

Setting up a Writing Support Service

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The Writing Support Service established itself in September 2008. By the end of the first term, the writing skills workshops were oversubscribed, the demand for one-to-one tutorials was increasing and an online writing quiz was launched as a tool to help students identify their own writing support needs. This workshop will assess the processes involved in setting up a writing support service within a culturally and developmentally diverse learning environment. Addressing five key areas, this workshop will:

- Reflect upon the process of 'making the case' for a writing support service. It will consider the conflict between academic perceptions of how writing support *should* be delivered and the reality of a diverse learning and cultural environment which requires a non-standardised approach to teaching writing practices.
- Describe the process of designing, launching and maintaining an online writing quiz as a self-diagnostic tool for students. It will outline the design and structure of the quiz, share feedback from the early pilot sessions, and offer a brief demonstration.
- Consider the delivery and relevance of the first writing skills workshops which focused on offering basic skills in grammar, punctuation and style. It will examine the feedback from students which illustrates the demand for the service as well as for workshops to have a deeper and wider coverage of writing practices.
- Examine the methods involved in the booking and delivery of one-to-one tutorials and discuss the ways writing support is managed within thirty-minute segments. It will also present a range of learning materials and exercises used to support students.
- Explore the ways writing support is delivered within the faculties and discuss the importance of contextualising writing support.

Participants will be invited to share their own experiences of offering writing skills within a learning support context.

Presenters:

Mary Pillai – Academic Team Manager – Centre for Learning and Study Support (CLaSS)

Mary co-ordinates the work of CLaSS and develops a range of academic support services offered by Library Services. She leads and co-ordinates the development of academic study skills tutorials and workshops offered via the library, and makes a contribution to their delivery.

Melanie Petch – Lecturer in Writing Support – Centre for Learning and Study Support (CLaSS)

Melanie is responsible for providing writing support in the form of one-to-one tutorials, workshops and work within the faculties. She also produces learning materials to support students with their writing.