

# 24/7 Instant Feedback on Writing: Integrating AcaWriter into your Teaching

Simon Buckingham Shum (Connected Intelligence Centre)

Antonette Shibani (Transdisciplinary Innovation School)

# AGENDA

- Introduction to AcaWriter (5 min) (Simon)
- Learning Context 1 (Law Essay & Business Report) (8 min) (Shibani)
- Learning Context 2 (Research Abstract) (8 min) (Simon)
- Learning Context 3 (Critical Reflection on practice) (8 min) (Simon)
- Hands-on activity (10 min) (Shibani)
- Sharing and Discussion (10 min)
- How would you integrate AcaWriter into your teaching? (10 min)
- Keep talking to us!

# WELCOME & INTRODUCTION!

## AcaWriter now a UTS-wide tool (May 2020)



### Get instant feedback on your academic writing

Introducing AcaWriter, an online tool that uses artificial intelligence to give you detailed feedback on your writing. Developed in-house at UTS, AcaWriter can help you express your ideas clearly in formal academic language – and is available to help 24/7.

[Learn how it works](#)

# A long term R&D project in CIC

## <https://cic.uts.edu.au/tools/awa>

UTS

Home > Research and teaching > Teaching and research integration > Connected Intelligence Centre

Home / Tools / Academic Writing Analytics (AWA) Project

### Academic Writing Analytics (AWA) Project

**Students learn that critical, reflective, academic writing must make their thinking visible. This is conveyed through particular linguistic forms, which are hallmarks of academic writing. AcaWriter can identify some of these patterns, and provide instant feedback to help students improve their drafts.**

| Analytical Support   | Feedback  | Examples  |
|--|---|---|
| <p><b>Move 1: Establishing a research territory</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasis on a significant or an unresolved idea</li> <li>Background information and reviewing previous work</li> </ul>        | <p><b>1</b> The rhetorical moves signposted by AcaWriter are used in good academic writing but we mean them caution according to the context. Remember, AcaWriter does not really understand your writing, the way people do. You may have written beautifully crafted sentences - that's for you to ensure. However, writing to compare, and AcaWriter will get it wrong sometimes. If you think it isn't a writing, that's fine - now you're thinking about more than spelling, grammar, and punctuation.</p> | <p><b>1</b> The rhetorical moves signposted by AcaWriter are used in good academic writing but we mean them caution according to the context. Remember, AcaWriter does not really understand your writing, the way people do. You may have written beautifully crafted sentences - that's for you to ensure. However, writing to compare, and AcaWriter will get it wrong sometimes. If you think it isn't a writing, that's fine - now you're thinking about more than spelling, grammar, and punctuation.</p> |
| <p><b>Move 2: Establishing a niche</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparing your research, engagement or critical thought</li> <li>Question or gap in previous knowledge</li> </ul>                          | <p><b>1</b> It looks like you are missing a Summary move that highlights the purpose (thesis statement) of your essay and your essay plan. Try including linguistic cues to make this move clearer in your writing. Examples: 'This essay tells about... In this essay, I explore... This essay contains three parts... The first part talks about... in conclusion.'</p>   | <p><b>1</b> It looks like you are missing a Summary move that highlights the purpose (thesis statement) of your essay and your essay plan. Try including linguistic cues to make this move clearer in your writing. Examples: 'This essay tells about... In this essay, I explore... This essay contains three parts... The first part talks about... in conclusion.'</p>   |
| <p><b>Move 3: Occupying the niche</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Novelty and value of your research</li> <li>Summary of the writer's goal to 'revisit of this research' - a re-visit of the ideas</li> </ul> | <p><b>1</b> It looks like you are missing a Background move in your text which highlights background information and previous literature on the topic. Try including linguistic cues to make this move clearer in your writing. Examples: 'The past research has seen... Recent studies indicate... It is generally accepted that... the concept has previously been thought to be...'</p>  | <p><b>1</b> It looks like you are missing a Background move in your text which highlights background information and previous literature on the topic. Try including linguistic cues to make this move clearer in your writing. Examples: 'The past research has seen... Recent studies indicate... It is generally accepted that... the concept has previously been thought to be...'</p>  |
| <p><b>Move 4: Concluding the research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concluding the research</li> <li>Concluding the research</li> </ul>   | <p><b>1</b> It looks like you are missing a Conclude/Question move, which highlights the critical insights in your essay. Try including linguistic cues to make this move clearer in your writing. Examples: 'However, the issue seems to be... the study fails to consider the research has been done... raises various questions...'</p>  | <p><b>1</b> It looks like you are missing a Conclude/Question move, which highlights the critical insights in your essay. Try including linguistic cues to make this move clearer in your writing. Examples: 'However, the issue seems to be... the study fails to consider the research has been done... raises various questions...'</p>  |
| <p><b>Move 5: Evaluating the research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluating the research</li> <li>Evaluating the research</li> </ul>   | <p><b>1</b> There is a key idea you do not do in your writing by including linguistic cues to make this move clearer in your writing. Examples: 'It is important to note that... it makes a proper understanding important.'</p>  | <p><b>1</b> There is a key idea you do not do in your writing by including linguistic cues to make this move clearer in your writing. Examples: 'It is important to note that... it makes a proper understanding important.'</p>  |

### Research publications

Learn more from the publications and replays below, visit our [Writing Analytics blog](#), and browse the **Events** menu to see the workshops we convene, where many of the world's leading researchers meet to reflect on the state of the art and future of automated writing assessment.

(overview of 5 years research, joint with academics from Law, Accounting and Pharmacy) Knight, S., Shibani, A., Abel, S., Gibson, A., Ryan, P., Sutton, N., Wight, R., Lucas, C., Sándor, Á., Kitto, K., Liu, M., Mogarkar, R. & Buckingham Shum, S. (2020). [AcaWriter: A learning analytics tool for formative feedback on academic writing](#). *Journal of Writing Research*, 12, (1), 141-186.

(insights into the academics' experience) Shibani, A., Knight, S., Buckingham Shum S. (2020). [Educator Perspectives on Learning Analytics in Classroom Practice](#). *The Internet and Higher Education*, Volume 46. Available online 20 February 2020.

Buckingham Shum, S. and Lucas, C. (2020). [Learning to Reflect on Challenging Experiences: An AI Mirroring Approach](#). *Proceedings of the CHI 2020 Workshop on Detection and Design for Cognitive Biases in People and Computing Systems*, April 25, 2020. [slides]

Shibani, A. (2019). [Augmenting pedagogic writing practice with contextualizable learning analytics](#). *Doctoral Dissertation*, Connected Intelligence Centre, University of Technology Sydney, AUS.

(students' responses to reflective writing feedback) Lucas, C., Gibson, A. and Buckingham Shum, S. (2019). [Pharmacy Students' Utilization of an Online Tool for Immediate Formative](#)

# AcaWriter

- Students need better feedback on academic writing
- AcaWriter is a web-based tool that provides formative feedback on rhetorical moves (structural elements) in writing
- Two types of writing genres are supported
  - 1. Analytical Writing** e.g. Essay, Research Paper/Abstract
  - 2. Reflective Writing** e.g. Learning Journal, Reflective Essay, Project Review

**WRITING IS HARD**



## Rhetorical moves in analytical writing

A rhetorical move is “a discoursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse” (Swales, 2004).

| Rhetorical move   | Function                                       | Example  |
|-------------------|--|--|
| <b>Question</b>   | Raising a question or missing knowledge.       | Little research exists on how automated feedback impacts students' writing.                      |
| <b>Background</b> | Consensus or background knowledge              | Recent studies indicate that the Earth's climate is changing rapidly.                            |
| <b>Contrast</b>   | Contrast, disagreement, tension, inconsistency | This approach fails to address the issue of bullying outside the classroom and schools.          |
| <b>Emphasis</b>   | Emphasis on significant, important ideas       | Stormwater pollution is a significant environmental issue that arises from intense urbanisation. |
| <b>Novelty</b>    | Novelty, improvement                           | This framework provides a new approach to tackling childhood obesity.                            |
| <b>Surprise</b>   | An unexpected outcome                          | These results are unexpected considering the device was only a prototype.                        |
| <b>Trend</b>      | A trend, growth, pattern or tendency           | Futsal was introduced in 1930 and its popularity is growing worldwide.                           |
| <b>Summary</b>    | Authors' goals, contribution or conclusion     | We show how the constructs included in the model link to relevant research.                      |

# AcaWriter feedback on analytical writing

Analytical Report
Feedback
Examples

The analytical report highlights salient rhetorical moves AcaWriter identified in your essay for reflection. For more specific feedback, go to the Feedback tab.

Rhetorical Moves

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: green;">S</span> Summarises or signals the authors goals</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">E</span> Emphasis to highlight key ideas</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">C</span> Contrasting idea, tension or critical insight</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">S</span> Surprising or unexpected finding</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">T</span> Trend or tendency related to ideas</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: orange;">P</span> Perspective or stance</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">N</span> Novel improvements in ideas</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">B</span> Background information and previous work</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">Q</span> Question or gap in previous knowledge</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

Technology is an enabler in providing greater access to justice through its ability to connect people with legal needs to legal assistance, information, and advice. T With the increasing popularity of internet-enabled hand held devices and laptop computers, there is a tendency to assume that even the socio-economically vulnerable in our society have access to technology and the skills to use online services with confidence. This is not necessarily the case.

Examples of the application of technology to provide legal information and assistance include case studies, guides and virtual legal advice clinics. S C The 2012 Review does not address the role of courts in serving the legal needs of the community. The court system is not regarded as a part of the wider legal assistance services. C This omission questions the role of the court in facilitating access to its services, including dispute resolution and trials. It also identified uses of technology to expand the delivery of services, many of which are transferable to an online court. These services include e-access for remote communities, availability outside of business hours, interactive processes and virtual appearances. S This essay will discuss uses of technology to expand the delivery of services, many of which are transferable to an online court.



