

Academic Writing

Sequence, 8 sessions, 4 days

Introduction

To teach the crucial skills of academic writing and critical thinking, CARTA partnered with an organization called ESE:O. The ESE:O-CARTA [manual](#) – A Critical Approach to Scientific Reading and Writing – provides basic skills to help students to write a doctoral thesis and other academic texts, including research articles and book chapters, that are well structured, logically coherent and engaging.

These modules provide an introduction, covering the essential framework and concepts of the method. The manual is directed to students themselves, to follow as individuals or together.

Ideally, integrate Academic Writing with the [Research Question and Methodology](#), especially the session related to the research gap.

Download the [curriculum](#) for these sessions.

To schedule these sessions over four days, use or adapt CARTA's timetable.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
8:30	Session 1: Body, voice and motivation	Session 2 continued	Session 4: Titles and sentences	Session 6: Teaching while doing Session 7: Criticism
10:30	Break	Break	Break	Break
10:45	Session 1 continued	Session 2 continued Session 3: The research gap	Session 5: Working with concepts	Session 8: Presentations
12.45	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
13.45	Session 1 continued	Session 3 continued	Session 5 continued	Session 8 continued
15.45	Break	Break	Break	Break
16.00 – 17:45	Session 2: Methodology	Session 3 continued	Session 5 continued	Session 9: Wrapping up

Background

This programme of modules is based on ESE:O's Training of Trainers methodology, a multifaceted method developed by instructors with experience in different fields: critical thinking, writing and publishing, body expression, music, poetry, social sciences, human rights, and leadership). The methodology promotes critical thinking, a pluralistic exchange of ideas, and writing as a tool for social change.

Approach

Aligned with CARTA's approach and principles, the ESE:O methodology:

- Considers reading and writing as part of the thinking process, and vice versa.
- Approaches reading–thinking–writing as a cultural practice that involves “learning by doing” in the real world.
- Develops social, communication, attitudinal, and intercultural skills.
- Is metacognitive: in other words, each time a participant completes a cycle, they gain awareness of the steps they are taking and can replicate them.
- Is flexible and procedure based.
- Follows a series of simple and easily applied steps that can be adapted to the needs of each writer.
- Works through collaborative interaction between students and facilitators, teamwork, peer review, and micro role-playing. This helps build critical thinking, planning, and writing skills as well as the capacity to participate concretely and

effectively in real-life discursive communities.

- Uses a “training of trainers” perspective to build participants’ competencies so that they can go on to transmit their skills and knowledge to others.
- Promotes self-learning and the empowerment of writers.
- Trains writers in the use of digital and information technology.
- Has been developed and tested for over 15 years in different languages, cultures, and continents.

Core Ideas

This introduction to critical thinking and academic writing builds 15 core ideas.

1. The importance for a PhD thesis of the research (knowledge) gap, research problem, and research questions.
2. Critical discussion, rather than reproduction, of existing knowledge.
3. Helping writers gain confidence to use their own voice and perspective from the start and contribute their own thoughts and conclusions to the debate.
4. Developing a stance when engaging with the literature.
5. Identifying the key idea and holding focus on it (“the heart of the matter”).
6. The importance of logical coherence, continuity, and cohesion in developing an argument in writing.
7. How to use titles, subtitles, paragraphs, and topic sentences.
8. Understanding what concepts are and their role in scientific research,
9. The ability to describe and discuss a conceptual framework.
10. Familiarity with mind-maps as a creative tool to generate ideas.
11. The circular and self-reinforcing nature of writing and self-editing.
12. The importance of developing a productive reading habit and reading/note-taking technique. A good reader helps make a good writer.
13. The importance of peer review: role-playing as author and editor. Peer review is used throughout the workshop.
14. Writing as a collaborative activity: building a writing community, consulting experts, mutual support, solidarity and encouragement.
15. Academic integrity: referencing, plagiarism and publishing.

Voice

With this methodology, writers learn to develop and value their own voice to participate effectively in different communities. For this purpose, the approach combines cognitive, affective, and social competencies. It stimulates excitement and creativity in the writing process from the start by showing the rewards as well as the challenges in all their transdisciplinary dimensions.

The aim is to strengthen writers’ voices so that they produce an impact on their desired audiences by legitimising and authenticating their discourse. By using international writing standards, publications acquire value as interventions in the world and contributions to change.

Sessions

Session 1: Body, Voice and Motivation

In these initial sessions, students get to know each other and bond. Through thoughtful and creative steps – journals, interviews, poetry, performance – they bring their full selves into the process of thinking and writing.

