

AE Academic English UK

Describing Results (Questionnaires)



Academic Writing Skills

This lesson begins with an introduction to describing results of questionnaires. It analyses the language used in describing quantities and group sizes from an example set of data. It then provides a variety of graphs, charts and tables for students to write descriptions of the data.

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Teacher's Notes

Aim: To develop the students' ability to describe graphical questionnaire data through using a range of language phrases and collocations.

Level: ***** [B1/ B2/C1/C2]

Lesson Time: 1-2 hours

Describing Results Lesson Plan **EXAMPLE**

1. Lead in (10 minutes)

- i. Ask students to look at the **Example Chart** (University Mental Health Statistics) and explain the chart to their partner.
- ii. Teacher elicits the most significant points from the chart [Answers: data from a questionnaire/depression and stress are the majority/alcohol & family minority].

2. Exercise 1: Short descriptions (reporting verbs / linking words) (5-10 minutes)

- i. Students read through the 6 short descriptions.
- ii. Students identify and highlight the **reporting verbs** and **linking words**.
- iii. Feedback as a whole group (**ANSWERS** at the back of this book)

3. Language development: Describing data language development sheet (10+ minutes)

- i. Students read through the language sheet and check any unknown language.
- ii. Ask students to tick ✓ or highlight language they know.
- iii. Feedback with **Exercise 2** collocation quiz
Note: Students may need an explanation of collocation (collocation is verbs and adjectives that naturally go together).

4. Exercise 3: Short descriptions (quantity phrases and collocation features) (10-15 minutes)

- i. Students read through the same 6 short descriptions again.
- ii. Students identify and highlight the **describing quantity phrases** and **adjective collocations**.
- iii. Feedback as a whole group (**ANSWERS** at the back of this book)

5. Exercise 4: Writing (30-60 minutes)

- i. Using the 'describing results language' as a guide, students describe the data in 2 or 3 sentences for each chart, graph, or table.
- ii. Teacher monitors and guides where necessary. This can be done on a shared OneDrive document.

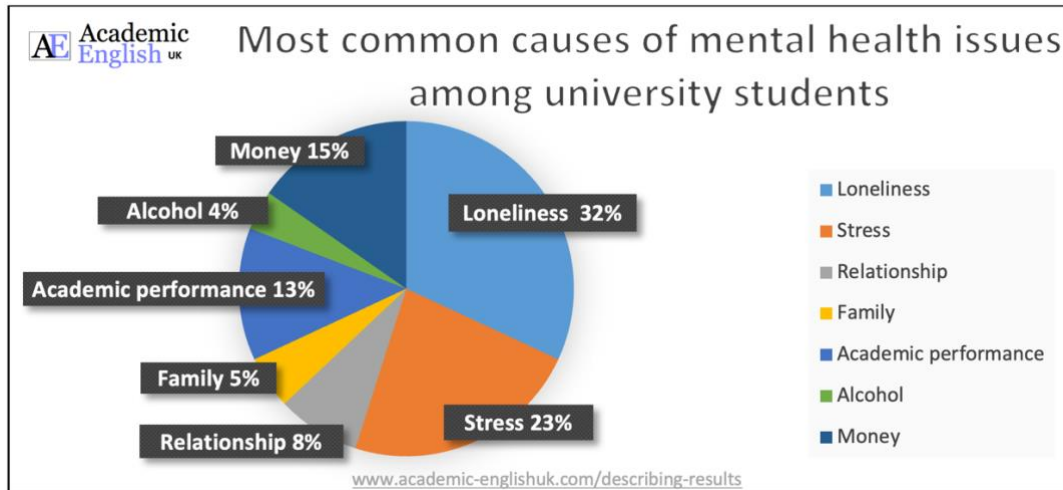
6. Extra

- i. Students look at each other's work and highlight the describing results language.
- ii. Students create their own questionnaire based around the topics of the charts and tables in exercise 4. They could collate the data, create a bar chart, pie chart or table and write up the results.

Describing Results

Example Chart: University Mental Health Statistics

This pie chart has been created from a questionnaire which asked 500 students what the main causes of their mental health issues at university were.



Exercise 1

Read through these short descriptions of the above data and highlight the reporting verbs and linking words.

1. The most significant finding from the questionnaire is that approximately a third of respondents (32%) said that loneliness was the main cause of their mental health issue at university. This was in contrast to a small number of students (4%) saying that alcohol was the primary cause.

