# English for academic study:
# Extended writing & research skills

新世纪标准大学英语　　　学生用书

# 学术英语写作教程

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　　　and John Slaght

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普通高等教育"十五"国家级规划教材

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# 前　言

　　随着我国大学英语教学改革的不断深入与发展，大学本科生对英语学习有了更高的要求。许多学生在通过了大学英语四级考试后，希望尽快进入选修课程的学习，如：实用写作、高级听说、英美社会与文化、报刊选读等，以便更有针对性地加强某项语言技能或提高某方面的语言能力和文化素养。从多数院校的实际情况看，高年级或通过大学英语四级考试后的学生开设英语选修课程已成为高校大学英语课程建设与发展的一个重要的方面。

　　为了更好地适应大学英语教学这一发展趋势以及学生的需要，高等教育出版社引进了由英国里丁大学开发、Garnet出版社出版的本系列教材，并将其列入《新世纪标准大学英语》系列教程。这套教材以学术性写作和阅读为主体，针对具有较好英语基础的大学生和研究生而设计，以语言运用培养为主线，以学术内容为基础。其主要特点是：

　　1. 选材新颖，内容丰富，题材广泛；具有强烈的时代气息；有利于拓宽学生在英语方面的视野及知识面。

　　2. 语言规范，难度适中，语言实践性强；适合于大学高年级学生的实际需要，能够达到《大学英语课程教学要求》的相关要求。

　　3. 教学内容实用，注重学术英语的培养，有利于学生较早地了解这方面的知识，为将来的工作打下相应的基础。

　　为了使这套教材能够更好地符合我国大学英语选修课程的教学需要，我们做了以下工作：

　　1. 根据《大学英语课程教学要求》对选修课程的要求，将这套系列教材合并为两册，即《学术英语阅读教程》和《学术英语写作教程》。

　　2. 在保持原书风格的基础上，适当增加相应的练习，以满足我国大学英语教学的需要。

　　3. 在所有增加的练习后面，配有参考答案。扩展写作部分提供参考范文等，以便教师和学生参考。

　　4. 对一些内容和有关文字做了必要的修改，使其更加符合我国国情和大学英语教学的需要。

《学术英语阅读教程》和《学术英语写作教程》分为学生用书和教师用书；每册约需48学时，供一个学期教学使用。主要适用于本科高年级或通过大学英语四级考试的学生使用，也可用于研究生英语选修课程。本教程还适用于自修和准备到国外留学的人员。

