

Academic Writing for International Students of Business and Economics

Stephen Bailey

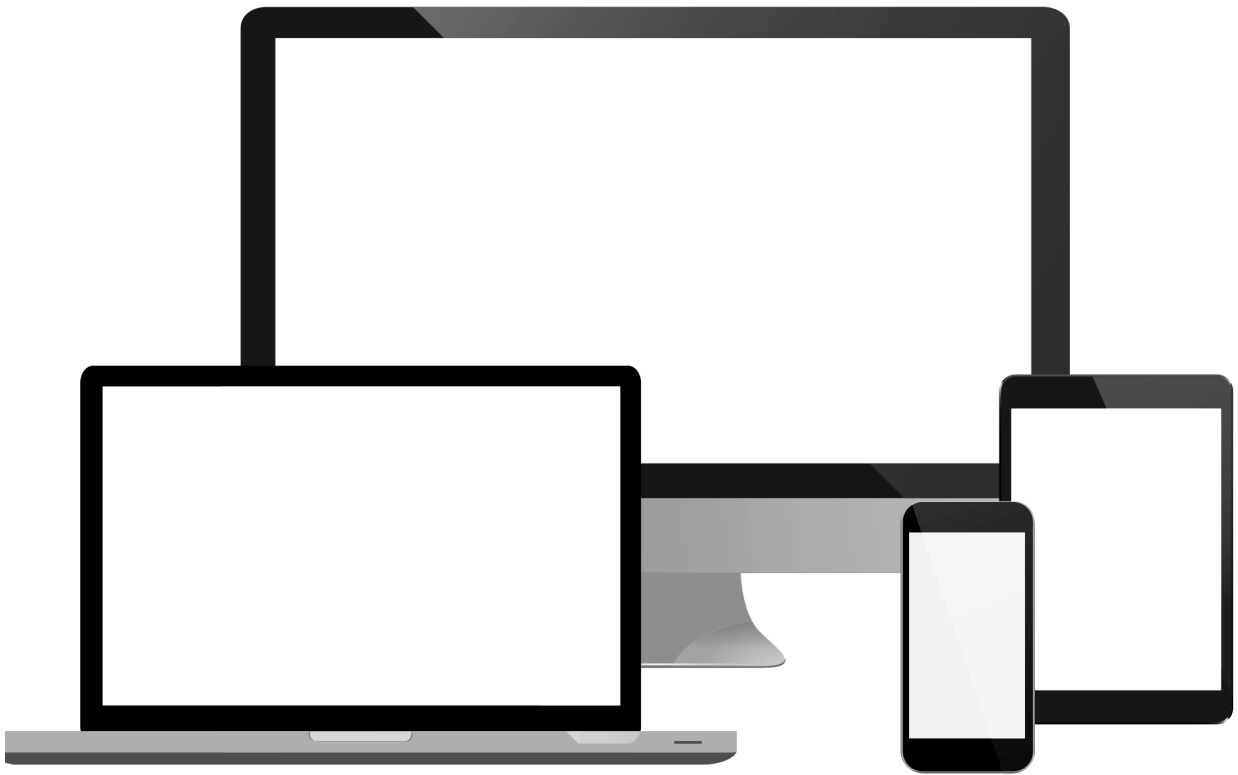
Third Edition





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Academic Writing for International Students of Business and Economics

The third edition of *Academic Writing for International Students of Business and Economics* is written to help international students succeed in writing essays, reports and other papers for their English-language academic courses. Thoroughly revised and updated to reflect issues such as diversity and sustainability, this book is designed to let students and teachers easily find the help they need, both in the classroom and for self-study.

The book is divided into five parts, comprising a total of 42 units:

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

New topics in this edition include Writing in Groups, Written British and American English and Reflective Writing. In addition, the new interactive website has a full set of teaching notes as well as more challenging exercises, revision material and links to other sources. Additional features of the book include:

- Models provided for writing tasks such as case studies and literature reviews
- Use of authentic academic texts from a range of sources
- Designed for self-study as well as classroom use
- Useful at both undergraduate and postgraduate level
- A complete set of answers to the practice exercises
- Cross-references across all units

Providing a glossary to explain technical terms and written to deal with the specific language issues faced by international students of Business and Economics, this practical, user-friendly book is an invaluable guide to academic writing in English.

