1.1 Background to writing

1 The purpose of academic writing

Other reasons might include:

- to present a hypothesis for consideration by others
- to make notes on something read or heard

Possibilities include:

- semi-formal vocabulary, lack of idioms
- use of citation/ references
- normally impersonal style
- use of both passive and active

2 Common types of academic writing

**Notes** — A written record of the main points of a text or lecture, for a student’s personal use.

**Report** — A description of something a student has done, e.g. conducting a survey.

**Project** — A piece of research, either individual or group work, with the topic chosen by the student(s).

**Essay** — The most common type of written work, with the title given by the teacher, normally 1000–5000 words.

**Dissertation/ Thesis** — The longest piece of writing normally done by a student (20,000+ words) often for a higher degree, on a topic chosen by the student.

**Paper** — A general term for any academic essay, report, presentation or article.

3 The format of long and short writing tasks
4 The features of academic writing

(a) title
(b) sub-title
(c) heading
(d) sentence
(e) phrase
(f) paragraph

6 Simple and complex sentences

(Example sentences)

(a) In 2007 the company produced nearly 165,000 vehicles.

(b) Vehicle production fell in 2008.

(c) In 2009 fewer vehicles were made than in the four previous years.

(d) Between 2005 and 2009 vehicle production peaked in 2007, when the number reached 164,000.

7 Writing in paragraphs
See Unit 1.10. Organising paragraphs 1 for initial questions

para 2 begins: But a new use for charcoal …

para 3 begins: The other benefit of biochar …

para 4 begins: But other agricultural …