DEVELOPING
REFERENCE SKILLS

Teresa O’Brien
R. R. Jordan

Collins Study Skills in English
Contents

List of figures 4
Preface 5
Introduction: two tests in alphabetical ordering 6

Chapter 1 Using an English dictionary 8
Section A
1 Finding a word 8
2 Finding the meaning of a word 10
3 Using the dictionary when you are writing 14
4 Using the pronunciation information 16
5 Using the dictionary to help you spell 17
6 Other uses of the dictionary 18

Section B Exercise 18

Dictionary pages 20

Chapter 2 Books – using the contents page and index 23
Introduction The organisation of a book 23
Section A
1 Using the contents page 24
2 Using the index 27

Section B
3 Using the contents page 31
4 Using the index 33

Chapter 3 Using libraries 35
Section A
1 Using a reading list 35
2 The author catalogue 36
3 Classification systems 40
4 Finding the book itself 42
5 The title catalogue 44
6 Periodicals 45
7 Library services 49

Section B Exercise 52

Chapter 4 Building your own reference system 54
Section A
1 How to record your reading 54
2 Using footnotes and bibliographies to extend your reading 59
3 How to find your own references in the library 62
4 Bibliographical reference works 65
5 General reference works 68

Section B
6 Following up references 69
7 Finding your own references 70
Appendix A  Key to phonetic symbols  73
Appendix B  How to use the Science Citation Index  74
Appendix C  Library of Congress Classification System  76
Answer key  77
Glossary of Latin terms frequently used in books  87
Glossary of book and library terms  87
Bibliography  90
Index  92
2 Books – using the contents page and index

Introduction: the organisation of a book

Throughout this book we use special words that refer to the different parts of a book. It is important, therefore, to understand these words and to see how a book in English is organised.

Let us start with the outside of a book.

The book may have on it a dust jacket which may contain a publisher’s blurb.

The cover may be hardback or paperback.

If you are not sure what some of these words mean, look in the glossary. All the words in bold (very black) type in this book are in the glossary.

Now let us look at the inside of a book. Usually the first page in the book (i) is the title page; the second page (ii) usually contains publishing details. We can easily see how the rest of the book is organised by looking at a typical contents page:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preface (or/and Foreword)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of tables, illustrations, maps, figures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction (or Prologue)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>: –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography (or Further Reading or References, or Sources)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These items are normally at the beginning, but may be in a slightly different order.

When chapters, parts, sections, etc. are numbered, the numbers are on the left and are usually Arabic numerals, but may be Roman numerals (I, II, III).

These items are always at the end.

Page numbers are almost always on the right of the topic.

Pages at the beginning are often in small Roman numerals.

The main part of the book always uses Arabic numerals.

This contents page has a small Roman numeral (v).
BOOKS – USING THE CONTENTS PAGE AND INDEX

The chapters of academic books are often divided into smaller sections. The titles of these (called headings) are sometimes, but not always shown on the contents page.

We have seen in our example of a contents page that two different page numbering systems may be used: Arabic numerals and Roman numerals. The Roman numerals may be in capital or small letters. The numbers up to 20 are given below for reference:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Roman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10</td>
<td>I II III IV V VI VII VIII IX X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i ii iii iv v vi vii viii ix x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Roman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20</td>
<td>XI XII XIII XIV XV XVI XVII XVIII XIX XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xi xii xiii xiv xv xvi xvi xz xii xix xx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section A 1 Using the contents page

The contents page of a book shows you the structure of the book. It helps you to select the sections that you need.

Exercise 1

On page 25 you will find the contents page of Introduction to Economics by Sir Alec Cairncross. You will see that the book is divided into seven parts and that each part contains several chapters. (The chapters are grouped together in parts because they contain related information.) One important study skill is to be able to use the more general titles of parts to help you find the particular topic or chapter you need.

