

ANSWER KEY INCLUDED



Fourth Edition

Academic Writing

A Handbook for
International Students



Stephen Bailey



Academic Writing

Most international students need to write essays and reports for exams and coursework, but writing good academic English is one of the most demanding tasks students face. This new, fourth edition of *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students* has been completely revised to help students reach this goal.

The four main parts of *Academic Writing* are:

- The Writing Process
- Elements of Writing
- Vocabulary for Writing
- Writing Models

Each part is divided into short units that contain examples, explanations and exercises, for use in the classroom or for self-study. The units are clearly organised to allow teachers and students to find the help they need with writing tasks, while cross-referencing allows easy access to relevant sections.

In the first part, each stage of the writing process is demonstrated and practised, from selecting suitable sources, reading, note-making and planning through to rewriting and proofreading.

The fourth edition of this popular book builds on the success of the earlier editions, and has a special focus on the vital topic of academic vocabulary in Part 3, 'Vocabulary for Writing'. Part 3 deals with areas such as nouns and adjectives, adverbs and verbs, synonyms, prefixes and prepositions, in an academic context. More key features of the book include:

- All elements of writing are clearly explained, with a full glossary for reference
- Models provided for all types of academic texts: essays, reports, reviews and case studies
- Full range of practice exercises, with answer key included
- Use of authentic academic texts
- A companion website offers further practice with a range of additional exercises
- Fully updated, with sections on finding electronic sources and evaluating Internet material

All international students wanting to maximise their academic potential will find this practical and easy-to-use book an invaluable guide to writing in English for their degree courses.

Stephen Bailey is a freelance writer of materials for English for Academic Purposes. He has taught students in Barcelona, Tokyo, Johor Bahru and Prague, and more recently at Derby University and the University of Nottingham. His other books include *Academic Writing for International Students of Business* (Routledge).

International students have many adjustments to make as they enter British universities and Stephen's book makes at least one area of their lives – academic study – much more approachable. With its straightforward approach and improved layout, it will be a book many students will come to regard as an essential companion to their university lives.

Stephen Dewhirst, *Freelance EAP teacher, UK*

International students and indeed all students should find this book very helpful. It is accessible to read and engages in an explicit and sharply focused manner with many elements of the critical use of reading, of writing and of studying. The book usefully explains, exemplifies, and tests understanding. It deals with the problematic areas of plagiarism and grammatical work, of developing argument and counter argument, and essay expression. It should be very useful for international students engaged in academic writing.

Professor Gina Wisker, *University of Brighton, UK*

Stephen Bailey's *Academic Writing* is one of the few academic writing books that deal with core areas effectively - language, text type, academic conventions and the writing process. This is done by giving simple explanations, authentic examples and useful practice opportunities which can either be done in class or as self study. The book appeals to a range of levels including pre and in sessional students and equips them with a range of the key language and skills needed to embark on academic writing in higher education.

Fiona Gilbert, *Oxford Brookes University, UK*

This book provides international students with a useful introduction to the basic practices in reading and writing for academic purposes. It includes topics such as the typical content of article abstracts, the mechanics of citation and referencing, and some uses of sources in writing – topics that will help international students, studying in an English medium university for the first time, to meet their tutors' expectations in reading and writing assignments. The chapter on reading advises a critical attitude to internet resources, advice most relevant to students today.

Antonia Chandrasegaran, *National Institute of Education, Singapore*

Academic Writing

A Handbook for
International Students

Fourth edition

Stephen Bailey

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Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xii
<i>Introduction for Teachers</i>	xiii
<i>Introduction for Students</i>	xv
<i>Academic Writing Quiz</i>	xvii
Part 1	
The Writing Process	1
1.1 Background to Writing	3
The purpose of academic writing	3
Common types of academic writing	4
The format of long and short writing tasks	4
The features of academic writing	6
Some other common text features	6
Simple and longer sentences	7
Writing in paragraphs	8
1.2 Reading: Finding Suitable Sources	9
Academic texts	9
Types of text	12
Using reading lists	12
Using library catalogues	13
Using library websites to search electronic resources	14
1.3 Reading: Developing Critical Approaches	16
Reading methods	16
Titles, sub-titles and text features	17
Reading abstracts	18

