

Generalising/ hedging language academic speaking and writing practice

Choose one of the topics below and talk about it. Your partner ask you for more information about your views and the evidence behind those opinions, then give their own opinion about what you said.

Suggested questions

- But isn't it more like...?/ I'd say (it's more like).../ I'd change that statement (slightly) to say...
- Do you (really) mean (to say)...?
- How common do you think that is?
- How sure are you about that?/ What makes you so sure/ unsure?
- I think it's (slightly/ quite a lot/ a lot/ far) more/ less common than that.
- I think that's a bit of an overgeneralisation/ exaggeration./ Isn't that (a bit of) an oversimplification?/ That is a bit of a stereotype, isn't it?
- I think you can be more certain about that. - I don't think you can be so sure about that.
- I wouldn't go so far myself. – I'd go further and say...
- Is it really so much/ many/ little/ often/ seldom/ likely/ unlikely?
- Isn't that a bit out of date?
- That's a bit vague./ I think you could be more precise.
- What makes you think that?/ What evidence is there that...?/ Do you have any figures on that?

- A justified generalisation
- An unjustified generalisation
- A common generalisation
- A generalisation that might have been true but is no longer
- An over-generalisation
- Generalisations about this country/ town/ university/ area
- Generalisations about the infrastructure/ retailers/ the environment/ the local people around here
- Generalisations about research/ studying/ qualifications/ tests/ academic writing
- Generalisations about English/ your language
- Generalisations about a country/ nationality/ region
- A generalisation that your parent(s)/ colleague(s)/ teacher(s)/ neighbour(s)/ classmate(s) make
- A generalisation that politicians/ old people/ middle aged people/ rich people/ young people often make
- A generalisation that you have heard/ read/ read about/ heard about/ challenged/ reconsidered/ thought of recently
- A generalisation about the future
- Generalisations about academic writing

Homework

Write at least 250 words based on one or more of the tasks above. If you need more than one topic to reach the 250 word limit or use the same task twice with different topics, there is no need to tie the different pieces of writing together. There is no minimum number of words for each task/ topic.