

# Support your student's writing development

– a teacher's guide to [writingguide.se](http://writingguide.se)



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## **Preface**

This teacher's guide is intended as a complement to the Writing Guide digital platform (<http://writingguide.se>), a learning resource where students can teach themselves more about academic writing. The teacher's guide is based on current research on student writing within higher education, discussions I have had with teachers and the experiences I have had as a writing tutor and developer at Kristianstad University. My hope is for this guide to provide support to all those teaching, supervising and assessing the writings of students at colleges and universities.

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Note that this teacher's guide mainly deals with the aspect of writing an academic paper that involves the actual writing. However, in the Writing Guide there is also information on reference management and publishing. The long-term ambition is to develop these aspects in future versions of the teacher's guide.

A big thanks goes to the colleagues at Kristianstad University, Blekinge Institute of Technology and Linnaeus University who have contributed with feedback and thoughts on the content.

Kristianstad, 4 December 2017, Johan Landgren

## **Preface to translation**

A few adjustments have been made to secure that the teacher's guide is fully useful in an English context. A big thanks to Helen Hed for all the work you put into this translation.

Kristianstad, 3 December 2019, Johan Landgren



# Introduction

What is the core of academic writing - when you look beyond all the formalities and guidelines? Who are those students who should develop this skill? How can you as a teacher use the Writing Guide to support your students while they are developing it? These three questions will constitute a launch point for this guide

## **The Writing Guide as a teaching tool and resource**

The idea behind the Writing Guide is to offer both students and teachers a common and open platform on which to base discussions on academic writing. The ambition of the editorial board is that you as a teacher can use it as a reference point when it comes to general questions on writing as well as specific questions on how to formulate an aim or how to tweak a text to make it more formal, precise and credible.

It is important to point out that the Writing Guide provides general information on academic writing. As academic writing does differ across disciplines, it is quite possible that you as a teacher do not agree with everything in the guide. Still, the hope is that you will find elements that can complement your own instructions. See the Writing Guide, and this teacher's guide, as a source of ideas where you can find inspiration for your own teaching. If you wish to share your thoughts and contribute with good examples, please get in touch with the editorial board as we are grateful for all tips and ideas that can help students.

Aside from being a tool for students who have an independent interest in learning more about academic writing, the Writing Guide is available for anyone interested in academic writing. In accordance with the Creative Commons license chosen, you can use this material in any way you wish as long as it clearly states where it came from; in digital or print form, as course literature or supplementary reading, in its entirety or just individual elements.

### **TIP!**

Feel free to add a link to [Writingguide.se](http://Writingguide.se) in the teaching platform, and/or in the students' study guides. In this way it will be easy for the students to find when needed.

## **Academic writing – a definition**

To be able to write in an academic style is a requirement for all students in higher education in Sweden. Still, we seldom talk about what academic writing actually is and what function it performs. Most students surely have received instructions regarding formal requirements imposed on academic texts, that they should be objective, precise, focused, and have correct references, but is this really what defines academic writing? Do we not need to have a definition based on why the texts have these characteristics?

Suitable starting points in the search for a definition for academic writing are the Swedish Higher Education Act and Higher Education Ordinance. Among other things, these elucidate the knowledge and skills that the student is expected to have upon graduation. The Higher Education Ordinance (SFS 1993:100) states, for example, that the student must, in order to obtain a Bachelors' degree, be able to “demonstrate the ability to present and discuss information, problems and solutions in speech and writing and in dialogue with different audiences”. Similar formulations can be found for most qualifications at the first and second-cycle levels. Furthermore, the Higher Education Act (SFS 1992:1432) states that higher education shall develop the student's ability to “communicate their knowledge to others, including those who lack specialist knowledge in the field”. Together, these two formulations indicate a number of things – that writing within academia involves the exchange, presentation and discussion of information, and that this exchange is to be pursued with individuals both within and outside of academia.

In short, one could say that the Higher Education Act and Ordinance aims to emphasize the importance of developing the students' ability to communicate. This is also the departure point of this publication, and that of the Writing Guide, a departure point that has led to the following definition of academic writing: Academic writing is the act to communicate an often complex content, like an argument or the findings of a study, in an as effective and precise way as possible.

My opinion is that this definition should be the departure point for all teaching in academic writing. By encouraging the students to, instead

of asking “How will I be able to follow the guidelines on academic writing that I have been given?”, ask themselves “How can I communicate my thoughts, so that my readers will understand what I am trying to convey?”, you, as teacher, can be a facilitator by changing the focus from details to the whole; that is, how to present the results of their academic work in an interesting, purposeful and correct manner.

### **Pedagogical departure points**

This guide assumes that writing instruction is part of student-centered and holistic learning. Despite this sounding obvious and having been long discussed within higher education, research shows that it is a concept that has not yet fully gained traction (see e.g. Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015; Elmgren & Henriksson 2016; Lundberg 2013).

Real student-centered learning is a challenge as it requires that each student’s learning process is addressed and developed. This is complicated by the fact that students today, compared with a few decades ago, constitute much more of a heterogeneous group (Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015; Swedish National Agency for Higher Education 2009). This heterogeneity is evident, for example, in the fact that some students, at commencement, do not have the basic language skills that many teachers expect them to have (Swedish National Agency for Higher Education 2009). Furthermore, it is common for students to have a different goal with their studies than the teachers. In a study from Kristianstad University two-thirds of the first-year students indicated that they primarily applied to their programme for job-related reasons (Landgren 2016). This despite the fact that they are studying on an academic programme where writing is an essential component.

Teachers who wish to work with a student-centered approach need to be clear about these preconditions. In order for the students to take writing seriously and view it as an important part of their education, it needs to be clear why writing is essential and what is expected of them as students and writers. This is not always the case, as demonstrated by Sofia Ask in her thesis *Vägar till ett akademiskt skriftspråk* (Paths to Academic Written Language). Among other things, Ask highlights that

students perceive writing within higher education as a non-transparent system and that norms and rules for writing are changeable and unclear (Ask 2005).

A good departure point for creating meaning and clarity for the students is holistic learning, as this is learning that involves placing the knowledge in a context (Biggs & Tang 2011; Elmgren & Henriksson 2016). It is also a learning that values not only subject knowledge but also skills such as academic writing, how to search for information and critical thinking. Holistic learning aims to generate both good subject knowledge and an ability to communicate this knowledge both in the present and in the future.

Based on an academic writing perspective, writing instruction should, in line with the definition formulated in the chapter above, primarily be about function and not form. In this work, a student-centered and holistic approach represents a relevant base from which to proceed.

# Requirements for successful writing instruction

Through decades of research, a number of aspects that contribute to successful writing instruction have proven to be particularly effective. A few of these are described below. The list does not claim to be complete but is intended to provide support to teachers when developing their writing instruction. Nor are the aspects ranked in any particular order as seen from the point of potential effect and/or area of use – which are dependent on the specific learning context. Some of the aspects are complemented with example exercises and example supplements.

## It starts with reading

Although this teacher’s guide concerns writing, it cannot be emphasised enough how important reading is for writing. It is through reading that we appropriate the terms and the specific terminology we need and familiarise ourselves with the academic styles within which we are expected to write. Reading is perhaps the single most important aspect of being socialized into academic language use. To a certain extent this socialization is a subconscious process, and it is more rapid for some than for others. By making the student aware of this process, you as a teacher can facilitate and speed up their learning.

