

**These are brief descriptions of the courses and workshops available to postgraduate researchers (PGRs) through the Academic English Centre:**

### **Courses**

- **Academic writing style:** This course covers specific features of academic writing style, its grammar and vocabulary, including degrees of formality, use of the passive voice, cautious language, impartiality and objectivity, avoiding wordiness (5 sessions).
- **Sentence Structure:** This course looks at common errors in sentence structure and at specific types of sentences relevant to academic writing, including conditionals, who- and which-clauses, cause and effect sentences and reported speech (6 sessions).
- **Conference and Presentation skills:** How do you give a memorable presentation? How do you start and finish your presentation effectively? How do you deal with visuals? These are all topics discussed in this course, and you will also have an opportunity to practise your presentation in a mock conference at the end (5 sessions x 1 hour 30 minutes each).

### **Workshops**

Writing for various specific purposes is covered in a series of workshops, for example writing literature reviews, introductions, conclusions and abstracts. Workshops also cover some difficulties in paraphrasing and connecting ideas in writing. If the workshop you are interested in is not in the timetable, you can ask for it to be organised or book a one-to-one tutorial to discuss the topic you are interested in by emailing [pgrskills@hud.ac.uk](mailto:pgrskills@hud.ac.uk).

#### **Avoiding plagiarism, Summarising and paraphrasing and Practical summary writing (3 sessions)**

Plagiarism in post-graduate researchers' writing is very often involuntary and results from an unclear understanding of plagiarism and paraphrasing. The first session of this workshop is aimed at clarifying what is and what is not considered plagiarism.

Plagiarism is often caused by difficulties with paraphrasing and summarising. During the second session we will address these difficulties and look at a step-by-step approach to achieve professional paraphrasing and summarising.

The third session is practical. PGRs will be expected to do practical paraphrasing and summarising, using their own material with help and feedback when necessary.

Please note that participants will be required to attend all sessions.

## **Who's afraid of Turnitin?**

### **(1 session)**

During this workshop, you will be looking at Turnitin reports in order to improve your paraphrasing, summarising and referencing skills.

## **Argumentation and critical voice with practice**

### **(3 sessions)**

If you have ever received these comments from your supervisor:

- *"Your writing should be more critical".*
- *"You do not put across your argument effectively".*
- *"Where is your voice"?*

and did not know how to improve your work, then this workshop may help you. This workshop looks at argumentation and critical writing from the point of view of:

- Strategy: How to put your argument across and how to evaluate arguments from the literature you are reading critically, and
- Language: What words and phrases can be useful to express criticality

The third session is practical. PGRs will be expected to write a piece of critical analysis of one or several sources that PGRs are reading at the moment. The teacher will provide help and feedback when necessary.

These sessions are particularly suitable for PGRs who are actually writing or are at the point of writing.

Please note that participants will be required to attend all sessions.

## **Writing literature reviews with practice**

### **(3 sessions)**

Writing a good literature review is essential for every substantial piece of academic writing. In the first two sessions of this workshop we will be looking at both strategies and the process of writing a literature review, including analysis, synthesis and the critical evaluation of literature. We will also consider appropriate vocabulary (including reporting verbs and common phrases), and grammar (use of tenses, passive voice and indirect speech).

The last session is practical. PGRs will be expected to write a review of two or three sources they are currently working on.

These sessions are particularly suitable for PGRs who are actually at the point of writing a literature review.

Please note that participants will be required to attend all sessions.

### **Writing abstracts with practice**

#### **(2 sessions)**

In the first session the basic components of an effective abstract will be discussed as well as language issues such as appropriate vocabulary, useful phrases, and tenses.

The second session is practical. PGRs will be expected to write an abstract based on their own material. The teacher will be facilitating by offering advice and feedback.

These sessions are particularly suitable for PGRs who are actually working on an abstract.

Please note that participants will be required to attend all sessions.

### **Use of tenses and passive voice in academic writing**

#### **(2 sessions)**

Correct use of tenses is very important in any kind of writing. In academic writing however, the use of tenses and voices has certain peculiarities. In the first session of this workshop the use of tenses specific to academic writing will be discussed. The second session will address arguments for and against using the passive voice in academic writing. PGRs will also practise using tenses and the passive voice in academic writing.

Please note that participants will be required to attend all sessions.

### **Writing for publication**

PGRs are encouraged to publish their research. For a novice researcher this presents many gruelling questions:

- What journal to choose?
- What are the dos and don'ts of writing an article?
- What is an impact factor?
- What is a peer review?
- How to deal with feedback and rejection?

All these questions will be discussed in a 3 hour workshop, which has a strong practical element.

### **Connecting your ideas in writing**

#### **(1 session)**

It is most important in academic writing to maintain the flow of writing. This workshop looks at the ways in which such flow can be achieved by connecting ideas, parts of the dissertation, paragraphs and sentences.

### **Concordancers in academic writing (beginners)** **(1 session)**

This workshop is an introduction to using Concordancers – software that allows writers to browse large volumes of expert-written texts and to explore how particular words and phrases are used in authentic texts in order to make the best choices in their own writing.

(Please, note that Concordancers are NOT proofreading software or grammar checkers).

### **Concordancers in academic writing (advanced)** **(2 sessions)**

This workshop gives you an opportunity to explore further the ways in which Concordancers can help you improve your academic writing. Concordancers are the latest online tools that allow you to explore how particular words and phrases are used in authentic texts by experts in your field. This workshop will help you create corpora of texts in your own field in order to make the best choices in your own writing.

This workshop is a follow-up to the beginners' workshop and is suitable for PGRs with some previous knowledge of Concordancers.

### **Grammar Tutorials**

These are new 30 minute tutorial sessions to focus on individual grammar issues you may have with your writing. Examples of such problems may be the use of articles, "a, an and the", the correct use of modal verbs, sentence structure, word form and punctuation to name but a few.

### **Academic Speaking**

This is an 8-part academic speaking course that will cover the many aspects of speaking in a formal environment. The course will give real examples of vocabulary to take away that can be used in different situations. Each session will build on the work of the last, so it will be most beneficial if you can attend all of the sessions.

### **One-to-One Tutorials**

If you have any specific queries or problems which are not addressed in the courses, you can book a one-to-one tutorial, lasting one hour. Your query may be about any language-related issue that you would like help with.

To have a productive tutorial, you should send an email with your **particular question or problem** to [pgrskills@hud.ac.uk](mailto:pgrskills@hud.ac.uk). The Academic English Centre will then be able to prepare some theory/ practice materials for you.

If you would like to get feedback on your written English, you can send in advance a sample of you writing – **two pages maximum** – then we can discuss how you can improve it. Please send this to [pgrskills@hud.ac.uk](mailto:pgrskills@hud.ac.uk).

**Please note that the Academic English Centre cannot proofread your work.**