# Very different rhetorical moves in reflective writing

Major moves: Context, Challenge, Change

|              |                  |                                      |                                      |   |  |   |   |
|--------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Depth</b> | Intention        |                                      |                                      |   |  |   | What change is likely to lead to future benefits? |
|              | Integration      |                                      |                                      | What impact on my goals/aspirations?      | What other ideas could I use to change myself? | How do others address these challenges? | How can I learn from other perspectives?          |
|              | Internalisation  |                                      | What do these feelings say about me? | How is this a problem that challenges me? | Why do I need to change?                       | How can I change?                       |   |
|              | Interpretation   | What does it mean for me?            | Why do I feel this way?              |   |  |   |   |
|              | Impression       | What do I notice about my situation? |                                      |   |  |   |   |
|              | Thoughts         | Feelings                             | Challenge                            | Self critique                             | Potential solution                             | Learning opportunity                    |   |
|              | CONTEXT          |                                      | CHALLENGE                            |   | CHANGE   |   |   |
|              | <b>Narrative</b> |                                      |                                      |   |  |   |   |

# AcaWriter feedback on reflective writing

Reflective Report
Feedback
Resources

- ✓ ■ Initial thoughts and feelings about a significant experience.
- ✓ ● The challenge of new surprising or unfamiliar ideas, problems or learning experiences.
- ✓ **Deeper reflection, personally applied.**
- ✓ ► How new knowledge can lead to a change
  
- ✓ Expressions indicating belief, learning, or knowledge.
- ✓ *Expressions indicating self critique*
- ✓ *Words associated with strong feelings*
  
- ✓ ⚡ Sentence too long, might disengage the reader. Try breaking it into smaller sentences

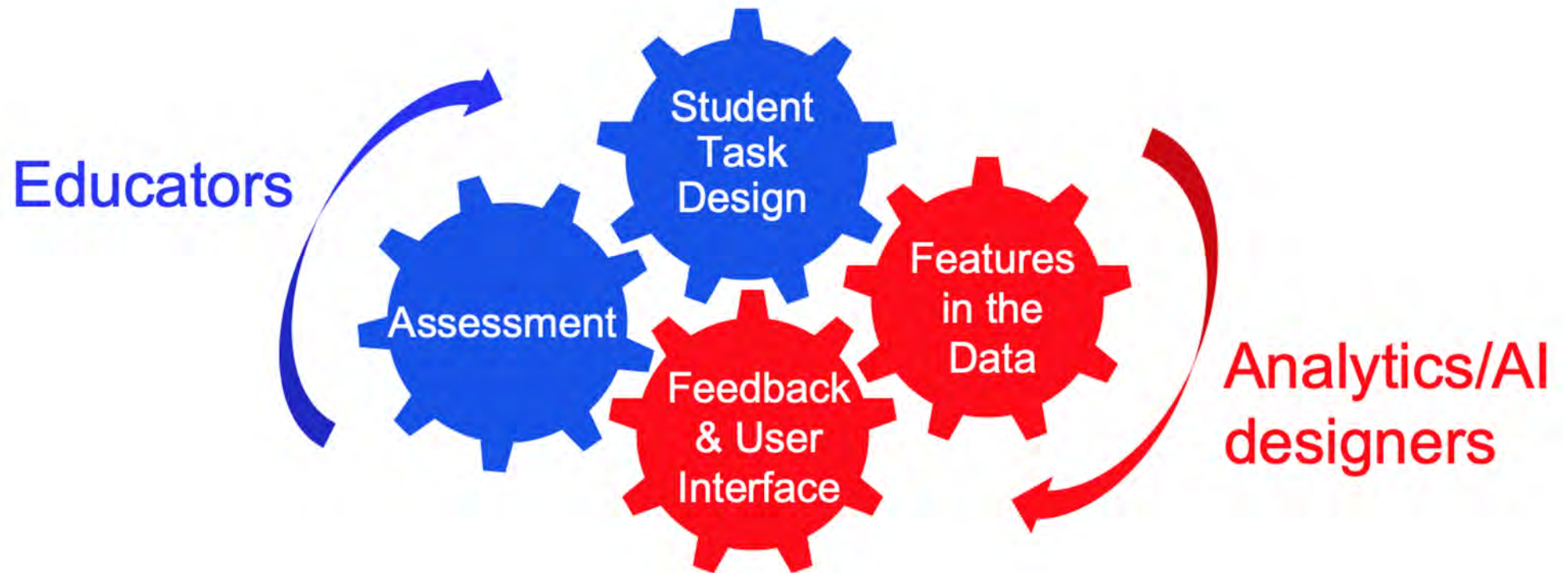
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outcomes for the patient. ► **Thus, this experience taught me that in future, *I must* take a patient-centred approach. ■●► *I must* spend time addressing the patients concerns and demonstrate excellent communication with them so they can fully understand their clinical picture and history.** This relates to Domain 2: Communication and Collaboration, Standard 4: Apply Interpersonal Communication Skills to Address Problems, which is a standard in the National Competency Standards Framework for Pharmacists in Australia (2016). The incident has taught me to use a whole range of communication techniques when counselling a patient. It gave me the opportunity to practice this sort of behaviour in my subsequent weeks of clinical placement. ● **It has strongly encouraged me to shift my perspective to one that focuses more on patient-centred care.** ■ I personally think that this is crucial in ensuring that a patient's health objectives are met. This standard I have obtained is important for any practising pharmacist.

# How to integrate AcaWriter into your course?



# How to integrate AcaWriter into your course?



# LEARNING CONTEXT 1

## Law essay writing

# Law Essay Context

- Writing is a key disciplinary skill for law students
- Instructor rubric elements require the use of rhetorical moves

| Sample Sentence   | Essay Assessment Rubric Element   | AcaWriter Move     |
|---|---|--------------------|
| The concept of good faith <b>has previously been thought</b> to be a work in progress in Australia.   | Engagement with the law and scholarly literature                          | Background         |
| <b>This article will trace</b> the origins of good faith and its development in the common law. <b>This essay contains three parts. The first part will talk about</b> the origins of good faith. | Statement of thesis, Essay plan   | Summary            |
| <b>However</b> , where the obligations are found in statute and they conflict with contractual obligations, <b>it is important to note that</b> the former must prevail.                          | Identification of relevant issues, Critical analysis and original insight | Contrast, Emphasis |

# Law essay context – Feedback tuning

Analytical Report
Feedback
Examples

The analytical report highlights salient rhetorical moves AcaWriter identified in your essay for reflection. For more specific feedback, go to the Feedback tab.

Rhetorical Moves

- S Summarises or signals the authors goals
- E Emphasis to highlight key ideas
- C Contrasting idea, tension or critical insight
- S Surprising or unexpected finding
- T Trend or tendency related to ideas

- P
- N
- B
- O

Technology is an enabler in providing greater access with legal needs to legal assistance, information, and internet-enabled hand held devices and laptop computers. The socio-economically vulnerable in our society have online services with confidence. This is not necessarily true. Examples of the application of technology to provide legal studies, guides and virtual legal advice clinics. S C of courts in serving the legal needs of the community of the wider legal assistance services. C This facilitating access to its services, including dispute resolution technology to expand the delivery of services, many of which are interactive processes and virtual appearances. S expand the delivery of services, many of which are tra

Analytical Report
Feedback
Examples

The rhetorical moves highlighted by AcaWriter are used in good academic writing according to the context. Remember, AcaWriter does not really understand what you have written beautifully crafted nonsense - that's for you to decide! More often than not, it gets it wrong sometimes. If you think it got it wrong, that's fine - now you can correct the grammar, and plagiarism.

i It looks like you are missing a Background move in your writing. You need to provide more information and previous literature on the topic. Try including a Background move clearer in your writing. Examples: The past decade has indicated ... ,It is generally accepted that..., the concept has...

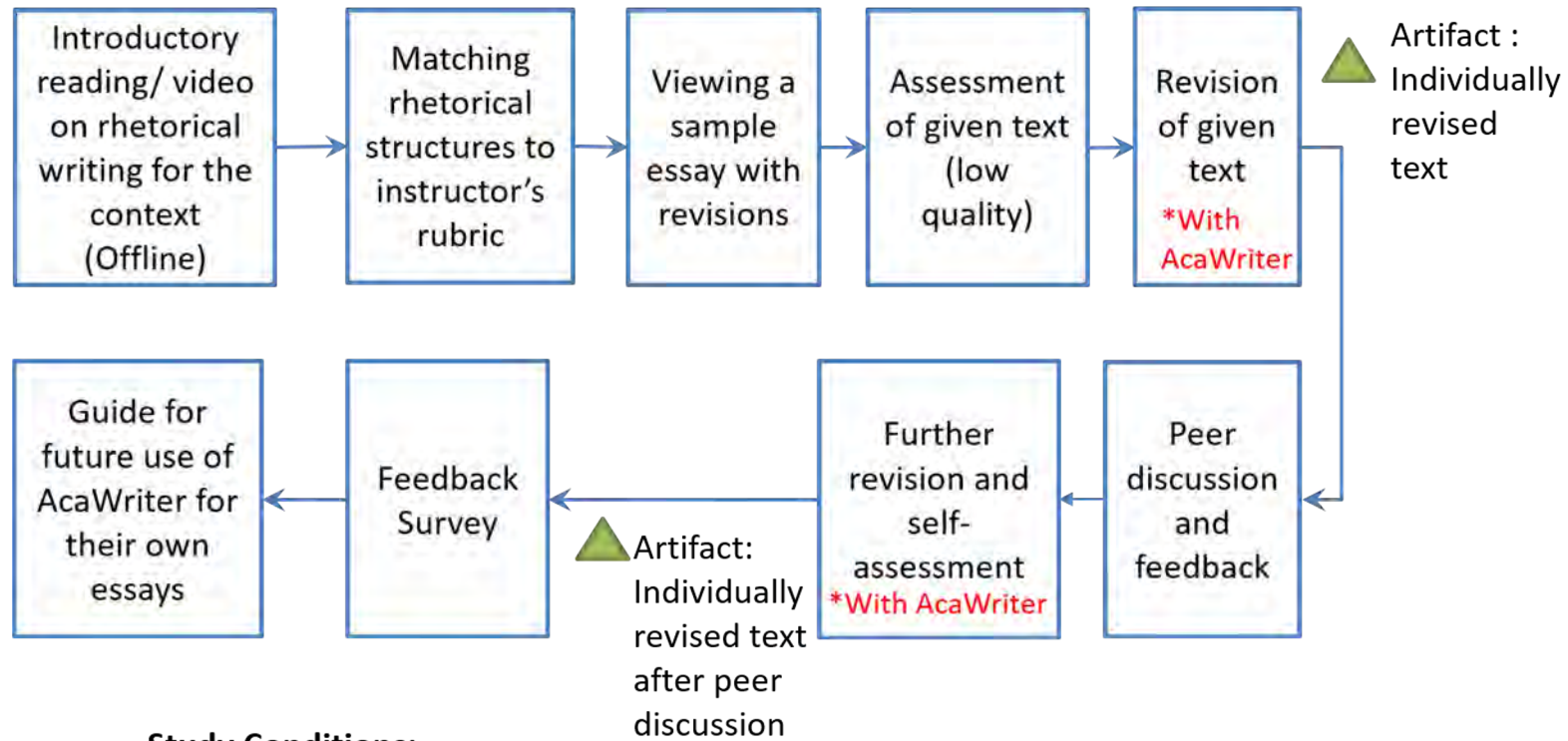
i If there is a key idea you did like to emphasise in your writing, you need to make this move clearer in your writing. Examples: It is important to understand that... proper understanding important...