In the contents page here only the title of Part I is given. The titles of Parts II to VII are given below in a mixed order. Look at them and then look carefully at the chapter headings. For example, you may find, as in a, that one of the chapters has the same title as one of the parts or, as in b, that the words in the title of the part appear several times in the chapter headings. You may also have to make links between adjectives and nouns, e.g. industrial and industry, or between words that have very similar or related meanings, e.g. finance and balance of payments. Write the correct Part number beside the title. The first one has been done for you.

General titles

a THE DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME  b INCOME, EMPLOYMENT AND MONEY
d INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND FINANCE  e ECONOMIC POLICY
f SUPPLY AND DEMAND

When you have checked your answers write the titles of the Parts in the spaces on the contents page opposite.

Exercise 2

Speed exercise

It is important to be able to find topics quickly.

Look at the contents page again. Find the page number of the first page of the chapters on page 26 and write it on the right of the list. Also write in the chapter numbers (not the part numbers). The first one has been done as an example.

24
# CONTENTS

List of Tables ix
List of Diagrams xi

## Part I – INTRODUCTORY
1 What Economics is About 1
2 The Central Problems of Economics 18
3 Production, Consumption and Trade 27
4 The Factors of Production 38

## Part II –
5 Growth, Transformation and Development 67
6 Specialisation: Division of Labour 80
7 Specialisation: Localisation of Industry 90
8 Large-Scale Production 102
9 Small-Scale Production 125
10 The Finance of Large-Scale Production 137
11 The Growth of Business Units 151

## Part III –
12 The Existing Order: a Preliminary Survey 179
13 The Price Mechanism 186
14 Supply and Demand 193
15 Demand 208
16 Supply: Cost and Price 219
17 Monopoly and Competition 234
18 Supply: Cost in Relation to Output 245
19 Supply: Cost in Relation to Time 254
20 Inter-relationships of Supply and Demand 261
21 Social Aspects of Pricing 270

## Part IV
22 The Distribution of Income 279
23 Wages 302
24 Interest and Profit 325

## Part V
25 The National Income 350
26 Appendix to Chapter 25: The National Accounts 362
27 Fluctuations in the Value of Money: Inflation 379
28 Appendix to Chapter 27: Index Numbers 429
29 The Demand for Money 436
30 The Supply of Money 446
31 British Financial Institutions 466

## Part VI –
32 International Trade 492
33 The Balance of Payments 505
34 The Mechanism of International Adjustment 518

## Part VII –
35 The Managed Economy 542
36 Economic Planning 548
37 Some Problems of Economic Policy 558

Appendix A Sources of British Economic Statistics 591
Appendix B Further Reading 594
Index 604

From Introduction to Economics, Sir Alec Cairncross
## Exercise 3

One of the most important and most difficult skills that you need to develop is selecting the correct chapter to help you with a particular task. This becomes easier as you learn more about a subject, but when you know very little, it can be difficult. If you are not an economics student, you will have to think carefully in order to answer the following questions. You will have to use all your knowledge of English vocabulary and grammar and your general knowledge of the world.

Write down the number of the chapter (from the contents page on page 25) in which you would find some information about the following topics. Before you do this exercise, check that you have filled in the titles of the Parts (see Exercise 1). These will help you to save time in your search. For instance, you would not expect to find the answer to 1 in the Part entitled 'Income, Employment and Money' or 'The Distribution of Income', since neither of them has anything to do with producing goods on a large scale. Do not read every chapter heading. Decide first on the Part which seems most suitable and then read the chapter headings. The first one has been done for you.

1. obtaining and using money in order to produce goods on a large scale (i.e. in great quantity)  
   Chapter 10

2. the ways supply and demand relate to each other (i.e. the way one affects the other)  
   Chapter

3. how money loses value  
   Chapter

4. the reasons for dividing work into separate tasks (e.g. in the manufacture of cars, the engines may be made in one factory and the bodywork in another)  
   Chapter

5. the advantages of trade between countries  
   Chapter

6. why certain industries develop in certain places  
   Chapter

## Exercise 4

Here are some examples of essay questions. Look again at the contents page and decide which chapters could help you. Sometimes there may be several chapters which seem useful. Write the chapter numbers on the lines below. If you cannot find a useful chapter, write none. The first one has been done for you.

