

# Contents

<i>Preface</i>	ix	<b>4 Vocabulary</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>1 Case studies: these people need help!</b>	<b>1</b>	Introduction	40
Case study 1 Chamroeun	1	What does this word mean?	40
Case study 2 Hanna	1	Different types of vocabulary	41
Case study 3 Tanako	2	Formal and informal language	43
Case study 4 Laura	2	What is your vocabulary level?	44
Case study 5 Phond	2	What vocabulary do you use?	44
Case study 6 Ken	2	How to learn new words	46
Case study 7 Fukang	2	Learning vocabulary with flashcards	49
Case study 8 Tanya	3	How to make the most of a dictionary	51
Case study 9 Marco	3	Online and mobile tools for vocabulary learning	54
Case study 10 Umot	3	Using a corpus to learn new words and improve your writing	55
<b>2 Planning your studies</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5 Listening to lecturers</b>	<b>59</b>
Introduction	4	Introduction	59
Where to go	4	What's the problem?	59
Applying for a scholarship	6	The purpose of a lecture	60
Which language test is right for me?	7	Lecturing styles from one country to another	60
Foundation courses	11	Preparing for a lecture	60
Case studies	11	Note-taking	61
Enrolling in a university	13	The organisation and language of lectures	67
<b>3 Improving your English</b>	<b>15</b>	Asking questions in lectures	69
Introduction	15	Becoming a better listener	70
What language skills do you need to improve?	15	Conclusion	71
Planning your learning: setting goals	19	<b>6 Small-group learning</b>	<b>72</b>
What kind of learner are you?	22	Introduction	72
Are you a strategic learner?	23	Why have tutorials?	72
Choosing the right language school and course	26	Planning for tutorials	75
Getting to know your language centre	29	How to talk in tutorials	78
Building a language portfolio	33	Getting a turn	80
Keeping a language journal	33	Culture and tutorials	83
Learning English the relaxed way	33	Conclusion	83

<b>7 Reading</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>10 Assessment</b>	<b>139</b>
Introduction	84	Introduction	139
Case studies – learning from other students' experiences	84	Understanding assessment for your course	139
Why university students read	86	Types of assessment	139
What university students read	87	Understanding assessment criteria	142
Reading different types of academic texts	88	Learning from feedback	143
Planning your university reading	89	Examinations	146
Finding reading texts	90	Writing under time pressure	149
Using the library	90	Giving presentations	153
Finding readings on the internet and in databases	94	Portfolio assessment	159
Becoming a more efficient reader	97	Conclusion	160
Critical reading	99		
Ways of reading	102	<b>11 Communicating with staff</b>	<b>161</b>
Improving your reading	102	Introduction	161
Increasing your reading speed	105	Why contact staff	161
Reading strategies	106	Using email	162
Keeping track of your reading	107	Face-to-face requests	163
Reading online	111	Telephone contacts	168
Conclusion	113	Class Representatives	168
<b>8 Essays at university</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>12 Dealing with problems</b>	<b>170</b>
Introduction	114	Introduction	170
What bothers students?	114	Managing anxiety	170
Understanding essay questions	115	Sources of help	176
Types of writing	117	Culture shock	176
Collecting ideas for your essay	117	Academic issues: What would you do?	
Conclusion	120	A quiz	180
		Friends	184
<b>9 The essay writing process</b>	<b>121</b>	Money	185
Introduction	121	Summary	190
From essay topic to essay thesis	121		
Writing an essay introduction	124	<i>Conclusion: What next?</i>	191
From essay thesis to topic sentences	125	<i>A glossary of university words</i>	192
From topic sentence to paragraph	127	<i>References</i>	196
Referencing in an essay	129	<i>Further reading</i>	199
Putting it all together	129	<i>Answers</i>	201
Joining ideas in a paragraph	131	<i>Index</i>	224
Proofreading	132		
Peer-feedback	133		
Punctuation	137		
Conclusion	138		

# Chapter 1

## Case studies: these people need help!

### CHAPTER OVERVIEW

In this chapter you will meet a number of students we have worked with over the years. Each one speaks English as a second language, and each one is concerned about some aspect of studying at university. At the end of the profile you will read some questions to help you identify the problems they faced.

When you have thought about your own ideas, look at the suggestions at the end of the book (pp. 201–3). If it turns out that you are concerned about the same thing, then follow the directions to the chapter or chapters that will help you.

