

Top 10 Academic Phrases for IELTS Essays

IELTS Writing Task 2 (Band 6.5–8+)

1) Stating Your Position (Thesis)

- This essay argues that...
- It will be contended that...
- The essay maintains that...

Model:

This essay argues that public transport should be subsidised because it reduces congestion, protects the environment, and increases accessibility.

2) Defining Scope & Key Terms

- In this essay, the term X refers to...
- Within the scope of this discussion...
- This analysis focuses on...

Model:

In this essay, the term “online learning” refers to university-level courses delivered via digital platforms rather than informal tutorials.

3) Signposting the Structure

- Firstly / Secondly / Finally
- In addition / Moreover
- By contrast / On the other hand / However
- Therefore / Consequently / As a result

Model:

Firstly, pollution increases healthcare costs; in addition, it damages ecosystems.

4) Expressing Causation

- leads to / results in / causes
- is driven by / stems from
- due to / because of

Model:

Increased traffic congestion often results in longer commuting times and reduced overall productivity.

5) Hedging (Academic Caution)

- may / might / tends to / appears to / is likely to
- to some extent / in many cases

Model:

This policy appears to reduce carbon emissions, particularly in densely populated cities.

6) Presenting Evidence or Examples

- For example / For instance
- According to recent research...
- A study by ____ suggests that...

Model:

According to recent research, blended learning environments improve student retention rates.

7) Evaluating & Weighing Perspectives

- On balance, ...
- The benefits arguably outweigh the drawbacks...
- While it is true that..., nevertheless...

Model:

While it is true that petrol taxes raise living costs, the long-term environmental benefits arguably outweigh these drawbacks.

8) Introducing a Counter-Argument

- Critics may claim that...
- Some argue that...
- It is sometimes suggested that...

Model:

Critics may claim that remote work isolates employees; however, structured communication channels can offset this.

9) Rebutting & Strengthening Your Argument

- however, this overlooks...
- yet this perspective fails to consider...
- nonetheless, it can be argued that...

Model:

Some argue that exams measure effort fairly; however, this overlooks inequalities in educational support.

10) Concluding with Impact

- In summary, ...
- On balance, ...
- It is therefore recommended that...

Model:

On balance, renewable energy investment should be prioritised. It is therefore recommended that governments increase subsidies for solar and wind power.

Bonus Sentence Frames (Ready to Use)

Strong Thesis:

This essay argues that **X** should be prioritised because **A**, **B**, and **C**.

Counter-Argument + Rebuttal:

While some may argue that **X**, this perspective overlooks **Y**.

Conclusion:

On balance, the evidence suggests that **X**. It is therefore recommended that **Y**.

Usage Tips

- Use **only 2–4** of these phrases per essay to avoid sounding memorised.
- Always pair phrases with **specific examples**.
- Avoid emotional language; stay factual, neutral, precise.