

English & Creative Writing Newsletter

Welcome to the September/October 2025 Edition of the English & Creative Writing Newsletter

Hi Everyone,

Well done on getting through the first two weeks of term, and welcome again to the new academic year! I'm Peter Riley, your Director of Student Experience, and I'll be working with you throughout the year to help shape and enrich your time here. One way I'll be doing this is through a regular newsletter, where I'll share updates, opportunities, and contributions from across our English & Creative Writing community. A special thank you to all the student contributors to this newsletter – you are brilliant!!



It's been a delight to meet many of you in lectures and seminars, and I (and all of your lecturers and professors) look forward to getting to know more of you as the term goes on. As ever, your energy, commitment and talent continues to shine very very brightly.

There are some fantastic events coming up this term, and I hope you'll get involved. First, our Radical Voices student-staff reading group returns this term. Last year's session on Shon Faye's *The Transgender Issue: An Argument for Justice* was a real highlight. This time, we'll be reading *Perfect Victims* by Palestinian writer and activist Mohammed El-Kurd. As always, cake and coffee will be provided. All welcome!

Also don't miss the Library Research Skills workshop in Week 7, led by our brilliant subject librarian Sarah Jones. This session is designed to help you make the most of the library's resources and take your summative assessments to the next level (again cake, coffee).

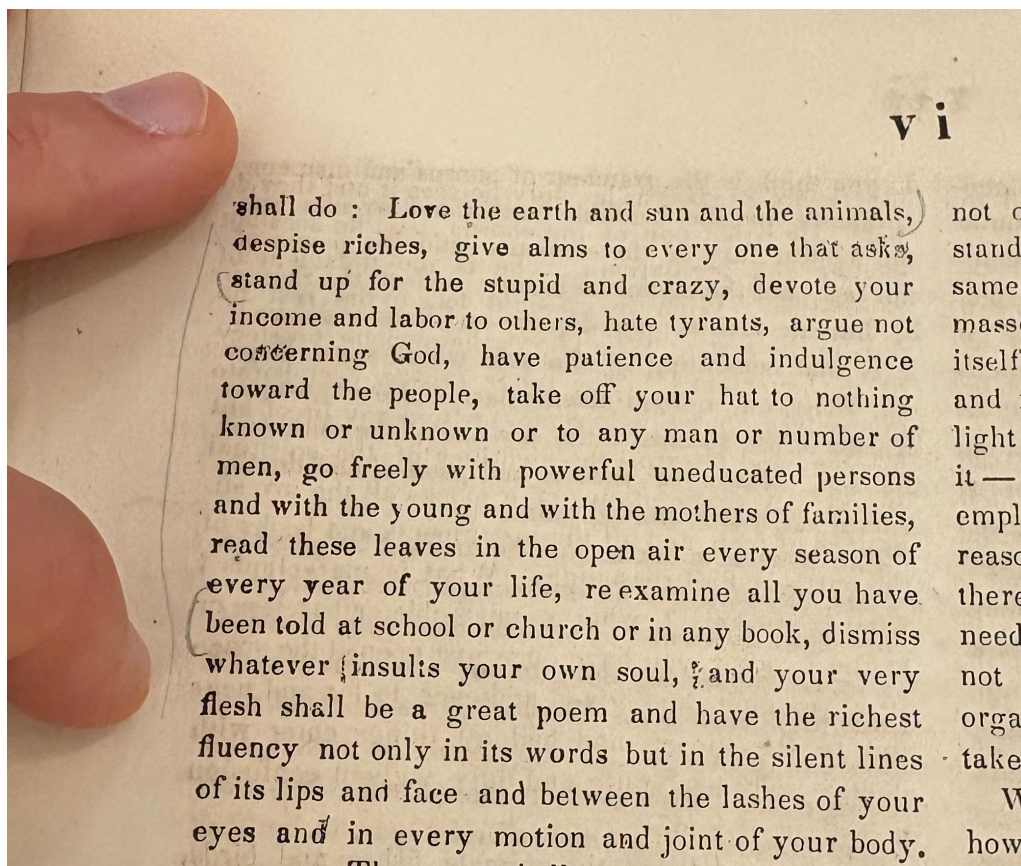
In Week 11, we're excited to welcome Professor Tom F. Wright (Head of English at Sussex University) for a guest talk and Q&A. Drawing on his path-breaking new book, *Oracy: The Politics of Speech Education* (2025), Tom will think about how we can use this moment to create a university where every student has the chance to speak, and to be heard. The talk extends a growing conversation in our department about voice, access, and belonging in higher education. Over the past year, issues of class and the question of how to make students from non-traditional backgrounds feel more included have come to the fore, particularly in light of the Student Guild survey published back in March. In this context, Tom's work offers timely insights into how oracy (understood not just as speaking skills, but as a means of empowerment) might help reshape our classrooms and campuses into spaces where all students can feel heard and valued. Expect lively discussion and free pizza.

