

Synopsis - Article Writing Course

Module 1 - Welcome to The Writers Bureau

Your first and most important step to becoming a published writer - how to build on your natural talent - how to enjoy your course - a six point plan to make your course a complete success - analyse your attitudes and writing ambitions.

Module 2 - Making a Writer Out of You

Deciding where and when to write - how to start your writing - writer's block and how to overcome it - the tools you must work with - keeping a cuttings file - how to organise yourself - the writer's approach to life - developing your imagination - an excellent source of writing ideas - how to stimulate your imagination - how to develop your powers of observation - what the trained writer looks for - personal qualities every writer needs: perseverance, determination, self-organisation, resilience, confidence - how to use rejections to improve your writing - how to keep yourself at your mental peak - cashing in on your specialist knowledge - finding more writing ideas - what editors are looking for - how to obtain ideas from other people's experiences.

Module 3 - Developing Your Writing Style

Getting the basics right - 11 rules to develop a good style and avoid common mistakes - constructing clear sentences and paragraphs - using active and passive tenses - link words and signposts - how to say exactly what you mean - dangers to avoid: verbosity, circumlocution, clichés, repetition etc - dealing with slang and obscenities - how to use adjectives, similes and metaphors - comparing different styles.

Module 4 - How to Develop Your Writer's Craft

How to write opening sentences and paragraphs that captivate editors and readers - the article's body - planning your writing - the importance of revision - how to write an article - a detailed case history worked through: the initial idea, gathering facts, quotations, logical order of presentation, first draft, revisions and alterations discussed by the author - the finished article - always check your facts - the importance of summaries - a worked example.

Module 5 - How to Sell Your Writing

Avoid the common mistakes that untrained writers make - the value of market research - the large number of markets you can sell to - where to find them - analysing your markets - article analysis: length, paragraph and sentence length, titles, the closing paragraph - writing for newspapers - selling to the world - why America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore etc. can be big markets for writers - how to approach overseas editors and publishers - syndication and press agencies - kill fees - practical advice for the new writer.

Module 6 - Presenting Your Work

How to present your work - advice on what to buy - making corrections - layout of your manuscript - cover sheets - how to safeguard your interests - word counts - covering letters - submitting your work - do not double deal - preparing an outline - query letters to editors - sending reminders - selling rights - the Internet.

Module 7 - Essential Legal Aspects

Copyright - plagiarism and how to avoid it - why your good name is important - the dangers of libel and how to avoid them - contracts, what to look for and how to safeguard your position - the Minimum Terms Agreement - literary agents and how to obtain one - royalties - Public Lending Right - vanity publishing and its snags - self publishing - tax and VAT - using a pen name or pseudonym.

Module 8 - Readers' Letters and Fillers

Opportunities for a regular income - who publishes readers' letters - turning your experiences into cash - personal anecdote letters, further comment letters and controversial letters explained - how to start - the value of market research and how to tackle it - assessing the competition - tips on writing a successful reader's letter - developing your writing style - how long to wait for publication - tips on increasing your chances of publication. What makes a

filler - targeting your subjects - quizzes, brain teasers, crosswords and questionnaires - the importance of humour - other good markets - good sources for ideas - how to submit fillers - your copyright - multiple submissions - payment.

Module 9 - Articles for Women's and Men's Magazines

Section 1: Writing for Women - Opportunities for the freelance - market research is vital - what editors want - the changing face of women's magazines - front page teasers - men writing for women's titles - how to tackle the triumph over tragedy article - how to write the confessional article - celebrity profiles and the freelance - how to contact celebrities - the interview, how to approach it and what questions to ask - the importance of preparation - how to get an original quote - 'Happy Days' articles - health articles - the personalised piece - making the most of photographs - articles for the feminist press - writing your preliminary letter - who to send it to and what to say - packaged magazines explained.

Section 2: Writing for Men - The new contents of magazines for men - speaking the lingo - market research is essential - the big six subjects - what editors will pay for - who can write for men's magazines.