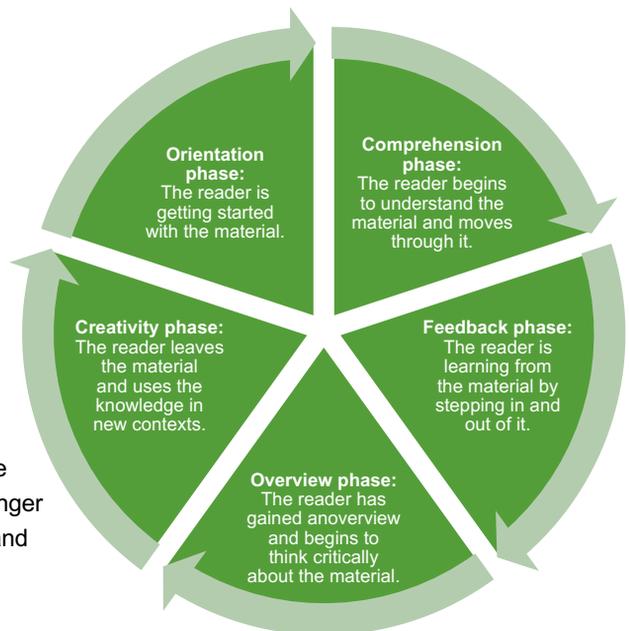


Figure 1. Phases in the reading process. The figure is based on the work of Langer (2011) and Ingemansson and Magnusson (2015.)

A model (fig. 1) describing the reading process was created by Langer (2011) and further developed by Ingemansson and Magnusson (2015). It divides the reading process into five phases, starting with the orientation phase and ending in the creativity phase.

The model shows that the reading process is complicated and that the reader needs to go through a number of phases to get to the phase of primary interest to this guide: the creativity phase. Through working with students' reading you will facilitate their writing process. Active reading creates understanding for both how texts are constructed and how the reader and writer can create context between their own and others' experience and research findings. In the long run, the latter leads to the students having a good foundation on which to stand when relating their results to previous research.

To encourage students to improve their reading technique, you can ask them to keep a few questions at the back of their mind while reading. The purpose of these questions is to draw their attention to certain elements of the text enabling them to understand the text's message. The suggested questions below are inspired and developed based on Langer (2011) and Ingemansson (2016), with a focus on an academic context.

- In the orientation phase it helps, for example, to ask:
  - What impressions do I get from the title and the illustrations?
  - What type of text is this?
  - What does the headings say about the text?
  - What is indicated in the text on the cover or summary?
- In the comprehension phase you can ask:
  - How are the various parts of the text connected?
  - What concepts seem to be most important?
  - How are these concepts presented?
- In the feedback phase:
  - How is the text connected to my experiences and other texts I have read?
  - What use can I extract from what I am reading?

- In the overview phase:
  - How does the text influence my prior knowledge?
  - Do I need to revise my previous understanding or does the text reinforce what I already know?
- And in the creativity phase:
  - How can I use what I am reading to strengthen my argumentation in my paper?

Whether or not these questions are posed, the reader will go through the different phases of the reading process. The questions can streamline the reading process, and help the reader to a more rapid understanding of what and why they are reading, while at the same time making connections to other texts they have read or to the examination following the reading. Considering this, it is a good idea to encourage your students to write down their thoughts while reading. It would be ideal if they could meet regularly and discuss the texts they have read as this facilitates both the feedback phase and overview phase.

It is important to point out that the phases do not always follow each other in a linear way and that reading not only develops in a circular way. The process could, perhaps, be better described as a spiral where the reader after each reading reaches higher levels of competency in all phases. This means that we cannot assume that students, after reaching the creative phase, have become perfect readers. But we may assume that they, in all likelihood, have developed their reading skills to a level where they find it easier to orientate themselves in and understand the contents of new texts. It is when we read a lot, regularly and consciously that this process continues to develop.

A further aspect of reading, with a link to writing, is that reading increases the students' text awareness; that is their knowledge of how texts are constructed in order to propose theses and argue one's position. The basis for being a good writer is an ability to understand the components necessary to make a text complete and readable. When students have understood this, they are well on the way to be able to effectively communicate their own message.

### EXERCISE: AWARENESS OF THE READING PROCESS

WHY?	In order for the students to reflect on how and why a specific book is to be read and how active reading can help them achieve the intended learning outcomes of the course.
WHEN?	During a class when a text from the course literature is presented.
HOW?	Read and discuss the title, back page text and table of contents together with the students. Pose questions like: What do you expect the text to be about? What is your prior understanding of concepts mentioned/used? What do you know about the subject before you start reading?

### EXERCISE: CORE OF THE TEXT

WHY?	To make the students reflect on how to identify the core of the text.
WHEN?	During a class when the students have read one or more chapters of a book or scientific article.
HOW?	Make students discuss texts in groups using questions like: What is the central message in the text? How does the writer lead the reader to this message? How is the message described so that the reader will understand it?

### EXERCISE: TEXT AWARENESS

WHY?	To give students tools to understand what makes good academic texts.
WHEN?	In conjunction with a study period before a written assignment early in the programme.
HOW?	As pre-class assignment, ask the students to highlight sentences or paragraphs that they feel are especially effective and those that they do not fully understand. Then analyse together why some sentences are easier to understand than others.

## Writing in the disciplines

There is strong evidence that the most effective way for students to learn to write academically is to write on the subject they are studying (see e.g. Dysthe, Hertzberg & Hoel 2011; Pelger & Santesson 2015). Some researchers even claim that writing instruction does not have any proven effect when generalised, i.e. based on general directions on how to write (Santesson & Sigrell 2015). Furthermore, it is through subject-oriented writing that you as a teacher will see direct results of the work you are doing.

The primary advantage of subject-oriented writing is the contextualisation of the writing. Aside from it facilitating for the students when they have a writing assignment, it is also likely that it increases the students' motivation and deepens their knowledge on what they are writing about (more on this in the chapter *Writing to learn*).

Receiving assignments and writing texts that the students view as useful for their desired future professions increases the possibility of them perceiving writing as an important part of their education, and as a path to future employment. Not the least, this applies to those students who are not studying to become a researcher but rather to get a degree to gain access to a specific labour market. These students are often the most difficult to motivate into writing academically, as the only reason they see for doing the assignment is that it is mandatory for passing the course. If the students are motivated for other reasons, the possibilities of them making an effort to raise the level of their writing will increase.

All exercises in this guide are based on writing instruction being an integrated part of the teaching of a subject. How you can work with subject-integrated writing over a longer period, for example, through an entire programme, is something you can read more about in the chapters *Progression* and *Constructive alignment*.

## **Writing as an act of communication**

One of the most common shortcomings in student texts is that they are not written for a clearly defined target group. This often reveals itself through the texts being sloppy, not thought through, hard to understand and/or uneven. One reason for this, as described by Camilla Forsberg (2014) in *Lär dina studenter att skriva* [Teach you students to write], is that the students find themselves in a double language situation”.

A double language situation means that, from the student's perspective, there are several aims with writing a student text, and that the roles as sender and recipient are interchangeable depending on the objective that currently holds their focus. One objective with the text is, for example, to pass the course, while another is to present the results from a study. In the first case, the sender is the writer as a student on a specific

course, while the sender in the second case is the writer as a researcher. The same duality arises in regard to the recipient; in the first case the recipient is the teacher as an examiner, and in the second case the recipient is another researcher within the subject area.

To support the students, it is important that you as a teacher is aware of this duality. By making the assignment instructions very clear concerning the relevant language situation, you can support your students in consistently keeping to *one* objective, *one* sender and *one* recipient and thereby improve the chances of them writing communicative and coherent texts.

If the students write a strictly academic text, such as a Bachelor's thesis, it is usually good to recommend that they write for a target group with approximately the same prior knowledge as they themselves have, for example, their course mates. This often leads to them using a form of address and language that is customary within the subject area, and to them using terms and concepts they have learnt during their studies.

It can also be effective to experiment with different types of recipients in order for the students to train their abilities to write for different groups. It is then good to suggest groups based on which subject the students are studying and the professions within which they will eventually come to work. By making the writing assignments as realistic as possible you increase the motivation of the students, while at the same time fulfilling the steering directive of the Higher Education Act to offer the students instruction that teaches them to “communicate their knowledge to others, including those who lack specialist knowledge in the field” (SFS 1992:1434).

