In 2017, four colleagues within the School of Humanities and Communication Arts put together a suite of mini-lecture pods, designed to support students around academic literacy. They were Dr Rachel Morley, Dr Melissa Dietz, Dr Roger Dawkins and Dr Navin Doloswalah.

The videos are short and accessible, each lasting approximately 5 minutes. In these, academics cover a range of topics including ‘Academic Writing’, ‘Critical Reading’ and ‘Referencing and Academic Integrity’. Staff explain both the principles and practice of academic integrity in plain English, conveying to students both what they should be doing and, crucially, the reasons why university study rests on these conventions.

These pods are housed on a website called CALs (Communications Academic Literacy Week) https://www.hca.westernsydney.edu.au/cal/. They are accessible to students at all times and students are directed toward them at key moments during the year – in the run up to assignments; as part of assignment feedback; in lectures and tutorials.

The approach taken by the school is around demystifying academic conventions, getting beyond the jargon and making students aware of the ideas and principles that underpin what can often seem like an overly pedantic set of rules and practices. HCA was keen to create a resource that was permanently available to staff and one that complemented the text-based resources on AI produced by the library. The pods are also an excellent way of communicating with online students.

Please contact the SHCA for any further information. Ling Gong at L.Gong@westernsydney.edu.au