# ACADEMIC WRITING MODULE DESCRIPTION

The academic writing module has been developed as an introductory module for undergraduates to lay basis for the academic skills and develop a common understanding of the academic module. Although the module title is ‘Academic writing’, its contents incorporate a wider understanding of the main study principles of academia. This includes a critical analysis of the texts produced in the study subject, and their responsible use in one’s own writing and spoken presentations.

*Table: Academic writing module description*

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| **Title of the module** | Academic writing |
| **Credits awarded** | 6 credits (ECTS) |
| **Number of hours** | **34 contact hours distributed as follows:**   * interactive lectures (sessions) and seminars: 22 hours * mid-term assessment: eight hours (mid-term exam one and mid-term exam two, four hours each) * final assessment: four hours.   Self-study: 116 hours. |
| **Module developer** | Maia Rogava, Ilia State University |
| **Prerequisites** | At least an intermediate level in general English |
| **Teaching/learning approaches, methods and forms** | * The module is practical and interactive. To ensure this, a range of synchronous and asynchronous learning methods will be used, such as active learning, flipped classroom, peer review, reflection, brainstorming, discussion, group- and pair-work, case studies, writing home assignments, demonstrations and/or presentations, verbal methods. * Three online electronic platforms will be used during the module, out of which the first two are mandatory. * **Intranet:** specially developed study portal for providing module-related general information as well as the assessment of students’ academic performance. * **eLearning**: learning management system for providing module content, audio/visual material, compulsory and/or supplementary tasks/activities, feedback, practical work. * **Zoom**: video conferencing platform for conducting tutorials and seminars. * **Interactive lecture (session):** teachers work together with the group on theoretical materials, assigned in advance as self-study. * **Seminar:** students work on each topic in the same format (aims: to develop reading, writing and critical thinking skills). * **Activities in class:** individually and/or in groups. * **Current writing assignments**: students are assigned written home assignments on the topics discussed in class. |
| **Module objectives** | The module aims to help students develop effective and efficient academic study and communication skills. Namely, academic writing and presentation skills, as well as strategies for collecting and critically engaging with valid scientific literature, analysis of complex texts and argumentation, and evidence-based discussion. |
| **Module outcomes (learning outcomes and competences)** | Upon successful completion of this module, students will acquire the following competences:  **Field-specific competences**  Having successfully completed the module, students will be able to:   * Create a structured academic paper that conforms with the prescribed requirement (the university preferred academic style). * Formulate a research topic/problem/issue, its relevance, research aim, and research questions in compliance with the prescribed criteria; review and analyse relevant scientific literature and systematise the text around those research elements. * Systematise and analyse information (annotation, compilation, paraphrasing, summarising, citation, drafting reading notes, creating mind maps). * Assess component(s) of an academic paper through peer-review in compliance with the set criteria.   **General competences**  Having successfully completed the module, students will be able to:   * Understand the importance of conformity with academic standards to ensure effective academic communication and avoid any form of academic dishonesty (e.g. plagiarism). * Communicate effectively in writing and speaking; use consistent and relevant argumentation in academic communication. * Receive and use feedback to consistently, and holistically assess and improve the learning process. |