Analytical Report
Feedback
Examples

A list of sample sentences with rhetorical moves, mapped to your essay assessment rubric is provided below:

| SAMPLE SENTENCE  | ESSAY ASSESSMENT RUBRIC ELEMENT   | ACA WRITER MOVE    |
|--|---|--------------------|
| The concept of good faith <b>has previously been thought to</b> be a work in progress in Australia.  | Engagement with the law and scholarly literature                          | Background         |
| <b>This article will trace</b> the origins of good faith and its development in the common law. <b>This essay contains three parts.</b> <b>The first part will talk about</b> the origins of good faith. | Statement of thesis, Essay plan   | Summary            |
| <b>However,</b> where the obligations are found in statute and they conflict with contractual obligations, <b>it is important to note that</b> the former must prevail.                                  | Identification of relevant issues, Critical analysis and original insight | Contrast, Emphasis |

# Writing Activity



## Study Conditions:

- \*With automated feedback from AcaWriter for revision
- Without automated feedback from AcaWriter for revision

More info: <http://heta.io/resources/wawa-improve-sample-text-plus-peer-discussion-civil-law/>



# Matching exercise

## Understanding instructor's rubric by matching sample sentences to rubric elements

To help you in your assignments, it is important that you understand the rubric you will be assessed against. In this task, you should identify the sample sentences from an essay (on the left) that correspond to the elements of the rubric (on the right). Use the drag and drop interface to match the sentences to the elements. Once you have completed the task, you will automatically be redirected to the next page.

**Note:** The sentences are highlighted to show how they would be marked by the tool AcaWriter which identifies rhetorical moves in a text. Make sense of this to understand how AcaWriter tags are related to the rubric.

| Sample Sentences   | Drop here  | Rubric Elements  |
|--|--|--|
| <p><b>Rhetorical Moves from AcaWriter:</b> <b>S</b> Summarises or signals the authors goals or sections <b>P</b> Perspective or stance <b>E</b> Emphasis to highlight key ideas <b>N</b> Novel improvements in ideas <b>C</b> Contrasting idea, tension or critical insight <b>B</b> Background information and previous work <b>S</b> Surprising or unexpected finding <b>Q</b> Question or gap in previous knowledge <b>T</b> Trend or tendency related to ideas</p> |  |  |
| <p><b>B</b> The concept of good faith has previously been thought to be a 'work in progress' in Australia. Elucidation of Mason J's three indicia have revealed the concept to not only be moulded by the context in which the obligation is imposed, but to guide the aspects of behaviour required of practitioners in negotiation and dispute resolution settings.</p>  | <p>Engagement with the law and scholarly literature</p>        | <p>Statement of thesis/ argument</p>                   |
| <p><b>S</b> This essay contains three parts. The first part will talk about the origins of good faith. The second part explains its origin in the common law to a three element representation of good faith espoused by Sir Anthony Mason. Finally, It concludes by illustrating behaviour which may guide practitioners how best to adopt and demonstrate good faith.</p>  | <p>Essay plan</p>  | <p>Identification of relevant issues</p>               |
| <p><b>E C</b> However, where the obligations are found in statute and they conflict with contractual obligations, it is important to note that the former must prevail. Such conflict in duties is something to which the court must have regard.</p>  | <p>Drawing together themes and reaching logical conclusion</p> | <p>Critical analysis, evaluation, original insight</p> |
| <p><b>S</b> In conclusion, the reasonable behaviour required under the standard of good faith does not preclude strong bargaining techniques, and facilitates the goals of legislative and contractual requirements to undertake dispute resolution processes.</p>   |  |  |

# Viewing sample revisions

## Bills or Bitcoin?

### Five things every lawyer should know about the future of money

Buying Bitcoin is not the only way to “invest” in it. There are a number of proposed exchange-traded funds or Bitcoin trusts being promoted in the United States as investment schemes. Unremarkably, none has been registered. So far, regulators have demonstrated more resistance to a negative view of Bitcoin than acceptance of it. In May 2014, the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) issued an alert warning of the potential risks of investments in Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies. However, this sentiment may be about to change.

Indicates to the reader that this is not a surprise. The author is framing the text that follows.

Author is indicating that the next paragraph will describe a shift from the position described in the first paragraph

In February 2017, the SEC moved closer to accepting the registration of the Winklevoss Bitcoin Trust as an investment product.<sup>1</sup> The Winklevoss twins have been waiting for over three years for this approval. Since then, two further applications for approval have been submitted by Bitcoin investment trusts.<sup>2</sup> After a number of requests for public comment, revisions, and extensions of time, the SEC’s deadline to rule on whether to approve these applications looms. If the SEC approves these applications, there will likely be a significant increase in trade in Bitcoin.

The author is indicating to the reader

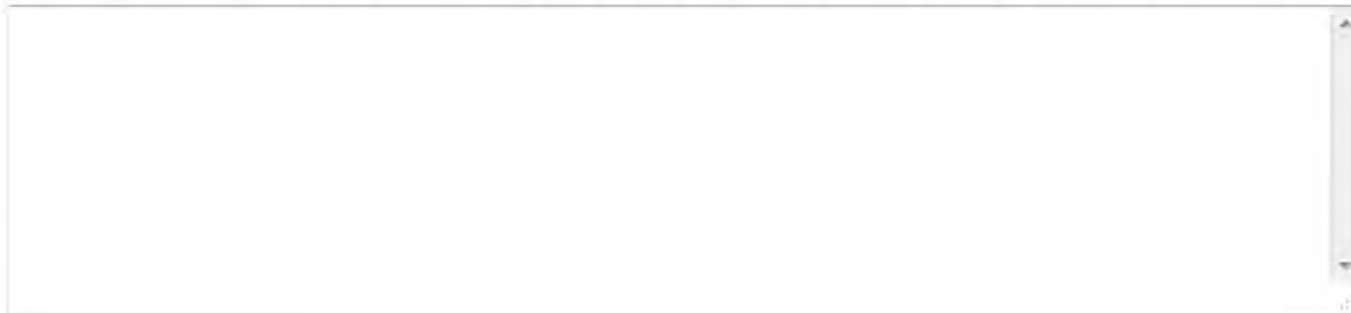
The reason why the SEC’s approval is required is that a key role of the SEC is to

# Assessing given text

1. What grade would you give to this sample essay?

- HD     Distinction     Credit     Pass     Fail

2. Give reasons for selecting the above grade. What are the problems in this text and how would you address them?

A large, empty rectangular text box with a thin grey border and a vertical scrollbar on the right side, intended for the user to provide reasons for their grade selection.

3. How confident are you that your grade for this essay will match the instructor's grade?

- Extremely confident     Very confident     Somewhat confident     Slightly confident     Not confident at all

# Revision and Self-assessment

Law Assignment
Feedback and Draft Saved 09/07/2019 06:40pm

Get Feedback & Save
Download PDF

AcaWriter works fastest with short texts, so if you're only working on a specific section, don't paste in the whole document. It still processes long texts, but it may take a few minutes to get your feedback to you.

**B I U**

**Essay title: Do the benefits of video conferencing in civil trials outweigh the risks?**

**Introduction**

Rapidly advancing technology has been seen as a marker of contemporary modernity. It has been a formidable vessel in transporting old world values and traditions into a new world of innovation and deviation. In the legal world, the growing area of cyber-crime, metadata and privacy laws all affirm the idea that technological change is inescapable. The implementation of video conferencing technologies in courts reflect an attempt by the judiciary to give effect to case-management principles and the overriding purpose - that is, the 'just, quick and cheap' resolution. Do the benefits of video conferencing in civil trials outweigh the risks identified by Salzyzn [1]?

While video conferencing in civil trials does generally reduce costs, promote access to justice and is generally quicker than in-person examinations, the pursuit of such technologies should only be engaged with as a last resort for the purpose of upholding the integrity of the law in the Australian context. The current stance of Australian courts considering the access to justice in light of Salzyzn's arguments, particularly the latter, is of interest. Part three will examine the role of video conferencing in breaking down traditional social barriers before investigating and evaluating the cost and quality of video conferencing by considering credibility assessments and emotional connection, and part five will examine the impact of video conferencing on the public perception of the legal system.

**Part I: Current Stance of Australian Courts**

Since the use of CCTV in what were predominantly criminal trials (for vulnerable witnesses, such as children or sexual abuse victims) [2], the courts have advanced to utilising Integrated Services for Digital Network (ISDN) video c...

