

Academic Word List- Expressing Certainty and Uncertainty

Do the AWL words and phrases below express certainty or uncertainty? Label the rows with these three signs:

+ = No doubt (positive)

- = No doubt (negative)

? = Doubt

They are arranged into lines where all three are the same type, so you don't need to check every single one.

apparent/ apparently	approximate/ approximately	in the area of...
depends on the context	contradictory	controversial
comprehensive	conclusively	confirmed
illogical	manipulated results	abnormal results
debatable	diversity of opinion	first draft
assuredly	authoritative/ an authority on...	clearly
assumed to be	under some circumstances	attributed to...
conceivable/ conceivably	can conceive (of)...	there is conflict about...
conforms fully to...	full consensus about...	convincing
we are ignorant of...	misinterpreted	unjustified
has been established by...	evident/ self-evident	expert opinion
being (re)formulated	on shaky foundations	hypothetical
interpretation	under investigation	he maintains that...
the vast majority believes...	under mediation	a minority believe...
fully matches the criteria	definitive	demonstrable
undeniable	documented/ well documented	emphatic/ emphatically
a notion	it occurs to me that...	the odds are that...
variable outcomes	the perception is that...	one perspective on...
inherent/ inherently	objective	obvious/ obviously

a portion of...	potentially	imprecise
unpredictable	predict/ prediction	preliminary findings
inconceivable/ inconceivably	erroneous/ erroneously	unfounded
presume/ presumption	in principle	a prospective...
being pursued	within the range of...	being refined
we can be positive that...	precise	predictable
one scenario is that..	scope for disagreement	being revised
a section of society believes...	simulation	so-called
we can reject...	irrelevant	unreliable
unstable/ instability	the present status is...	a submission
the target is...	theoretically	traditionally
being transformed	in a transition stage	he has undertaken to...
secure in the knowledge that...	straightforward	ultimately,...
results can vary	he had a vision of...	virtually
unsustainable	unobtainable	invalid
the policy is to...	estimated/ estimation	under evaluation
on firm foundations	guaranteed	inevitable/ inevitably
in the region of...	being researched	
invariable	has been resolved	

All the vocabulary is from the Academic Word List. Ask about any that you don't understand.

Do you know any other words and phrases (for example ones not on the AWL) with similar meanings?

Test each other in pairs, with one person reading out examples and the other person guessing "doubt" or "no doubt".