



University
of Glasgow

A WORLD
TOP 100
UNIVERSITY



Co-constructing an EAP Pre-sessionals in Education with Subject and EAP Specialists and Students input

BALEAP 2025: Collaboration, Co-creation, and Community: The transformative potential of EAP

Carole MacDiarmid,
Ide Haghi,
Vanessa McDonagh,
Micky Ross
(& the course design team)
English for Academic Study



Introduction

Context

- English for Academic study
- EGAP / ESAP and 5-week ESAP bridging courses as part of pre-sessional provision
- Needs analysis project for education-specific pre-sessional (PS Ed)

Method and findings

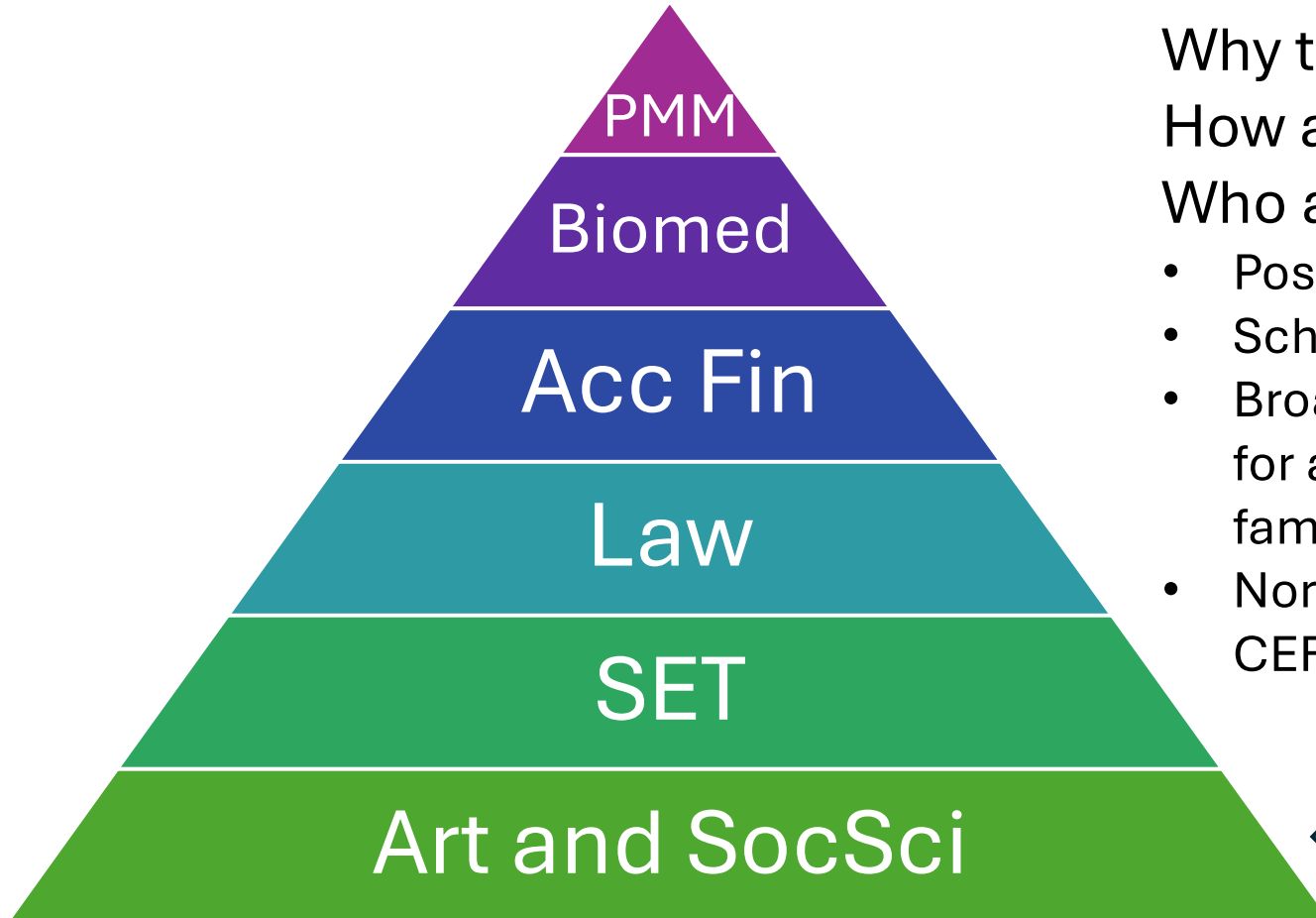
- Data collection: staff interviews and student focus groups
- Data analysis: thematic analysis
- Need for tailored provision that focuses on reading

