

Higher Education and Research English Jargon Quick Reference

Field-specific terms, contrast pairs, and high-pressure sentence frames

Audience: faculty, postdoctoral researchers, graduate students, lab managers, research administrators, grant staff, ethics-board coordinators, and academic program leaders

Focus: A higher education and research English curriculum for grant proposals, lab meetings, peer review, research ethics, authorship, data management, academic presentations, and institutional collaboration.

Designed for advanced ESL learners who already use professional English and need industry-specific terminology, realistic meetings, role-play pressure, careful pushback, and polished workplace outputs.

Teaching stance: this is language and workplace-communication training, not legal, medical, financial, safety, or regulatory advice. Instructors should connect every scenario to the learner's current company policies, local rules, and approved procedures.

Nomenclature and Jargon

These are classroom working definitions. Learners should adapt wording to their organization's policies, systems, and local regulatory environment.

Research Questions and Study Design

Term	Working meaning
research question	Working higher education and research term used in research questions and study design; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
hypothesis	Working higher education and research term used in research questions and study design; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
methodology	Working higher education and research term used in research questions and study design; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
limitation	Working higher education and research term used in research questions and study design; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Grant Proposals and Specific Aims

Term	Working meaning
specific aims	Working higher education and research term used in grant proposals and specific aims; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
significance	Working higher education and research term used in grant proposals and specific aims; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
innovation	Working higher education and research term used in grant proposals and specific aims; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
feasibility	Working higher education and research term used in grant proposals and specific aims; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Lab Meetings and Data Challenges

Term	Working meaning
control	A process, approval, check, or technical safeguard designed to reduce risk.
replication	Working higher education and research term used in lab meetings and data challenges; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
protocol drift	Working higher education and research term used in lab meetings and data challenges; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
analysis assumption	Working higher education and research term used in lab meetings and data challenges; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Research Ethics and Human Subjects

Term	Working meaning
IRB	Working higher education and research term used in research ethics and human subjects; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
informed consent	Working higher education and research term used in research ethics and human subjects; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Term	Working meaning
secondary use	Working higher education and research term used in research ethics and human subjects; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
human subjects	Working higher education and research term used in research ethics and human subjects; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Authorship, Collaboration, and Credit

Term	Working meaning
authorship	Working higher education and research term used in authorship, collaboration, and credit; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
contribution	Working higher education and research term used in authorship, collaboration, and credit; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
corresponding author	Working higher education and research term used in authorship, collaboration, and credit; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
acknowledgment	Working higher education and research term used in authorship, collaboration, and credit; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Peer Review and Revision Responses

Term	Working meaning
peer review	Working higher education and research term used in peer review and revision responses; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
major revision	Working higher education and research term used in peer review and revision responses; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
response letter	Working higher education and research term used in peer review and revision responses; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
scope	Defined boundary of work, responsibility, deliverables, assumptions, and exclusions.

Data Management and Reproducibility

Term	Working meaning
metadata	Working higher education and research term used in data management and reproducibility; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
repository	Working higher education and research term used in data management and reproducibility; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
provenance	Working higher education and research term used in data management and reproducibility; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
reproducibility	Working higher education and research term used in data management and reproducibility; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Academic Presentations and Conferences

Term	Working meaning
generalizability	Working higher education and research term used in academic presentations and conferences; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
limitation	Working higher education and research term used in academic presentations and conferences; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Term	Working meaning
future work	Working higher education and research term used in academic presentations and conferences; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.
conference Q&A	Working higher education and research term used in academic presentations and conferences; define the owner, evidence source, governing document, risk, and decision impact before using it in a meeting.

Industry-Specific Meeting Moves

Situation	Useful language
Research Questions and Study Design	Before we commit, I want to confirm research question, hypothesis, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If hypothesis, design, sample, limitations, and inference must be aligned., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Grant Proposals and Specific Aims	Before we commit, I want to confirm specific aims, significance, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If feasibility, significance, innovation, approach, and milestones need balance., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Lab Meetings and Data Challenges	Before we commit, I want to confirm control, replication, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If controls, replication, protocol drift, and analysis assumptions need review., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Research Ethics and Human Subjects	Before we commit, I want to confirm IRB, informed consent, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If consent, irb approval, privacy, and secondary-use rules may apply., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Authorship, Collaboration, and Credit	Before we commit, I want to confirm authorship, contribution, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If contribution, criteria, order, acknowledgments, and publication norms must be explicit., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Peer Review and Revision Responses	Before we commit, I want to confirm peer review, major revision, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If tone, evidence, scope, feasibility, and transparent limitations matter., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Data Management and Reproducibility	Before we commit, I want to confirm metadata, repository, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If metadata, code, provenance, privacy, and repository requirements need attention., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.
Academic Presentations and Conferences	Before we commit, I want to confirm generalizability, limitation, the owner, and the evidence behind the decision. If population, context, method, and future work should be addressed calmly., I recommend we document the risk and agree on the next step.

High-pressure pushback frames

- I understand the urgency. The risk is that we move faster than the evidence or process supports.
- I am not blocking the goal. I am naming the condition we need before the decision is safe and credible.
- If we accept this risk, we should name the owner, document the assumption, and define the trigger for escalation.
- That may be possible, but not under the current scope, timeline, or approval path.
- Let's separate what we know, what we assume, and what still needs confirmation.

Contrast Pairs

Do not confuse	Useful distinction
research question vs limitation	In research questions and study design, define whether the discussion is about the current fact pattern, the controlling process, the stakeholder pressure, or the final decision.

Do not confuse	Useful distinction
specific aims vs feasibility	In grant proposals and specific aims, define whether the discussion is about the current fact pattern, the controlling process, the stakeholder pressure, or the final decision.
control vs analysis assumption	In lab meetings and data challenges, define whether the discussion is about the current fact pattern, the controlling process, the stakeholder pressure, or the final decision.
IRB vs human subjects	In research ethics and human subjects, define whether the discussion is about the current fact pattern, the controlling process, the stakeholder pressure, or the final decision.
authorship vs acknowledgment	In authorship, collaboration, and credit, define whether the discussion is about the current fact pattern, the controlling process, the stakeholder pressure, or the final decision.
peer review vs scope	In peer review and revision responses, define whether the discussion is about the current fact pattern, the controlling process, the stakeholder pressure, or the final decision.
metadata vs reproducibility	In data management and reproducibility, define whether the discussion is about the current fact pattern, the controlling process, the stakeholder pressure, or the final decision.
generalizability vs conference Q&A	In academic presentations and conferences, define whether the discussion is about the current fact pattern, the controlling process, the stakeholder pressure, or the final decision.