



**ROMANCE**  
**WRITERS**  
*of Australia*  
**ACADEMY**

## **Guidelines for RWA Academy Proposals**

The Romance Writers of Australia (RWA) Academy is divided into three levels of professional development.

1. Online Self-paced courses
2. Online Short courses (previously known as OWLs)
3. Focused One-on-One Courses

To help you prepare your proposals, guidelines for each of these levels are provided below. Please note, these are guidelines, not rules. They are meant to inspire rather than restrict your ideas. Each presenter works differently as does each participant. It is up to you to find what works well for you. However, there are some basic parameters you should meet in each course to maintain the quality of the courses. As you prepare your course, you might also like to read *RWA's Tips for Creating Great Online Courses* (available on RWA website).

### **1. ONLINE SELF-PACED COURSE GUIDELINES**

Self-paced courses allow participants to work through learning materials themselves. With little, or no presenter interaction, the cost of these courses is low. Learning materials can be presented via Moodle or Webinar Ninja and with participants able to access information for 12 months after purchase. Courses will be available via RWA Academy for an agreed period, such as three years. Prices start at \$19.25 and will vary depending on the extent of a course.

### **2. ONLINE SHORT COURSES**

A four week online short course should have at least 4 x 1-hour sessions included with approximately 40-50 minutes of content per week, and 10-20 minutes allowed for interaction and feedback. Depending on your course, you might structure this differently with one larger opportunity for feedback at the end.

It is essential to always include personalised feedback. This may be on a series of short exercises or on a larger exercise/project at the end. Given the timeframe and cost of your course, feedback is recommended on around 500 to 2,000 words (or equivalent project in another medium). If you wish to provide feedback on more extensive projects, then you should consider Focused One-on-One Courses.

One of the benefits of an online short course is the small group environment where participants can encourage and support each other. Consequently, active participation should be encouraged, although it is not mandatory.

The cost of online short courses has been set at \$55 for RWA members and \$66 for non-members. This is considered to be equivalent to a half day course for a non-school public appearance as outlined by ASA at 31/5/2020, which is set at a rate of \$561. If you have 10 participants you will achieve \$550, which is close to this amount (with no travel involved). If you have more participants, then your profit margin will naturally increase. RWA recommends a minimum of 8 participants to support a group environment. It is your prerogative to set a higher minimum number of participants.

Remember to check out *RWA's Tips for Creating Great Online Courses* for some more great ideas for putting together a course.

### **3. FOCUSED ONE-ON-ONE COURSE GUIDELINES**

Seeking individual feedback is one of the best ways to improve writing once basic craft is understood. One-on-one courses are targeted at the intermediate to advanced writer who wants to improve their writing and take it to the next level. Participants of these courses will receive individual feedback on a minimum of 2,000 words (or equivalent project in another medium).

Focused One-on-One Courses should concentrate on a particular topic and provide learning materials, personalised feedback and discussion opportunities. The program should include:

- a. Learning materials - This could be tips, strategies, lessons, powerpoints, videos, links to useful articles, etc. The intent is to provide a guide to your participant on your focus topic and a framework for marking feedback. However, given the one-on-one nature of the course, the major focus should be on discussion and feedback.
- b. Personalised feedback - This should be on a minimum of 2,000 words on craft, or equivalent in another medium. Feedback can take the form of annotated comments and a report using the framework you have provided in your learning materials. However, if another type of feedback suits your program then include it in your proposal. Note, your comments are not restricted by your framework, which merely serves a guide.

c. Discussion opportunities (Q&A) - You should ask your participant if they have any questions relating to the focus topic, then answer as required. This section may not always be explicit and may just occur as a normal part of interacting with your participant.

Focused One-on-One Courses should have a defined duration and cost so participants can plan their time and budget.

An approximate guideline for estimating price is the cost of a book for learning materials as these can be used repeatedly for different participants. The rest of the cost should factor in the time you spend providing feedback and discussions. For example, feedback on text could be \$40 per 1,000 words, which may vary according to qualifications, experience and level of recognition in your field. E.g. If you're a world famous author with a PhD in Writing, you would likely charge a higher rate. Alternatively, you may calculate price based on time, such as \$40 per hour.

This is best illustrated using a simple example.

### **Example: Writing Effective Blogs - Focused One-on-One Course**

Writing Effective Blogs is a four-week focused one-on-one course. It will include:

- Tips on how to write a great blog including crafting a headline, choosing good images, language, structure, and pros and cons of shorter blog posts vs longer blog posts.
- A brainstorming session on places to send blog articles and ways to increase your blogging profile.
- Feedback on three of your blog posts (approximately 3,000 words).
- The opportunity to ask any questions you have about blogs.

*Duration: 4 weeks.*

#### *Weekly Plan and cost estimate:*

Week 1: Tips on how to write a great blog (\$5. Equivalent to a small book which can be reused. Given this is a 4 week program, it does not have to be a massive course but does need to provide some tips and examples, which you can refer back to when providing feedback so your feedback doesn't come out of nowhere).

Week 2: Brainstorming session (30 minutes at \$20)  
Submit blog 1 for feedback. Feedback will be provided within 3 days so participant can review it before submitting next blog. (\$40 for 1,000 words. Note, there may be some short blogs and longer ones, which I've averaged out here to 1,000 words.)

Week 3: Q&A session - (30 minutes at \$20). This may be spread across the course as discussions will likely be ongoing. This is also an opportunity to ask if participant has any questions regarding feedback.  
Submit Blog 2 for feedback (\$40 for 1,000 words)

Week 4: Submit Blog 3 for feedback (\$40 for 1,000 words).  
Q&A

*Total Price:*

Tips and learning material: \$5

Brainstorming session: \$20

Q&A sessions: \$20

3 x 1,000 word blogs \$120

Sub-Total: \$145

Plus GST: \$14.50

**Total incl GST: \$159.50**

For simplicity's sake and to be consistent with other Focused One-on-One Courses of 4 weeks duration, we are going to round this figure up to **\$165.00 (including GST)**.

Please remember, the example above is not the only format/structure you can use and is used for illustrative purposes only.

With respect to focus topics, it is totally up to you as a presenter. Here are a couple of other ideas to get your creative processes going. Note, if anyone has something on these topics we would love to see it.

- Character study - tips on how to create a character profile and feedback on two of your profiles (e.g. protagonist and romantic interest), tips on how to create goals, motivation and conflict in your characters to help drive your story forward with feedback on the GMC of two of your characters, tips on how to write a scene to show your characters and feedback on a scene of up to 2,000 words.
- Plotting your story - Learn how to plot your story from beginning to end including creating conflict, raising the stakes and identifying your black moment. At the end of this program, the participant will have a chapter by chapter outline of their plot, or a spreadsheet with plot points, or whatever system, you as a presenter are promoting.

If you're interested in submitting a proposal, you can use the RWA Academy Proposal form available on the RWA website. Good luck with your proposal. We look forward to reading it.