Key components of course

What we learned



Rationale for this study



Why this study?

How and where does it enhance our provision?

Who are the students?

- Postgraduate taught masters
- School of Education
- Broad aims: develop effective skills and strategies for academic communication and study; 'become familiar with subject area'
- Normally demonstrate a level equivalent to high B2 CEFR (some low C1)



Project design – needs analysis



What can we learn about:

common inputs, outputs, practices, and expectations in the discipline?



Project design

Needs analysis

Planning grid

Range of stakeholders & sources

Ethical approval

Needs analysis: Data sources

Multiple sources (same/similar methods);

Multiple methods (same source) (Serafini et al., 2015)

Stage 1 [& stage 2]

Who/What	How
Academic staff (subject & EAP specialists)	Interviews + Academic literacies grid Observations Autoethnography
Students (with/without UofG PS)	Focus groups [student work/writing]
Documents	Course information; handbooks, moodles

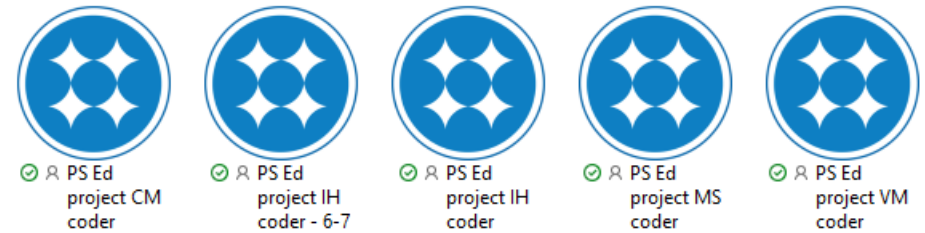
Needs analysis: data sources & detailed planning grid

Who/What	Why	How
Academic staff (1) Education subject lecturers	*TSA- challenges; needs for study; academic literacies	Interviews (n8) + Ac Lit grid Observations (n4)
Academic staff (2) EAP lecturers	*PSA – current challenges; needs for current (and views on future) study; academic literacies and language	Interviews (n 4)
Students (1) Students (2)	Current PSA On programme (+ UofG PS x 1) On programme (- UofG x 2)	Focus groups (x 3 ; #st. 9)
Course documentation audit	Assessments; learning events	Access to public information & course handbooks; Moodles
Stage 2 Student work (C/pass +)	Insights to effective output	Genre & corpus analysis
Course evaluation	* Target and present situation analysis	Pre and post course (Immediate & delayed)



Interview analysis

- Thematic analysis (Polio & Friedman, 2017)
- Team of 4
- Collaborative and iterative
- Manual to NVivo coding
- Code book development & data cleaning
- Reports of each code & summaries
 - Used to develop course ILOs and inform content and approach



PS Education Interviews

Name	Description	Files	References
1 Assessment	refers to summative assessments on courses	0	0
1a Types of assessment	Variety of types & genres (e.g., written /oral/group)	12	54
1b Challenges with assessment	Depth; unfamiliarity, time pressures; (includes challenges e.g., with approach to dealing with assessments)	10	31
2 Engagement		0	0
2a engagement 2a Class learning activities & materials	How <u>st.</u> engage and what the L does to facilitate <u>this engagement</u> discussions <u>sgt</u> scaffolding; specific actions/activities- focus on pedagogical approach/process of learning (may include L1 use) What lecturer does to engage/facilitate/scaffold learning Cognitive, affective, <u>behavioural</u> (what <u>st</u> do/don't do) to support/facilitate learning	13	92
2b engagement 2b Content theory	2b Content theory (understanding, critical engagement) (e.g., explain what	10	64