2. Although the majority of students stated that loneliness and stress were the most significant factors of mental health issues at university at 55%, academic performance and money problems were also reported to be fundamental at 28%.

3. A small [redacted] that their mental health issues [redacted] alcohol abuse, whereas a similar number (5%) [redacted] main contributing [redacted]

4. Despite [redacted] expressing [redacted] aspect of their mental health issue, relationships were [redacted]


Noting surprising results


5. An unexpected result from the survey [redacted] for their mental health issue. In addition, another surprising finding of similar proportion was that financial [redacted] factor to mental health.


Identifying importance


6. There are two distinctive features which occupy over a [redacted] questionnaire responded that depression was the main cause of mental health issues at university. [redacted] of the [redacted] university.

Describing Results Language Development

|  Referring to quantities in a report | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| a /an / the | <i>great, large, overwhelming, significant, substantial, vast,</i> | majority | (of + noun) |
| | <i>significant, sizeable, substantial insignificant, small, tiny</i> | minority | |
| | <i>considerable, large, low, significant, small, similar, substantial, surprising</i> | number | |
| | <i>considerable, equal, high, large, overall significant, sizeable, small, substantial</i> | proportion | |
| over / nearly | | a half / a quarter / a third | |
| more / less | than | X % | |
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|  Referring to features in the data (adjective collocations) | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| a/an/ the | <i>complex, difficult, important, key, main, problem, sensitive</i> | area |
| | <i>controversial, critical, crucial, disturbing, essential, fundamental, important, key, negative, problematic, significant, vital, worrying</i> | aspect |
| | <i>common, fundamental, main, major, primary, single, sole</i> | cause |
| | <i>basic, considerable, crucial, decisive, dominant, essential, fundamental, important, key, main, major, necessary, principal, significant, vital</i> | element |
| | <i>crucial, contributing, decisive, determining, important, key, main, major, relevant, significant, vital</i> | factor |
| | <i>central, distinctive, dominant, essential, important, interesting, key, main, major, notable, predominant, remarkable, significant, unusual</i> | feature |
| | <i>conflicting, early, important, initial, interesting, key, main, original positive, significant, surprising, unexpected</i> | finding |
| | <i>basic, big, central, critical, crucial, fundamental, important, key, main, major, minor, vital</i> | issue |
| | <i>disappointing, encouraging, inconclusive, impressive, negative, poor, promising, surprising, unexpected, unsatisfactory</i> | result |
| | <i>central, clear, decisive, direct, dominant, essential, fundamental, important, key, major, minor, significant, secondary</i> | role |
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|  Linking words | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| contrast | In contrast, whereas, however, nevertheless |
| concession | Despite, although |
| addition | In addition, additionally, moreover, furthermore |
| listing | The first, secondly, lastly, another point is... |

|  Reporting words | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| <i>said</i> | <i>saying</i> | <i>stated</i> | <i>reported</i> | <i>contended</i> |
| <i>declared</i> | <i>expressing</i> | <i>indicated</i> | <i>felt</i> | <i>noted</i> |

Exercise 2: Language revision

Decide if these are true collocations from the previous page (Don't look back!)

| | Quantities | True or False |
|----|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | A <u>sizeable</u> majority of... | |
| 2 | [REDACTED] | |
| 3 | An <u>overwhelming</u> number of... | |
| 4 | [REDACTED] | |
| | Features | |
| 1 | A <u>decisive</u> area... | |
| 2 | [REDACTED] | |
| 3 | [REDACTED] | |
| 4 | A <u>dominant</u> element... | |
| 5 | [REDACTED] | |
| 6 | A <u>predominant</u> feature... | |
| 7 | [REDACTED] | |
| 8 | A <u>fundamental</u> issue ... | |
| 9 | [REDACTED] | |
| 10 | A <u>relevant</u> role... | |

Exercise 3

Read through these short descriptions of the data again and highlight the phrases for **describing quantity** and **adjective feature collocations**.

1. The most significant finding from the questionnaire is that approximately a third of respondents (32%) said that loneliness was the main cause of their mental health issue at university. This was in contrast to a small number of students (4%) saying that alcohol was the primary cause.

2. Although the majority of students stated that loneliness and stress were the most significant factors of mental health issues at university at 55%, academic performance and money problems were also reported to be fundamental at 28%.

