

WRITING GUIDE

COMPETITION : ONE UPON A TIME... PSL



PSL
VOICES

By students, for students

WELCOME



If you're here, it's because you're getting ready to contribute, to creating content for our blog !

Writing an article can appear intimidating, but don't worry, you'll soon get the hang of it! What matters above all is sharing your own experiences and advice on subjects you care about.

This guide will provide you with practical advice and examples to help you write your article.

And they're off... shall we get going?



WHAT IS PSL VOICES BLOG ?

PSL launched its **student blog**. A new "by students for students" sharing platform dedicated to helping French and international applicants with their academic planning and their admission process to our university.



OBJECTIVES

FOR YOU, REDACTORS

- Make the difference by helping candidates and future PSL students
- Improve your writing skills while highlighting your experience at PSL
- Win a €100 gift voucher and get your article published on the blog

FOR CANDIDATES & FUTURE STUDENTS

- Fully immersing themselves in the everyday experiences at PSL
- Receiving feedback and helpful advice
- Reducing anxiety and self-censorship

FOR PSL

- Promoting PSL to French and international students
- Developing the attractiveness of our courses and student services
- Providing different and immersive content on our communications media

3 CATEGORIES TO ENTER THE COMPETITION

As part of the competition, **3 categories** are available to you :

24 HOURS ON MY
COURSE AT PSL

A "WOW" EXPERIENCE
AT PSL

FROM THE WORLD
TO PSL

Depending on the topic you choose, your article may be published in one of the following categories of the blog: **Help with application process at PSL, Academic & International Experience at PSL** and **Student Involvement & Campus Life**.

TO WRITE AN ARTICLE..



01. DON'T FORGET THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Always keep in mind that the blog targets both **French** and **international applicants** and **future students**.

→ So it's not aimed at students already attending PSL.



02. FIND THE SUBJECT

Articles must deal with **subjects that will interest future applicants**, allow them to **imagine themselves** at PSL, and answer **any concerns or questions** they might have.

→ Even if you share a personal experience, remember that it's not your personal blog.



03. ADOPT A UNIQUE POINT OF VIEW

Once you've found your subject, **think about the angle** you want to give your article. It needs to be **eye-catching** and **personalized** and provide a **point of view backing up the more institutional content** on the website.

→ Examples of angles for an article on the theme of "Research":

- What does a research course involve?
- My anthropological research internship
- My life, between research internship & Bachelor's degree course



04. THINK ABOUT PSL

Readers should be able to **picture themselves** as part of PSL's broad community when reading your article, regardless of the course they're interested in at our university. Therefore, avoid including too many specifics about your school or training program—unless it's the category you've chosen for your article (e.g., '24 Hours in My Course at PSL').

→ Your testimonial also allows you to highlight PSL's unique features (student services, multidisciplinary, PSL Weeks, etc.). Feel free to include them if they fit naturally into your article.

LET'S ANALYZE A BLOG ARTICLE TOGETHER

1

PSL voices | Oui, oui, un croissant et une baguette – How important is it to know French?

Share : [f](#) [in](#) | [@](#)

2

Bonjour, mes amis! This article aims to understand whether surviving without knowing French to study at PSL or in France is possible. In this text, I talk about all the opportunities to learn French. I will not only talk about my experiences but also talk about my observations from other people.

3

Do I need to know French to study in France?

If we answer the question in a short way, the answer is 'yes' and 'no'. You can **come to France to study** without knowing any French and you'll do just fine which was the case for many of my international friends. Because in Paris and specifically at the university most people speak English and they'll try to help you as much as they can. But I should be honest in saying that this is quite a challenge in some situations, especially for the French bureaucracy. You'll understand what I am referring to if you have experience of France. Because mostly, the **French don't speak English very well**... or they don't want to. That's why knowing some French for your appointments in different services, finding a job or an internship or your daily life is handy.

4



5

Before coming to Paris I already had **A2-level French**, which is generally only enough to understand basic topics and have small daily conversations. My first interaction in French in Paris was in a taxi from the airport where I tried to explain to the driver how I missed my flight. I still remember how I said it: "Il y a l'avion et après il y a pas" – if we ignore all the mistakes with grammar it literally means "There is the plane and then there is no". But guess what? He understood what I said. And this gave me the confidence (a meaningless one, but still) to speak without the fear of being judged. This is important if you want to **improve your language skills**.

