

English for
Academic Study

New edition

Writing

Course Book

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Book map

	Unit	Unit essay	Skills and language focus
1	Introduction to academic writing No source text	<i>(Reflective questionnaire)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflecting on the process of academic writing
2	Sustainable energy 2a Using waste, Swedish city cuts its fossil fuel use (1) 2b Using waste, Swedish city cuts its fossil fuel use (2)	<i>How can alternative sources of energy be harnessed effectively?</i>	Getting started: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning an essay Writing a first draft of an essay Peer evaluation of a first draft Incorporating sources Writing introductions
3	The business of science 3a Stop selling out science to commerce 3b Is business bad for science?	<i>Over the past 20 years, commercial influences on scientific research have become increasingly detrimental. Discuss.</i>	Organizing and supporting ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generating ideas for an essay Organizing ideas Incorporating and referencing sources Using paragraph leaders to help organization
4	Telemedicine 4c Telemedicine	Timed essay: <i>As technology continues to improve, the range of potential uses for telemedicine will increase. Telemedicine will offer more beneficial applications in preventing rather than curing disease. Discuss.</i>	Writing in examinations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding key instruction verbs in examination questions Interpreting examination questions Writing an examination essay
5	Food security 5a Diet and sustainability 5b The challenge of feeding 9 billion people 5c Closing the yield gap 5d Dealing with the situation	<i>There are many threats to global food supplies. Explain the problem, identify possible solutions, and assess the implications of implementing these solutions.</i>	The SPSIE approach to organization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing ideas using the SPSIE approach Concluding sentences in paragraphs Writing conclusions

	Unit	Unit essay	Skills and language focus
6	Human resource management 6a Background and origins of people management 6b International human resource management	<i>To what extent does human resource management play a formal role in companies?</i>	Developing your ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzing the essay question Writing short definitions Writing extended definitions Paragraph development – exemplification and support Thinking critically Using examples to develop ideas
7	Sustainable fashion 7a Material diversity 7b Sustainable fashion 7c The future of eco-fashion: A design-driven approach	<i>The fashion industry poses a serious threat to the environment. A higher level of sustainability in materials production is the key solution. Discuss.</i>	Writing about cause and effect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing your essay – cause and effect The language of cause and effect Using statistical facts
8	The Tipping Point 8a The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference 8b Mental epidemics 8c An interview with Malcolm Gladwell, author of the <i>The Tipping Point</i> 8d <i>The Tipping Point</i> by Malcolm Gladwell: Book review 8e Rumours, sneakers and the power of translation	<i>Compare and contrast the role of Innovators and Early Adopters with the role of the Early Majority in achieving commercial success. Relate your answer to Gladwell's theory of the Tipping Point.</i>	Comparing and contrasting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing your essay – comparison and contrast The language of comparison and contrast Incorporating quotations Planning and writing your essay Peer evaluation

Aims of the course

The purpose of this book is to help you develop the academic writing skills you need to deal effectively with the written element of your academic study, as well as to develop other important skills such as reading research and critical thinking.

Structure of the course

- **Unit structure:** There are eight units in the book. Each unit explores and/or recycles certain key aspects of academic writing, such as organizing and supporting ideas, or writing in examinations. The development of the skills necessary to succeed in these key aspects occurs within the context of a specific topic area, such as *sustainable energy* and *the business of science*. You will have the opportunity to read texts on these and other topics in the accompanying *EAS: Reading & Writing Source Book*. Your writing in any unit will be based on the unit topic. The importance of the context reflects the reality of academic study, where students write about topics and issues within their chosen subject area, and the purpose of writing is directed by the context.
- **Key writing skills:** These are explained where it is felt you need specific information on an area of writing. They usually appear at the end of a task, so that you can reflect on the skills, having done the task.
- **Study tips:** These are included for ease of reference when you are revising what you have studied. They either summarize the outcome of a series of activities, or are a summary of other information contained in the unit.
- **Unit summaries:** Each unit is followed by a unit summary, giving you the opportunity to reflect on what you have learnt.

