

The WriteBeyond Program

WRITEBEYOND
BY
ALMA
MAGAZINE



This programme is unique: it is based on a pedagogy that has a sharp focus on writing as practice and craft, but in a practical and experiential work environment. Rigorous training in the processes of writing and editing will accompany one-on-one guidance from the Senior Editors and mentors of the magazine, and involve rewriting and studying real submissions across fiction, humour, commentary, poetry and more. Our curriculum has been developed to provide an exhaustive dive into the nitty-gritties of wielding the written word. The objective is simple: to play on your strengths as a writer or editor and help you find your distinctive voice. This is a competitive and exclusive programme, and we only select 5 applicants for each six-week session.

WriteBeyond is accredited and partnered by EDUCIS, and students will receive a certificate on successful completion of the curriculum.

The Curriculum

Those applying for WriteBeyond have the option of choosing between two specialisations:

The Editing Specialisation

The Writing Specialisation

WRITING SPECIALISATION

Week 1 - Introduction to Writing: Channeling your inspiration

What should a first draft look like?

You'll begin with an overarching study of how to build on an idea and create corporeal themes, arguments, or plot points, depending on the genre. The goal is for you to find your own unique method of getting a piece going.

Week 2 - Develop and Hone: Testing the waters

What makes 'good' writing?

While 'good' is subjective, we'll make sure to cover all the objective aspects. You'll learn to think critically about the ideal narrative voice you assume and situate characters in a plot, bearing in mind elements of diction, syntax, meter and characterisation. We will also cover the best practices of reportage and explore the role of logic, argument construction, fallacies, and syllogisms in topical writing.

Week 3 - Organising your words: Placing the horse before the cart

How do I organise writing? Are the rules different for different genres?

This week, you will take on the challenge of structuring your work. You will turn your inspired ideas into coherent sentences and paragraphs that improve readability. We will focus on producing writing across genres that is technically sound in terms of pacing and structure. Character development will be mapped: you will learn how to create multi-dimensional figures that burst onto the page. Your resultant writing will be layered yet effortless.

Week 4 - Style and Flair: Who are you as a writer?

How do I discover my own distinct voice?

Style is what sets you apart, what makes your writing your own. Specific, personalised advice from our writers and editors will help you find the confidence to tell your story in your own voice, but this is a discovery you must make alone. For this we will drive you to think about all the elements you can weave into your own unique style—everything from punctuation to sentence length.

Week 5 - Finishing Touches: Soar and slide

Spinning the subtleties and going beyond self-conscious writing

In the fifth week, you will learn what final strings need to be tied together to refine all the skills you have developed. There is no single way to perfect the writing process; but fine-tuning is what augments the quality of written work. Meticulous line edits and detailed guidance from WriteBeyond will show you how to create a nuanced piece of writing that is polished and technically accomplished.

Week 6 - Write, Write, Write!

How much practice is enough?

Finally, you will write and pitch real articles. This week, you will focus entirely on applying your knowledge to familiarise yourself with the writing process to the extent that it becomes effortless for you. You will constantly improve your writing, bearing in mind all that you have learnt, and, with the help of our staff writers, you will become fully equipped to write, write, and write some more.

EDITING SPECIALISATION

Week 1 - The Basics

When should I edit with a heavy hand? What should I look out for as an editor? What is the outline of the editing process?

The course begins with an introduction to the role of an editor. We will analyse the implications of editorial work, from structural changes to proofreading. The senior editors will acquaint you with the different facets of editorial work, keeping in mind the utmost importance of preserving the writer's vision and idea.

Week 2 - Word Order and Vocabulary Choice

What vocabulary makes written work stand out? Why is word order so important? Choosing the right words are crucial to convey your ideas accurately. Critical reading will be a key tool to effectively think through the implications of vocabulary choices. You will learn how to incorporate certain vocabulary in someone else's writing, and observe the effects of the same on tone, mood, and intended meaning. The effective use of these writing elements must not take away aspects of the writer's own authorial voice, which you will learn to distinguish.

Week 3 - Structure, and Syntax

How do I employ structure in different writing genres? What kind of syntax makes a piece more readable?

You will study editing through the lens of organisation and structural composition. This week will explore how distinct elements in a piece of writing can be brought together seamlessly, and how syntactical changes can lead to a more compelling piece.

Week 4 - Communication

What is the best way to concretely show the improvement my edits will bring? What is the language and register I must use as an editor?

In week 4, you will learn how to articulate your edits to a writer and how to suggest changes in a piece. You will also learn to articulate and justify the elements of a piece that should be preserved. This will include analysing the role of voice, tone, and diction. You will also learn how to fully visualise the entire editing process while collaborating with a writer.

Week 5 - Revising and Redrafting

What should a finished piece look like? When should I stop editing?

Our mentors are prominent writers with great expertise in the field, and you will have the opportunity to have your own work edited by them. You will combine the knowledge you have accrued over these weeks to edit writing as comprehensively and intuitively as a professional editor.

Week 6 - A Piece a Day

How do I increase my output without compromising on quality?

In the final week you will go through various submissions for different sections and use your newly acquired skill set to edit and better submitted pieces.