

1:1 Tutoring

Booking Appointments

Q: How do I book an appointment?

A: Create an account in <https://uvic.mywconline.com/> and choose an appointment time that is convenient or a tutor you want to work with. You may book appointments up to three weeks in advance. Appointments can't be booked online for the same day; they can only be booked for the next day or later. It's a good idea to plan ahead!

Q: Do you offer drop-in appointments?

A: During busier times of the year, we do offer "Express Lane" appointments after 4pm. These appointments are for quick questions and are 15 minutes long. You can sign up at 3:45pm on the sign-up sheet attached to the whiteboard.

From 10am to 4pm, you may also sign up for available appointments on our whiteboard. Just write your name in any blank space with a star next to it. Please note that some times of year are very busy and no same-day appointments are available. Sometimes we do have cancellations, though, so keep checking! Please email thecac@uvic.ca if you can't get an appointment. We'll do our best to arrange one as soon as possible.

Q: How many appointments can I book?

A: You may book two 25-minute appointments per week, up to a total of 10 appointments per term. Come often, and come early, but remember that our goal is to help you become a more confident, independent writer! Ten appointments is usually enough for most students, but if you think you may need more time and assistance, you may wish to participate in our Academic Communication Learning Plan program. Contact Nancy Ami at thecac@uvic.ca for more information.

If you just need a few more appointments for a particular assignment, please email your request to Nancy at thecac@uvic.ca, indicating the number you need, the reason you need them, and when you're available. We'll book the additional appointments for you.

Q: Can I cancel or change my appointment?

A: Of course! If you can't make it to your appointment, log in to <https://uvic.mywconline.com/> and cancel your appointment any time before the start time. There is no penalty for changes or cancellations that occur in advance.

Q: I missed my appointment! What should I do?

A: If you miss an appointment without letting us know, you are taking tutoring time away from another student who needs help, so we take this seriously. If you miss two appointments without notice, your CAC account will be suspended and you will no longer be able to book appointments online. If this has already happened, email thecac@uvic.ca to appeal your suspension. Include the date and time of your missed appointment(s), the reason you missed it, and what you plan to do to avoid making this mistake again.

Q: Who are your tutors? Which one should I choose?

A: All of our tutors are graduate students in the second year of a Master's program or beyond. See the tutor profile page at <http://www.uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/undergraduate/staff/index.php> for more information about their interests and areas of study.

Q: Are you open on the weekend or in the evening?

A: We are usually open from 10am to 4pm, Monday through Friday. If these hours don't work for you, you may be able to use the distance/online tutoring option. See below for details.

Preparing for Your Appointment

Q: What should I bring with me to an appointment?

A: Bring the assignment you're working on (a printed hard copy is great, or you can bring your own computer, but please no tablet- or phone-sized devices!) and the assignment guidelines or rubric. Bring a pen or pencil if you're working on paper; the tutor will not write on your assignment.

Q: My assignment isn't finished yet. Is it ok to bring in a draft or an outline?

A: Absolutely! We can help with any stage in the writing process, from planning to polishing.

What We Do

Q: What kinds of assignments can I bring to the CAC?

A: We can help with academic assignments for any course at UVic. We cannot help with take-home exams or non-academic writing or communication (such as resumes, cover letters, or creative writing).

Q: Can I get help with a group assignment?

A: Sure! If more than one person will be coming to the appointment, you may want to let us know ahead of time so that we can arrange enough space for everyone.

Q: Can you help me with citations or APA style?

A: Our tutors can usually tell when something isn't quite right and help you detect possible plagiarism, but we are not experts in all styles of citation. If you need detailed citation help, we can direct you to the qualified staff at the Research Help Desk for assistance.

Q: What, exactly, do the tutors do during an appointment?

A: Your tutor can discuss with you any concerns or questions you might have about writing and other types of academic communication, including

- Assignment instructions (e.g., What does “analyze” mean? How is it different from “summarize”? How do I know if my sources are peer reviewed?)
- Genre-specific writing (e.g., How do I talk about *ethos* in a rhetorical analysis? Is it ok to use “I” or “we” in a scientific report?)
- Organization, coherence, and clarity (e.g., Is the connection between these ideas clear, or do I need a transitional word/phrase/sentence/paragraph? Can you understand my methodology section? Does it make more sense if this sentence goes earlier in the paragraph?)
- Grammar, syntax, and punctuation (e.g., Should I use present or past tense to talk about this research? Is this the right word? Do I need a comma here?)
- Presentation skills and speaking (e.g., Am I pronouncing this word correctly? What should I say if I need to interrupt during a group discussion? Do my PowerPoint slides have too much information on them?)

The tutor will also usually read some of your work aloud, or ask you to read it aloud, and work with you to improve sentence-level clarity and overall organization, flow, and argument. He or she may also take notes while you're speaking or reading, and you'll be able to take those with you at the end of the session.

The tutor can also help you find other services on campus, such as the Research Help Desk, Study Solutions, Counselling, and the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability.

Q: I have no idea where to start or what questions to ask, but I know I need help. What should I do?

A: Make an appointment! We can help you to define a few of your key challenges and give you some tools and resources to get you started.

Q: Can you help me with my resume or cover letter?

