



# information | pack

This document details the **Random House Struik Creative Writing Course**.

Random House Struik and GetSmarter, specialist Online Training Company, are proud to present the 10-week Internet-based **Random House Struik Creative Writing Course**. This course meets the high and exacting standards of Random House Struik and GetSmarter and is compiled and facilitated by Mr. Ronald Irwin, a professional literary agent, editor and author in South Africa, Cape Town.

### **What is Random House Struik?**

Random House Struik is the largest general trade publisher in Southern Africa. The recent merger of South Africa's two most prominent book publishers, Random House and Struik Publishers have formed Random House Struik.

The Random House Group is one of the world's largest book publishing companies and operates in the UK, Australia, Europe, India, New Zealand, USA, Canada, South America and has now joined forces with Struik Publishing in South Africa.

### **What is GetSmarter?**

GetSmarter is a specialist Online Training Firm that makes first-class continuing education possible for working professionals throughout South Africa and abroad.

### **About the course:**

This 10-week part-time course will enable students to start and finish a creative piece of writing, including short stories and complete novels. It looks at the major concerns writers face while working on an extended piece of fiction and offers an introduction to how they should present their work to editors and agents.

The course is highly practical with students completing 5 creative written pieces during the 10 weeks with an Internet-based learning model that allows students to study and complete their work in their own time with the support of expert teachers. Students will receive rich personal feedback on their assignments from both their teacher and fellow students. The top manuscripts chosen by the Course Convener will also be submitted to Random House Struik for consideration.

### **Network of writers:**

In addition to the core coursework, signing up for this course means becoming part of a network of writers who can be in constant contact with each other through the private conversation threads on the GetSmarter Learning website. This means that as the course progresses, students make friends with fellow writers; sharing work, contacts and ideas. Moreover, in the last module students will submit work to the group for consideration by fellow classmates. There is no more reason to write alone after completing this course - the network will remain active after the conclusion of the course, allowing students to keep track of your friends indefinitely. This is a unique and very powerful networking resource.

### **Who is Ronald Irwin?**

Ron Irwin is an American professional literary agent, editor and author based in Cape Town, South Africa. He holds a Masters Degree in Literary Studies and a Masters in Creative Writing, both completed under the supervision of Nobel Prize winning author Prof. JM Coetzee.

Ron has edited and sold over a dozen novels to local and international publishers and is the author of one novel, dozens of magazine articles and numerous short stories. Ron has lectured in undergraduate creative writing at the prestigious University of Cape Town since 1997 and in the University of Cape Town's adult extension course in creative writing since 1998.

### **Who should attend?**

This course in creative writing is designed for anyone who wants to bring more flair, drama, and passion into their work. It is ideal for anyone who has dreamed of writing a novel or a short story; for accomplished writers of fiction who want to brush up on their skills, and for nonfiction writers who want to use dramatic storytelling techniques to make their work come alive. Professional editors can also benefit from this course by learning the basic techniques of the creative craft of writing. The course is presented internationally.

## Entry requirements

Students must have a current email account, access to a computer and the Internet and a general familiarity with the Internet and computers, including the ability to read documents in Adobe PDF (Portable Document Format), create documents in Microsoft Word® and view video content.

## The course outline

This 10-week course is completed through distance learning via the Internet and comprises 10 modules. The course outline is included below:

