Academic writing ...

... needs practice.

Writing academically is very different from writing in your diary, or writing a letter or a story. Academic writing needs a lot of training, and is usually characterised by the following elements:

› Concise
› Focussed
› Structured
› Backed up by evidence

Every word matters:

1 Academic writing and critical reading go hand in hand. You have to be good at both.

2 The main purpose of academic writing is to inform other researchers and academics about your research and research findings:
   › Consider how you may be able to reach a mixed audience with some readers from your area of research or a related one, using pre-existing knowledge, and other readers from areas of research that may touch your topic only marginally. Expect that your audience is able to follow a more abstract path of logic.
   › Ensure your audience understands why your research is important, how it contributes to knowledge and what its strengths and limitations are.

3 In most cases you will have word limits to adhere to requiring you to learn how to be very efficient and to the point with your words.

Tips

› Ensure your writing is grammatically correct, and spelling and punctuation are accurate.
› Do not make any major omissions - your argument has to be "watertight".
› Writing academically is not about your opinion. It is about facts.
› Use up-to-date research. Do not use arguments that were made 20 years ago.
› Find a balance between seminal and current research to use for your argument.