Fact and opinion	19
Assessing internet sources critically	19
Critical thinking	22
1.4 Avoiding Plagiarism	25
What is plagiarism?	25
Acknowledging sources	26
Degrees of plagiarism	26
Avoiding plagiarism by summarising and paraphrasing	27
Avoiding plagiarism by developing good study habits	29
Research	30
1.5 From Understanding Titles to Planning	31
The planning process	31
Analysing essay titles	32
Brainstorming	33
Essay length	34
Outlines	35
1.6 Finding Key Points and Note-making	36
Finding key points	36
Finding relevant points	37
Why make notes?	38
Note-making methods	39
Effective note-making	40
1.7 Summarising and Paraphrasing	42
What makes a good summary?	42
Stages of summarising	43
Paraphrasing	47
Techniques for paraphrasing	49
1.8 References and Quotations	52
Why use references?	52
Citations and references	53
Reference verbs	53
Reference systems	54
Using quotations	55
Abbreviations in citations	57
Secondary references	57
Organising the list of references	58

1.9 Combining Sources	61
Mentioning sources	61
Taking a critical approach	62
Combining three sources	64
1.10 Organising Paragraphs	67
Paragraph structure	67
Example paragraph	67
Development of ideas	69
Introducing paragraphs and linking them together	70
1.11 Introductions and Conclusions	72
Introduction contents	72
Introduction structure	73
Opening sentences	76
Conclusions	76
1.12 Rewriting and Proofreading	78
Rewriting	78
Proofreading	81
Part 2	
Elements of Writing	83
2.1 Argument and Discussion	85
Discussion vocabulary	85
Organisation	86
The language of discussion	88
Counterarguments	88
Providing evidence	89
2.2 Cause and Effect	91
The language of cause and effect	91
2.3 Cohesion	96
Reference words	96
Preventing confusion	97
2.4 Comparisons	100
Comparison structures	100
Forms of comparison	102
Using superlatives (e.g. the largest/smallest)	102

2.5	Definite Articles	105
	Use of articles	105
	Using definite articles	106
2.6	Definitions	109
	Simple definitions	109
	Complex definitions	110
2.7	Examples	112
	Using examples	112
	Phrases to introduce examples	113
	Restatement	115
2.8	Generalisations	116
	Using generalisations	116
	Structure	117
	Building on generalisations	119
2.9	Passives	121
	Active and passive	121
	Structure	122
	Using adverbs	122
2.10	Problems and Solutions	125
	Paragraph structure	125
	Alternative structure	126
	Vocabulary	127
2.11	Punctuation	129
	Capital letters	129
	Apostrophes (')	129
	Semicolons (;)	130
	Colons (:)	130
	Commas (,)	130
	Quotation marks/inverted commas (“...”/‘...’)	131
	Full stops (.)	131
	Others	132
2.12	Singular or Plural?	134
	Five areas of difficulty	134
	Group phrases	135
	Uncountable nouns	135

2.13 Style	138
Components of academic style	138
Guidelines	139
Avoiding repetition and redundancy	141
Varying sentence length	142
The use of caution	143
Using modifiers	144
2.14 Visual Information	146
Types of visuals	146
The language of change	148
Describing visuals	149
Labelling	150
Part 3	
Vocabulary for Writing	153
3.1 Approaches to Vocabulary	155
Introduction	155
Discussing language	156
Practice	157
Confusing pairs	158
Words and phrases from other languages	159
3.2 Abbreviations	161
Types of abbreviation	161
Some common abbreviations	162
Punctuation	163
Duplicate abbreviations	163
Abbreviations in writing	163
3.3 Academic Vocabulary: Nouns and Adjectives	165
Introduction	165
Nouns	165
Using nouns and adjectives	167
Academic adjectives	169
3.4 Academic Vocabulary: Adverbs and Verbs	172
Understanding main verbs	172
Using verbs of reference	174
Further referring verbs	175
Using adverbs	176

