

Exemplar for PGR Writing Group Facilitators

SECTION TWO – Clear evidence of broadly based success and effectiveness in a substantive teaching and/or supporting learning role(s)				
Those applying for Associate Fellowship must, as a minimum, provide evidence of:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A5 plus any other two of the Areas of Activity (A) • Core Knowledge (K) 1 and 2 • All Professional Values (V) Ten to twelve activities (maximum of 1000 words in total).				
Date	Professional and developmental activities	A 1-5	K 1-6	V 1-4
2018	Attending Writing Group Facilitator Training Workshop I attended the Writing Group Facilitator Training workshop during Write Fest 2018. At this CPD workshop we learnt about the research around PGR writing, and the foundation of the Doctoral College approach in the evidence informed approaches of Rowena Murray (2009, 2015) and Pat Thomson and Barbara Kamler (2014, 2016). We also received training on facilitating small group discussion tasks and creating a supportive environment to foster peer and informal learning, as integral to learning at this academic level.	A5	K3	V1, V3
2018-2019	Facilitated 5 Doctoral College Writing Groups As part of the Supporting PGR Writing project in the Doctoral College I have facilitated 5 PGR Writing Groups. This has involved planning and delivering creative writing activities and discussion tasks, and facilitating peer learning alongside facilitating structured writing time during the sessions. This is the subject of Section 3, Example 1.	A1, A2, A4, A5		

SECTION THREE – Clear evidence of broadly based success and effectiveness in substantive teaching and/or supporting learning role(s)

Examples should be based on the Descriptor for Associate Fellowship (Descriptor 1).

For each of the four examples you select as case studies, you should:

Describe what you have been involved in doing and explain why this evidence is appropriate for an Associate Fellowship application (approx. 100 words)

Critically evaluate the success/effectiveness of the activity providing evidence of scholarly activity/research where appropriate (this should entail a critical and reflective self-analysis) (approx. 300 words)

Discuss the impact on your practice with reference to student and colleague/peer feedback and the literature (approx. 100 words)

Please give the total word count at the end of each example (maximum of 500 words per example).

Example One: Facilitated 5 Doctoral College Writing Groups

The Supporting PGR Writing project explores the scholarship around the challenges of research writing, specifically the work of Rowena Murray (Murray and Newton, 2009 and Murray, 2015), and Pat Thomson and Barbara Kamler (Kamler and Thomson, 2014, Thomson and Kamler, 2016) on doctoral and research writing (**V3**). As part of the project I attended a CPD workshop to train and register to be a Writing Group Facilitator (**A5**). To become a Writing Group Facilitator, PGRs are required to:

- Complete LTHE Stage 1
- Attend Writing Group Facilitator's Training
- Attend at least one writing group as a participant
- Co-facilitate a writing group with a member of the RD team, and receive feedback
- Attend monthly mentoring and facilitators forums

In this case study I am going to discuss my experience co-facilitating a writing group with Kelly Preece, Researcher Development Manager and facilitating 5 of my own groups over the past year. I am particularly interested in reflecting on the design and facilitation of creative writing tasks. These creative 'warm-ups' aim to enhance the community-building aspects of Murray's 'typing pool' model (2005) through working together on a shared task.

When I co-facilitated a writing group with Kelly, she encouraged me to take the lead on designing the creative and discussion tasks (**A1**). I delivered a creative task asking PGRs to write a Haiku poem about their research (**A2**). When we met to discuss the writing group, Kelly and I reflected on the creative tasks and the way in which it challenged the PGRs to clearly and concisely articulate their research (**A5**). Although a useful task in terms of research communication, discussions made clear that PGRs struggled to complete the task, and that this had an impact on their writing time. This was further reflected in the session feedback:

'I found the opening task really hard. It didn't put me in the right mindset for writing. Perhaps do something a bit easier?' (**K5**)

At the next facilitators forum I attended, fellow PGR Debbie Kinsey said she preferred using tasks unrelated to research, as then attendees don't have the chance to 'fail' – it is a purely creative, personal exploration of language and storytelling (**A4, K2, V1**). As such, when I started running my own writing groups I tried to make sure my tasks weren't research focused, and were 'free from failure'.

I have since developed a practice of creative tasks using *The Joy of Mindful Writing* (2017), using mindfulness-based activities (to create a calm, non-judgemental atmosphere) and focusing on fiction/storytelling based creative tasks. This moves away from research and the notion of 'failure' whilst also helping PGRs practice and develop the storytelling skills that are crucial to research communication (Duarte, 2010) (A4, K1). I am currently refining these tasks to be included in the creative and discussion task resource Kelly is developing as part of the Supporting PGR Writing project.

Literature cited:

Duarte, Nancy (2010) *Resonate: Present Visual Stories that Transform Audiences* Sussex: John Wiley & Sons

Kamler, Barbara and Thomson, Pat (2014) *Helping Doctoral Students Write Pedagogies for Supervision* London: Routledge

Kenward, Joy (2017) *The Joy of Mindful Writing* London: Leaping Hare Press

Murray, Rowena and Newton, Mary (2009) 'Writing retreat as structured intervention: margin or mainstream?' *Higher Education Research and Development* Vol. 25 Issue. 5 pp.527-539

Murray, Rowena (2005) *Writing for academic journals* Maidenhead: Open University Press McGraw-Hill

Murray, Rowena (2015) *Writing in Social Spaces: A Social Processes Approach to Academic Writing* London: Routledge

Thomson, Pat and Kamler, Barbara (2016) *Detox Your Writing Strategies for Supporting Doctoral Researchers* London: Routledge