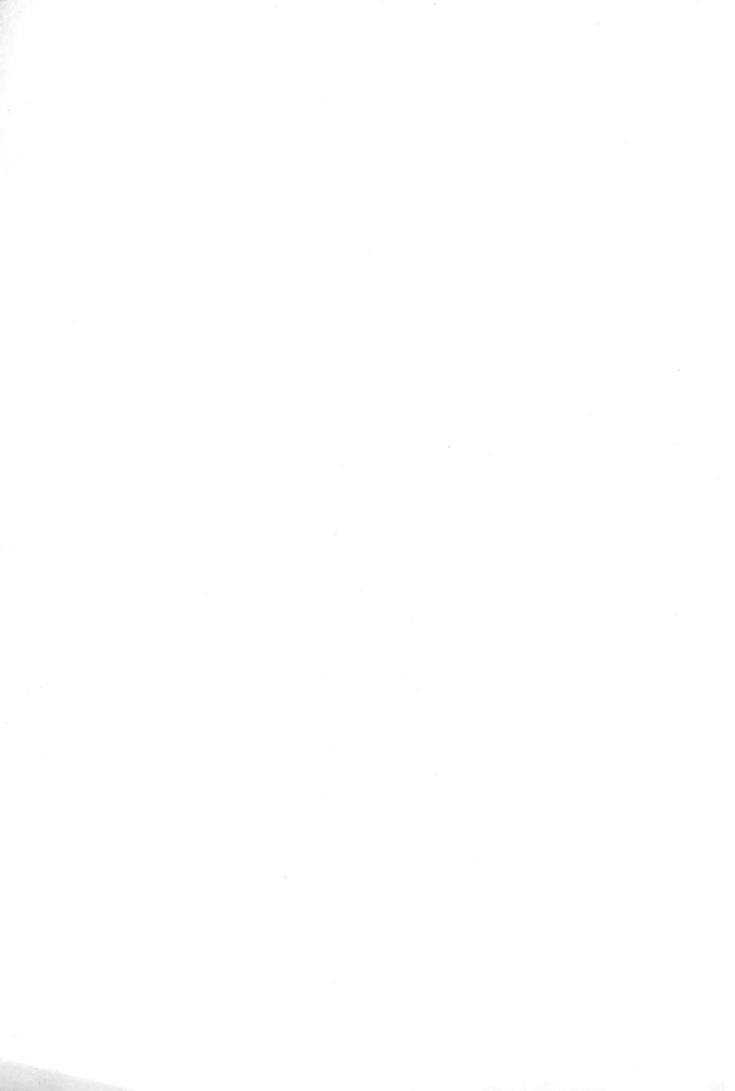　　由于编者水平有限，错误和疏漏之处一定不少，热忱欢迎批评指正。

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编　者

2006 年 6 月

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# Contents

# Contents

# 1 Introduction to the skills of extended writing and research

In this unit you will be introduced to extended writing and informed about the projects you will work on in this book.

## Academic disciplines on the typical university campus

There are a number of schools (or faculties) that exist on university campuses, and within these there are also departments and units (or sections). Students often have to produce a specific type of work in order to be assessed, depending on the school, faculty, department or unit they are studying in. The type of writing that students have to do also depends on the level of study: whether undergraduate or postgraduate.

## Extended writing at university: Why do students write?

Students write for a number of purposes, according to the particular requirements of their course. In many cases the topic or title will be predetermined by the lecturer, and may require the reading of recommended texts. At other times, for example, when writing a thesis or dissertation, students have to choose their own titles. The students will receive support and guidelines from a supervisor, but on the whole they are expected to work independently at this level.

The reasons why students carry out extended academic writing activities may include:

● to develop and express their ideas;
● to provide evidence to support their ideas;
● to dispute or support existing theories;
● to display knowledge.

The type of writing required by students will be determined by the purpose of the writing.

## Task 1: What do students write?

You are going to brainstorm some ideas about the kind of writing students have to do at university. This means you are going to write down some ideas about this topic. You are going to do this very quickly within a time limit, so don't worry about the accuracy of your grammar or spelling.

1.1 List the kinds of writing students have to do at university, without worrying about the order.

Note your ideas in the box below; one idea has been written for you.

## WHAT STUDENTS HAVE TO WRITE AT UNIVERSITY

- Reports of experiments
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

University students are often asked to write *essays*. These may be as short as 600 words, especially during examinations. However, undergraduates as well as postgraduates are also frequently required to write *extended essays*. A typical length for an extended essay might be 3,000 words. We sometimes refer to these extended essays as *projects*.

However, not all students write traditional-style essays. For example, in the Engineering Department of a university, students will often be expected to write *reports* on projects they have been working on during their course. Towards the end of their period of study, the same students will probably be expected to write a *thesis*. This is "a long piece of writing based on your own ideas and research as part of a university degree, especially a higher degree such as a PhD" (Cobuild 1993 *Advanced Learner's Dictionary*). Sometimes this is called a *dissertation* – "a long formal piece of writing on a particular subject, especially for a university degree" (Cobuild 1994 *Advanced Learner's Dictionary*). In the United Kingdom and Ireland, a dissertation is written for a Master's-level degree.

In certain academic disciplines, such as Applied Linguistics, Education or Sociology, students may be required to write a *case study*. A good example of a case study might be the "study of speech, writing, or language use of one person, either at one point in time or over a period of time, e.g., a child over a period of one year' (Richards, Platt & Weber, 1985). A student in an Applied Linguistics Department would probably write a case study like this.

Students also have to write *notes*: from written sources, or when attending a lecture, seminar or tutorial. Some students annotate lecture handouts, either by highlighting key points or writing notes/comments in the margins of the text, which may be useful later.