Outcomes

By the end of this session, students can:

- Work together, participate and collaborate.
- Understand a poem as a text that expresses a central theme or emotion in a few words and shares many features with academic texts, such as title (central idea), structure (beginning, middle, end), rhythm, verbal economy and precision, repetition.
- Keep a journal of memories and reflections about the learning process as a cognitive, emotional, intercultural and social experience: reflexive and metacognitive writing.

Preparation

Find short YouTube videos on mindfulness; warm-up (stretching and breathing exercises); ice breaker exercises; posture, breathing and voice exercises.

Test hyperlinks and/or audiovisual equipment.

Allocate co-facilitator roles.

Assessment

Observe and note students' strengths and weaknesses in:

- Understanding and following instructions.
- Meeting time restrictions.
- Speaking with confidence.
- Expressing views clearly and precisely.
- Having no fear of revealing doubt or uncertainty.
- Having no fear of revealing doubt or uncertainty.
- Communicating successfully with others..
- Ability to avoid unnecessary jargon.

Steps

Time	Step	Who
60 minutes	1. Warm up	Facilitators
60 minutes	2. Interview peers	Pairs, plenary
120 minutes	3. Present self and partner	Pairs to plenary
20 minutes	4. Exercise posture, breathing, voice	Videos, plenary
55 minutes	5. Analyse and perform a poem	Individuals, plenary

Step 1: Warm up

60 minutes

Share greetings and briefly present the facilitators.

Screen a five-minute YouTube video that engages students in a mindfulness exercise.

Engage students in 20 minutes of warm-up, stretching, and basic breathing exercises, and then 20 minutes of ice-breaking body exercises also using YouTube videos.

Invite students to keep a Personal Learning Journal for memories, feelings and reflections about the learning process as a cognitive, emotional, intercultural and social experience.

Step 2: Interview peers

60 minutes

For 30 minutes, students interview each other in pairs, asking about:

1. Name and relevant personal information, family and hobbies.
2. Motivation for doing a PhD.
3. Any previous experience with academic writing and publishing, including courses and/ or workshops.

For the next 30 minutes, invite students to note or share their reflections on the task – what did they learn; feel; notice about themselves and others (metacognition).

Step 3. Present self and partner

120 minutes

Co-facilitators split roles: one is the animator/ facilitator and the other observes and take notes.

Each student 'interviewer' in turn stands up, speaks up and presents themselves. Then they present their 'interviewee' in no more than two minutes. Keep strict time.

For the next 30 minutes, invite students to note or share their reflections on the task (metacognition).

Step 4. Exercise posture, breathing, voice

20 minutes

Engage students in posture, breathing and voice exercises, drawing on YouTube videos.

Step 5. Analyse and perform a poem

55 minutes

Invite students, working individually for 15 minutes, to:

- Search for a favourite poem or poetic song lyric.
- Underline its title.
- Write down its main idea (the heart of its meaning).
- Look for and underline examples of repetition and rhyme.
- Notice how it summarizes feelings and ideas – its ability to be a WHOLE work in just a few words).
- Note how it conveys different aspects of and variations on the same theme.
- Think about how to perform the poem to maximum effect. Annotate the text to show posture, expression, voice volume and tone.

For the next 25 minutes, volunteers read out the poem or lyric they chose.

For the last 15 minutes, focus on specific poems and invite discussion of:

- Cohesion and coherence.
- Beginning, middle and end.
- Rhythm, rhyme and repetition.
- Capacity to summarise and show different aspects and variations of a theme in a few words.

Session 2: Methodology

Introduce the basics of the ESE:O methodology. Students learn and practise the principles of paragraph construction as they think and write about their motivation to do a PhD.

Outcomes

By the end of this session, students can:

- Reflect on their personal motivation to begin a doctoral research project, embrace the importance of motivation as the driving energy of a text and learn to identify this element in peer-reviewing others' work.
- Understand the basic elements of the ESE:O methodology and workshop objectives; key framework concepts such as motivation and peer review; and the available workshop resources.
- Appreciate the importance of basic structural features of academic writing, such as title and subtitles.
- Grasp the principles of effective paragraph construction
 - That paragraphs should focus on a single idea.
 - How to open paragraphs (topic sentences).
 - Where to locate data and argument
 - How to close paragraphs.
- Perform reflexive and metacognitive writing by keeping journals of their memories and reflections about the learning process as a cognitive, emotional, intercultural and social experience.

