

AWE

Academic Writing in English

Module 1, 2025-26

Course Information

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1. Course Description

1.1 Context

Writing is a “process of discovery and interpretation... of seeing relationships and making meanings”.

(Berthoff, 1981)

Course overview:

This course is designed to introduce you to **academic writing in English**. It is an initial engagement with the processes which you will require for your final year dissertation, as well as fulfilling other written assignments during your study at PHBS.

While the course is titled “Writing in English”, it is specifically **academic English** with a focus on writing. The four key skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking are intrinsically linked and cannot be disaggregated. You will need to read academic texts, listen to academic lectures, and use academic language in peer- and instructor led-discussion, all with a view to producing a clear and **persuasive written academic text**. All of these processes are **active** and require **criticality**.

For second language (L2) learners, writing in English is most often taught as a function of language learning. It is focused mainly on vocabulary building and grammar, usually to prepare students for tests. However, within this class, **inductive reasoning** and **argument** are paramount. Students will choose a **position**, or point of view within an argument, and then focus a **justification** to **persuade** the reader of the efficacy of that position. This is much more than reproducing language, and at the heart of the **process** is **critical thinking**, which transcends second-language acquisition as a **higher order skill** demanded by employers and universities of any nationality. Explicitly, you will need to:

- Think creatively to generate ideas and opinions (de Bono, 1970);
- Test and explore your assumptions, as well as those of others, including fellow students and academic authors;
- Invoke “deliberate analytical action” (Vygotsky, 2012, p.192);

- Critically evaluate sources and their arguments;
- Demonstrate breadth and depth of knowledge;
- Synthesise your findings;
- Reach conclusions;
- Use your own language to voice these conclusions.

Communication is the **writer's responsibility** rather than that of the reader, such that you will need to develop clear logic and reasoning, before communicating this as effectively as possible using concise and precise language. As a **social process**, academic writing requires you to have a clear understanding of who you are writing for (**audience/reader**) and their expectations, plus the academic protocol, or requirements, of the subject and level, in terms of content, linguistic style (**register**), and **format** (APA formatting, citations & referencing). This can be seen as a **conversation** between you and the reader, set at master's level within the discipline of the Social Sciences (**genre**). Implicit within this is an **ethical responsibility** that includes avoiding **plagiarism**.

Production of academic writing can be challenging because of the assiduity, precision and patience required; after all, **no-one's first language is academic English!** However, the course will lead you through a **process** that involves multiple stages, each one of which you will practice, scaffolding your development. As academics, we also need to write to think and you will have the opportunity to develop **creativity** and **criticality**, as you work through **draft** and **redraft**, refining your composition, enhancing the strength of your justification and the clarity of your argument.

Through these processes and demands, this course aims to stretch and challenge, enabling both personal intellectual and cognitive growth (Vygotsky, 1978), as well as linguistic development (Krashen, 1981).

1.2 Textbooks and Reading Materials

No textbook is required, but various hand-out materials will be provided from a variety of resources, not limited to but including the following:

- American Psychological Association. (2019). *APA Publication Manual* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association.
- American Psychological Association. (2020). *Reference Examples*.
<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples>
- Bailey, S. (2015). *Academic Writing for International Students of Business*. Routledge.
- Beebe, S., & Beebe, S. (2010). *Public Speaking Handbook*. Pearson.
- Berthoff, A. E. (1981). *The making of meaning: metaphors, models, and maxims for writing teachers*. Heinemann.
- Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. & Tight, M. (2010). *How to Research* (4th Ed.). Open University Press.
- de Bono, E. (1979; 1990). *Lateral Thinking: A Textbook of Creativity*. Penguin.
- Day, T. (2018). *Success in Academic Writing. Second Edition*. Palgrave.
- Everson, B.J. (1991). Vygotsky and the Teaching of Writing. *Quarterly of the National Writing Project and the Center for the Study of Writing and Literacy*, 13(3), pp.8-11.
- Gillet, A., Hammond, A. & Martala, M. (2009). *Successful Academic Writing*. Pearson.
- Graff, G., & Birkenstein, C. (2010). *They say, I say: The moves that matter in academic writing*. Norton.
- Guffey, M.E. & Loewy, D. (2015) *Business Communication*. Cengage Learning.
- Hewings, M. (2005). *Advanced Grammar in Use: A self-study and reference book for advanced learners of English*. Cambridge University Press.
- Johnson, S. (2009). *Winning debates: A guide to debating in the style of the world universities debating championships*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

