

Alison Chisholm – Sussex Centre for Language Studies – What do you offer new doctoral researchers? – Transcript

My name's Alison Chisholm and I work in the Sussex Centre for Language Studies and I have a range of roles but my main role in term time is I'm a senior teaching fellow and I oversee international academic development, which focuses on developing skills with international students or those with English as a second or third language. It's not so much just the language skills it's also helping students adapt to a different academic culture. Throughout the world even from school to University or from country to country, academic cultures and expectations are very different and its understanding how to adapt to those differences that's key to success studying in a British university.

We offer a range of input which is open to all international students, from undergraduate right the way through to doctoral. Each term we run a series of workshops, these are two hours, there's no preparation and nothing to do afterwards and you don't have to attend all of them. So you can book the ones which you are interested in. Some of them will be on typical features of academic writing, and how to make even good, general English, sound more academic, or meet the requirements of academic writing and those certain techniques we can teach you to do that.

Some workshops will be on how to make the most of tutorials or make the most of seminars if you're sometimes finding it difficult to participate, we can give you techniques to help you participate in those. And then we also look at academic culture, what's expected of students and how culture can change. We also offer individual tutorials, these are especially useful for doctoral students because we can focus on your own writing or if you're giving a presentation we can practice that with you. We can't offer a lot of tutorials over the year because it's a very high demand service, but we can certainly see most students a couple of times a term, but we do expect students to do some work in between the tutorials and come back, so we see progression. We work a lot with doctoral students because their writing is key and transforming and giving you clarity of communication is essential for doctoral level studies. We also, if you happen to have quick questions, we run a drop in service, and somebody is based in the Language Learning Centre and you can just turn up and ask them a quick question about anything to do with academic culture or academic language.