ISDN the courts' adapted

**Analytical Report**      **Feedback**      **Examples**

The analytical report highlights salient rhetorical moves AcaWriter identified in your essay for reflection. For more specific feedback, go to the Feedback tab.

**Rhetorical Moves**

- S Summarises or signals the authors goals    P Perspective or stance
- E Emphasis to highlight key ideas    N Novel improvements in ideas
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**Questions (To be answered after completing your revision in AcaWriter)**

**1. How would you rate the changes you made? (Consider the criteria: Statement of Argument, Statement of Essay Plan, Identification of issues, Analysis, Sustained thesis, Original insight, Engages with lit/cases, and how they are expressed)**

Improved a lot   
  Slightly improved   
  About the same   
  Worse

**2. Why? Give reasons for selecting the above option**

# Peer Discussion and Revision

**Instructions for peer discussion (10 mins)**

- Select a partner nearby to work with and swap your laptops so you can see each other's revised essays.
- Read your partner's revised essay, and think about how to improve it, making use of rhetorical moves and discourse markers
- Give feedback to your partner on how they can improve their revised essay further, and then your partner will give you feedback
- Try to make at least 3 suggestions for improvements, using the rubric and discourse markers to support your feedback.
- For further revising the text, swap back laptops and use the feedback to create your final improved version of the essay.

Enter the studentID and name of the peer you are working with today:

**Revision Task (10 mins)**

Go back to AcaWriter now to improve the text further by taking into account the peer discussion comments. Keep the current tab always open, and come back to AWA-Tutor when you are satisfied with the revisions you made in AcaWriter.

**Questions** (To be answered after completing your revision in AcaWriter)

1. How would you rate the changes you made from the previous stage?

Improved a lot  
  Slightly improved  
  About the same  
  Worse

2. Why? Give reasons for selecting the above option

Law Assignment
Feedback and Draft Saved 09/07/2019 09:40pm

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**Part I: Current Stance of Australian Courts**

Since the use of CCTV in what were predominantly criminal trials (for vulnerable witnesses, such as children or sexual abuse victims) [2], the courts have advanced to utilising Integrated Services for Digital Network (ISDN) video conferencing and extended it to civil trials [3]. With this progression from CCTV to ISDN the courts' adapted to technological change [4].

**Analytical Report**      **Feedback**      **Examples**

The analytical report highlights salient rhetorical moves AcaWriter identified in your essay for reflection. For more specific feedback, go to the Feedback tab.

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Essay title: Do the benefits of video conferencing in civil trials outweigh the risks?  
Introduction  
Rapidly advancing technology has been seen as a marker of contemporary modernity. It has been a formidable vessel in transporting old world values and traditions into a new world of innovation and deviation. In the legal world, the growing area of cyber-crime, metadata and privacy laws all affirm the idea that technological change is inescapable. The implementation of video conferencing technologies in courts reflect an attempt by the judiciary to give effect to case-management principles and the overriding purpose - that is, the 'just, quick and cheap' resolution. Do the benefits of video conferencing in civil trials outweigh the risks identified by Salzyzn [1]?

While video conferencing in civil trials does generally reduce costs, promote access to justice and is generally quicker than in-person examinations, the pursuit of such technologies should only be engaged with as a last resort for the purpose of upholding the integrity of the law in the Australian context. The current stance of Australian courts considering the access to justice in light of Salzyzn's arguments, particularly the latter, is of interest. Part three will examine the role of video conferencing in breaking down

# Feedback Survey

How did you find this task in helping to improve essay writing?

5     4     3     2     1

Very useful    Not useful at all

Please explain why:

In general, how comfortable are you with getting automated feedback from a computer?

5     4     3     2     1

Very comfortable    Not comfortable at all

How did you find the automated feedback provided in this task to improve the essay?

5     4     3     2     1

Very useful    Not useful at all

From this exercise, what do you find as the limitations of peer feedback and discussion?

We'd love to hear any further thoughts you have. Please comment here

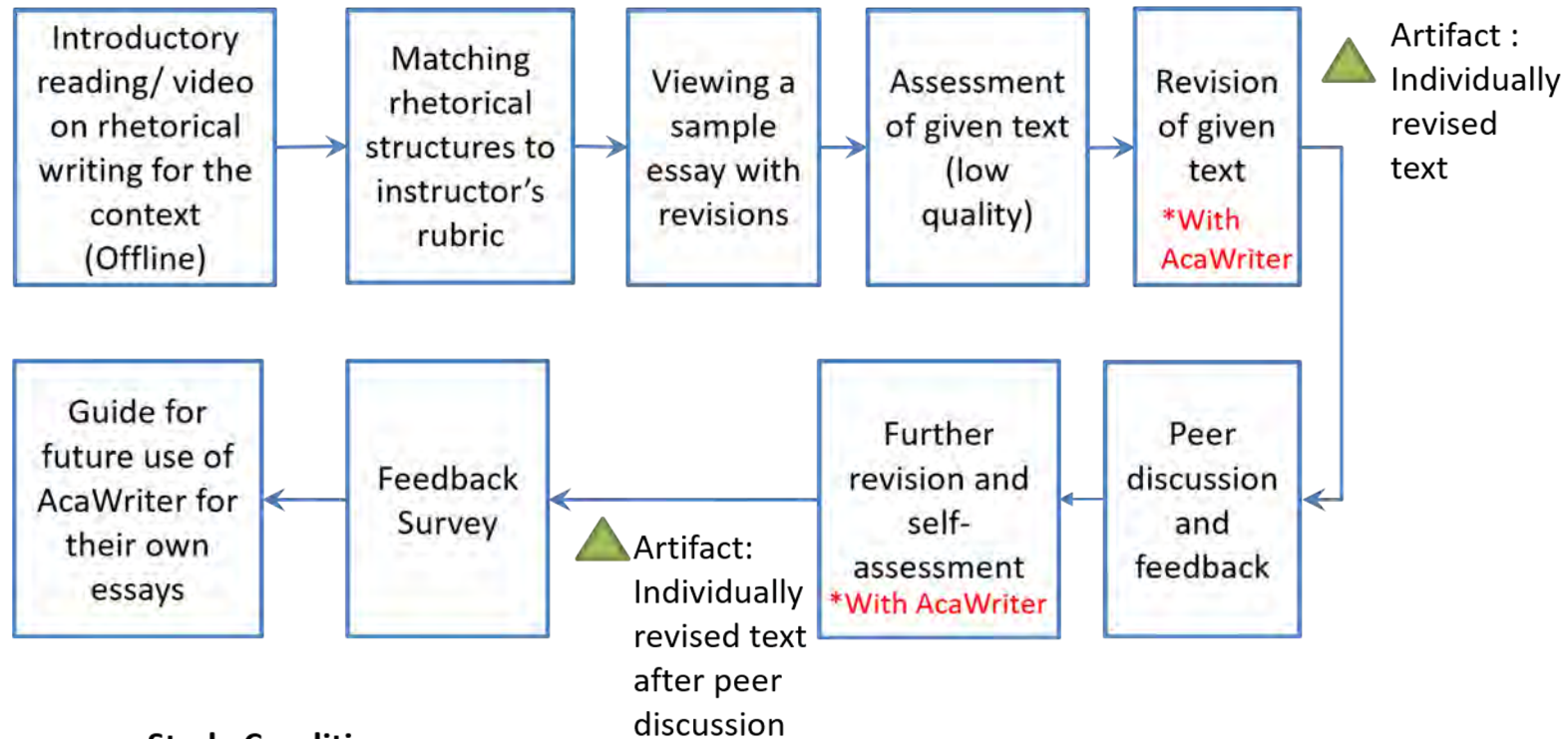
For your own reflection, PDF of a sample improved essay by your instructor is available for download below:

[Download my instructor's improved essay](#)

[Submit your responses](#) [End of task!](#)

[Submit](#)

# Writing Activity



## Study Conditions:

- \*With automated feedback from AcaWriter for revision
- Without automated feedback from AcaWriter for revision

More info: <http://heta.io/resources/wawa-improve-sample-text-plus-peer-discussion-civil-law/>

# AcaWriter Quick Start Guide

## Why is it relevant to you?

AcaWriter is a writing analytics program that can provide draft feedback on essays.

### How does AcaWriter provide feedback?

In the same way that spell-check and Grammarly will indicate that there may be a spelling or grammatical error in your writing, AcaWriter indicates the presence of certain features of good academic writing. By simply copying and pasting text into the editor box on AcaWriter's landing page and then clicking "Get Feedback & Save", the software processes the text and reports back to the user whether or not certain types of text have been detected. AcaWriter does this with the help of sophisticated natural language processing technology powered by artificial intelligence.

### So, what is AcaWriter looking for in your essays?

In short: attitude. In order to detect attitude, AcaWriter is programmed to recognise discourse markers.

### What are discourse markers?

Good legal academic writing is an important skill for all lawyers. With the advent of evidence by affidavit, written submissions, email, and e-filing, lawyers write more than ever. Knowing how to write persuasively requires an understanding of the different functions that words perform. In your mid-session essays, you have been asked to take a stance in relation to a proposition. For example, should NSW Courts allow parties to appear and give evidence via video conferencing technology? To answer this question, it is necessary to evaluate the risks and benefits. Only an essay that takes a position and then provides a persuasive argument in support of that position will achieve a High Distinction. In order to persuade, the author should use particular rhetorical devices known as discourse markers. Discourse markers perform the function of speaking to the reader and conveying a position (e.g. *This essay will argue ...*; *It is interesting to note, ...*; *Nevertheless, ...*; *Conversely, ...*; *However, ...*; *In spite of these factors, ...*). More examples are provided in the reading material for Week 3 in UTSONline.

### Why bother?

Using AcaWriter gives students an opportunity to receive some pre-submission feedback about their essays. Where there are large tracts of text with no highlighting, students can ask themselves whether there should be (is some analysis, evaluation, original insight needed); or is there too much highlighting (which would suggest a lack of evidence and too much opinion)? Ideally, academics and tutors would give students this feedback, but there simply is not enough time.

