# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A guide to the book’s icons: what do they mean?</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 1: The basics</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Writing at school and writing at university: are they really so different?</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Different philosophies, different writing styles</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Shifting the balance: reproduction vs critical analysis</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Originality, creativity and ‘voice’</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 The emphasis on research and reading extensively</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Depth of analysis and depth of argument</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Sound reasoning and the importance of evidence</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Transparency, clear organisation and accessibility</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 References and bibliographies</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9 Appendices</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10 Length</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Fundamental principles</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Paragraph essentials: what is a paragraph … and when should you begin a new one?</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Good argument structure: what does it mean and how do you achieve it?</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Explaining everything and avoiding assumptions</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Supporting your statements: evidence, what it is, why it’s essential, and how you provide it</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Being concise and relevant … and avoiding waffle</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Punctuation, how important is it … really?</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Table of Contents

## Part 2: Getting down to writing

### 3 Analysing and answering the question
- 3.1 What do assignment questions mean? 45
- 3.2 Special features of linguistics questions 48
- 3.3 Different forms of writing . . . and the language you need for them 50
- 3.4 How to keep focused on the question 69
- 3.5 Summary: coverage, argumentation and evaluation 70

### 4 The writing process
- 4.1 Information-gathering: brainstorming, researching and selecting material 72
- 4.2 Note-taking 81
- 4.3 Planning 84
- 4.4 Drafting, checking and revising 87

### 5 Writing an introduction
- 5.1 The purpose of an introduction 89
- 5.2 How an introduction achieves its purpose 90
- 5.3 The thesis statement: what it is, where to place it and how to write it 91
- 5.4 Indicating organisation and approach 96
- 5.5 Length 97
- 5.6 Paragraghing 98
- 5.7 When is the best time to write an introduction? 98
- 5.8 Handy language 98

### 6 Writing the body of your essay
- 6.1 What's covered in the body? 100
- 6.2 What proportion of my essay should the body account for? 100
- 6.3 A brief review of the essentials 101
- 6.4 Good layout and presentation 102

### 7 Writing summaries and conclusions
- 7.1 What's a summary and how's it different from a conclusion? 108
- 7.2 Are summaries always needed? 110
- 7.3 Where should I include a summary? 110
- 7.4 Summaries: handy language 111
- 7.5 What exactly should I be doing in a conclusion? 111
- 7.6 Tips for more effective conclusions 113
- 7.7 Conclusions: handy language 115
# Table of Contents

8 Referencing and quotations

8.1 The importance of finding your own voice ... and the need to use sources 117
8.2 What is plagiarism, why should I avoid it, and how can I avoid it? 118
8.3 What's the best way to paraphrase? 118
8.4 Referencing styles 120
8.5 In-text referencing: how should I quote my sources? 121
8.6 In-text referencing: citing without quoting 124
8.7 The bibliography: what is it and how should I format it? 128
8.8 Increasing your efficiency: using bibliographic software packages 132
8.9 Handy language 134

9 Stylistic issues

9.1 Concision and clarity 137
9.2 The use of first person singular – ‘I’ 138
9.3 ‘All-or-nothing’ language 139
9.4 Using present tense to refer to others’ work 140
9.5 Emotive and biased language 140
9.6 Vague and empty language 141
9.7 Casual language: colloquialisms and slang 142
9.8 Shortened forms 144
9.9 Using humour 145
9.10 Formatting your work – some dos and don’ts (see also section 6.4) 145
9.11 Clichés 146
9.12 Dealing with jargon 147
9.13 Keeping your writing gender-neutral 148
9.14 Using footnotes: a reminder 148
9.15 Avoiding rhetorical questions 149
9.16 Formatting linguistic examples 149
9.17 What about Latin words and abbreviations? 154
9.18 Checking and editing your work 156

10 Writing up small-scale research projects or dissertations

10.1 What's expected of me as an undergraduate student with no previous research experience? 159
10.2 Deciding on a project: what are the important considerations? 161
10.3 Tips for a stress-free project: being efficient and submitting on time 177
## Contents

10.4 The main components of a research project 177  
10.5 Presentation and submission 195  

Frequently asked questions 198  
Introduction 198  
Developing your own voice 198  
Answering the question 199  
Writing to time and word limits 201  
Citing sources/referencing 203  
The introduction, body and conclusion 203  
Using figures/illustrations 204  

*Linguistics glossary* 205  
*Task key* 218  
*References* 228  
*Index* 232