Guidelines for Writing e-Textbooks

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

Guidelines for Writing e-Textbook

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GUIDELINES

4. OVERVIEW OF E-TEXTBOOK WRITING

An author in writing an e-textbook seeks to explain a concept, and impart information on a topic or subject area WR D ZLGHU DXGLHQFH 7H[WERRN ZULWLQJ opinions, but focuses on accepted facts about a topic, including statistics or other evidence.

Author(s) of textbooks should bear in mind that the textbook is NOT:

1. **A research paper;** Textbooks are neither research papers nor journals.
2. **Encyclopedia;** The textbook is not a book or set of books giving information on many subjects or on many aspects of one subject and typically arranged alphabetically.
3. It is not a series of facts without explanation
4. It does not contain exclusively theoretical or exclusively practical aspects of a subject.

The author(s) must take into consideration the potential users of the textbook who include students and researchers. The author(s) must take these features of the e-textbook user into consideration before setting out to write.

a. **Previous knowledge of the target audience (students);** The author must consider the previous knowledge and experience of the student who will use the textbook. This prior knowledge and experience helps the user to understand and appreciate issues about the subject in the textbook.
b. **Intelligence of the target audience (students);** The author must also take the level of intelligence of the student into consideration. This helps to inform how well issues are supposed to be explained and elaborated for the student to understand.
c. **Interest in a subject;** The interest of the students should also be taken into consideration. The users are supposed to relate with examples and illustrations provided in the textbook.

5. E-TEXTBOOK PROPOSAL

University of Ghana requires all authors seeking to publish an E-Textbook through the University to submit a book proposal using the UG E-Textbook Proposal (see Appendix A). The proposal is structured as follows:

5.1 Basic Information

The first section of the UG e-textbook Proposal focuses on the basic details of the book:

1. Title
2. Academic or Professional Affiliation
3. Contact Details (Phone Number and Email Address)

5.2 About The Book

Title: The title is important, because it defines the work. Academic books usually have less catchy titles, but the marketing function is still there in that they aim to define the level and content. For example,

> *Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning, Implementation, & Control*[i]

Synopsis/Brief Summary: The synopsis should convey the essence of the book, what concepts it will cover, what problems it will solve. Authors should provide an initial statement about what the book does, before going on to describe the content. Please provide a succinct summary of your work (150 words max). For example,

> *This book highlights the most recent trends and developments in global marketing. It emphasizes the importance of teamwork between marketing and all the other functions of the business; introduces new perspectives in successful strategic market planning; and presents additional company examples of creative, market-focused, and customer-driven action. The author underscores the importance of computers, telecommunications, and other new technologies in improving marketing planning and performance. A special focus on the 21st Century acknowledges the accelerating*

pace of change in the marketplace, and illustrates what leading companies are doing to meet the challenges of the new environment and the new millennium[i].

Full book Description: Please provide a full description of your work. Please take into consideration why a new publication on this topic is needed at this time, and how your work is designed to meet the need. What is the purpose of the publication? What new contribution does the publication make to the field? (250-500 words). By describing the e-textbook's purpose, what it seeks to achieve, you will have already provided the rationale: why should this e-textbook be published? You can also think in terms of what problems the e-textbook's publication will solve:

You are welcome to Research Made Easy – Workbook Edition. This book is a guide for researchers and students carrying out a research project or working on long essays, theses and dissertations. It is aimed at being used in teaching, and hence, it adopts an interactive approach requiring the reader/student to participate in the learning process. What are the elements of a good research? Most often than not we face a dilemma in seeking answers to this question. The challenge becomes pronounced when we begin to evaluate the different requirements of the diverse academic audiences in the social sciences and business. So what really makes a good research? In this book, I attempt to provide a general outline which can be considered as being essential for a good research thesis. Though this is not exhaustive, it will be of help, especially to young researchers. The purpose is not to create a 'one best format', but to offer guidelines in starting a research project and the preparation of long essays, theses and dissertations for submission. This book is essential for anyone involved in business and social science studies. On completion, the reader would have acquired practical research skills to select a research topic, review literature, identify research gaps, conceptualize research designs, and conduct data collection and analysis to address research gaps[ii].

The specification will include the anticipated length, subject area, subheadings, keywords, estimated delivery date, and an estimate of the number of figures and tables. This will help the University of Ghana/publisher, which is taking a commercial risk, assess the costs associated with the proposed book.

Also, authors need to provide a full outline, including a table of contents, and any additional features, e.g. any supplementary content online [2] videos, slides, question bank et cetera. It is important to remember that whereas the purpose of the brief synopsis is to sell the idea to the commissioning editor assigned by the university, the full outline should help the person who is asked to review the title make to a judgment. It is also an indication that the authors have thought through the structure of the e-textbook.

5.3 Market and Competition

Authors are required to describe the book's target market. This should include:

a) the primary and secondary markets (academic library, teaching, student, practitioner, etc.), any courses which might adopt it, etc. Is the book intended as a comprehensive reference work for practitioners, researchers and administrators?

b) the size of the market [2] give all the indications you can, including the number of active researchers and practitioners. Would it also be suitable for people on master's courses in the subject [2] how many of these are there, and roughly how many people on each course? Do you know people who teach those courses who are likely to adopt the book?
c) details of opportunities to promote the work via student lists, mailing lists, websites, print media etc. How is the author going to actively promote the book? Which outlets will the author use?

Lastly in this section, authors need to list and analyse the competition, and (which is the same thing turned around) say what is original about the book. It is more than likely that there will be at least one competitive title with similar features. In this case, ask the question: given x, why do the target audience need this book? It may be that x has weaknesses, for example the coverage may be shallow, or the number of topics or methods are limited.

5.4 Profile of Author(s)

This is the chance for the author(s) to outline qualifications for writing or contributing to this work. This should be outlined in a profile highlighting the knowledge and experience in the subject area [2] what is it that makes you especially qualified to write this work? An example is illustrated below.

> *Philip Kotler, widely considered to be the world's leading marketing guru, is the S.C. Johnson Distinguished Professor of International Marketing at Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University. He is the author and co-author of sixteen books, including Marketing Management, Marketing of Nations, and Kotler on Marketing. He also acts as a consultant to many major multinationals and has lectured extensively in Asia and North America.*[i]

Profile of author should also include the contact details of the author [2] i.e. email address(es) and telephone number(s).

5.5 Previous Writing Experience

Author should provide a list of relevant publications especially in relation to textbook writing or other academic publications related to the subject area, along with a list of relevant recent publications.

Author(s) should include current post, other publications of which the author is an editor, academic honours, fellowships, etc.