## Task 2: Types of writing

Complete the following table to help your understanding of the types of writing described above.

| Type of writing | Type of student | Explanation |
|---|---|---|
| Essay | | A traditional 600–6,000 word text written as an assignment or for an exam |
| Extended essay or project | | |
| Report | Undergraduate/ postgraduate | |
| Thesis | | |
| Dissertation | | |
| Case study | | An account that gives detailed information about a person, group or thing and their development over a period of time |

Whatever form of extended writing students are expected to do, the process will usually involve the following steps:

- gathering information from various sources;
- organising this information so that it appropriately answers the needs of the task that the writer has to complete;
- planning the text;
- drafting and redrafting the text until it communicates the information and ideas fully and clearly.

Students are expected to take responsibility for working through these steps. In other words, they should work independently to a large extent.

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# Types of assessment

The writing of reports, theses, dissertations and case studies is all part of the assessment process in most academic disciplines in the majority of universities. Another form of assessment is through *oral presentations*. Presentations are normally given as part of a study project. For example, a student writing a report might give a presentation in order to 'present' his or her report in a clear, concise way.

Oral presentations can be given by an individual student, or they can be group presentations. Another form of presentation is the *poster presentation*. In this case, the student prepares a visual display outlining the work or project he/she has been involved in. A poster presentation will normally be displayed during a student *conference*. Students display their work, and participants and visitors to the conference are invited to look at the display and ask the author of the poster questions about the process or information they can see. At the same time, other students will normally be giving oral presentations at the conference.

Apart from the methods of written and oral assessment mentioned above, of course, students will probably have to take exams at the end of term and/or the end of year, as well as at the end of their university studies when they take their *final examinations*.

# Writing projects

You will do most of the extended writing in this course independently, outside the classroom. Any writing that goes on in the classroom will normally be for editing purposes, when you will have an opportunity to consult your tutor and redraft your work accordingly. You will be expected to follow a *process writing* approach. This approach includes editing your work, submitting your first draft, and redrafting the project after your tutor has given you feedback.

You might also have the opportunity to take part in one-to-one tutorials with your tutor, in order to discuss your first and subsequent drafts. You will be expected to go on redrafting and revising the content of your text in order to improve it, as long as you are able to submit your final draft before any submission deadline. The final product is less important than the process you go through while writing it. Writing your project gives you the opportunity to practise the academic skills and conventions you have been learning and developing.

The project you are going to complete will be on the topic of *sustainable development*. For this project, you will be given certain "core" texts to consult. However, you will have the opportunity to carry out some independent research, because you can select *two extra texts* of your own choice from books, journals or online sources. You will need to provide hard copies of these sources for your tutor.

The aim of this project is to give you practice in finding appropriate information. Although a range of texts is available, you will need to read "selectively" in order to find information that is relevant to the task title. You will also practise note-taking from these sources and then summarising your notes effectively. You will be given advice on how to avoid plagiarism and how to acknowledge the origin of your information.

The project in this book should be considered as practice for a second project. For the second project, you should make all the decisions about subject, topic and title, and you will carry out the research independently (including the search for appropriate sources).

At each stage of both projects, you should make best use of any tutorial sessions you may have. University staff are busy people and expect you to come with readily prepared questions and a thorough knowledge of the work you have been carrying out. Preparation for tutorials is your responsibility.

## Task 3: Analysing the task

Before beginning any task, it is important to analyse the requirements of the task so that you have a very clear idea of your purpose for writing.

Consider the following project title:

**To what extent can the problems of urbanisation be met by a policy of sustainable development?**

Discuss the following with a partner:

**a)** Look at the project title above and highlight the key words/phrases.

**b)** How is the title framed (e.g. statement/question/heading)?

**c)** What does the title ask you to do?

## Task 4: The stages of writing a project

There are three stages in producing an extended essay or project: **planning**, **researching** and **writing up**. In each of these stages there are a number of smaller steps.

**4.1** Put the steps listed below into the appropriate stages on page 10 (*Planning, Researching* or *Writing up*), in the most appropriate order. Write the steps in full; do not write numbers. Note that one step can be placed in two stages.