### Case study 1 Chamroeun

Chamroeun is studying for an undergraduate degree. Although most of his lectures are large, and a bit impersonal, he is pleased to be in one class that is small enough for the lecturer to know the students by name. This lecturer encourages everyone to ask questions in class and even to go to her office if they have additional problems with their assignments.

Chamroeun takes up the offer every time and is a constant visitor to the lecturer's office. At first his questions are all about his assignments but gradually, as he realises how kind she is, he starts talking to her about problems with his girlfriend. Lately he senses that she is not so keen to talk about his personal problems, although she continues to be helpful with questions about his assignments. She has even suggested that he might like to see a counsellor.

He is puzzled. In his country staff members are very interested in every aspect of a student's life. Why is this person suggesting he should see a counsellor. 'I'm not going mad,' he says to himself. 'Why on earth would she suggest such a thing?'

### QUESTIONS

- 1 How many problems does this student seem to have?
- 2 Can you explain the lecturer's attitude?

### Case study 2 Hanna

Hanna is always surprised when her assignments are returned. Sometimes the mark is much higher than she had expected but the reverse also happens. For instance, last week she got back an assignment that she had worked on solidly for a week. Yet, she only got a B. The big surprise, though, was the lecturer's comments. The lecturer praised several aspects of the assignment. How could he possibly praise her for such a low mark? It doesn't make sense.

Hanna doesn't know how to tell her parents about this terrible grade. When she did her first degree in her own country she always had top grades, which is why she was given a scholarship to study overseas. Now, in her postgraduate studies, here comes this disgrace. She feels lonely and ashamed.

## QUESTIONS

- 1 How many problems is Hanna facing?
  - 2 Who could help her with them?
- 

### Case study 3 Tanako

Tanako is a popular student who has had no trouble making friends in her new country. People are always complimenting her on her English and saying things like ‘We can understand everything you say.’ What’s more, she never has to ask people to repeat themselves. She gets their meaning the first time.

When it comes to her assignments, however, the lecturers are often making suggestions about her getting some help with her writing. How can they say this when all her friends understand her so well? It doesn’t make sense.

## QUESTIONS

- 1 Can you explain why her friends and the markers of her assignments are giving her different messages?
  - 2 What advice would you give to Tanako?
- 

### Case study 4 Laura

Laura is extremely shy. She was horrified to discover that tutorials meant discussion time. What is worse, the tutor sometimes calls on students to answer by name. She finishes each tutorial feeling embarrassed and stupid. The other students probably think she understands nothing, but that’s not true. She understands most of what the other students and the tutor are saying but she is scared to speak.

She is thinking that it might be best to avoid tutorials altogether except when an assignment is being given out. That would save her being constantly embarrassed.

## QUESTIONS

- 1 How many reasons can you suggest for Laura’s attitude?
  - 2 What advice would you give her?
- 

### Case study 5 Phond

Phond has come to a Western university for just one year to do a postgraduate diploma. She doesn’t really need this for her chosen career but her parents believe having a foreign qualification will help her to find a really good job in her own country.

After the first class test this student is shocked to find that her grade is B-. Immediately she goes to see the lecturer, feeling sure that this kind person will understand. She starts explaining:

‘This qualification doesn’t mean much to me but it does to my parents and they have spent a huge amount of money sending me here. Would you be able to adjust the mark please?’

To her shock the lecturer looks quite severe and says “No, definitely not.” The lecturer also says he considers B- a good mark for the first test in a new country and a new course.

## QUESTIONS

- 1 Who is being unreasonable here: the lecturer or the student, and why?
  - 2 What would you suggest the student does next?
- 

### Case study 6 Ken

Ken is concerned because he cannot take down everything that is said during lectures. However fast he writes he cannot keep up. What is worse, when he goes to read his notes later they don’t make sense. He is afraid that without understanding the lectures he will fail the course.

## QUESTIONS

- 1 Is Ken right that without lecture notes he will fail the course?
  2. What suggestions would you make for overcoming his problems?
- 

### Case study 7 Fukang

Fukang is having a hard time getting used to living in the new country. In his home country

he usually studies with others in groups or at least spends time with them after class. Every student joins a club of some sort, either sports or a hobby. Here students immediately rush off after class without paying much attention to each other. Although there are some university clubs, often people seem to arrive together in pairs or small groups and it is difficult to talk to them. Fukang is starting to feel lonely and is also finding it hard to motivate himself to study alone.