1. What is money? Explain its importance in the modern economy.  
   Chapters 27, 28, 29 (Although these are the best answers, 13 and 23 are also possible.)

---

1 Remember, chapter numbers are on the left of the contents page.
2 What is the role of the Bank of England in determining the supply of money?

3 Discuss the advantages of International Trade.

4 Explain and illustrate the meaning of the term 'Third World'. Compare and contrast the main barriers to growth in the Third World and in Western capitalist economies.

5 In 1972 there were about 69,000 small manufacturing firms (with fewer than 200 employees) in Britain, accounting for some 18 per cent of net output, 22 per cent of employment and 12 per cent of investment. What do you think are the main reasons for the existence of so many small firms?

6 Why is it necessary for the government to intervene in the location of industry? Critically assess the policies that have been adopted by post-war UK governments.

7 Discuss the view that monopoly is an evil. What types of economic policy are used against monopoly?

Exercise 5

Quick revision
1 How many page-numbering systems are used on the contents page (page 25)? If you are not sure what this means, look again at the sample contents page in the Introduction to this chapter.

2 Write a list of items from the Introduction to Economics contents page which are neither chapters nor parts. The first one has been done for you.
   a List of Tables  e
   b __________________________ f __________________________
   c __________________________ g __________________________
   d __________________________

3 What would you find on page viii of the economics book?

2 Using the index

An index gives you information about the contents of a book; it does so in much greater detail than the contents page. It includes all the important subjects, people and places that are mentioned in the book. It also tells you the exact pages on which you will find the information you want. For example, imagine that you wish to know where in Introduction to Economics you can find information about 'booms and slumps'. If you turn to the index on page 29 you will see that the following page references are given – 26, 114–5, 173, 384 et seq., 417, 441, 568.
BOOKS – USING THE CONTENTS PAGE AND INDEX

It is often easier to find what you want in the index because it is arranged alphabetically. If you want to know whether a certain economics book includes information about the Bank of England, for example, you turn to the page which includes B entries.

Sometimes you need to consider which letter an entry will appear under. For example, it would be possible for Bank Charter Act to appear under B (Bank) or A (Act) but not under C (Charter) because the important words are normally at the beginning or the end of a phrase. On the page from the index of Introduction to Economics (page 29) it appears under B. Always check carefully.

Exercise 6

Look at the index page opposite.

1 The following sentences describe where the Bank of England entry is on the page. Fill in the gaps below to show this position exactly.
   a It is in the ______________ hand column.
   b It is immediately below the ______________ entry.
   c It comes before the ______________ entry.

2 In how many separate places in the book will you find details about the Bank of England? __________

3 Some pieces of information are longer than others. Which is the longest sequence of pages about the Bank of England? (If you wanted to find out as much as you could in a short time, it might be sensible to look at the longest sequence first.)

__________________________________________

Exercise 7

1 Sometimes you need to use the index and the contents page together. Suppose you want to find out about the role of the Bank of England in supplying money. You know from the contents page that the chapter on The Supply of Money begins on page 446 and ends on page 465 (Chapter 29). The index tells you that within that chapter, the Bank of England is mentioned four times. Write down the four sets of page numbers:
   a __________   b __________
   c __________   d __________

2 Before you do the following exercise turn to the glossary of Latin terms on page 87 to find the meaning of passim: this will help you to do the exercise. Now use the index and contents pages together to find the most useful pages for information about the following. In the spaces below, first write the relevant chapter numbers and their page numbers, then write the most useful page numbers.
   a Agriculture and small-scale production _______________________________________