If you'd like to share an idea, promote an event, recommend a book, or contribute to the newsletter, I'd love to hear from you at p.j.riley@exeter.ac.uk. Wishing you all a happy and successful start to Term 1.

Best wishes,

Peter

P.S Thought I'd share a snap: the person who got me into this line of work was the great working class and queer poet Walt Whitman. He (self-) published his groundbreaking book *Leaves of Grass* in Brooklyn in 1855, and it's remembered as the first "free verse" in English – and for how extraordinarily open and beautiful it is. There were only 750 printed (he couldn't afford to print any more), and two weeks ago, I was lucky enough to finally get my hands on an original copy (under armed guard in a library in Philadelphia). Here's some words for the new year, and as we go singing to the fashioning of a new world...



Director of Student Experience
Senior Lecturer in American Literature
English and Creative Writing

In The Newsletter...

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 - More things to look out for: *Peer Mentoring Scheme*; *The Confidence Lab*; *Charles Causley Trust Opportunities for Students*; *Access to Academia Mentor Scheme*; *Digital Skills Workshops for Students*
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-

Events to look out for this term:

1) Sign up for Radical Voices, our Student-Staff Reading Group! Thursday 16 October (Queen's SCR)

We had a truly brilliant session at the end of last academic year discussing an extract from Shon Faye's *The Transgender Issue: An Argument for Justice* (2021). As ever, I was bowled over by the acuity and passion of our ECW students. This time we're reading *Perfect Victims* by the Palestinian writer and activist Mohammed Ed-Kurd. [SIGN UP HERE](#).

The Department of English and Creative Writing

Radical Voices Reading Group

Our staff-student reading group will meet on **Thursday 16 October 2025 in the Senior Common Room, Queen's Building, 12:30-2 pm**, to discuss an excerpt from:

Mohammed El-Kurd's

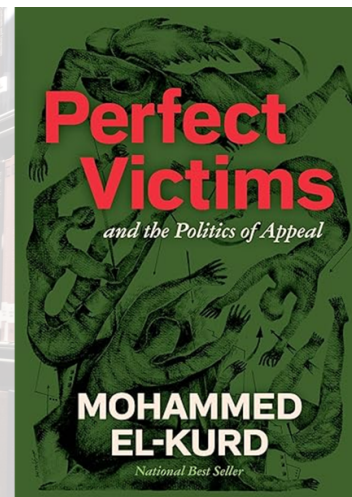
***Perfect Victims and the Politics of Appeal* (2025)**

"In *Perfect Victims*, Mohammed El-Kurd recenters the Palestinian gaze as compass and metric unit." —**Noura Erakat, author of *Justice for Some***

We'll be reading the first two chapters (PDF sent to you when you register). Content warning: potentially distressing themes.

Radical Voices is open to all members of our department (staff, students, and professional services). It is underpinned by a belief in the power of reading and critical thinking as revolutionary acts, and in the value of reading and thinking together in the creation and sustenance of this community.

Cake, Biscuits, Coffee & Tea provided.



