

A List of VERY USEFUL University Terms

Like any large organisation, universities often use terms or words that you may not have heard of before – we have compiled a list of some VERY useful terms to know! We have also included some links that provide more examples of academic language. You may find that your university has a similar list or glossary on its website that explains all of the main terms and how they are used at your university.

TERM	DEFINITION
Academic staff	People employed by the university to teach and carry out research. They will have university qualifications and titles.
Alumni	These are graduates of your university. Once you have a degree, you will join the alumni of your university.
Bibliography	A bibliography is a list of books, journal articles and other written sources read by the writer in the preparation of an essay or report, but not necessarily directly mentioned in the body of the work. Provision of a bibliography is essential at the university level. It demonstrates the extent of your reading and the relevance, recency and reliability of your information. Always check your discipline's preferred style and use it.
Chancellor	The Chancellor is the formal head of the university. This is an honorary position usually held by a distinguished citizen who appears only on formal occasions such as graduation.
Critical thinking/Criticism/Critique	In the context of university study, 'critical' and 'criticism' are used in the sense of the French word ' <i>critique</i> ', that is, you mention the good as well as the bad. Critical thinking means making careful and exact judgements through a process of systematic analysis and questioning.
Dean of Students	Dean of Students is a senior academic appointed to have special responsibility for student interests and welfare.
Dean	Head of the Faculty, usually a senior academic elected by the staff of all the Departments in the Faculty for a limited term, maybe two or three years.
Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Pro-vice Chancellor	The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Pro-vice Chancellor are senior academics in charge of certain sections of the university activities.
Essay	An essay is a structured, integrated argument about a topic usually set by your Subject or Course Coordinator. It will analyse the topic, look at the available evidence and give an informed judgement. An effective essay will also reflect on the significance and implications of what you have found.
Faculties and Schools	A university is divided into Faculties and Schools, such as the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Economics, and the Faculty of Science. Each Faculty is usually composed of different Schools or Departments.

TERM	DEFINITION
Head of School/Department	The Head is usually a Professor but may be a senior academic, responsible for the organization of the Department, including the teaching, staffing and research.
Journal/Journal Article	A journal is a magazine that publishes the work of researchers in a particular discipline or area. Journals can be known as magazines, periodicals, or serials. Journals are published at least twice per year and contain recent or preliminary research findings written up in short articles (usually about 5,000 words). Journals also contain book reviews and editorial comment. They are great for accessing the very latest research.
Lecture	In a lecture, a 'lecturer' speaks to a large group of students. Each lecture is designed to convey structured information about a selected topic in the subject/course. Lecturers may invite questions at the end of a lecture. They usually do not invite discussion.
List of References	The List of References is a list of books, journal articles and other written sources used, that is, directly mentioned (or 'cited') by the writer in the essay or report. Always check your discipline's preferred style and use it.
Monograph	A monograph is one-volume book on a special subject written by an expert mainly for an academic audience.
Peer Review	Peer Review is where researchers of similar standing (peers) read and comment on the research of their peer. Academic journals are usually 'peer reviewed', this where expert researchers in the field read and comment on the articles <i>before</i> they are published in the journal. Academic journals usually have stringent or demanding peer review.
Plagiarism	Plagiarism is "the taking and using as one's own, the thoughts, writings or inventions of another."(<i>OED</i>) This is an academic crime and can lead to penalties.
Professor	The title of professor is the most senior academic rank; he/she is addressed as 'Professor'. There are seldom more than two Professors in any Department. Associate Professor is the rank just below full professor. An Associate Professor is also addressed as 'Professor'. The other ranks in a Department include
Reader, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer and Associate Lecturer	If these academics have a doctorate they are addressed as 'Doctor'. When any academic takes a tutorial group, he/she is referred to as your tutor, but this is no longer a university rank.
Registrar or Academic Registrar	A Registrar or Academic Registrar is a senior administrator responsible for the routine management of the university, including admissions, fees, and examinations.
Report	A report is a structured presentation of information about a topic. It may describe a process, an event, or any phenomenon

TERM	DEFINITION
	that is of interest or importance, presenting the information in clearly labelled sections. The report should consider any significant changes that have occurred and evaluate any developments. Its conclusion should express the author's judgement / evaluation of what has been described. It may look at further implications and the wider significance of the findings. The third person is used throughout.
Semester	Half of the academic year, each year will have two semesters usually of 13 up to 15 weeks depending on the University.
Sub-deans	Sub-deans are elected academics who serve as advisers to students on the structure of their degree course and their academic progress.
Thesis	A thesis is the main idea or proposal that is to be proved by the evidence presented in the argument of an essay.
Tutorial	A tutorial is a small group discussion led by a tutor. Usually you will be given the topic for the tutorial and the reading you must do. You will also be issued with some questions on the topic which will be addressed in the discussion. In tutorials you have the opportunity to share your ideas and your problems with your fellow students and an experienced academic tutor.
Vice-Chancellor	The Vice Chancellor is the executive head of the university, who is nearly always an academic and who holds the post for a five or seven year term.

Other lists of university terms can be found at:

<http://unisa.edu.au/Student-Life/Support-services/Student-administration/Glossary-of-University-Terms/>

<http://www.monash.edu.au/adjusting/glossary-of-terms.html>

<http://www.open.edu.au/site-support/glossary/>

http://www.uws.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/enrolment/glossary_of_terms