- Katz, L. (2018). *Critical Thinking and Persuasive Writing for Postgraduates*. Palgrave.
- Krashen, S.D. (1981). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. Pergamon Press.
- Marshall, J. (2006). *How to write an essay*. Spark Publishing.
- Paul, R. & Elder, L. (2019). *The Nature and Functions of Critical and Creative Thinking (3rd ed.)*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Pedagogy in action (2007, April 20), retrieved on 7 November 2016 from <https://serc.carleton.edu/sp/library/peerreview/tips.html>
- Mackenzie, I. (2010). *English for Business Studies: A course for Business Studies and Economics students*. Cambridge University Press.
- Monippaly, M. & Badrinarayan, S. (2010). *Academic Writing: A Guide for Management Students and Researchers*. Response.
- Morley, J. (2018). *Academic Phrasebank: A compendium of commonly used phrasal elements in academic English in PDF format*. The University of Manchester.
- Pears, R. & Shields, G. (2019). *Cite Them Right: The essential referencing guide (11th ed.)*. Palgrave.
- Raimes, A. (2002). *Keys for writers*. Houghton Mifflin.
- Read, Siew Hean. (2019). *Academic Writing Skills for International Students*. Red Globe Press.
- Roen, D., Glau, G., & Maid, B. (2011). *McGraw Hill guide to writing for college, writing for life*. McGraw Hill.
- Swales, J. & Feak, C. (2012). *Academic Writing for Graduate Students. Essential Tasks and Skills (3rd ed.)*. University of Michigan Press.
- Toulmin, S.E. (2003). *The Uses of Argument*. Cambridge University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind and Society. The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Harvard University Press.
- (2012). *Thought and Language*. MIT Press.
- Wallwork, A. (2011). *English for Writing Research Papers*. Springer.
- (2013). *English for Academic Research: Grammar Exercises*. Springer.
- (2013). *English for Academic Research: Vocabulary Exercises*. Springer.
- (2016). *English for Academic Research: Writing Exercises*. Springer.
- (2016). *English for Presentations at International Conferences*. Springer.

In addition, students will be introduced to Coxhead's Academic Word List (AWL), Davies and Gardner's Academic Vocabulary List (AVL), and Ackermann and Chen's Academic Collocation List (ACL).

2. Learning Outcomes

2.1 Intended Learning Outcomes

| Learning Goals | Objectives | Assessment (YES with details or NO) |
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| 1. Our graduates will be effective communicators. | 1.1. Our students will produce quality business and research-oriented documents. | Yes. Students will be required to conduct research and write an argumentative essay in academic style, make an academic presentation of their argument, |
| | 1.2. Students are able to professionally present their ideas and also logically explain and defend their argument. | |

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| | | and defend a position. |
| 2. Our graduates will be skilled in team work and leadership. | 2.1. Students will be able to lead and participate in group for projects, discussion, and presentation. | Yes: Essays, defense, presentation, and formative in-class activities will require students to work together in groups. |
| | 2.2. Students will be able to apply leadership theories and related skills. | Yes: within the large number of group activities. |
| 3. Our graduates will be trained in ethics. | 3.1. In a case setting, students will use appropriate techniques to analyze business problems and identify the ethical aspects, provide a solution and defend it. | No |
| | 3.2. Our students will practice ethics in the duration of the program. | Yes: Evidenced in their assignments, students will respect and demonstrate academic integrity through understanding and avoiding plagiarism. |
| 4. Our graduates will have a global perspective. | 4.1. Students will have an international exposure. | Yes: Students will have the opportunity to work on topics with global significance and some will work with international students. |
| 5. Our graduates will be skilled in problem-solving and critical thinking. | 5.1. Our students will have a good understanding of fundamental theories in their fields. | Not specifically, although students are encouraged to apply theories from their fields in their writing. |
| | 5.2. Our students will be prepared to face problems in various business settings and find solutions. | Not specifically, although the development of reasoning, argument, and persuasion, which are critical in business settings, are developed within the course. |
| | 5.3. Our students will demonstrate competency in critical thinking. | Yes: This will be demonstrated in topic choice, analysis and development, source selection, critical reading, |

