Pre-course work:

1. Complete online Lynda.tcd.ie course "Learn to write for the Web" by clicking on this link: https://www.lynda.com/Web-Content-Strategy-tutorials/Writing-Web/180104-2.html?org=tcd.ie

2. Complete Questionnaire by clicking this link https://plainenglishireland.polldaddy.com/s/tcd-practical-writing-25-april

Writing for the Web – Course outline

Overview
Writing for the web is very different from other types of writing – mainly because online readers access information differently. According to research:

- Almost 80% of users scan the page instead of reading word for word
- Reading from computer screens is about 25% slower than reading from paper
- Web content should have 50% of the word count of its paper equivalent

During this highly practical course, an experienced writer and editor will show participants how to apply this research to create web content that is clear, concise, well-structured and user-friendly. Using authentic situations / material for their site, participants will gain the confidence and skills to write and edit effectively – and to deliver information successfully to the target audience.

On completion of this course, participants will:

- Feel confident they can write effectively for their website
- Understand the issues involved in making online writing accessible to all readers
- Understand how users ‘read’ websites
- Know how to achieve a reader-focused style and structure
- Be able to explain information quickly, clearly and concisely
- Understand how to adapt hard copy for the web
- Recognise common errors of punctuation and use of English
- Take away a comprehensive resource pack with useful online links
Course content

Part 1 – Planning: Clear thinking leads to clear writing

Essential steps in planning a professional website:

- Understand how readers access web pages
- Define your purpose
- Identify your target readership (age, expertise, interests, literacy etc.)
- Create an effective brief for writers and editors
- Build an effective structure for a page, with a skeleton
- Use hypertext / anchor links to improve accessibility
- Link information, using chunks and following breadcrumbs
- Practice

Part 2 – Writing content: strong, clear, concise English

- Identify best practice in web content writing
- How to adapt hard copy for the web
- Accessibility – guidelines and practice on how to achieve WCAG 2.0 (international standard supported by the National Disability Authority)
- When to use pdfs / Word / HTML
- Ensure scanners get the message quickly
- Use the power of language to achieve objectives (and achieve WCAG 2.0):
  - Get the style and tone of voice right – for your target audience(s)
  - Use clear, concise, accessible English
  - Does it do what it says on the tin? Good labelling
  - Ensure each section fulfills its purpose e.g. informs users or answers their questions

Part 3 – Reviewing: Polishing the content

- How to edit to make every word count
- Checklist: common errors of grammar, punctuation etc.
- Identify commonly confused words
- Practice