Preparation

Develop or source Powerpoint/s to introduce ESE:O methodology.

Locate and prepare to screen videos or share links.

Test hyperlinks and audiovisual equipment.

From the Manual, access and share with students:

Module 1, pp. 10–20

Module 4, pp. 58–70

Self- and peer assessment

[Rubric 1: Motivation.](#)

Steps

Time	Step	Who
100 minutes	1. Introduce ESE:O methodology	Facilitator
60 minutes	2. Summarise motivation for PhD	Individuals, facilitator
Own time	3. Write in the Learning Journal	Individuals
70 minutes	4. Warm up	Videos, plenary
95 minutes	5: Discuss titles and sentences	Videos, plenary
75 minutes	6: Peer review of motivation summaries	Pairs

Step 1: Introduce ESE:O methodology

100 minutes

Present the ESE:O methodology, concepts, guiding principles, objectives and literature review workshop. Describe the key resources and demonstrate where students can find the Academic Writing [videos](#) and the ESE:O-CARTA Manual: A Critical Approach to Scientific Reading and Writing (the [Manual](#)). Share the assessment rubrics.

Open a Q and A discussion.

Step 2. Summarise motivation for PhD

90 minutes

Using the poem exercises as a starting point, speak about the ‘heart of the matter’, motivation and desire. Point out that writing a PhD is a long-distance race, a marathon, and so the student needs to pace themselves with a daily writing, thinking, and reading routine.

Ask students to write a 50-word paragraph with their ‘heart of the matter’ motivation and desire to contribute / change the world, from their particular field of knowledge. Allow ten minutes.

Stress how fundamental it is to understand what they are doing and why they are doing it. Each student needs to:

- Think it out, unpack it and probe its weak areas.
- Reflect on it repeatedly during the PhD journey and discuss it with teachers and peers.
- Focus on the contribution, justification, and relevance for their local context.

Without losing sight of their motivation, each student now expands their 50 words to 100, using [Rubric 1: Motivation](#).

Step 3. Write in the Learning Journal

In their own time

Either in the evening or the next morning, each student takes Learning Journal time – reflecting on the day.

Step 4: Warm up

70 minutes

Share greetings and briefly present the facilitators.

Screen a five-minute YouTube video that engages students in a mindfulness exercise.

Engage students in 20 minutes of warm-up, stretching, and basic breathing exercises, and then allow 20 minutes for Learning Journal.

Step 5: Discuss titles and sentences

90 minutes

Screen and discuss Video 1. [Structure: titles and subtitles.](#)

Screen and discuss Video 2. [Paragraphs and topic sentences.](#)

Step 6: Peer review of motivation summaries

70 minutes

Students pair up and, for 25 minutes, review each other's paragraphs using [Rubric 1: Motivation](#). Invite volunteers to discuss the results of their review in plenary.

Session 3: The Research Gap

The first steps along their PhD journey develop and strengthen students' motivation, critical awareness and writing ability, so that they can draft – to the highest scholarly and ethical standards of their scientific community – a short presentation of their research idea, the research gap it fills and its potential impact.

Outcomes

By the end of this session, students understand more deeply:

- The functions of structure in an academic text, including titles and subtitles.
- The importance of well-structured paragraphs.
- What a topic sentence is, what its functions are, and how to write one.
- How sentences are formed and four common errors in writing sentences.
- The concept of the research gap and its centrality in the literature review.
- The distinction between a research gap and a policy gap.
- How to synthesise a research idea (the "heart of the matter") in a few words.
- Authors' combined roles as writers and editors.
- The importance in writing of constructive criticism, editing and self-editing.

Preparation

Review the [Checklist: The research gap](#).

Locate and prepare to screen videos or share links.

Test hyperlinks and audiovisual equipment.

From the [Manual](#), access and share with students:

Module 2.3, pp. 23-27

Self- and peer assessment

[Rubric 2: Research gap](#)

[Rubric 3: Motivation and research gap](#)

Steps

Time	Step	Who
20 minutes	1. Discuss the research gap	Video, facilitator
25 minutes	2. Identify their own research gap	Individuals
60 minutes	3. Review peer's research gap	Pairs
60 minutes	4. Report back on peer review	Individuals, plenary
105 minutes	5: Conduct a collective review	Plenary
15 minutes; own time	6: Reflect and re-edit	Individuals

Step 1: Introduce ESE:O methodology

20 minutes

Screen and discuss the [video](#) on the Research Gap.