Additional materials

- **Glossary:** Words or phrases in **bold** (or **bold** and underlined in task instructions) in the text are explained in the glossary on pages 84–85.
- **Peer evaluation sheets:** These can be found on pages 86–91 and provide structured questions to help you evaluate another student's essay and provide useful feedback.

Appendix

The appendix on pages 92–93 contains an *Assessing my progress* form for you to complete once you have finished the course. You should use it to assess the progress you have made on the course, by evaluating the essays you have written and deciding on your strengths and weaknesses.

Working with the course

When you are writing in another language, you not only need to think about the language to express your ideas, but you also need to understand the writing conventions associated with it. This can be particularly challenging with academic writing, where the writing conventions may be very different to the conventions used in your own academic culture. This book will help you in two ways:

- by providing you with guided instruction on what to do and how to do it
- by giving you the opportunity to practise writing in a similar context to the one you will use in your future studies

What you put into the course will determine how much you get out of it. If you want to improve your academic writing, it is essential to practise the skills. You should therefore prepare well for the sessions, as well as participating actively in them.

The process approach to writing

The **process approach** to writing has been widely used for a number of years on writing courses throughout the world. The approach has proved itself an effective way of improving the academic writing skills of students studying English for academic purposes (EAP). The basic concept of this approach is that good writers go through a number of processes while composing a text before they produce their final product. The main underlying principles are:

- **Writing is a recursive process. Effective writing results from rewriting and revising at each stage of the composing process. A good writer goes back and thinks again before continuing to write. You will be asked to:**
 - **brainstorm** ideas, i.e., think quickly to get ideas for your essay
 - organize your ideas into a plan
 - write your first draft
 - revise and edit your first draft, according to peer feedback and your own developing ideas
 - rewrite it to produce a second draft
 - revise and edit your second draft, according to teacher feedback and your own developing ideas
 - rewrite it to produce a third draft
- **It helps to share and discuss the writing process with others.** Your work improves if you talk to others about your ideas and problems. Simply by talking to another student, you can clarify aspects of your work that you are not sure about. Another person will have an objective view, as your reader, and will be able to make useful suggestions about your writing. When you write, it is for an audience; you should therefore consider ways of structuring your message so that you communicate your ideas in the clearest way. Showing your writing to others will provide you with feedback on how to adapt your writing to different audiences.

During this writing course, you will have the opportunity to discuss your writing at each stage of the process.

- **A good writer is critical of his/her own work.** You should read your work carefully and consider both the strengths and weaknesses of your writing.
 - a. **Self-evaluation:** To help you develop your critical ability, you will be asked to consider a series of *evaluation questions*, which you will use to evaluate your own writing.
 - b. **Peer evaluation:** You will also be asked to consider a series of evaluation questions which you will use to evaluate the writing of another student. You will carry out peer evaluation by reading the student's essay, offering suggestions and comments in a way that is both helpful and constructive. You will then benefit from the comments of the other student. When reading a student's essay, you will focus on the organization of the ideas and the overall argument of the text. At this stage, this is more important than the accuracy of the language, spelling and punctuation, unless errors make the essay difficult to understand.

Your teacher will read the second draft of your essays, and will respond with comments and suggestions. His/her feedback will focus on:

- task achievement, i.e., how well you have responded to the title of your essay
- organization and development of ideas
- content
- language