Key themes from staff interviews



Student profile (# 11/47)



Approaches to Learning & Teaching (#12/63)



Engagement (classes; content; agency
(13/92;10/64;10/41)



Assessment (12/54; 10/31)



Support (programme; assessment) (8/17;8/40)



Academic register and genre (7/15; 7/12)

Prominent themes & codes (6 files/interviews or >/ 12 or > related comments)

(N.B., reflection emerged through analysis in a range of points; not a specific code)



Key themes from student interviews



Student profile (#9)



Engagement (classes; content;
#9 + 21)



Assessment (challenges; #24)



Support (programme &
assessment) (#18)

Prominent themes & codes (9 or >
related comments)

Key findings: what did the code book look like?

Themes	Codes	# interviews & comments
Student profile	4 a Education & experience	11/47
Approaches to teaching & learning	6 a Types of learning events	12/63
	6 b lecturer individual style	8/15
Engagement	2 a Class learning activities & materials	13/92
	2 b Content theory	10/64
	2 c Agency	10/41
Assessment	1 a Types of assessment	12/54
	1 b Challenges with assessment	10/31
Support	3 a Programme level support	8/17
	3 c Support- assessment specific	8/40
Academic register & genre	5 c General academic vocab- lexis/ lexicogrammatically	7/15
	5 d Genre specific	7/12

Transforming NA findings to course design

Aims

- This course aims to prepare students for a PGT **programme in Education** and related programmes e.g., TESOL, Education and Psychological studies, applied linguistics by developing **academic language, skills and literacies** to effectively **engage with their studies**. This should enable participants to operate over **a range of genres and tasks** and demonstrate minimal thresholds for programme/conditions of offers

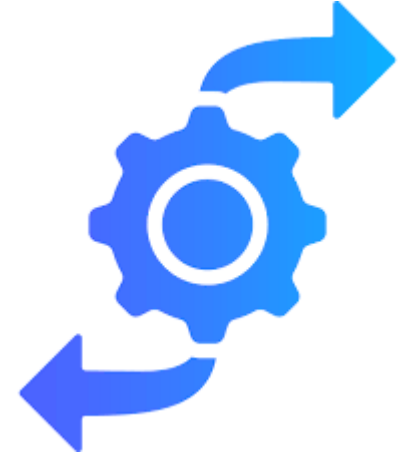
Themes emerging from NA:

- Critical reading skills including understanding rationale for use (of sources)

Transforming to ILOs:

By the end of the course you should be able to:

- Find, select, understand and critically read a text- skills: using database, keywords, reading titles/abstracts, selecting a source





Translating to course content

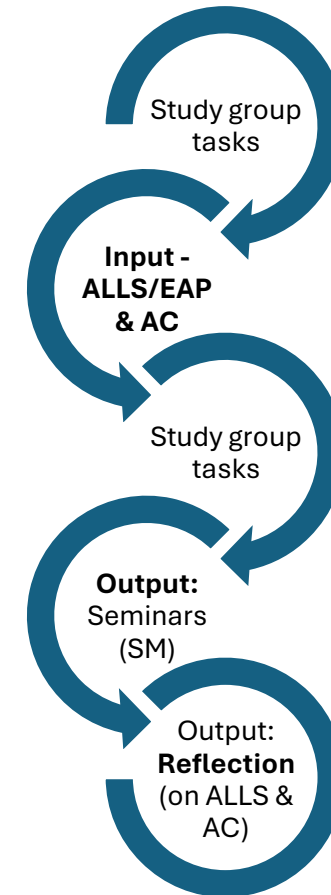
Critical reading, data /source management

Engagement with content (SDG 4: quality education)

- Engagement with learning activities /active learning and small group teaching
- Developing a critical voice & argument; synthesising; managing time for assessment
- Student profile: drawing on and relating to educational experience/background
- Fewer in number but comments on genre and lexis and academic style