The research gap is about gaps or deficits in knowledge (not in public policies). Explain the difference with examples. Once they have reviewed the scientific literature, each student's task will be to establish that the gap exists, describe it as precisely as possible, and demonstrate its importance.

Step 2: Identify their own research gap

25 minutes

Each student underlines the heart of the matter in the 100-word paragraph they wrote earlier. They now write a 50-word paragraph identifying and describing the research gap. As a result, their text is now a maximum of 150 words and must include a working title and five keywords. They refer to [Rubric 2](#) and [Rubric 3](#).

Step 3: Review peer's research gap

60 minutes

Students pair up and review their partner's text. As an editor, they focus on the Research Gap, ensuring that:

- There is only one 'heart of the matter' (they underline it).
- The research gap is directly related to the heart of the matter
- The research gap refers to a gap in knowledge and not in public policy.
- The description of the gap is complete and clear (no jargon, no long and confusing sentences).

For this task, they refer to [Rubric 2: Research gap](#).

Then, as an editor, they review the working title for the 'heart of the matter' and the keywords, as clarified in referring to the video on [Structure](#) and [Rubric 3: Motivation and research](#).

Once they are done, they discuss their feedback with the writer. In the conversation between writer and editor, the editor makes sure s/he got it right and allows the writer to explain it better and adjust the title if necessary.

Step 4: Report back on peer review

60 minutes

The editor in each pair reports back to the group (out loud) on:

- The number of words.
- What is the heart of the matter (reads out a quote from the text).
- The suggested working title.

The writer comments on the experience and outcomes of the exercise.

Step 5: Conduct a collective review

105 minutes

Begin with a 10-minute mindfulness exercise. Then screen the video on Paragraphs and topic sentences for the second time and discuss it.

Explain and then lead a collective review. With your co-facilitators, choose a selection of students' 150-word texts to show on screen (live or online). For each one, facilitators and students together:

- Comment on how the text is structured overall: sentences and paragraphs.
- Comment on how paragraphs are structured. Each paragraph should have one, single central idea; start with a short and concise topic sentence, followed by the development of the central idea or argument, and end with a conclusion or a connection to the next paragraph (the 'hamburger' principle).
- Identify topic sentences, and how well they serve their purpose.
- Discuss the formation of sentences, identifying errors.

Step 6: Reflect and re-edit

15 minutes, own time

Invite students to reflect on this session in their learning journals.

Explain the 'homework' to complete this session. In their own time, each student re-edits their own 150-word text, ensuring that sentences, paragraphs and topic sentences are effective. They use [Rubric 3: Motivation and research](#) for guidance and refer to the [Checklist: The research gap](#).

Session 4: Titles and Sentences

In this session, you use your students' own work to give a general introduction to the essential components of effective academic writing. In particular, focus on title, keywords, topic sentences and construction.

Outcomes

By the end of this session, students can:

- Detect when and why a text is well or poorly constructed.
- Spot the central argument or point of a paragraph (the 'heart of the matter').
- Judge the quality of a title and compose one.
- Grasp the principles of effective paragraph construction
- Choose viable keywords.
- Ensure that paragraphs are not too long and contain only one main idea
- Craft a concise topic sentence to start a paragraph.
- Make sure that the sequence of ideas is logical.
- Use the appropriate connector when necessary to improve the flow of sentences and paragraphs.
- Write, edit and polish until the whole text works effectively.

Preparation

Locate and prepare to screen videos or share links.

Test hyperlinks and audiovisual equipment.

Print copies of the [Checklist: Titles, keywords and sentences](#) or share online.

From the Manual, access and share with students:

Module 4, pp. 58–71

Module 3, pp. 49–51

Module 2.3, pp. 23–27

Steps

Time	Step	Who
20 minutes	1. Warm up	Video, facilitator
15 minutes	2. Write in Learning Journals	Individuals
85 minutes	3. Discuss paragraphs	Plenary

Step 1: Warm up

20 minutes

Screen a five-minute YouTube video that engages students in a mindfulness exercise. Engage students in 15 minutes of warm-up, stretching, and basic breathing exercises.

Step 2: Write in Learning Journals

15 minutes

Students reflect on the day.

Step 3: Discuss paragraphs

In their own time

Show eight texts that you and your co-facilitators pre-selected. For each one in turn, ask students of the paragraph complies with the [checklist](#):

- How strong is the title?
- Are the keywords appropriate for the field of inquiry?
- Are the keywords specific and precise enough?
- Do the keywords add search possibilities not already in the title?
- Is the language and meaning clear?
- Are topic sentences effective?
- Are paragraphs well-constructed and a reasonable length?
- Is unnecessary background information avoided?
- Do the citations appear relevant to documenting the research gap?
- Does the text end on a strong note?