### QUESTION

- 1 How can Fukang connect with people and avoid becoming isolated?
- 

## Case study 8 Tanya

Tanya is enjoying her university studies in her new country except for one thing: oral presentations. Whenever the tutor announces that next week students will start presenting their assignments to the rest of the class, she starts to feel unwell. She gets headaches, her throat goes dry and she feels physically ill. The main reason for this is that her spoken English is not as good as her understanding of other people's speaking. On top of this, even in her own language she never enjoyed public speaking. She thinks it might be a good idea to ask the tutor what she needs to do to be excused from oral presentations.

### QUESTIONS

- 1 What do you think of Tanya's solution to the problem?
  - 2 If you were her friend, what would you advise her to do?
- 

## Case study 9 Marco

Marco's problem is the amount of reading that is expected for the course. He reads English quite well, but not fast. Staying up later and later doesn't seem to be helping. In fact, he is now having trouble waking up early enough to get to his first lecture of the morning.

One day he asks a friend, 'Why can't the lecturers hand out summaries of all our text books? That's what they used to do in my country.'

### QUESTIONS

- 1 Why do you think lecturers don't hand out summaries?
  - 2 If you were the friend, what would you suggest to this sleepless student?
- 

## Case study 10 Umut

Umut found a wonderful article on the very topic of her assignment. She used large pieces of this article in her essay and now has received what looks like a very urgent email from the person marking the assignment. The email is full of words like 'serious', 'plagiarism' and 'explanation'. Even though she doesn't know the meaning of the word 'plagiarism', she can understand that there is a major problem (see Chapter 12 for more on Umut's case).

### QUESTIONS

- 1 Do you think this student has been dishonest?
  - 2 How would you explain the word 'plagiarism' to her?
-

# Index

- abbreviations
  - in emails, 163
  - in notes, 64–6
- abstracts
  - in databases, 96
  - in research articles, 88
- academic culture *see* culture
- academic problems, 170–6, 181–2; *see also*
  - critical thinking
- academic vocabulary, 41–9; *see also* vocabulary
- Academic Word List, the, 41–2, 45, 47, 49, 197, 200
- active learning
  - self-managing learning, 26; *see also* critical thinking
- analytical essays, 115
- applying to university, 13–14
- argument essays, 115, 119, 122, 129, 131
- asking questions
  - in lectures, 69–70
  - to lecturers, 163–4, 166–7
- assessment
  - feedback, 143–5, 157–8
  - types of assessment, 139–40
  - technical terms for, 151–2
  - understanding assessment on your course, 139
- assignments
  - asking questions about assignments, 69–70, 161–7
  - understanding assignment topics, 151
  - understanding criteria, 142; *see also* assessment *and* essays
- audience
  - for spoken presentations, 153–5, 157–8
  - for writing and speaking, 156
  - in emails, 162–3
- bibliographies, 112; *see also* references
- brainstorming
  - in exams, 153
  - in writing, 118–19
- budgets
  - when planning where to study, 13
  - when studying, 185–7
- cellphones, 54–5
- cheating, 3, 129, 182–3
- checking writing, 132–3, 136–7
  - in an exam, 149
- checking collocation, 57
- choosing
  - a country, 4–6
  - a pre-university language course, 26–9
  - a university, 5–6
- Class Representative, 163, 168–9, 181
- clubs, 3, 185, 191
- collocation, 49–51, 57–8
- conclusions
  - in an essay, 131, 135, 138
  - in assessment feedback, 145
  - in presentations, 154
  - in reading, 99, 105
- concordancers, 55–8
- corpora in vocabulary learning, 55–8
- coursework, 13, 140–1
- criteria in assessments and exams, 142–3, 149
- critical thinking
  - for assessments, 140, 160
  - in exams, 146, 148
  - when reading, 98–102, 111
  - and university culture, 181–4
  - when writing, 119, 121–3

- culture
  - and body language, 158
  - and counselling, 176
  - and critical thinking, 99, 182, 184
  - and money, 186, 189
  - and referencing, 129
  - and tutorials, 83
- culture shock, 170, 176, 178–80
  