   _______________________________________

   b The balance of payments and international trade______________________________

   _______________________________________

   c Collective bargaining and wages ___________________________________________

   _______________________________________

   _______________________________________

28
INDEX

A
Abstraction, use of in economics, see Methodology
Accelerator, 386, 391, 442, 406-8, 568
Accepting houses, 482
Accountancy, 112, 129, 163n, 221, 224-5
Accountancy, social, Chapter 21 passim, 268, 358
Advances, see Bank
Advantages: absolute, natural and comparative, Chapter 7 pas- sim, 9, 492-4; net, 352-4, 356
Advertising, 10, 12, 30, 133, 156, 163n, 225, 234, 266, 277; see also Marketing
Agricultural Mortgage Corp., 470
Agriculture: 53 et seq., 72-1, 125, 116-7, 125, 179, 177, 176, 263-4, 280-5, 315, 474, 475, 476; and economic fluctuations, 114, 204-5; and margin of
transference, 231; and rising costs, 246-8, 252-3; and wages, 286 et seq., 326
Allocation, see Control, Raw materials
Aluminium Co., 243
Amnesties and location, 102; and social costs, 268, 277, 351; and wages, 8, 264
American Telephone and Telegraph Co., 110, 142
Aquinas, Thomas, 270
Arbitration, 298
Ashworth, W., 49m
Assets: Financial, Chapter 35, patum, 41, 81 et seq.; fired, 376; liquid, 448-9, 453, 457-9, 463-2; 479-82; see also Investment intermediaries
Automation, 88-9
B
Balance: of payments, Chapter 32, pas- sim, 3, 373-4, 378, 463, 491, 497, 516, 546, 565-7; of trade, 63, 536; on official settlements, 372
Bank: definition, 452; advances, 113, 140, 312, 341-2, 387, 417, 450-1, 473 et seq., 487; amalgamations, 169; assets, 460, 473 et seq.; deposits, 143, 447 et
seq., 471; enforcement, 114, 471; functions, 450, 452 et seq., 471 et seq.; investments, 477; notes, 438, 446-7, 454, 461; overdrafts, 473, 474-6; profits,
452; reserves, 450, 454 et seq., 466; inter-bank market, 456, 481; see also Bank Rate, Banks
Bank Charter Act, 542, 543
Bank for International Settlements, 488
Bank of England, 359, 438, 447, 448-50, 454, 456-60, 483-8, 487 et seq., 511; base rate, 473; minimum lending rate, 459
Bank Rate, 439, 473
Banks: Chapters 29 and 30 passim, 5, 138n, 169, 302, 412; American, 454, 464, 471; Big Four, 169, 468-71; branch, 470-1; central, 454 et seq., 512-4, 523, 563, 578-9; City of Glasgow, 138n; clearing, 435, 457-6, 475, 476-7, 479; commercial, 456; development, 470, 474; French, 471n; German, 418n, 471n; industrial, 468; Irish, 447; joint-stock, 143, 468 et seq.; merchant, 468, 470; mortgage, 470; overseas and foreign, 470; savings, 470; Scottish, 447, 471; and economic fluctuations, 387; see also Bank, Credit, Investment intermediaries
Bargaining, collective, 298-9, 310-2, 314 et seq., 321-2, 571
Barter, 6-7, 437, 516
Base rate, 473
Bauer, P. T., 30, 31n
Bechteler, F., 152
Bedford, Earl of, 137
Bentham, 189n
Berle, A. A., 147n
Bernstein Committee, 510
Beveridge, Lord, 382n, 382, 425n
Bilateralism, 496, 534-5
Bills of exchange, 448-9, 480-1
Birth-rate: 42, 44 et seq., 50, 250-1; and wages, 255
Black market, 428, 533, 545
Bloomfield, A. I., 464n
Blum experiment, 425
Boadicea, 328
Boomers and slumps, 26, 114-5, 173, 384 et seq., 417, 441, 568; see also Inflation and deflation, Trade cycle
Booing, L., 259
Booth, Charles, 329n
Bottnicks, 75, 252, 387, 554, 567, 570, 579
Boycott, 158, 506
Branch banks, 470-1
Branch factories, 133-4, 153, 171, 176-7
Bray, Jeremys, 526
Bretton Woods, 537
Bridgewater, Duke of, 137
Briston, R., J., 144n
British Broadcasting Corporation, 36
British European Airways, 36
British Oxygen Co., 158n
British Petroleum Co., 37
Budget: 356, 357, 358, 418, 532, 559 et seq., 586 et seq.; and trade unions, 572
Building societies, 446; see also Investment intermediaries
Bullion Report of 1810, 527n
Bulls and bears, 495
Bureaucracy, 22, 580
Business units: 34-5; growth of, Chapter 11 passim
Butler, J. D., 91n
C
Cairncross, A., 161n, 554n
Campion, H. G, 554n
Canal-building, 137
Capital: Chapters 12 and 24 passim; definition, 38, 46; as a factor of production, 62 et seq.; inflows, 577-8; intensity, 295; market, Chapter 52 passim, 146, 350, 333-4, 439, 491, 571; consumption of, 364-5; expenditure of; see Investment; free, 63; function of, 314 et seq.; international movement of, 465; marginal productivity of, 337 et seq.; mobility of, 342-1; and economic progress, 74-5, 298; and overseas markets, 77; see also Interest, Investment, Profits, Savings, Thrift
Capitalism, Chapters 12, 32 and 33 passim, 20, 271, 329, 330, 549
Carrels, 167 et seq.
Cassel, Gustav, 527n
 Census of Production, 125n, 126
Cheques, use of, 448
Choice and planning, 11; and rationality, 9-11; see also Consumer preferences
Civil service, 36, 544; see also Bureaucracy
Clark, J. M., 127n
Class divisions, 182, 320-10, 584 et seq.
Cleaving house, 470
Coal, supply and demand, 193-4
Coco, 9
Cohn, 446, 449-50
Collateral, 424
Combination, industrial, Chapter 11 passim, 123, 128, 134
Commodity, difficulty of defining, 226-7, 234
Commonwealth Development Finance Co., 470
Communism, 22-1, 184

