

WRITING THE ABS

Facilitator: Kira Bruschke (she/her)

Career Advisor



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

Centre for Career
Development

Territorial Acknowledgement



- I acknowledge that I live and work on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnaabeg, and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to Six Nations, which includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.
- At UW our active work toward reconciliation takes place through research, learning, teaching, and community building, and is coordinated within our Office of Indigenous Relations.

WELCOME!

Kira Bruschke (she/her)

Career Advisor

@ Centre for Career Development

KBRUSCHKE@UWATERLOO.CA



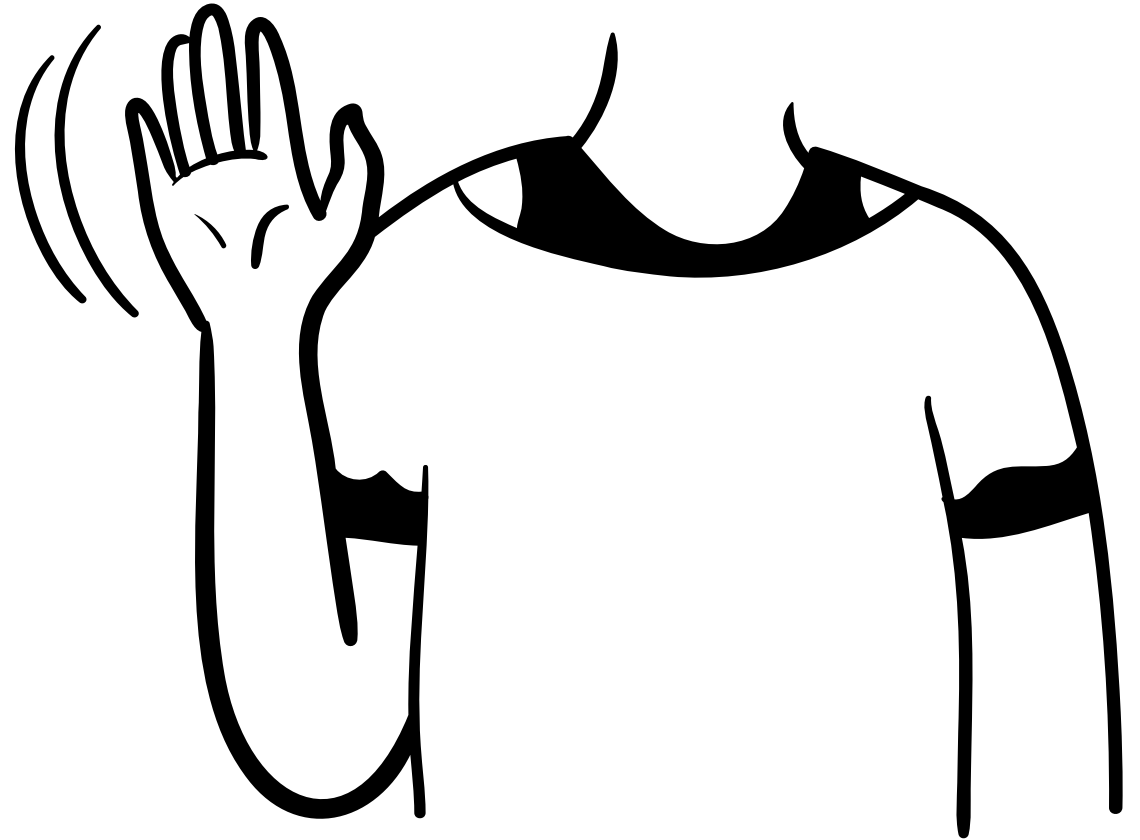
Agenda

- What is the ABS?
- Writing tips—things to consider
- Editing tips
- Breakout rooms
 - 3 samples to review
- Writing time
- Discussion/Q&A



Drop a hello in the chat

- Name
- Program of study
- Pronouns if you want
- What program you're applying to
- What questions are coming up about the ABS?



Autobiographical Sketch



Tailored 'resume' and history of achievements



Requested by medical schools, dental programs, optometry programs etc.



Often comes with strict word limits



Typically covers specific areas of experience



Common Content

Employment

Volunteer Activities/Job shadowing

Extracurricular Activities/community involvement

Awards and Accomplishments

Research

Other?