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| | | research, developing persuasive arguments, producing a final written paper, presentation, and defense of a position, as well as in formative in-class activities. |
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2.2 Course specific objectives

Students will learn how to evaluate writing, craft an argument in support of a position that they can defend both in terms of a thesis (essay) and in terms of a defense (presentation and Q&A).

Academic Writing

The ultimate aim of this course is to introduce students to concepts and foundational skills that will help them successfully write their master's thesis. As such, they will:

1. Learn what plagiarism is and how to avoid it;
2. Develop or improve the ability to understand and interpret academic research papers and other reading in English. "Interpret" means the ability to paraphrase and summarize what they have read in their own words. This is key for all academic writing and is essential for a successful thesis;
3. Exercise critical thinking and express ideas to be demonstrated in written work, with a clearly stated thesis, supporting evidence, and appropriate in-text citations and references.

The Conventions of Writing

The rules, or conventions, of writing in English will be embedded in coursework, and practicing them will be elemental to writing exercises and assignments.

Specifically, the course will be concerned with the following:

- Summarizing, paraphrasing, and citations/references;
- Organization, structure and writing of an argumentative essay;
- Academic format and register (style);
- Defending a position.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is infused throughout the course, within every class, exercise, and assignment. However, there will also be specific focus on:

- Creative thinking;
- Analysis;
- Evaluation;
- Synthesis;
- Argumentation.

2.3 Assessment/Grading Details

N.B. Details are indicative and may be changed at the discretion of the ESC Director.

| Weighting | Type | Description |
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| 20% | Source Assignment <i>In-class - lesson 7</i> | Students will be given an article and asked to read and summarize it in-class, making sure to capture the author's position and highlight the article's key points. The summary must be <u>written in English</u> . |
| 20% | Draft Body Paragraphs <i>Due before lesson 13</i> | Individually, students will write one paragraph towards their group's position paper. |
| 20% | Final Position Paper | Each group will submit a final draft of their position paper, incorporating feedback from the different stages of development. |
| 20% | Presentation & Defence of Final Position | Each group will present and defend their position. |
| 20% | Participation | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 10%: Classroom performance, i.e., students' involvement in discussions and/or being engaged with classroom exercises, assignments, etc.2. 10%: Peer review, i.e., students need to provide feedback on the work of their peers and submit their feedback as homework on turnitin. |

TARDINESS AND ABSENCE FROM CLASS

Attendance is marked at the beginning of each class. Missing a class will incur a penalty of -2% from your final course grade.

Missing more than 20 minutes of a lesson will incur a penalty of -1% from your final course grade.

Absences that are not considered leave but for which you can provide written verification of illness or emergency may be excused at the discretion of the instructor. Wherever possible, contact me before class to request leave and be prepared to submit evidence to support an absence, i.e., doctor's note.

Missing three classes (for any reason other than verifiable emergencies) will result in automatic failure of the course.

LATE WORK:

All summative assignments must be handed in on time on the due date (at the beginning of class via electronic submission (either through Turnitin, the CMS, or email, depending on the individual assignment)).

Any summative work that is handed in late will result in an automatic lowering of your assignment grade by 10%, unless you provide documentation of illness or other compelling

emergency. Each subsequent class meeting day on which the work is not submitted will be debited by 5%.

