

## Editorial

# Expanding the Horizons of Academic Writing Pedagogy

In this issue of the *Journal of Academic Writing*, we are delighted to feature three contributions that explore how academic writing is taught, experienced, and conceptualised in higher education in unique contexts. Each piece is distinct in its methodology and setting, yet all share a commitment to rethinking writing pedagogy in ways that are inclusive, flexible, and attuned to the realities of contemporary learners.

The first article, 'Balancing Preference and Practicality: Student Choice of Study Mode in a Hybrid-Flexible Academic Writing Course', by **Pringle Barnes**, offers a timely exploration of hybrid-flexible (HyFlex) delivery in a non-credit academic writing course for postgraduate students. The author's dual perspective as both course designer and sole instructor adds a rich layer of pedagogical reflection. What stands out is the nuanced understanding of how students navigate between their ideal learning preferences and the practical constraints of time, access, and interaction. The article not only describes a teaching format; it also interrogates the pedagogical implications of flexibility itself. In doing so, it raises important questions such as: How do we ensure that all modes of delivery, whether in-person, online, or asynchronous, are pedagogically equitable? How can we design for flexibility without reinforcing hierarchies of learning value?

The second article, 'Booksprints as a Learning Format for Students in Higher Education', by **Voigt-Färber**, introduces a collaborative and time-bound writing model that foregrounds process as much as product. Rooted in the German higher education context, the booksprint format in this article positions students not just as learners, but as co-authors and co-producers of knowledge. Thus, it also challenges notions of authorship, assessment, and academic authority. The article is compelling in its articulation of the potential booksprints have for writing development beyond the booksprint itself and in areas such as future skills, project management and digital literacy. It also offers a valuable look into the scaffolding required for social dimensions, to support collaboration and role assignments.

The third contribution, written by **Lestari and Hakim**, is a book review of *Change and Stability in Thesis and Dissertation Writing: The Evolution of an Academic Genre* by Paltridge and Starfield (2024), which offers a genre-based analysis of dissertation writing across four countries. This book provides a comprehensive exploration of how doctoral writing practices have evolved in response to disciplinary norms, institutional expectations, and broader socio-professional shifts. Much like the articles in this issue, the book challenges static conceptions of academic writing and calls for more nuanced, research-informed approaches to pedagogy. Its insights into macrostructure diversity, multimodality, and genre evolution are particularly valuable for educators designing inclusive and flexible writing environments. The review highlights how the book's theoretical foundations such as typology, taxonomy, and textographic analysis are applied to real-world dissertation formats, offering a rich resource for supervisors, graduate students, and policy makers. While the book is praised for its depth and relevance, the reviewers also note areas for improvement, including the need for clearer methodological guidance, more precise definitions of dissertation structures, and broader integration of genre-based approaches. These reflections reinforce the importance of principles such as transparency and adaptability in academic writing pedagogy, which are echoed across the contributions in this issue.

Together, these three contributions offer complementary visions of academic writing pedagogy. One emphasises flexibility and learner autonomy within structured modalities; another centres on collaboration and the social dimensions of writing; and the third provides a scholarly framework for understanding the evolution of academic genres. All are united by a shared implication: that writing extends beyond a skill to be assessed, and the role of the educator is more like that of a designer of learning environments, a facilitator of reflection, and a co-navigator of uncertainty. A further dimension that connects the contributions is the degree to which we can and need to empower students in their active choices about academic writing. The meta-cognitive and self-regulation implicit in all three contributions is compelling. We note the fundamental assumption in booksprints that writing is collaborative and, therefore, the strategic awareness that is called for in writing contexts. We see how the flexible offer of a course delivery invites conscious efforts from both instructor and students to optimise learning given the expanded offer. We appreciate the unpacking of the thesis genre as it calls for more deliberate choices by both candidates and supervisors, though sometimes in the context of somewhat restrictive institutional traditions.

These two common denominators, an extended conceptualisation of writing and the meta-cognitive dimension of writing, in the contributions are vital in a landscape where students' needs, technologies, and institutional expectations are in constant flux and instructors struggle to keep up. So, we hope this issue will inspire readers to experiment with new formats, question inherited assumptions, and continue the important work of making academic writing pedagogy more responsive, more inclusive, and more transformative.

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