

# Advanced Academic Writing in English

Programme 2012

## Graduate School, Open Universiteit

### Description:

The course takes a close look at some more subtle features of writing academic papers in English. It compares various genres that researchers need to write, including literature reviews, theoretical papers, research papers, with a focus on disciplinary differences.

In particular, much of this course is devoted to constructive critiquing of written work including your own. The course will pay attention to the development of vocabulary, with special focus on nuances between synonyms, in verb tenses, and modal verbs. The course will serve as a refresh your knowledge of the options in English for particular functions, and the impact different options have on the reader.

The course covers the critical aspect of reporting research, and how writers may subtly express attitudes towards the findings and opinions given. Academic style in the discipline is also a key aspect.

As and where necessary, attention will also be paid to matters of grammar, partly as a reminder.

The outline below presents the planned schedule, but it is subject to change in light of participants' needs and wishes. The topics listed below will be reflected in the various genres participants' have to write.

### Trainer:

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### Schedule

Session 1:

- Critical analysis of written texts
- Characteristic problems: refresher

Session 2:

- Genres: research articles, reviews, theoretical articles – disciplinary differences

Session 3:

- Readability: critical aspects that assist the reader
- Subtle style: nuances in the use of synonyms

**Session 4:**

- Rephrasing and restructuring your work
- Looking closely at verbs and modal verbs

**Session 5:**

- Style and register
- Reporting verbs: refresher – noticing the nuances
- Reporting the findings and opinions of other authors: attitudes
- Expanding your range of vocabulary to express nuances

**Session 6:**

- Reporting your own findings and opinions: degrees of confidence
- Applying hedges in your work
- Idiomatic language in academic writing
- Shades of meaning

**Session 7:**

- Dealing with feedback from reviewers and rewriting your work
- Checking carefully

**Session 8:**

- Final editing of your work
- Outstanding questions on scientific writing?
- Summing up and evaluation

Note that the order of items is subject to change, as some items may be brought forward or delayed depending on the group wishes. More time may be spent on one item as the group requests.

**Procedure**

Materials will usually be sent to the participants in advance electronically.

Participants will work on a series of short tasks focusing on the aspects introduced during the sessions. In general, participants will work in small groups of 3-5 people on these tasks.

In addition, participants will write parts of a scientific research text (usually submitted in advance of each session). Participants will analyse extracts of these in small groups that are relatively homogeneous regarding disciplinary areas.

**Dates**

13.00-15.00

7, 14, 28 February, 6, 20, 27 March, 3 and 17 April 2012.