2.4 Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

It is important for a student's effort and credit to be recognized through class assessment. Credits earned for a student work due to efforts done by others are clearly unfair. Deliberate dishonesty is considered academic misconducts, which include plagiarism; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; or altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying of data, research procedures, or data analysis.

All assessments are subject to academic misconduct check. Misconduct check may include reproducing the assessment, providing a copy to another member of faculty, and/or communicate a copy of this assignment to the PHBS Discipline Committee. A suspected plagiarized document/assignment submitted to a plagiarism checking service may be kept in its database for future reference purpose.

Where violation is suspected, penalties will be implemented. The penalties for academic misconduct may include: deduction of honour points, a mark of zero on the assessment, a fail grade for the whole course, and reference of the matter to the Peking University Registrar.

AI tools requirements:

Using AI tools to complete assignments or assessments without the approval of the course instructor will be regarded as an act of academic dishonesty. Depending on the severity of the situation, penalties will be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the Peking University Graduate Student Handbook.

For more information of plagiarism, please refer to *PHBS Student Handbook*.

Topics, Teaching and Assessment Schedule

N.B. This course schedule and content is indicative and may be changed at the discretion of the instructor to reflect student need.

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| Week 1 Lesson 1 | Introduction: What is Academic Writing? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Process and purpose of academic writing• Course overview |
| Week 1 Lesson 2 | Ethics: Avoiding Plagiarism I <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plagiarism• Citation and referencing |
| Week 2 Lesson 3 | Ethics: Avoiding Plagiarism II <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction APA• Title page and headings |
| Week 2 Lesson 4 | Ethics: Avoiding Plagiarism III <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summarizing• Paraphrasing |
| Week 3 | Critical Thinking: Introduction & Teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Critical thinking |

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| Lesson 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic inquiry and analysis • Introduction to teamwork |
| Week 3 Lesson 6 | <i>Critical Thinking: Research</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source identification • Main idea • Source evaluation |
| Week 4 Lesson 7 | <i>Assignment One:</i> Individual In-class Writing Assignment (Article Summary) |
| Week 4 Lesson 8 | <i>Critical Thinking: Evaluating Argument</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical reading • Logic & reasoning • Argumentation |
| Week 5 Lesson 9 | <i>Writing the Essay: Preparation I</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlining • Working thesis statement • Working topic sentences |
| Week 5 Lesson 10 | <i>Writing the Essay: Paragraphing I</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paragraph Structure • Topic Sentences Revisited • Supporting Sentences • Concluding Sentences |
| Week 6 Lesson 11 | <i>Writing the Essay: Paragraphing II</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logical Cohesion and Word Order • Coherence and Cohesion • Peer-review |
| Week 6 Lesson 12 | <i>Writing the Essay: Paragraphing III</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refining • Concision • Register <i>Assignment Two:</i> Individual body paragraph |
| Week 7 Lesson 13 | <i>Writing the Essay: Introduction</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening statement • Background information • Parameters • Thesis statement revisited |
| Week 7 Lesson 14 | <i>Writing the Essay: Conclusion</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Review of Introduction • Synthesizing the Key Points • Final Thoughts • Coherence between paragraphs |
| Week 8 Lesson 15 | <i>Presenting & Defending a Position – What is academic presenting?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to presenting a position • Use of PPT |
| Week 8 Lesson 16 | <i>Writing the Essay: Further Refinement</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer review of final paper • Punctuation |

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| <p>Week 9</p> <p>Lesson 17</p> | <p><i>Writing the Essay: Finale</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Review of Final Paper • Editing & Proofreading • Group meeting in the class • Presenting the outline of the final presentation |
| <p>Week 9</p> <p>Lesson 18</p> | <p><i>Final Position Defence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a group, students will make a presentation of their thesis in defence of their position • Each group will then be questioned and must defend their thesis <p>Summative Assessment: Complete the final draft of the Group Position Paper (Deadline TBC)</p> |