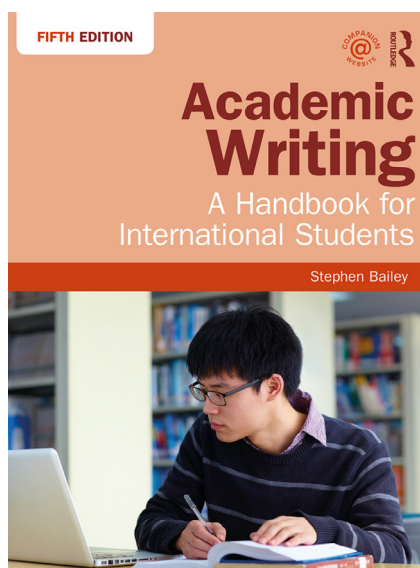


BOOK REVIEW



Title:	Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students. (5 th ed.)
Authors:	Stephen Bailey
Publisher:	Routledge
Year:	2017
No. of pages:	344
ISBN:	1138048747 / 978-1138048744
Reviewers:	Alan Ali Saeed, <i>Komar University of Science & Technology (KUST)</i> and <i>Sulaimani University, Iraqi Kurdistan</i>

This is the latest edition of a stalwart textbook for teaching English for Academic Purposes (EAP). It is a stand-alone volume, unlike many EAP books that have become a series differentiated by stages of student ability (for example, the *Oxford EAP* series or *Longman Academic Writing*). The advantage is that Bailey's textbook accompanies the student through their courses, from beginner to advanced, rather than requiring several separate books. The book is systematic and thorough, with varied examples of material, and it is broken into logical sections and subsections like a science or engineering textbook. The emphasis is on students practicing and completing writing throughout, rather than a more theoretical approach.

'Part 1 - The Writing Process', explores how academic writing occurs, from what distinguishes academic writing from other types of writing, through finding appropriate sources through reading (part 1.2), to developing a critical stance towards those sources (part 1.3). Avoiding plagiarism is dealt with early on (part 1.4), as are key issues such as: understanding essay titles and planning (part 1.5); locating key points and taking effective notes (part 1.6); summarising and paraphrasing (part 1.7); and referencing and quotations (part 1.8). It then examines the structure of writing, such as organising paragraphs (part 1.10), as well as a crucial problem for many students, writing introductions and conclusions (part 1.11). The all-important issue of rewriting and proofreading (part 1.12) is something that will make a significant difference to student work but is one students seldom believe to be accurate.

It is clear from my summary that each section of Part 1, moves from a beginner to an advanced level of EAP, which a teacher needs to consider. The other parts of the book are similarly detailed. Part 2, 'Elements of Writing', covers how writing can define, generalise, compare, and discuss. Part 3, 'Language Issues', deals with problematic areas of academic language, including punctuation and the passive voice. Part 4, 'Vocabulary for Writing', may be particularly useful for beginners. Part 5 'Writing Models', examines the many genres of academic writing from reports to essays to literature reviews. This is an area where I think the book needed

more varied examples. For instance, what about audio-visual presentations and PowerPoint slides? What about project work or reflective writing and logs? Arguably, there are too many varieties of academic writing nowadays employed as an adjunct to or substitute more traditional forms, but nonetheless this means turning to other specialised sources. I did, however, welcome Bailey's attention to collaborative group writing (part 5.6), which is important for the sciences, and electronic writing (part 5.5). Both areas are often overlooked. Many students nowadays, for example, have no experience of writing letters and treat emails like text messages.

The book has evolved through its editions. Earlier editions were criticised for lacking an accompanying teacher's book. Now, there is a useful, free thirteen-page guide available from Routledge on a companion website, together with useful web links for each chapter (Bailey, n.d). It is less prescriptive than some similar teaching guides, as Bailey presumably does not want to disempower the classroom teacher's pedagogic ownership of teaching materials. However, a much more detailed guide would be beneficial for less experienced teachers. On the same companion web site, there is also a designated student area which includes further web links, quizzes, and sets of extra practice materials. EAP educators who are used to having access to answers that the students do not, may find it surprising that Bailey supplies the answers to quizzes and tests, as he does in the book itself. This may restrict their utility for in-class tests; however, it is congruent with Bailey's presupposition that his textbook can serve as a self-study guide for students and early career researchers. In fact, this is one of the few EAP textbooks that can be recommended to colleagues or postgraduate students who wish to hone their skills through self-study, and which they will not find patronising. This is also a valuable reference guide to perfecting aspects of your academic work, especially in constructing bibliographies or making more effective and purposive arguments that successfully integrate evidence from primary and secondary sources.

However, one thing about this textbook that is less of a caveat *per se* than it is a cautionary tale, is the way textbooks are put into the service of EAP practitioners with specific groups of students. It is the case, especially in developing nations, for EAP to be taught by non-native speaker staff with an ESOL or TEFL background to student groups who come from academic disciplines that the teachers may be unfamiliar with. However, while all academic disciplines may be cognate on an aspect such as note-taking, they often vary tremendously in characteristics such as the way essays are written. This has been recently discussed by Jeanne Godfrey and Melinda Whong (2020), who suggest that teachers need to ensure that they are familiar with the appropriate demands of EAP for specific disciplines. To be fair to Bailey, he does mention this briefly in the 'Teacher's Notes' to 'Writing Models' (p. 17). However, a longer and more detailed discussion of the topic would be of value in future editions of the notes. I believe a DVD with PowerPoint visualisations of materials in chapters and audio-visual materials, such as examples from lectures, would also increase the book's functionality.

Nevertheless, *Academic writing: A Handbook for International Students* continues to be a good textbook for EAP courses at the university level. Its self-study aspect remains unique while it continues to be innovative (for example, in discussing group writing and electronic communication). I very much look forward to future editions.

THE REVIEWERS

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Godfrey, J., & Whong, M. (Eds.). (2020). *What is good academic writing? Insights into discipline-specific student writing*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.