



Dean of Graduate Studies

IUE 353/20 (CA330)

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## EUI Policy on Academic Writing support and Thesis Correction Services

### A. Principles underlying the guidelines for English academic writing courses

Writing is a fundamental element of an academic's job description, and therefore should be an integral part of doctoral training. Writing well is also fundamental to many jobs outside academia.

The principles underpinning these guidelines represent a shift towards a more inclusive literacies-based approach to academic writing support at the EUI. Rather than "you lack English skills and need to take courses to improve", the message should be that nobody grows up writing academic English; it's something we all have to work on. While English language skills are essential, good writing goes far beyond knowing the grammar of a language. The guidelines further aim to embed academic writing within disciplines and within departments.

Below are some recommendations as to how writing could be more effectively integrated into the doctoral programme by embedding it more into the departments.

1. *Integration into doctoral training of all researchers:* The art of scholarly writing should be recognised as intrinsic to the doctoral pathway of all researchers. To this end, pre-sessional discipline-specific writing courses should be open to **all** interested researchers (including native speakers) and recognised on completion e.g. a certificate, recognition by the department, credits, etc.
2. *Writing in the disciplines:* English academic writing courses should be tied to each of the disciplines at the EUI and integrated into each department's schedule. Pre-sessional English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) courses are held in September, as agreed on with the departments. During the academic year, the time-slots for discipline-specific academic writing courses are agreed on with the departments and included in the departmental calendar. Departments do not schedule seminars or workshops at that time, or where they need to do so, advise the Language Centre so that the writing course can be moved.
3. *Integration into curriculum of departments:* Courses should be embedded into each department's curriculum, e.g. first-year courses are planned around January, April Prospectus, February, May, June papers; second-year economics around Forum papers.

Writing 'paths' flanking each department's needs through the years should be created, so researchers can more easily understand how the academic writing courses support their progress towards their degrees.

4. *Provision of additional support where requested:* To provide extra support for researchers with less prior experience in English medium instruction settings, additional courses are offered, e.g. English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP), Grammar for Writing, Writing Clearly, etc.
5. *Communication channels:* An ongoing exchange of information about researchers' academic writing needs is necessary. To ensure that researchers' needs are being met, the flow of information between the departments and the Language Centre should be ensured throughout the year.

The appropriate institutional channel is the Language Centre Coordinator, the Directors of Graduate Studies, and the Researcher Representatives, with regular review at the DPC.

## B. Guidelines governing academic writing courses

### *English entrance tests and placement into courses*

1. English language certificates (i.e. TOEFL, IATEFL, Cambridge, etc.) attesting to the candidate's general level of English are required. If the candidate does not have a recognised certificate, the candidate sits an assessment test with the Language Centre.
2. The results of the researchers' certificates or assessment test are entered in the researcher's database (Osiris). Osiris allows departments to check the researcher's original placement as well as his/her/their subsequent record of language course participation.
3. Where the incoming researcher has a written level of C1 or below, he/she/they is/are required to take pre-sessional English academic writing courses in September.
4. All other incoming researchers (including native speakers) are offered the possibility to take pre-sessional writing courses in September as part of the Institute's policy of support for doctoral training.
5. In ECO, tests are held at the end of the first year. ECO researchers are offered an English academic writing course starting in January of their second academic year (to tie in with the 2<sup>nd</sup> year Forum Paper requirement). This course is obligatory for those testing C1 or below; optional for the others.

### *Scholarly Writing Courses: guidelines*

1. For the purposes of researchers' academic records, mandatory courses are treated just like regular departmental seminars. Regular attendance is obligatory and failure to attend has

clear consequences: specifically, more than 20% absences means the researcher loses his/her/their right to text revision.

2. All researchers attending courses will be provided with a certificate of attendance on completion of the course.

Each researcher's attendance shall be noted on their record, as follows:

- (1) successfully completed the course
- (2) completed the course but would benefit from more training: further courses, participation in academic writers' groups, or in-depth tutoring
- (3) did not satisfy attendance requirements

### C. Assessment of Scholarly Writing Skills at the End of First Year

April prospectuses (SPS), May papers (LAW) or June papers (HEC) must be assessed by readers (supervisors and second readers) not only for quality of academic content, but also for academic writing. The assessment of the writing is communicated to the Language Centre. In the standard reports one of the following boxes should be ticked:

- academic writing satisfactory
- academic writing needs further support

If the latter box is ticked, the Language Centre will support the researcher either through a targeted course, or a Writers' Group, or individual consultation(s).

If the first-year paper is written in a language other than English, it is recommended that the researcher develop an academic piece in English, for example, a seminar paper, an academic blogpost, an op-ed or policy paper. The purpose of this would be to show that all researchers have the necessary writing skills to allow their research to circulate internationally. The language centre is available to provide support.

### D. Thesis correction service:

See:

<https://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/LanguageCentre/CorrectionService/ThesisEditingProcedure>

Supervisors are responsible for assessing the extent of language correction needed. Depending on his/her/their assessment, the department will contribute a sum of money towards the correction of the thesis. When assessing whether a final draft submitted by a researcher is ready for defence, the supervisor(s) must report:

Supervisors' assessment	Departmental funding	Time allocated for correction
thesis needs no language correction	No funding	
thesis needs minor language correction	A maximum of 500 Euros	Editing must be carried out within 2 weeks after submission to the corrector
thesis needs extensive language correction (and possibly two rounds of correction)	A maximum of € 1000. The Head of Department may accept or reject this request depending on her or his own assessment and the available budget for thesis editing.	Extensive editing should generally be carried out within 4 weeks after submission to the corrector. Extra time must be negotiated if more rounds of editing are needed.

For language corrections of earlier drafts and of revisions in response to jury reports after submission of the final draft, researchers can use the list of freelance correctors on the Language Centre webpages, but they will have to pay themselves for these services according to rates equivalent to those specified above.

Researchers who submit a thesis consisting of several papers may use the correction service only once for the final draft of each paper.

Supervisees are asked to give feedback on their experience with the thesis corrector after their theses have been corrected, using a short questionnaire with pre-formulated assessments concerning quality of the correction and time for correction. Consistently negative assessments will lead to individual correctors being taken off the list. Researchers can ask the Language Centre to indicate correctors who have received particularly positive feedback.