

Professional Writing Course Syllabus

1. **Course introduction:** overall aim, objectives, scope and approach.
Key principles to apply when writing.
2. **Writing clearly**
Describing a clear **purpose**, showing a clear **layout** and providing clear **messages**.
Organising a clear **structure** with appropriate sentence lengths, minimising subject-to-verb distance, structuring paragraphs and sentences, using arcs of coherence (topic and conclusion sentences and logical links) and employing best practice for prepositional phrases.
An introduction to **Plain English**.
3. **Writing concisely**
Using concise introductory phrases, word economy and best practice for lists.
4. **Writing precisely (part 1)**
An introduction to the *Diction Election Lists* and *House Style Document* booklets.
Choosing an appropriate **tone**.
Checking **Subject and Verb agree**.
Removing ambiguity when using **pronouns**.
Keeping a **parallel structure** within lists.
5. **Writing precisely (part 2)**
Some reminders when using **punctuation marks** (and pitfalls to avoid) focusing on apostrophe, colon, comma and semi-colon.
6. **Introducing remaining elements of Body of Knowledge** (Guidance Notes etc)
Essential **grammar** in a nutshell.
When to use the **Active and Passive Voice**.
Planning and checking writing.
Exploding some **writing myths**.