3. A small [REDACTED] that their mental health issues [REDACTED] alcohol abuse, whereas a similar number (5%) [REDACTED] main contributing [REDACTED]

4. Despite [REDACTED] (5%) expressing [REDACTED] aspect of their mental health issue, relationships were [REDACTED].

Noting surprising results

5. An unexpected result from the survey indicated that a [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for their mental health issue. In addition, another surprising finding of similar proportion was that financial [REDACTED] factor to mental health.

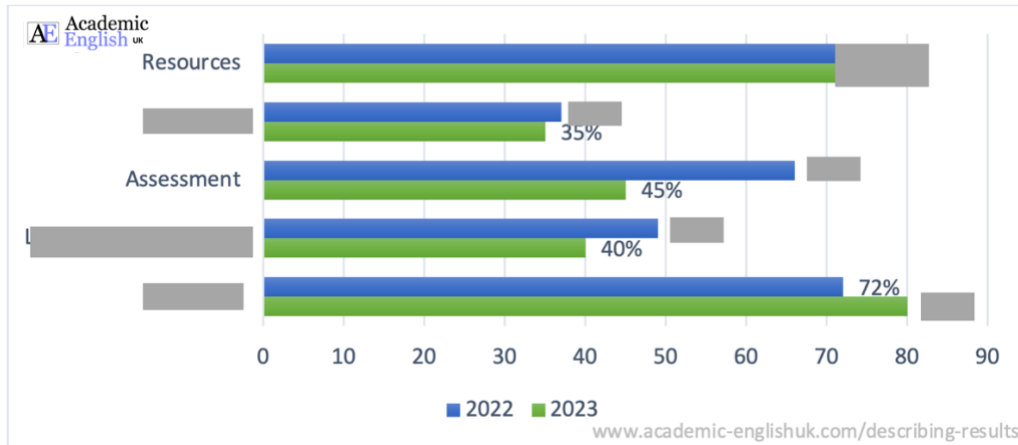
Identifying importance

6. There are two distinctive features which occupy over a [REDACTED] [REDACTED] questionnaire responded that depression was the main cause of mental health issues at university. [REDACTED] of the [REDACTED] university.

Exercise 3: Academic Writing

Here are seven different types of questionnaire data presented in a variety of different charts, graphs and tables. Using the describing results language development as a guide describe the data in 2 or 3 sentences for each chart or table.

Figure 1: Student Feedback across 2 years (2021 & 2022)



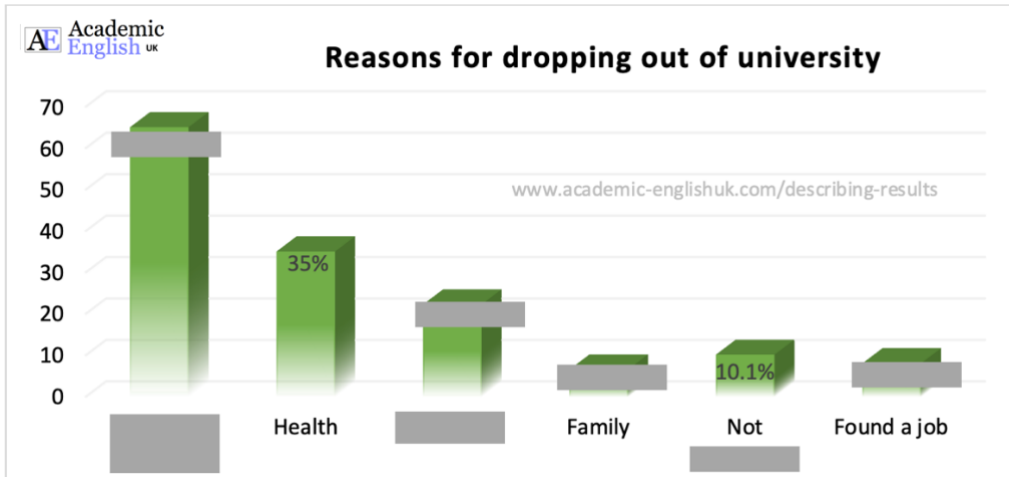
Describe the data:

Figure 2: Accommodation Questionnaire (100 students were asked the following questions)

| Question | Very satisfied | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Very dissatisfied |
|---------------|----------------|-----------|---------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1. Comfort | 6 | | | 2 | 1 |
| 2. [Redacted] | 0 | 0 | 55 | 27 | |
| 3. Quality | | 46 | | | 0 |
| 4. [Redacted] | 12 | | 17 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. Security | | | 1 | 1 | |
| 6. [Redacted] | 13 | 76 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. Noise | | | 24 | | 11 |
| 8. [Redacted] | 0 | 2 | | 84 | |

Describe the data:

Figure 3: The main reasons students drop out of university.



