

Technical authoring training programme

Training course outline

Comprehensive technical author training programme for newcomers, and existing technical authors who want to improve their skill set.



Programme summary

Comprises three modules: introductory (day 1), intermediate (days 2 and 3) and advanced (days 4 and 5).

Attend the full programme, or just the module(s) relevant to your experience.

Duration

Five days.

Who should attend?

Newcomers to technical authoring, and existing technical authors who want to improve their skill set.

In-class or live online

Attend in-person at our centres in Bristol or Reading, or participate live online.

In-class delegates have the use of a computer to practice the techniques taught.

Refreshments and lunch are provided. For venue details, see armada.co.uk/centres.

To read about our approach to online training, see armada.co.uk/live-online-training.

ISTC-accredited

Armada is a long-standing business affiliate of the ISTC, the UK-based society for professional communicators. Our Technical author training programme has been accredited by the ISTC since 2012.

Lead instructor: Matthew Ellison

The programme is hosted by Matthew Ellison, who has over 30 years' experience working as a user assistance and eLearning professional. To read a short bio for Matthew, see Expert trainers.

General information

For over two decades Armada was a leading provider of technical authoring services. Our background makes us ideally suited to offering technical author training.

Course fees can be paid by card or bank transfer. We accept purchase orders from UK-registered companies and public sector organisations.

If you're self-funding your training, you can pay in staged payments, interest-free, over 12 months.

Course materials and certificate

Delegates receive:

- Comprehensive training course materials.
- An e-certificate confirming successful completion of an ISTC-accredited *Technical authoring training programme*.

Method of delivery

Training combines lecture, demonstration and hands-on practice. You carry out plenty of practical exercises to learn the techniques taught, and have ample opportunity to discuss specific requirements with the trainer.

After course support

Following technical authoring training, you're entitled to 30 days' email support from your trainer.

Further information

See armada.co.uk/course/tatp.

Course syllabus

See over.



ACCREDITED
TRAINING
COURSE



Course syllabus

Introductory module (day 1)

Session	Topics
Introduction	Objectives Recommended reading list Why good writing is important and the costs of documentation
Know your audience	Understanding and prioritising the different categories of your audience, and handling different levels of reader Researching the basic tasks of your audience
How to structure your documents	Understanding which sections to include in your manuals and the order in which they should be placed
Write from a design	Using mind mapping techniques for designing a document Planning the content of your document before you start writing
Skills of writing – 12 golden rules	12 golden rules of writing to ensure a clear and concise style Using readability checking and testing techniques
Punctuation and grammar	Understanding the basics of punctuation and grammar Avoiding the six most frequently made errors that occur in writing
Document layout	Understanding the basics of layout and typesetting Formatting your document for maximum impact
Writing for the screen	Techniques for conveying your content for easy on-screen consumption
Reviewing and proof reading	Checking your documentation to ensure it is error free Using industry standard techniques for reviewing, rewriting and proof reading

Intermediate modules (days 2 and 3)

Session	Topics
Introduction and overview	
Basics of technical writing	The definition of technical writing Key international technical writing standards Writing tools for technical writers Image creation tools for technical writers The four types of writing The six W's of technical writing
The technical writing process	Why people write ineffectively Why you should treat technical writing as a project The POWER process for technical writing
The Prewriting step	Identifying the document objective(s) Understanding your readers Four key audiences The global audience Adding detail to your audience analysis The audience you don't support Communication style issues
Structuring your document	Creating a body of knowledge Defining structure and content Brainstorming tools and techniques Generating topics for a structure Using the LATCH principle Creating an outline prototype
Creating effective document content	Six rules for writing headings Writing effective topic sentences Creating effective paragraphs Varying sentence structures

Course syllabus

Session	Topics
Clarity in technical writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some rules of English that do not help technical writers Common writing styles The principles of Simplified Technical English (STE) Grammar issues that affect technical writers
Consistency and correctness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieving consistency Different spelling forms Standards for numbers, capitals and punctuation The use of contractions Copy editing and proofreading
Writing for translation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Techniques for enhancing linguistic quality to aid high-quality translation
Putting it all together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building readability into your documents from the start Applying the techniques you have learned throughout the course

Session	Topics
Exploring Writing for Multiple Platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeting your platform for content delivery Writing and structuring effective headings, menus, and links Home pages and transitional pages Developing multimedia content Accessibility guidelines
Content re-use and single-sourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principle of 'write once, publish everywhere' Techniques for writing content for reuse
Creating Better Graphics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designing the page to help your readers Using fonts to improve readability Using graphics to improve communication Presenting data in an accessible format
Checking Document Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checking document integrity The difference between copy editing and proofreading Using standard proof correction symbols
Working With Other People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning for editing and writing with others Document review processes Applying fundamental feedback techniques (the SBI model) Facilitating good communication during the writing process
Polishing Your Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key grammar problems for technical writers Creating cohesion using transitions Using parallel construction in sentences, lists and tables Applying the techniques you have learned throughout the course

Advanced module (days 4 and 5)

Session	Topics
Introduction and overview	
Building Readability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How people take on information Working with how the brain works Given/New and readability Reducing inferential load Signalling with headings
Communicating to the Reader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using active voice for direct communication Using passive voice effectively Making your writing concrete
Standards and Style Guides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International standards for technical writing Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA) Regulatory requirements Company and other style guides Creating a style guide