EXERCISE: WRITE FOR DIFFERENT TARGET GROUPS	
WHY?	To draw the students' attention to the fact that writing is an act of communication, while at the same time giving them tools for how they can formulate themselves with respect to different groups.
WHEN?	In connection with an appropriate written assignment.
HOW?	The assignment should be tailored to fit the needs and interests of the students. Students on a teacher training programme? Have them summarize a chapter from appropriate course literature for their classmates. After that, ask them to reformulate the text for a child in primary school. Finally tell them to rewrite the text so that it targets the child's parents. Students on a nursing programme? Possible target groups can be patients or relatives of patients. Students at a businessschool? Target groups can be bank customers or potential collaborators. Engineering students? Target groups can be readers of popular science journals or investors.
DEVELOP?	Do you have placement or some other form of internship-related education as part of the course? If so, make the exercise an element linked to this, as this will make the element more contextualized and give the students concrete evidence of how writing can be an important part of their future work life.

## Writing to learn

At a seminar on academic writing which I held a few years ago, one of the participants expressed the following thought: Is it not so that we teachers all too often appear to be more interested in having our students write a text that is written in an academically correct way than one that is actually good? This is a thought that touches on something that we who work with student texts need to consider not just once. What is it that our instructions, our teaching and our examinations actually aim to achieve? Is it to help the students avoid linguistic errors or to develop the students' learning?

I would imagine that most teachers would answer the latter. Nonetheless, we often focus on the formal aspects of the text. Of course there are good reasons for this as it can be difficult to convey a clear idea without clear language. However, there are also good reasons to take a closer look at writing that primarily aims at learning and development.

In *Skriva för att lära* [Writing to learn], Dysthe, Hertzberg and Løkengard Hoel (2011) suggest that academic writing is not simply

about producing finished texts and communicating, it is also a powerful tool for student learning. They propose that writing is both an important learning strategy and a necessary study skill, and that we who work with higher education have a lot to gain by pointing out to students that writing is as much about developing ideas and thoughts as it is about producing finished texts.

To illustrate the different types of writing, the authors have developed a model (fig. 2) where they divide writing into two types; writing to present and writing to think. The model is available in the Writing Guide. Please, feel free to use it when instructing your students in academic writing as it provides a clear picture of how they can develop both their learning and their writing.

	<b>WRITING TO THINK</b>	<b>WRITING TO PRESENT</b>
<b>AIM</b>	"Think with the pen" Get ideas Discover, test Develop ideas Clarify vague ideas Explain to oneself	Communicate Present Convey  Explain to others
<b>TYPICAL FEATURES</b>	Creative thinking  Writer-oriented text Process is most important	Critical thinking Analytical recipient awareness Reader-oriented text Product is most important
<b>RECIPIENT</b>	You yourself Fellow students in writer group Teacher as dialogue partner	Outsiders "The public" Teacher as assessor Examiner
<b>LANGUAGE</b>	Personal language Expressive Formal aspects unimportant	Formal language (adapted to subject culture and norms) Correct
<b>STYLES</b>	Ideas text, notes, log, journal, first draft	Subject paper, report, article, degree essay

*Figure 2. Writing to think and writing to present. By Dysthe, Hertzberg & Løkengard Hoel (2011). Table translated to English by the author.*

It is worth pointing out that although the two types are separated from each other in the model, it is often the case that they overlap in the actual work of writing. However, there are several points with separating them from each other.

One such point is that it highlights the efforts the student makes on the road to the finished text. For a good writer, this is a major part of the writing work, but the instructions that most students receive before writing assignments, and the feedback they get during the process, is more often based on an expectation of them producing a text to present. Commonly, this is about the text having an academic style, a line of reasoning and being grammatically correct. However, for many students it would be of great value to also receive instructions and feedback concerning the more creative aspects of the writing.

Another point is that this model can take away some of the anxieties that students may have. One recurring problem in terms of students' writing is that they find it difficult to start writing. For many, this is because they are trying to write a presentation text directly. If instead they are encouraged to turn off their inner text reviewer and allow themselves to write freely, this increases the chances of them starting in good time and producing interesting material that can later be transformed into a formal and communicative text.

A third point is that it promotes creativity and curiosity and highlights what, from an academic perspective, is perhaps the most important aspect of academic studies; that the student develops critical and reflective thinking.

If these two aspects of the writing process are not made clear to the students, it is common that they end up in a situation where they do both at the same time, without really knowing why. This often leads to the texts being a cross between a presentation text and a thinking text, which comes across as unfocused and uneven. By having your students actively work with both writing to learn and writing for presentation, you can avoid such a scenario. You can then draw your students' attention to the entire writing process, something which will likely lead to better and more readable texts.

### EXERCISE: FREE WRITING TO THINK

WHY?	In order for the student to begin the writing and thinking processes.
WHEN?	Starting up a writing assignment.
HOW?	Suggest a number of subject areas that are suitable for the assignment and ask the students to write freely for a few minutes on one of these that interests them. Point out that what is important is that they start writing, not what subject they choose or the end result. To support them even more – give instructions such as: Write about an experience you have had connected to the subject area. Or: Write about a problem you have observed within the subject area.
DEVELOP?	Ask the students to open a new document where they reflect, in writing, on what they have just written. Give them instructions such as: Are there other ways of viewing the experience you have had? Do you think that someone else would be able to interpret the experience in another way? Can what you have written be formulated as a research question?

### EXERCISE: WRITTEN REFLECTION FOR INCREASED LEARNING

WHY?	To initiate a reflective process that encourages the students to be active participants instead of passive listeners.
WHEN?	At the start, during, or at the end of a lecture.
HOW?	Pose one or a few questions to the students to be answered in 1–2 minutes. The questions can be about what they expect from the lecture, what they think the most important message was during the lecture or what they think has been most difficult to understand. Point out that the purpose of the exercise is for them to begin reflecting on what they have learnt, that what they are writing is for themselves, and that they do not have to use formal academic language.
DEVELOP?	Collect the texts to get a picture of how the instruction has worked. In this way you can ensure that your message has reached the students and, if not, changes can be made for future lectures. Don't forget to be clear about why you are collecting the texts. This element should not be perceived as examination.

## Writing for popular science

Another aspect of academic writing, which has the potential to deepen students' learning while also fulfilling that aspect of the qualitative target stating that students must also be able to communicate with readers outside the academic context, is writing for popular science. In *Retorik för naturvetare* [Rhetoric for science students], Pelger and Santesson (2012) outline several gains working with writing for popular science. They suggest, among other things, that the widened perspective that

comes with writing for a broader audience, where the student not only needs to present but also to explain to others, leads to increased understanding. Furthermore, they suggest that writing for popular science can prepare students for a changeable work life and strengthen their capacity for metacognition, i.e., that they start to reflect on things like how they think, learn and communicate.

For these reasons, several of the exercises and appendices in this guide are grounded in the notion that it is a good idea to have students encounter different types of writing.

## **Progression**

In the Writing Guide, it is repeatedly mentioned that it takes a long time to write a good academic text. The same applies to the ability to master academic writing. The students are therefore encouraged to begin well in advance. The same goes for you as a teacher.

If you have the opportunity to work with your students over a longer period, e.g. within a programme, progression is one of the most effective means for creating long-term development and learning. Of course, it is also possible to work with progression within independent courses, but the teaching becomes even more effective when you can work and increase the students' writing skills, step by step, over a period of several years.

One way of doing this is if you, together with the rest of the teaching team and if possible with educational developers, writing teachers and/or programme coordinators, establish a clear progression plan for how the students should assimilate different parts of academic writing over the course of the programme. The goal for such a plan for progression should be for the students to have all the pieces of the puzzle in place and for them to be prepared for when the degree paper needs to be written.