**a)** Read the first draft.

**b)** Edit the draft – decide objectively whether your ideas have been expressed clearly.

**c)** Think of a working title for the project. ✓

**d)** Search for relevant journals/books/information in the library and on the Internet.

**e)** Write down the details of your sources.

**f)** Decide if you need to do more reading.

**g)** Write the contents page, bibliography, title page and abstract. ✓

**h)** Arrange a tutorial with your tutor.

**i)** Do some reading.

**j)** Decide on a topic.

**k)** Write the first complete draft.

**l)** Highlight/take notes of relevant information. ✓

**m)** Plan the contents in detail.

**n)** Work on establishing a clear focus.

**o)** Make a rough outline plan of your ideas.

**p)** Check that sources are available/accessible.

## Planning

1. _____

2. _____

3. Think of a working title for the project. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

## Researching

1. _____

2. _____

3. Highlight/take notes of relevant information. _____

4. _____

5. _____

## Writing up

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. Write the contents page, bibliography, title page and abstract. _____

**4.2** Discuss your answer with another student. There is more than one possible order for the steps.

# Task 5: Starting Project 1

In Task 3, you analysed the title of the project: *To what extent can the problems of urbanisation be met by a policy of sustainable development?*

You are now going to work on this project by answering the following questions, which are grouped under the three broad headings *Introduction*, *Main body* and *Conclusion*. First read the questions.

## Introduction

a)  What is "sustainable development"? (Definition)

b)  What is "urbanisation"? (Definition)

c)  What are the problems of urbanisation? (Background information)

d)  What policies of sustainable development exist or could be introduced? (Background information)

e)  To what extent do you <u>think</u> sustainable development can solve the problems?
    [The expression "*To what extent*" allows you to give your opinion about the likely success of sustainable development policies. Your position (opinion) on this question will help form your "thesis" – that is the main argument you will present in your project.]

## Main body

f)  What specific problems are related to the lack of urban space?
    What evidence can you find for this?

g)  What specific problems are related to urban transport?
    What evidence can you find for this?

h)  What are the possible solutions to the problems outlined above?

i)  What evidence can you find to suggest that a policy of sustainable development can be successful?

## Conclusion

j)  Based on the evidence you have presented above, to what extent can a policy of sustainable development meet the current urban problems related to a lack of space and transport?

k)  Does the evidence you put together in the 'main body' support the thesis you introduced in your introduction?

In the appropriate boxes on the next page, brainstorm some ideas on the above questions. At the moment, you are only being asked to guess what the answers *might* be. After this, you will have to do some reading to find out whether your guesses are correct or not. You will also be reading to find out other ideas about the topic. This reading stage is one of the most important parts of your work because you will be looking for *evidence* to support your ideas.

Write your initial ideas in the boxes overleaf. You only need to write in note form.

## Introduction

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

## Main body

1. _Lack of playground facilities for children._
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

## Conclusion

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

# Task 6: Extensions

**6.1** Analyze the title of the project: To what extent can the problems of Internet affect college students' learning, and then work on this project by answering the following questions, which are grouped under the three broad headings *Introduction*, *Main body* and *Conclusion*.

## Introduction

**a)** What is the purpose of this project?

**b)** What are the main problems related to Internet at colleges?

**c)** What policies exist or could be introduced to Internet at colleges?

**d)** To what extent do you think these problems can be solved?
Your main argument should be presented in the introduction of your project.

## Main body

**e)** What specific problems are related to Internet?

**f)** What are the possible solutions to the problems outlined above?

**g)** What evidence can you find to suggest that a policy concerning Internet can be successful?
More evidence should be needed in this part to support your argument.

## Conclusion

**h)** Based on the evidence you have presented above, to what extent can a policy solve the current problems related to Internet?

**I)** What are your suggestions and conclusion?

At this moment, you are only to guess what the answers might be. After this, you will have to do some more reading or search on Internet to find out whether your guesses are reasonable or not. If possible in the next class, some students will be asked to give a short presentation with PPT.

**Internet and students' study**

### Introduction

**1** _____

**2** _____

**3** _____

**4** _____

**5** _____

**6** _____