

Probing the Principles of EAP Course Design

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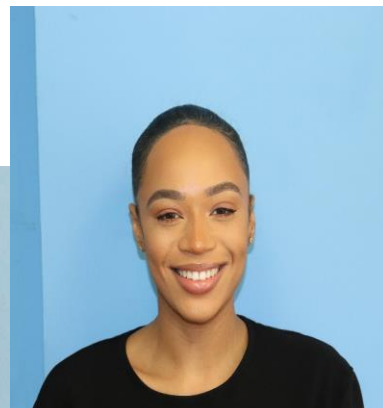
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Centre for Academic Language and Literacies (CALL)



International Foundation
Certificate pathways

Graduate
Diploma
pathways

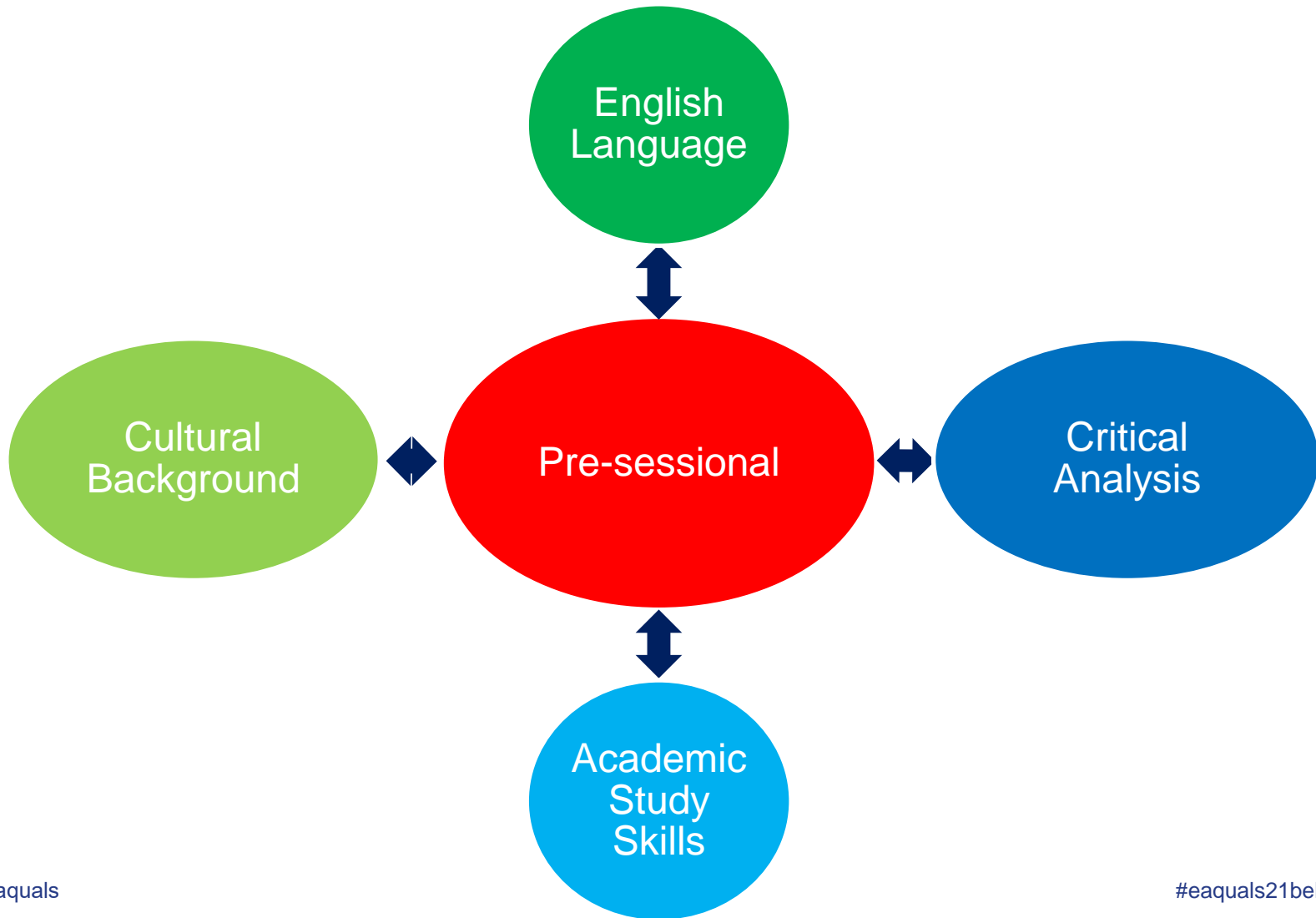
CALL's
activities

Pre-sessional English

Academic Language
Development/Academic
Literacies

Pre-sessional English

A highly integrated, content-led syllabus:



BALEAP Accreditation The Global Forum for EAP professionals



BALEAP Accreditation?

- The BALEAP Accreditation Scheme (BAS) is designed to establish and sustain the standard required of specialist **English for Academic Purposes** (EAP) provision to enhance the student experience.