A good way to begin is for the group to discuss the basic knowledge you feel is most important to introduce to the students. This is because it is easier for the students to learn to handle a few elements at a time than to try to understand the entire spectrum of academic writing all at

once. So what is most important? Writing a correct list of sources? To write a grammatically correct text? Writing impersonally? Focusing on different target groups? Adhering to a predetermined structure for academic texts? To correctly formulate a research question?

When you have decided which elements are most important, you might find it useful to go back to the syllabi for the course and programme, and consider whether there are any elements that need more attention than is currently the case, and if any elements can be replaced. If, for example, you have decided to focus on writing based on it being about communicating with different target groups, you may need to add exercises for that theme. Perhaps one of the intended learning outcomes needs to be changed or another added?

Another aspect for you to reflect upon is whether you, in some way, could make it a little bit easier for the students. Maybe you could offer a text template where important headings and practical information are already in place? Or perhaps you have good examples to share with the students; examples they can imitate? In the chapter *Concrete examples as support in teaching academic writing*, you can read more about how the use of good examples has the potential to improve students' texts.

Finally, it is of great importance that you document the progression plan you have created, thus creating an overview of the work that allows you to easily identify gaps that need to be filled. A documented progression plan can also be used to show students why you want them to perform certain tasks and what the expected outcome is. You can read more about the advantages of this in the chapter *Constructive alignment*.

See Supplement 1 for an example of a progression plan for three years of writing on a Bachelor's programme.

## **Constructive alignment**

It is as important to offer the students a progressive learning scale as it is to clearly explain to them what is required for a passing grade, and why. This can be achieved by working with constructive alignment (Biggs & Tang 2011).

The basic idea behind constructive alignment is to visualise and inter-link different elements of the teaching, such as intended learning outcomes, teaching activities, feedback and examination, so as to ensure that the students are taught and examined on the intended learning outcomes that are required by the course syllabus for a passing grade.

For example, if the aim is that students should achieve the intended learning outcome “demonstrate the ability to present and discuss information, problems and solutions in speech and writing and in dialogue with different audiences” (1993:100), then you as a teacher should ensure that students are instructed and examined on elements that concern verbal presentation, written presentation, how to formulate argumentative text, and how to adapt text and speech to different groups.

To further strengthen the constructive alignment between different modules of a course, you can work with assessment matrices and/or learning matrices. The aim of these matrices is to define what the content of different intended learning outcomes means in the specific course context. Learning and assessment matrices can be viewed as the glue that conjoins the constructively aligned elements with the teacher’s assessment and the student’s learning experience. Here, terms like present, discuss and analyse are broken down and defined in order to facilitate for both teacher and students.

Assessment matrices are often formulated as grade criteria and describe what the student is to achieve to receive a certain grade, while learning matrices are formulated as actions that the student can perform and develop to achieve learning. Learning matrices is, according to Johan Alm (2015), a relatively new term that aims to shift focus from assessment to learning. Alm describes learning matrices as being a tool for the student rather than the teacher, and that the purpose of learning matrices is for the students to understand in advance what they are expected to learn, instead of being a tool for assessing afterward how well an assignment corresponds to the intended learning outcomes. By differentiating, as Alm has done, between assessment matrices and learning matrices, one important point is undeniably highlighted, but the different matrices are not, and above all should not be, each other’s opposite. A good assessment matrix can successfully be used as support in the

students learning through visualising and concretising different elements in the education.

See Supplement 2 for an example of how an assessment matrix for a number of aspects of academic writing can be formulated.

A well-formulated learning and assessment matrix can also be an excellent tool for feedback, which will be discussed in more detail in the chapters *Feedback* and *Peer feedback*.

## **Concrete examples as support in teaching academic writing**

A common concern for many students is that they have difficulty translating the instructions on academic writing they have received into concrete writing acts. For lack of understanding, they often complain that the instructions are not good enough. All too often, the teacher responds by giving instructions that are even more detailed. In my experience it is not uncommon to find examples of study guides for writing assignments that are tens of pages long, with extremely detailed descriptions of what the student is expected to produce in different parts of a writing assignment or written examination.

To avoid lengthy and hard to grasp instructions, one way is to explore the use of a pedagogical principle called *imitatio*. *Imitatio* is a term taken from ancient writings on rhetoric in which it is assumed that we learn through imitation, by studying good examples and copying them. (Santesson & Sigrell 2015). Santesson and Sigrell suggest that the use of good examples has great potential to help students learn to write academically.

Despite this, there are few teachers who work with good examples within their courses. And those that do so often refer to, for example, the academic articles that are included in the course literature list. However, there is reason to question whether these are at too high a level for many students, at least for those in an early stage of their education. For a certain type of student, they assuredly work well, but for a student who has difficulties with formulating a formal text, these examples are

far too advanced to be identifiable as a reasonable goal. These students will be better helped by a student text that constitutes a good example of what students are expected to produce in the course in question.

To enhance the class materials with good examples does not need to be too time consuming, at least not if you are teaching a course that has been offered previously. It is quite possible that you are sitting on a potential goldmine of student texts. Are the students expected to write a lab report or an essay as part of the course? Why not circulate a few well-written lab reports or essays that have received passing grades that the students can imitate or be inspired by? In this way you make it easier for the students to translate instructions into actions so that they can instead focus on communicating the content they are expected to learn.

It should be added that the principle of imitatio is not without its objections, and these should be discussed. One of them is that the method is considered to result in passive writers who only learn through mimicking other writers. Another is that the method is considered to increase the risk of plagiarism.

With regard to the first objection one can ask where it says that mimicking of style would inhibit intellectual development. Perhaps even the opposite is true? That the writer, through placing their thoughts in a structure that has the goal of communicating these thoughts, gains increased understanding of their own ideas and can more easily see the flaws in their argument. It is quite possible that the objection is due to a mixing of the different parts of the writing process, like the previously described division into writing to think and writing to present. When I talk here about the benefits of imitation, I wish to put the emphasis on this as a part of the communicative aspect of writing, writing a presentation text.

With regard to the second objection, it points to an important demarcation; that between plagiarism and imitation. The question we need to ask ourselves is: Are all forms of reuse plagiarism? I mean that this is not the case. Reusing a combination of words is only plagiarism if it contains recycled, and incorrectly referenced, thought content.

Thus, it is totally fine to reuse the sentence “I mean that this is not the case” without referring to the author of this text, while using the following sentence without a reference “a common concern for many students is that they have difficulty translating the instructions they have received into concrete written documents in their written assignments” would be plagiarism. However, in the latter case, it is completely acceptable to imitate the sentence structure: “A common concern for [...] is that they [...]”.

The solution to preventing plagiarism among students, while at the same time encouraging them to imitate, is for you as teacher to be clear about how the examples you circulate are meant to be used; i.e. that you get the students to understand the difference between imitation and plagiarism. It is the style, the linguistic craft, and the text’s structure that is to inspire and be reused, not the content. By being acquainted with the examples you distribute, it is also likely that you will easily notice which students are plagiarizing rather than imitating.

In summary, it can be said that the use of good examples that are on a moderately advanced level is one of the most effective ways to develop the students’ academic writing. The method has the potential to help the students understand the abstract instructions given by the teacher, increase their text awareness and facilitate their work with creating their own texts.

#### EXERCISE: ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH QUESTION

##### WHY?

To make the students aware of how different wordings affect the clarity of the purpose or the thesis statement, and to support them in the work on limiting their subject to a reasonable level. At the same time, you are helping them to gain perspective on what defines academic research.

##### WHEN?

Before a writing element where the students are to formulate a research question.

##### HOW?

Use, for example, the section *Aim, issue and research questions – delimiting the subject matter* under *The writing process* in the Writing Guide. There are, in addition to a discussion on what characterizes the terms aim, issues and research questions, concrete examples of what defines a well-formulated aim and issue. During a workshop, use these examples (or create your own that are appropriate for the subject you are teaching and the given assignment) as a basis when the students are experimenting with their own aim and issue formulations in smaller groups.

