2. Giving your opinion implicitly

Academic writing and professional reports favour an impersonal style in which the author’s presence is not directly revealed.

2.1. Using impersonal structures

You can use impersonal structures to give your opinion, without using first-person reference:

- **it is** + **ADJECTIVE** + **to**
  
  *It is reasonable to assume that such changes have significant social and economic effects.**

- **it is** + **ADJECTIVE** + **that**
  
  *It is important that those concerned with post-school education for young people with learning difficulties are informed about the context in which they work.*

**Collocation**

Adjectives frequently used in the structure **it is** + **ADJECTIVE** + **to**:  
- appropriate, convenient, difficult, easy, essential, hard, important, impossible, interesting, necessary, reasonable, sufficient, useful

- **it is** + **ADJECTIVE** + **that**
  
  *It is important that those concerned with post-school education for young people with learning difficulties are informed about the context in which they work.*

**Collocation**

Adjectives frequently used in the structure **it is** + **ADJECTIVE** + **that**:  
- apparent, appropriate, arguable, clear, conceivable, crucial, desirable, doubtful, essential, evident, important, inconceivable, interesting, necessary, notable, noteworthy, obvious, regrettable, remarkable, significant, surprising, unfortunate

- **it is** + **VERB** + **-ing**
  
  *It is worth noting that some writers on business strategy are well aware of this problem.*

**Collocation**

Verbs frequently used in the structure **it is** + **VERB** + **-ing**:  
- asking, considering, emphasising, examining, investigating, looking at, mentioning, noting, pointing out, quoting, recalling, remembering, repeating, stressing

- **it seems/ would seem that**
  
  *It seems that education is not even essential to happiness. It would seem that the date of the invention of the mechanical clock is probably some time between 1290 and 1300.*

---

**Personal Opinions**

2.2. Using adverbs

You can also use adverbs as a way of giving your opinion, especially when you want to qualify or evaluate the content of your message:

- **Interestingly**, virtually all published studies from around the world have reported similar findings.

- **Significantly**, leading Japanese car manufacturers have adopted export strategies similar in some respects to those of the car industry.

There is, surprisingly, still a good deal of uncertainty about whether the animals can solve problems of this kind.

**Frequent evaluative adverbs**

- arguably, evidently, interestingly, ironically, obviously, remarkably, significantly, surprisingly

For more information on adverbs that can be used to express opinion with different degrees of certainty, see the writing section on **Expressing Possibility and Certainty**.

---

**F. EXPRESSING POSSIBILITY AND CERTAINTY**

When you state facts or ideas, you can express various degrees of certainty, ranging from total uncertainty to confident certainty. Expressions of possibility are very common in academic writing and professional reports, because this style of writing often favours a tentative approach: that is, it tends to avoid making strong and definite claims. By using expressions of possibility, you can limit the scope and strength of your claims, and thus display modesty and allow the reader to disagree with you. On the other hand, expressions of **certainty** show that you are confident in the statements and claims that you are making. In this section, we describe some of the most useful ways of expressing possibility and certainty and we give advice about using them.

1. Using modal auxiliaries such as **may** and **must**

You can use modal auxiliaries to express various degrees of certainty. These range from **might** (which is very tentative) to **must** (which expresses firm conviction), with **could**, **may**, and **should** indicating intermediate degrees of certainty.

**Advances in medical knowledge might lead to the conclusion that some forms of sport are simply too dangerous.**

**In this situation, research into the police could well become increasingly difficult and even less welcome than it was a decade ago.**

**The world's second largest ice cap may be melting three times faster than indicated by previous measurements.**

This is a major archaeological research project which **should** provide valuable new information on sites located in gravel deposits throughout the area.