

ESL STUDENTS: TIPS FOR WRITING TO AN ACADEMIC AUDIENCE

STATE YOUR THESIS:

Canadian academic essays and research papers are usually "thesis-driven." This means that you as the writer must **explicitly** state the main point or *thesis* of your paper at the start.

A **thesis statement** is one or two sentences that:

- shows the purpose of the paper or essay
- indicates the basic components (main points) of the paper or essay
- offers the unique point of view or the argument of the writer

Here's an example of a thesis statement:

Concordia University should offer more scholarships for international students because they have greater expenses than most Canadian students and they tend to work harder.

DEVELOP THE MAIN POINTS STATED IN YOUR THESIS:

Once the thesis of the paper is established, the rest of the essay must "flow." In order to do this, develop points that directly relate to your thesis. It often helps to make an outline of your paper showing how the ideas connect. Here is a simple example of an outline for the thesis above:

Introduction: thesis - more scholarships for International students

Point 1: International students have greater expenses

a) tuition costs

b) travel and living expenses

Point 2: International students work harder

a) language learning

b) need to graduate more quickly

Conclusion: Concordia needs to find more money for IS scholarships

CONCLUSION:

In an English academic paper, the conclusion is usually a simple summary of the paper's main points. The writer may also be asked to give an opinion at this point or offer solutions to the problem or make a prediction about the future of the topic. Do this **ONLY** if asked for by your professor; otherwise, simply summarize your main ideas.

USE TRANSITIONS:

Connect the different sections of your paper with transitions. Transitions are words (like *however, therefore, additionally, thus, also*) or phrases (like *for example, on the other hand, in conclusion*) that show a link between a paragraph or sentence and the one that precedes it. You usually put a transition at the beginning of the paragraph to connect it to the previous one.