

School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies Course Outline

WRIT 151, Writing in English as a Second Language, Trimester 1, 2009

1. **Course Coordinator:** John Macalister

2. **Staff:**

Lecturer:

John Macalister
VZ203
Ext. 5609
Office hours: by appointment
Email: john.macalister@vuw.ac.nz
<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/lals>



Tutors:

Tutors' names, rooms and office hours will be posted on Blackboard once workshop groups have been established.

3. **Class times and rooms:**

Tutorials/Workshops: Three (3) hours per week

You are expected to attend all your workshop sessions. If for any reason you are unable to attend a session, you should explain your absence to your tutor. **Note that there is an attendance requirement for the workshops** (see the **Mandatory Course Requirements**).

NB It is important that you are able to attend **all three hours** listed for your workshop group.

Workshop groups

The workshop groups will be posted on the notice board and on Blackboard on Monday 2 March at 9 a.m. Workshops begin in the first week of the trimester.

4. Announcements:

Noticeboard

The WRIT 151 noticeboard is opposite VZ 208, on the second floor of the von Zedlitz building. Course information will be announced in workshops and/or posted on this notice board and/or on Blackboard.

Assignments

All student assignments are to be placed in the Assignments Box opposite the elevators on the second floor of the von Zedlitz building. It is situated on the wall of the School office, which is VZ210.

Language Learning Centre

You are encouraged to make use of the University's Language Learning Centre (Floor 0, von Zedlitz). Most of the books listed on page 3, and a number of additional resources and texts relating to second language writing, including grammar, spelling and punctuation, are available in the Self-Access Centre (VZ007). The Centre also has a wide range of listening materials in general and academic English.

5. LALS main office:

VZ210, 2nd floor Von Zedlitz Building, Kelburn Parade

6. WRIT 151 Course Administrator:

Vivien Trott, Undergraduate administration
Tel: 463 5600/463 5894/472 1000 ext 8386

7. Aims:

The course is designed to improve the writing of students for whom English is a second or other language. During the course, students practice techniques for generating, drafting and revising writing for a range of purposes, with an emphasis on addressing problems faced by second language writers. The course comprises three hours of workshop attendance per week.

You are expected to participate actively in the workshops. The workshops provide an opportunity to clarify your understanding of the writing process and to work on a range of language tasks aimed at practising and refining writing and reading skills. A regular feature of workshop tasks will be your preparation of successive drafts of written text on which your tutor and peers will provide feedback.

8. Learning objectives:

A student that has successfully completed WRIT 151 should be able to:

- a) solve some of the problems faced when writing and reading in a second language
- b) demonstrate increased richness and accuracy of their English when expressing complex ideas
- c) demonstrate strategies for writing and reading texts effectively
- d) demonstrate a critical awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses when writing in English.

9. Content:

- Introduction to the course. Critical thinking.
- Setting writing development goals. Planning and writing the first draft.
- Hierarchies of ideas in text.
- Integrating sources in your writing.
- Coherence and cohesion in texts.
- Introductions and conclusions.
- Understanding and using feedback.
- Selecting and notetaking from sources. Paraphrasing.
- Revising and editing your final draft.
- Writing under time constraints in tests and examinations.
- Applying principles presented on the course to reading and writing tasks in other subjects.

10. Texts:

Required:

- WRIT 151 Coursebook. (Available from Student Notes Distribution Centre at an estimated cost of approx. \$10 - 15)

You should buy this resource before workshops begin.

Recommended:

(Note: Most of the following books are on 3-day loan in the VUW Library. You should also check under Course Reserve on the Library website.)

- Braine, G. (1996). *Writing from sources: a guide for ESL students*. Mountain View, California: Mayfield.
- Clanchy, J. & Ballard, B. (1991). *Essay writing for students*. (2nd ed.). Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.
- Coxhead, A. (1998). *An academic word list*. Wellington: School of LALS, Victoria University of Wellington.
- Gardner, P.S. (2005). *New Directions: Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McCarthy, M. & O'Dell, F. (2002). *English vocabulary in use (Advanced)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Murphy, R. (1985). *English grammar in use*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Raimes, A. (1992). *Exploring through writing: A process approach to ESL composition*. New York: St Martins Press.
- Rountree, K. (1991). *Writing for success: a practical guide for New Zealand students*. Auckland: Longman Paul.
- Sinclair, J. (ed.) (1995). *Collins Cobuild English Dictionary*. London: Collins.
- Swan, M. (1995). *Practical English usage*. (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wilhoit, S. (1997). *A brief guide to writing from readings*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

You may need to buy a grammar book to refer to during the course. Ask your tutor for advice.

Any other relevant material/equipment:

There are a large number of useful websites which can help you with your grammar; many of these include quizzes which you can use to test your knowledge of grammar. Try visiting some of the following:

"Guide to Grammar and Writing" (<http://ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/>)

"Online Resources for Writers" (<http://webster.commnet.edu/writing/writing.htm>)

"The Purdue University On-Line Writing Lab (OWL)" (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>)

"Sentence Sense" (<http://webster.commnet.edu/sensen/>)

"My Words" (<http://mywords.ust.hk/>)

You need to take responsibility for working on your grammatical weaknesses by using practice materials available on websites or in the VUW Language Learning Centre. Your tutor will help you identify your weaknesses.

