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Introduction to Academic Writing

1. Course Overview

The *Introduction to Academic Writing* course is designed to equip students with the essential skills required to write effectively in academic settings. The course focuses on critical reading, structured writing, research skills, proper citation, and academic integrity.

This course is suitable for students entering higher education, especially those preparing for university-level writing.

2. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- ✓ Understand the principles of academic writing.
- ✓ Analyse and synthesize information from multiple sources.
- ✓ Produce structured academic essays and reports.
- ✓ Apply correct referencing and citation styles.
- ✓ Demonstrate academic integrity in all written work.



3. Course Structure

The course consists of 4 sessions, each lasting 2 hours:

Session #	Topic	Objectives
Session 1	Understanding Academic Writing	Introduce academic writing, its purpose, and formal conventions.
Session 2	Academic Reading and Research Skills	Develop reading strategies, note-taking, and research skills.
Session 3	Academic Essay Writing	Learn essay structures, thesis development, and paragraph coherence.
Session 4	Editing, Referencing, and Academic Integrity	Improve editing skills, referencing techniques, and ethical writing.

4. Session Notes

Session 1: Understanding Academic Writing

Key Concepts:

- ✓ Definition of academic writing
- ✓ Differences between academic and non-academic writing

Characteristics: clarity, coherence, formal tone, objectivity

Example:

- Non-academic: "I think this book is interesting."
- Academic: "The book provides a critical analysis of social dynamics in urban settings."



Practice Task:

Rewrite three informal statements in an academic style.

Session 2: Academic Reading and Research Skills

Key Concepts:

- ✓ Skimming and scanning for key information
- ✓ Critical reading: questioning the author's argument
- ✓ Note-taking and summarizing
- ✓ Identifying credible sources

Example Exercise:

- Read a short academic article and create a summary in your own words.

Session 3: Academic Essay Writing

Key Concepts:

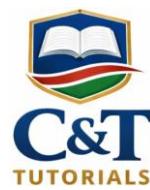
- ✓ Essay structure: Introduction, Body, Conclusion
- ✓ Developing a thesis statement
- ✓ Topic sentences and paragraph coherence
- ✓ Supporting arguments with evidence

Example:

- Thesis: "Social media significantly influences adolescent mental health."
- Topic sentence: "Peer comparison on social media platforms can lead to feelings of inadequacy."

Practice Task:

Draft a 200-word essay on a topic of choice using the structure learned.



Session 4: Editing, Referencing, and Academic Integrity

Key Concepts:

- ✓ Proofreading for grammar, punctuation, and clarity
- ✓ Common citation styles: APA, MLA, Harvard
- ✓ Avoiding plagiarism
- ✓ Paraphrasing and quoting effectively

Example:

- Plagiarism: Copying a paragraph verbatim without citation
- Correct paraphrase: Summarize the idea in your own words and cite the source

Practice Task:

Edit a sample paragraph and add proper citations.

5. Exercises and Practice Tasks

Task (Exercises)	Objective
Rewrite informal sentences academically	Improve formal tone
Summarize academic articles	Develop critical reading
Draft short essays	Practice essay structure
Edit and cite paragraphs	Apply referencing and editing skills

6. References and Suggested Reading

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

Swales, J., & Feak, C. (2012). Academic Writing for Graduate Students. University of Michigan Press.

Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL): <https://owl.purdue.edu>