Glossary of academic words used in titles

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| Account for | Give reasons for: explain why something happens. |
| Analyse | Examine something in very close detail and from a number of angles. Identify the important points and chief features, and understand their relationships. |
| Argue | Present a case for and against a proposal or statement and present your own opinion at the end. |
| Compare | Show how two or more things are similar. |
| Contrast | Look at two or more things and draw out differences. State whether the differences are significant. |
| Critically  evaluate | Weigh arguments for and against something, assess the strength of evidence on both sides. |
| Define | Give the exact meaning of… |
| Describe | Give a detailed account of the main features or characteristics. |
| Discuss | Write about the most important characteristics of something. Give arguments for and against, look at it from a variety of perspectives. |
| Distinguish | Identify the differences between two items. |
| Evaluate | Assess the worth or usefulness of something. Use evidence to support your opinion. |
| Examine | Look at something in detail. You may be expected to ‘critically evaluate’ it as well. |
| Explain | Make it clear why something happens or why it is the way it is. |
| Identify | Recognise, name and briefly describe something. |
| Illustrate | Use examples to further explain or justify something. This could be visual or verbal. |
| Interpret | Explain the meaning or significance of information or data that you are presenting. |
| Justify | Provide evidence that supports an argument or idea |
| Outline | Give only the main points, show only the main structure. |
| Prove | Present evidence in a logical structure to support an argument for a point of view. |
| Relate (Two  meanings) | 1. Show how ideas/theories/events etc. are linked or connected  2. Tell a story. Explain something in a narrative fashion |
| Review | Survey and comment on the key aspects of something or a range of things. |
| State | Give the main features clearly and simply. |
| Summarise | Draw out the main points, omitting detail and examples. |
| To what  extent… | How far is something true, or how far does it contribute to a final outcome? How far is it not true? In academic writing, the answer is usually somewhere in the middle. |
| Trace | Describe the development of something; follow the order of different stages in an event or process. |