A: For help with resumes and job-related writing, please visit Career Services. If you are writing a cover letter or an academic application, we can help you to polish the clarity, flow, and accuracy of your writing, but we do not provide assistance with content.

Q: I got feedback on an assignment from an instructor and I can't read his/her handwriting. Can you help?

A: We'll try! We are semi-fluent in the scrawl of instructor feedback and will do what we can to help translate this perplexing language form. We can also explain what comments like "awk" or "c/s" mean and how to correct these issues.

Q: Can you tell me what grade I should receive or should have received on an assignment?

A: No, we can't. Tutors can provide feedback on whether and to what extent they think you have fulfilled the instructions for an assignment, and whether your ideas and language are clear and coherent, but we cannot guess the grade you'll receive. It is your responsibility to clarify your instructor's and the course's expectations regarding grading criteria and assignment standards.

Who Uses the CAC

Q: I'm a graduate student. Can I book an appointment to work with a tutor on a thesis or dissertation?

A: Absolutely! We suggest that you book two 25-minute slots back-to-back. This will give you time to describe your project and your writing concerns in more depth.

Q: English isn't my first language. Can I get help at the CAC?

A: All students registered in degree programs at UVic can use the services at the CAC (English Language Centre students in Continuing Studies can only use the ELC's services, but students in the Pathways program can use the CAC). Our EAL Specialists and some of our tutors are very experienced English language instructors. All of our tutors have received training in working with students with English as an additional language, and a few of the tutors have English as an additional language themselves. Check out the tutor profiles on our website to find a tutor who specializes in EAL learners:

<http://www.uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/undergraduate/staff/index.php>

Q: I'm not registered in a degree program at UVic student. Can the CAC help me?

A: We're sorry, but CAC services are only available for students registered in degree-track programs at UVic. If you are a future student, a post-doc, or a visiting scholar interested in visiting the CAC or using our services, please contact thecac@uvic.ca for more information.

Q: I'm not on campus. Are there online or distance resources available?

A: You're not alone out there! Check out

<http://www.uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/undergraduate/self-help/index.php> for online resources and self-study materials, or see the "Distance/Online Tutoring" section below for more details.

Q: I think my writing is already pretty good. Why should I book an appointment at the CAC?

A: That's great! We love helping strong writers become even better writers. We can help you talk through your ideas and plan your writing, and it's often a good idea to get a second pair of eyes on a piece of writing during your editing process. We can make sure that you finish your appointment with even more confidence (and maybe even a thing or two to work on in the future!). There's always room for improvement, no matter what level you're currently at.

Editing and Proofreading

Q: Will the tutor edit or proofread my work?

A: No. "Editing" means that the tutor makes changes and corrections for you. We are not here to "fix" your work; that doesn't make you a better writer! The tutor may point out patterns in error and make suggestions about improving flow, clarity, and organization, but he or she won't draft the changes for you or tell you what to write.

Q: UVic has a new policy on editing, and I'm not sure how the CAC's tutoring fits into it. Can you clarify?

A: Good news! Our tutors are not editors. We do not manipulate, revise, correct, or alter your work for you; rather, our aim is to make you a better editor yourself by giving feedback that prompts you to evaluate your work and make your own revisions. You can review the policy here:

<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2017-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html>. As always, check with your instructor if you're not sure about the limitations of the policy in a particular course, and make sure that you get written authorization if your instructor or supervisor has recommended that you hire a professional editor.

Distance/Online Tutoring

Q: I'm a distance student. Can I get help with my writing and academic communication?

A: We're happy to help! Guidelines for submitting your work for feedback from our distance tutor can be found at <http://www.uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/undergraduate/tutoring/online/index.php>. Follow the instructions here:

<http://www.uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/assets/docs/Online%20Procedure%202017%20Spring.pdf>.

Both real-time appointments (in wconline's chatroom, or by Skype or phone) and written feedback are available. You can select your preferred option when you book your appointment.

Q: I'm not a distance student, but I would prefer to book an online appointment. Is this possible?

A: We understand that life doesn't always fit our 10am to 4pm schedule. If you're on campus full-time, we prefer that you book a face-to-face appointment with one of our tutors at the Centre, but if you can't make it in because of an injury or illness, or because you work during the day or have small children or a sick pet, please feel free to use the online appointments! UVic's student population is wonderfully diverse and we aim to provide equal access to all students, both on and off campus.

Q: How does online and distance tutoring work?

A: The guidelines and booking instructions can be found here:

<http://www.uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/assets/docs/Online%20Procedure%202017%20Spring.pdf>.

The tutor will either "meet" you online or by phone, or return your assignment by email with written feedback within 24 hours of the time slot you've booked.

Q: What if the online tutoring schedule gets full? Should I reserve a time slot in advance if I'm not ready to receive feedback yet?

A: You may book a time slot up to two days in advance, but it's best to book the first time that's available and attach your assignment when you're ready to receive feedback. If you forget to attach your assignment before your booked time slot, your appointment will be cancelled and marked as "missed." If you miss two appointments, you won't be able to book in wonline anymore. If you're ready to receive feedback and the schedule appears full, please email twc@uvic.ca. Requests for written feedback can always be accommodated within 48 hours, and are usually returned the same day if they are received in the morning.