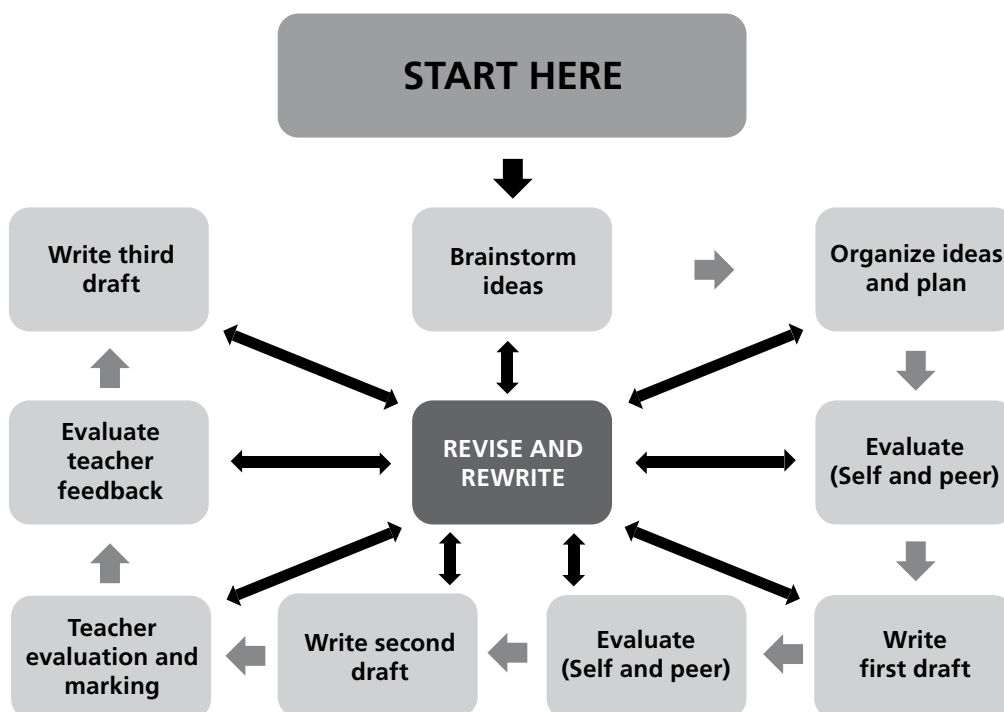
He/she will give you feedback on language problems through the use of symbols, which will indicate the type of error you have made, such as:

- using the wrong word (*ww*)
- using the wrong form of the word (*wf*)

Your teacher will explain this system in more detail and refer you to a key to the symbols. You will be asked to correct your language errors, as well as improve other aspects of your essay; this will be your final editing work.

Although some of these approaches may be unfamiliar to you, the aim is to help you acquire skills with which you will be able to produce good written English without dependence on a teacher. This is essential for your future studies.

In diagrammatic form, the process looks like this:



The development of critical thinking skills

At the advanced level necessary for your studies, academic writing should express the **critical thinking** and reasoning that has been used to develop the main ideas in your writing (see *The link between reading and writing* on page 10). This is a fundamental skill which is necessary for successful academic study in higher education. It could typically involve:

- assessing information to show how it relates to an understanding of the *truth* in a particular context
- identifying problems
- seeking solutions to these problems
- evaluating the solutions
- assessing the implications (or effect) if those solutions are applied

Research has shown that working for a period of time on one particular topic provides a basis for developing and expressing critical thinking skills. This is one of the reasons why your writing tasks are based on specific reading texts.

Many of the tasks you will carry out during the course will contribute to the development and expression of your critical thinking skills. You will probably discover that writing of this kind in English higher education differs from writing in your own language.

The microskills of writing

EAS: Writing will also deal with other important aspects of writing, known as **microskills**. These include:

- how to write an effective introduction and conclusion
- how to communicate the main idea of a paragraph to the reader
- how to support your main ideas with examples
- how to express yourself in writing using more complex sentences
- how to write accurately and fluently using language appropriate to the task

The importance of genre

In later units, *EAS: Writing* will look at how different academic subjects require different styles of writing, i.e., **genre**. For example, an essay written in a science subject will typically be in a more **concise** style than one written in a social science subject. A variety of ways of organizing writing will therefore be analyzed and practised. These will include essays of:

- cause and effect
- situation, problem, solution(s), implication(s) and evaluation (**SPSIE**)
- comparison and contrast

The course will also increase your awareness of the most appropriate type of language for expressing these patterns of organization. By the end of the course, you should be able to write effectively for your individual purposes, and be able to make appropriate choices when approaching a writing task. In your writing, you should be able to show clear development of a topic through good organization and language use.

