



Assessment briefings – a space for interdisciplinary collaborations

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Presentation abstract

This presentation showcased inter-professional collaborations between a learning developer and two subject specialists in a BA Primary Education module. The module has a complex assignment which assesses students' primary mathematics and English subject knowledge and pedagogy, and their capacity to critique authentic teaching practice and to formulate a strong rationale for their critique. The session specifically explored: (a) formal assignment briefings as an opportunity for academic literacies integration, and (b) how learning developers can work across boundaries to embed academic development in the context of specific assessments. Furthermore, the presentation examined how these three professionals worked across disciplines to create learning resources for the module to collaboratively introduce the assignment brief to a large cohort. The session also made reference to the pedagogic principles which brought these professionals together, the strategies required to cultivate trust in interdisciplinary relationships, and the skills needed to co-design and co-teach within the module, to foster students' critical engagement with both subject-specific pedagogy and academic writing as a means of developing a professional stance.

Keywords: academic literacies; interprofessional relationships; integrating academic development.

Community response

Audience member responses to this presentation highlighted its significance and relevance to contemporary LD and disciplinary collaborative practices. Their comments underlined the perspective of the need for collaboration between LD practitioners and

subject specialists in order to deliver a high-quality learning experience to students. This issue has been raised in multiple papers (see D'Alesio and Martin, 2019; Butters et al., 2013), with this presentation demonstrating how the embedding of academic skills into the module, assignment briefings and lectures can prove fruitful. This not only has a positive impact on students but also in showing the importance of LD in university teaching, learning and assessment. Comments from audience members are as follows:

ST: It was really interesting to hear Silvina build on the previous work she has done with this programme, with excellent results. I think it demonstrates the positive impact that sustained relationships between faculty members and learning developers can have on the experiences and outcomes of students. Providing examples and exemplars for students can be an issue, and it is great to note that Silvina has had success in working with faculty colleagues to develop these in the absence of authentic student examples (because the module has been revalidated recently). This collaboration continued into the delivery of the resources, with the assignment lecture being co-taught by faculty and Silvina. Induction for new members of staff that includes the LD team as standard must also have a positive impact on their perception of LD's contribution being central to the student experience. Thanks for a great session Silvina.

R P-N C: I share the same thought with Sam Thomas about the positive impact that Silvina has brought to the education of students through close collaboration with subject lecturers and co-teaching with relevant/authentic exemplars. The infographic (see Figure 1) is not only visually appealing but also arouses my interest in the slightly different trajectories of the English and Maths students.

LG: I second Sam and Robert's thoughts on the positive impact that Silvina's work has had on the Education programme. It is very refreshing to hear how collaborating and co-creating with subject experts can improve student outcomes and lead to better engagement. Endorsing the LD contributions for new staff members validates our work and contributions, which is a practice I fully stand behind! Thank you for your talk, Silvina.

Figure 1: Presenter's slide: effective teaching in English, Maths and Science

Next steps and additional questions

Audience members pointed out two areas they would like to know more about:

1. The accessing and use of Prezi as a delivery tool – how did staff respond to it?
2. The differences between the trajectories of Maths and English students – what factors may have contributed to these?

Author's reflection

The comments from the community highlight important aspects of LD practice: building relationships with subject specialists, co-delivering to integrate academic skills in modules, and the use of authentic and subject-specific exemplars. Integrations such as this have the potential to truly engage students and, as a result, improve student outcomes. One of the motivations to present the approach I have utilised in this module is its potential for scalability. Learning developers who align with academic literacies principles are often concerned with scalability – whether it is possible to take on such work with limited human resources. What I intended to demonstrate with the session is that, when learning developers act as consultants and co-create with subject specialists, academic literacies development becomes plausible, as it is a shared responsibility. I would encourage

colleagues who support academic literacies principles to develop interprofessional relationships which can allow for true integration, so that learning developers can feel part of the teaching teams of the modules and courses they work with.

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The author did not use generative AI technologies in the creation of this manuscript.

References

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D’Alesio, R. and Martin, B. (2019) ‘Creating an academic literacy framework to enhance collaboration between learning developers and subject academics’, *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education*, (15). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.47408/jldhe.v0i15.539>

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