- databases, 90–4, 96, 193
- deadlines, 11, 98, 132, 134, 140–1, 159, 180
- diary keeping, 33–5, 71, 140, 179
- dictionaries
  - and vocabulary learning, 36, 38–9, 41, 48, 51–3
  - electronic, 54–5, 57
  - in assessments, 147, 149
  - online – general and specialised, 197–8
- discourse *see* organisation
- discursive essays *see* essays
- dissertation, 89, 92
- drafts, 124, 129, 193
- DVDs, 36–7
  
- editing, 132–3, 136–7
  - in an exam, 149; *see also* writing
- email, 162–3
- enrolling for university, 13–14
- essays
  - appropriate vocabulary for, 43–6, 48, 51–3, 56
  - getting ideas for, 117–19
  - introductions for, 124–5
  - outlines for, 129
  - referencing in, 129
  - taking a critical stance in, 121–3
  - thesis statements for, 121–2
  - topic sentences for, 125–7
  - types of, 114–15, 117
  - understanding questions for, 116
  - wider reading for, 98, 112; *see also* assessment *and* writing
- exams
  - finding out about, 146
  - planning for, 142
  - revision, 148
  - strategies for, 148
- experience, learning from, 159
  - for reading, 84–5
- expository essays, 155 ; *see also* essay
  
- face-to-face requests to lecturers, 163–4, 166–7
  
- feedback
  - peer feedback, 133–5
  - tutor feedback, 143–5, 157–8
- finding readings, 89–97
- flashcards, 49–50; *see also* vocabulary learning strategies
- foundation courses, 11–13
- friends, 178–80, 184–5
  
- goal-setting
  - for language learning, 19, 21, 26, 32–3, 35
  - for tutorials, 75, 78, 81
- grades, 1, 11, 16, 140, 143
- grammar
  - and concordancers, 57
  - and language classes, 29
  - and learning style, 22
  - and memory, 24
  - and proofreading, 132, 135–7
  - differences between speaking and writing, 156
  - in essay feedback, 145
  - in language tests, 8, 19
  - references, 196, 199
- grants, 8, 185, 187, 189–90
- groupwork; 80, 82; *see also* tutorials
  
- health problems, 176–7, 187, 191
- help
  - at university, 176–7
  - in the library, 92–3
  - with your English, 29
- homesickness, 177–9
  
- IELTS, 11, 29, 89, 193, 196
- index, 86, 103, 104, 106, 193
- interaction patterns in tutorials, 80
- international student office, 11, 94, 177, 185
- internet
  - searches, 94–7
  - tools for language learning, 19, 54:
    - concordancers, 56–7; dictionaries, 39, 53, 112, 198; podcasts, 36
- intonation *see* pronunciation
  
- journals,
  - learning journals, 33–5
  - reading journal, 107
  
- language learning centres, 28–30, 184
- language learning strategies, 23

- language levels
  - self-assessment grids, 17–18, 20
  - IELTS/TOEFL scores, 9–10
- language portfolios, 31–2
- language schools, 26–9
- language tests, 7–11, 14, 16, 196
- learning styles, differences and preferences, 22–3, 73, 175
- lectures
  - asking questions in, 69–70, 146, 164
  - compared with tutorials, 72
  - cultural differences in, 60
  - improving your listening for, 70–1
  - language of, 67–9
  - note-taking in, 61–5
  - problems in, 59, 70–1
  - purpose of, 60
  - reading for, 84, 89
- libraries
  - catalogues and databases, 93–7
  - finding texts, 89–91
  - fines, 180, 187
  - getting help, 92–3
  - jargon, 92
  - orientation, 91
  - overcoming problems in, 169, 177, 179
- listening
  - prediction, 60–2
  - self-assessment, 17–18, 20
  - strategies, 22, 29, 33–8, 70–1; *see also* lectures
- literature search, 89–97
- loans
  - bank, 185, 189–90
  - library, 91–3
- loneliness, 178–80, 184–5
- memory and vocabulary, 23–4
- money *see* budgets
- motivation
  - and managing your learning, 26
  - and staying motivated, 170–2
- movies, 36–7
- note-taking
  - developing your, 66
  - from lectures, 61–6, 199
  - from readings, 106, 109–10
  - software and storage for notes, 108
  - styles, 63–4
  - symbols and abbreviations, 64–6
- online tools for language learning, 19, 54
  - concordancers, 56–7
  - dictionaries, 39, 53, 112, 198
  - podcasts, 36
- opinions *see* critical thinking
- organisation
  - and assessment, 145, 149, 153
  - and proofreading, 132, 135
  - of ideas/notes, 64
  - of lectures, 67
  - of written texts, 88, 106, 124–5, 131, 135, 144, 155
- paragraphs
  - and reading, 84
  - and text organisation, 131, 135, 144, 145; *see also* topic sentences
- peer feedback, 133–5
- personality and learning, 173–5
- plagiarism, 3, 129
  - and critical thinking, 182–3
- podcasts, 36
- portfolio assessment, 140, 159–60
- practicals, 140
- prefixes, 48
- presentations
  - and nerves, 155
  - criteria for, 142
  - feedback for, 157–8
  - language of, 155–6
  - preparing for, 153–5
  - strategies for, 158
  - understanding your audience, 153–5, 157–8
- problem-solving, 180–1
- proficiency tests *see* language tests
- pronunciation
  - and vocabulary learning, 49–50
  - and listening, 70
  - developing, 19
  - in lectures, 68
  - in presentations, 156–7
  - resources, 197, 199
  - when making requests, 93, 165
- proofreading, 132–3, 136–7
  - in exams, 149
- punctuation, 133, 136–8, 145
- reading
  - and vocabulary, 46
  - critically, 99–101
  - experiences of students, 84–6
  - faster, 103, 105
  - goal-setting for, 19