Stephen Bailey has taught English for Academic Purposes at the University of Nottingham and Derby University in the UK. Previously he taught students in Barcelona, Tokyo, Johor Bahru and Prague. His other books include *Academic Writing, A Handbook for International Students* (Routledge), *The Essentials of Academic Writing for International Students* (Routledge) and *The Old Roads of Derbyshire* (Matador).



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Third Edition

Stephen Bailey

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Closer to home, my wife Rene, who has a remarkable grasp of the finer points of good English in academic style, has been an invaluable critic and adviser, while my daughter Sophie has provided vital feedback to help me appreciate the other side of the academic whirl.

Introduction for Teachers

Aims

The third edition of *Academic Writing for International Students of Business and Economics* has been designed to help students successfully complete their written academic work. They may be studying in a range of different situations: on full-time pre-sessional courses, on part-time in-session classes, in subject-specific classes or in multi-discipline courses, or studying entirely by themselves: due to its flexible structure this book can be used in all these situations.

This course is aimed at both undergraduate and postgraduate students, since although they are studying at different levels the requirements of their teachers are similar: for written work that is precise, objective, accurate and correctly referenced.

The structure of this book recognises that all language courses are inevitably time-constrained, and that some students may prefer or need to work by themselves. Each unit aims to involve students in completing a variety of exercises, which can be analysed and discussed in the classroom. Most of the exercises can be done individually or in pairs and groups, and students can check their work using the answer key.

The book is designed for ease of access and simplicity of reference, which is achieved via the format shown below.

Structure

<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 and self-study
3	Language Issues from cohesion to time markers	Classroom, self-study and reference

<i>Part</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Main application</i>
4	Vocabulary for Writing from abbreviations to synonyms	Classroom, self-study and reference
5	Writing Models from case studies to reflective writing	Self-study and reference

Using the book

Part 1 guides students through the entire process of writing essays or similar papers, and is best taught as a progressive series of lessons, with feedback from the practice exercises.

Part 2 teaches related writing skills, and like Parts 3 and 4 is organised alphabetically.

Part 3 examines the language issues that pose particular problems for international students, and Part 4 deals with the vocabulary problems which are an understandable concern for such students.

Finally, Part 5 provides models of some of the most common types of assessed writing tasks. All the units in Parts 2–5 can be taught in conjunction with units from Part 1, or can be suggested to individual students on a remedial basis for self-study.

The first three units in Part 1 are designed as a basic introduction to the subject and assume a fairly low level of writing ability. With stronger students teachers may choose to progress rapidly through these to more difficult materials starting with Unit 4, Avoiding Plagiarism. At the end of Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 there is a Progress check to allow students to revise their work.

Note that *Academic Writing for International Students of Business and Economics* uses authentic reading texts taken from a range of relevant sources, but selected to be of interest to all students of business or economics. At the end of the book there is a glossary of academic terms and an index.

Cross-referencing to relevant sections in other units is provided like this:

- ▶ See Unit 3.4 Passive and Active and Unit 4.5 Conjunctions

The companion website provides a full set of teaching notes, plus relevant web links for each unit in the Teachers' Area. Further practice exercises for certain units plus web links and quizzes are found in the Students' Area. See www.routledge.com/cw/bailey



The materials in this course have been thoroughly tested in the classroom, but improvement is always possible, so that I would be grateful for any comments or suggestions from teachers for future editions.

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Introduction for Students

The challenge of writing in English

Most international students who come to college or university to study on English-language courses can speak the language well enough for everyday activities such as shopping and travelling. But they may be surprised to find that writing notes, essays and reports in English is much more difficult. There are several reasons for this situation.

Firstly, while speaking is normally done face to face, so that you can see if the listener understands what you say, when writing we cannot see the reader, so we must write as clearly as possible, to make our work easy to understand. Additionally, with academic writing, writers and readers must learn special conventions, such as using capital letters in certain places. If you do not follow these rules, your meaning may be unclear and your teacher could find it hard to assess your work. There is also the issue of vocabulary, since in most academic subjects students are expected to use a semi-formal vocabulary which is different from the idiomatic language of normal speech.

The aim of the book

The main purpose of *Academic Writing for International Students of Business and Economics* is to help you succeed in the writing tasks which you may be asked to complete on your course. The kind of writing you are asked to do could be different from the work you have done before, and this may be the first time you have had to write long essays and 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 present course, but also in preparation for your future career. Most large companies and organisations now expect their staff to be able to communicate effectively in written English, as well as orally. During your studies you have an ideal opportunity to learn to write English well, and this book can help you achieve that goal.

