

## **BALEAP PIM at LSE, 16<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

### **Embedding academic literacy instruction in the curriculum: The role of EAP specialists**

Dr Ursula Wingate, King's College London

All students new to university have to acquire academic literacy, which is the ability to communicate competently in their academic discipline. However, there tends to be little support within the disciplines for developing this ability. The difficulties that many students encounter when trying to communicate through speaking or writing are commonly perceived as language deficiencies, and universities typically address these with remedial courses outside the curriculum. Academic literacy, by contrast, requires knowledge of the discipline's epistemologies and genres, as well as reading, argumentation and the ability to recognise the linguistic features of genres. This understanding implies that academic literacy instruction cannot be developed outside the discipline, but should be part of the curriculum. Furthermore, because of the linguistic nature of academic knowledge, instructional approaches should be designed and delivered collaboratively by subject lecturers and EAP specialists. While subject lecturers can contribute their insider knowledge of disciplinary content and discourses, their knowledge of the expected linguistic conventions is usually tacit, and their ability to teach these is limited. Therefore the contribution of EAP lecturers, who as language experts are able to analyse disciplinary genres and develop relevant teaching resources, is essential. In a fully-embedded collaborative approach, EAP specialists, most of whom are currently located in central units, would work in departments where they would play a crucial role in identifying opportunities in lectures, seminars and personal tutorials for teaching academic literacy, in advising lecturers on formative feedback, and in developing follow-up learning resources and literacy workshops.

In this paper, I provide examples of curriculum-embedded collaborative instructional models developed in Australian and some UK universities. I also discuss various genre-based learning resources and teaching approaches, based on a series of academic literacy interventions at King's College London.