Describe the data:

Figure 4: The main uses of the university library

| What do you usually do when you visit the university library? | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Borrow and return books | 72.2% | | 25.7% |
| | 65.4% | Use the library computers (research library catalogue) | 20.5% |
| Ask librarians for help | | Attend events (study support workshops / academic skills) | |
| | 32.7% | | 60.3% |
| | 27.6% | | 10.2% |
| Use the photocopier / scanner | | deadlines | |

Describe the data:

Figure 5: Social life n=1000

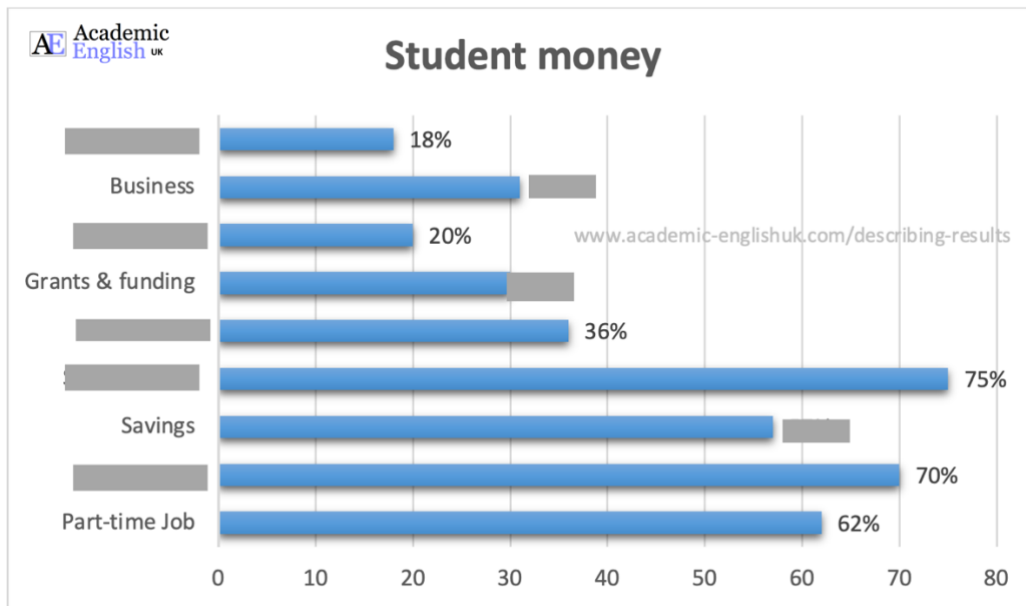
How often do you do these activities?

| AE Academic English UK | Daily | 2-3 times a week | Weekly | Fortnightly | Monthly | Once a semester | Never |
|------------------------|-------|------------------|--------|-------------|---------|-----------------|-------|
| Play video games | 20 | 149 | 133 | 38 | 76 | 16 | 187 |
| Go to a Restaurant | 0 | 156 | 100 | 333 | 400 | 51 | 24 |
| Go to the Theatre | 0 | 0 | 100 | 41 | 400 | 128 | 24 |
| Hang out friends | 0 | 333 | 389 | 290 | 104 | 0 | 243 |

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Describe the data:

Figure 6: How do students get money?



Describe the data:

Figure 7: Do you understand your student loan agreement?

|  Academic English UK | Yes | No | Not sure |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Do you understand your student loan agreement? | 30% |  |  |
|  the interest rate  |  | 67% | 12% |
|  loan back in full? |  |  | 5% |
| Are you  about your loan repayments? |  | 14% |  |
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*Student loan repayment term is 30-40 years / Average loan is £45,000 / Current RPI rate is 9%

Describe the data:

ANSWERS

Exercise 1 ANSWERS

Read through these short descriptions of the data and highlight the **linking words** and **reporting verbs**.

1. The most significant finding from the questionnaire is that approximately a third of respondents (32%) **said** that loneliness was the main cause of their mental health issue at university. This was **in contrast** to a small number of students (4%) **saying** that alcohol was the primary cause.

ALL ANSWERS INCLUDED IN PAID VERSION...