I live in a student dorm ([in a CROUS residence](#)) where I had the chance to interact more with French people (this wasn't easy to get in their groups). As you talk to them you understand that not everything that you learned in classes is used in a perfect way in real conversations. This helps you to be more natural when speaking a language. In the beginning, you only nod and ~~wish~~ to not be expelled from the group even though you barely understand anything (I hope they don't see this). But with time you improve your understanding.

PSL services for learning French

If you're an **international student coming to PSL**, you'll also have the **FLE (Français langue étrangère) classes**. Thanks to our professors we had amazing classes not only teaching us French grammar but also French culture, history, lifestyle, etc.

"**Tandem program**" is another great opportunity to **learn French**. This Program pairs you with different PSL members, according to the preferences you have indicated, so that you can practice the languages you are interested in and get to know other people at Université PSL. [Learn more about the Tandem Program: Partner@PSL](#).

As an international student, you can contact the PSL [Welcome desk](#) before or after your arrival at PSL. The **Welcome desk** offers you personalized assistance with all your administrative formalities (accommodation, visa, etc.) and puts you in touch with the right people if you are interested in **FLE courses** or the "Tandem program" for example.

1

TITLE

It needs to be eye-catching to make the reader want to read the article.

2

HEADER

It's a brief introduction that gives insight into the article.

3

PARAGRAPHS WITH TITLES

They contain the content of the article and structure it :
1 paragraph = 1 idea.

4

PHOTOS

They illustrate your article and make reading less monotonous.

5

LINKS

They allow the reader to delve deeper into the subject and stay on our website.

STEPS TO WRITING YOUR ARTICLE



CHOOSE YOUR SUBJECT

- ➔ Your article topic must fall into one of the 3 competition categories :
 - **24 hours on my course at PSL :**
 - Describe a typical day on your course, highlighting the diversity of your activities, memorable moments, and specifics of your course, in the form of an account structured over 24 hours.
 - **A "wow" experience at PSL :**
 - Share a memorable experience you had in the course of your academic journey at PSL (e.g. research internship, event you entered or organized, PSL week, etc.).
 - **From the world to PSL :**
 - Describe your experience as an international student at Université PSL addressing key aspects such as adapting to academic and cultural life in Paris, challenges faced, enriching discoveries, what you wish you had known before your arrival, tips and advice as an international student, or any other relevant subject for international students looking to study in France at Université PSL.

ORGANIZE YOUR IDEAS & WRITE YOUR CONTENT

- ➔ When you start writing, don't forget to give your **point of view** and **your advice** to readers, that's your value added! That's what will make your article unique and different from content that can be found on other websites and blogs.
- ➔ Choose the language you'll be most comfortable with to write your article: **French** or **English**.
- ➔ The expected length for each article: **between 700 and 900 words**.



- Here's some advice to help you with your organization and writing:
- **Write everything that comes to mind so you don't forget anything (bullet points)**
Think of all the positive and negative aspects, your relationship to this subject, etc.
 - **Use other resources to find fresh ideas**
Websites, blogs, social networks, ask your friends and family, etc.
 - **Organize your ideas into paragraphs and give them titles**
Titles will help you structure your article and keep on track
 - **Use a few personal anecdotes to illustrate your words**
They back up more general facts or advice
 - **Think about links you can make**
Links to PSL website pages or external sites
 - **Look for photos that could illustrate your article in your archives, if you have it***
This can be an event, place, students, a trip, etc.

END WITH A CONCLUSION, AN OPENING

- To round off you can :
- **Write a paragraph summing up your experience**
e.g. A summary of my research internship
 - **Provide information for the next step if the reader wants to delve deeper**
e.g. Find the student association that's right for you
 - **Write a few sentences of encouragement if it's an anxious subject**
e.g. Don't forget: interviews are meant to assess your motivation, not give you a hard time

WRITE THE TITLE AND HEADER

- These are parts of your article that you can leave to the end, because they're known to be the hardest to write.

PROOFREAD YOUR ARTICLE!

- Correct any spelling, grammar and syntax errors.

ANY QUESTIONS

Contact us at : ambassadeurs@psl.eu

