

# Report Writing Course Description

## Type of Participant Targeted

Report Writing is designed for any System examiner in the ECP, regardless of specialty, to be taken when he or she begins to write significant parts of examination reports or other supervisory products. The word "significant" leaves each Reserve Bank in control of when each examiner takes the course, since when an examiner begins to write and how much of a document he or she will write differs among Reserve Banks and specialty areas.

## Prerequisites

Examiners should have had some exposure to basic parts of examination reports and other supervisory documents before registering for Report Writing. Ideally, participants should be beginning to write one or more of the products listed under the "Course Overview" before attending the course.

## Course Overview

Course materials focus on a simultaneous, two-pronged approach: (1) The supervisory process and selected risk-focused supervisory products common to our major constituencies and (2) the report writing process.

### The Supervisory Process and Selected Risk-Focused Supervisory Products

The following risk-focused products, will be addressed in varying degrees in the context of the overall supervisory processes of the:

#### Community Bank Organizations (CBO) and Foreign Banking Organizations (FBO)

- Institutional Overview and Risk Assessment
- Scope Document
- First-day Letter and Questionnaire
- Workpaper Documentation
- Examination Report or Target Letter
- Transmittal Letter
- Directors' Summary (problem companies)
- Reply to Examination/Inspection Report Response
- Supervisory Actions (problem companies only)

## **Large Complex Banking Organizations (LCBO), Large Financial Institutions (LFI) and Regional Banking Organizations (RBO)**

- Risk Assessment and Institutional Overview
- Scope Document
- First-day Letter and Questionnaire/Request List
- Report of Examination/Inspection or Target Letter
- Transmittal Letter
- Quarterly Updates for LCBOs and RBOs or Monthly Summaries for LFIs
- Replies to Examination/Inspection Report Responses
- Annual Roll-up Letter (LCBOs and LFIs only)
- Director's Summary (problem companies only)
- Supervisory Actions (problem companies only)

## **Consumer Affairs (CA)**

- Request Letter/Request List/First-Day Letter
- Two Scope Documents – one for consumer affairs and one for fair lending
- Second Request Letter/Phone Call/Fax
- Workpaper Documentation
- Examination Report or Target Letter
- CRA Performance Evaluation
- Transmittal Letter
- Replies to Examination Report Responses
- Supervisory Actions (problem companies only)

## **The Writing Process**

The writing process will be presented in (1) Setting the Tone, (2) Writing Process, (3) Organizing and Outlining and (4) Outline to Narrative. The objectives of these units are as follows.

### **Setting the Tone**

- Define, in general terms, positive, negative and neutral tone
- Identify examples of positive, negative and neutral tone
- Identify the most appropriate situations for employing positive, negative and neutral tone
- Recognize the characteristics of passive voice.
- Identify examples of passive and active voice.
- Determine, based on a given situation, whether you should use passive voice or active voice to achieve a desired tone.
- Identify the characteristics of personal and impersonal writing.
- Determine whether you should use personal writing or impersonal writing to achieve a desired tone.
- Identify how word choice changes the tone of sentences
- Identify the difference between a primary audience and a secondary audience.
- Define three purposes for writing.

- Determine which tone to use – positive, negative or neutral – based on your purpose and audience characteristics.

### **Writing Process**

- Identify the three phases of the writing process: brainstorming; planning and writing; and revising and editing.

### **Organizing and Outlining**

- Identify the components of an outline, when given examples of each.
- Define each component of an outline, identifying its purpose.
- Use a brainstorming strategy to generate information for writing a product.
- Identify two components of a position statement.
- Identify strong position statements when comparing strong and weak statements.
- Write a position statement.
- Further develop an existing position statement with relevant major discussion points.
- Complete the fact, problem, solution process for each major point in your outline

### **Outline to Narrative**

- Move each section of an outline into the appropriate section of a narrative.
- Identify a topic sentence.
- Identify supporting sentences.
- Select appropriate verbal links, transitional phrases and demonstrative pronouns as transitions to make sentence meaning clear.
- Check your final product for appropriate tone and any spelling or grammar issues that need to be corrected.

### **Course Objective**

The Report Writing course provides a framework to help examiners better understand how to write various examination products. An overview is provided of the different products learners will be writing for the respective audiences. The content also includes general writing guidance on the use of tone, voice and word choice. The course provides an overview of the basic writing process including the use of outlines and organizing topics and narrative in order to deliver a clear and concise message. Learners will have a hands-on opportunity to develop a write-up and receive feedback from an expert writing coach. Lastly, the course also provides learners the opportunity to understand the report writing processes specific to their individual Reserve Bank.

### **Learning Objectives**

After completing this course, the participant will be able to:

- Draft risk-focused, supervisory products to conform to System guidelines.
- Prioritize conclusions in order of risk.

- Organize conclusions by (1) presenting and supporting the issue, (2) discussing the implications, and (3) presenting examination findings, if appropriate.
- Organize supervisory issues into coherent comments, explanations, and findings, if necessary, according to document requirements.
- Organize page-one comments or executive summary into (1) a summary of the institution's financial condition and (2) if appropriate, disclosure of the institution's composite rating.
- Write with consistency in organization, tense, tone, and form.
- Use transitions to communicate importance of issues and to give documents a coherent and cohesive flow.
- Use appropriate Reserve Bank stylistic conventions for technical writing.

