

25th October 2024

OET Writing – Addition: Using Linking Phrases

Starter

On 21st June 2024, Mrs Salamanca visited our clinic and reported experiencing dizziness and nausea for three weeks. In addition to that, she had had visual disturbances. As a result, a physical examination was carried out. However, it was unremarkable. Consequently, blood tests were ordered and a follow-up appointment after one week was arranged. Subsequently, on 28th June 2024, Mrs Salamanca returned for her blood test results which revealed high blood pressure. Additionally, she had elevated blood glucose levels. Therefore, Mrs Salamanca was advised on making adjustments to her diet.

What do you think about this paragraph?
Would you change anything?

What does OET say about linking words and phrases?

Tip: Don't use a connector if it doesn't add any value to the sentence.

If you can remove the connector and the sentence still makes sense, then you are using a connector when one isn't needed. Avoid this in OET when it is important to write efficiently without words the reader does not need.

For example:

- Considering the above,/Given the above/In light of the situation, Mrs Jones will need to attend a follow-up appointment in 3 days' time.

Instead, you could simply write:

- Mrs Jones will need to attend a follow-up appointment in 3 days' time.

Here are some common questions to help clarify your concerns about using sentence connectors:

Can I use simple connectors?

Candidates are encouraged to write in a natural way. This includes demonstrating use of **both simple and complex connectors**. You will be scored according to your range of vocabulary and your ability to show that you can strike a balance between formal professional written language and concise, direct phrasing, which is easy for the reader to understand. **Choose the best language that fits for clarity.**

What connectors should I avoid?

Remember, writing a healthcare care letter to another healthcare professional is not the same as writing an essay task or academic report. Some candidates make the mistake of using the same connectors as they did for academic tasks at school or university. These may be less appropriate in the context of OET.

Some connectors are **less suitable** for healthcare letter writing. These include:

- **Academic connectors:** furthermore, moreover
- **Informal connectors:** besides, meanwhile, apart from that, later on
- **Outdated connectors:** hence, thus, thereafter

(from <https://oet.com/post/blog-use-sentence-connectors-to-add-clarity-to-your-writing>)

Look at this sample letter from the OET Medicine writing section of the website

How many linkers can you see?
Are they simple or complex?

MEDSAMPLE01

Occupational English Test

WRITING SUB-TEST: MEDICINE SAMPLE RESPONSE: LETTER OF REFERRAL

Dr Jason Roberts
Newtown Hospital
111 High Street
Newtown

18 June 2018

Dear Dr Roberts,

Re: Ms Anne Hall, DOB 19.9.1972

Thank you for seeing Ms Hall, a 45-year-old secondary school teacher, who presented today with a two-week history of gastro-oesophageal reflux with possible stricture. I am referring Ms Hall to you for further investigation and an endoscopy if required.

Ms Hall's symptoms follow a constant course and include dysphagia for solids, epigastric pain radiating posteriorly to T12 level, and concomitant 1-2kg weight loss. The problem commenced after an upper respiratory tract infection two weeks ago for which she self-prescribed an over-the-counter Chinese herbal product with unknown ingredients. There are no apparent signs of anxiety, and no sensation of a lump.

Ms Hall has recently increased her coffee consumption and takes aspirin 2-3 times a month. She has a history of dyspepsia (2012), and dermatitis for which she was prescribed oral and topical cortisone. She ceased smoking 15 years ago. She drinks socially (mainly spirits), has a family history of peptic ulcer disease and is allergic to codeine. Her BMI is currently 28.2.

I have recommended that Ms Hall reduces her coffee and alcohol intake and immediately stops taking the over-the-counter product. In addition, I have prescribed Pantoprazole 40mg daily.

I would be grateful if you could provide Ms Hall with a definitive diagnosis. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Doctor

Can you rewrite this paragraph to make it flow better?

On 21st June 2024, Mrs Salamanca visited our clinic and reported experiencing dizziness and nausea for three weeks. In addition to that, she had had visual disturbances. As a result, a physical examination was carried out. However, it was unremarkable. Consequently, blood tests were ordered and a follow-up appointment after one week was arranged. Subsequently, on 28th June 2024, Mrs Salamanca returned for her blood test results which revealed high blood pressure. Additionally, she had elevated blood glucose levels. Therefore, Mrs Salamanca was advised on making adjustments to her diet.

One possible example:

On 21st June 2024, Mrs Salamanca visited our clinic and reported experiencing dizziness and nausea for three weeks **as well as** visual disturbances. A physical examination was carried out **but** it was unremarkable. Blood tests were ordered and a follow-up appointment after one week was arranged. **On 28th June 2024**, Mrs Salamanca returned for her blood test results which revealed high blood pressure **along with** elevated blood glucose levels. **As a result**, Mrs Salamanca was advised on making adjustments to her diet.