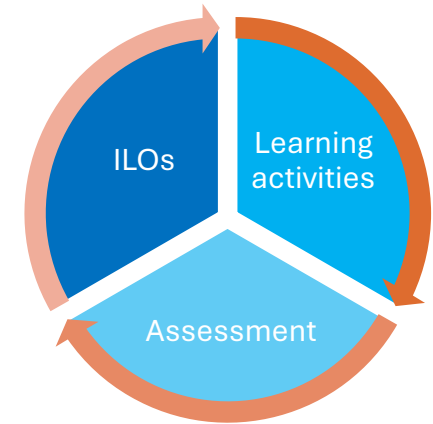
Transforming findings to course design

- Academic language, literacies, skills & strategies (ALLSS)
- Academic **content** (AC) based: SDG 4; Quality education; input selection (articles; lectures)
- Contextualised use
- Critical reading, scaffolding, discussion and writing
- Reflections on content and learning (**global** issues; **local** contextualized **reflections**)
- Cycle of work (integrated and intertextual)
- Developing independent, confident learners



Constructively aligning assessment

- Academic **content** (AC)
- **Content-knowledge focus: SDG 4**
- **Centrality of critical reading**
- Academic language, literacies, skills & strategies (ALLSS)
- **Scaffolded seminar discussion based on topic/reading**
- Essay & reflective writing tasks
- Viva based on project (includes spontaneous work)
- Ongoing class-based comments/formative feedback
- Listening and reading assessments (required)





Critical reading cycle



PREPARATION WITH
SCAFFOLDING



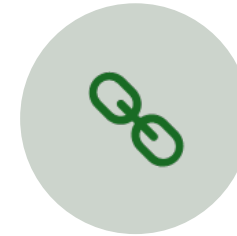
READING WORKSHEETS-
SMALL STUDY GROUPS-
HOW THE
READING WORKSHEETS
DEVELOP



SPEAKING / DISCUSSION
EXPLORATION IN CLASS



REFLECTIONS



LINK TO OTHER LISTENING
AND READING; WRITTEN
TASK/ OWN CONTEXT



Critical reading worksheet week 1

PS Education-Reading Worksheet Week 1

Give biographical information about the text.



(e.g., the author(s), year of publication, author's research interest, etc.,)

Bullet key points in the text for you.



(list key points in the text using bullet points)

Part 1

Add simple discussion questions.



1. (e.g., How does Boeren's discussion of SDG 4 connect to your own experiences in education?)
- 2.
- 3.

Part 3

Part 2

Respond to these comprehension questions/reflective prompts.



What are the key challenges identified by Boeren (2019) in achieving SDG 4?

How does Boeren describe the roles of micro-, meso-, and macro-level stakeholders? Provide examples.

What strengths and gaps can you identify in Boeren's use of the structure-agency framework?

If I were to respond to the author(s), what would I say?

What challenges have I faced reading this text and preparing for class discussion?



Creating practical classroom tasks

Example 2: Writing

Reflection on content and learning

- Regular reflection on learning and content
- Scaffolded reflection worksheets
 - Academic skills & literacies
 - Content
- Encouraging peer feedback
- Linked to seminars and lectures and summative writing

Reflective tasks

Day-7-Reflective-Task: Blog-Entry-About-Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and-Quoting?¶

Task-Title: Reflecting-on-Academic-Writing-Strategies?¶

Instructions:¶

- 1.-> **Think-About-the-Lecture:** Reflect-on-what-you-learned-about-summarizing, paraphrasing, and-quoting-during-the-Day-7-lecture.¶
 - o-> What-was-the-most-challenging-aspect-of-these-skills-for-you?¶
 - o-> How-do-these-skills-contribute-to-effective-academic-writing?¶
- 2.-> **Reflect-on-the-Content:**¶
 - o-> How-does-Boeren's-discussion-of-micro-, meso-, and-macro-level-educational-policies-enhance-your-understanding-of-collaboration-in-achieving-SDG-4?¶
 - o-> How-did-the-lecture-connect-this-content-to-academic-writing-skills-like-summarizing-and-quoting?¶
- 3.-> **Write-a-Blog-Entry(150-200-words):**¶
 - o-> Begin-with-a-brief-summary-of-the-lecture-content-(academic-content-and-skills).¶
 - o-> Reflect-on-your-personal-learning-experience.¶
 - > What-did-you-find-interesting-or-surprising?¶
 - > What-strategies-will-you-adopt-to-improve-your-summarizing-and-paraphrasing?¶
 - o-> End-with-one-question-you-still-have-about-applying-these-skills.¶
- 4.-> **Post-Your-Blog-Entry:**¶
 - o-> Share-your-blog-entry-on-Moodle.¶
 - o-> Comment-on-at-least-one-peer's-blog-post, offering-feedback-or-sharing-your-perspective.¶