| **Requirements for awarding credit points** | * Mid-term assessment: **70%.** * Involvement**:** oral presentation of learning materials/reading notes, engagement in class discussions, and practical activities. * Final assessment: 30%. * Literature review: module paper and its presentation. |
| **Compulsory reading:**  **essential and supplementary sources, online sources** | **Essential literature:**  Gillett, Andy, Angela Hammond, and Mary Martala. 2009. *Successful Academic Writing*. London and New York: Pearson Longman.  Turabian, Kate L. 2018. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations; Chicago Style for Students and Researchers.* Edited by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and William T. Fitzgerald. 9th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.  Eco, Umberto. 2015. *How to write a thesis.* Massachusetts Institute of Technology.  Shulman, Myra. 2005. *In Focus: Strategies for Academic Writers*. University of Michigan Press ELT.  Bailey, Stephen. 2011. *Academic Writing a Handbook International Students.* Routledge.  Zwier, J. Lawrence. 2010. *Building Academic Vocabulary. Advanced Practice for EAP Classes and Self-Study.* The University of Michigan Press.  Ackles, M. Nancy. 2006. The *Grammar Guide. Developing Language Skills for Academic Success.* University of Michigan Press.  Ruszkiewicz, J. John. and Dolmage, T Jay. 2012. *How to Write Anything. A Guide and Reference.* Second edition. Bedford/St. Martin’s, Boston, New York.  **Supplementary literature:**  Chazal, Edward de. 2018. *English for Academic Purposes.* Oxford University Press.  Chazal Edward de & Sam McCarter. 2016. *Oxford EAP. A Course in English for Academic Purposes*. Oxford University Press.  Sword, Helen. 2012. *Stylish Academic Writing*. Harvard University Press.  Soles, Derek. 2010. *The Essentials of Academic Writing.* Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.  **Online resources:**  Kawasaki, Guy. 2005. *The 10/20/30 Rule of PowerPoint*. <https://guykawasaki.com/the_102030_rule/> (accessed 17.10.2023)  The Purdue Writing Lab. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/> (accessed 17.10.2023)  Crinfill, Katie. *Annotating Text.* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZXgr7_3Kw4> (accessed 17.10.2023)  How to mark a book.<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueQcI0ejAjk> (accessed 17.10.2023)  *Summarizing a Text.* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwQIcVW0NYE> (accessed 17.10.2023).  **Dictionaries:**  The English Collocations Dictionary online. <https://ozdic.com/> (accessed 17.10.2023)  Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary. <http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/> (accessed 17.10.2023)  **Academic word list:**  <http://www.uefap.com/vocab/select/awl.htm> (accessed 17.10.2023)  <https://www.eapfoundation.com/vocab/academic/awllists/> (accessed 17.10.2023)  <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/wordlist/american_english/academic/>(accessed 17.10.2023)  <https://www.vocabulary.com/lists/218701> (accessed 17.10.2023)  **Chicago style:**  The Chicago Manual of Style Online. <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html> (accessed 17.03.2022)  The Chicago Manual of Style, 17th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.7208/cmos17> (accessed 17.10.2023)  Citation Machine® Chicago style guide. Updated January 8, 2020 <http://www.citationmachine.net/chicago> (accessed 17.10.2023)  Free Chicago Citation Generator. <https://www.refme.com/us/citation-generator/chicago/> (accessed 17.10.2023)  **Electronic databases**:  ScienceDirect, Scopus, Thomson Reuters, ProQuest, EBSCO< Cambridge Journals, Oxford Journals, Emerald, etc. <https://library.iliauni.edu.ge/en/e-library/scientific-databases/> (accessed 17.10.2023)  **Reference management software:**  Zotero Video Guide. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C0RrNu89oAM&ab_channel=GradCoach> (accessed 17.10.2023)  Mendeley: Video instruction. <https://www.mendeley.com/?interaction_required=true> (accessed 17.10.2023)  **Computer programmes and resources:**  Microsoft Office Word  Microsoft Office PowerPoint  Free and Open Source Mind Mapping Software <https://www.goodfirms.co/blog/best-free-and-open-source-mind-mapping-software> (accessed 17.10.2023);  <https://coggle.it> (accessed 17.10.2023) |