Module 10 - How to Write General Interest Articles

The market - important differences between articles and features - subjects to avoid - opportunities for the freelance - sources for ideas - researching the market - how to begin your article - using the same idea for a variety of markets - finding a 'peg' - when to submit articles - the value of careful planning - using topicality - keeping one step ahead of the competition - being in the right place at the right time - seasonal articles and when to submit them - how to look for different angles for different markets - more sources for ideas - making your hobby or pastime pay - writing for the colour supplements - writing from your own experience - keep on writing!

Module 11 - Travel Writing

The reality uncovered - huge opportunities for freelancers - what a travel editor is looking for - what to avoid - the secret of a good travel piece - tips on finding a fresh angle - the importance of knowing your market - getting free or reduced travel - the value of preparation before travelling - how to gather your information on location and how to use it - tips on how to sell to more than one market - the importance of taking your own photographs - how to write the travel article - what to include and what to leave out - gripping introductions - sidebars - an example - using your locality to your advantage - where to find information - contacting and writing for the top travel markets - opportunities in the overseas markets and in-flight magazines - subjects to write about and those to avoid - what rewards to expect from travel writing.

Module 12 - Writing for the Trade Press

Another huge market - the importance of market research - the stories editors are looking for - the importance of in-depth research and accuracy - your writing style - avoid jargon - expanding into features - how to break into the trade press market - becoming a local correspondent - making your contacts - where to find ideas - how to cash in on trade fairs - some practice projects - in-house magazines - sponsored magazines.

Module 13 - Writing for Children's and Teenage Publications

What children read - why write for youngsters - what to write about - language matters - style and presentation - the value of talking to children - selling your work - what not to write - what to include in activity articles. The teenage market and opportunities for the freelance - youth culture - subjects for the freelance - old favourites discussed - using humour - the boy/girl divide - true confession stories - some taboos in writing for the teen markets.

Module 14 - How to Write Humorous Articles

Where to find humour - using humour effectively in your writing - finding your niche - different types of humorous writing: personal experiences, irony, satire, strange but true stories and general interest - using humour in fillers and readers' letters - how to find humorous ideas and use them in your writing - your humour file - funny quizzes - subjects to avoid.

Module 15 - Religious and Inspirational Writing

Who can write for this market - faith and facts - understanding the market is vital - be sincere - subjects to cover: news, people, places, practical advice, humour, anniversaries, devotional/spiritual, personal opinion, reviews, personal experiences, readers' pages, homes/gardens/cookery, writing for children - payment - inspirational articles - the New Age market - dos and don'ts - the American market - finding markets.

Module 16 - Writing Reviews

A good place to start - the reviewer's role and responsibilities - what you should include in your review - your attitude - how much you can expect to be paid - building your portfolio - how to review and write up stage shows including: plays, musicals, concerts, opera, ballet and comedy - reviewing amateur dramatics - reviewing books - who to sell to - a checklist of what to include in your review - tips on reviewing CDs, films, TV and computer games - eating out reviews - the pitfalls - key points to include - an example of a fact file - reviewing cars - what to include - example of an auto file.

Module 17 - On the Editor's Desk

What happens in a magazine office - what editors want - titles - envelopes - rejections - the importance of new angles - mistakes to avoid - how long should an editor hold onto your work? - withdrawing work - what's your work worth? - chasing overdue payment - keep writing.

Module 18 - Journalism

Different types of newspapers - the qualities you need to be a journalist - vital equipment - making the break into journalism - building up your contacts - submitting your copy - putting together a story - getting the most from a story: coverage of previews, the actual event and then follow ups - interview techniques - stories to avoid - starting out - tip offs.

Handbooks

Punctuation And Spelling - Diana Nadin

This is a guide and reference for those who have ever had doubts about their ability to spell and punctuate correctly. This is an excellent little reference book to help you.

The Internet - Making It Work For You - Nicola Taylor

Nicola provides a quick guide to writing for online publishers, finding markets and contacting them. She then looks at using the Internet for both research and to publicise yourself.

Getting The Most From Interviews - Iain Pattison

Iain has interviewed thousands of people, from all walks of life. Here he gives you excellent advice on how to develop your interview technique and takes you step-by-step from setting up the interview to the final written piece.