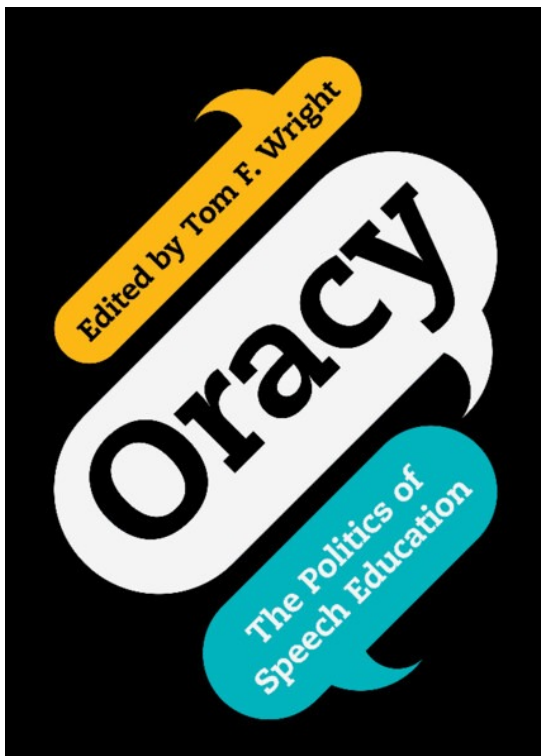
Everyone welcome!

Please sign up here...

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=d10qkZj77k6vMhM02PBKU9vUA-Ju0XVBnhlbzGoji_tUMUxLSDJXRjE3M0RQRVJDRUNVMEkxWk9PTC4u

2) Visiting Speaker: Professor Tom F. Wright (Friday 5 December, Week 11, 4:30-6pm, LT4.1). "Can Oracy Save the Humanities? From the Chartist to Chatbots"

What role will the humanities play in universities when AI can automate so much of our writing? Tom Wright, currently Head of English at Sussex University, argues that the answer lies in oracy—our capacity to speak and listen. Long associated with confidence and opportunity, oracy has become one of the biggest buzzwords in modern British education. But as his groundbreaking new book *Oracy: The Politics of Speech Education* (2025) shows, oracy is never neutral. It can reproduce privilege, rewarding certain accents, tones, and personalities. This talk will demystify the term, separating its promise from its pitfalls. It will argue that to make oracy work for all we must look to the progressive and radical past. From Chartist debating societies to women's suffrage campaigns, grassroots speech education helped ordinary people claim civic voice. By connecting these movements to today's classrooms, he shows how universities can reimagine the humanities as spaces where every student has the chance to speak, and to be heard. Open Q&A and discussion afterwards. *Free pizza.*



3) Elevating Your Assessments: Library Research Skills and Resources Workshop (with librarian and subject specialist Sarah Jones). Friday 7 November, Week 7, 3-5pm. Room TBA.

Want to take your assignments to the next level? This session will show you how to unlock the full potential of your library's extensive resources to enrich your critical analysis and impress in **your summative assessments**. Whether you're close reading a poem, analysing a play, or writing about a novel, the library holds millions of resources that can bring your work to life. Come along to this session with your Liaison Librarian, Sarah Jones, to find out more.



WHAT STUDENTS HAVE BEEN READING

Maddie Cairn (Stage 1, BA English and Film and Television Studies)



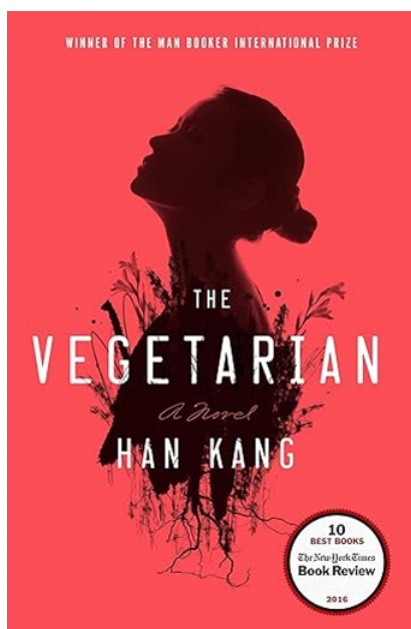
The White Album by Joan Didion is a collection of intimate anecdotes from the late 1960s and early 1970s. These essays combine her individual narrative with cultural commentary in a way that feels both disorienting and personal. Though always present in her writing, her observations often resist satisfying conclusions. The stories jump from Hollywood parties to courtroom testimonies, forcing the reader to decipher meanings. In this way, *The White Album* doesn't simply recount significant moments in American history; it performs the experience of living through such a complex period of time. Capturing the uncertainty and counterculture of America, the book recounts stories of the Manson murders, the Black Panthers and encounters with Janis Joplin. Didion also touches on stories of her own personal endeavours, namely, her interest in dams and her visit to California's water management; it's this diversity of her essays that make it such an engaging read and signals her as one of the best essay writers of the 20th century.