## EXERCISE: ANALYSIS OF ACADEMIC LANGUAGE USE IN TEXT

<b>WHY?</b>	To give the students tools for formulating their ideas when starting to construct their own texts.
<b>WHEN?</b>	The exercise can be used in conjunction with all types of written assignments, from the formulation of individual sentences and paragraphs to chapters. It can be particularly effective when it comes to passages that many students consider complicated to write, such as the introduction.
<b>HOW?</b>	Can be done with any type of academic text, depending on the intention. It is appropriate to use texts that concern the field of knowledge of the course so that the material is put into context. Recommend to the students that they prepare for the module by reading those parts of the Writing Guide that concern the specific exercise. Is the aim for them to be better at creating cohesion within the text? They can then read the section <i>Creating cohesion</i> . Is it a theory chapter they are writing? They can then prepare by reading the section <i>Theory</i> under <i>The structure of the academic text</i> . By only focusing on the structure of the language and text, you will support the students in finding a suitable language level.

## EXERCISE: ANALYSIS AND GRADING OF ENTIRE TEXTS

<b>WHY?</b>	To make the students aware of the importance of interplay between different parts of texts, while at the same time make them aware of how nuances in formulations and analysis create different levels of complexity that in turn is reflected in the grade the paper will achieve.
<b>WHEN?</b>	Before a big project, e.g., a Bachelor's essay.
<b>HOW?</b>	<p>Circulate a small number of approved papers (from former students), some with a passing grade some with a pass with distinction grade. Invite students to reflect on the different aspects of what defines a paper that received a Pass and Pass with credit grade respectively. Focus on the parts that you find most important for the students to include in their own work, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How well formulated is the aim of the text?</li><li>• Is there a clear line of reasoning from introduction to conclusion?</li><li>• How does the theory section line up with what is discussed in the analysis and discussion section?</li><li>• Is the scientific work on which the author is basing their argument clearly indicated?</li></ul>
<b>DEVELOP?</b>	If you are working with assessment and learning matrices, this exercise can be a good opportunity to contextualize different intended learning outcomes.

## Feedback

Providing feedback is one of the most effective means of supporting the students in their writing development (Hattie & Timperley 2007). For the feedback to have the desired effect, however, it is not enough to write a comment in the margin indicating that the text has no clear line of reasoning or that the academic language needs to be improved. Useful feedback must be individualized, constructive and concrete. Hattie and Timperley (2007) have developed a model for such feedback. This model divides the feedback into three parts, all of which are important for the writer: *Feed up*, *feed back* and *feed forward*.

*Feed up* answers the question: Where am I going? It is a type of feedback explaining to the student what the objectives are. To some extent, this is something that you as teacher can prevent by formulating clear intended learning outcomes, providing clear instructions and using learning and assessment matrices. If you have done this, it is possible in your feedback to refer back to these. Working with constructive alignment, as described earlier in this guide, is a good basis for facilitating this type of feedback.

*Feed back* answers the question: How is it going? This type of feedback is that most commonly received by writers. What is important however is that you as a teacher are not content with writing “Good!” or “Bad!” in the margin. In the same way as for the other types of feedback it is of great importance that the students receive constructive feedback, i.e., feedback that they can use to develop their writing. If instead of only writing “Good!” you add a few words on why it is good, or even better, compare it to another part of the text that was less successfully formulated and explain the difference, you will give the student tools to understand how to develop their writing.

*Feed forward* answers the question: Where I am going next? This is a type of forward-looking feedback that challenges the writer’s thoughts. It is also feedback that does not primarily aim to correct the text but rather aims to develop the writer’s learning and challenge their thoughts. This is characterized by questions like “Have you thought about this?” and “Here you make an interesting connection, could you develop this?” Good feedback such as this can do wonders for students

on their way to understanding, for example, how a theory can be used or how to perform an analysis based on previous research and their own results.

All three types of feedback are thus important, for different reasons. The first type clarifies what the objectives are, the second relates to the student where they are in relation to the objectives, and the third helps them develop as writers and academics.

In addition to giving the right type of feedback, it is important that feedback is given at the right time. Is the text on which you are giving feedback a text produced early in the writing phase? Then maybe you should place less focus on the structure and appearance of the text and more on things that aim to challenge the writer's thoughts and provide tools to make them think about the text and its content as a whole. Or, is it a text produced at the end of the writing phase? Then the writer will benefit more from feedback that examines the specific language situation and helps them to communicate the message and material which at this point should be more or less fully worked through. However, it is of course of great importance to, at an early stage, draw attention to and discuss the latter if the writer has appeared to have misunderstood or strayed too far from the objective.

Hattie and Timperley (2007) also emphasize the importance of giving response at a level that the students can handle. The argument in favor of this is essentially the same as the argument for using student texts instead of academic articles as good examples for writing instructions; it helps the students to concretize where they are going, how it is going and where they are to go next, in the context within which they are currently working.

Since constructive and concrete feedback is time-consuming work, it can be good if a plan is established within the teaching team for how this can be managed. Such a plan can of course include a stance on providing limited feedback on some of the course assignments. It is better to choose one or a few assignments that the teaching team think are appropriate for in-depth feedback than giving mediocre feedback on all assignments. As long as it is clear to the students why you are

applying different review methods on separate occasions, there is nothing that speaks against this approach.

An additional important aspect that you as a teacher need to consider is how to get the students to embrace the feedback they receive. Many teachers perceive this as a major problem, which consumes a lot of time and resources.

The first step to achieve this is to give the students feedback at a level they understand, and in a way that give them an opportunity to develop as writers. The second step is to build the actual text revision into the writing assignment. This can be done by relatively simple means without significantly increasing the workload for either students or teachers. The students can for example, in connection with submitting their text, be asked to write a short reflection text where they describe in a few sentences how the feedback has impacted their text and what they have learnt.

#### EXERCISE: REFLECTION TEXT ON FEEDBACK

##### WHY?

In order for the students to use the feedback given and reflect on how they are developing as writers.

##### WHEN?

In conjunction with the students submitting a final text.

##### HOW?

Ask the students to write a few sentences reflecting on how the feedback during the course has influenced their text. Ask them to focus on the broad features of the text and elements they will take with them when writing future written assignments.

## Peer feedback – giving students the tools to support each other

One method with a potential to greatly influence students texts, while reducing the burden on the teacher to provide feedback, is to allow students to respond on each other's texts. However, a few aspects are important to keep in mind for this method to work.

The most important thing to take into account is the students' attitude. Many students have a negative attitude towards this type of activity. They argue, for example, that they do not have the tools to give feedback, that they cannot be sure that the feedback they give and receive

is correct, and that the feedback takes unnecessary time away from their own writing. The solution to overcome this resistance is, for example, to highlight the benefits of giving and receiving feedback, to give the students tools that makes it possible for them to become good respondents and to grade the module in question. As described in the chapter *Constructive alignment*, it is important to tell the students why and in which way the feedback is a key part of the education.

Also point out that it is not only when the students receive feedback on their work that they learn something. When they read others' texts, they simultaneously increase their text awareness. Perhaps they find useful phrases that they themselves can use? Or maybe the writer has thought about something that the respondent themselves has not? Emphasise also that the feedback is important training for the oral presentation and examination of the degree project.

In addition, discuss Hattie and Timperley's (2007) model for feedback (pp. 30–31), preferably in relation to Dysthe, Hertzberg and Løkensgard Hoel's (2011) model for "writing to think" and "writing to present" (p. 20). The models offer tools that help the students provide the right type of feedback at the right time, and to reflect on both the text and their own writing process. If you are working with learning or assessment matrices, these are also useful in peer feedback as they concretely break down what is expected of the students during the course into addressable chunks, and give the respondents tools to identify on what is important to provide feedback. The matrices could be used by the students, both when they are preparing and giving the feedback.