To guide class discussion, follow these points:

1. Only work on one main idea in each paragraph.
2. Create a topic sentence for that main idea/ paragraph. Explain why topic sentences need to be succinct and precise.
3. Reinforce the main idea at the end of the paragraph/ connect with following paragraph.
4. Use connectors effectively to help logical coherence and flow. Ask students to give examples of connectors and to explain their function.
5. Discuss paragraph length and structure: Why aim for short paragraphs? Explain the hamburger model.
6. Cultivate rhythm and argument in the sequence of paragraphs (like a poem).
7. Read your text out loud.
8. Avoid unnecessary background and end strongly.
9. Find effective keywords.
10. Use references to enrich a text.

Show and discuss examples of single paragraphs written by other students as part of their literature review chapter that illustrate effective paragraph construction.

Session 5: Working with Concepts

Many students have difficulty understanding what concepts are and grasping the central role of concepts in scientific

research. They are frequently confused with, for example, issues or hypotheses. In this module, guide students to fellows to identify the key concepts in their research question, find literature that discusses them and explain their meaning.

Outcomes

By the end of this session, students can:

- Understand concepts and their role in scientific research.
- Understand the difference between conceptual and empirical issues.
- Spot the key concepts in a scientific discussion.
- Develop ideas about the relationship of concepts with one another and their pertinence to the research question.
- Search for journals with relevant discussions of concepts and issues.
- Use words precisely and make them count.
- Understand the importance of references to the research argument and how to cite them correctly.
- Construct a reference list correctly.

Preparation

Source a video and/ or prepare a PowerPoint presentation on “concepts and conceptual frameworks”.

From the [Manual](#), access and share with students:

Module 3, pp. 41–48

Steps

Time	Step	Who
20 minutes	1. Focus on mindfulness	Video, facilitator
45 minutes	2. Discuss concepts	Video, facilitator, all
100 minutes	3. Identify the concepts they are using	Small groups
45 minutes	4. Report back on identifying concepts	Groups to plenary
40 minutes	5. Edit and polish texts	Individuals
90 minutes	6. Expand texts	Individuals
15 minutes	7. Write in Learning Journals	Individuals
Own time	8. Finalise expanded texts	Individuals

Step 1: Focus on mindfulness

20 minutes

Invite students to join a mindfulness exercise.

Step 2: Discuss concepts

45 minutes

Begin by explaining what concepts are and their role in scientific research. Screen a video and/or present PowerPoint slides on “Concepts and conceptual frameworks”, followed by Q and A.

Clarify how the main ideas that students expressed in their paragraphs – just like all research questions and the knowledge gaps they fill – involve the use of concepts. The concepts a student uses need to be defined and discussed with reference to the scientific literature and current usage.

Step 3: Identify the concepts they are using

100 minutes

In break-out rooms, small groups of five students each, led by a single facilitator, discuss concepts. Each group selects a rapporteur to take notes.

The facilitator shows each student's paragraph in turn. The author reads their text aloud to the group, followed by discussion.

The group locates and lists the key concepts in the text. The author explains how they understand the concepts (a formal definition is not required). The group discusses:

1. Are there any potential problems in the way the concepts are understood and/or used in the text?
2. Are the concepts used consistently and is their meaning clear in the context?
3. Is the relationship between the concepts clear?

Step 4: Report back on identifying concepts

45 minutes

Begin with a five-minute mindfulness exercise. Then rapporteurs report back on the texts that were analysed in their group. They identify problem areas and challenges that arose in the discussion, especially regarding the correct identification of concepts and the difference between a discussion of concepts and a discussion of empirical issues.

Step 5: Edit and polish texts

40 minutes

Each student edits and polishes their texts, integrating comments in relation to concepts, the main ideas, connectors, the structure of paragraphs and topic sentences.

Step 6: Expand texts

90 minutes

Ask students to produce a longer version (350–400 words) of their research idea (“the heart of the matter”) and research gap. Below, they should include a brief discussion (approximately 200 words) of three key concepts, closely related to their research idea and gap. They should name each concept, followed by a short paragraph discussing its meaning, citing at least three authoritative and reputable sources for each concept. (Citations are not part of the word count). At the end, they should list references, including at least three key references for the research gap, as well as at least three per concept.