As well as achieving accuracy, students are generally expected to take a critical approach to their sources. This means that you are expected to question and evaluate everything you read, asking whether it is reliable and relevant. Your teachers also expect you to refer carefully to the sources of your ideas, using a standard system of referencing. *Academic Writing for International Students of Business and Economics* will help you develop these skills.

Using the book

The organisation of the course is explained by this chart:

<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 and self-study
3	Language Issues from cohesion to time markers	Classroom, self-study and reference
4	Vocabulary for Writing from abbreviations to synonyms	Classroom, self-study and reference
5	Writing Models from case studies to reflective writing	Self-study and reference

The book can be used either with a teacher or by yourself for self-study and reference. To help you get the most out of the course, note the following points:

Instructions are printed like this:

- **Read the following text**

Cross-referencing to relevant sections in other units is provided like this:

- ▶ **See Unit 3.4 Passive and Active and Unit 4.5 Conjunctions**

Answers to most exercises are provided in the answer key at the end of the book. If there is no definite answer, a model answer is usually given.

The **glossary** on page 259 explains academic terms you may not be familiar with. The **index** on page 313 can be used to find specific information.



The Students' Area of the **companion website** provides further practice exercises for some units, plus web links and quizzes. See www.routledge.com/cw/bailey

I hope you find this new edition helpful in progressing your studies, and I would be glad to receive your comments and suggestions on any part of the book to help develop future editions.

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The Importance of Writing for Students of Business and Economics

During your business school course you may be asked to write a variety of tasks, such as reports, case studies, proposals, essays or a dissertation. These vary in length, format and complexity, but all should be written in academic English, as explained in the five parts of this book.

At first writing may seem the most difficult part of your work, but studying in English gives you a great opportunity to improve your writing skills for future employment. This is essential for the following reasons:

- Writing about a topic helps you to understand the subject better
- Writing enables you to organise and examine your ideas clearly
- Writing allows you to show your knowledge in tests and exams
- Writing allows you to communicate with your teachers
- Most companies expect employees to be able to communicate effectively in written English

■ **Discuss the following questions with a partner.**

- a) What experience do you have of writing in English?
- b) What is the longest piece of writing you have done in English?
- c) What do you find most challenging about writing in English?
- d) How do you plan to improve your written English?

Written British and American English – A Short Guide

Speakers of British and American English can usually understand each other easily, with only minor confusions due to some variations in vocabulary or pronunciation. However, with written academic work more differences need to be understood. The main issues are explained below.

NB: Academic writers in Australia, New Zealand and many other English-speaking areas tend to use British English; in Canada American English is more common.

1. Vocabulary

There are many vocabulary items which differ between British (UK) and American (US) English e.g. *autumn* (UK) and *fall* (US). However, these are mainly well-known and widely understood. But the two main problematic areas in everyday vocabulary are:

- a) words which are not commonly understood in both countries e.g. *tap* (UK) and *faucet* (US).
- b) words with different meanings in each country e.g. *gas* is used for cooking in Britain but in the USA *gas* powers cars (or automobiles).

Further examples:

UK	US
flat	apartment
underground	subway
queue	line
timetable	schedule
high street	main street

UK	US
lorry	truck
lift	elevator
toilet	restroom or bathroom

In the business field, these are examples of further differences:¹

UK	US
share capital	capital stock
company	corporation
current account	checking account
merchant bank	investment bank
property	real estate
trade union	labor union
unit trusts	mutual funds

For a full list of differences see:

<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/usage/british-and-american-terms>

2. Spelling

There are many minor differences in spelling, but among those worth noting are:

- a) In American English the ‘u’ is commonly dropped from words ending in -our (e.g. *neighbour* becomes *neighbor*).
- b) Words ending in -ise or -yse in British English (e.g. *sanitise*, *analyse*) change to *sanitize* and *analyze* in American English.
- c) A group of technical nouns such as *haemophiliac* and *foetus* lose the ‘ae’ or ‘oe’ in American English and become *hemophiliac* and *fetus*.
- d) British English spells the noun *practice* but the verb *practise*. In American English both forms are spelt with an ‘s’. The same applies to *license*.
- e) Many words ending in -re in British English (e.g. *metre*, *theatre*) become *meter* and *theater* in American English.