## How to use AcaWriter?

Open the AcaWriter website at <https://acawriter.uts.edu.au>. Select UTS Login and enter your UTS Student ID and password. This is the same ID and password that you use to log into UTSONline.

Once you're logged in you'll see the **My Dashboard** homepage. You can **Create a new document** to experiment, but for **Civil Practice** related feedback, click **Enter my assignment code** and type: **<assignment code>**. This is matched to your subject (pops up in blue – see below). Click on this, and optionally edit the title of the new document you're creating. Then press **Add to my documents**.

Click on **Go to my document**, or press the **View my documents** button and click on your Document Title. Your document opens, and you can now start using AcaWriter.

Paste your draft essay text into the white box and press the **Get Feedback & Save** button. AcaWriter works best with short texts, so paste only a section of text you're working on to get feedback faster. AcaWriter will send your text to a server to be analysed and shows you the progress of the analysis. Once the server has completed processing, feedback from AcaWriter will appear on the right hand side of your original text.



# Accounting feedback example – New context

| Analytical Report  | Feedback | Tips |
|--|----------|------|
| <p>The rhetorical moves highlighted by AcaWriter are used in good academic writing but use them with caution according to the context. Remember, AcaWriter does not really understand your writing, the way people do. You may have written beautifully crafted nonsense - that's for you to decide! Moreover, writing is complex, and AcaWriter will get it wrong sometimes. If you think it got it wrong, that's fine - now you're thinking about more than spelling, grammar, and plagiarism.</p> |          |      |

⚠ It looks like you are missing a Summary move that defines the goal or summary of your report and its sections. Try including linguistic cues to make this move clearer in your writing like: This report defines..., the report first examines.. then..., this section explains... Note that you should use past tense in the executive summary section where you explain your results.

⚠ It looks like you are missing a Background move in your text, which highlights previous work on the topic. Some linguistic cues that exemplify background are: Previous market analysis demonstrate that..., ...is widely recognised as ..., It is generally accepted that...Also, make sure that you provide relevant contextual information on the organisation.

⚠ It looks like you are missing Perspective and Emphasis moves, which highlight your attitude about an idea in text. Try including linguistic cues to make this move clearer in your writing. Examples: The key factor is that..., They highlight the focus on ..., ...is a critical aspect of..... Academic theory holds that...

⚠ It looks like you are missing a Contrast move which highlights disagreement, issues, or alternatives. Try including linguistic cues to make this move clearer in your writing like: Although it is the case..., One challenge is..., However, this problem..

| Analytical Report | Feedback | Tips |
|-------------------|----------|------|
|-------------------|----------|------|

Here are certain rhetorical moves you can look for in your report and example sentences for your reference.

Organisational analysis

Where does your report provide contextual information about the organisation's objectives, strategy, structure and activities?

Defining performance

Where does your report provide your perspective **P** about how to define performance or success for the organisation? Where does your report provide emphasis **E** to highlight the most important aspects of performance for the organisation?

Justification of your definition of performance

Where does your report provide convincing, persuasive justifications for your definition of performance by proposing novel **N** or critical insights, contrasting ideas or tension **C**? Where does your report justify your definition of performance with reference to prior work or background **B**?

Written communication

Where in your report do you use appropriate summary statements **S** to signal the content, sequence and goals of the report?

| AcaWriter Move               | Sample Sentences  |
|------------------------------|---|
| Summary                      | <p><b>S</b> This report defines performance for Nike Inc as a whole from the three main perspectives of economic, social and environmental performance.</p> <p><b>S</b> This section will explain how sustainability can result in the achievement of organisational objectives and contribute to company success.</p>  |
| Perspective, Emphasis        | <p><b>P</b> Importantly, research has suggested a link between stronger brand perception and customer loyalty.</p> <p><b>E</b> Therefore, to effectively measure performance for the Canadian Head Office of Lululemon it is essential to consider how the transformational self-improvement ethos of the company is achieved by analysing non-traditional metrics.</p>   |
| Background                   | <p><b>B</b> Previous market analysis shows that Nike is the world's largest supplier of athletic shoes, equipment, and apparel.</p> <p><b>B</b> Such an evaluation by a global organization has been observed previously.</p>   |
| Contrasting ideas and Issues | <p><b>C</b> These requirements maintain product quality as unethically produced garments could be of lower quality, damage its reputation and ultimately contradict the companys objective.</p> <p><b>C</b> While the companys corporate mission is to maintain its market position as a leading brand for an active and mindful lifestyle, a holistic approach to defining performance is necessary given that Lululemons strength lies in its premium image</p> |
| Novelty                      | <p><b>N</b> This closer connection with their customers allows Nike to create new ideas and convert them into products quicker while also being in touch with their demands.</p> <p><b>N</b> Nike believes that through investing in employees and communities, they can inspire while also creating a new method of growth (Nike 2018c).</p>   |

# Accounting Writing Activity

| Week           | Activity  |
|----------------|---|
| Week 1         | Homework Online activity                                  |
| Week 2         | Class exercise – Peer discussion                          |
| Week 3         | Submitting their draft report                             |
| Week 4         | Self-evaluation of draft report (with AcaWriter feedback) |
| Week 5, Week 6 | Peer feedback (optional) and working on final report      |
| Week 7         | Report submission   |

# LEARNING CONTEXT 2

HDR research writing

# Designing AWA for CARS model

## Create A Research Space (CARS)

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>Move 1</b> | <b>Establishing a research territory</b> |
| Step 1        | Claiming centrality<br>and/or            |
| Step 2        | Making topic generalisation(s)<br>and/or |
| Step 3        | Reviewing items of previous research     |
| <b>Move 2</b> | <b>Establishing a niche</b>              |
| Step 1A       | Counter-claiming<br>or                   |
| Step 1B       | Indicating a gap<br>or                   |
| Step 1C       | Question-raising<br>or                   |
| Step 1D       | Continuing a tradition                   |
| <b>Move 3</b> | <b>Occupying the niche</b>               |
| Step 1A       | Outlining purposes<br>or                 |
| Step 1B       | Announcing present research<br>or        |
| Step 2        | Announcing principle findings<br>or      |
| Step 3        | Indicating RA structure                  |



|               |  |          |
|---------------|--|----------|
| <b>Move 1</b> | <b>Establishing a research territory</b>   | CONTEXT  |
| <b>E</b>      | a. by showing that the general research area is important, central, interesting, problematic, or relevant in some way (optional)       |          |
| <b>B</b>      | b. by introducing and reviewing items of previous research in the area (obligatory)  | PROBLEM  |
| <b>Move 2</b> | <b>Establishing a niche</b>  |          |
| <b>C Q</b>    | a. by indicating a gap in the previous research, raising a question about it, or extending previous knowledge in some way (obligatory) | SOLUTION |
| <b>Move 3</b> | <b>Occupying the niche</b>   |          |
| <b>S</b>      | a. by outlining purposes or stating the nature of the present research (obligatory)  |          |
|               | b. by listing research questions and hypotheses (optional)   |          |
| <b>H</b>      | c. by announcing principle findings (optional)   |          |
|               | d. by stating the value of the present research (optional)   |          |
| <b>S</b>      | e. by indicating the structure of the research paper / thesis (optional)   |          |

*Adapted from Swales and Feak (2012, p. 331)*

# Example AcaWriter Feedback

[Get Feedback & Save](#)
[Download PDF](#)

Analytical Report

Feedback

Resources

Move 1: Establishing a research territory

**E** Emphasis of a significant or an important idea **B** Background information and reviewing previous work

Move 2: Establishing a Niche

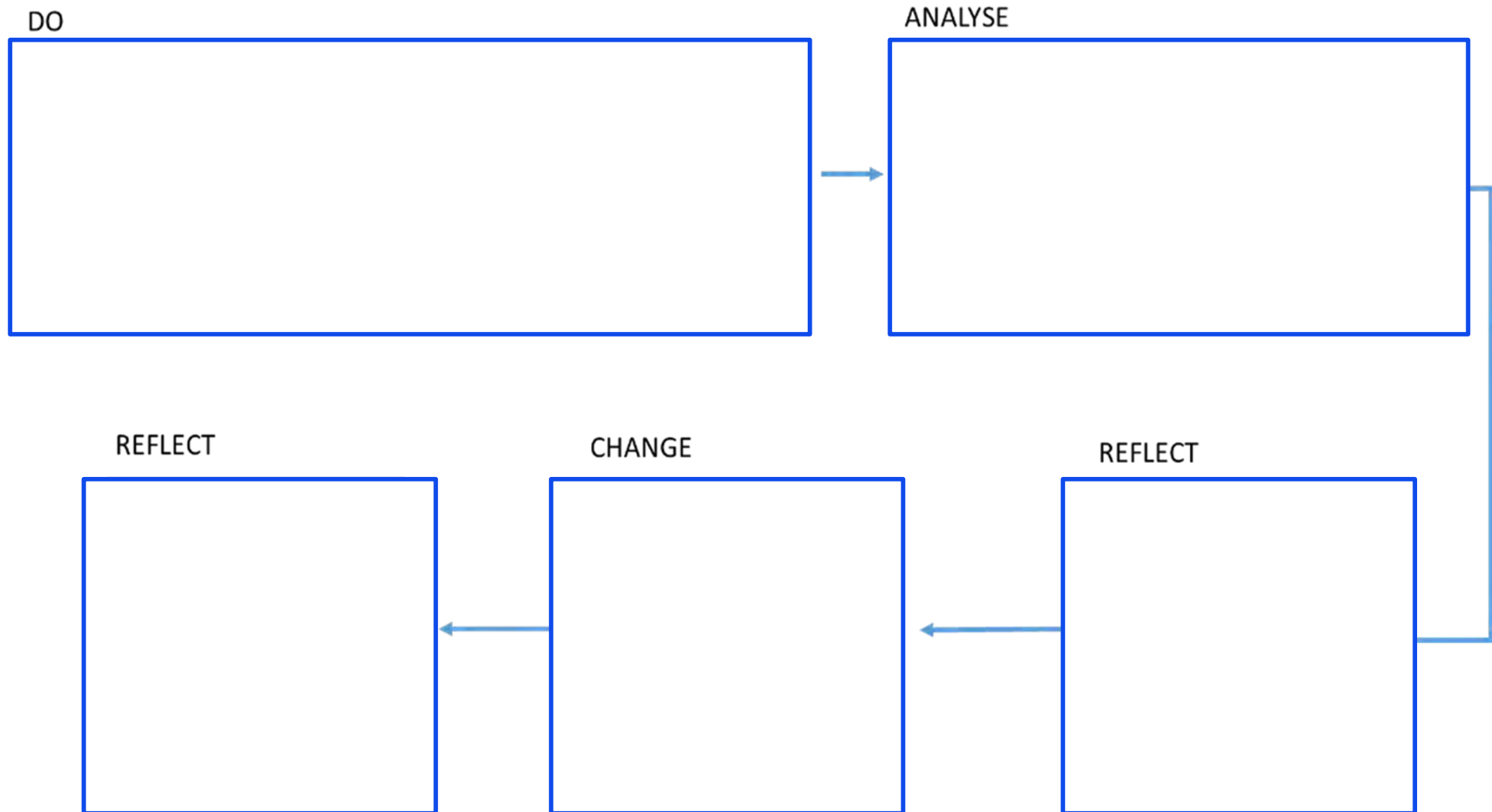
**C** Contrasting idea, tension, disagreement or critical insight **Q** Question or gap in previous knowledge

