

Master Qualifying Program (MQP)

Unit code: XDP 702

Unit name: Academic Writing and Research Skills Development for Masters Study

Length of course:

12 Weeks

Contact Hours:

4 hours class contact time per week

Class Size:

Average of 10 -18 students per class

Broad aim of course:

This is an academic skills focused program designed to ensure students develop the necessary academic writing, research and critical thinking skills to successfully undertake postgraduate study at Deakin University.

Rationale:

The further development of students' writing, research and critical thinking skills to provide strategies that enable international students to be independent learners and so gain maximum benefit from their award courses.

Staffing

The course will be delivered by experience TESOL teachers

Where delivered

Burwood and Geelong campuses

Pre-requisites:

Students enrolled in this course will have met the English language requirements for entry to undergraduate award courses at Deakin University

Course Description:

The course primarily aims to develop analytical reading, critical thinking, academic writing and research skills through analysing academic texts and carrying out the initial stages of a group research project. The focus is on developing negotiation and teamwork skills for the development of academic writing and research skills.

Objectives of Course

This course will enable students to:

Use catalogue and database searching techniques to locate relevant articles

Critically analyse research articles

Paraphrase and summarise information

Negotiate a research proposal with a group

Synthesise information.

Edit and re-draft information

Use appropriate research report format

Develop teamwork skills

Use appropriate referencing techniques

Recognise and avoid plagiarism

Write a literature review

Negotiate procedures and outcomes in small groups

Develop time management and study skills

Assessment:

In order to successfully complete this program student will need to obtain an overall grade of 60%.

Summary of Assessment:

At the end of the 12 week program students' level of skill will be assessed through:

1. The critique of a text evaluating strengths of evidence and argument (20%)
2. A written explanation of data presented in diagrammatic form (20%)
3. A literature review completed from information in a series of research articles (30%)
4. An abstract of a short research article (30%)

Outline of tri-mester unit

Week	Theme	Skills	Objectives	Assessment
1	Introduction Language learning, time management and goal setting.	Deciding individual strengths and weaknesses in language learning and academic skills. Managing time and setting goals.	Measure and complete profile of individual skills. Complete list of goals and strategies for academic progress.	
2	Reading strategies 1 Understanding structure to skim texts	Skimming and surveying for main ideas	Identifying main ideas in research articles and academic texts.	
3	Reading strategies 2 Making inferences. Using academic vocabulary.	Predicting and making inferences. Developing academic vocabulary.	Identifying main ideas in research articles and academic texts.	
4	Academic writing. Referencing and plagiarism.	Identifying plagiarism and using the Harvard referencing system.	Re-write a text to avoid plagiarism and use Harvard referencing system.	
5	Critical thinking. Taxonomy of thinking. Empirical evidence.	Brainstorming tasks. Evaluating credibility of sources, assumptions and generalisations. Cause and effect issues, selection and bias.	Complete applications of taxonomy of thinking levels. Identify assumptions and generalisations.	
6	Research writing 1 Empirical research.	Identifying and evaluating ways of collecting data. Recognising uses of qualitative and quantitative data.	Conduct one method of data collection – use of case studies. Evaluate validity and reliability of case studies.	Critique of text: Identification of logical problems. 20%
7	Research writing 2 Literature review.	Synthesising purpose, methodology, findings and discussion of research articles.	Write a practice literature review from abstracts. Presentation of abstracts for assessment task.	
8	Research Writing 3 The abstract.	Identifying main features of a research article.	Practice writing of abstract of short article.	Literature review. 30%
9	Academic writing Comparison and evaluation.	Using language of comparison and evaluation. Using appropriate tense form.	Re-write text using appropriate verb tense and evaluative language.	

10	Research Writing 4 Presentation of research.	Comparing and contrasting ways of reporting research.	Explain main features and evaluate uses of a research report, business report, case study and essay.	Writing an abstract. 30%
11	Academic writing. Australian academic style.	Ways of linking ideas. Nominalisation and use of passive.	Re-writing texts in formal academic style.	
12	Academic writing. Describing statistical data.	Using appropriate language to summarise diagrammatic and statistical data.	Write a commentary on data presented in non-verbal form.	Written commentary on data presented in diagrammatic form 20%

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