

OET Writing – Punctuation

We can expect to see in general English usage:

- comma
- full stop
- question marks
- semi colon
- colon
- brackets / parenthesis
- exclamation marks
- apostrophes
- speech marks / quote marks
- capital letters

In OET, we can expect to use:

- **commas**
- **full stops**
- **capital letters**
- **apostrophes**

Breakdown of punctuation usage in OET Writing:

Capital letters

Proper nouns:

Names: Paul, Hussain, Emma, Joanne, Sita

Dates/Days/Months/Celebrations: Eid, Christmas, Easter, May, June, July, Wednesday, Friday

Medications:

Brand name	Generic name
Prozac	fluoxetine
Rabo	rabeprazole

- **Conditions:**

generic condition	named after a person
cancer	Alzheimer's disease
leukaemia	Parkinson's disease
dementia	Down's syndrome
diabetes	Asperger's syndrome
schizophrenia	Behcet's syndrome
hypertension	Huntingdon's chorea
hypotension	Bell's palsy

Tricky use of capitals:

- Dementia diagnosed 2019

~~She was diagnosed with Dementia~~

Institutions/Departments:

- She presented to the Emergency Department at 8pm this evening.
- Her GP referred her to our department yesterday.
- The Outpatients Department is available for queries between 9 and 5.

Start of sentence:

- Bananas are delicious.
- Paracetamol is good for dealing with pain.

Hyphens

Compound nouns:

- She is a three-**week**-old baby.
- I am a forty-three-**year**-old man
- Last year I had a five-**week** holiday.
- I am starting a four-**year** project.
- She has been commenced on a three-week course of antibiotics.

In compound nouns we do not pluralise the noun that is normally pluralised.

Some examples (usually presented with hyphens in case notes):

- X-ray
- non-allergic

Commas

Address: Comma or no comma – it doesn't make much difference.....

13 th March 2013	13 th March 2013
Dorothy Smith, Surgeon, Greenfields Hospital, Greenfields,	Dorothy Smith Surgeon Greenfields Hospital Greenfields
Re: James Smith, age 56 Re: James Smith, DOB: 17/11/1967	Re James Smith age 56 Re James Smith DOB 17/11/1967
Dear Ms Smith,	Dear Ms Smith
.....but ultimately, it takes no time to learn to use commas, so do it!	

Time phrases that start sentences:

- Yesterday,
- Today,
- Tomorrow,
- On Monday,
- Last year,
- Postoperatively,

Other phrases that start sentences:

Use a comma	Don't use comma
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please note, • Regarding her medical background, • In terms of her lifestyle, • Most importantly, • According to her drug regimen, • In view of the above, • ..., including..... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please note that • It's important to be aware that

Sentence Structure

Some phrases use commas before or after in order to connect ideas together:

Function	Structure
Addition	and In addition, In addition to + noun, Additionally,
Causes	As a result of + noun, Due to + noun,
Results	As a result,,, resulting in + noun Consequently,
Contrast	Despite + noun,, Despite the fact that + verb phrase, Although + verb phrase, However, + verb phrase
Sequence	Firstly, Secondly, Subsequently,
Relative Clauses – non defining	, who , which..... , for which, She requires crutches, which are available at reception. Mrs Johnson, who recently underwent an operation, is feeling groggy.

Lists

- 5 packets crisps
- 1 chocolate bar
- 55 tins dog food
- 2 pints milk
- Flour

X, y and z

I bought 5 packets of crisps, 1 chocolate bar, 55 tins of dog food, 2 pints of milk and flour.

X and y, as well as z

I bought 5 packets of crisps, 1 chocolate bar, 55 tins of dog food and 2 pints of milk, as well as flour.

Exercise

Create sentences using linkers and lists. Watch out for capital letters!

alzheimer's disease	chemotherapy	aleve	side effects	symptoms	wheelie walker		
mobility	reduce	immune system	metformin	problems	aura	physio sessions	
reflux	diet	modification	pain	elbow	methimazole	chest	right knee
osteoarthritis	nausea	diabetes	alter	increase	vitamins	migraines	mr smith
hyperthyroidism	hair loss	obimet	medication	progress	throat cancer		

Answers

Some examples:

- Although Mr Smith's mobility has improved, he still uses a wheelie walker.
- Yesterday, Mr Smith presented with signs suggestive of a compromised immune system.
- Mr Smith has experienced side effects, including nausea, hair loss and pain.
- My mother has diabetes, for which she receives metformin.
- Mr Smith was diagnosed with diabetes, for which he takes metformin.
- He has a family history of Alzheimer's disease.
- James has suffered from osteoarthritis since 2020.
- My father takes methimazole and Obimet.
- Alzheimer's disease is the early stage of dementia.
- Due to hyperthyroidism, she is experiencing hair loss.
- Mr. Smith was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease in addition to osteoarthritis.
- In addition to osteoarthritis, Mr Smith was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.
- Diet modification is an important part of treatment for diabetes, as well as taking metformin.
- Despite having Alzheimer's disease, he had a good life.
- Mr Smith has digestive reflux.
- Mr Smith, who underwent chemotherapy, has developed side-effects.
- Mr Smith has side effects of chemotherapy, which cause him nausea and hair loss.