Lauren Bull (Stage 3, BA English)



I'd never really bought into the idea of a book 'altering my brain chemistry' until I read John Steinbeck's *East of Eden* over the summer. This relentlessly allegorical novel was so much more than a mere retelling of Genesis, raising questions of predetermination, familial relations, and the problem of evil. Partially biographical, the novel focuses primarily on the Trasks, but also the Hamiltons (based on Steinbeck's maternal grandfather). Laced throughout the novel is the idea of Timshel, a Hebrew word which housekeeper Lee translates as 'thou myself'. This notion plagues the novel as characters attempt unfetter themselves from familial fates, asserting whatever free will they have. The novel spans multiple generations and uses nominal determinism to indicate who will live a life of scrupulousness and compassion like Abel, and who will be marked with eternal suffering like Cain. Though an intimidating and ambitious text, it is addictive from the first page and the type of novel which has clung to my conscience and changed the way I perceive morality and the human condition.

Saba Khorassani (Alumni, 2025)



As a recent graduate of English Literature, I have been intentionally trying to reignite and rediscover my love for reading outside of my course. I set myself a goal for the summer to always have a book on the go and keep my post-uni reading momentum going. One notable book I have just finished is Han Kang's *The Vegetarian* (2007). The title appealed to my vegan proclivities, and I thought I was in for a thinly-veiled manifesto for vegetarianism in fictional form. I was wrong. The book follows Yeong-hye, a woman living with her husband in Seoul, and the turbulent aftermath of her decision to become a vegetarian. This decision marks not only a cultural deviation, but also a gradual unravelling of Yeong-hye's mental state. What begins as subtle feminist statements— Yeong-hye's refusal to cook her husband's meat-heavy meals and abandoning bras— soon give way to a rapid collapse of her grip on reality. My expectations for this book and the reality of Kang's narrative were vastly different. Kang's prose feels almost Kafka-esque, detached yet unflinching in its portrayal of traumatic and absurd events. The novel continues to linger with me, its message still something I grapple with— a testament to its power. I would recommend it to anyone seeking a thought-provoking and unsettlingly beautiful read.

And what students have been writing...

Daisy Carbin (Stage 3, BA English), Illustrations and Layout by Lola Terek



DVE GUŠTERA
By Daisy Carbin

I wish I had a working camera,
Or an easier life
And a small dog whose hair is long enough to braid
bows and all

She's become a soulless city
And on hot days when there's nothing to do,
She wanders through the parts of herself
She hasn't seen yet

The people who live here barely speak
Their mother tongue
And if you speak to them,
they return with blank stares

After we're done with our dinner
We waltz-on down the hill,
Our path illuminated by the storm a few towns over,
We end up on the dock and I complain about how cold it is.
The lightning lasts all night, and the downpour never comes.

English Society (EngSoc) Introductions

Megan White – Co-President



Hi there! My name is Megan White and I am one of your co-presidents of English Society for this year! This is just a small section of writing to get to know me as one of your new English Society leads:

- I am currently reading Dorothy Parker's Collected New Yorker Articles. Fun fact: in high school I was the only one who checked 'The Collected Dorothy Parker' out of the library since the 90s, and they eventually just gave me the book because I was the only one reading it, haha. Highly recommend her writing if you are a bit of a modernism lover like me.
- I drink black coffee, but I also drink really wacky tea (Mulled Wine and Chocolate Digestive flavours being personal favourites).
- I am a diehard lover of both Modernism and Restoration Satire. Would it be wise of me to just pick one of these two very different areas of literature? Yes. Will I? Absolutely not.

Finally, if you are interested in what English Society does, or you have any questions generally about what upcoming events you would like to see, do not hesitate to let us know. Either email Lucy or myself, or DM us on Instagram.

