

### Modal verbs and adverbs

The table below contains verbs and adverbs that you can use to express the different degrees of certainty or modality of your opinions or argument. It also provides you with some examples of how to structure your sentence to use these words in your writing.

Certainty of Conclusion	Modal Verbs/Adverbs	Statement of Claim
<b>Strong</b>	is, will, can not, must, undoubtedly, always, never, definitely, clearly	It is certain that... It seems clear that... X is definitely...
<b>Moderate</b>	should, would, can, ought to, tends to, usually, likely, probably, regularly, majority, generally, often, frequently, rarely	It appears probable... It is usually the case that... In the majority of cases... The results suggest it is likely that...
<b>Tentative</b>	May, might, could, possible, conceivable, sometimes, occasionally, seldomly, perhaps, maybe, uncertainly, minority	Conceivably,... It is possible that... Occasionally,... It may be the case that...

Adapted from: Jordon, R. R. (1990) *Academic Writing Course*. Edinburgh: Nelson Study Skills in English and Learning Assistance Centre, University of Sydney (1992) *Writing in an Academic Style*.

Here are some examples of modality use in academic writing:

It seems likely that a species leaf structural characteristics influence their seasonal water-tissue relations because.....	1.
Technology assessment can be an effective tool to analyse the effect of a technology on social and environmental issues, yet in practise it can be used to formalise and legitimise previously decided outcomes.	2.
Legal aid, by providing representation and individual legal advice has the potential to mitigate some of the entrenched inequality in regards to access to justice.	3.