



Academic Write Club

Productive writing *in balance with the rest of life*

Online Coaching Programme : June-September 2020

- Set writing goals that are meaningful, balanced, possible and satisfying
- Build confidence, motivation and awareness of what gets in the way and how to overcome it
- Establish strategies for productive writing practices in balance with the rest of life
 - Ongoing peer-support and learning from the collective wisdom of the group
- Ongoing accountability and insight with regular group coaching calls and 1-1 support
 - Create a sustainable writing practice beyond the programme

Academic Write Club is for academics at any stage of their career who want to create a successful period of writing and establish a more effective, balanced writing experience.

Starts Wednesday June 3rd 2020 with an online live coaching writing retreat – with option of attending face-to-face – followed programme of group coaching, peer and 1-1 support for 3 months

Costs: £450 (Personal rate) or £600 (Institutional rate). Concessions also available

For further details or to book a place please email Will and Laura - hello@writeclubcoaching.com

Academic Write Club will be led by Will Medd and Laura Premack. Both are former lecturers with international reputations who became coaches after successful academic careers. They bring an intimate understanding of the experience of academic life, and they share a commitment to coaching with professionalism, emotional sensitivity, and humour.

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- “Just thanks to Will and everyone else in the group for the supportive atmosphere, helpful suggestions and the ability to make even bad writing weeks seem much better after each call! I think my attitude towards writing has really shifted this summer, and become much healthier, and that’s had a big impact on my day-to-day work life.” (Researcher, Lancaster University, 2017)
 - “I stayed on target with my writing goals, and it enabled me to see quickly when I was slowing down and allowed me to get back on track more easily than otherwise would have been the case.” (Lecturer, Lancaster University, 2018)
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Academic WriteClub

Whether your diary has an 'empty space' within which you've been planning to write, or is filled with an ongoing workload within which writing is a squeeze, Write Club will help you create a balanced, productive and satisfying approach to writing. How often is time lost through realising you have too much to do, that you've set unrealistic goals, you've not the space you thought you had, you've lost confidence in what you're trying to do, or you're just too tired!

Write Club involves a combination of group coaching, peer-working and individual support that creates support, challenge and accountability in ways that help you get your writing done and develop effective writing practices you can sustain in balance with the rest of life. Paying particular attention to how you prepare to write, the habit of writing, and the goals you set and what holds you back, Write Club aims for you to end the programme with a sense of satisfaction, balance and confidence in what you've achieved, and with a clear sense of how you will take the lessons into the future.

Running from mid-June to the end of September, we begin with a day retreat to establish some core principles – this can be attended face-to-face or virtually (including following a recording) – and follow with a programme of support that includes group coaching, peer-support and one-to-one communications.

Who is Write Club for?

The Academic Write Club is for academics at any stage of their career who want to create a successful period of writing and establish a more effective, balanced writing experience. The programme has been attended by researchers, lecturers and Professors and PhD students, sometimes at the same time. It has also been attended by people from all disciplines – from physicists to creative writers, sociologists to mathematicians.

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- "The meetings were incredibly useful for touching base with writing and sharing experiences with others, artfully facilitated by Will." (Senior Lecturer, Lancaster University, 2018)
 - "The most useful has been Will's experience and skills as a coach. He can tune in to each individual and is so versatile in his methods. He is amazing and has truly helped each one of us, and has kept us motivated and focused." (Lancaster University PhD Researcher, 2016)
 - "I've attended a few writing retreats with Will, and each reinforces/refreshes/refines my efforts. It's invaluable." (Senior Lecturer, Lancaster University 2018).

What's involved?

Academic Write Club is designed to be adaptive to the needs of participants. It begins with a day retreat to establish some core principles – this can be attended face-to-face or virtually (including following a recording) – and is followed by a programme of support that includes group coaching, peer-support and one-to-one review.

Stage One: WriteHere, RightNow Day Retreat (attended virtually or in person).

The day's agenda includes:

- **Setting up:** Introducing a coaching approach and the relationship between performance, potential and interference; sharing current experience of writing and how participants would like it to be; setting intentions.
- **Engagement:** Developing an agreement amongst the group for the time together and establishing principles for writing, including: when it's writing time, write; separate preparing, drafting and crafting; be curious with a beginner's mind; warm up & warm down.
- **Live coaching experiments:** Focused writing time paired with reflective exercises that lead to insights about process, challenges, successes, and self. Themes include: setting intentions; realigning vision and purpose; managing fear; being present; seeing mood as perspective; writing with joy, confidence, creativity, focus and rhythm.
- **Developing strategies and commitment:** Applying the principles; incorporating new insights; setting the conditions; developing writing habits that sustain momentum; establishing individual goals for the writing period; creating peer-support systems for sharing progress.

Stage 2: Fortnightly Group Coaching, Weekly Peer Support and One-to-One Coaching

Following the retreat, participants will put into practice their writing strategies and will regularly come together to reflect on learning through the following:

- **Weekly review:** Each week participants will complete a short review of progress on their goals and questions and receive email support from coaches as needed.
- **Group coaching:** A fortnightly group coaching session offers regular opportunity to reflect on progress. The topics are adaptive to the themes that participants bring up in the reviews – examples have included staying motivated; pacing oneself; maintaining focus; setting reasonable goals; working with co-authors; managing guilt, anxiety and lethargy.
- **Peer-support:** Participants will support and learn from each other in small groups. Each group's members will determine how they want to support each other. Options might include: weekly check-in; regular shared writing time (face-to-face or virtual); a system of reward and challenge.
- **One-to-one coaching:** Throughout the programme participants will have the opportunity to receive focused attention from the coaches, with 2*20 min sessions plus ad hoc support if needed. This can be at any stage of the programme.
- **Concluding group call:** A final group call at the end of the programme will create space for reflecting on key lessons learned and how to take those forward into everyday practice.

