WRITING FOR ACADEMIC PUBLICATION

~ A BLENDED LEARNING APPROACH ~

NUI MAYNOOTH
Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad

INTRODUCTION

The Library at the National University of Ireland has organised a variety of workshops and seminars to support Irish librarians writing for academic publication over a six year period. In 2011 a blended learning programme was piloted. The programme combines three elements...

A — A FORMAL WRITING SEMINAR

B — SERIES OF ONLINE EXERCISES & MENTORING SUPPORT

C — PEER FEEDBACK DAY

OPERATION

The programme was run by the Deputy University Librarian, who acted as mentor to the group of 13. Tasks were allocated on a weekly or fortnightly basis, the aim being to complete an article and submit for publication within a nine month period.

ASPECTS

1. GETTING STARTED

For the less experienced writer it can be difficult to know how to begin writing. The online programme involves small incremental writing tasks which help make writing a less daunting process, breaking writing into manageable tasks that progressively develop into an article.

2. SHARING WORK

Being part of an online group means that participants are making an active commitment to the task of writing. Sharing work helps develop a sense of being part of a community of writers. Participants make suggestions online to their colleagues, thus strengthening the group as a writing community and a source of professional support.

3. PEER FEEDBACK

Giving and receiving feedback online, and face-to-face at a subsequent peer feedback meeting, allows people gain an insight into the peer-review process and may help build up the necessary resilience to write.

4. FINDING TIME TO WRITE

The online tasks allow people to choose their own time and space to write. This can help people integrate writing into their lives and careers. The fact that the online writing group is from across the higher education sector and also from across the country makes for interesting exchanges of experience.

5. MINIMUM FINANCIAL COSTS

There are no costs after the initial course fee of €120 for the one-day writing seminar. In a time of severe cutbacks in funding, online professional development activity such as this offers a means of continuing professional development that does not incur travel costs.

ACTIVITIES

The process can be broken down into the following activities:

TASK 1 Develop a working title and three keywords for your article

TASK 2 Define the audience and purpose for your article? Identify a journal suitable for your article and read submission guidelines

TASK 3 Write a 80-200 word informative or structured abstract for your article

TASK 4 Draw up an outline for your article

TASK 5 E-mail the journal editor asking if he/she would be interested in seeing your article on completion

TASK 5 Draft a section in 500 words

TASK 6 Continue draft to 1,000 words

TASK 7 Online peer feedback

TASK 8 Continue draft to 2,000 words

TASK 9 Face-to-face meeting with structured group feedback sessions

TASK 10 Submission of article and responding to subsequent peer review

TASK 11 Resubmission following peer review

TASK 12 Deposition in an institutional repository following publisher guidelines. See www.sherpa.ac.uk Click on Project Romeo

FURTHER RESOURCES

» Black, D., Brown, S., Day, A. & Race, P. (1998).
500 Tips for Getting Published: A Guide for Educators, Researchers and Professionals
London: Kogan Page.

» Carter, D.V. (2006). *Becoming an Author: Advice for Academics and Other Professionals*
Maidenhead: Open University Press.

» Day, A. (2007). *How to Get Research Published in Journals*
2nd ed., Burlington, VT.: Ashgate.

» Fallon, H. (2009). *"The Academic Writing Toolkit: Writing for Peer-reviewed and Professional Journals"*
SCONUL Focus, Vol. 45: pp. 66-71. Retrieved from http://eprints.nuim.ie/1387/ on 3 May 2012.

» Hartley, J. (2008). *Academic Writing and Publishing: A Practical Handbook*
New York: Routledge.

» Henson, K.T. (2005). *Writing for Publication: Road to Academic Advancement*
Boston: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.

» Kitchin, R. (2005). *The Academic's Guide to Publishing*
London: Sage.

» Maimon, E.P., Peritz, J.H. & Yancey, K. (2009). *A Writer's Resource: A Handbook for Writing and Research*
3rd ed., McGraw-Hill.

» Murray, R. (2009). *Writing for Academic Journals*
2nd ed., Maidenhead: Open University Press.

» Murray, R. & Moore, S. (2007). *The Handbook of Academic Writing: A Fresh Approach*
Maidenhead: Open University Press.

» Rankin, E. (2001). *The Work of Writing: Insights and Strategies for Academics and Professionals*
San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

» Silva, P.J. (2007). *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing*
Washington: American Psychological Association.

SEE ALSO
» Fallon, H. & Dempsey, B. (2011). *Poster Design: Guidelines & Tips*
Accessible from http://academicwritinglibrarian.blogspot.com/p/further-resources.html

I see now that if I want to write that all I have to do is write, there is an audience for what I'm interested in.

Prior to undertaking the blended writing programme, I had some experience with publishing my work. This was usually a lengthy and expansive process, I found the programme, and the approaches it took, excellent for making the writer think more about the actual writing process.

I had a plenary paper accepted for an international conference and a paper invited by the related journal to complement the conference presentation. I also have had another paper on a different topic accepted for an international conference.

I have completed a draft of my original paper I have plans to bring this draft to publication in the coming months. In addition to this, I have submitted an abstract for a conference and I am awaiting a decision on this abstract. I also recently had a co-authored paper which has been accepted for publication.

I am currently working on a writing piece and poster themed on my experience of the blended learning process to be used with guidelines for an upcoming competition.

I completed my poster on 'E-books' throughout the course of the blended learning process and I had submitted it to INULS conference and to an AISHE conference. It was accepted for both, displayed and it won runner-up prize in the INULS poster competition and first place in the AISHE conference poster competition.

Helen Fallon, Library, NUI Maynooth   email Helen.B.Fallon@nuim.ie   web http://library.nuim.ie