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## BOOK REVIEW

# ACADEMIC WRITING: A HANDBOOK FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS (SECOND EDITION)

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Bailey, S. (2018). *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students*, Routledge

The book titled *Academic Writing: A handbook for international students* (2nd edition) is written by Stephen Bailey and published by Routledge Taylor & Francis group. Stephen Bailey's book is one of the comprehensive books written on the academic writing skills by any local and foreign author. This book plays a fundamental role in developing the skills of academic writing to someone with less formal writing experience of English. Academic writing is divided into four parts. Each part deals with different features of academic writing and further divided into small sections and units dealing each aspect of the titled sections.

First part "the writing process" discusses the initial stages of writing and is divided into three main sections. 1st section provides the guidelines of writing foundations focusing on types, organizations, features and understanding of text as before writing comprehension of text and its layout is important. Furthermore, 2nd section reading and note making addresses the importance of evaluating, paraphrasing, note making and selecting key points from the text. This section enables the learner to grasp the writers' intention thus avoiding the usage of unreliable or irrelevant material in their writing and mastering in these components can leads to write essays accurately and logically. 3rd and last section deals with the writing stage as it guides students about stages of planning essay, organizing paragraphs, organizing the main body, writing an attractive introduction that leading to conclusion, rewriting and proof reading.

Second part "elements of writing" deals with the skills that are essential for writing rationally and effectively. These skills include using arguments, understanding cause and effect relationships, cohesion of the sentences, making comparisons, key terms definitions, giving examples, opening paragraphs, using referencing, quotations, generalization of text and describing the visual information such as graphs, charts and tables. This section is arranged alphabetically for students to go through the content and practice desired skill.

Third part "accuracy in writing" gives remedial practices in those areas which students are often find confusion and count as grammatical errors. These skills include use of adverbs, conjunctions,

verbs, nouns and adjectives, relative pronouns, verb of reference, punctuations and prepositions, confusing pairs, numbers, abbreviations, use of articles and tenses. Avoiding these grammatical errors helps the students to meet the required standard of writing.

Fourth part “writing models” offers examples of types of writing that students commonly need such as formal letters and lay out of applications, essential components of curriculum vitae, elements of report writing, designing surveys and writing comparison and discussion essays. This part provides a complete reflection of all the aspects of academic writing discussed previously. There is also a writing test section for checking progress and improvement in writing skills. A complete answer key is also given at the end for all the units for self-assessment. This book also has a sources section at the end which shows the authenticity and honesty of the writer as these sources are mentioned to enlist quotations of different articles uses in various units across the book for language purpose only.

The author made clear that the targeted audiences of this book are the students of all subjects and levels from foundation to PhD where academic writing is being offered as a course to the students across different universities internationally. However, this book can also be used as self-practice exercises for the teachers and academicians of different disciplines who are involved in academic writing career and seek continuous improvement, accuracy, fluency in writing to incorporate new ideas accurately and referencing in their written work.

The structure of the book follows simple to complex approach as all the content of the book is arranged in a sequence that one concept/idea leads to next and students/ reader don't feel isolated while moving from one section to next. The titles of four parts of the books are self-explanatory as it gives the idea to students/reader what they are going to expect in different units. The language of the book is simple and contains diverse techniques to improve the specific content in a unit. Writer has mentioned multiple strategies regarding content in a single unit for self-improvement thus equips the students for self-assessment and effective writing.

Another salient feature of this book is that all the units contain exercise regarding the content. The content is self-explanatory, and every unit has practical writing exercises to practice techniques and revise difficulties. Detailed examples for exercises are used in the book and each unit exercises also have variety of questions i.e. fill in the blanks, tables, short passages, listing the ideas, explaining graphs and figures, match the columns, rewriting, correcting and proof reading the passages. These varieties of exercises not only attract the readers but also guide the students as it also has detailed answer keys in the end for self-assessment.

The nature and quality of the exercises are more suitable for undergraduate students as format of the exercise is mostly objective and students are demanded to choose, underline, fill in the blanks with one word and circle the best option. This format help in grasping the skills at sentence level by swift reading, finding the mistakes and making corrections. However, the adequacy of the exercise for graduate and post-graduate students is somehow lacking. There should be more paragraphs with mix skills of grammar included for higher level students.

One of the prominent features of the book is cross referencing which help the students to link the related units and concepts together. Illustration is also being used across different units in the book to attract the reader. These illustrations are according to the content and not flooded along each text

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but used intentionally where is needed. Overall, the academic writing book meets the desired quality and covers all the important aspects of English writing skills in an organized manner.

As there is always a room for improvement, the reviewer would like to highlight the few aspects which may be considered to further improve the quality of the book. The title suggests that this book is for international students but the context of the examples regarding names, figures, tables and information of content/text is limited to the Europe and the United Kingdom mostly. Text/content can be chosen from different sources around the globe.

It is concluded that this book is a vital source for most of the students internationally who faces difficulty in writing English academically. This book is an excellent resource of enhancing writing skills in a rational way and ideal for independent study or classroom usage.



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