Peer feedback is commonly given in groups. This allows the students to learn from each other while at the same time each student receives feedback from more than one person. For the feedback occasions to have the desired effect, it is of great importance that the respondents are respectful, specific and above all forward-looking. The feedback is intended to help the writer resolve any issues, not create new problems. Dysthe, Hertzberg and Løkensgard Hoel (2011) state that feeling secure is the basic prerequisite for the work in feedback groups.

To facilitate and to some extent control the feedback group, it may be appropriate to use a feedback guide in which it states on what the students are supposed to give feedback on. According to a survey by Ingrid Hallberg (2014), 83 % of the questioned respondents stated that a feedback guide was an important part of the feedback work. A feedback guide can be more or less detailed, but the important thing is that it contains instructions that help the respondent to prepare their feedback as well as instructions on what is expected on the occasion that feedback is given, both from the giver and receiver. One example of how a feedback guide looks can be found in Supplement 3.

It is a good idea if you as a teacher, or if you have access to, for example, a writing teacher, are present during at least the first feedback session. The person present can then check that the students have understood the assignment and give support to groups being unsure about what is expected of them. A teacher's presence is also an indication that the feedback session is important to the course.

<b>EXERCISE: REFLECTION FOLLOWING PEER FEEDBACK</b>	
<b>WHY?</b>	In order for the students to use the feedback given and reflect on how they can develop as writers.
<b>WHEN?</b>	In close connection with the peer feedback.
<b>HOW?</b>	Ask the students to write a few sentences on how they perceived the giving and receiving of feedback and how they think they can apply this to their own writing and to future peer feedback sessions.

## **Writing instruction on distance learning courses**

One of the motives for developing the Writing Guide has been that the platform must be so easily navigated and user-friendly that it can speak for itself. It should be usable by students whenever they need it and wherever they are. In the same way, all of the exercises presented in this guide are easy to carry out via a teaching platform or via another type of distance education. However, it may be worth pointing out a few aspects that can be good to think about in the case of online instruction in academic writing.

The most important point concerns how you communicate within a distance course. Many teachers perceive that it can be difficult to start discussions among students on distance courses and that many students do not visit the discussion forums set up, nor do they participate in the sessions when the teacher offers supervision. One solution to this is that you, through constructive alignment, make it mandatory to take part in discussions and to give feedback on each other's texts. In addition, you as a teacher can also, through formulating discussion questions on different aspects of academic writing on different occasions and in connection with written assignments, help them to get started.

A related aspect that requires some adaptation to be successful is the actual giving of feedback within distance education. With verbal feedback in a physical teaching environment, both students and teachers have several tools that, at least to some extent, are not available when providing feedback remotely. Elements such as body language, vocal pitch and being in the same room are all aspects that affect how the feedback is perceived. For example, relatively critical feedback can come across as positive if the person giving it has a positive and forward-looking attitude.

When you provide feedback on distance courses it is however common that the feedback is only given in written form. This places particular emphasis on the fact that the respondent is able to communicate not only the shortcomings of the text, but also to point out the benefits and how the writer can further develop. For that reason, it can be extra important for you as a teacher to use a template for giving feedback, where it clearly states what the function of the feedback is and what you expect from the giver and recipient.



# Sections of the Writing Guide

Below is a brief description of the Writing Guide's different sections and how they can be used in your teaching. Besides using the Writing Guide for preparatory reading, it can be used as a reference for specific problems that you identify when providing feedback. Do they, for example, have problems with formulating an aim? Ask them to read the subsection *Aim, issue and research questions – delimiting the subject matter* under *The writing process*. Do they have difficulty producing a fluid text? Refer then to *Cohesive ties* under *Creating cohesion*.

## Writing

This section of the Writing Guide is intended as an initial introduction to academic writing. Here the reader will find a description of what potential users can expect from the platform, including a short video explaining the fundamentals of academic writing as well as a few common features of all academic writing. The intention is to create meaning and understanding regarding the function of writing, i.e., writing as a communicative act.

Despite this being the most basic aspect of academic writing, my experience is that parts of what is presented in this section is something that many students have never heard. One tip is therefore that you as a teacher, before the students' first writing assignment or following the first class in academic writing, instruct the students to watch the video on academic writing and read the short related texts provided.

## The writing process

When I teach academic writing, I usually ask the students what they think when they hear the term academic writing. The most common answers are that it is complicated and difficult, that it involves writing complex words and that it entails curtailing your writing so that it fits in a certain form. Many students also say that they feel a resistance to writing academically. For this reason the section *The writing process* is aimed at helping the students find their own path into academic writing by pointing out that there is space for both creativity and personal writing within academic writing.

The section is divided into two main parts; a first part where there is a discussion on the importance of viewing the writing process in its entirety and as a personal process, and a second part where the writing process is broken down into six phases.

The first part highlights that the actual starting point for writing an academic text is to begin with your own thoughts and experiences instead of focusing on the form in which academic texts are to be written. Here you can find, among other things, a presentation of Dysthe, Hertzberg and Løkensgard Hoel's (2011) model for dividing writing into "writing to think" and "writing to present", which is also included in this guide (p. 20). As a teacher, you can benefit from the fact that the students, prior to a teaching moment early on in the education, for example for a first writing task, have read these parts and looked at the film about the writing process.

In the second part of the section, the writing process is broken down into six phases; preparation, outline, feedback, revision, proofreading and final revision; phases which are all important to go through in order to create a good academic text. During each phase, students are given tips and information on how they can think about, for example, how to come up with, and formulate, good topics for a paper, how to formulate a purpose, how to give and receive feedback, and how to submit an essay with as few linguistic shortcomings as possible. Although the phases build on each other, the parts can be read individually so that you as a teacher can recommend that the students, prior to a feedback session for example, read the specific part that deals with feedback, or have read those parts on proofreading and final revision before submitting a finished text.

## **The structure of the academic text**

As the section *The writing process*, the section *The structure of the academic text* is divided into two parts. The first part applies a holistic perspective on texts and describes, among other things, the characteristics of an academic text with good structure. The second part comprises information and examples concerning the different parts of the academic text, from what to think about when formulating a title, to aspects

concerning theory, method, discussion and the style and content of the reference list. The section is aimed primarily at students who are going to write longer academic texts, such as a Bachelor's thesis or Master's thesis.

It is preferable if the students before writing longer academic texts have familiarized themselves with the importance of an essay having a good structure, what characterizes a good structure and how they can think of the planning stage as an opportunity to create the conditions for writing a well-structured text. It is therefore a good idea to recommend to your students to carefully read the first part of the section and scan through the second part at an early stage. When the students have gotten started with the writing, it may be appropriate for them to take a closer look at subsequent parts, where there is both information and concrete tips that can help with writing the corresponding parts of their papers.

## **Creating cohesion**

In *Creating cohesion*, the students are given tips on how they can write texts that are formally correct and easy to read with the help of linguistic markers and by structuring their texts in sentences and paragraphs. There are many concrete examples on how to connect words, sentences and paragraphs in a meaningful way, how to indicate to the reader that a comparison is being made or that there is a contrast between two statements, and how they can use metatext to clarify for the readers how a certain part of the text is to be interpreted.

This section is appropriate to use both as preparatory reading before a writing assignment that concerns formal writing, and as supplementary reading for students who have a problem with writing cohesive texts.

## **Academic language**

In the section *Academic language*, a number of guidelines are presented that define academic language use. The section introduces the terms academic prose, precision and focus, and provides examples on how the students, with the help of correct use of language, can produce texts that give an academically correct impression. For example, how spoken colloquial variants and unnecessary intensifiers and values are avoided,

and how to formulate an impersonal and objective text with the help of passive constructions.

This section can be used in the same way as the section *Creating cohesion*, partly as preparatory reading for all students and partly as supplementary reading for students who are in need of this.