Move 3: Occupying the Niche

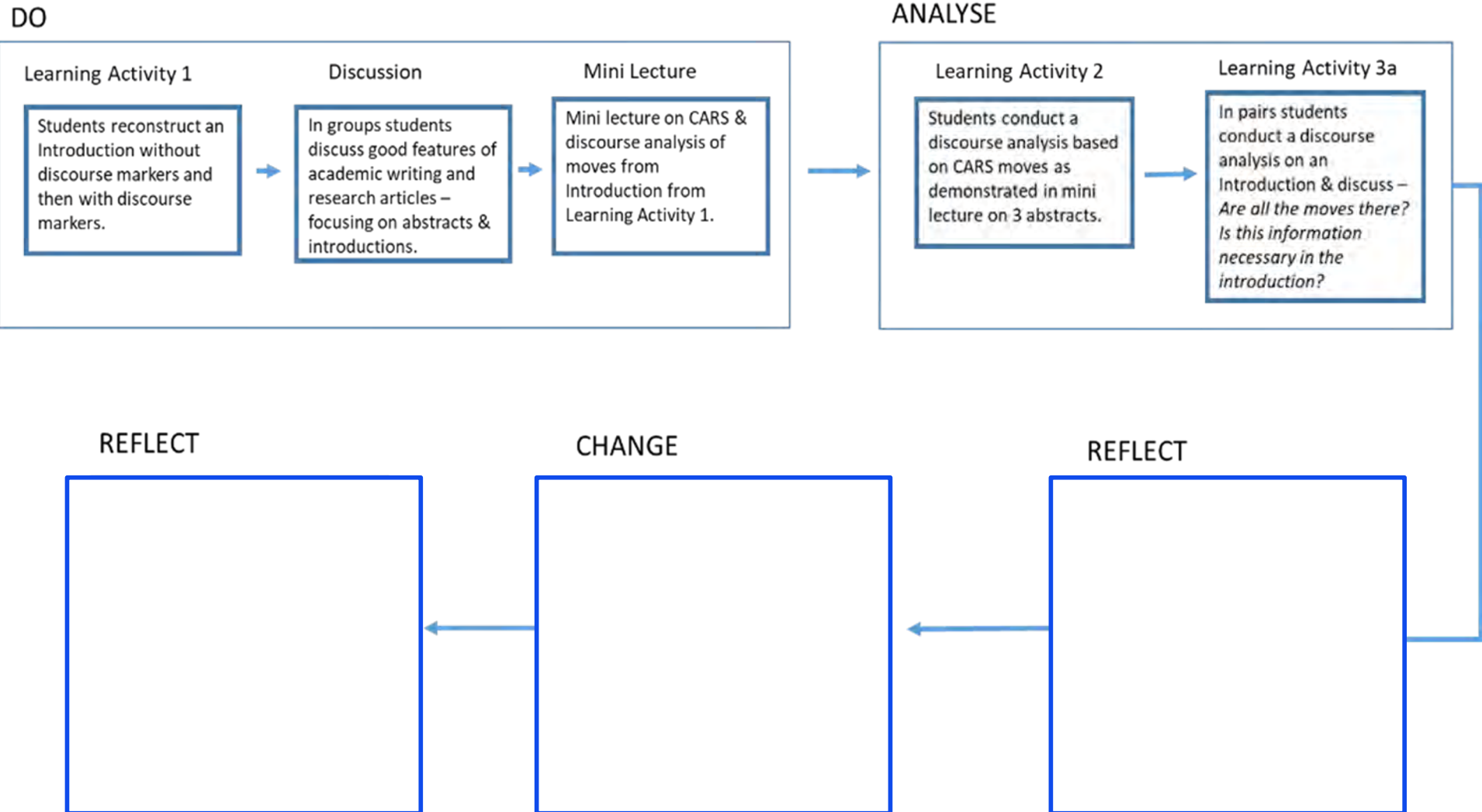
**N** Novelty and value of your research **S** Summary of the author's goal or nature of the research, or structure of the paper

Futsal is the official name for the 5-a-side indoor version of soccer (i.e. 1 goalkeeper and 4 outfield players) that is sanctioned by soccer's international governing body Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA). Futsal was introduced in 1930 and its popularity is growing worldwide. Since 1989, the Futsal World Cup has been contested by countries from all continents every 4 years and involved 16 teams in 1989 growing to 24 teams in 2012. Futsal is a 2 x 20-min game of high-intensity and intermittent actions requiring high physical, tactical, and technical efforts from the players. The court measures approximately 40 x 20 m with 3 x 2-m goals. Futsal is played within both professional and amateur leagues and uses a smaller (size 3 or 4) low-bounce ball, relative to normal, outdoor soccer. During FIFA-organised competitions, teams are made up from a squad of 12 players (2 goalkeepers and 10 outfield players) and unlimited substitutions are permitted. Futsal was designed to maintain the rhythm and intensity of play throughout the match, and achieved via 'rolling' substitutions. The time is stopped when the ball is out of play and for any events that may waste time, meaning that the game usually lasts 70-85% longer than the scheduled total of 40-min. **C** Despite its popularity, limited research has been undertaken into futsal possibly due to the lack of financial interest in the game (relative to soccer). **C** And, of these research articles, most have addressed the game analysis and/or physiological demands on players during match play and training, with little or no evidence relating to skill performance (e.g. shooting and passing). Skilled soccer players can recognise and recall patterns of play more effectively than their less skilled counterparts. Understanding futsal skills would allow practitioners to transfer beneficial information to the player and so a greater understanding of the physical and skill requirements would certainly aid in the development of the sport. **E C S** Therefore, the aim of this review is to highlight the current body of evidence relating to the physical, physiological and skill demands of futsal and identify gaps for future research.

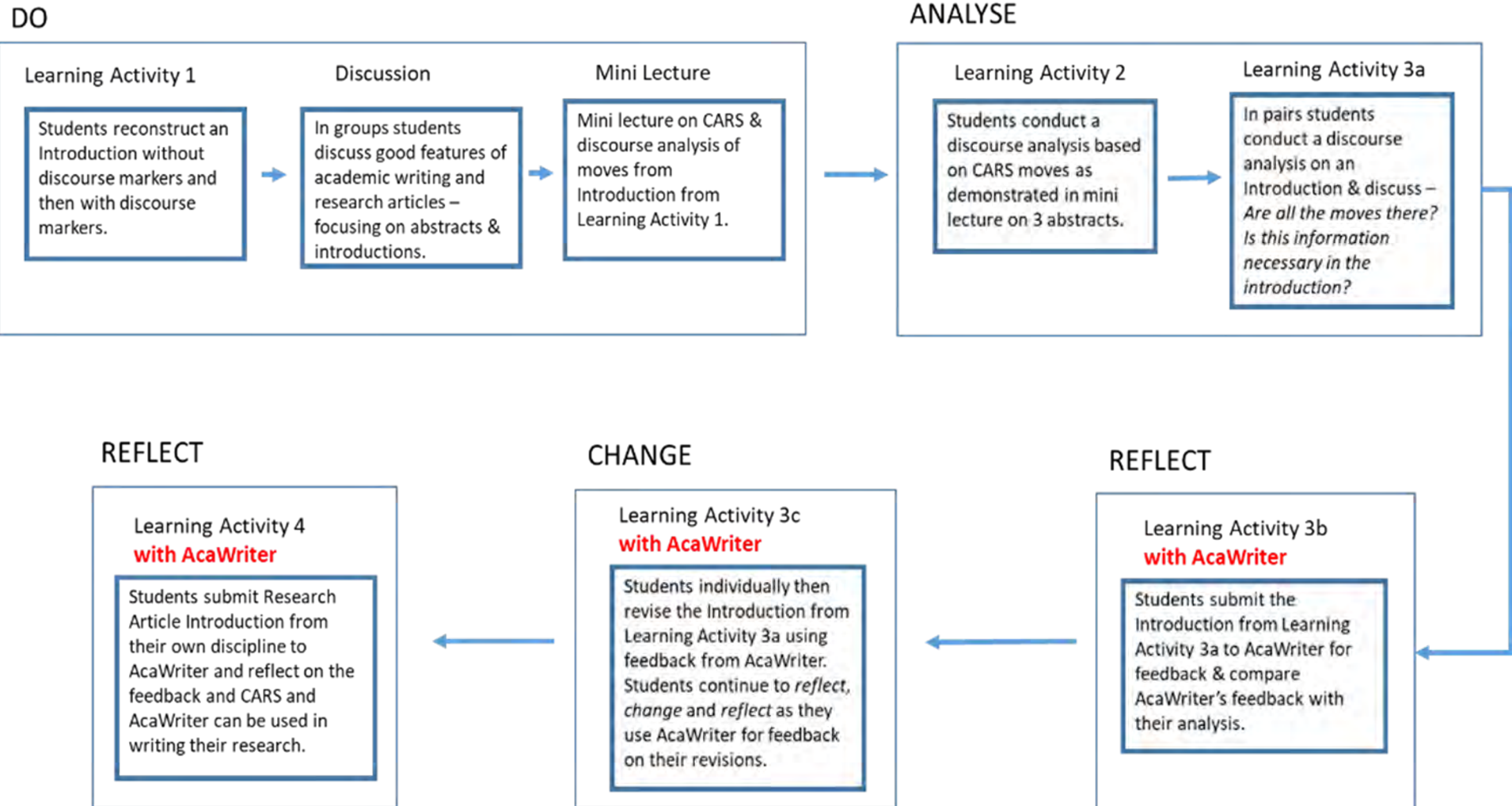
# Embedding AcaWriter in an HDR activity



# Embedding AcaWriter in an HDR activity



# Embedding AcaWriter in an HDR activity





# UTS Online Open Course: Writing an Abstract

**TASTER COURSE**  
**Writing an abstract**

Do you find it difficult to condense a 2,000-word document into a clear and engaging abstract? Writing an effective abstract is an important skill to have especially if you're a research student or academic. Here, we take you through the 'moves' in abstracts and how to apply them to your writing.

