

Date: 18 November 2025

Summary of student needs and desired resources for publishing:

Individual mentorship: One-to-one guidance from a trusted supervisor or expert to help turn research into a publishable article.

Guidance on publication process: Support identifying suitable journals, understanding norms, and structuring work.

Academic writing support: Help with argument development, structure, style, academic language, and ensuring originality, especially for practice-based research.

Language and editing assistance: Tools or services (AI or human editors) to improve English, phrasing, and detailed proofreading.

Key ideas and themes from the interview:

Motivation and awareness:

- Lack of consideration for publishing.
- Lack of guidance or encouragement - supervisors have never suggested publishing.
- Feels publishing is for more advanced scholars; sees themselves as not ready.
- Practice-based research creates difficulty translating work into traditional written articles.

UAL's resources and support

- Aware of support services and resources (tutorials, writing retreats).
- Writing retreats: provide time and space to write, not focused on publication.
- Existing resources provide general writing support but not tailored publication guidance.
- Support exists, but participant feels embarrassed sharing work and fears judgment.
- Preference for more individualised support rather than group-based workshops.

Social and peer support

- Avoids sharing writing due to embarrassment.
- Sometimes asks friends to read texts, but lacks ongoing professional mentoring.

- Desire for trusted, ongoing one-on-one guidance to convert research into publishable work.

Transcript (edited):

AT: Can you tell me about your experience with academic writing for publication so far?

XX: I'm a PhD student—currently in my third year. In terms of academic writing specifically aimed at publication, I haven't published anything yet and I've never tried to submit an article. The only related experience I've had was being asked by colleagues to act as a peer reviewer for the *Journal of Arts Writing by Students*, but that's it.

AT: And regarding writing within your PhD—your thesis or doctoral coursework—have you been writing?

XX: Yes, I'm writing my thesis.

AT: That is also academic writing. What motivates or discourages you? Why haven't you written for publications yet—what obstacles do you see?

XX: Honestly, I've never really thought about publishing. I know people do it, but it hasn't been a practice I considered for myself. This is a common feeling, many students don't realise that they 'can' publish. At UAL, students are often used to making their creative outputs public, but less so their academic arguments. This theme emerges across other interviews.

AT: Did you feel any encouragement from your supervisors or colleagues—any sense that publishing is important and something you should start thinking about now?

XX: Not really. My supervisors have never told me to write for publication. And I haven't thought about it much because I feel I don't yet have anything that could become a paper. I know some people at my level are already publishing, but I don't know how the process works—how to write, where to submit, or what the publication process looks like. This is also shared with the other participants - their supervisors do not encourage writing for publication or are part of the process.

AT: So in terms of guidance and mentoring, you feel you haven't received encouragement?

XX: Yes. No one has ever suggested me to write for publication—but it's also true that I never raised it as an option myself.

AT: Do you know what resources your university offers—workshops, support groups, peer review groups?

XX: I know there is an Academic Support service where you can book tutorials. They mainly help with the structure of writing. There are also writing retreats—I've attended some. They're more about encouraging people to write and giving you time and space to work. But they are not specifically designed around writing with the intention to publish.

AT: Do you feel far from submitting an article? Is it not something you feel confident doing soon?

XX: Yes, I feel quite far from it. First, because I never considered it as something I could do now. Second, because I don't know the norms and practices of publishing. For me, people who publish are much more advanced. I wouldn't know what to write, how to write it, or where to publish. I also don't know which journals or outlets would match my kind of work. Maybe after I finish the PhD—or later—I'll think about publishing, but not at this moment.

XX: Another issue is that my project is very practice-based. Turning that into an academic article feels difficult because an article is primarily a written text. I once attended a workshop on “how to turn your research into text for publication.” It was somewhat helpful, but I don't remember the details clearly now.

AT: In those writing retreats, did you receive feedback from peers? Was there sharing?

XX: It's mostly someone giving prompts and people writing independently. I don't like sharing my writing; I feel embarrassed. I tend to avoid showing what I write.

AT: So sharing or receiving feedback discourages you, or makes you feel less confident about publishing?

XX: I've never received feedback on texts intended for publication, because I've never written for publication. For other types of assignments, it's not the same.

AT: Do these institutional resources increase your confidence in your ability to write academic articles?

XX: It's mixed. On one hand, it's good to know support exists. On the other hand, I feel embarrassed and I think I would feel judged. I believe a more individual form of support would be better.

AT: What kind of individual support would you need to publish?

XX: First, help identifying where to publish. Then help turning my work into a written text with a clear argument that fits the outlet. I would need someone to help me with structure, with the level and style of academic language, and with ensuring the text is an original contribution. And I would also need support with writing in English.

AT: Beyond institutional resources and peer support, what about tools like AI—do you use AI to help with writing, grammar, editing, or finding appropriate academic language?

XX: I don't use it much for generating ideas. I mainly use it like a text corrector, similar to Grammarly. The problem is Grammarly is paid, and the university doesn't provide it. The free version only works for very short texts; beyond that you need to pay.

AT: What do you think about using AI for academic writing? Is it helpful?

XX: I think it's very helpful for language: choosing the right words, opening and closing sentences, linking ideas—basically the academic English phrasing I didn't know how to produce. It saved me a lot of time and filled a gap left by the university, because the university helps with some aspects like

structure and sometimes idea development, but it does not do proofreading or detailed language correction.

AT: Would it be useful if the university offered students a free AI service (for example, a paid ChatGPT plan) or Grammarly?

XX: Yes, that would be useful. Although I'm not sure how much Grammarly adds now that people can use free AI tools. But I think an editing service—even without AI—would be valuable. At the same time, AI doesn't fully replace a person, because sometimes it produces language that isn't correct in meaning. A human editor is expensive—around £400–£600 and sometimes up to £1,000—and the university doesn't offer that.

AT: Is there any other support you think would help you prepare to publish?

XX: Sometimes I ask British friends to read my texts. But what I really need is ongoing mentoring from someone I trust who understands my work—ideally my supervisors—on a one-to-one basis, to help me turn my project into something suitable for publication. But I suspect they may not be interested; I've never asked them. They also don't publish much themselves, so I'm not sure they would support me in that direction.