

# Basic Grammar

Having a good knowledge of even the most basic grammatical terms can help you improve your assignments/coursework and communication skills. This leaflet explains some of the key words.

## Parts of speech

- **Noun**- a person, place or thing (**sister, London, dog**)
- **Pronoun**- a word which substitutes for a noun (**she, it**)
- **Verb**- an action or 'doing' word (**smile, run, talk**)
- **Adverb**- a word describes how a something is done (**cheerfully, quickly, enthusiastically**)- they *usually* end in an "'-ly"
- **Adjective**- describes a noun (**pretty** [sister]), (**busy** [London]), (**lazy** [dog])
- **Preposition**- indicates the relationship of a noun to another word e.g: are, to, at, with, for, against (Sam is **with** Diana)

## Putting words together

**Phrase**- conveys a single thought, not necessarily a full sentence

**Prepositional phrase**- expands the single thought

Eg: "The bright moon" (**phrase**) becomes

"I look at the bright moon" (**prepositional**)

**Sentence**- needs a subject and a predicate

- **Subject**= noun referred to by the verb
- **Predicate**= verb and anything which modifies it (like an adverb)

Eg. "My sister is shopping"

Sister= noun= subject

Shopping= verb= predicate

## Useful information

### Verbs

**Passive**- when the subject is the recipient of the verb

**Active**- when the subject performs the verb

Eg. "Pete was followed"= **passive**-: Pete is the subject but he *is not* doing the following

"Pete was being followed by Sue" = **active**: Sue is now the subject and *is* doing the following

**Conjugation**- states the form taken for each person eg. " to have" can become "I have, they have, she/he/it has"

### Nouns

An **object** is a noun which is the recipient of a verb. There are two forms of an object, **direct** and **indirect**.

Eg:

"Marie placed her bag on the desk"

↑
↑
↑  
 subject                      direct object                      indirect object

### The person speaking...

There are different ways to speak through writing.

- **1st person**- "I went through the doorway to find Stephen sitting by the window, waiting for me"
- **2nd person**- "You go through the doorway. You see Stephen by the window, waiting for you."
- **3rd person**- Stella went through the doorway and saw Stephen sitting by the window, waiting for her"

### Split infinitives

A split infinitive is one where the original verb has been separated from the word 'to' by another word. A really famous example of a split infinitive is:

**"To boldly go where no man has gone before"**

The correct way to phrase this sentence is:

**"To go boldly where no man has gone before"**

Sometimes however, a split infinitive can add a dramatic element to a sentence, as illustrated in the above example.