BE PREPARED TO THINK OF THE FOLLOWING:



Name of
activity



Description



Verifier



Hours

Tips: start with reflection (and research)

- What is the program looking for—what do they value and screen for?
- What have you done (since 16?)
- Select meaningful experiences and identify key takeaways
- Decide what goes in and how you want to represent experiences
- Connect experiences to you as a future healthcare professional!



Tips: draft your content

- Use active voice and ‘action verbs’ or accomplishment verbs
- Adverbs can help! (e.g. effectively, maturely, responsibly, collaboratively etc.)
- Be concise
- What words best capture your strengths?
- Connect to the skills they’re screening for—use frameworks etc.



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

Centre for Career
Development

Providing evidence of required skills

Canmeds Medical Expert Framework	Dentistry	Optometry
Scholar	Teamwork/leadership	Leadership
Leader	Exposure to diversity	Integrity
Professional	Self-directed learning	Resiliency
Health advocate	Problem solving and critical inquiry	Motivation
Communicator	Social accountability	Initiative
Collaborator		Social awareness
		Ability to work with others

Example activity



- Jazz choir leader
 - Leadership—recruiting members for the choir, mentoring them
 - Collaboration –deciding on song choices, performance style
 - Organizational skills—planning meetings and practices and concerts

Extra-curricular example

Description	Start date	End date	Location	Hours	Responsibilities/ type of activity	Connection to Canmeds framework	Verifier
Jazz choir director	Jan 2024	Present	WaterlooON	200 hours	Managed choir logistics, budget and trips. Mentored new members and collaborated on creative decisions.	Leader Collaborator	First name, last name, Role, and contact info

Volunteer example

Description	Start date	End date	Location	Hours	Activity type/level of performance	Verifier
Residence orientation leader	May 2024	Present	WaterlooON	100 hours (summer) 20 hours (academic year)	Facilitated welcoming group environment; led events for ~200 students; maturely managed emergency situations	First name, last name, Role, and contact info

Employment example

Description	Start date	End date	Location	Level of education	Hours	Responsibilities (150 characters)	Verifier
Summer student, University Health Network	May 2023	August 2023	Toronto, ON	Year 1, undergrad	40 hrs/wk 600 hours total	Screen and recruit patients for 3 research studies; obtain participant data in clinic; train new study trainees	Dr. XYZ Title, Contact info

Editing tips

- Short form words are ok
- Present tense is ok
- Are the skills and lessons learned clear?
- Review, review, review (and have someone else review too!)



Example from good to even better:

- **Health Fair organizer**
- Responsibilities:
 - Organized and ran health fair for 500 community members including health screenings and workshops.

VS.

- Led a team to organize a health fair, providing free screenings and workshops for 500 community members, enhancing leadership and teamwork skills.

- *(from BeMO consulting youtube)*

Breakout rooms

- We will review 2 examples in small groups (5 to 6 minutes)
- Questions to discuss:
 - What did you like?
 - What could be improved?
 - Brainstorm other ways to phrase it.
- Take notes if it's helpful
- Share with the larger group

Experience Sample

- Swim Camp Counsellor
- Responsibilities:
 - Taught 30+ students swim techniques. Created welcoming space conducive to personal growth.



Research Sample

- Research Assistant
- Responsibilities:
 - Conducted literature review and lab experiments. Helped analyze data and make graphs.



Breakout room

- As a group, write a possible ABS entry for this experience
- **Activity:** Social media coordinator of a student group on campus
- **Responsibilities:** keep members informed of events and activities to ensure strong attendance. Communicate other news and gather feedback from members.



FROM SCRATCH



Reflect on one of your experiences



Write a 150 word entry for your ABS



Share it in the chat if you wish-totally optional

Discussion

- What questions are coming up?
- What haven't we covered yet?
- What are your next steps?



How can the CCD support you?

- Career advisors
- 30-60 minute one-on-one appointments:
 - Further education
 - Career planning
 - Résumés, Cover Letters, CVs
 - Work search strategies
 - Mock interviews
 - Managing your online presence
- Workshops, employer panels, conferences



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

Centre for Career
Development