

**SOLSTICE & CLTR Conference 2012**

**Edge Hill  
University**

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The Impact of Academic Study Skills Support: A Case Study

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# Academic Writing Support at EHU

- Situated within Learning Services
- Academic Skills Advisors offer one to one and group support

# Bespoke support

- In 2009-10 opportunity to work with a tutor to deliver bespoke support tailored to the assignment
- Trainees must write a children's story and reflect on the writing process
- The written reflection causes problems

# Bespoke Support

- A 45 minute lecture delivered to tutorial groups with tutor present to give subject context
- Proforma
- Increase in marks: 47% achieving 1<sup>st</sup> or 2i

# Bespoke Support

- 2010-11 lecture repeated
- What is the impact of this support?
- Impact measurement: grade profile, questionnaires

# Questionnaires

- Three questionnaires: before the session, immediately following session and after receipt of feedback

## First Questionnaire:

- 32% felt less confident in planning, structuring and writing an assignment
- 36% felt less confident in referencing

# First Questionnaire

- 75% had problems starting
- 53% did not understand terms “critically evaluate” or “critically analyse”
- 53% felt unable to link theory and personal reflection
- Most popular sources of support: internet (57%), peers (49%), books (43%)

## Second Questionnaire

- Confidence levels in planning and structuring rose to 76%
- 83% confident in breaking down assignment
- 35% found it easier to start
- 93% felt they understood terms “critically evaluate” and “critically analyse”
- 69% felt able to link theory with personal reflection



## Third Questionnaire

- 71% felt their writing had been helped by the session
- 71% had used ideas or strategies from the session
- Assignment structure, introduction and conclusion areas most influenced by session
- Many would like a referencing session and a session earlier in the year

# Grading Profile

Academic Year	1st	2i	2ii	3rd	Refer
2008-09	2%	18%	31%	43%	6%
2009-10	14%	33%	27%	10%	16%
2010-11	13%	32%	31%	15%	9%

# Module Comparison

Module	1st	2i	2ii	3rd	Refer
ABC100	13%	32%	31%	15%	9%
DEF200	3%	18%	48%	27%	5%
GHI300	3%	43%	29%	14%	11%
JKL400	8%	27%	36%	18%	12%

# Conclusion

- Positive impact from students' point of view:
- Increase in confidence in planning, structuring, writing
- Greater awareness of terms “critically evaluate” and “critically analyse”
- Greater reported ability in linking theory and personal reflection

# Conclusion

- Majority found the session useful
- Most reported session had influenced their writing and had used ideas and strategies
- The perceived impact of session was positive

# Conclusion

- Increase in 1st and 2i results from 2008-09, less 3rds
- Module compares favourably with other core modules
- Key to success: partnership between Academic Skills Advisor and tutor

# Conclusion

- This approach represents a model which is neither generic nor tutor delivered
- Session enabled students to reflect and find their own meanings in their writing