## Academic writing module plan

The academic writing module plan shows the step by step plan of how the learning objectives of the academic writing module can be achieved. This is through interactive lectures, and practical activities that gradually integrate not only reading and writing texts, but also a wide range of technologies that are used in academic studies (searching databases, selecting articles, summarising them and integrating them in student written and spoken presentations). The weekly plan follows a writing process approach that provides the ‘scaffolding’ for the students’ further research work in other subjects. This includes drafting, editing, and publishing one’s own work.

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| **Week** | **Topics, activities, assignments** |
| **Pre-module**  **week** | **Welcome to the module**  **Step 1:** *Welcome letter*: a brief message from the instructor with the module overview and learning management system (LMS) registration guidelines.  **Step 2:** *My profile*:upon registration, students write a brief introduction in the LMS forum. |
| **1** | **Lecture/seminar 1**  **Introduction: syllabus, functional writing elements, academic communication etiquette.**   * **Interactive lecture: working on the syllabus**   Instructor familiarises students with the module specifics, including an introduction to the module aim, content, format, assessment components, LMS, similarity detection programme, and compulsory reading list.   * **Practical activity:**  elements of functional writing: academic communication etiquette.   Instructor introduces academic communication etiquette. Students work on the elements of functional writing. The material is preselected by the instructor. |
| **2** | **Lecture/seminar 2**  **Text styles, academic paper, structure (1) and format, reading and analysing literature (reading notes).**   * **Activity #1:** reading and analysing literature: reading notes (forms, techniques, need).   Students present prepared questions on the assigned literature and discuss the answers in the discussion format. Students, together with their instructor, draft reading notes on the texts pre-selected by the instructor.   * **Interactive lecture/practical work:** topics assigned as homework for reading and note-making |
| **3** | **Lecture/seminar 3**  **Scientific databases: how to use them, searching for literature, bibliography, identifying research topics.**   * **Activity #2:** Searching and organising sources; evaluating sources.   Lecture starts with the discussion of additional home assignments. Students and instructor comment on the presented material and give constructive feedback. Students also present prepared questions on the assigned literature and share their answers in the discussion format.   * **Interactive lecture/practical work:** using scientific databases; drafting a MS Word format bibliography. |
| **4** | **Lecture/seminar 4**  **Introduction (1): defining a research topic/problem, MS PowerPoint programme. Handout: mind maps.  Preparation for the first mid-term assessment.**   * **Activity #3:** Introduction (1): defining a research problem/topic.   Session starts with the homework discussion. Students and instructor comment on the presented material and give constructive feedback. Students also present prepared questions on the assigned literature and share their answers in the discussion format.   * **Interactive lecture/practical work:** selecting sources, annotating sources, mind map, MS PowerPoint |
| **5-6** | **Lectures/seminars 5-6**  **Mid-term 1: Presentation of a term paper plan.**  Students make presentations followed by a Q&A discussion. |
| **7** | **Lecture/seminar 7**  **Discussing mid-term 1 results.**  **Introduction (2), research question(s), research aim and objectives, plagiarism, citation styles, paraphrasing, MS Word programme.**   * **Discussing mid-term 1 results** * **Activity #4:** Introduction (2): completing the structure, research question(s), aim.   Session starts with a discussion about two introductions pre-selected by the instructor; identify key elements. Students draft an introduction for a text provided by the instructor, including references. Students also present prepared questions on the assigned literature and share their answers in a discussion format.   * **Interactive lecture/practical work:** MS Word programme (2). |
| **8** | **Lecture/seminar 8**  **Reading strategies (2): academic/scientific literature review (1).**   * **Activity #5:** reading strategies and literature review.   Session starts with a discussion about the home reading material. Students present prepared questions on the assigned literature and share their answers in a discussion format.   * **Interactive lecture/practical work:** Working on the selected literature. |
