

**ACADEMIC WRITING: RETREAT 'BOOTCAMP'**  
**15 NOVEMBER 2019**  
**EVALUATION FEEDBACK WITH RESPONSES FROM ORGANISATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT**  
**FACILITATOR: DAVINA WHITNALL/SANDY SPARKS**

**1. What did you find useful and how will you implement your learning?**

- The most important thing about the bootcamps is to carve time for myself, away from the incoming emails and admin. To be in that room with other academics beavering away is super productive!
- Having the time and space to focus on writing. I didn't get as much done as I originally hoped, but I did make progress with my paper, and the 1.5 pages I wrote is more than I had at the start of the session, so I am taking the positives from that. For the future I am thinking about how to complete the paper before the next bootcamp so that I can use that to focus on another project!
- I have attended this workshop a number of times. This is the only course, my line manager is keep asking me to book.  
Every time I have attended, I learned something new. For this run, I learned a few new methods from Davina to make a good structure as well as delivering a good quality paper. Her feedback was quite clear and precise. I have started to use these new techniques I learned for next paper already.
- It was excellent for focusing on one writing task, which I achieved. It made me set a realistic writing goal that I would probably not have done with such commitment otherwise.
- I found it very useful to have the time to speak to Davina. She gave me some really helpful advice about my project and gave me some ideas and techniques that I would never have thought to use, but I have since implemented into my writing practice. It was refreshing to have a focus on not just writing and getting as much down on the page as possible, but also just a recognition about how important 'thinking' time is. I felt Davina really understood the challenges I was facing and her advice was practical and achievable.  
I went into the day with a vague idea that I would start to think about what I might include in the first chapter for my next monograph, but came out of the day with not only a clear plan about what the chapter was going to be about (including structure and argument), but also a much better idea about the book as a whole, which has returned some momentum to the project that I had lost.
- The interaction part with Davina is extremely helpful. I have done some of academic writing during my PhD study. It is the right time for me to the improvement. But I felt less confident about my English writing as a second language speaker. It really good that I had Davina as an advisor in order to help me improving my work. The most valuable advice she offered is the strategies in improving my writing. I really enjoyed the help from her. Much appreciated.

The retreat offered candidate the complete time to focus in the task. I think it is really good for people needs to finish their to-do list in writing but struggling to find out the time. I got the feeling about this section this time.

## 2. What else do you feel should have been included?

- Nothing else is needed.
- Nothing it was an ideal environment for me.
- As set up, the way runs is quite good. Please keep it as it is. We heard that Sandy Sparks is leaving. Her leaving is a big loss. Hope, she can still involve this workshops and maybe new ones.

Organisational Development Response:

The good news is Sandy is returning to deliver [Leadership in Action](#) in February. For further information and to apply for a place visit the [programmes website](#) (links above). Sandy will also be involved with the [Retreat 'Bootcamps'](#) that are running in March and July next year.

- The food and drink and break-time catering could have been more environmentally friendly. We could be encouraged to bring our own mugs for drinks, for example.

Organisational Development Response:

That's a great suggestion – thank you.

- I can't think of anything – this was a really helpful day.

## 3. What other learning and developing opportunities / courses do you need?

- I would say, as many have before, 'more bootcamps'!

Organisational Development's Response:

We have two further 'bootcamps' scheduled for this academic year. They are both two day events. The first on the 5 and 6 March 2020 during term time and the second on 2 and 3 July 2020 during summer vocation

- Specifically, applying for funding including class room learning and working on example case studies.
- Just more of these bootcamps – they are a highlight of the academic year for me, as they give me an opportunity to begin writing projects that I would otherwise put off and thus enable me to move forward with my research outputs. If there was an opportunity to do a week-long bootcamp over the summer or a weekend retreat then that would also be useful.

Organisational Development's Response:

Thank you for your very positive feedback – we're delighted to know 'Bootcamp' is the highlight of your academic year and we have noted your suggestion of a week long Retreat 'Bootcamp'.

- I need to have systematic planning to take the Academic Writing Programme courses in order to my writing. Now I am very satisfied with the courses offered.

## 4. Additional Comments

- Very good section, will attend similar session in the future.

## **Achievements/Impacts – from last 2-day Academic Writing: Retreat ‘Bootcamp’**

1. I submitted the journal article I worked on.
2. I submitted a journal article having been on my desk for many years. I now have corrections/comments to work on and then re-submit.