The link between reading and writing

Research has shown that an integrated approach to the teaching of writing contributes to the development of the critical thinking skills of the learner. Carson and Leki view critical thinking as: 'the ability to transform information for their own [students'] purposes in reading and to synthesise their prior knowledge with another text in writing ... Together, reading and writing facilitate the development of critical thinking' (1993, p. 100).

The implication of research for teaching academic writing is that there should be an integrated skills approach that includes the specific development of critical thinking skills.

The structure of *EAS: Writing* reflects this approach. Each unit has a writing topic that is based on the relevant reading text in the *EAS: Reading & Writing Source Book*. This follows the principle that, as a student, you read an academic text for a particular purpose. One of the main purposes of the texts will be to provide relevant information to support your ideas in the written assignments. You will need to process and critically analyze that information before incorporating it in your own argument. In this way, you will be engaging in problem-solving activities. It is important that your writing development reflects the problem-solving you will meet in your academic study.

During the course, you will carry out tasks that develop your awareness and skill in incorporating **sources** into your writing; you will learn to **paraphrase** and use quotations, as well as how to acknowledge sources accurately. As the sources you refer to are the ideas of other writers and not your own, it is essential to acknowledge them accurately. Inaccurate referencing can be considered as 'stealing' ideas – known as **plagiarism** – a serious offence in academic life.

Timed writing

Written examinations will be a major method of formal assessment once you start your chosen degree course. To be successful in examinations, you will need the ability to write quickly and concisely when answering a question. Writing to complete an essay within a time limit will be practised on this course as an integral component. You will also develop your technique in quickly analyzing an examination question, in order to respond to the task appropriately.

Some practical points

You should type your first drafts in a word-processing programme. This is because:

- it is easier for your classmates to read
- it is easier to make corrections and revisions to your work
- you will be required to submit word-processed essays in your future studies

You should use an approved university style of layout. This might be Times New Roman font size 12 and 1.5 spacing for the main body of your text. However, if you have little or no experience in word processing, you should discuss with your teacher when you begin typing your essays.

When you give your teacher the second draft of your essay, you will also give him/her your plan and your first draft. This will enable him/her:

- to assess the effectiveness of the process
- to assess your response to evaluation
- to help you further

Similarly, when you give your teacher the third draft of your essay, you will also give him/her your second draft.

Reference

Carson, E. J., & Leki, I. (1993). *Reading in the composition classroom*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

In this unit you will:

- make decisions about what the essay title is asking you to write about
- consider the most appropriate way to organize your ideas
- incorporating and referencing sources
- practise writing paragraph leaders

Texts

The business of science, Texts 3a–3b (Source Book pp. 12–16)

In this unit, you will have the opportunity to read two extracts from articles, one from *New Scientist* and another from the *Harvard Business Review* (Texts 3a and 3b in the *Reading & Writing Source Book*).

The tasks in this unit will prepare you to write the following essay:

Over the past 20 years, commercial influences on scientific research have become increasingly detrimental. Discuss.



Task 1

Microskills: Generating ideas

In this task you will generate ideas, organize your ideas and write a plan. You have already practised doing this in Unit 2, so you will be familiar with the process. Reflect on any improvement you have made at the end of the task.

1.1 Study the essay title and answer these questions.

1. What are the key words in the essay title?
2. Why do you think they are the key words?

Discuss your ideas with another student.

1.2 Write down any ideas you think might be relevant to the essay topic.

Write the ideas in the order you think of them in five minutes.

1.3 Discuss the ideas you have generated in Ex 1.2 with two other students.

Decide which ideas are particularly relevant to the topic and the best ones to use in your essay.

1.4 Read sentences 1–4. Which of them is the essay asking you to do?

1. Explain all the commercial influences on scientific research to your reader.
2. Persuade your reader that commercial influences on research are either damaging or enriching.
3. Write a historical description of all commercial influences on scientific research.
4. Explain to your reader that research has shown there are different commercial influences on scientific research, and persuade him/her that some of these influences are more damaging than others.