<b>Module 1: Planning the Story</b>
What is your story about? Who will read it? Is your story really a story? Can you outline it? This module helps you examine closely whether you want to spend an extended period of time with your fiction—or nonfiction—story, and how to make an interesting story something readers cannot put down. This module should appeal to writers of fiction and nonfiction, both of whom hope to maximize reader interest in their work.
<b>Module 2: The Importance of Beginnings</b>
It is crucial that every story grabs reader’s attention from the very first sentence. This holds true for people writing fiction as well as for magazines and newspapers. A good beginning jumps out at the reader—as well as the editor who might buy it. This module helps writers create an instant curiosity about their work and looks at great beginnings to novels written by novelists ranging from John le Carre to Hunter Thompson to JM Coetzee. It will ensure that every story you write demands to be read, right from the outset.
<b>Module 3: Characters and Characterisation</b>
Creating characters that readers remember and will follow through your story with interest is an art form. Characterisation is a skill that both fiction writers and nonfiction writers - who must characterise real people - must become adept at. Some editors believe that “characters are your story” and the ability to create a person on page whom readers will sympathise with is quite possibly the most important task you will face as a writer. This module helps you learn the difference between “round” and “flat” characters, and to watch out for “caricatures” rather than characters.
<b>Module 4: Plot vs. Story</b>
When does a story become a plot? Journalists always have to write “stories” for newspapers and magazines, but longer fiction requires a plot and the professional author is sure of the important difference in this regard. A good plot gives cohesion and form to your novel and indeed to your short stories. Understanding what drives characters and how a novel is plotted is a crucial part of your education as a writer. If you can’t tell the difference between a story and a plot, then this module will be most illuminating.
<b>Module 5: Dialogue</b>
A good part of your fiction and nonfiction will be relating to readers what characters say. But does your dialogue spring off the page? Does it help cast the story forward while at the same time tell us something more about the characters themselves? Are you dead sure about the difference between how people really talk and what dialogue looks like? Writers who are masters at dialogue have a distinct advantage over writers who do not. Here is where you develop your writer’s “ear”.
<b>Module 6: Point of View</b>
Should you write in first person or third person? What about the elusive second person voice? What are the pros and cons of each for the writer of fiction and nonfiction? Understanding exactly why authors

choose a certain point of view to present their stories can help you decide how your own story should be written. This module uses examples from popular fiction and nonfiction and provides writers with a checklist they can use to decide which POV will work best for them.

#### Module 7: Conflict

This module examines how conflict and plot meld together to create an incredible reading experience. Understanding how conflict affects your characters, and how it adds motion and energy to your writing, is what this module is all about. Many conflicts drive novels and nonfiction prose, including psychological, physical and metaphysical conflict. The judicious handling of conflict can prevent your prose from “sagging” and will give a focus to your work. Included in this module is an examination of conflict and characters’ desires. How do readers want to see conflict resolved...and how and when do you give them what they want?

#### Module 8: Tying it All Up

Finding the perfect ending is one of the biggest challenges a writer can face. How do you know when enough is enough? How do you end things so the reader wants to read your next piece? How do you begin with the end in mind? What makes for a bad ending—and a good ending? How should we feel after reading the ending to a novel or an extended piece of nonfiction, and what kind of endings leave readers feeling dissatisfied and confused?

#### Module 9: Revision

In this module writers taking the online course share their work with their fellow participants. Each writer will look at writing from two other course members as well as submit material to the instruction. Here we will look at how your writing can be tightened up and improved. It is a unique opportunity to get instant feedback from informed readers about your work, and to get solid advice about how you can improve. Revision is a key element of all writing—many writers spend fifty percent of their working time or more revising their work into publishable quality. This module shows you how to do it!

#### Module 10: Approaching Publishers and Agents with Your Finished Work

How do you write a query letter to a publisher that instantly garners interest? What are the main differences between amateur and professional when looking for publication or representation? How can you immediately be taken seriously as both a businessperson and an artist? This module looks at how authors create query letters that sell, synopses that are smashes, and manuscripts that demand to be read.

#### Course Delivery:

Interaction with students will be via the **GetSmarter Learning** website and the notes and guidelines for study will be delivered to students in electronic format (PDF® or MS Word®).

(<http://www.getsmarter.co.za/learning>)

Each module listed above is divided into several components and is delivered via a user-friendly website, which caters for the varying needs and preferences of students. These components include:

- course notes
- video lectures
- online discussion forum (round table writings)
- multiple choice quizzes answered online
- module assignment (creative writing piece)
- smart games (to test your knowledge)

Each week a new module is made available to the student body and students work through the course material together as a group, mirroring the classroom environment online. Ron Irwin is the Course Convener who provides academic support during the 10-weeks and Jill Pienaar is the Course Coordinator who provides administrative assistance. Together, they ensure quality assistance is provided throughout the duration of the course.

The 5 assignments are not graded and all attending students receive a Certificate of Attendance issued by GetSmarter.

