

# Engineering-appropriate Writing Pedagogies: new tools to engage early candidature HDR Engineering students in self-editing for writing for publication

Alison-Jane HUNTER  
Schools of Education and Mechanical Engineering  
The University of Adelaide, Australia  
[alison-jane.hunter@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:alison-jane.hunter@adelaide.edu.au)

This presentation will describe the first stage of an on-going participative action research project involving Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students, their supervisors (advisors) and language and learning academics. The aim of the project is to match recognized Engineering ways of learning, which are active, creative, visual-kinaesthetic approaches to problem-solving, with new, dynamic ways of teaching control of language for and skills in self-editing of research papers and theses. The project is informed by analysis of teaching and learning discourse, gatekeeping practices of schools, universities, editors and examiners and the pressure to achieve publication track records that count towards employability markers.

The supervisors provided input into indicators of quality writing in Engineering by identifying examples of excellent extant writing, and discussed writing needs with the researcher from a professional perspective. Engineering HDR candidates provided input on their own language and writing difficulties. Finally the Language and Learning academics analysed student errors and assisted in translating the supervisor feedback into a range of supportive activities at sentence, paragraph and whole text levels. All these inputs assisted the researcher in developing new, creative, visual-kinaesthetic tools which aim to increase technical accuracy, confidence and engagement in research writing in English by Engineering HDR students: both those for whom English is their native language and those for whom English is an additional language or dialect.

The project is unique in that it offers a set of evidence-based, non-hierarchical approaches to active teaching and learning of these key researcher skills for this group of often-reluctant writers. In addition it brings together the key participants in the collaborative development of student writing.

## Biodata

After over twenty years in the classroom in the UK and Australia as an English teacher, Alison-Jane Hunter is currently an HDR at the University of Adelaide, studying Engineering Education. She edited the South Australian English Teachers' Association journal *Opinion* for a number of years, overseeing its full redesign, and is involved in Future Problem Solving and Tournament of Minds. She has edited PhDs for several years now and teaches ESP in the School of Mechanical Engineering. She has published two books on teaching English: *Great Ideas for the Middle School Classroom* and *Approaches to Senior English*.