3.5	Conjunctions	178
	Types of conjunctions	178
	Common conjunctions	180
	Conjunctions of opposition	181
3.6	Numbers	183
	The language of numbers	183
	Percentages	184
	Simplification	184
	Further numerical phrases	185
3.7	Prefixes and Suffixes	188
	How prefixes and suffixes work	188
	Prefixes	188
	Suffixes	190
3.8	Prepositions	192
	Using prepositions	192
	Prepositions and nouns	193
	Prepositions in phrases	194
	Prepositions of place and time	194
	Verbs and prepositions	195
3.9	Synonyms	197
	How synonyms work	197
	Common synonyms in academic writing	198
3.10	Time Markers	201
	How time markers are used	201
	Tenses	202
Part 4		
Writing Models		205
4.1	Case Studies	207
	Using case studies	207
	Model case study	208
4.2	Literature Reviews and Book Reviews	211
	Literature reviews	211
	Example literature review	212
	Book reviews	214
	Model book review	214

4.3	Writing Longer Essays	216
	Planning your work	216
	Example essay	218
	Revision	222
4.4	Reports	224
	Writing reports	224
	Essays and reports	225
	Scientific reports	227
4.5	Surveys	229
	Conducting surveys	229
	Questionnaire design	229
	Survey language	230
	Question forms	232
	Tenses	232
	<i>Test Your Progress</i>	234
	<i>Glossary</i>	236
	<i>Answers</i>	241
	<i>Index</i>	282

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My wife Rene has provided me with invaluable support, encouragement and advice on many aspects of academic writing during the development of this book. Final thanks are due to my daughter, Sophie, for helping me to keep the whole subject in perspective!

Introduction for Teachers

Aims

This course has been developed to help international students with their written assignments in English at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. Students who are not native speakers of English often find the written requirements of their courses very challenging. In addition to the vocabulary of academic English, they have to learn new conventions of style, referencing and format. Furthermore, their lecturers are often concerned by their lack of critical thinking skills, and also mention students' failure to answer the specific question and their inability to develop answers logically. Issues around vocabulary, plagiarism and referencing skills are significant additional worries.

The fourth edition of *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students* sets out to address these problems directly. It recognises that while international students are not expected to write perfect English, accurate and effective language use is an essential skill for such students. What may be individually minor problems with prepositions, word endings, spelling or articles can result in essays that are barely comprehensible to the best-motivated marker.

Structure

To deal with this, students are guided through the stages of the writing process in [Part 1](#) and then the related writing skills are explained and practised in [Part 2](#). [Part 3](#) is designed to assist students with aspects of academic vocabulary, understandably a prime concern for many non-native users of English. [Part 4](#) provides models of some common writing formats, such as case studies.

Teachers may wish to work through the writing process in [Part 1](#) while referring to units in [Part 2](#) as the group progresses. ([Part 2](#) is not intended to be taught from start to finish: note the alphabetical organisation of [Parts 2, 3 and 4](#).)

<i>Part</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Main application</i>
1	The Writing Process from finding sources to proofreading	Classroom use
2	Elements of Writing from argument to visual information	Classroom use and self-study
3	Vocabulary for Writing from abbreviations to synonyms	Classroom use, self-study and reference
4	Writing Models from case studies to surveys	Self-study and reference

Using the Book

A feature of *Academic Writing* is its clear and logical organisation, which makes it ideal as a self-study and reference guide for students needing to work independently. This is a recognition that most courses in academic writing are inevitably time-constrained, and that some students may have no other option. It is designed to be used on both pre-sessional and in-sessional courses, and is suitable for subject-specific (e.g. law, medicine) and multi-discipline courses in English for Academic Purposes (EAP). The first three units in [Part 1](#) assume a fairly low level of writing ability and deal with some basic issues, but beyond this the material becomes more demanding.

Academic Writing uses authentic texts and examples taken from a wide range of disciplines. Extensive cross-referencing is provided to assist both teachers and students find relevant support. All exercises can be done individually or in pairs and groups. A full answer key, plus glossary and index, are included at the end of the book. Extra practice exercises are available on the book's website: www.routledge.com/cw/bailey/.

The material in this course has been extensively tested in the classroom, but improvements can always be achieved. Therefore, I would be very glad to receive any comments or suggestions about the book from teachers, for future editions.