A site that can help you with study skills is: www.skills4study.com

11. Assessment:

WRIT 151 is an in-term assessed course. The final grade will be based on:

	<u>Length</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Due date and time</u>
Essay 1	1000 -1200 words	20	Friday 3 April, 12 noon
Revision Task 1		10	Friday 1 May, 12 noon
Essay 2	1000 - 1200 words	20	Friday 8 May, 12 noon
Test		20	Tuesday 26 May 6.00-6.50pm
Revision Task 2		10	Friday 5 June, 12 noon
Portfolio		20	Friday 5 June, 12 noon

The Essays

You will be guided through a process approach to writing the essays. The process includes pre-writing tasks, drafting, revising, and editing. This will involve discussing your writing with members of your workshop group, and giving each other feedback on writing drafts. The process also includes integrating reading from different sources, and using appropriate referencing conventions.

Word limits

You must ensure that your essays meet the word limit requirements.

The Revision Tasks

When you submit each essay, your tutor will write comments on it, and return it to you with specific suggestions for improving the essay. The Revision tasks require you to reflect and act on the feedback from your tutor. In addition to working through the specific suggestions from your tutor, you are expected to identify other areas needing improvement, and plan and make changes to these. You will then submit the revised essay and revision notes to your tutor. Your ability to make effective changes to the essay both independently and in response to tutor feedback will then be assessed for 10% of your final grade.

Portfolio Reflection

You are required to keep all your written work for the course in a portfolio – a loose leaf folder – during the trimester. At the end of the course you will submit an 800-word written Reflection on your development as a writer during the course, along with a selection of your work during the trimester. Your tutor will provide guidance on compiling the portfolio in workshops. The portfolio will contribute 20% of your final grade.

Please supply your tutor with a stamped self-addressed envelope, so that we can return your portfolio to you at the end of the course.

The Test

The test is worth 20% of the final assessment for WRIT 151. It will be held on Tuesday 26 May 6 - 6.50pm. You will be advised of the room/s in workshops. It is **your responsibility** to ensure you are present at this time.

12. Penalties:

You must complete essays by the deadlines. If you have strong personal reasons for needing an extension (such as illness or bereavement), you must get explicit permission before the due date from John Macalister, the course co-ordinator, to hand in work late. Work handed in late without prior permission to do so may not be eligible for assessment.

13. Relationship between assessment and course objectives:

The skills outlined in the course objectives will be assessed in two written essays and a test. Your critical awareness will be assessed in the two revision tasks. You will also have an opportunity to reflect critically on your writing development in your portfolio reflection.

14. Workload:

In line with faculty workload guidelines, you are expected to spend 12 hours per week (including 3 hours of class time) working on WRIT 151, in order to maintain satisfactory progress.

15. Mandatory Course Requirements:

In order to earn the right to be assessed for a final grade in WRIT 151, you must:

- ❑ attend a minimum of 30 hours of workshops.
- ❑ complete all assessment tasks and workshop tasks.
- ❑ submit a portfolio reflection of between 700 and 900 words by 12 noon Friday 5 June.

16. Attendance:

You must attend a minimum of 30 hours of workshops. You should only miss workshops for strong reasons such as illness or bereavement.

General University policies and statutes

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 (reproduced below)
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

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. All cases will be recorded on a central database and severe penalties may be imposed. 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:

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx

WRIT 151 Course Outline

The following outline summarises the topics to be covered during the workshop sessions.

Week beginning

2 March	Introduction to the course. Critical thinking. Setting writing development goals.
9 March	Hierarchies of ideas in text.
16 March	Planning and writing the first draft.
23 March	Integrating sources in your writing.
30 March	Introductions. <i>Essay 1 (20%) due by 12 noon, Friday 3 April.</i>
6 April	Understanding and using feedback
Mid-trimester break 13 – 25 April <i>(Start work on Essay 2)</i>	
27 April	Coherence and cohesion in texts. <i>Revision task 1 due by 12 noon, Friday 1 May</i>
4 May	Selecting and notetaking from sources. Paraphrasing.
11 May	Conclusions. Revising and editing your final draft. <i>Essay 2 (20%) due by 12 noon Friday 15 May</i>
18 May	Writing under time constraints in tests and examinations.
25 May	Portfolio guidance. TEST , 26 May, beginning at 9.00 sharp.
1 June	Becoming an independent writer

Portfolio reflection (20%) and revision of Essay 2 (10%) due by 12 noon Friday 5 June

The workshop programme will provide opportunities for practising relevant skills and receiving feedback on them. Towards the end of the course the workshops will focus on applying the principles you have met and practised in WRIT 151 to your other subjects, and developing independence as a writer.