Creating practical classroom tasks

Example 1: Preparing for reading, skills & strategies

- Scaffolding
- Planning approach to reading
- Academic literacy windows
- Content-based
- Linked to seminars and lectures and writing
- Agency & expectations

Journal article: quality education in early childhood education

Week 3: Critical Reading Discussion Worksheet

Preparing for reading

You are going to read an article about quality education in early childhood and discuss the findings in the following seminar. You will also be asked to discuss these in relation to your own context.

This is the article title:

Rao, N., ~~Uttobawa~~, M., Yang, Y., & Ranganathan, N. (2021). Ensuring access, equity and quality in early childhood education in Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar: Challenges for nations in a populous economic corridor. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 82, 102380. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102380>

Stop and think

- What do you know about these countries?
- What do you know about 'access', 'equity' and 'quality' and 'early childhood education'?
- The title says 'arousing'. What do you think the challenges might be and why?

Now read the abstract

- What did they study/research and what were the key findings?
- What do you want to learn more about?
- Now look at the sub-headings
- Look at the sub-headings and turn these into questions

E.g., Early childhood education and the sustainable development goals

Question: why/how are they related?

Now ... select your approach to reading. What skills and strategies will you use?

Academic Literacy windows tasks

Please note that you should read **your** assigned reading **before** coming to class and complete the reading worksheet.

This should be **uploaded** onto the Reading Forum on Moodle.

You will be given 10 minutes to **lead** a discussion on your worksheet when you come to class (in a group with students who read something different), so it is essential that you are prepared for the workshop.

Instructions:

- Read your section and take notes in your own words on key information that you can share with classmates. Don't copy the reading word for word.
- Write one or two discussion questions about the section.
- Write a personal response to the section. What is your reaction or opinion to what the authors have written? Think about a specific context (perhaps your own). In what ways could the concepts in the reading be (or not be) applied within a specific educational context?

Complete the following table:

Part 1 Write your key details about the text here.	
Part 2 Write your notes about the content of the text here.	
Part 3 Write questions to stimulate discussion here.	
Part 4 Write a response to the text here.	



Creating practical classroom tasks

Example 2: Critical Reading worksheets Article selection: research article

- Understanding aspects of content
- Engaging with and responding to content
- Challenging
- Reflecting on reading
- Agency & expectations

Journal article: SDG 4 in higher education: challenges and opportunities

Give biographical information about the text.	
Bullet key points in the text for you.	
Respond to these comprehension questions/reflective prompts.	
According to Ferguson & Roofe (2020), what are the main contributions of higher education to SDG 4?	
What challenges do higher education institutions face in implementing inclusive and equitable quality education?	
Identify two examples of initiatives or strategies mentioned in the article that demonstrate the transformative potential of higher education.	
How do the authors connect theory and practice in their discussion of SDG 4?	
If I were to respond to the author(s), what would I say?	
What challenges have I faced reading this text and preparing for class discussion?	
Add simple discussion questions.	
1.	
2.	
3.	