from Introduction to Economics, Sir Alec Cairncross
Exercise 8

Item 2c above reminds you that you may have to search under more than one letter if there are two or more words. The entry is Bargaining, and the type of bargaining is collective.

Sometimes one entry has many sub-entries. In the following example notice that the sub-entries are indented (i.e. the printed line starts further to the right than the main entry). The next entry starts in line with the entry above it.

Now look at the Bank entry and then complete the following:

It has __________ sub-entries

e.g. functions, 450, 452 et seq., 471 et seq.
deposits, 143, __________, __________.

Find page references for the following:
1 Wages in agriculture __________ 4 Bank rate __________
2 Clearing banks __________ 5 Branch banks __________
3 Balance of trade __________ 6 Fixed assets __________

Exercise 9

Sometimes the information is not in the main text, but in a footnote. This is shown by a letter n. (an abbreviation for note) immediately after the page reference, e.g.

Accountancy . . . 163 n.

Find three more examples in the index of information in footnotes. Write the entry followed by the page numbers:
1 entry ________________ page ______
2 entry ________________ page ______
3 entry ________________ page ______

Exercise 10

When the names of people appear in an index, the surname (or last word of the name for titled people) comes first, for example Berle, A. A. 147 n. Find page references for:
1 Lord Beveridge __________ 3 P. T. Bauer __________
2 The Earl of Bedford __________ 4 The Duke of Bridgewater __________
Section B  3 Using the contents page

Exercise 11
Look at the contents page of *Writing English* by D. J. Collinson (on page 32) and answer the following questions.

1. How many parts are there in this book?  
2. How many chapters are there in this book?  
3. How many pages are there in this book?  
4. How many sub-divisions or sections are there in Chapter 6?