## **Reference management**

In the section *Reference management*, you can read about why and how references must be made. The section presents a number of general guidelines for reference management and explains the differences between terms such as abstract, quotation, paraphrase and reference. The section also contains concrete examples on how you as a writer can formulate references in the text and in the literature list, as well as tips on various digital aids for reference management.

The starting point for this section is that it should help the students to understand the role of reference management within academic writing, and make them understand that good reference management is the key to avoiding plagiarism. Use it as preparatory reading for all students and as supplementary reading for students in need of this.

## **Publishing**

The section *Publishing* addresses different aspects of academic publishing and copyright. In this section terms such as open access, database, archive and peer review are explained. Part of the section deals with copyright in different contexts, such as online publication and the use of tables and illustrations created by other parties. There are also tips provided on what the students should think about when they are considering publishing their paper.

The section can be used as preparatory reading for all students and as supplementary reading for students in need of this.

## Literature and other teaching resources for academic writing

There is an abundance of resources for teaching academic writing. Here are a few examples that I recommend you to use in your teaching, for self-study or when you are preparing instructions on academic writing for your students. They are divided into two categories, one aimed at students and one aimed at teachers.

### For your students

*Writing in English at University* – Lund University

A very useful digital teaching and learning resource, a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course). The course consists of four modules, concerning different aspects of academic writing. You can find the MOOC here: <https://www.coursera.org/learn/writing-english-university>.

*Scriptor* – Uppsala University

Another useful digital resource, developed to help students improve their academic writing skills. The site contains a collection of commented students texts and different tools and tips concerning academic writing. You can find Scriptor here: <http://scriptor.sprakverkstaden.uu.se/en/>

*Academic Writing: A University Writing Course* – Lennart Björk and Christine Räisänen (2003)

An in-depth book that addresses academic writing from a process-writing perspective. It's structured as a course, mixing information with commented examples and exercises on topics like causal analysis, argumentation, summarizing, writing coherently and writing a research paper in different disciplines. Suitable for all students, from beginners to more experienced. It can also be used as an inspiration for teachers looking for examples of how one can incorporate elements of academic writing in their courses.

## **For teachers**

*They say / I say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing* – Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein (2018)

A book that sets academic conversation at the center of academic writing and shows how you, by working with templates, can help students to organize their thoughts and develop their writing. The book can best be described as a toolbox and contains many concrete examples of how you can support your students.

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# Supplements

## Supplement 1: Progression plan for academic writing

The starting point for the model provided below is a Bachelor's programme. The model has been inspired by the progression plans presented by Pelger and Santesson in *Retorik för naturvetare* [Rhetoric for science students] (2012). The model should be concretized and supplemented in a way suitable for the subject areas taught and the specific assignments examined during the course or study program. It is also advisable to ensure that the progression plan is synchronized with the teaching of other academic skills, such as information literacy, oral presentation and critical thinking.

Each stage corresponds to one year of the programme, which means that stage 1 is to be implemented during the first year, stage 2 during the second year and stage 3 during the third year. For each stage of the progression plan, the student is given an additional layer of skills to handle.

**Overall goal:** After completing stage 3, the student should have reached the degree goal of being able to “demonstrate the ability to present and discuss information, problems and solutions in speech and writing and in dialogue with different audiences” (1993:100). This can, for example, be examined during the last semester by having the student write a report of an academic nature, providing constructive feedback on other students' reports, and reformulating the reports' content into a text modelled on the style of a popular science article.

### Stage 1

**Intended learning outcome:** The student shall be able to communicate in writing using correct formal language, and to provide feedback on others' texts.

**Intermediate goals:** The student shall ...

- read and familiarize themselves with different text styles

- use correct and formal language
- use basic terminology within the subject area
- summarize part of the course literature for both an academic and public audience
- write a basic report based on a given outline
  - present the aim of the report
  - present material and methodology
  - present and interpret results
  - briefly discuss the results
  - formulate conclusions
- discuss in a group and give feedback on others' texts based on the above points

## Stage 2

**Intended learning outcome:** The student shall be able in writing to present a completed project in both an academic and popular science format, and give constructive feedback on others' texts.

**Intermediate goals:** The student shall ...

- use correct and formal language adapted to the subject area and style of text
- use and explain terminology within the subject area
- independently write a basic report that summarizes a completed project
  - structure the report's content in suitable sections
  - present the background of the report
  - explain the aim of the report
  - present and justify choice of material and methodology
  - present and analyze results
  - discuss and problematize the results in relation to any sources of trouble and alternative viewpoints
  - advocate and formulate conclusions
  - clearly present references in the running text and in a reference list
- summarize the report in the form of a polemical article
- give constructive feedback on others' texts based on the above points

### Stage 3

**Intended learning outcome:** The student shall be able in writing to present and critically evaluate a completed project in both an academic and popular science format, and give formal and constructive feedback on others' texts.

**Intermediate goals:** The student shall ...

- use correct and formal language adapted to the subject area and style of text
- use and explain terminology within the subject area
- independently write an academic report that summarizes a completed project
  - structure the report's content so that all parts are relevant to the whole
  - explain and advocate the project's aim and relevance
  - summarize and critically evaluate publications of relevance to the project
  - present and justify choice of theories
  - present and justify choice of material and methodology
  - present the results in an appropriate way
  - interpret and analyze the results based on selected theories
  - discuss and problematize the results in relation to any sources of trouble and previous research within the subject area
  - advocate and formulate conclusions
  - discuss the significance of the results for research within the subject area
  - clearly present and critically evaluate references in the running text and in a reference list
- summarize the report in the form of a popular science article
- conduct a formal public examination based on the above points

## Supplement 2: Assessment matrix for academic writing and writing for popular science

This is a general assessment matrix based on the intended learning outcome specified under stage 3 of Supplement 1: Progression plan for academic writing. The assessment matrix is designed to clarify the differences between different grade levels, firstly to facilitate assessment and secondly to show the student what they need to develop in order to better master the skills described in the matrix: academic writing, writing for popular science and giving feedback. As the criteria for the different styles of writing differ, the intended learning outcome is divided into three intermediate goals.

In order to clarify the different aspects of academic language use, the category of language use has been broken down into a number of sub-categories. The choice of words in each category reflect terminology used in the Writing Guide, making it easier for you as a teacher to refer those students who fall short in one of the criteria to those parts of the Writing Guide that address the respective criteria, for example, academic language or how to formulate oneself in a focused and precise manner.

For additional support and information on how to use assessment matrices, it is recommended to read *Att sätta praxis på prânt: En handbok i att skriva betygsgriterier* [Putting practice to print: A handbook in writing grading criteria] by Johanna Bergqvist and *Lärandematriser: Att få eleven att förstå* [Learning matrices: Getting students to understand] by Johan Alm.

As assessment matrices are most effective when they are subject-specific and clearly linked to the course content, you should modify the criteria so that they correlate to the specific course's intended learning outcomes, instruction and examinations (Alm 2015; Bergqvist 2015).

**Intended learning outcome:** The student shall be able in writing to present and critically evaluate a completed project in both an academic and popular science format, and give formal and constructive feedback on others' texts.

