on content and information flow first.



Consider the **overall format** of your written work.

Are the paragraphs clear? Is the line spacing correct? Have you used standard forms, font sizes and referencing conventions (check with Anders's slides)

Check **spelling**. Don't trust your spellchecker!

Check **punctuation**.

Proofread for **grammatical accuracy**.



Thank you!

See you at the writing workshop!



## 9. References & Toolbox

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