# English for Uni

# Making the most of marker feedback

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| Feedback Comments | What it means and what you can do |
| **“The vocabulary used is limited and not appropriate for the task.**  **This impacts on your ability to communicate effectively.”** | This comment tells you to develop your vocabulary further. You won’t be able to discuss ideas fully and comprehensively with limited vocabulary.  Action: When reading texts, take notice of the vocabulary and how words are used. It is a good idea to develop a word bank to increase your vocabulary for each topic/theme. |
| **“You tend to switch between tenses.”** | Such a comment indicates that you need to be consistent with the correct use of verb tenses.  **Action:** There are many verb tenses in English. However, not all of them are used in academic writing. Some tenses are used more often than others. Look through your readings to find the most commonly used verb tenses. Learn more:  * [Clarity English Programs](https://www.deakin.edu.au/students/studying/study-support/academic-skills/clarity-english-programs)  - Tense Buster program * [Purdue Online Writing Lab](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/601/1/) – Sequence of tenses |
| **“You have written a number of short sentences and the connections between the ideas are not clear.”** | This comment suggests that the ideas expressed in short sentences are not clear and difficult to follow.  **Action:** Use linking words (e.g. because or however) to connect the ideas or use conjunctions (e.g. where, as or that) to combine the short sentences. Learn more:  * [Purdue Online Writing Lab](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/573/01/) – [Strategies for variation](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/573/1/) |
| **“Some of your sentences are vague and unclear.”**  **Or**  **“Avoid writing long sentences that mix a number of different ideas.”** | Vague or ambiguous sentences can be quite confusing and difficult to understand.  **Action:**  Include only one or two ideas in each sentence and put explanations into separate sentences.  **Learn more:**   * [Purdue online writing lab:](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/600/01/)  [Improving sentence clarity](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/600/01/). |
| **“Your writing lacks critical analysis.”** | Such a comment indicates that your writing is perhaps descriptive and you have superficially discussed the ideas.  **Action:** You need to consider the ideas from different perspectives by comparing and contrasting ideas, finding areas where writers agree and disagree and/or assessing differing pieces of evidence and discussing which evidence appears to be stronger and why etc.  **Learn more:** See [Study Support Academic Skills](https://www.deakin.edu.au/students/studying/study-support/academic-skills/reading-and-note-taking) on [critical thinking, reading and notetaking](https://www.deakin.edu.au/students/studying/study-support/academic-skills/reading-and-note-taking) |
| **“Your writing lacks flow.”** | What this means is that it wasn’t easy to make connections across your sentences and paragraphs.  **Action:**   * Read it aloud to yourself. If it is difficult to understand, this might indicate that some things need to be changed in the sentence. * Ideas joined with linking words such as ‘because’ or ‘however’ increase the flow and readability. * Greater use of linking words e.g. therefore, subsequently will help to clarify how one point relates to another. Your writing will have greater fluency when ideas and information relate to each other logically. * Also think about grouping ideas that are similar near each other, so there is better flow from one idea to the next. |
| **“You need to ensure you paraphrase by re-structuring the sentence and not just changing a few words.”** | Here you are being asked to write in your own words by changing words, sentence structure and word order etc.  **Action:**   * To paraphrase effectively, read the material and ensure you understand the main points, then write notes from memory. * Use your notes to develop your paraphrase as this makes it easier to express ideas in your own words.   **Learn more:** Start using one of the suggested [note taking strategies](http://www.deakin.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/900906/Note-taking-Six-strategies_Deakin-Study-Support.pdf). See [Study Support Academic Skills](https://www.deakin.edu.au/students/studying/study-support/academic-skills/reading-and-note-taking) -Integrating Sources. |