## About this course

Writing an effective abstract is critical in the era of publish or perish. The abstract is the first section that is read by reviewers and researchers, so it's important to not only provide an overview of your paper, but more importantly, effectively communicate the argument you are presenting. Millions of research articles are published each year, and often only your abstract is presented. So you'll want to grab your readers' attention, ensuring your abstract is engaging enough to persuade those readers to click, and read your paper. In this course you will learn about the hallmark 'moves' in effective abstracts, analyse abstracts and practice applying the moves to your writing. You'll also have the chance to submit your abstract to AcaWriter, our automated feedback tool, and receive feedback on the moves in your abstract.

### Course structure

- ▶ The purpose of an abstract
- ▶ What abstracts are made of
- ▶ Analysing an abstract
- ▶ Starting your abstract
- ▶ Finding the moves
- ▶ Moves in your discipline

### Free course


**START DATE** Start anytime

**MODE** Online

**DURATION** Self paced

Start learning

### Meet the Expert



**Sophie Abel**  
Academic Language and Learning Educator

Sophie Abel is an academic writing specialist who has taught academic writing for over 10 years to undergraduate, postgraduate and higher degree research students in a

**More** ▾

# LEARNING CONTEXT 3

## Reflective Writing

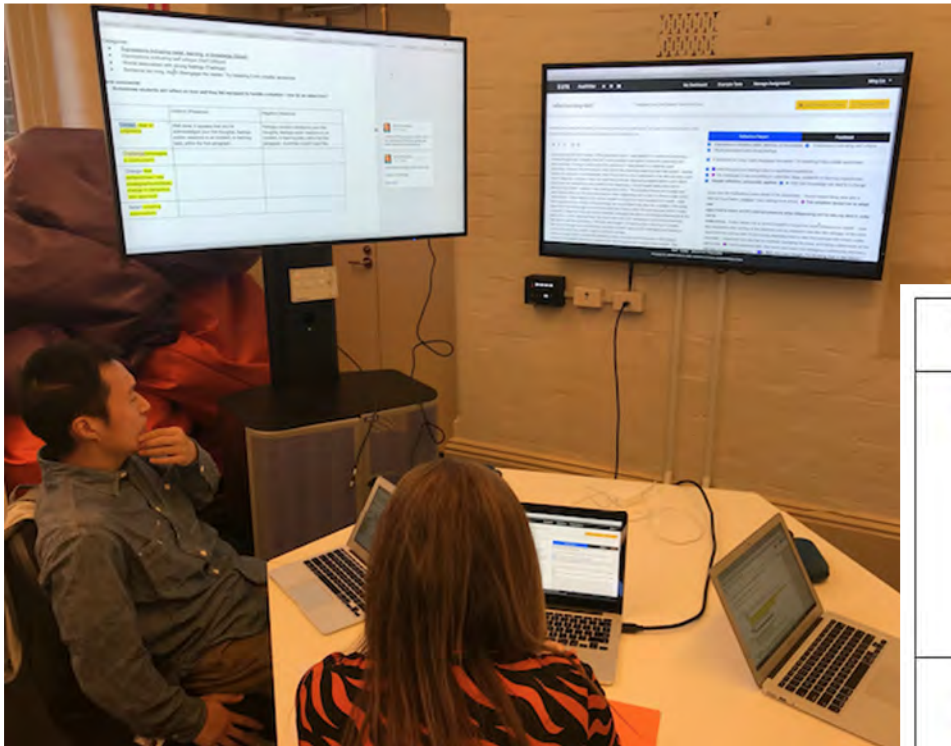
# An example of co-design rubrics for Critical Reflection Essay

|       |                 |                                      |                                      |  |   |   |
|-------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Depth | Intention       |                                      |                                      |  |   | What change is likely to lead to future benefits? |
|       | Integration     |                                      | What impact on my goals/aspirations? | What other ideas could I use to change myself? | How do others address these challenges? | How can I learn from other perspectives?          |
|       | Internalisation |                                      | What do these feelings say about me? | How is this a problem that challenges me?      | Why do I need to change?                | How can I change?                                 |
|       | Interpretation  | What does it mean for me?            | Why do I feel this way?              |  |   |   |
|       | Impression      | What do I notice about my situation? |                                      |  |   |   |
|       | Thoughts        | Feelings                             | Challenge                            | Self critique                                  | Potential solution                      | Learning opportunity                              |
|       | CONTEXT         |                                      | CHALLENGE                            |  | CHANGE                                  |   |
|       | Narrative       |                                      |                                      |  |   |   |



|   | EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS - PROFICIENT  | MEETS EXPECTATIONS - COMPETENT   | CRITERIA NOT YET MET  |
|---|--|--|---|
| GRADE                                     | D → HD   | P → C  | Z   |
| 1. Readability/5 marks                    | <b>High standard of English expression, grammar and spelling</b><br>Clear and concise written expression and accurate grammar and spelling   | <b>Appropriate standard of English expression, grammar and spelling</b><br>Written expression is mostly clear and correct. Some instances where expression, grammar and/or spelling could have been clearer or corrected                                   | <b>Inappropriate written expression.</b><br>Unclear written expression including frequent spelling and grammatical errors. Little or no attempt to create a flowing narrative and grammar/spelling is poor  |
| 2. Initial thoughts and feelings/10 marks | <b>Highly effective communication style with high levels of engagement with initial thoughts and feelings</b><br>Excellent descriptions of initial thoughts and feelings. Reflections are original and demonstrate student's ability to engage effectively with set task/keeping regular notes and reflecting on those | <b>Communication style is appropriate. Appropriate engagement with initial thoughts and feelings</b><br>Appropriate descriptions of initial thoughts and feelings. Reflections demonstrate appropriate attempts at original thinking but could be improved | <b>Communication style is inappropriate. Minimal engagement with initial thoughts and feelings</b><br>Minimal/lacking descriptions of initial thoughts and feelings. No evidence of original thinking. Reflections closely mirror those offered in introductory sources |
| 3. Critical reflection/10 marks           | <b>High levels of critical Reflection</b><br>Clear critical analysis of literature. Clear links to personal experiences. Reflections demonstrate student's ability to link theory and practice   | <b>Appropriate levels of critical reflection</b><br>Some attempt at critical reflection with clear evidence of engagement with the literature. Links to personal experience but can be improved  | <b>Inappropriate level of critical reflection</b><br>No attempt at critical reflection. Engagement with literature is mostly descriptive. No links or reflections on personal experience and learning   |
| 4. Referencing/5 marks                    | <b>Referencing is well formatted in UTS Harvard Style</b><br>Appropriate style used. Acknowledges all sources appropriately  | <b>References provided</b><br>Appropriate style used. Most sources are acknowledged. Some mistakes or references are incomplete  | <b>There are no references provided</b><br>Incomplete and/or inconsistent reference style. Does not acknowledge any sources   |

# An example of co-design feedback for pharmacy placement reflection report



| Highlighting Category                     | Positive feedback<br>(Presence of highlighting)   | Cautionary feedback<br>(Absence of highlighting)   |
|---|---|--|
| <icon> Context, clear of judgments        | Well done, it appears that you've acknowledged your first thoughts, feelings and/or reactions to an incident, or learning task, within the first paragraph.   | Perhaps consider introducing your first thoughts, feelings and/or reactions to an incident, or learning task, within the first paragraph. AcaWriter couldn't spot this.<br><br>(triangle without square) While it appears that you've reported on how you would change/prepare for the future, you don't seem to have described your thoughts, feelings and/or reactions to an incident, or learning task.         |
| <icon> Challenge(strategies to overcome?) | Well done, it appears that you've reported on something you found challenging. Do you think you could expand the detail related to the challenge?<br><br>(double circles) Well done, it appears that you may have expanded the detail on the challenge you faced. | It appears that you haven't commented on anything you found challenging. If you did find something challenging, please expand on this.<br><br>(triangle without preceding circle) While it appears that you've reported on how you would change/prepare for the future, you don't seem to have reported first on what you found challenging. Perhaps you've reflected only on the positive aspects in your report? |
| <icon> Change new perspectives/ new       | Well done, it appears that you've reflected on how you would change/prepare for the future. Is there anything further to say about these new  | It appears that you haven't commented on what you would do differently should the same event occur in the future. Perhaps think about changes  |

## Co-design feedback (Contd..)

- The feedback template consists of a set of rules, which will trigger feedback device to students given the presence or absence of particular writing analytics features.
- An example of co-designed feedback rules in pharmacy. For a given feature (col.1), we considered what should be said to the student if it appeared (col.2) or was missing (col.3). More complex patterns can be defined.