The total length of text should now be 600 words. The text must have a title, author name, author affiliation, five keywords and a list of references at the end (not included in word count).

Step 7: Write in Learning Journals

15 minutes

Students reflect on session 5.

Step 8: Finalise expanded texts

Own time

Students finalise the work on their texts.

Session 6: Teaching while Doing

Here, each student uses a detailed assessment rubric to review the expanded paragraph of a peer. Students develop the capacity as critics and editors to give constructive feedback to help the author improve their work.

Outcomes

By the end of this session, students can:

- Use a detailed rubric to assess the work of another writer.
- Give constructive commentary to another writer.

Preparation

Print copies of [Rubric 4: Final version of 600-word research gap and concepts text](#) or share online.

Peer-assessment

Based on Rubric 4.

Steps

Time	Step	Who
5 minutes	1. Share a mindfulness exercise	All
55 minutes	2. Review a peer's text	Pairs

Step 1: Share a mindfulness exercise

5 minutes

Show a video or lead a mindfulness exercise.

Step 2: Review a peer's text

55 minutes

Each student reviews the text that a partner produced in Session 5. Taking the critic/editor role, students use the detailed assessment [Rubric 4: Final version of 600-word research gap and concepts text](#). When you explain the task, stress the importance of “general comments” to orient the writer in the revision process.

Session 7: Criticism

In this session, students learn to absorb criticism, adjust their work and move ahead.

Outcomes

By the end of this session, students can:

- Summarise ideas and arguments in an effective PowerPoint presentation.
- Adjust and reformulate text to correct problems identified by a reviewer.

Steps

Time	Step	Who
60 minutes	1. Prepare a PowerPoint presentation	Individuals

Step 1: Prepare a PowerPoint presentation

60 minutes

Each student receives comments on their expanded text from their peer reviewer on [Rubric 4: \(Final version of 600-word research gap and concepts text\)](#). They prepare a three-slide PowerPoint presentation of their research idea, incorporating the reviewer's comments.

Session 8: Presentations

This session focuses on the student projecting their ideas. Each student has three minutes to present their research idea with a three PowerPoint slides. The group comments on each presentation, using an assessment rubric, and then reflects on the experience in their Learning Journals. Finally, they discuss the Learning Journal.

Outcomes

By the end of this session, students have:

- Developed their capacity to speak in public: attitude, good posture, strong and clear voice, speed, good start and good fin-

ish.

- Gained skills in giving a strong first impression and an effective ending to a presentation.
- Developed the capacity to keep to time limits when speaking in public.
- Developed their capacity to evaluate public speaking.

Preparation

Prepare to lead a discussion of the Learning Journal as a protected time to note memories and reflections about the learning process, as a cognitive, emotional, intercultural and social experience.

Steps

Time	Step	Who
5 minutes	1. Focus on mindfulness	Video, facilitator
15 minutes	2. Note reflections in Learning Journals	Individuals
130 minutes	3. Present and review PowerPoints	Individuals to plenary
45 minutes	4. Discuss presentations	Facilitator, plenary
15 minutes	5. Reflect on Session 8 in Learning Journals	Individuals
60 minutes	6. Discuss the Learning Journal	Facilitator, plenary
60 minutes	7. Evaluation and wrap up	Facilitator, plenary

Step 1: Focus on mindfulness

5 minutes

Invite students to join a mindfulness exercise.

Step 2: Note reflections in Learning Journals

15 minutes

Step 3: Present and review PowerPoints

130 minutes (excluding breaks)

Each student presents the PowerPoint slides they prepared in Session 7. Ask one student to volunteer as the timekeeper – they must keep strictly to time: no more than three minutes per presentation.

Students note their comments on each PowerPoint presentation using [Rubric 5: Three-slide PowerPoint presentations](#).

Step 4: Discuss presentations

45 minutes

As the facilitator, lead a group discussion of the presentations based on the criteria of Rubric 5.

Step 5: Reflect on Session 8 in Learning Journals

15 minutes

Students note their reflections on this session.

Step 6: Discuss the Learning Journal

60 minutes

As the facilitator, lead a group discussion on the Learning Journal.

Step 7: Evaluation and wrap up

60 minutes (excluding break)

Students provide feedback on the content and organisation of the eight sessions. Conclude with a celebratory wrap-up activity.

Note: Within CARTA, these sessions introduce an ongoing process of writing tasks with deadlines and feedback, that continues over the students' PhD journey.