

Writing Scientific English for ESL* Users HT 2024, 3-credit course (8 weeks) for PhD students

*English second language

Deadline for application: 13 September 2024 at 5 p.m. or until the course is full, whichever occurs first. There are 16 places. Decisions will be emailed when the course is full, or by Tuesday, 17 Sept at the latest.

Course description: The scientific paper is an essential part of the research process. This course will teach how to structure and write an article for publication in scientific journals that use the IMRAD style (Introduction, Materials, Results and Discussion). While the course will cover mechanics of good English usage and online tools for grammar and punctuation, the main emphasis is on *writing*. This includes logical structure, flow, and readability. An editor from a scientific journal covers the editorial and referee processes.

The class is limited to 16 students to ensure individualized attention in the writing exercises. Each participant receives multiple opportunities for peer feedback as well as an individualized, private tutorial (30 minutes) with the instructor.

Who is eligible to take the course:

Ph.D. students registered at departments within the TekNat Faculty. M.Sc. students are not eligible. If there are available places, post-docs and Ph.D. students from other Faculties can be accepted. Not all Faculties publish in IMRAD journals, but most of the course material is applicable to scientific writing in general. The course is aimed at PhD students whose first language is not English. Participants are encouraged to bring their own writing as material for the course.

Cost: There is no charge for the course and the course book is also provided free of charge.

When and where: Eight weeks from 24 September to 26 November 2024 (no lectures weeks 41 or 42). The lectures are held at the Biomedical Center (BMC). It is not possible to attend the course remotely.

See xray.teresebergfors.com/teaching for the schedule. The course is once a week, on Tuesdays. It runs from 15:15 to 17.00.

How to apply: Applications must be made by email to the contact person. Give your social security number (personnummer), your supervisor's name, department name and program within it, and preferred native language(s). State in 150 words or fewer—in English—why you need the course at this point in your PhD career.

Contact person: Terese Bergfors, ICM, tel 471 4543, terese.bergfors@icm.uu.se

Credit points: 3

Examination form: The examination consists of 12 writing exercises assigned throughout the eight-week period. All of the writing assignments must be completed to receive the course credits. Attendance at the lectures is obligatory. In the event of illness or other really good excuse, up to one absence can be replaced with an extra writing assignment.

Lecturers:

Terese Bergfors, Structural Biology, ICM, & co-editor of Acta Crystallographica for 11 years

Sara Schwarz, The Language Workshop, Uppsala University

Expected learning outcomes of the course:

After the course, the students should be able to:

1. Use the classical IMRAD structure to write, in acceptable English, a scientific journal article containing: Title, Authors List, Keywords, Abstract, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, References.
2. Use good writing skills regarding sentence length, paragraph construction, text flow, and academic register.
3. Understand the submission, editorial, and referee processes.

Topics to be covered include:

1. What is the IMRAD style? What are the essential parts for each section of an IMRAD article?
2. How is a (good) paragraph constructed? Why does every paragraph need a topic sentence?
3. Why is the title so important? How do I optimize it for search engines?
4. How do I write a concise abstract that will attract my target audience?
5. How can I write the Introduction with help of the CARS model?
6. What are the different ways to construct an argument in the Discussion section?
7. Are there certain problems specific to some language backgrounds? Can I get help with these?
8. What online tools are available for checking grammar and what writing resources does Uppsala University offer?
9. British vs. American English, does it matter?

Topics not included:

How to make good figures (These require a course of their own.)
AI-generated text

Course literature:

- Robert Day's **How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper**, 4th edition or later. *No need to buy the book. You will get a copy without cost on the first day of the course.*
- Assigned readings, available on Studium.