### Course fee

Students may pay in the following currencies:

Region	Currency	Amount
United States of America	United States Dollars (\$)	\$825
United Kingdom	United Kingdom Pounds (£)	£510
Europe	Euros (€)	€590
Australia	Australian Dollars (\$)	\$1 025
South Africa	South African Rands (R)	R6 600 (excl VAT)

Course fees include access to all course material, expert support, video tutorials, assignments as well as postage and packaging of a certificate.

### Course dates:

Registrations close: 17 September 2010

Course starts: 27 September 2010

### Registration and enquiries:

Final date for registration and payment: **17 September 2010**

Should you have any queries, please contact Karin at GetSmarter:

**Tel:** New York, USA: (646) 257 2353  
London, England: 020 3286 8669  
Sydney, Australia: (02) 8006 4311  
Cape Town, South Africa: 021 685 4775

**Fax:** +27 21 685 4883

**E-mail:** [karin@getsmarter.co.za](mailto:karin@getsmarter.co.za)

**REGISTRATION FORM**  
**RANDOM HOUSE STRUIK CREATIVE WRITING COURSE**  
**SEPTEMBER 2010**

**Registrations close:** 17 September 2010  
**Final date for payment:** 17 September 2010  
**Course start date:** 27 September 2010

**How to register:**

- complete registration form below and email to [karin@getsmarter.co.za](mailto:karin@getsmarter.co.za)
- **or** complete registration form below and fax to +27 21 685 4883
- **or** complete the online registration form found at [www.getsmarter.co.za](http://www.getsmarter.co.za)

**STUDENT DETAILS**

SURNAME:

\_\_\_\_\_

FIRST NAMES (as you wish them to appear on your certificate)

\_\_\_\_\_

PREFERRED NAME (the name by which you wish to be called during the course)

\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (including country code) \_\_\_\_\_

MOBILE: (including country code) \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: (Please print clearly. You will receive all communication at this address)

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: (year/month/day)

\_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY NAME: (if relevant) \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL ADDRESS: (including relevant codes. Your certificate will be posted to this address)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your motivation in completing the course?

\_\_\_\_\_

Where did you hear about this course?

- |                                       |  |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Google       | <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook              | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing Group       | <input type="checkbox"/> GetSmarter<br>Past Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Email        | <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth         | <input type="checkbox"/> Random House Struik |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Article Source: _____ |  |   |

## FEES AND PAYMENT

- Course fees can be paid either via electronic funds transfer (EFT) or via credit card.
- Please ensure course fees highlighted below are deposited **free of bank charges**.
- Should 3 or more students register together as a group, you will be entitled to a **10% discount** on the course fee, provided this has been arranged with GetSmarter staff.
- A pro forma invoice will be sent to you upon acceptance of this registration form.
- Payment plans are available to South African students on request.

Please indicate if you are registering as part of a group of 3 or more, entitling you to a **10% discount**:

Yes  No

If yes, please specify the names of your other group members:

Please indicate in which currency you would like to pay the course fee: (please mark with an X)

Currency	Amount	Please indicate:
United States Dollars (\$)	\$825	
United Kingdom Pounds (£)	£510	
Euros (€)	€590	
Australian Dollars (\$)	\$1 025	
South African Rands (R)	R7 524 (incl. VAT)	

## CANCELLATIONS

- Registrations cancelled in writing before 17 September 2010 will qualify for a refund of your payment, but you will be liable for a 10% cancellation fee.
- Cancellations after the 17 September 2010 do not qualify for a refund and will be liable for the **full course fee**.

## PAYMENT DETAILS

Payment can either be made via credit card or via direct deposit. Please indicate how you are paying your course fee:

**By credit card**  
Master, Visa, Diners and cards only.

GetSmarter will contact you via telephone to obtain your credit card details.

**Direct Deposit**  
Account Name: GetSmarter  
Bank: Standard Bank  
Branch: Claremont  
Branch Code: 025109  
Account Number: 07 251 0684  
Swift Code: SBZAJJ

Please use your **name and surname** as a reference.

**Please note:** Random House Struik and GetSmarter reserve the right to cancel the course if there is insufficient demand. In this case all affected students will receive a full refund of their course fees.

**\*\*\*\*\*I acknowledge that I have read and accept all the terms and conditions set out in this registration form.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date