ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD
(Department of English Language & Applied Linguistics)

Dear Student:

Welcome to the **BS English III: Basics of Technical English course.** This course has been designed keeping in view the needs of most of you who wish to understand the basics of technical writing in English, for personal as well as professional reasons. It ensures your understanding and confident use of the concepts and terminology specific to it.

Technical writing is defined as a specific writing meant for a specific audience that has specific needs. It is the process of conveying technical information through writing, speech and other mediums to a specific audience. Being practical it has its own importance in today's fast moving world where the ability to communicate both verbally and in writing are considered to be the most crucial skills. Knowing the basics of technical writing is essential if one hopes to have a future in a technical field.

BS English III: Basics of Technical English is a 3 credit hour course and comprises 9 units. The book "Technical Report Writing Today" which is in your hands has been selected for this course as a textbook since its contents fit into the outline of the course very well. This book is very simple in its approach to vocabulary and style. There are around 20 chapters in the book. You are not required to read all these 20 chapters. However, if you want to go through the rest of the chapters, that is your own choice.

The grid that has been given in the book helps you identifying the chapters that you have to go through in order to cover the prescribed syllabus. Go through it carefully before you start reading the relevant chapters. The number of units along with the titles have been given in the left hand column, whereas, the relevant chapters of the book have been mentioned in the right hand column.

The mailing package that you have received must include:

1. The textbook
2. 2Assignments
3. Assignment forms

In case you need an answer to a query related to the study material or any of the above mentioned items is missing in the study package, kindly contact the mailing section of the University at the address given in the prospectus. In case you need any kind of academic help you must talk to your tutor during the tutorials.

Remember there is no alternate to hard work. It is the hard work that pays in every walk of life.

We wish you success in your studies.

Coordinator
Shagufta Siraj

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Course: Basics of Technical English   **Semester: Autumn, 2013**
Course Code: 1425   **Total Marks: 100**
Level: BS   **Pass Marks: 40**

ASSIGNMENT No. 1

*This assignment is based on **Units 1-5** of the outline given in the book.*

Q.1 Define and differentiate between technical writing and other kinds of writing. Do you consider them as separate areas of study? Give suitable examples to support your point of view.   **(10)**

Q.2 Discuss the code of ethics which gives technical writing the status of a **responsible** writing and, therefore, must essentially be observed by technical writers. Give relevant examples.   **(15)**

Q.3 **A.** Technical writers use a specific style and tone of writing, for instance, there is a use of active voice instead of passive voice similarly, redundant phrases or gender based language is avoided. Go through Chapter 4 carefully and discuss do's and don'ts of the style of technical writing.   **(15)**

   B. What do you understand by the phrase avoid wordiness in technical writing. This phrase is used while discussing the style of writing. Explain in detail. **(10)**

Q.4 Memos are usually used in offices for carrying out different official activities. For a memo to be clear it has different heads such as subject, from, to, date etc. Read Chapter 12 on memos and describe the major components of a memo in detail. **(15)**

Q.5 Read Chapter 16 and discuss; what is a proposal, what are the different kinds of proposals and what are the goals/objectives of each kind of proposal in technical writing.   **(15)**

Q.6 Visuals play a specific role in proposal writing? Enlist some visual aids that are specially used in designing a proposal and discuss these in detail.   **(10)**

Q.7 Your recently bought refrigerator is out of order and despite several reminders to the company concerned there has been no response. Write an informal report to bring the problem to the notice of the senior authorities in the company expressing your unhappiness on the delays in the fixing of the problem. **(10)**

ASSIGNMENT No. 2

*This assignment is based on **Units 6-9***

Q.1 Technical writing is a process and is carried out in stages. A technical writer must adapt these stages to produce an effective and efficient technical document. What are the basic stages of the technical writing process and what kind of activities can be carried out at each of these stages? **(15)**

Q.2 Punctuation marks play a very vital role in technical writing. They can either bring clarity or confuse the message so technical writers must be very careful in the use of punctuation signs. Make a list of the common punctuation marks used in technical writing and explain the use of at least five of them with appropriate examples. **(15)**

Q.3 Tables are often used as visual aids in technical writing. They can be of great help in summarizing data, in generating discussions etc. Discuss in detail with examples. **(15)**

Q.4 Write a comprehensive note on the importance and rules of capitalization in technical writing. Give a few examples of appropriate capitalization. **(10)**

Q.5 Write a formal report on any specific issue. Describe the person or group of people for whom the report is meant. Define the objectives/reasons for writing this report. Be clear about your objectives and plans. (Maximum 250 words) **(15)**

Q.6 Define and differentiate between comma splice, run on sentences and sentence fragments with specific reference to technical writing. **(15)**

Q.7 There are two famous methods of documenting sources and mentioning the names of the authors and the resources in a research report or an article. Go through Appendix B and write down the names of the two methods along with their significant features. **(15)**