



School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies Course Outline

WRIT 101: Writing English
2008 – Trimester 3 (1 December 2008-30 January 2009)

Course co-ordinator:

Dr Sky Marsen
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Office hours: tba

Tutors: Your tutor will provide you with their contact details and office hours at your first class.

LALS main office:
Von Zedlitz (VZ) 210

LALS WRIT 101 administrator:
Vivien Trott, VZ 210, ext. 5894

Web contact:

www.blackboard.vuw.ac.nz

All course notices, including this outline, will be posted on Blackboard. Other than for these general notices, however, Blackboard will **not** be used extensively in this course. This is because WRIT 101 is a tutor-based course involving small autonomous groups and in-class activities, with no formal lectures.

WRIT 101 noticeboard for course information:
VZ Level 2 opposite VZ 207 and 208

Course aims and objectives

WRIT 101 is designed to help students of any subject to communicate competently and appropriately in writing at university level. The course will focus on developing effective writing techniques and styles for academic essay writing, but in the process will also provide instruction and practice that will provide you with a foundation for writing effectively in any situation. You will also learn to revise your own writing and respond to the writing of others.

Specifically the course should enable you to:

- 1 Employ efficient and effective techniques for drafting and revising a range of written texts for different purposes and audiences.
- 2 Reflect clearly on your own writing development.
- 3 Respond effectively to, and evaluate, the writing of others.
- 4 Carry out and document research according to the conventions of academic essay writing.

Course texts

Required:

Wallace, D. (2008) Becoming an Effective Writer, Auckland: Pearson.

Sword, H. (2007) The Writer's Diet, Auckland: Pearson.

(Both texts can be purchased as a single discounted package at Victoria University Bookshop.)

Recommended:

Peck, J. and Coyle, M. (1999) The Student's Guide to Writing, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Mounsey, C. (2002) Essays and dissertations, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kane, T. (1988). New Oxford Guide to Writing. Oxford University Press.

A good dictionary and thesaurus (such as Oxford, Collins or Macquarie)

(All texts are available from Victoria University Bookshop.)

Mandatory course requirements

In order to qualify for grade assessment at the end of the course, you must:

- 1 Submit the first **THREE** assignments (Explanation, Persuasion, and Inquiry) by their due dates, including drafts for peer review, first tutor review, and final grading
- 2 Attend **ALL** workshops. If absence from a workshop is unavoidable, due to sickness or exceptional circumstances, **you must contact your tutor** (or failing that, the course coordinator), preferably **in advance** of the class you cannot attend, or if that is not possible, **before the next meeting** of the class so that you can be informed of how to come prepared. **Students who miss more than six hours of class contact time without satisfactory explanation will fail the mandatory course requirements.** This policy might seem harsh, but WRIT 101 is not an ordinary course. That is, it is not an information-based course that allows you to catch up through borrowing of notes or obtaining lecture handouts, etc. It is a course that revolves around activities carried out in a small cooperative class, and therefore non-attendance is disruptive for everybody as well as discourteous.

Final assessment

WRIT 101 has no exam. Your final assessment will be based on the completion of the following texts:

Explanation	25%
Persuasion	25%
Inquiry	40%
Reflection	10%

With the exception of the reflective text, you will develop these texts gradually through peer and tutor response followed by revision. You will be graded only on the final revision of each assignment.

Criteria for Assessment

The specific criteria you will need to meet to pass this course are:

- A demonstrated ability to use and synthesize other texts in your own written work – i.e. summarise, paraphrase, quote, and correctly document relevant sources.
- A demonstrated ability to structure and organise a complete text in a way that is appropriate to the situation, purpose, and designated audience.
- Sufficient independent control over the basic mechanics of writing (vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar and punctuation, etc.) so that meaning and readability are not impeded by errors.

(Note that it is necessary to demonstrate a basic competence in all three areas.)

Workload

It is difficult to estimate the time you will spend on your assignments, since individuals vary in their writing processes and speeds. Generally, you should allow 10-12 hours' preparation (thinking, reading, and writing) each week outside of class.

Grading

At the end of the course, you will be given a university grade (A to E). In rating your performance, tutors will consider your performance in terms of these criteria:

Excellent (A+, A, A-): Independent learning taking place with some consistency to an exceptionally high standard of proficiency. Submitted writing is exceptional: it has something of substance to say and says it with some originality, clarity, purpose and voice; a variety of strategies are tried and commented on in feedback to the tutor; evidence is provided of insightful observations and reflections on writing and learning; there is thoughtful engagement with other students, both orally and in written responses; and there is clear evidence of an emerging professionalism in relation to own and others' writing.

Very good (B+, B): Evidence of independent learning to a high standard of proficiency. Submitted writing is of a high standard: convincing in style and presentation, clearly and consistently achieving "competency" in substance and clarity, though not to an exceptional degree; evident commitment and thought in peer response work; some attempt to try different strategies and reflect on these.

Good (B-, C+): Some evidence of competent proficiency, without being exceptional in any way. Conscientious completion of tasks; writing is reasonably competent and clear, but without significant substance or originality; it may be pedestrian, or inconsistent. Independent learning is not markedly obvious. Revision is largely superficial.

Satisfactory (C): A minimally acceptable level of proficiency. Work may be flawed, but writing is definitely communicative and there is evidence of commitment, understanding of what is required to achieve competency, and ability to improve. All course requirements are met.

Unsatisfactory (D, E) Unsatisfactory level of proficiency demonstrated, based on the submitted work. A Fail in WRIT 101 is intended to signal to the University that the student is unlikely to succeed in university studies without undertaking remedial work in writing and study skills.

Incompletion (K) Failure to complete the mandatory course requirements.

Victoria University grades

Marks	85+	80-84	75-79	70-74	65-69	60-64	55-59	50-54	40-49	<40
Grades	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	E

ASSIGNMENT DATES

Final version on week beginning	
Assignment 1 (Explanation) (700-900 words)	15 December
Assignment 2 (Persuasion) (700-900 words)	12 January
Assignment 3 (Research Inquiry) (1500 words approx.)	25 January
Assignment 4 (Reflection) (500-700 words)	25 January

Note

For late assignments you will be penalised by 2% for each day that you are late (including weekends). Unless you have made special arrangements with your tutor, an assignment will not be marked if submitted two weeks after the deadline.

Submission guidelines

When submitting assignment to the LALS main office, make sure you attach the cover sheets (from the book *Becoming an Effective Writer*), and that you fill them completely, including your and your tutor's name. If you do not attach the cover sheet correctly completed, your assignment will be discarded.

Return of final assignments

Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope with your final research and reflection pieces if you wish them to be returned to you. As you will be handing them in after workshops finish you should bring them to LALS reception (see first page of this outline for details), or make arrangements with your tutor.

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

Information on the following topics is available electronically under "Course Outline General Information" at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

- Student and Staff Conduct
- Academic Grievances
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support