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# Launch of Revised BALEAP Accreditation Scheme Criteria

University of Leeds

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# Outline

- Introduction to the BALEAP Accreditation Scheme (BAS)
- Review process
- Aims of the review
- Main changes & rationale
- Piloting and redrafting

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# BALEAP ACCREDITATION

The BAS is a **peer-review**, **quality assurance** and **quality enhancement** scheme. The aims of the Scheme are:

- To enhance the quality of learning and teaching of English for Academic Purposes (EAP)
- To ensure that EAP provision prepares students for academic study
- To support the professional development of those involved in teaching, scholarship and research in EAP
- To assure standards in EAP provision across the sector



# REVIEW PROCESS

- BAS Assessors' day 2012 proposed review
- 2013 survey of former and current members
  - Aims require clarification
  - Criteria require streamlining
  - Institutions require mentoring
  - BAS needs greater visibility
- steering group meeting 14.2.14 discussed aims and established working parties to review scheme criteria, process/support & promotion



# AIMS OF REVIEW

1. To identify the key priorities of the Scheme, thereby seeking ways to:
  - increase the number of member institutions
  - maintain the strong link with Accreditation UK
  - make the scheme more agile & accessible
  - raise the profile of BALEAP and BAS
2. To review the role of BAS as an Accreditation Body - and how it can serve a number of purposes, e.g.
  - assessment of TEAP portfolios



# REVIEW OF CRITERIA

- EAP content central to accreditation
- Remove processes or policies that are responsibility of institution
- Sections reduced from eight to five
  - Institutional Context
  - Course Management
  - Course Design
  - Teaching and Learning
  - Assessment, Evaluation and Progression
- Criteria reduced from 87 to 51



# Definition of EAP

- Explicit definition of EAP added (Bruce, 2011)  
*... the study of English for the purpose of participating in higher education. This study will be centred on the texts (spoken and written) that occur in academic contexts and will include the discourses and practices that surround and give rise to such texts (p 6). EAP course design needs to be grounded in knowledge of the more general assumptions, values and practices of universities as well as understandings of the more specific differences that can occur among different subject areas (p 35).*

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# Section Summaries

## **COURSE DESIGN**

The Course will adhere to the principles of needs-driven, genre-informed syllabus design and assessment to enable students to acquire the knowledge, skills and attributes required for successful study in further or higher education.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The course will be delivered by suitably qualified professionals who understand the principles of needs-driven, genre-informed syllabus design and assessment for EAP and can integrate these within their teaching.





# Course design principles

5.4.1 The Course will be designed according to a set of principles based on the needs of students who intend to live and work in an English language academic environment.

5.3.1 The Course will be designed according to clearly articulated principles of language learning and the development of academic literacy in relation to the needs of students in English-medium academic contexts.



# Course design coherence

5.4.2 The overall course design will be coherent and will provide clear routes of progression, made known to both teachers and students, taking into account those students joining at later entry points than others.

5.3.2 The Course design will explicitly link course aims and learning outcomes to language and academic literacy skills teaching and assessment, with clear routes of progression.



# Syllabus components

5.4.3 The Course will be made up of components which will reflect student needs, each component having explicit aims supported by a syllabus or outline plan and specified materials established before the start of the Course.

5.3.3 The Course syllabus will have an explicit organising principle with a coherent set of components which allow for progression, recycling and transfer of language knowledge, academic literacy skills and study competence to target academic contexts.

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# Going Beyond IELTS

Why aren't the IELTS Academic Reading and Writing tasks more like university-level tasks?

IELTS is designed to test readiness to enter the world of university level study **in the English language** and the ability to cope with the demands of that context **immediately after entry**. It does not assume that test-takers have already mastered (or even partially acquired) the range of university-level reading or writing skills which they are likely to need; in fact, they will probably need to develop many of these skills during their course of study, often in ways that are specific to a particular academic domain. **The implication of this is that IELTS Academic Reading and Writing tasks cannot simulate the sort of university-level tasks which test-takers will encounter in their studies.** It would be unreasonable to define the 'authenticity' of IELTS Academic Reading and Writing tasks purely in terms of 'simulated university-level tasks' and then to judge them against that criterion.

Online at <http://www.cambridgeesol.org/assets/pdf/ielts-research-faqs.pdf> in 2009.



# Review outcomes

- Reworded criteria are aspirational
- Reflect best practice in EAP as viewed within the literature and by members of BALEAP & BAS
- Intended to set benchmark standards to encourage reflection and development
- Important to apply to EAP practice the standards expected of other disciplines within the academy



# Trialling revised criteria

- Eight institutions to be assessed in 2015 who will provide feedback on new criteria
- 11 experienced assessors trialling new criteria
- Nine trainee assessors
  - Experienced in other forms of accreditation
  - Shadow visits & evaluate criteria with fresh eyes
- Review & redraft of criteria by 2016

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# ANY QUESTIONS?



Image retrieved 16.09.13 from

<http://cdn.diabetesdaily.com/voices/files/2012/05/Puzzled1.jpg>