Creating practical classroom tasks

Example 3: Reflection Tasks

- Regular reflection on learning and content
- Scaffolded reflection worksheets
 - Academic skills & literacies
 - Content
- Encouraging peer feedback
- Linked to seminars and lectures and summative writing

Reflective tasks

Day-7-Reflective-Task: Blog-Entry-About-Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and-Quoting?¶

Task-Title: Reflecting-on-Academic-Writing-Strategies?¶

Instructions:¶

- 1.→ **Think-About-the-Lecture:** Reflect-on-what-you-learned-about-summarizing, paraphrasing, and-quoting-during-the-Day-7-lecture.¶
 - → What-was-the-most-challenging-aspect-of-these-skills-for-you?¶
 - → How-do-these-skills-contribute-to-effective-academic-writing?¶
- 2.→ **Reflect-on-the-Content:**¶
 - → How-does-Boeren's-discussion-of-micro-, meso-, and-macro-level-educational-policies-enhance-your-understanding-of-collaboration-in-achieving-SDG-4?¶
 - → How-did-the-lecture-connect-this-content-to-academic-writing-skills-like-summarizing-and-quoting?¶
- 3.→ **Write-a-Blog-Entry(150-200-words):**¶
 - → Begin-with-a-brief-summary-of-the-lecture-content-(academic-content-and-skills).¶
 - → Reflect-on-your-personal-learning-experience.¶
 - → What-did-you-find-interesting-or-surprising?¶
 - → What-strategies-will-you-adopt-to-improve-your-summarizing-and-paraphrasing?¶
 - → End-with-one-question-you-still-have-about-applying-these-skills.¶
- 4.→ **Post-Your-Blog-Entry:**¶
 - → Share-your-blog-entry-on-Moodle.¶
 - → Comment-on-at-least-one-peer's-blog-post, offering-feedback-or-sharing-your-perspective.¶

Creating practical classroom tasks

Example: Writing

Reflection on content and learning

- Scaffolded writing worksheets
 - What /why/relevance
 - *What? So What? Now What?* format and examples
- Regular reflection on learning and content
- Regular formative feedback
- Linked to seminars and lectures and summative writing

Introduction to reflection and reflective Writing Worksheet

Introduction to reflection and reflective Writing

What is reflection?

Why reflect?

Reflecting can help you become a self-directed learner by reflecting on

What is reflective academic writing?

How is reflection relevant to the pre-sessional course?

When working on the pre-sessional course, you will have the chance to reflect on your beliefs and assumptions in education as well as in relation to studying. When preparing for your session every week, you will be asked to note down your initial ideas and assumptions on the topics discussed. These should help you to develop your critical thinking and understand how your ideas have been challenged, changed, or remained the same [gpa](#), [gpa](#), [gpa](#) of reading, participating in the PS sessions.

At the end of each week, you will be asked to submit a short reflective writing piece of approx. 200 words to your reflective journal using Roche et al. (2001) framework. The reflective writing journal will allow you to document your journey of academic skills development and should help you self-reflect on the areas you are good at and ones that require further development.

What? So What? Now What?

What? Keep this Short! Give the reader just enough context to understand what comes next.

Outline the situation: Consider what you include: actions, consequences, feelings and problems. Set the context for your writing; refer briefly to what you did this week, which

	subject you want to cover in your reflection
So What? The most important part of your work. Make the link between your personal experience and the knowledge/skills you have developed.	Examine what you have learned about yourself... practice... others... consider personal and academic dimensions of your experiences. Show why it is important. This part allows you to comment/reflect on the skills/knowledge you have developed. You can also comment on the challenges you have faced when working on the topic this week.
Now What? Short section. Next steps or action plan.	Identify the implications. What impact could these ideas have on your academic development? Or thinking? Comment on the development of your academic skills and ideas. Please note, you do not need to make 'big' statements and the changes which might be happening might be very small. This section is to help you reflect on your development. When thinking about an action plan, think about a small step approach. Set yourself a small manageable goal to achieve.

Adapted from: Williams, K., [Dunlop, M.](#), & Spink, J. (2020). *Effective writing*. Bloomsbury Publishing, p. 80.

How will reflection be addressed in the **course**?