1.5 Discuss your choice and explain your reasons:

- a.** in groups of three
- b.** with the rest of the class

1.6 What would be an appropriate way to organize your ideas for this type of essay? Why? Discuss your ideas in groups.

1.7 Read Texts 3a and 3b to expand your ideas.

What ideas and information could help you develop your own ideas and provide **academic evidence** to support your argument?

Discuss your thoughts with another student.

Study tip

It is essential that you understand what the essay title is asking you to do. The more time you spend on this at the beginning, the more time you will save when you write your essay. You will work on this further in Unit 4.

Task 2

Organizing ideas in your plan

2.1 Organize your ideas in a logical essay plan and clearly show the structure of your essay. Use the prompts below to help you.

- a.** Group together ideas which seem to belong to the same paragraph.
- b.** Give enough information to show how you will support your ideas.
- c.** Think carefully about the order in which you will arrange the paragraphs.

Study tip

Writing a clear essay plan that shows the structure of your essay will save you time later.

2.2 Evaluate another student's essay plan using these questions as a guide. Then discuss your findings with your partner.

- 1.** What is the overall idea in the essay?
- 2.** Is it obvious from the introduction section what the writer's **thesis** is?
- 3.** Does the plan follow a logical sequence of ideas?
- 4.** Are the ideas grouped effectively into paragraphs?
- 5.** Is the main idea clear in each paragraph?
- 6.** How many paragraphs will the essay contain?

Note: If the answers to these questions are not clear from looking at your partner's plan, ask him/her to explain. Perhaps the plan needs to be changed or developed further.

2.3 Consider your partner's feedback on your plan and try to improve it.

Task 3

Microskills: Incorporating and referencing your sources

In Unit 2, you looked at ways of incorporating ideas from a text into your writing to support your points. You will now extend this skill by adding comment(s) to support your points further.

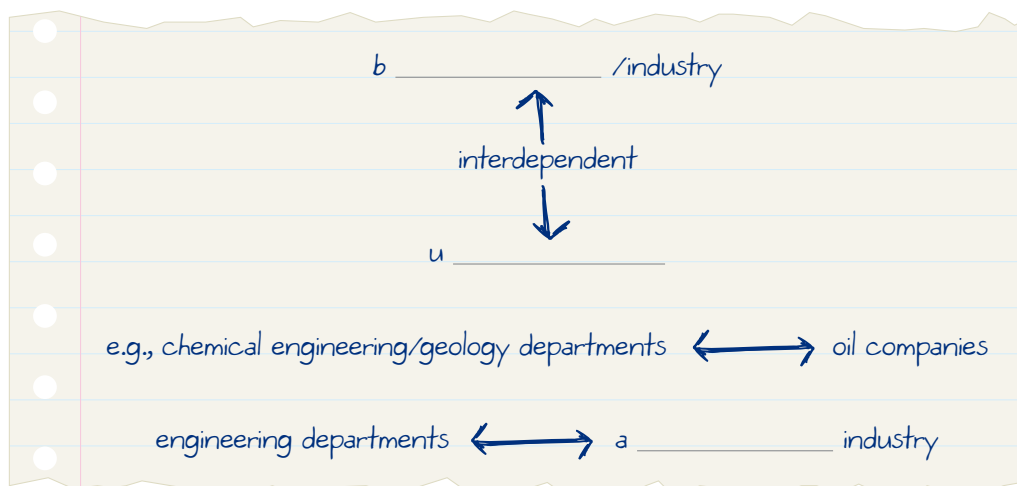
For example, if you want to persuade your reader that commercial influences on scientific research are detrimental, you may wish to use the following extract/idea from Text 3a (lines 23–30) to illustrate your point.

The rapid spread of partnerships between businesses and universities has led to some disciplines becoming so intertwined with industry that few academics are able to retain their independence. Chemical engineering and

geology are strongly linked to oil companies, for example, and it is hard to find an engineering department in the UK which does not receive funding from the arms industry.

