



# PROFESSIONAL WRITING ACADEMY

## WRITING FOR ACADEMIC PUBLICATION (ONLINE)

### Our approach to teaching writing online

This online course has been carefully designed by Dan Soule with the Professional Writing Academy. It is intended to provide an introduction to writing for academic publication, helping you to develop your understanding of how to target a specific journal, analyse published papers from that journal and use this information to plan and organise your own data and argument.

The learning model is structured around a combination of tutor-curated learning materials and peer discussion and feedback.

Your tutor will provide feedback to the group each session and will be monitoring individual learning, but perhaps more important in the learning experience are the close working relationships you establish with other participants on the course.

The practice of feeding back on the writing and reflections of others will enhance your own understanding and experience of academic writing and add to your experience of your own practice. It is hoped that relationships and collaboration will continue beyond the course to provide you with ongoing discussion and feedback from writers you trust.

This course is not a passive experience predicated on submitting work for ‘marking’ by a tutor, but a challenging, dynamic process that will help you develop both personally and as a writer.

We have extensive experience in teaching writing online, having set up the world’s first fully online postgraduate writing course. We’ve tried out, tested and tweaked our methods in recreational and academic situations; we know what you need to do in order to develop an independent thinking and writing practice and how it can translate into professional settings – and that’s what we deliver through our courses.

We are passionate about the importance of developing close-knit communities of supportive writers and facilitators. We are confident this approach works, particularly for people new to writing. But because the role of the online tutor and the online learning journey may be different to what you expect, we’ve written these notes to help answer some of the questions our students often ask.

*Professional Writing Academy*

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### **Who are the tutors and course developers?**

We’re all published and practising writers and group facilitators. We understand the demands of the world of the writing industries because we work in those worlds.

We are also experienced online teachers, working in universities in the UK, US and Middle East and Far East as well as with recreational writers. We recognise the need for accessible and enjoyable learning for writers not looking for a formal academic qualification, so we developed these courses to match the level of learning with your needs, at a pace that fits around your day-to-day life.

### **How is online learning different from face-to-face learning?**

An online course is a distinct experience and is not designed to replicate face-to-face learning. We know from our experience of teaching writing that online courses offer many advantages and often a faster progression than face-to-face study.

Our online courses are tightly structured, yet flexible enough to fit around your day-to-day life. The course materials are available 24

hours and past sessions remain open throughout the course, so that you can re-visit podcasts, videos and tutor notes whenever you need. And, of course, you can study wherever you are in the world.

### **Are online writing courses as effective as face-to-face writing courses?**

We find many of our best writers emerge from our online teaching, rather than face-to-face teaching. This is because online learning encourages you to develop a regular writing practice, which in turn improves your judgement and self-confidence. Our experience has shown us that this approach works, particularly for people new to writing.

Why do I have to work through the sessions in sequence?

Each course is designed as a slow-burn process because we find that writers progress best when they work to incremental goals. So, we suggest you work through the sessions one by one.

### **What does my tutor do?**

Your tutor devised your entire course. He created the structure, planned the progression of the topics (the pace of the course), and researched and wrote the materials needed to guide you. Our tutors' ability to do this is based on their own extensive practice as writers and mentors as well as their experience of teaching writers online and face-to-face in universities.

### **I don't feel fully comfortable with the writing exercises**

You shouldn't! We don't want you to be working in your comfort zone because that makes for dull writing and lifeless stories. You should feel challenged - maybe even a little confused - by the expectations, and at times out of your depth, embarrassed or awkward.

We want you to respond to the exercises naturally, in a way that feels right for you. Feeling off kilter and unsure of how to respond are good signs that you are developing your judgment and thinking like a writer. Good writing is about being exposed; letting go and making yourself feel vulnerable. Aim to control your sentences, not the emotions in your writing and storytelling.

### **Why do you suggest we critique fellow students' work at the end of each session?**

It's almost impossible to edit your own work when you're starting your writing career, but by critiquing others, you become able –

over time – to turn a sharp lens on your own work and become a much better editor of your own writing. Critiquing others creates self-sufficient writers who can switch between their ‘creative’ and ‘editorial’ brains, a vital skill. Put simply, it helps you develop a keen eye for what works, and what does not.

Peer critiquing is a pedagogically sound method. We know that when writing students actively engage in critiquing they learn about their own skills as a writer more quickly and soundly because they're actively putting those skills into practice.

### **What if no one critiques me?**

Many people have busy work and home lives and may not be able to post ahead of a deadline. Wait until the deadline for critiquing is up and, if you still haven't received feedback, then do approach someone whose work you find interesting and offer to exchange critiques.

It is also extremely valuable to read the feedback given to fellow participants. The points raised will inevitably be relevant to your own writing: if not now, then in the future. And since all feedback is available to everyone and is archived on the site, it's easy to look back whenever you need to find tips that you can apply to your own work.