Academic Write Club 2020 - Outline of Programme

Note - it is expected that participants will miss some parts of the programme – indeed we hope they are getting the balance right and taking a break at some point!

Week	One Day Live Coaching Retreat (Virtual or Face to Face)	1 Hour Group Coaching Session (online)	Peer Support (in groups of 3)	Weekly Email Review	One-to-One support			
1	Wednesday 3 rd June 2020							
2 - 8 th June		Call 1 Friday 12 th of June (am)	Weekly connect with peer-group. Determined by the group and may include agreed 'writing times' to check in with each other.	Each Friday submit a brief review of progress and plans for next week	2*20 minute individual focused coaching conversation (plus ad hoc support if needed)			
3 - 15 th June								
4 - 22 nd June		Call 2 Friday 26 th June (am)						
5 - 29 th June								
6 - 6 th July		Call 3 Friday 10 th July (am)						
7 - 13 th July								
8 - 20 th July		Call 4 Friday 24 th July (am)						
9 - 27 th July								
10 - 3 rd Aug		(No calls during August)						
11- 10 th Aug								
12 - 17 th Aug								
13 - 24 th Aug								
14 - 31 st Aug		Call 5 Friday 4 th Sept (am)						
15 - 7 th Sept								
16 - 14 th Sept		Call 6 Friday 18 th September (am)						
Follow up Whole Group Session call (2 hours) approximately 6 weeks after the programme								

Location of the Day Retreat

The live coaching day retreat can be attended in person or via Zoom.

Zoom details will be provided after registration

The location will be Halton Mill, a community events, office, and studio space, located about three miles north of Lancaster – www.haltonmill.org.uk.

If looking for accommodation for the nights before or after the one-day retreat, options include: two hotels about 30 minutes walk (Holiday Inn Lancaster or Premier Inn Lancaster), local AirBnB, and plentiful accommodation in Lancaster itself.

Details of how to get from Lancaster to Halton Mill (including cycling, bus and car) are on the Halton Mill website above – a taxi from Lancaster train station will cost under £10 and take about 15 mins.

Booking and Cost

For further details or to book a place please email us by emailing hello@writeclubcoaching.com

Cost for the programme –

Personal rate	- £450
Institution rate	- £600

Concessions are available, please contact us.

Arrangements to invoice Universities is possible, as well as to pay monthly.

Who are the coaches?

Academic Write Club will be led by Will Medd and Laura Premack. Both are former lecturers with international reputations who became coaches after successful academic careers. They bring an intimate understanding of the experience of academic life, and they share a commitment to coaching with professionalism, emotional sensitivity, and humour.

About Will Medd

Will Medd, a professional certified coach, developed the one-day, live coaching writing retreat (WriteHere, Right Now) which sets the foundation for Write Club. He regularly delivers this programme around the country, inviting people to find what works for them and supporting them in developing effective, regular and balanced writing practices. He is passionate about enabling people to be at their best while balancing academic work with the rest of life.

Will is a highly qualified coach and combines this skill set uniquely with robust experience in scholarly writing. As PhD student (1995-2000), contract researcher (2000-2006) and lecturer (2006-2013), Will was an REF active researcher, well versed in the challenges of interdisciplinary and cross-institutional research. He started coaching in 2009 and has been full-time since 2013, running coaching programmes including workshops, 1-1 coaching, coach supervision, 'train the trainer' and team coaching. He has co-written coaching training material for VITAE and two coaching books, *Your PhD Coach* (2013) and *Get Sorted!* (2015), as well as a resource 'FailuretoLearn' (www.failuretolearn.com).

Will is deeply committed to developing conditions of challenge and support which are conducive to all participants engaging and learning. His sessions are regularly scored as 'excellent' and comments have included: "respectful, sensitive to needs of the group", "fantastic, created a really safe atmosphere to expose the issues raised", "excellent, very patient when dealing with quite a few of us, kept us on track", and "exceptional – humane, forgiving, thoughtful and able to bring out the best in a diverse group."

You can find out more about will at www.willmedd.com and www.academiclives.com

About Laura Premack

Laura Premack is a coach and writer who spent nearly fifteen years in academia before changing course in 2019. Her longtime passions are writing and teaching — she did her PhD largely to have something to write about — and she has participated in and led writing groups across the United States.

Laura earned graduate degrees at Harvard University (EdM '02) and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (PhD '13, MA '07), and has held academic appointments in both the US and the UK, as a postdoctoral fellow, assistant professor (tenure-track), and permanent lecturer. While trained as an historian, she embraced an interdisciplinary approach to her scholarship, along with a focus on making her work accessible to the broader public. Her publications include peer-reviewed articles and book chapters as well as essays for literary journals and blogs. She is currently writing creative nonfiction.

Laura brings an extensive background in education to her work as a coach. She has taught at Lancaster University, Bowdoin College, Keene State College, and UNC-Chapel Hill, where she received consistently outstanding evaluations. Her students describe her as "engaging," "inspiring," "enthusiastic," "passionate," "fair," and "funny." A head of department noted her talent for guiding "lively, informed, engaging, and, at times, truly inspired," discussion. Her work at the university level is informed by the years she spent as a schoolteacher before entering academia and her training at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and as a Teach For America corps member (Phoenix '98).

To learn more about Laura, you can visit her website at www.laurapremack.com.