

WRITE101x FAQ

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What do I do if the online activities don't work?

When accessing the course materials and attempting activities, please use the Google Chrome browser whenever you can. If you are still experiencing repeated and specific technical problems, contact edX directly for support using the help tab located at the top left of your screen.

Can I download transcripts of the lecture videos?

You can either copy and paste the text from the window that appears at the side of the video when you click on CC (in the bottom right) OR save a plaintext file by clicking on the Download tab beneath the video and selecting 'Timed Transcript' from the options.

What if I don't have time to go to other sources when I need to expand on the video material?

You'll have to wait until you do. All our material, except for the discussion board, will be archived after the course has finished, so you can access it later. If you expect that an injection of grammar in half an hour of watching the videos each week will transfer itself to your writing, you are expecting the impossible, unless, of course, you are doing this course because you are already knowledgeable and skilled. And some students do fit into this category. You may have noticed on the discussion board that students are making comments like 'I thought I knew a lot about writing, but I've learnt some fantastic new strategies'. The course resources each week could take hours to investigate and the people who painstakingly go through the transcripts, go to recommended websites, and follow up the resources each week will gain substantial benefit from this course.

How can my peers adequately assess my writing?

Peer assessment isn't a perfect process, but it is a valuable one. In the real world, your writing will likely be read by individuals from a variety of educational and cultural backgrounds. Be patient with your feedback. You may not agree with every comment or assessment that your peers make, but you can learn a lot about how different people read and understand your writing.

How is the course assessed?

Throughout this course, you will need to both watch or read the weekly lectures and complete the associated activities to familiarise yourself with the core material. The assessment for Write101x comprises participating on the discussion board (8%), taking the weekly quizzes (40%), and writing four blog posts assessed by your peers (52%). The passing grade for this course is an overall mark of 50% or higher. To find out more about the blog posts, please click on the 'Course assessments in Write101x' link in the 'Introduction to Write 101x' section of the courseware.

How do I format a blog post?

The blog post text box doesn't have a format box option, so this means that you cannot bold, italicise, underline or alter the alignment of your text. As for numbered lists, those can be structured manually.

How can I support those who are struggling to express themselves in English?

English is a difficult language to learn, let alone master. Non-native English speakers who attempt this course and actively participate on the discussion board and in blog assessment should be commended for their effort and bravery. Support other students who are struggling to express themselves in English by writing as clearly as you can. Try to focus on the content of a student's writing rather than on the surface grammatical errors. Offer tips or corrections by modelling the structure or principle or by focusing on the most basic or frequent error, rather than overwhelming the writer with a barrage of corrections. Above all, be patient. We're all in this together.

What do I do if I spot what I think may be an error in the content?

If you spot what you think may be an error, please let us know via the discussion board. Be sure to title the thread specifically about the error that you wish to discuss/enquire about. It would also be helpful if you included 'staff' somewhere in the title, too. We can then fix up any errors as soon as possible (or perhaps explain why a perceived error is not an actual error in this case). Thank you for your attentiveness.

Why are the videos so short, so packed with information, and move so fast?

For many students, accessing longer videos might be prohibitively expensive, time-consuming, or wasteful (where individuals cannot exceed a certain data allowance on an Internet plan, for example). English grammar and style naturally encompasses many complex principles and ideas. The lectures in this course are intended to give students an overview of core material, which they can then follow up at their leisure.. Remember that you can pause or replay the videos as many times as you like, and view the videos with subtitles by clicking the 'CC' button in the bottom right of the window. (You may also copy and paste this text to read through later.) We recommend that you watch the videos with pencil in hand. Take note of any terms or concepts that are unfamiliar, confusing, or otherwise interesting to you. Many of the concepts that we highlight are worthy of following up in greater detail. The Internet is packed with excellent information and advice about grammar and style, so be sure to check out the course resources and suggested readings that we post every week.

Why do we have only one chance to do the quizzes?

Remember that you have until the 17 November 00:30 UTC to submit your answers for all of the quizzes, and that you can save your answers and come back to them later before finally submitting. We recommend making sure that you are 100% confident about the topic before taking the quizzes. You can do this by reading the material in the course resources tab, engaging with fellow students about grammar topics on the discussion board, and taking notes and re-listening to the lectures.

Do some questions have more than one correct answer?

Yes, and these are not there to trick you. We put these questions in as we often point out during lectures how more than one answer can be grammatically sound in a given sentence context. These questions are also a good example of just how a slight grammar change can impact the meaning of a sentence.

Why does edX allow so many students to enrol?

The acronym 'MOOC' stands for 'Massive Open Online Course'. A MOOC aims to offer quality education to as many students as possible — regardless of their age, their gender, their physical ability, or their cultural, educational, or financial background — in an open-access format. As well as including traditional educational resources, MOOCs capitalise on the flexibility of the Internet, incorporating multimedia lectures and activities. MOOCs also encourage democratic interaction among staff and students. edX believes in presenting higher education online, offering an opportunity to 'anyone who wants to achieve, thrive, and grow'. As such,

a MOOC such as Write101x does not exclude any students from participating and welcomes and encourages all participants who wish to learn more about grammar and style in English writing.

What do I get at the end of the course to acknowledge that I have completed it?

Write101x offers both an honour code certificate of achievement for free and an ID verified certificate of achievement, which carries a fee. An honour code certificate of achievement certifies that you have successfully completed a course, but does not verify your identity. A verified certificate of achievement shows that you have successfully completed your edX course and verifies your identity through your photo and ID. Verified certificates are available for a fee that varies by course. The fee for a Write101x verified certificate is \$100 USD.

If you started out auditing the course but wish to upgrade to a verified certificate, simply click the 'challenge yourself' button visible on your dashboard.

Why are you not giving us strategies for enhancing our writing?

We are! All our material is packed with strategies. If you absorb and then apply all the principles that we present each week, you will be well on the way to becoming a confident and competent writer. It takes work on your part to capitalise on all the work that we've done on our part. Remember the writing-thinking-learning connection in week 1? It's hard to get good in a hurry, but, the harder you try, the quicker (more quickly) you'll get good.

How should I mark blog posts?

Firstly, it is important to be objective and fair: use the rubric to guide both the mark that you assign and the feedback that you provide. If you decide to mark down a blog post, you should clearly explain why you have deducted marks according to the material that we cover in this course (you can use terminology from the rubric as a guide). If you are ever in doubt about what grade level to award someone, it is better to mark up than down.

Roslyn Petelin and team