NB: If you are writing in an environment using British English, you should retain American spelling when providing references i.e. do not change the original spelling.

3. Academic language

There are many minor variations between the language of the educational systems of Britain and the US. These are some of the more important:

- a) A *college* in the UK is usually any post-school institution which provides mainly vocational training, but doesn't award degrees (but a few universities such as Oxford are organised in *colleges*). In the US a *college* is usually part of a university and does give first degrees.
- b) Most teaching in UK universities is done by *lecturers*, while a *professor* is a senior position. In US colleges and universities teaching is mainly done by *professors* and *assistant professors*.
- c) In Britain students *read/do/study* a subject. In the US they *study* or *major* in a subject (the latter as the main part of a two-part degree).
- d) Someone studying for a Master's degree in the UK is a *postgraduate*, while in the US they are a *graduate student*.
- e) Students in Britain *sit* or *take* exams, in America exams are just *taken*. Before taking an exam, British students may *revise* the subject, but in the US they *review* the topic.

UK students generally receive *marks* for their work, while American students get *grades*.

- f) In Britain a *thesis* is the paper submitted for a PhD. This is called a *dissertation* in the US. (In the UK a *dissertation* may be written for a Master's degree.)

4. Punctuation

- a) In Britain quotations are shown by single quotation marks, while nested quotations (those inside quotations) use double. In the US the convention is, confusingly, the opposite.

UK: *As Kauffman remarked: 'His concept of "internal space" requires close analysis'.*

US: *As Kauffman remarked: "His concept of 'internal space' requires close analysis."*

Note that in British English the full stop comes after the quotation marks, while in the US it is inside them.

- b) In American English the 'Oxford comma' is standard, i.e. the comma before the final 'and' in a list:

Vision, knowledge, courage, and luck are the attributes of a successful entrepreneur.

In British English this is usually omitted:

Vision, knowledge, courage and luck are the attributes of a successful entrepreneur.

c) Dates are generally written with the month first in American English:

11.30.2019 = 30 November 2019

In British English dates usually begin with the day:

30.11.2019 = 30 November 2019

5. Capitals

In Britain titles are generally written with only the first word and proper nouns capitalised:

A study of inflation in India since the millennium

In the US all relevant elements have capital letters:

A Study of Inflation in India since the Millennium

► See Unit 1.8 References and Quotations and Unit 3.5 Punctuation

1 Kutateladze, M. (2014) 'Major Differences between American and British English in Business Communication'. *Journal in Humanities* 3(2), 23–25.

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 other writing is that academic writing:
 - a) uses longer words
 - b) tries to be precise and unbiased
 - c) is harder to understand
2. Italics are used for two of the following reasons:
 - a) to emphasise a word
 - b) words from other languages
 - c) for idioms
3. Teachers frequently complain about students:
 - a) not answering the question given
 - b) not writing enough
 - c) writing in pencil
4. The best time to write an introduction is often:
 - a) first
 - b) last
 - c) after writing the main body
5. The purpose of an introduction is:
 - a) to give your aims and methods
 - b) to amuse the reader
 - c) to summarise your ideas
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. Proofreading means:
 - a) getting a friend to check your work
 - b) checking for minor errors
 - c) rewriting
11. Teachers expect students to adopt a critical approach to their sources:
 - a) sometimes
 - b) only for Master's work
 - c) always
12. This punctuation mark (') is called:
 - a) comma
 - b) colon
 - c) apostrophe
13. A suitable synonym for 'business' is:
 - a) firm
 - b) organisation
 - c) outfit
14. 'Progress' and 'research' are both nouns. What kind of noun?
 - a) countable
 - b) uncountable
 - c) proper
15. An abstract is normally found:
 - a) on the back cover of books
 - b) before journal articles
 - c) in exam questions
16. The word 'unreliable' contains:
 - a) a prefix
 - b) a suffix
 - c) both

17. When making notes you should always include:
- a) your own ideas
 - b) a full reference
 - c) the date
18. A pie chart is used to show:
- a) changes in time
 - b) proportion
 - c) structure of an organisation
19. Acknowledgements are generally used:
- a) to admit possible errors
 - b) to suggest more research
 - c) to thank people who helped
20. The conclusion to an article usually includes:
- a) results of the study
 - b) additional data
 - c) references