- reading (*continued*)  
 log, 107  
 planning reading, 89  
 reading online, 97, 111–13  
 self-assessment of, 17–18  
 skills and strategies, 97–8, 102–4, 106–7  
 referencing, 88, 94, 108, 129, 145, 183, 194;  
*see also* bibliographies  
 research articles, 88, 94–5, 102  
 revision  
 reflecting on successful exams, 146  
 strategies, 148
- scholarships  
 and other sources of funding, 189  
 finding and applying for, 6–8  
 model scholarship letter, 7  
 self-access centres, 28–30, 184  
 self-assessment of language level and needs,  
 15–20  
 self-assessment grids: general proficiency,  
 17–18; speaking micro-skills, 20  
 seminars *see* tutorials  
 signposting language  
 in essay feedback, 144–5  
 in lectures, 68  
 in reading texts, 106  
 in spoken presentations, 142  
 when writing, 125, 131  
 small-group learning *see* tutorials  
 speaking  
 face-to-face with lecturers, 163–8  
 in small groups *see* tutorials  
 on the telephone, 168  
 presentations, 153–9  
 self-assessment, 20  
 speed-reading, 105  
 spelling, 45, 132, 135, 137, 145, 162, 197  
 study groups, 54, 85, 89, 105, 148, 185,  
 191  
 suffixes, 49  
 summer jobs, 189
- telephoning, 168; *see also* cellphones  
 tests *see* assessment
- textbooks, 90, 104  
 and lectures, 60–2, 85  
 and vocabulary, 41–2, 46, 48, 70  
 text types at university, 87, 116  
 thesaurus, 45, 51, 53, 96, 195, 197  
 thesis, 13, 88–9, 92, 195  
 thesis statement, 128, 145, 153, 121–2, 124–7  
 TOEFL, 8–11, 14, 16, 29, 195, 196  
 TOEIC, 8  
 topic sentences, 106, 125–8  
 tutorials  
 and culture, 83  
 and getting a turn, 80–1  
 asking questions in, 82–3  
 goal-setting for, 75–6, 78  
 purpose of, 72–3  
 speaking more in, 77–9, 81
- university culture *see* culture  
 University Word List, the, 44, 56
- vocabulary  
 academic vocabulary, 49; *see also* Academic  
 Word List *and* University Word List  
 and formality, 43  
 and language courses, 29  
 and proof-reading, 132, 134–5, 137  
 and self-assessment, 17–18, 44  
 categories of, 41–3  
 games, 50, 55  
 in language portfolios, 31  
 in language tests, 8, 19  
 learning strategies, 36, 38, 46–50  
 resources, 197; *see also* dictionaries, corpora  
*and* collocation
- word formation, 48–9  
 word lists, 22, 41, 45–7  
 writing  
 critically *see* critical thinking  
 editing, 132–3, 136–7  
 generating ideas and planning of, 117–19  
 genres, 116  
 in exams, 141, 146, 148–53  
 organisation of, 124–5, 131, 135, 144, 155  
 types of, 114, 117, 159