Exercise 12
If you had the following problems, which *chapter* and *subdivision* would you turn to for help? Look carefully: give the number of the chapter and write the title of the subdivisions where necessary. (The first one has been done for you.)

1. You are reading a textbook and you find the following 'word': *viz.* (You do not know what *viz.* means but you think it is not English. You guess it may be an abbreviation.)
   
   Chapter 6. Some Latin terms and their abbreviations. p. 103 Latin terms again. p. 106

2. You are writing an essay and wish to quote in it a sentence from a book you are reading. You are not sure how to punctuate it.
   
   Chapter

3. You are reading a chapter in a text-book. You want to be able to remember and refer to the important points for a discussion with your tutor. You are not sure of the best way to do this.
   
   Chapter

4. You have been told that your written work is not well organised. You want to read something that will help you to correct this.
   
   Chapter

5. You know that you have difficulty remembering when to use *at* and when to use *to*.
   
   Chapter

6. You would like to find another book that deals with punctuation in more detail.
   
   Chapter

7. You want some advice on the use of indirect (or reported) speech.
   
   Chapter

8. You have been told that you sometimes use words wrongly.
   
   Chapter

9. You are writing an essay and must include a list of the books and articles you have read. You are not sure how to organise this.
   
   Chapter
Contents

Introduction 9

Part one: Basics

1 Spot the mistakes 13

2 Spelling 19
   Improve your spelling 19
   Two spelling rules 22
   Latin and Greek plurals; similar words 25
   The apostrophe 27
   Common pitfalls 32
   Revision exercises 35

3 Punctuation 38
   Full stops and capital letters 38
   The comma 41
   The semicolon and the colon 45
   Quotation marks 48
   Dashes, brackets and hyphens 52
   Revision exercises 57

4 Grammar 60
   Arranging the words 60
   Some common failings 62
   Prepositions 66
   Some debatable points 69
   Common failings again 73
   Revision exercises 76

Part two: Techniques

5 Style and diction 81
   Some common failings 82
   Diction: misused words 85
   Ornate writing 89
   Jargon 92
   Vocabulary 95
   Revision exercises 99

6 Academic apparatus 102
   Some Latin terms and their abbreviations 103
   Latin terms again 106
   Bibliographies for books and articles 108
   References and footnotes in books and articles 111
   A method for essays; abbreviations; some Latin phrases 116
   Revision exercises 120

7 Making notes 124
   Techniques and materials 124
   Brevity 127
   More techniques 131
   Notes of arguments 135
   Taking relevant notes 138
   Revision exercises 140

8 Essay writing 144
   Basic form 144
   The essay plan 147
   Content for the plan 149
   Six recommendations for writing an essay 152
   Beginnings, endings, and paragraphs 154
   Referring back; revision exercises 158

9 A note on writing examination answers 161
   Bibliography 164
   Further reading 164
   Works cited 165

Part three: Answers to Exercises

Index 224

from Writing English, D. J. Collinson
4 Using the index

A page from the index to Writing English is shown on page 34. In the following exercises use the index and remember that you may have to look back at the contents page as well.

Exercise 13

List the pages on which you will find information on the following topics. List also the chapter numbers. (Use the contents page.) Notice that often there is information on the topic in more than one chapter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Chapters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 passive voice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 italics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 full stop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 examination essays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 course-work essays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now state which chapters you would use in the following circumstances:

a You are writing a list of articles and books you have read for an essay. You are not sure if you should put a full stop at the end of each item.

b You need some advice on planning an essay.

Exercise 14

You will remember that sometimes an entry has sub-entries; e.g. notemaking has ten sub-entries listed underneath. Write down four other entries which also have sub-entries.