Answers on p. 264

The Writing Process

PART

1

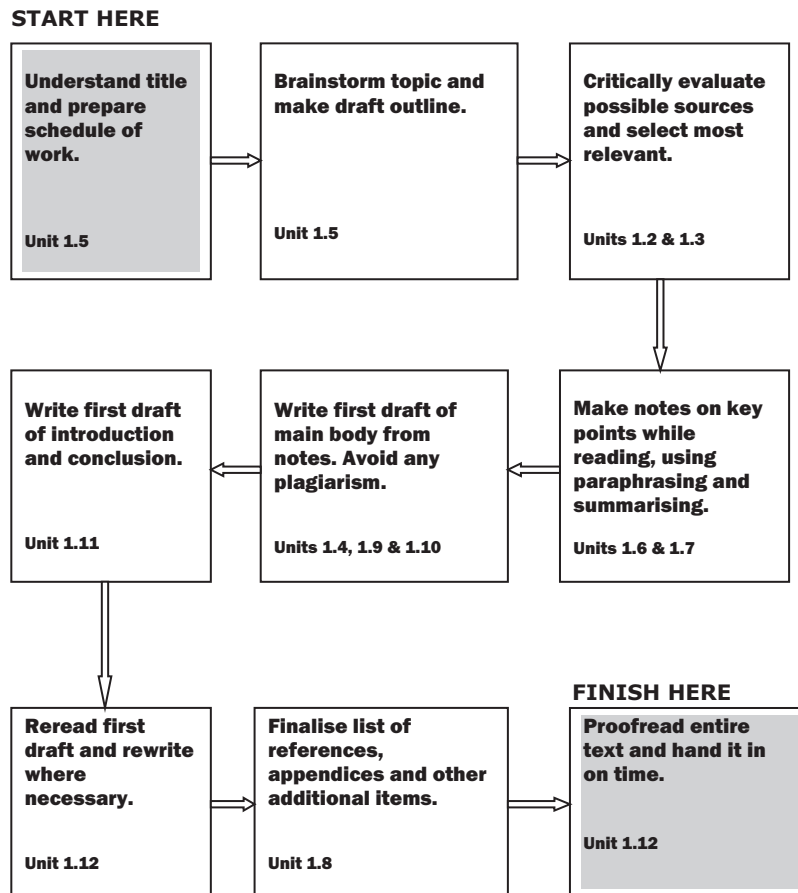


This section explains and practises all the stages of producing a piece of academic writing, from analysing the title, reading the sources, note-making and referencing through to rewriting and then proofreading the final draft.

1. The writing process

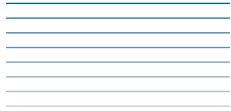
- Study the flowchart below, which illustrates the process of academic writing.

Each stage is fully explained in the relevant units.



1.1

Basics of Writing



Most business schools assess students through written assignments of various kinds. 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 main features of academic writing
- the names of different writing tasks
- the format of short and long writing tasks
- the structure of sentences and paragraphs.

1. The purpose of academic writing

Students should be clear why they are writing. The most common reasons 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?

- _____
- _____

2. Features of academic writing

Although there is no fixed standard of academic writing, and style may vary from subject to subject, academic writing is clearly different from the written style of newspapers or novels. For example, it is generally agreed that academic writing attempts to be accurate, so that

instead of ‘sales fell sharply’ it is better to write ‘sales fell by 35%’. What are some of the other features of academic writing?

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

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

3. Common types of academic writing

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

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

Report	<i>The longest piece of writing normally done by a student, often for a higher degree (20,000+ words).</i>
Essay	<i>A general term for any extended piece of academic writing.</i>
Dissertation/ Thesis	<i>A persuasive text written to convince a potential customer of the value of a new product or strategy.</i>
Paper	<i>A description of a situation or process, often with suggestions for dealing with a problem.</i>
Case study	<i>The presentation of the results of a piece of research you have conducted, using interviews or questionnaires.</i>
Survey report	<i>The answer to a question set by the teacher, often on a theoretical subject.</i>
Reflection	A detailed report on a particular situation or organisation.
Proposal	<i>A piece of writing in which you critically examine how you dealt with a situation or task and what you learned from it.</i>

4. The format of written assignments

Essays and reports (1,000–5,000 words) generally include the following items.

■ Discuss the meanings of these elements with a partner.

Introduction

Main body

Literature review

Case study