## Course Construction and Design

The course may be delivered in two ways.

### Blended Report Writing

The blended format includes three required modules:

1. **Report Writing Online module** – the learner takes the online module, available in FedLearn, which reviews report writing essentials. At the end of the module, the learner clicks on the "I Agree" button which commits the learner to complete a write-up within five business days of finishing the online module.
2. **Report Writing Write-up Feedback and Coaching module** – the learner completes a write-up and receives individual coaching/feedback from a Report Writing coach.
3. **Reserve Bank Overview module** – conducted individually or with a small group of examiners who have recently completed module one and two above. This is conducted by a Report Writing coach and covers a brief review of the online content and the Reserve Bank specifics for writing reports (i.e. RTS, NED forms, where to find information, report writing processes, etc.)

Estimated times for completing the three modules are shown below.

Module	Approximate Time
Report Writing Online Module	8-16 hours
Write-up, Feedback and Coaching	2 hours
Reserve Bank Specific Overview	4 hours

### Class Size

The RW blended version is designed to allow learners to take the course at anytime during the year and allow for more individualized training for the learners with a RW instructor/coach once they have completed the online module of RW.

Learners take the online module individually and meet with their report writing coach one-on-one to receive coaching and feedback on their write-ups. The Reserve Bank overview module may be conducted individually or with a small group of examiners who have recently completed module one and two above. This is conducted by a Report Writing coach.

### **Instructors**

The course utilizes report writing coaches. Coaches provide one-on-one coaching and feedback to individual learners based on their write-ups. In addition, coaches provide an overview of the online content and Reserve Bank specific practices to individual or small groups. The number of coaches needed depends on how an individual Reserve Bank implements this version of the course; however, please note that the course has been designed to reach learners at their time of need, so it is anticipated that group sizes will be small and will require no more than one or two coaches.

### **Classroom Report Writing**

The traditional classroom option is interactive, largely self-paced and includes individualized coaching. How much is individualized coaching and how much is classroom presentation depends entirely on each Reserve Bank's assessment of its learners. Classroom time focuses on instructor presentations with questions, instructor-led discussions, in-class writing assignments and skills practice, and small-group critiques of writing assignments.

Estimated times for the classroom modules are shown below.

<b>Module</b>	<b>Approximate Time</b>
<b>Introduction to Course</b>	<b>1 hour</b>
<b>Planning</b>	<b>2 hours</b>
<b>Organization and Outlining</b>	<b>2.5 hours</b>
<b>Outline on Management (For CA, the Compliance Mgt. Program)</b>	<b>.5 hours</b>
<b>Technical Writing Module (Self-paced)</b>	<b>.5 hours</b>
<b>Paragraph Development and Transitions</b>	<b>2 hours</b>
<b>Write-up on Management Outline (Self-paced)</b>	<b>1 hour</b>
<b>Feedback</b>	<b>.5 hours</b>
<b>Professional Formality I (Self-paced)</b>	<b>.5 hours</b>
<b>Professional Formality II (Self-paced)</b>	<b>.5 hours</b>



<b>Module</b>	<b>Approximate Time</b>
<b>Modules as Chosen by Reserve Bank (Depending on the specialty area of the participants)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Banks (Safety and Soundness)</b></li> <li>• <b>International/Foreign Banking Organizations (FBOs)</b></li> <li>• <b>Large Complex Banking Organizations (LCBOs)</b></li> <li>• <b>Consumer Affairs</b></li> </ul>	<b>8 to 16 hours</b>

### **Class Size**

The maximum class size is 12 participants.

### **Instructors**

The number of instructors for a classroom setting is flexible and depends on the specialty areas represented in the class. It is suggested that a class facilitator/instructor present the introduction and content parts of the instruction; handle the administrative duties of tracking the participants' progress on the modules, and give feedback on the following modules:

- Technical Writing
- Professional Writing I
- Professional Writing II

Subject matter coaches in the specialty areas should be available for consultation and evaluation for days 2 through 3 and until the end of the course, but need not be present during the entire class. Subject matter coaches should be effective writers and skilled in giving editorial feedback. A coach should be assigned no more than 4 participants.

### **Optional Modules**

In addition to either delivery option, there are three optional grammatical modules that help learners sharpen writing skills. These modules also include tips and resources which can be used as future reference tools.

<b>Course</b>	<b>Approximate Time</b>
Grammatical Dos and Don'ts Part 1	<b>2 hours</b>
Grammatical Dos and Don'ts Part 2	<b>2 hours</b>
Grammatical Dos and Don'ts Part 3	<b>2 hours</b>

### **Post-Course Intervention**

Post-course intervention will be required to enhance the knowledge and skills gained by participants during the course. After completing the course, each participant should be given individualized, on-the-job assignments that will improve the retention of the knowledge and refinement of skills gained during class. Such on-the-job assignments may include writing

significant parts of an examination report and other risk-focused documents and receiving constructive feedback.