

Notes: Helpful abbreviations for speedy note-taking and note-making

In lectures and when reading, many people spend a lot of time and effort writing out whole sentences and long phrases. In lectures, this makes it very difficult to keep up and vital information can be missed. When reading, many people just re-produce the text. Others tend to copy only key words and points, and then have problems knowing what they mean when they look back at them. Both of these are **note-taking**.

Note-making, on the other hand, involves engaging with the material, which helps with understanding and memory. The best thing in most cases is to think about what you are noting, perhaps summarising, paraphrasing, or adding your own or other writers' ideas. See our handout "**Mind Maps: From Chaos to Order**" for one alternative to linear notes.

This handout provides a number of common abbreviations, which will help you to save time and keep up in lectures.

Make up your own abbreviations. You will find that some words and phrases are commonly-used. Find a way to shorten them. However, make sure that you will not become confused with other, similar words, which is all too easily done. Make up your own short forms, and take a note of it or you might forget what it means. Be as creative as you like!

Three abbreviation techniques

1. Use the first few letters of the word. Ensure that there are enough letters to prevent confusion between other words with the same first letters.

Examples: **imp** for "important".
Info for "information".
eval for "evaluation".
dev for "development".
gov for "government".

2. Use initials for phrases.

Examples: **PU** for "Portsmouth University".
RS for "reflective skills".
LG for "local government"; **NG** for "national government".

3. Remove all or most of the vowels.

Examples: **mngmt** for "management".
mkt for "market".
dvpt for "development".

Common Abbreviations

& or +	Plus; in addition; and	-	Minus; without
=	Equals; the same as; results in	≠	Does not equal; is different; does not result in
≈	Approximately equal or similar to	Cf	Compared to
>	Is greater than, e.g. 9 > 5	<	Is less than, e.g. 5 < 9
∴	Therefore; thus	∵	Because; as a result of
?	Uncertain; unproven; check it out	!	Highly significant; surprise factor
/	Per. E.g., £50/day	*	Special; important; notable
↑ ↑↑	Greater; higher; increase A lot greater; rapid or strong increase	↓ ↓↓	Smaller; lower; decrease A lot lower; rapid or strong decrease
→	Results in; leads on to; causes	←	Results from; follows on from; is caused by
Eg	For example	ie	In other words; adding more detail or explanation
Etc.	And so on; more of the same	v vv	Very Extremely
w/	With	w/o	Without
✓ ✓✓	Yes; correct Absolutely certain	X xx	No; not; incorrect Definitely not; disproved
c.	Approximately; roughly; about	Vs.	Versus; against
K	A thousand (e.g., £5k; £500K).	M	A million (e.g. \$6m)
4	for	0	No; none

Ask Contact Details:

Email: academicskills@port.ac.uk.

Phone: 02392 843462.

Visit: Third Floor, Nuffield Building.

Resource revised 2019 by Heather Lee.



**UNIVERSITY OF
PORTSMOUTH**
ASK - ACADEMIC
SKILLS UNIT