



UCD Sutherland  
School of Law

# The Write Stuff

## Saying More by Writing Less

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## The Inspiration



Gussie & Me

# What Works

## The 'Granny' Test

Can you explain your research  
to your Gran in 3 minutes or less?

And she gets it...





## What Works

**Clarity**

**Brevity**

**Euphemy**



## What Doesn't Work

**Long sentences**

**Judging language**

**Overly-complex ideas**



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# Substance & Style

## The Practical & The Personal



## Good Example:

The Conversation is really supporting academics to write for the lay audience

***Brexit: why customs are central to solving the Irish border impasse***

by Prof Gavin Barrett, Sutherland School of Law

### **Short, perfectly formed sentences...**

Hence Irish attachment to the idea.

This half-way house compromise pleased few in Westminster.

This seems wholly unlikely to change.

### **A nice turn of phrase, engaging language – there's a rhythm and a cadence to it...**

Pyrrhic

Ruinous

Analogous

Rearguard action



## Bad Example:

A detailed (**1,000 word**) research plan to include the following:

1. **Proposal Title**
2. **Background and Aims**
3. **Significance and Novelty**
4. **Approach and Methodology**
5. **Alignment with one or more of the six key research themes**
6. **Potential to attract research funding**

I was sent a proposal with nearly **1,500 words** – over **500 words** had to go!

Editing was made easy as the writer was insisting on a mini-introduction/background in each of the larger sections. Whole paragraphs just had to be cut. The intro and background could only occur once under **2**.

From then on each section had to start with exactly what they were looking for under **3 through 6**.





## How do you go from 1,500 words to 1,000 words to 500 words?

- Look at the language you use
- Eliminate redundant words
- Cut to the chase
- Choose words wisely
- Edit, edit, edit

## Bringing the E.Q. to the I.Q.