1 ____________________________  3 ____________________________
2 ____________________________  4 ____________________________

Exercise 15

Write down the page(s) you would look at for information on the following:

1 development and change in language ____________________________
2 paraphrasing in notemaking ____________________________
3 using numbers or symbols in footnotes ____________________________
4 use of numerals with references ____________________________
5 numbering system for notemaking ____________________________

Exercise 16

If you look at the entry for essays, you will find two sub-entries. Write these on the lines underneath:

1 ____________________________  2 ____________________________

You will note that each sub-entry is followed by the abbreviation q.v. Look in the glossary of Latin terms to find its meaning.

3 Explain why it has been used in these two cases.
Index

abbreviations 41, 102, 117, 118–19, 121–2, 123, 140
punctuation of 40, 118–19, 123
use in note-making 127, 128
see also Latin abbreviations
active voice 84–5
adjectival use of heroic and well-known names 96–7, 101
apostrophe 27–31
to indicate possession 27–9
to show letter omitted 27, 30
argument, condensing of 135–37, 142
arrangement of words 60–2
bibliographic description 109, 110, 112, 113, 114, 116, 117, 121, 122
purpose of 112, 123
bibliographies 103, 108–11, 112, 113–16, 117
books, references to 111
see also reference bibliography, reference footnote
brackets 52, 53, 54, 111
brevity 89, 92, 127–30
broadcasting 87, 93, 99
capital letters 38–40, 57, 58
card-index system 134
charts 131
clarity of meaning 38, 42–3, 60–2,
74–5, 76, 81, 82, 85, 89, 92, 95, 110
cliché 82–3, 93, 94
collective nouns 71–2, 77
colon 46–8, 54, 58
comma 41–5, 46, 48, 49, 52–3, 57–8, 110, 111
conjunctions 74–5
course work essays 111, 116, 118, 144–60
basic form 144–6, 152, 153, 160
beginnings 154–6, 159
endings 156
essay plan 147–52, 153–4
paragraphs 156–7, 159
preparatory work 152–4
referring back 152, 153, 158
dangling modifier 61–2
dashes 52, 53, 54, 55
diagrams 131–2
diction 81–101
direct speech 48, 49
dissertations 111
‘due to’ 62–4, 76
essays 103, 108, 111, 122
course work essays (q.v.) 111, 116, 118, 144–60
examination essays (q.v.) 144, 161–3
examination papers 144, 161–3
basic form 161
essay plan 161
practice 162
referring back 162
examination technique 162–3
examination marks 38, 57
‘fewer’ and ‘less’ 65, 76
footnote reference, purpose of 112, 123
footnotes 102, 103, 105, 111–15, 117
using numbers or symbols 111
full stop 38, 48, 49, 57, 110, 111
grammar 60–78
hackneyed words and phrases 82–4
hyphens 55–6, 59, 108
indirect speech 49–50
initials 40–41, 110
italics 52, 109, 119
jargon 92–4, 100
journalism 87, 93, 94, 99
language, development and change in 87
Latin abbreviations 102, 103–8, 114, 118, 119, 121, 127
Latin words and phrases 117, 119–20, 122
Latin and Greek plurals 25–6
‘lay’ and ‘lie’ 65–6, 77
lecture notes 128
misuse of words 85–9, 93, 98, 101
modifier 61–2
note-making 124–43
brevity 127–30
card-index systems 134–5
diagrams, tables, etc. 131
numbering system 126
of argument 135–7, 142
paper for 124
paraphrasing 133–4
relevant notes 138–40, 142
setting out 125
summarising 129–30
notes, on text 117, 118, 121–2, 141
numerals, use with references 111, 116, 117
omission of letters 27, 30
‘one’, use of 72
opening paragraph 154–6, 159
ornate writing 89–92
papers, references to 111
see also reference bibliography, reference footnote
paragraphs 156–7, 159
paraphrasing 133–4, 141–2
parenthesis 52–3, 54, 59
passive voice 62, 84–5
planning, of the essay 147–52, 153–4, 161
plural 25–6, 31, 34, 35–6
possessives 27–30
precision 89, 92, 95
preparation work for essays 152–4
prepositions 66–9, 76
published writings 103, 111, 121

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