- Pre-session tasks asking you to reflect on your understanding of key terms, learning experiences. It is important that you complete these tasks as the notes will be used to help you write your entry in the reflective writing log.
- Activities marked



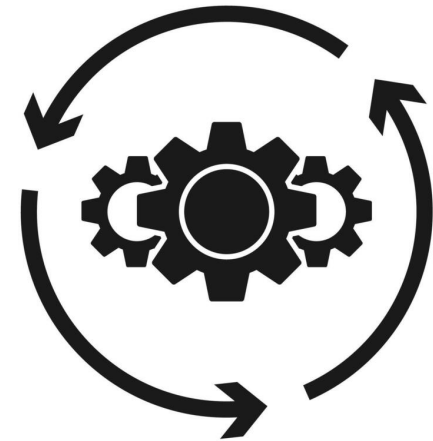
Something old, something new!

So, what did we learn? Re-orienting the PS to content and highlighting reading and critical reading

- Confirming & continuing
 - Voice & argument in writing; intertextual links
 - Academic reading/discussion circles
- Bringing to surface: making the tacit visible & emphasized
 - Focus on content and assessment: education & reflecting on own contexts
 - Content selection & sustained focus
 - Depth ..multiple views/angles
 - Critical reading: now at center of the course
 - Scaffolded critical reading skills
 - More 'academic literacy' windows (Wingate, 2016)
 - Making visible/modelling practice: **agency**, autonomy confidence/expectations
- Embedding and developing- future courses; directions for in-sessional

And this is an ongoing process...

Next step: more cooperation than collaboration (e.g., inviting subject specialists as guest lecturers)

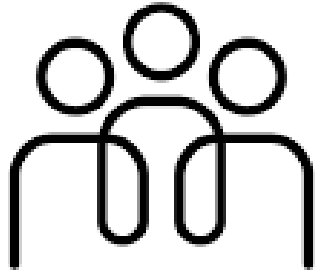




Contributor Role Taxonomy CRediT Roles

PS Education Needs Analysis Team: CRediT roles

- Ide Haghi (IH): Conceptualisation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, project administration, validation, conference paper review and editing
- Carole MacDiarmid (CM): Conceptualisation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, project administration, validation, supervisor, conference paper draft, review and editing
- Vanessa McDonagh (VM): Conceptualisation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, validation
- Micky Ross (MR): Conceptualisation, investigation, methodology, conference paper review and editing
- Marcus Szilagyi (MS): Conceptualisation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, validation, conference paper review and editing
- Anneli Williams (AW): Conceptualisation, investigation, methodology



References

- Bocanegra-Valle, A. (2016). Needs analysis for curriculum design. In K. Hyland & P. Shaw (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of English for academic purposes* (pp. 560–576). Routledge.
- Gardner, S., & Nesi, H. (2013). A classification of genre families in university student writing. *Applied Linguistics*, 34(1), 25-52. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/ams024>
- Hyland, K. (2016). General and specific EAP. In K. Hyland & P. Shaw (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of English for academic purposes* (pp. 17–26). Routledge.
- MacDiarmid, C., & Haghi, I. (2024). Analysing learner needs for effective EAP instruction. In E.Z. Topkaya & H. Çelik (Eds.), *Teaching English for academic purposes: Theory into practice* (pp.85-116). Palgrave Macmillan. <https://link.springer.com/book/9783031725449>
- MacDiarmid, C., Williams, A., Irwin, K., & Doonan, B. (2021). Integrating a signature pedagogy into a pre-sessional: Impact on pedagogy in ESAP. In C. MacDiarmid & J.J. MacDonald (Eds.), *Pedagogies in English for academic purposes: Teaching and learning in international contexts* (pp.169-183). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Nesi, H., & Gardner, S. (2018). The BAWE corpus and genre families classification of assessed student writing. *Assessing Writing*, 38, 51-55. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2018.06.005>
- Polio, C., & Friedman, D. A. (2017). *Understanding, evaluating, and conducting second language writing research*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315747293>
- Serafini, E. J., Lake, J. B., & Long, M. H. (2015). Needs analysis for specialized learner populations: Essential methodological improvements. *English for Specific Purposes*, 40, 11–26.
- Wingate, U. (2016). Academic literacy across the curriculum: Towards a collaborative instructional approach. *Language Teaching*, 51(3), 349-364. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444816000264>



University
of Glasgow

#UofGWorldChangers



@UofGlasgow