

Editorial

Academic Writing Otherwise: Templates, Technologies, and Relational Practices

For the past three general issues of the *Journal of Academic Writing*, we have had a number of authors help us explore approaches, adaptations, and boundaries of academic writing. In the [Summer 2024 issue](#), we saw an emphasis on the human element in writing and the hidden risks of our specialisations when they blind us to the human and affective dimensions in our respective fields and disciplines. For the [Winter issue 2024](#) authors problematise our toolboxes and the requirement on us in Writing Studies to make academic writing more transparent and less of a black box for students so they can fully benefit from the cornerstone it is. [The Summer 2025 issue](#) of JoAW exemplified some of that adaptation and what the attempts of unpacking the black box of writing and writing processes might seem like to students. JoAW's authors did that through exploring alternative approaches such as book sprints or through optimising student course participation with hybrid courses.

In this Winter 2025 issue, during a time we observe academic writing opening up to new tools, perspectives and possibilities, we see JoAW's authors continue the contributions and invite us to fundamentally reconsider and remain open to new and diverse forms of scholarly writing. As we strive to address contextually situated disciplinary writing endeavours, we find ourselves interacting with new tools and approaches such as Journal Article Structure Template (JAST), critical engagement with AI, and educative, multispecies pedagogies. Each piece in the issue calls for greater reflection, flexibility, and openness to emerging norms of scholarly expression.

This issue features three contributions; "Introducing the Journal Article Structure Template (JAST) Approach to Getting your Paper Published," "Student Evaluative Judgements of Writing and Artificial Intelligence: The Disconnect between Structural and Conceptual Knowledge," and "Toward an Educative Pedagogy for Academic Writing in Doctoral Education". Each contribution foregrounds the importance of reflective judgement and agency in the writing process.

Hardy-Johnson, Weller, Strommer and Barker offer us JAST in their article. As a tool, JAST is designed to be inclusive, adaptable, and accessible, especially for writers outside traditional academic centres or those working across languages and disciplines. It addresses the challenge of navigating the often implicit structural and stylistic expectations of journals. By guiding writers to analyse recent articles from their target journals and systematically plan each section and paragraph, JAST seems to offer a practical, flexible, and efficient way to overcome writer's block and meet the implicit expectations of academic publishing. While JAST can be positioned as a tool to enhance productivity and confidence, like any tool, it requires critical engagement. Without an initial investment in understanding how the tool works, its applicability across contexts may be limited, and careless use could risk verbatim imitation and potential plagiarism.

The article on "Student Evaluative Judgements of Writing and Artificial Intelligence" by **Eaton, Harris and Vearncombe** examines how undergraduate students evaluate writing produced with and without generative AI. The study explores the gap between students' ability to assess structural features such as organization and mechanics and their struggle to evaluate conceptual content and argumentation. Through interviews and focus groups, the authors find that while students can identify and revise surface level issues in both AI and human generated texts, they often lack the deeper genre knowledge and evaluative judgement needed to critically

engage with ideas and context. The authors argue that developing students' evaluative abilities, especially in AI mediated writing contexts, is essential for meaningful learning and writing development, and they call for pedagogical approaches that foster both structural and conceptual awareness.

In "Toward an Eductive Pedagogy for Academic Writing in Doctoral Education" **Tu** contributes to the field by proposing the inclusion of more-than-human actors such as trees, animals, and environments as co-creators in the writing process, challenging anthropocentric and individualistic models of scholarship. The article questions the traditional, human-centered view of academic writing as a solitary, purely human activity guided by conventions and structures. Instead, it draws on posthuman and new materialist perspectives to argue that writing is a relational, evolving process shaped by entanglements between humans and more-than-human entities. By sharing personal experiences and examples of such entanglements, the author demonstrates how knowledge production in doctoral writing can be understood as an "eductive" process that unfolds through relationships and interactions with the natural world. This approach builds on posthuman theory by recognising that agency, creativity, and scholarly voice are co-constructed through assemblages that include both human and non-human participants. It also aligns with new materialist thought, which emphasises the material, affective, and ecological dimensions of knowledge-making, and calls for academic writing to be seen as a collaborative practice of "relational becoming" rather than a product of individual engagement. We regard this article text as a promising starter for a JoAW Dialogue and invite our readers to continue the conversation about our assumptions and givens about academic writing, knowledge sharing, and scaffolding writing processes.¹

A key question we must consider is whether alignment is possible between scholars who are flexible and open to evolving writing practices and the gatekeepers of academic writing. Such an open attitude might include writing mentors who might critically invest in tools such as JAST to explore the possibilities they offer in specific contexts; instructors who engage thoughtfully with evaluative teaching practices involving AI; and publishers, PhD committees, and journals willing to experiment with eductive pedagogies and to publish work produced through entanglements with more-than-human actors.

Such an endeavour requires experimentation with what counts as "new" and "valid" in our particular contexts, as well as openness to new forms of interaction, whether we are writing scholars or those deciding which forms of writing can be disseminated and taught. Collaborative efforts of this kind are necessary to shape ongoing discussions around emerging or less visible writing tools, practices, and pedagogies.

We invite you to read this issue and reflect on these questions with us.

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¹ See <https://publications.coventry.ac.uk/index.php/joaw/about/submissions> for how to submit a JoAW Dialogue piece for consideration.