## Intermediate goals: Academic writing

	Pass with distinction	Pass	Fail
LANGUAGE: OVERALL	The text is <b>consistently</b> written on a precise, focused, and <b>reader-friendly</b> academic style.	The text is <b>for the most part</b> written in a <b>precise and focused academic prose</b> .	The text has such serious language deficiencies that it impacts the readability and comprehension.
LANGUAGE: ACADEMIC STYLE	The text is formal, informative, investigative, neutrally formulated <b>throughout</b> and <b>clearly and consistently adapted to writer and recipient</b> .	The text is <b>for the most part formal, informative, investigative, and neutrally formulated</b> .	The text contains far too many unjustified intensifiers and/or unjustly used personal, colloquial and/or everyday language.
LANGUAGE: PRECISION	The text uses specific terminology, concepts and linguistic markers <b>throughout</b> in a correct, consistent and <b>well-considered</b> way.	The text uses <b>for the most part specific terminology, concepts and linguistic markers</b> in a <b>correct and consistent way</b> .	The text is vague and/or incorrect and/or contains far too many unidentified and unclear terms.
LANGUAGE: FOCUS	The text is focused and straightforwardly and <b>comprehensively</b> formulated <b>throughout</b> .	The text is <b>for the most part focused and straightforwardly formulated</b> .	The text is far too long-winded and/or unfocused.
LANGUAGE: STRUCTURE	The different parts of the text follow each other logically, and <b>are integrated with and enrich each other</b> , at chapter, paragraph and sentence level.	The different parts of the text follow each other <b>logically at chapter, paragraph and sentence level</b> .	The text is incoherent and/or has an illogical structure.
SOURCE MANAGEMENT	<p>The text <b>clearly</b> indicates the writer's own opinions and what has been obtained from other sources, as well as what these sources are.</p> <p>The sources are <b>independently selected, well-integrated</b> in the text, relevant to the context and evaluated critically.</p> <p>The reference management adheres to the instructions provided on the course.</p>	<p>The text indicates <b>the writer's own opinions</b> and <b>what has been obtained from other sources</b>, as well as what these sources are.</p> <p>The sources are <b>relevant to the context and critically evaluated</b>.</p> <p>The reference management <b>adheres to the instructions provided on the course</b>.</p>	<p>It is unclear in the text what has been obtained from other sources and what is the writer's own opinions.</p> <p>The sources lack relevance.</p> <p>The reference management is not correctly done.</p>

## Intermediate goal: Feedback.

	Pass with distinction	Pass	Fail
FEEDBACK	<p>A <b>well-prepared and in-depth analysis</b> and presentation of another student's text has been performed, with a <b>good balance between positive and negative aspects</b>.</p> <p>All parts of the paper has been discussed in an <b>independent and constructive</b> way.</p>	<p>A <b>careful review and presentation</b> of another student's text has been made, <b>where both positive and negative aspects have been noted</b>.</p> <p><b>All parts of the paper has been discussed</b>.</p>	<p>No review or an inadequate review and presentation of another student's text.</p>

## Intermediate goal: Writing for popular science.

	Pass with distinction	Pass	Fail
LANGUAGE	<p>The text is written in a precise, focused and <b>reader-friendly</b> academic prose <b>throughout</b>.</p> <p>The text is <b>consciously</b> adapted to a popular science context <b>throughout</b>.</p> <p>In the text, <b>the results</b> of the investigation <b>are placed in a wider context in an independent and creative way</b>.</p>	<p>The text is, <b>for the most part</b> written in a <b>precise and focused academic prose</b>.</p> <p>The text is <b>for the most part adapted to a popular science context</b>.</p> <p>In the text, <b>the results</b> of the investigation <b>are explained in a simple and clear way</b>.</p>	<p>The text has such serious language deficiencies that it impacts the readability and comprehension.</p> <p>The text is not adapted to a popular science context.</p>

## **Supplement 3: Feedback guide**

This is a general feedback guide aimed at students. Feel free to rework the formulations so that they suit the assignment in question. If you are working with teaching or assessment matrices, these can replace or complement parts of the feedback guide.

### **Prepare your feedback**

If it is not stated in the instructions – think about what the writer needs feedback on, based on what stage of the writing process they find themselves in: Make sure the feedback is balanced and focused, and remember that your task is to help the writer improve their writing. Highlight elements in the text that are effective and well-written and those that are difficult to understand, linguistically incorrect or formulated in an unnecessarily awkward way. Write down any questions that arise when reading, questions the writer can consult when revising the text: What do you mean with X? I interpret Y as Z, is that correct? It is often useful for the writer if you make a proposal for how the text can be improved through alternative formulations or through a restructuring of the text.

Under the heading below, *Support questions during feedback*, you find tips on things that are worth considering when you read a text to give feedback. However, remember that feedback should be given within the frameworks set for the assignment in question.

### **Give feedback**

When you give feedback, it is important to clarify that the feedback relates to the text not the person. Therefore it is better to say “The text describes it as X” instead of “So you are saying that X”.

Begin by describing the highpoints of the text and then move on to highlighting potential improvements and uncertainties. It is also good to start by giving feedback on the text as a whole, and then go into detail.

Has the writer expressed any preferences with regard to what the feedback should focus on? Then focus on these.

## Receive feedback

Remember that the feedback session aims at helping you progress in your writing. You therefore do not need to defend what you have written even if you disagree with the feedback. Focus instead on understanding the feedback given and note any things that you find especially interesting.

Keep in mind that it is you as a writer who determines whether or not the feedback is warranted. You do not need to implement all the changes suggested by the respondents, but for your own sake you should have a good argument for not doing so.

Is there something in particular you are wondering about but have not gotten an answer on? Ask the respondent when they are finished.

## Support questions during feedback

The questions below are adapted to giving feedback on an essay. If you are giving feedback on some other type of text, it is possible that certain parts are not applicable. Always base the assignment on the description of the type of text the writer is supposed to write.

- Are the text's title and possible headings effective and substantial?
  - Does the title communicate the aim of the text? Do the headings describe what the different chapters are about?
  - If not, make the writer aware of the problem and give examples on how the title and headings can be changed to better match the content.
- Is the aim of the text consistent with the given assignment and the content of the text?
  - Is the aim formulated in a way that enables a response? Is the aim adapted and delimited to the assignment? Have all questions been answered or elucidated? Are the chosen methods and theories relevant to the aim?

- If not, think about whether it is the aim that needs to be revised or if something in the content is lacking or redundant.
- Does the text contain all elements expected in the assignment?
  - Does it explain why the investigation has been carried out? Is previous research presented in connection with the aim? Does the text contain parts concerning method, results, analysis and discussion?
  - If not, refer to the assignment's instructions and inform the writer on what parts are missing or deficient.
- Do the parts of the text logically follow from one another?
  - Does the reader understand what the author is trying to say? Is everything presented relevant to the whole? Is there a clear line of argument from aim on to theory, method, results, analysis, discussion and conclusion? Is the division of chapters and paragraphs logical? Is the writer using connective markers that facilitate reading?
  - If not, think about how the text's structure can be improved and how any gaps can be filled. Give concrete examples of what is missing and how the text can be improved.
- Is the text written in a style expected of an academic text within the specific subject area?
  - Is the text written as academic prose? Are the wordings clear and precise? Is the text impersonal? Is the language grammatically correct? Are the source references and reference list consistent with the selected reference system?
  - If not, define what it is in the text that works and what does not work.
- Does the text clearly indicate which are the writer's own thoughts and opinions and what has been obtained from previous research and other literature?
  - Are there correct source references in the text? Does the writer refer to sources correctly?
  - If not, mark which parts you are unsure about and suggest that the writer clarify the link.
- Are tables or illustrations consistent with the text content?

- Is it clear what the link between the illustrated material and the content is? Does the material have correct headings and source references?
- If not, notify the writer of the problem.



What is the core of academic writing – when you look beyond all the formalities and guidelines? How can you, as a teacher, support your students in developing these skills? And how do you create an environment where students feel motivated to write in a creative, as well as formal and correct, way. These are some of the questions that are treated in this teacher's guide.

The teacher's guide aims to inspire and provide you with the tools to work more strategically and proactively with students' writing. The guide addresses how you can work with subject-oriented writing, popular science texts, constructive alignment, assessment matrices and peer response. Each chapter provides set examples and exercises you can use for inspiration when planning your teaching.

The guide is aimed at those of you who are involved, as teachers at colleges or universities, in courses where students have to produce essays or other written assignments as part of their examination. It is a complement to the Writing Guide digital platform – a learning resource where students can learn more about academic writing.

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