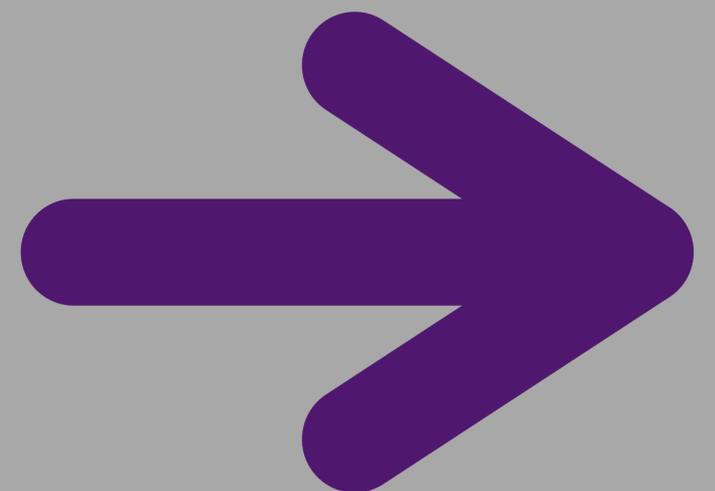
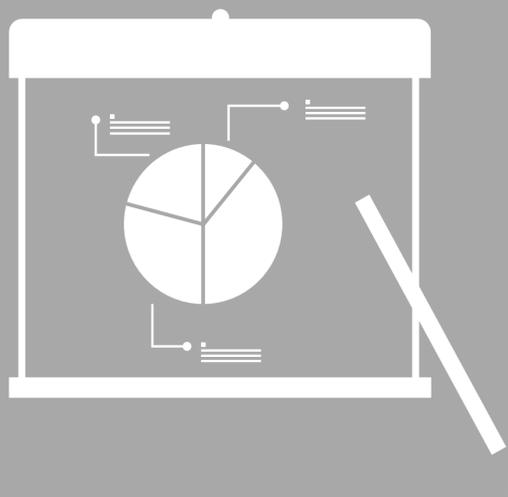




USING COLONS

Explaining & introducing





To explain

Clarifying your statement

Using a colon connects two statements, though it goes further than commas and semicolons. The phrase following the colon is used to clarify the first one. Imagine your readers have said 'tell us more'.

Use a colon instead of 'by which I mean' or 'namely'

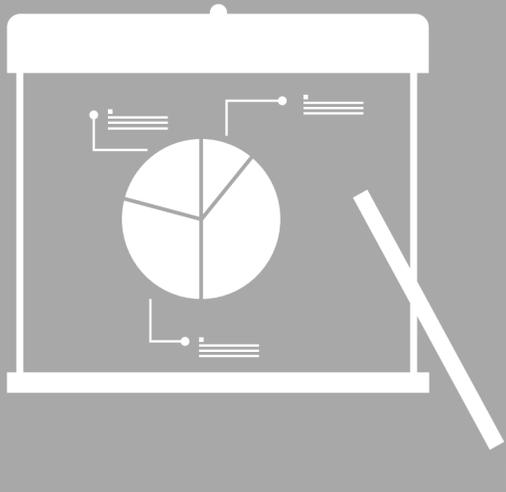
Your final grades will be 'curved', **by which I mean**, they will be awarded based on how your classmates fair.

—Your final grades will be 'curved': they will be awarded based on how your classmates fair.

Use a colon instead of 'and the reason I think that is'

A return to normal working patterns is unlikely in the future, **and the reason I think that is** due to the impact of coronavirus on remote working.

—A return to normal working patterns is unlikely in the future: due to the impact of coronavirus on remote working.



To explain

illustrating your statement

Besides using the colon to clarify, you might also use it to illustrate. Giving examples or providing further insight can be indicated by using a colon.

Use a colon instead of 'to illustrate'

Using punctuation adds nuance to your sentences, **to illustrate** we have seen how it improves communication in literary works.

Using punctuation adds nuance to your sentences: we have seen how it improves communication in literary works.

Use a colon instead of 'for example'

People are spending money in different ways, **for example**, buying food from local shops, and purchasing products online.

People are spending money in different ways: buying food from local shops, and purchasing products online.



Introducing

Special uses of colons

Colons are also used as introductory tools. Use them to introduce a list, subtitles, and quotations (only when they are preceded by a complete sentence). Colons may also be used to offer further clarification and introduction via an 'appositive' (another name for a word or word group).

Introducing a list

There are many reasons students may choose to go to the USA for university: a new experience, to travel, or to specialise in a course of study.

Introducing quotations

Wordsworth's poem illustrates the beauty of nature: 'Tyger Tyger burning bright....'.

Introducing subtitles

Batman: Bad Blood

Introducing appositives

He had one great love in life: himself.