3.1 The following notes show the hierarchy of ideas in the extract.

Complete the notes by referring to the text.



3.2 Use the notes in Ex 3.1 to summarize the information in your own words.

3.3 Compare your summary with the one below. How similar is the wording?

The marked increase in commercial financing of university departments, as with the oil industry's support for chemical engineering and geology, has led to diminished autonomy among academic staff.

3.4 Write two types of reference for the source texts you summarized in Ex 3.2:

- a. for the references at the end of your essay
- b. as an in-text citation after your summary

3.5 In academic writing, it is important to *comment* on ideas from sources you have included in your writing. This helps to integrate the ideas of others into your own work.

Follow steps 1–3 to understand the process of integrating ideas into your work.

Step 1: Read the extract below and underline the writer's comments.

The marked increase in commercial financing of university departments, as with the oil industry's support for chemical engineering and geology, has led to diminished autonomy among staff (Parkinson & Langley, 2009). It seems that academic researchers are obliged to research areas dictated by the industry concerned – areas which may be different from a researcher's particular interests. Of greater concern perhaps is the example that many engineering departments are funded by the arms industry. Thus, not only are university departments becoming more dependent on industry for funding, with restrictions on the type of research, but a number of departments receive funding from industries that could be seen as ethically unsound.

Step 2: From the text, identify other ideas that the writer has used to strengthen his point.

Step 3: Discuss your ideas with another student.

3.6 A student has decided to include the example of agricultural science to strengthen his/her point further. Use the steps in Unit 2 Ex 3.5 to provide a summary of the extract below from Text 3a. Then use steps 1–3 in Unit 3 Ex 3.5 to comment on the extract.

Another cornerstone of science that is being eroded is the freedom to set the public research agenda so that it serves the public interest. Governments are increasingly focused on delivering competitiveness, and business interests are able to exert pressure on funding bodies through representatives on their boards. As a result, environmental and social problems and 'blue-sky' research commonly lose out to short-term commercial gain. For example, genetics now dominates agricultural science, not

least because genetic technologies are highly patentable. This not only dominates privately-funded research, but also steers publicly-funded research away from work that takes a different approach or explores low-tech solutions. As a result, 'low-input' agriculture, which requires minimal use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides and is cheaper and more useful to poorer farmers, is largely overlooked. Similarly, research on how to improve food distribution receives inadequate support.

- 3.7 Continue to study Text 3a and 3b for more ideas that you can summarize in your essay, with comments to strengthen your argument.

Study tip

Using source texts to strengthen your argument will contribute to your understanding of your subject. Adding your own comments on ideas from sources will help deepen your understanding.

Write the first draft of your essay.

You should aim to write between 400 and 600 words.

- 3.8 Read and evaluate the first draft of another student's essay.

When you finish your first draft, exchange the draft with another student. Read your partner's draft carefully and respond to the questions on the peer evaluation sheet for Unit 3 (see page 87).

Task 4

Microskills: Using paragraph leaders

When you are writing, it is useful to think of your audience and how they will make sense of your ideas. Using clear **paragraph leaders** will help the reader follow your essay more easily.

- 4.1 Look at the following extracts from the article *Stop selling out science to commerce* and underline the key ideas.

- | | |
|---|--|
| a. Over the past two decades, government policy in the US, UK and elsewhere has fundamentally altered the academic | landscape in a drive for profit. (Section 1, lines 17–19, page 12) |
| b. Research is also undermined by misleading messages put out by industry- | funded lobby groups. (Section 2, lines 45–46, page 13) |
| c. Another cornerstone of science that is being eroded is the freedom to set the public research agenda so that it serves the | public interest. (Section 3, lines 56–58, page 13) |

- 4.2 Discuss your ideas in Ex 4.1. Then decide what information you might expect to follow each of the sentences:

- a. with another student
- b. with the whole class

- 4.3 Each of the extracts in Ex 4.1 is the first sentence of a different paragraph from Text 3a. Look at these three paragraphs in the *Reading & Writing Source Book* and complete activities a–c.

