

ABBREVIATIONS



Because academic writing is formal, it is unusual to use abbreviations and shortened forms of words in the text, although they sometimes appear in notes and references. Here are some guidelines to help you determine when, and if, to abbreviate a word.

When writing academically, we tend to **avoid using shortened forms of words and contractions**. A contraction is when we join 2 words together to make one word, or condense a word by omitting certain letters and substituting them with an apostrophe. While use of these words is common, it is considered informal and is not appropriate for academic writing.

FOR EXAMPLE:

INSTEAD OF:	USE:	INSTEAD OF:	USE:
can't	cannot	doesn't	does not
Mon	Monday	Feb	February
govt	government	dept	department

Abbreviations such as *etc.*, *e.g.* and *i.e.* should only be used when placed in parentheses (brackets). In most other circumstances, you should use word equivalents.

Australia is experiencing an increasing number of heatwaves (i.e. 3 or more days of unusually high maximum and minimum temperatures, as defined by the Bureau of Meteorology).

OR

Australia is experiencing an increasing number of heatwaves, which is 3 or more days of unusually high maximum and minimum temperatures, as defined by the Bureau of Meteorology.

Scholarly abbreviations such as *ibid.*, *cf.* and *q.v.* should only be used in footnotes or endnotes. A list of the most common academic abbreviations and Latin terms can be found on the next page.

Acronyms and initialisms are abbreviations made up of a sequence of the first letters or components of the name of the words in a phrase; for example, *USA* = United States of America, *UNISA* = University of South Australia, *TAFE* = Technical and Further Education

These can be used in academic writing, as long as you write the phrase out in full the first time it is mentioned, and place the acronym or initialism in brackets afterwards. Thereafter, the acronym or initialism alone may be used.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) was formed in 1948. WHO seeks to improve health in every country of the world.

Some abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms are so common that they have almost become 'words' in their own right. Examples are *radar*, *scuba* and *Qantas*. These can be used as you would any other word.



Points of the Compass should be written in full. They can, however, be used in their abbreviated form on illustrations and diagrams. In this case, they should be in upper case, followed by a full stop.

e.g. north east = NE.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following list will help you recognise common academic abbreviations and Latin terms, and their meanings:

anon.	anonymous
c./ca. (circa)	about (for use with approximate dates) c. 1880 c. 5 th century
cf. (confer)	compare with
ch.	chapter
ed./eds	editor(s), edited by, edition
edn	edition
e.g. (exempli gratia)	for example
esp.	especially
et al. (et alii)	and others
et seq. (et sequens)	and the following pages
etc. (et cetera)	and other things
f./ff.	and the following page (f.) or pages (ff.)
fig./figs	figure(s)
fn./fnn.	footnote(s)
ibid. (ibidem)	in the same book, chapter or page
id. (idem)	the same as previously mentioned
i.e. (id est)	that is
inf. (infra)	below
iss.	issue (e.g. of a journal)
l./ll.	line(s)
loc. cit. (loco citato)	in the place already cited
n.d.	no date
no.	number (e.g. of a journal)
op. cit. (opere citato)	a text that has already been cited
p./pp.	page(s)
para./paras	paragraph(s)
passim	here and there, throughout the work cited
q.v. (quod vide)	which see (that is, look this one up too)
rev.	reviewed, reviewed by, reviewed in, revised



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ser.	series
sup. (supra)	above
suppl.	supplement
trans	translated by, translation
v. (versus)	versus. (Used to contrast two things, people, sports teams etc. NB This is a preposition not a verb, so we cannot say 'Smith versed Jones' to mean 'Smith played against Jones'.)
viz. (videlicet)	namely
vol./vols	volume(s) (e.g. of a journal)