



Chris Sykes

Chris an OCA tutor says:

'Starting out I would have wanted someone I respected as a writer to share my work with. I would have hoped for honest, positive criticism and to be told truthfully that I wasn't wasting my time. That is what I try and give writers on the OCA writing courses, honest criticism, confidence and encouragement.'

Aims of the course

The course aims to:

- inspire and encourage students to work at BA dissertation level on an extended piece of writing of their own choosing
- encourage students to design and implement their own learning strategies
- increase awareness of the formal requirements and on-going practice of their chosen genre
- help students to develop informed and appropriate critical models, of own, and others' writing
- develop third level skills in researching, drafting, editing and presenting creative work and in responding to constructive suggestions/criticism
- help students to create, develop, edit and finish an extended piece of writing.

Course content

The course is based on a mentoring/supervision model. There are no course materials. Students select a tutor from OCA's '*Portfolio of Advanced Courses*'. Here tutors introduce themselves and offer in general terms the sorts of writing and learning approaches they are prepared to work with. Students must submit samples of their work to the chosen tutor who may choose to accept or not.

The specific content of the course is then negotiated between the student and the tutor.

Teaching methods

Distance learning via 5 postal/e-mail tutorials, working throughout with the chosen tutor, subsequent to the initial negotiation phase. All tutors have both relevant teaching experience and practitioner experience (publication in the genre is a minimum requirement). Students deliver assignments based on the negotiated contract and on tutorial guidance. Tutors respond to assignment texts and to the analytic and descriptive commentary students are required to produce.

Learning outcomes

By completion students should have:

- explored the structure, form, historical context, limitations, and specific strengths/problems of their chosen genre
- drafted and edited self-generated texts; and learned discrimination and choice in the deployment of these skills in relation to form and technique
- designed, implemented, monitored and analysed their own learning experience.

Assessment requirements

The student submits 4 units consisting of sections from the work undertaken based on the assignments and freely edited/revised on course completion. All units carry equal weight (25%) and are individually graded. A reflective account is also submitted, which is not graded but can be used as a moderating factor. OCA issues guidelines to the assessment procedures, containing advice as well as instruction.

Registered Office

The Michael Young Arts Centre,
Open College of the Arts,
Unit 1B,
Redbrook Business Park,
Wilthorpe Road,
Barnsley,
South Yorkshire,
S75 1JN

Charity number:

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