| Highlighting Category                     | Positive feedback<br>(Presence of highlighting)   | Cautionary feedback<br>(Absence of highlighting)   |
|---|---|--|
| <icon> Context, clear of judgments        | Well done, it appears that you've acknowledged your first thoughts, feelings and/or reactions to an incident, or learning task, within the first paragraph.   | Perhaps consider introducing your first thoughts, feelings and/or reactions to an incident, or learning task, within the first paragraph. AcaWriter couldn't spot this.<br><br>(triangle without square) While it appears that you've reported on how you would change/prepare for the future, you don't seem to have described your thoughts, feelings and/or reactions to an incident, or learning task.         |
| <icon> Challenge(strategies to overcome?) | Well done, it appears that you've reported on something you found challenging. Do you think you could expand the detail related to the challenge?<br><br>(double circles) Well done, it appears that you may have expanded the detail on the challenge you faced. | It appears that you haven't commented on anything you found challenging. If you did find something challenging, please expand on this.<br><br>(triangle without preceding circle) While it appears that you've reported on how you would change/prepare for the future, you don't seem to have reported first on what you found challenging. Perhaps you've reflected only on the positive aspects in your report? |
| <icon> Change new perspectives/ new       | Well done, it appears that you've reflected on how you would change/prepare for the future. Is there anything further to say about these new  | It appears that you haven't commented on what you would do differently should the same event occur in the future. Perhaps think about changes  |



| Reflective Report   | Feedback | Resources |
|---|----------|-----------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⚠ Perhaps consider introducing your first thoughts, feelings and/or reactions to an incident, or learning task, within the first paragraph. AcaWriter couldn't spot this within first paragraph</li> <li>✅ You have reflected on your beliefs/learning/knowledge.</li> <li>✅ You seem to have incorporated a deeper reflection indicating self-critique.</li> <li>✅ It appears that you have reflected on your feelings, thoughts or reactions.</li> <li>✅ It appears that you have reflected in a deeper way about how your experiences connect with your professional development.</li> <li>✅ It appears that you've reported on something you found challenging.</li> <li>✅ It appears that you've reflected on how you would change/prepare for the future. Is there anything further to say about these new insights that have led to change.</li> <li>✅ It appears that you may have expanded the detail on the challenge you faced. (3)</li> <li>✅ It appears that you have expanded the detail on how you would change/prepare for the future. (2)</li> <li>⚠ While it appears that you've reported on how you would change/prepare for the future, you don't seem to have reported first on what you found challenging. Perhaps you've reflected only on the positive aspects in your report?.</li> </ul> |          |           |

# ACAWRITER HANDS-ON

# Tutorial & Questions

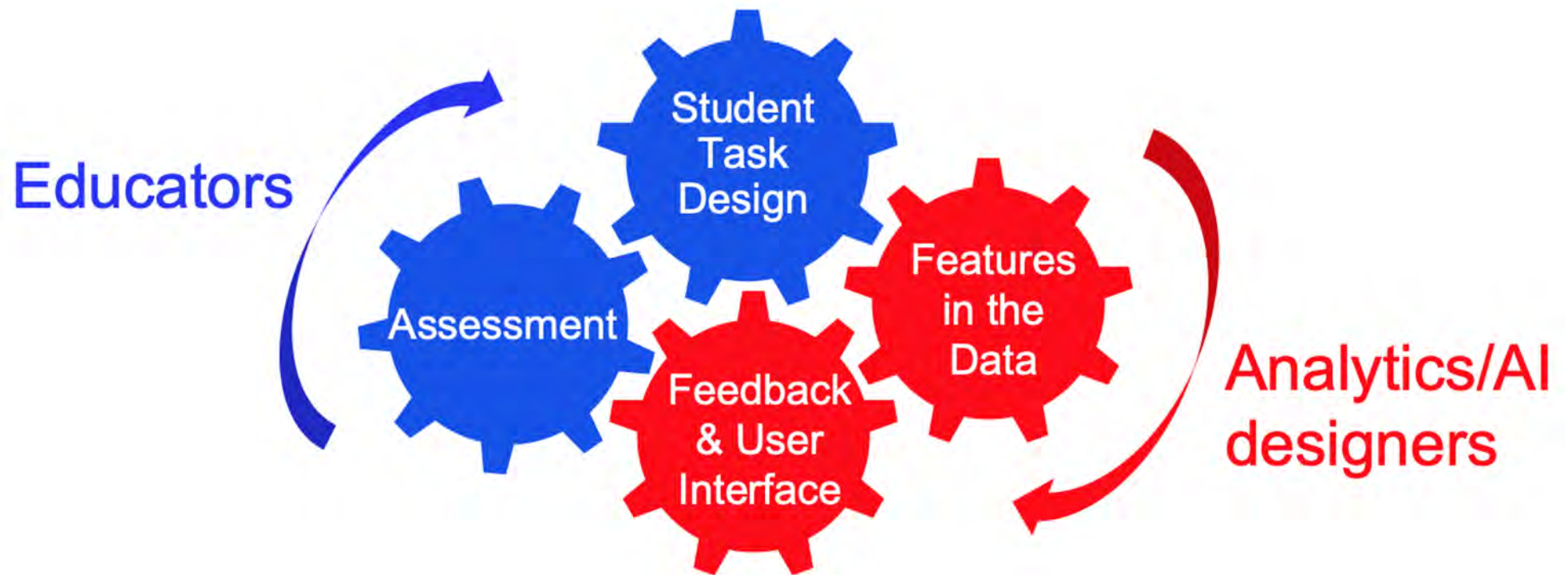
- Go to <https://acawriter.uts.edu.au> and login with your staff ID.
- Create your own assignment using a genre type.
- If you have a sample text to try on, paste it in the editor and click on 'Get Feedback & Save'.

Sample texts: <https://tinyurl.com/yyxg4nlf>

SHARE YOUR  
THOUGHTS...



Interested in working with us to integrate AcaWriter into student tasks/assessments?



## Recap

- Rhetorical moves
- AcaWriter feedback
- AcaWriter Integration into Courses
- Hands-on with AcaWriter

# Educator resources: AcaWriter Educators portal

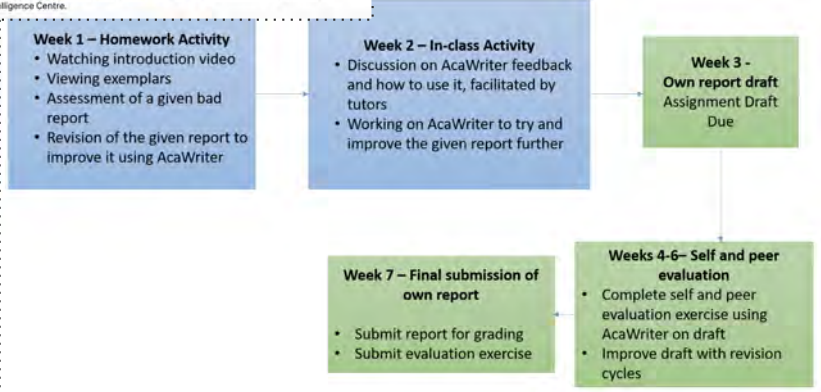
<https://www.uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/teaching-and-research-integration/acawriter/educators>



Improving pharmacy students' reflective writing



Improving Business Report Writing (Accounting)



# Educator resources: The UTS Open module for Research Abstracts

<https://open.uts.edu.au/uts-open/study-area/communication--media/writing-an-abstract>

**Writing an Abstract** Edit



Want to write an amazing abstract for that paper? In this module you will learn how to write an effective abstract. You will be introduced to the 'moves' in abstracts, analyse abstracts, and have a go at writing your own abstract.

So let's get started...

Drag and drop the implied questions below to match the corresponding move.

| MOVES   |  | IMPLIED QUESTIONS   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| Background / Context                                      | Purpose of the paper / Present, research | What do the findings mean?<br>What's the significance of the findings?<br>What are the implications of the study? |  |
| Research problem / Issues / Gap in the literature         | Methods / Approach / Procedure           | What problem or issue are you trying to solve?<br>What gap are you trying to fill?<br>What is unknown?            |  |
| What's the answer to the problem?<br>What was discovered? | Conclusion / Implications / Significance | What do we know about the topic?<br>Why is this topic / research important?                                       | How was the study carried out?<br>What methods, models, approaches, or data are used in the study? |

You've got the moves, so let's try finding the moves in abstracts in your discipline. But, before you make your move, have a go at matching the moves to the sentences in the below abstract.

**Designing Academic Writing Analytics for Civil Law Student Self-Assessment**

Simon Knight<sup>1</sup>, Simon Backingham Shum<sup>1</sup>, Philippa Ryan<sup>2</sup>, Agnes Sander<sup>2</sup>, Xiaohong Wang<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract** Research into the teaching and assessment of student writing shows that many students find academic writing a challenge to learn, with legal writing no exception. Improving the availability and quality of timely formative feedback is an important aim. However, the time-consuming nature of assessing writing makes it impractical for instructors to provide rapid, detailed feedback on hundreds of draft texts which might be improved prior to submission. This paper describes the design of a natural language processing (NLP) tool to provide such support. We report progress on the development of a web application called AWA (Academic Writing Analytics), which has been piloted in a Civil Law degree. We describe the underlying NLP platform and the participatory design process through which the law academic and analytics team tested and refined an evolving rhetorical parser for the discipline, the user interface design and evaluation process, and feedback from students, which was broadly positive, but also identifies important issues to address. We discuss how our approach is positioned in relation to concerns regarding automated essay grading, and ways in which AWA might provide more actionable feedback to students. We conclude by considering how this design process addresses the challenge of making explicit to learners and educators the underlying mode of action in analytic devices such as user interface panes, which we term algorithmic accountability.

**Keywords** Learning analytics · Writing analytics · Argumentation · Natural language processing · Rhetoric · Civil law · Participatory design

This was just the  
conversation starter.

Do get in touch...



**Enquiries:**

**[cic@uts.edu.au](mailto:cic@uts.edu.au)**