Lucy Eccleston – Co-President



Hey! I'm Lucy, one of English Society's co-presidents this year. I'm a third-year English student with a particular interest in both modernist and Gothic literature. One of my favourite novels is *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier — I even based my EPQ on her, comparing three of her works with their film adaptations (I'm a big fan of film too). Outside of my degree, I love to sing and a big Gracie Abrams/Taylor Swift fan. I really enjoyed being on committee last year, and I'm super excited to meet everyone at our upcoming socials and annual balls!!



What Staff Have been Up To

Professor Joe Crawford



This summer I attended the 'Sea Changes' conference at the British Library, on the cultural legacies of the mermaid and associated figures. Papers explored the literary and artistic histories of merfolk, selkies, sirens, and *ningyo*, with a particular emphasis on their significance for queer and trans identities over time. As one might expect, *The Little Mermaid* was extensively discussed in both its original and Disney incarnations, and there was even a chance to see the long-suppressed and surprisingly traumatic 1938 Disney short film *Merbabies*, which ends with the titular merbabies dying *en masse* as their bubbles pop. My own paper was on the Yao Bikuni legend and queer mermaids in Japanese *yuri* manga.

The conference was organised by the 'Open Graves, Open Minds' project at the University of Hertfordshire, which celebrated its fifteenth anniversary this year. After holding conferences on vampires (twice), werewolves, fairies, mermaids, and haunted cities, they're starting to run out of monsters - so if anyone has any suggestions for a supernatural-themed conference they'd like to attend in the next few years, feel free to pass it on and I can let the organisers know!

Professor Vike Plock



Hello—I'm Professor Vike Martina Plock, Head of English and Creative Writing. Recently, I have been thinking a lot about modernist writers and paper. Right now, we are talking about generative AI and the ways in which it will change how we think and engage with the world. About hundred years ago, another technological revolution was under way: new communication and information technologies like the telephone, telegraph, radio and cinema altered the pace and character of human interactions. Modernist writers like Joyce engaged with these new communication technologies in their writing. But paper was not superseded as principal technology at the beginning of the twentieth century. Instead, it almost imperceptibly slipped into new places and uses. An obvious example is the general availability of more elaborate, personalised stationery. As I returned to Joyce, I noticed that he was fascinated by the materiality of the paper products his characters handle in everyday situations.

Thanks to a grant from the British Academy, I was able to visit Joyce archives in the US this summer, looking at hundreds of letters and manuscripts written in Joyce's hand. Among other things, I discovered that his use of writing materials, including stationery, became more organised as he became more firmly settled in his role as a published author. I returned from my travels with the impression that Joyce thought that paper had magical qualities, precisely because of its ordinariness and universality. One picture postcard in the Joyce Collection at the University of Buffalo returned me unexpectedly to the Devon coast. It was written in 1929, reminding me that Joyce and his family spent one month in the Imperial Hotel in Torquay that year. I cannot wait to do further research, to follow the paper trail Joyce left behind and to find out more about paper's significance in the world that he and other modernist writers wanted us to encounter in their writing.

Professor Simon Rennie

Songs of the People – Crimean War Poetry, Ukraine, Folk Music: Last year I was able to gather approximately 540 poems from local UK newspapers published between 1853 and 1856 commenting on the Crimean War. The important thing about *local* newspapers in the Victorian period is that nearly all of them published poetry, and much of that poetry was by amateur

writers, often working class. The poetry provides a much deeper and wider reflection of public feeling about the conflict than previously studied. I have been awarded funding from the AHRC IAA Creative Invention Fund to produce two outputs related to this project between now and spring 2026. The first is a CD (and downloadable album) of songs adapted from a small selection of the poetry that has been collected. The poems will be adapted into song by English and Ukrainian professional musicians who play in the traditional style. The CD will include an explanatory booklet written by me and will be produced by a German record company [I have worked with before](#). The second output is a professionally made film documenting the process of adaptation, filming a workshop and performance. By exploring some poems in depth through adaptation, the idea is to encourage the public to view contemporary events in Ukraine through the lens of the UK's nineteenth-century involvement in conflict in the region. Local newspaper poetry on the subject of the Crimean conflict has not featured in any critical studies, but it provides new insight into the real Victorian reaction to the UK's 1850s military engagement in Eastern Europe.