| **9** | **Lecture/seminar 9**  **Literature review (2), argument.**   * **Discussion #1:** ungraded assignment.   Students and instructor discuss the assignment, make comments and suggestions on how to improve the literature review.   * **Activity # 6:** literature review and understanding the collected information, systematisation: summarising, commenting and compiling.   Students present prepared questions on the assigned literature and share their answers in a discussion format.   * **Interactive lecture/practical work:** understanding information; argument.   The literature review is written according to requirements of the university academic style, is **at least 500 words,** and includes the title page, introduction, and bibliography. |
| **10** | **Lecture/seminar 10**  **Literature review conclusion/summary.**   * **Activity # 7:** home reading material discussion.   Students present prepared questions on the assigned literature and share their answers in a discussion format.   * **Interactive lecture/practical work:** literature review summary/conclusion.   a) **Structure of an academic paper:** title, cover page, declarations, table of contents, appendices.  b) **Working on a paper, main stages:** structure of a paper, constituent elements, their functions and role.   * Literature: readings from Kate L. Turabian; Umberto Eco. |
| **11** | **Lecture/seminar 11**  **Academic paper structure (2): finalising preliminaries, title.**   * **Discussion #2:** ungraded assignment.   Students and instructor discuss the assignment, make comments and suggestions on how to improve the literature review.   * **Activity #8:** Working on a scientific/academic paper, main stages.   Students present prepared questions on the assigned literature and share their answers in a discussion format.   * **Interactive lecture/practical work:** Structure of an academic paper, final title.   Instructor, if needed, explains certain issues that require clarity. Students subsequently do practical tasks (exercises) to fully understand the issues. Students work in pairs or small groups and format initial and final pages of a paper provided by the instructor. They also give a title to a text. |
| **12** | **Lecture/seminar 12**  **Revision, editing, proofreading.**   * **Activity # 9:** Editing a text.   Students present prepared questions on the assigned literature and share their answers in the discussion format.   * **Interactive lecture/practical work:** final clarification.   Instructor, if needed, explains certain issues that require clarity. Students subsequently do practical tasks (exercises) to fully understand the issues. Students discuss and revise separate parts of an academic paper.   * During the session, students pair up for the peer review, and prepare for mid-term 2: peer review of a term paper. |
| **13** | **Lecture/seminar 13**  **Mid-term 2 examination preparation: academic paper peer review.**   * **Discussion #3:** ungraded assignment.   Students and instructor discuss the assignment, make comments and suggestions.   * **Activity # 10:** Peer review: role, function, importance.   Students present prepared questions on the assigned literature and share their answers in a discussion format.   * **Interactive lecture/practical work:** processing a text using track changes and comments.   Instructor, if needed, explains certain issues that require clarification. Students subsequently do practical tasks (exercises) to fully understand the issues. Students work in pairs or small groups and process the production of a paper.   * **Mid-term 2 preparation: peer review of a term paper (20 points)**   Students prepare a summarised review of a term paper to be uploaded to the LMS platform within a set deadline. Meanwhile, students prepare a presentation of the review. The authors present their reflections on the feedback from the reviewer. |
| **14-15** | **Lectures/seminars 14-15**  **Mid-term 2: term paper summarised peer review.**   * Reviewers: present their reviews. Time allocated: 8-10 minutes. * Authors:present their reflections on the review. * Q&A session, followed by discussion. * Final examination: content, forms, requirements, assessment components, criteria and rubrics.   **Preparation for the final examination**  Students:  a) Look back at all the assignments they’ve done, read the instructor’s comments and overall feedback again.  b) Revise the material covered throughout the module.  c) Prepare a final version of their term paper. The MS Word file of the paper is uploaded within the set deadline to the LMS.   * Based on the written paper, students must prepare an MS PowerPoint presentation and a handout, to be uploaded to the LMS one day before the examination. |
| **16-17** | **Lecture/seminar 16-17**  **Final assessment: term paper presentation**   1. **MS Word document: uploaded.** 2. **MS PowerPoint presentation of the paper with handout; discussion and feedback.** |

## Assessment criteria matrix

The assessment criteria matrix that is used at Ilia University can be used as a basis for developing assessment criteria for the academic writing modules in other universities. It provides a detailed description of the levels of achievement in the formulation of a research problem, research questions and objectives, the structure of the paper and its formatting.

*Table 4: Assessment criteria matrix*

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Description automatically generated

A screenshot of a computer

Description automatically generated