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Introduction for Students

Why is writing English more difficult than speaking?

Many international students who arrive at college to study in English can speak the language well enough for normal life: shopping, travelling and meeting people. But the same students are often surprised to find that writing essays and reports in English is much more difficult. It can be helpful to think about the reasons for this situation.

First, speaking is usually done face to face. If your listener cannot understand you, then they can look puzzled and ask you to repeat. But this does not work with a reader! When we write, we usually have little idea who may read our work, so we have to write as clearly as possible so that it is easy to understand.

With academic writing, writers and readers have to learn special conventions, such as using capital letters in certain places. If you do not follow these conventions, your meaning may be unclear and your teacher can have difficulty assessing your work.

Another issue is vocabulary. Most academic subjects require writers to use semi-formal language, which is different from the idiomatic language used in speech. One example is using a verb such as 'continue' instead of phrasal verbs such as 'go on'.

What is the purpose of the book?

This book is designed to help you succeed in the writing tasks you may be given as part of your academic course. The kind of writing that you are asked to do may be different from the work you have done before, and for some this may be the first time you have had to write long essays or reports in English.

Your teachers know that English is not your native language and will be sympathetic to the problems you have in your writing. But at the same time, you will want to learn to write as clearly and accurately as possible, not only to succeed on your current course, but also in preparation for your career. Almost all large companies and organisations expect their staff to be able to communicate effectively in written English, as well as orally. Therefore, during your

studies you have the ideal opportunity to learn to write English well, and this book can help you achieve that goal.

In addition to accuracy, students on academic courses are expected to take a critical approach to their sources. This means that your teachers will expect you to question and evaluate everything you read, asking whether it is reliable or relevant. You are also expected to refer carefully to the sources of all your ideas, using a standard system of referencing. *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students* will help you to develop these skills.

How is the book organised?

The book can be used either with a teacher or for self-study and reference. Each unit contains practice exercises that can be checked using the answer key at the end of the book. For ease of use, it is divided into the following sections:

To help you get the most out of this course, note the following points:

- Instructions are printed as shown here:
 - **List your ideas below.**
- Links to relevant units are shown like this:
 - ▶ **See Unit 2.13 Style**

These links help you to find extra information, but do not have to be read in order to complete the exercises.

- Extra practice in some areas is provided on the *Academic Writing* website www.routledge.com/cw/bailey/. This is shown, for example, by:



Referencing

- Answers are provided for most exercises in the answer key at the end of the book. If no definite answer can be given, an example answer is usually offered.
- The **index** can be used to locate specific information. The **glossary** explains academic terms that you may not be familiar with.

Thousands of students have already found that *Academic Writing* helps them to write more clearly and effectively. This new edition has been developed using their feedback and ideas, and I would be very glad to receive comments and suggestions on any aspect of the book to help develop future editions.

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Academic Writing Quiz

■ How much do you know about academic writing? Find out by doing this fun quiz.

- 1 The main difference between academic writing and normal writing is that academic writing:
 - (a) uses longer words
 - (b) tries to be precise and unbiased
 - (c) is harder to understand
- 2 The difference between a project and an essay is:
 - (a) essays are longer
 - (b) projects are longer
 - (c) students choose projects' topics
- 3 Teachers complain most about students:
 - (a) not answering the question given
 - (b) not writing enough
 - (c) not referencing properly
- 4 The best time to write an introduction is often:
 - (a) first
 - (b) last
 - (c) after writing the main body
- 5 Plagiarism is:
 - (a) a dangerous disease
 - (b) an academic offence
 - (c) an academic website
- 6 Making careful notes is essential for:
 - (a) writing essays
 - (b) revising for exams
 - (c) all academic work

- 7 An in-text citation looks like:
 - (a) (Manton, 2008)
 - (b) (Richard Manton, 2008)
 - (c) (Manton, R. 2008)

- 8 Paraphrasing a text means:
 - (a) making it shorter
 - (b) changing a lot of the vocabulary
 - (c) adding more detail

- 9 Paragraphs always contain:
 - (a) six or more sentences
 - (b) an example
 - (c) a topic sentence