Staff Introductions

Dr Nadeen Dakkak, Lecturer here in World and Postcolonial Literatures and Academic Lead for Student Support (Inclusion and Racial Equality)



Hello! My name is Dr Nadeen Dakkak and I am Lecturer here in World and Postcolonial Literatures. I am also your Academic Lead for Student Support (Inclusion and Racial Equality). My role relates to any protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil relationship, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation). I'm here to enable the creation of a supportive and safe environment for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students with protected characteristics in the Department of English and Creative Writing . I'm also here to act as a point of contact for any issues you might have in relation to your sense of belonging in the department and/or at the University of Exeter, or if you want to share concerns related to racism, racial discrimination and any other discrimination based on protected characteristics you might experience, and to direct you to the right avenues if you are wanting to report it and/or to seek support.

This term, I have three drop-in hours in my office in Queens 214, which I am listing below. You are very welcome to drop by if you want to raise any issues, or if you just want to have a chat! You can call me on Teams during these hours if you prefer to meet online. Aside from these dates, feel free to also email me at n.dakkak@exeter.ac.uk and we can arrange to meet at a different time.

Thursday 9 October, 1:30 to 2:30

Thursday 6 November, 1:30 to 2:30

Thursday 27 November, 1:30 to 2:30

I hope you have a great term!

Sarah Mandeno – your Pastoral Mentor in English, Creative Writing and Liberal Arts:



Hello all,

I hope you're all settling into the new term. This is just a reminder that I'm here as your first point of contact when you need support but aren't sure where to turn. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

How I can support you:

- **A space to talk** - I provide a safe, confidential and non-judgemental space to listen and talk through any concerns you have.
- **Personalised action plans** - we can co-create action plans and strategies to support you with your studies.
- **Mitigation** - I can support and provide evidence for mitigation applications where academic and pastoral concerns are raised.
- **Proactive reach out** - I can reach out to you, if there are potential challenges or barriers to your academic study, wellness and success.
- **Guidance and referrals** - I can provide guidance, signposting and help you navigate relevant services.

How to connect or arrange a meeting:

✨ **Meetings:** Book in using QR code below.



✨ **Email:** ECW-pastoralmentor@exeter.ac.uk

✨ **Drop ins:** Attend one of the drop ins in Queen's, room 306 on Monday 14.30-15.30 and Thursday 10.30-11.30

Your feedback is valuable so if you have interacted with me and would like to provide feedback, please complete this [form](#).

If you are concerned for your wellbeing, outside of office hours, you can find additional urgent support information here: [Urgent support](#) | [Wellbeing Services in Devon](#) | [University of Exeter](#)

Introducing our new *Writing Advice Centre* (WAC)

An interview with Dr Emily Bernard Jackson and Dr Vicky Sparey.



Hello both. I hear you're running something called the Writing Advice Centre – can you tell us a little bit about what that is, and what you do?

Emily: The Writing Advice Centre (WAC) is a peer-to-peer writing mentoring centre. That means both undergraduate and postgraduate students can make half-hour appointments to come to the centre — which is in Queens 301 — and talk to a peer about their writing.

Vicky: Yes, the beauty of the Writing Advice Centre is that students get guidance on their writing from other students. The advice comes from student advisors who have developed their own writing skills and been trained for this role, but, as students, they also know what it's like to face the challenges that the students seeking advice are facing. It's a supportive and, hopefully, unintimidating set-up.

What kind of support does the Writing Advice Centre offer to students?

Emily: The peer advisors at the WAC can help students with all aspects of writing. If you're having trouble getting started on an essay, they can lead you through the planning process; if you have a draft, they can go through up to 1,000 words of it with you and help you improve it (covering everything from basic punctuation to improving your argument), and if it's a partial draft they can talk through ideas for where to go; if you've received feedback you're puzzled about or aren't sure how to use to improve, they can go through that feedback with you. The WAC really is a one-stop shop!

Vicky: We've also got lots of resources and handouts about particular writing issues that students can take away with them. For example, there is a handout about writing introductions, and one on the correct use of semi-colons.

What would you say are your top three pieces of advice you'd give to students who sometimes feel overwhelmed or stuck in their writing?