- a. Confirm whether you were right about the information that follows the sentences.
- b. Decide what function these sentences have within the three paragraphs.
- c. Discuss your ideas with another student.

- 4.4 Read the following information on paragraph leaders and discuss how it ties in with what you did in Ex 4.1–4.3.

Key writing skills: Paragraph leaders

The first sentence in a paragraph can be called a *paragraph leader*. One key function of paragraph leaders is to anticipate the ideas that follow. This type of paragraph leader (also called a **topic sentence**) helps the reader to understand the focus and direction of the paragraph.

- 4.5 Imagine you are going to write a paragraph on the use of e-mail in companies. Decide which of the following sentences would make a suitable paragraph leader.

1. *E-mail is useful in the office.*
2. *One of the most useful functions of e-mail is to communicate efficiently with colleagues abroad.*
3. *There are many uses made of e-mail in the office environment; each of these has both advantages and disadvantages attached to it.*

Discuss your answer with another student and give reasons for your choice.

- 4.6 Now imagine you are going to write a paragraph on the benefits for international students of studying in a British university. Decide on the most suitable paragraph leader.

1. *Studying in a British university is useful for many reasons.*
2. *Studying in a British university provides students with a number of benefits.*
3. *International students prefer to study in the UK.*

Discuss your answer with another student and give reasons for your choice.

Study tip

It is useful to think of paragraph leaders as a way of helping you make your essays more organized and easier for the reader to follow.

- 4.7 The paragraph leaders have been removed from the following two paragraphs. Read and decide on a suitable paragraph leader for each one.

1.

Since English has become the most widely used international language in most fields, many employers require their employees to have a high level of English. It is especially useful for those in academic posts, as so many academic papers are published in English. Those working in financial markets also need English in order to be able to talk to their English-speaking clients and to work effectively in the international market. Other fields for which it is useful to know English include business, commerce and diplomacy. Thus, one of the advantages of being competent in the English language is that there is a wider range of career opportunities.

2.

The first option of building more roads needs to be examined very carefully, as one of the possible effects of further construction is an increase in the volume of traffic, which happened when the motorway around London was built. The second option, that of limiting the number of cars on the road at one time, will not meet with the approval of the general public. The third option, that of providing a more extensive, more efficient and cheaper transport system, seems to be the most viable one. It would encourage people to leave their cars at home, as they would benefit more from using public transport. So the third option should be examined in more detail in order to establish a new system.

Sources: Edited extracts from authentic student material.

Make appropriate changes to your essay for Unit 3, taking into account the work you have done on paragraph leaders in Task 4.

Unit summary

In this unit you have worked on developing skills necessary for organizing your ideas. You have also looked at using paragraph leaders to indicate the topic of the paragraph and link it to previous and subsequent ideas.

- 1** Think about the activities you have worked on in this unit and the skills you have practised. Complete the following table with the appropriate activity number.

Skill	Task/activity
Deciding what the essay is asking you to write	
Deciding the most appropriate way of organizing your ideas	
Deciding what information in a text is useful to support your ideas	
Incorporating that information in your writing	
Effectively introducing your reader to the main idea in each paragraph	

- 2** Complete the list of activities below with words and phrases from the box.

develop discuss group plan first draft key words relevant
academic evidence related ideas paragraph leader general statements

Organizing your ideas for an academic essay:

Planning a. Identify the _____ in the essay title.

b. Quickly write down all the ideas you can think of that may be _____ to the topic.

c. _____ with other students what the essay is asking for.

d. Read texts on the topic to help _____ your own ideas and provide _____ for your opinions.

Drafting e. _____ your ideas so that _____ are all in the same paragraph.

f. Introduce the topic with _____ and gradually become more specific.

g. Read and comment on another student's _____ or _____.

h. Make sure that you include a clear _____ at the start of each paragraph.

For web resources relevant to this book, see:

www.englishforacademicstudy.com

These weblinks will provide you with information covering all aspects of academic writing, including incorporating and referencing sources.