Revised Scheme: Core Principles

- EAP: language as content (genre-based)
- EAP: pedagogy, beyond CLT-driven ELT
- EAP: is inherently contextualised (for academic purposes)

New Criteria

- **Two sections:**
 - Leadership and Administration
 - Programme: Content, Delivery and Assessment
- Ten Criteria each = 20 Total Criteria

Central to New Scheme: The Accreditation Context document

- Contextualising your EAP Provision including: what your priorities are as a Centre
- Collaborations, Influence and Impact
- Principles underlying your approach to teaching, assessment, EAP
- Developments to Date (For Units seeking re-accreditation)
- Essentials for the BAS Assessors (size, time of year...)

But going back for a moment...

- Our last inspection...4 years ago
- Old scheme – 55 criteria
- Realised we did not have explicit principles that informed our course design
- So we set to work...



It became a department exercise...

- Planned a series of staff meetings
- Asked tutors to reflect on their beliefs are around teaching and learning
- Asked tutors to research the best definition of EAP
- Asked tutors to reflect on Goldsmiths itself and what it is we are trying to achieve with our course

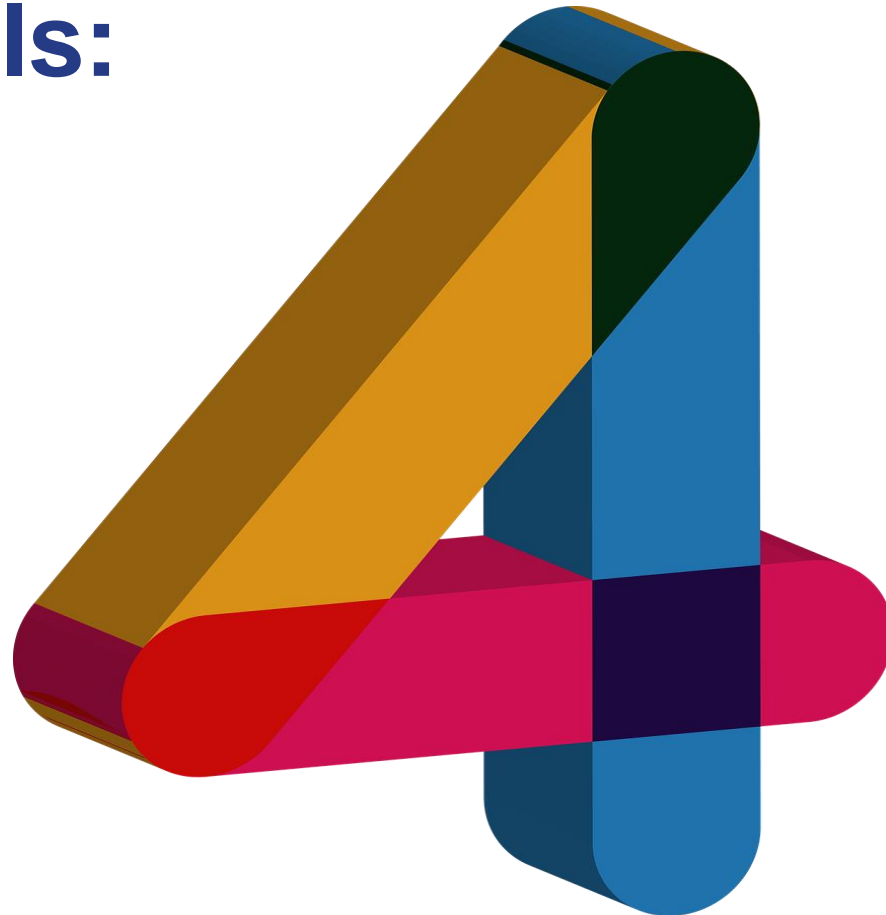
Fruitful discussions!

- Tutors talked about what they believed about teaching and learning
- We came up with a definition as to what we believed EAP teaching was:

[...] 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).

- **Bruce, I. (2011) *Theory and Concepts of English for Academic Purposes*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.**

**After further discussion we
formulated our course design
principals:**



- Learning occurs best in settings that are as authentic as possible
- Learning requires social interaction and collaboration
- Learning needs to be scaffolded
- Learners need an awareness of genre

Authenticity:

- **Choice of classroom tasks and activities**
 - Talking about one's own art work
 - Seminar discussions
 - Poster presentations
- **Choice of texts**
 - Contacted departments for appropriate texts
 - Asked departments to compile glossaries
 - Exploited texts for language and discipline specific language

Social interaction and collaboration:

- **Social activities**
- **Invited speakers from outside**
- **Student Union involvement**
- **Online quizzes and discussions**
- **Use of Padlets**
- **Changed our final speaking assessment**

Scaffolding:

- **Changed the final written assessment**
 - Gave students texts related to Goldsmiths strategic aims and to their disciplines
 - Discussions around the topic(s)
 - Reflective journals
 - Annotated bibliographies – formative assessment
 - How to construct a sound thesis statement related to discipline
 - Planning stages
 - Initial introduction and draft – formative assessment
 - Final assignment - summative

Genre:

- **Introduction of different text types**
- **Involving departments and the library in identifying possible texts**
- **Inviting staff and students from specific departments to come and talk**
- **Providing key notes about departments, courses, expectations and assessments**

Conclusions:

- **Accreditation schemes are beneficial on so many levels**
- **Ongoing reflection of principles is not only necessary it is essential**
- **Constructive alignment of principles of course design, learning outcomes, content, teaching and assessments is integral to a robust course**
- **The result often permeates throughout the centre and affects everything one does**

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Any comments or...



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