- 10 The purpose of an introduction is:
 - (a) to give your aims and methods
 - (b) to excite the reader
 - (c) to summarise your ideas

- 11 Proofreading means:
 - (a) getting a friend to check your work
 - (b) checking for minor errors
 - (c) rewriting

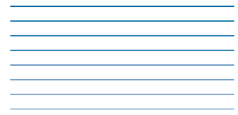
- 12 Teachers expect students to adopt a critical approach to their sources:
 - (a) sometimes
 - (b) only for Master's work
 - (c) always

(Answers on page 242)

The Writing Process

PART

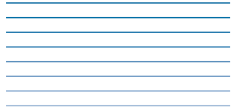
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UNIT
1.1

Background to Writing



Most academic courses test students through written assignments. These tasks include coursework, which may take weeks to write, and exam answers, which often have to be written in an hour. This unit deals with:

- the names of different writing tasks
- the format of long and short writing tasks
- the structure of sentences and paragraphs

1 The purpose of academic writing

Writers should be clear why they are writing. The most common reasons for writing include:

- to report on a piece of research the writer has conducted
- to answer a question the writer has been given or chosen
- to discuss a subject of common interest and give the writer's view
- to synthesise research done by others on a topic

■ Can you suggest any other reasons?

- _____
- _____

Whatever the purpose, it is useful to think about the probable readers of your work. How can you explain your ideas to them effectively? Although there is no fixed standard of academic writing, it is clearly different from the written style of newspapers or novels. For example, it is generally agreed that academic writing attempts to be accurate and objective. What are its other features?

■ Working alone or in a group, list your ideas below.

- *Impersonal style - avoids using 'I' or 'we'*
- _____
- _____
- _____

2 Common types of academic writing

Below are the most normal types of written work produced by students.

■ Match the terms on the left to the definitions on the right.

Notes	A piece of research, either individual or group work, with the topic chosen by the student(s).
Report	The longest piece of writing normally done by a student (20,000+ words), often for a higher degree, on a topic chosen by the student.
Project	A written record of the main points of a text or lecture, for a student's personal use.
Essay	A general term for any academic essay, report, presentation or article.
Dissertation/ Thesis	A description of something a student has done.
Paper	The most common type of written work, with the title given by the teacher, normally 1,000–5,000 words.

3 The format of long and short writing tasks

Short essays (including exam answers) generally have this pattern:

- Introduction
- Main body
- Conclusion

Longer essays and reports may include:

- Introduction
- Main body

- Literature review
- Case study
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- References
- Appendices

► See **Unit 4.3** Longer Essays

Dissertations and journal articles may have:

- Abstract
- List of contents
- List of tables
- Introduction
- Main body
 - Literature review
 - Case study
 - Findings
 - Discussion
- Conclusion
- Acknowledgements
- References
- Appendices

■ Find the words in the lists above that match the following definitions:

(a) A short summary that explains the paper's purpose and main findings.

(b) A list of all the sources the writer has mentioned in the text.

(c) A section, at the end, where additional information is included.

(d) A short section where people who have helped the writer are thanked.

(e) Part of the main body in which the views of other writers on the topic are discussed.

(f) A section where one particular example is described in detail.

4 The features of academic writing

There are no fixed rules for the layout of academic work. Different schools and departments require students to follow different formats for written work. Your teachers may give you guidelines, or you should ask them what they want, but some general features apply to most formats.

- Read the text below and identify the features underlined, using the words in the box.

sentence	heading	sub-title	paragraph	title	phrase
----------	---------	-----------	-----------	-------	--------

- (a) **A fishy story.**
- (b) Misleading health claims regarding omega-3 fatty acids.
- (c) Introduction.
- (d) There has been considerable discussion recently about the benefits of omega-3 fatty acids in the diet. (e) It is claimed that these reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and may even combat obesity. Consequently, food producers have added omega-3s to products ranging from margarine to soft drinks in an attempt to make their products appear healthier and hence increase sales.
- (f) However, consumers may be unaware that there are two types of omega-3s. The best (long-chain fatty acids) are derived from fish, but others (short-chain fatty acids) come from cheaper sources such as soya. This latter group have not been shown to produce the health benefits linked to the long-chain variety. According to Tamura *et al.* (2009), positive results may only be obtained either by eating oily fish three times a week, or by taking daily supplements containing 500 mg of eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) or docosahexaenoic acid (DHA).