Emily: This is a very good question. My first piece of advice would be: Make It Simpler. In my experience if I feel overwhelmed or stuck, it helps to break the thing down into smaller steps. If I can't make a paragraph work, I'll break it into individual sentences, and often that helps me see what's missing; if I'm having trouble expressing an idea, I'll imagine explaining it to a five-year old; if I have a complex sentence, I'll try to write it in much smaller words and phrases. Making things simpler always makes them clearer.

My second piece of advice would be: say it to yourself aloud, then write that down. Often when I'm stuck I'll ask myself, "What am I trying to say?" Then I'll literally say it. Then I'll write down what I said. After that, if I feel I need to, I'll make that initial writing more elegant. Sometimes saying things out loud makes them clearer to you. If you then write that saying down, you've got clarity. Now you can make that clarity sound better.

Third, I am a huge fan of what's called "pre-writing." It's hard to write without a warm-up! When I'm stumped I'll sometimes write a paragraph about how I'm stumped. More often, I'll just write on a piece of paper every idea I have about a given topic, everything that might relate. I write them longhand, all over the piece of paper. None of those things may be a good idea, but because they make me think I'll often think of a good idea right after that. In the same way, my paragraph about being stumped will be bad, but it warms me up to write a good paragraph.

Vicky: I think my first piece of advice is really reassurance: 'getting stuck' is a part of academic writing. We all get stuck, and it is good practice to make use of the support that is available, whether that's formal or informal support. Talking to someone else about your work really helps. In conversation you have to articulate your argument in simple terms, identifying, and then explaining, key concerns, which all becomes the building blocks of an essay.

Like Emily, I'm a fan of saying my ideas out loud to help me clarify my writing. My second piece of advice is not about starting an assignment, however; it's about how you edit and sharpen first drafts of your work. We can get really immersed in our own writing and it isn't always easy to see where we haven't fully explained an idea when, in our own minds, it makes perfect sense! Reading a paragraph or a sentence out loud can give you a little bit of distance that helps you review your work and spot where the expression of your ideas needs to be made clearer. Often this means breaking things down into shorter sentences that explain and also develop an idea. It's good to remember that if you are reading out a long sentence, and you lose your train of thought, and you wrote that sentence, then that point will not be clear to your reader!

Finally, I'd suggest that if you are feeling stuck about what you want to say in an argument, going back to the text(s) you are writing about, specifically the key passages that piqued your interest in the first place, can really help. This can help refocus an argument that is becoming overwhelming (what was your inspiration in starting the essay?) We can sometimes lose sight of our own response to a text after reading lots of scholarship, and rooting an argument's key points in developed textual analysis usually enhances the argument by adding complexity and showing individual engagement with the text.

How do people get involved?

Vicky: You can use this QR code to book appointments in the Writing Advice Centre, which are available from Monday October 6th (earlier dates may appear due to the booking software. Please do not book these dates that predate the opening of the centre!)



More things to look out for...

1) English and Creative Writing Peer Mentoring Scheme:



If you are a first-year student with any English or Creative Writing component to their degree, we would love to have you join our peer mentoring scheme. Peer mentoring pairs you informally with a second or third-year English/Creative student, who can chat through and give advice

about any aspect of your studies or university life. You can meet as often or as little as you like! All you have to do is fill out [a short form which you can find here](#), and you'll be allocated a mentor shortly. You can confidentially describe your situation or any preferences in the form. We think this is a great way to get ahead and feel supported here at Exeter, so do consider giving it a go!

2) The Confidence Lab

Are you an undergraduate student in English, Creative Writing, or Liberal Arts who finds it challenging to speak up or participate in seminars or study groups? This supportive small group coaching programme is designed for students who want to strengthen their confidence and academic voice. You may have an ILP that highlights specific challenges, or you may find engaging in seminars and wider academic discussions stressful and nerve-wracking.

Over six weeks, we'll explore themes of confidence, self-esteem, and resilience, while practising co-created strategies to cultivate self-compassion and develop confidence and voice.

Programme details

- Duration: 6 weeks
- Dates: Wednesday 15th October – Wednesday 26th November (no session on 29th October)
- Time: 3.30–5.00pm
- Location: Queen's Building (TBC)
- Commitment: You must be able to attend all six sessions. If you are interested but unable to commit to the full programme, please indicate this in Question 3.