- (a) Title (b) _____ (c) _____ (d) _____ (e) _____ (f) _____

5 Some other common text features

- (a) **Reference** to sources using **citation**: *According to Tamura et al. (2009)*
- (b) The use of **abbreviations** to save space: *docosahexaenoic acid (DHA)*
- (c) **Italics**: used to show words from other languages: *Tamura et al.* (= and others)
- (d) **Brackets**: used to give extra information or to clarify a point: *. . . but others (short-chain fatty acids) come from cheaper sources such as soya.*

6 Simple and longer sentences

- Study the table below.

Dragon Motors – vehicle production 2009–2013

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
135,470	156,935	164,820	159,550	123,075

All sentences contain verbs:

In 2009, the company **produced** over 135,000 vehicles.

Between 2009 and 2010, vehicle production **increased** by 20 per cent.

Simple sentences (above) are easier to write and read, but longer sentences are also needed in academic writing. However, students should make clarity a priority, and avoid writing very lengthy sentences with several clauses until they feel confident in their ability.

Sentences containing two or more clauses use **conjunctions**, **relative pronouns** or **punctuation** to link the clauses:

In 2009, Dragon Motors produced over 135,000 vehicles, **but** the following year production increased by 20 per cent. (conjunction)

In 2011, the company built 164,820 vehicles, **which** was the peak of production. (relative pronoun)

Nearly 160,000 vehicles were produced in 2012; by 2013, this had fallen to 123,000. (punctuation)

- Write two simple and two longer sentences using data from the table above.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

(d) _____

- ▶ See [Unit 2.13.5](#) Style: Varying sentence length

7 Writing in paragraphs

■ Discuss the following questions:

- What is a paragraph?
- Why are texts divided into paragraphs?
- How long are paragraphs?
- Do paragraphs have a standard structure?

■ Read the text below and divide it into a suitable number of paragraphs.

BIOCHAR

Charcoal is produced by burning wood slowly in a low-oxygen environment. This material, which is mainly carbon, was used for many years to heat iron ore to extract the metal. But when Abraham Darby discovered a smelting process using coke (produced from coal) in 1709 demand for charcoal collapsed. At approximately the same time the carbon dioxide level in the atmosphere began to rise. But a new use for charcoal, re-named biochar, has recently emerged. It is claimed that using biochar made from various types of plants can both improve soil quality and combat global warming. Various experiments in the United States have shown that adding burnt crop wastes to soil increases fertility and cuts the loss of vital nutrients such as nitrates. The other benefit of biochar is its ability to lock CO₂ into the soil. The process of decay normally allows the carbon dioxide in plants to return to the atmosphere rapidly, but when transformed into charcoal this may be delayed for hundreds of years. In addition, soil containing biochar appears to release less methane, a gas which contributes significantly to global warming. American researchers claim that widespread use of biochar could reduce global CO₂ emissions by over 10 per cent. But other agricultural scientists are concerned about the environmental effects of growing crops especially for burning, and about the displacement of food crops that might be caused. However, the potential twin benefits of greater farm yields and reduced greenhouse gases mean that further research in this area is urgently needed.

► See **Unit 1.10** Organising Paragraphs

UNIT
1.2

Reading

Finding Suitable Sources

Students often underestimate the importance of effective reading, but on any course it is vital to be able to find and understand the most relevant and suitable sources quickly. This unit:

- examines the most appropriate text types for academic work
- explores ways of locating relevant material in the library
- explains the use of electronic resources

1 Academic texts

You may need to read a variety of types of texts, such as websites or journal articles, for your course. So it is important to identify the most suitable texts and recognise their features, which will help you to assess their value.

- You are studying Tourism Marketing. Read the text extracts 1–4 below and decide which are the most suitable for academic use, and why.

Text	Suitability?
1	<i>Yes, it summarises some relevant research, and includes citations.</i>
2	
3	
4	