If demand is high and you do not secure a place, you will be added to the waiting list for next term. You will be notified by Friday the 10th of October if you have secured a place. The deadline for applications is 11am on Thursday the 9th of October. [Sign up here](#).

3) Charles Causley Trust Opportunities for Students

The Charles Causley Trust is excited to announce the launch of their annual **International Poetry Competition on 4 October**. The theme this year is **Family**, in all its meanings and possibilities! Entries close at midnight on the **4 January 2026**, and the top prize includes **£1,000 and a weeklong residency in Cyprus Well**, poet Charles Causley's former home in Launceston. Winners will also be celebrated in person at the **Launceston Poetry Festival (1–3 May 2026)**. Full competition details and the submissions portal will be available from **4 October at causleytrust.org** under *Competitions*.

The 2026 **Launceston Poetry Festival** will also include a **dedicated student-focused day** with **workshops, performances, and networking**, besides the generally amazing lineup of events and readings. **You can keep up with lineup announcements and further news on our Instagram (@causleytrust).**

We are also **seeking volunteers to help us with the 2026 festival by contributing to the planning remotely** and/or by **supporting us on-site** during the three days (or to the extent of their availability). Beyond this, **we welcome students year-round to gain valuable experience with us in roles tailored to their skills and future ambitions.** If you are interested in this, please reach out to @rita.camposteixeira@causleytrust.org.

3) Access to Academia Mentor Scheme

I'm Freddie Proctor and I'm a third year Politics student based at the Streatham Campus here at Exeter University. I have been part of the Access to Academia mentor scheme since last year, so the second year of my course. The scheme aims to include students who fall under the widening participation criteria and aims to match members of faculty and teaching staff who have also had a similar background or educational experience with students to aid them with truly becoming a part of the university community and to help them with anything either personally or professionally they might be experiencing as part of their studies. I was matched with Simon Rennie who is an English lecturer and so far I have really enjoyed my time with Simon on the scheme. As we were both mature students, Simon can strongly empathise and understand my educational journey and path that I have taken thus far in my life. The level of insight and advice that he has given me has been so useful and kind and I am really grateful that I am part of the scheme. This can range from just having a casual chat to talking over future plans and ideas. There is a set timetable of meetings but this is flexible enough to be able to tailor it to your personal schedule. I would highly recommend to anyone thinking of joining to apply. See [this link](#) for further details...

4) Digital Skills Workshops

DIGITAL SKILLS WORKSHOPS

2025-2026

Master your digital skills; master your studies.

ONLINE VIA MS TEAMS



BY THE
LIBRARY

TERM 1:

29TH SEPT, 17:30 - 18:30

GET DIGITAL READY

Tech skills every student needs.

1ST OCT, 16:00 - 17:00

AI ESSENTIALS

29TH OCT, 15:00 - 16:00

Know it, use it, question it.

13TH OCT, 16:00 - 17:00

GENAI UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

12TH NOV, 15:00 - 16:00

Thinking critically about it.

8TH OCT, 14:00 - 15:00

AI RESEARCH ASSISTANTS EXPLAINED

27TH OCT, 16:00 - 17:00

Using them effectively and responsibly.

10TH OCT, 13:00 - 14:00

CRAFTING CLEVER GENAI PROMPTS

23RD OCT, 12:00 - 13:00

Going beyond the basics.

24TH OCT, 10:30 - 11:30

COMMUNICATE SMARTER

19TH NOV, 13:00 - 14:00

Using GenAI responsibly to elevate your writing.

17TH NOV, 17:00 - 18:00

DISSERTATION 2.0

Next-level research with GenAI.



REGISTER
HERE

<https://bit.ly/UofEDigitalSkillsSessions>

Useful Links

[Mitigation Hub](#)

[Student Wellbeing](#)

[Career Zone](#)

[How to Use Assessment Feedback](#)

[UCU \(University and Colleges Union\) Membership Page for Students](#)

Would you like to write for the Newsletter?

Contributions always welcome!

Send 200-300 word reflections on what you've been reading, writing, researching, or generally feeling inspired by on campus.

p.j.riley@exeter.ac.uk