

PDS1: The Challenges of PDS in Writing Practice

Workshop Notes

Workshop Objective: to help tutors and other teaching staff to understand the issues involved in the use of P.D.S. in relation to overseas students studying on post-graduate courses in the UK.

Aims:

- To predict and identify causes of plagiaristic behaviour in overseas students studying in UK
- To examine the relationship between PDS and the learning process
- To discuss the implications of PDS for overseas students
- To explore how PDS can play a more constructive role in teaching and learning

Resources:

- Video clip 1 – The Challenges of PDS in Writing Practice
- Guidesheet for viewing (Worksheet 1)

Duration: 1 – 1.5 hours

Procedure:

1. Set out session objectives and aims.

2. Predictive pre-viewing activity.

a. In the first part of the video clip the speaker establishes that overseas students are disproportionately identified by P.D.S. What makes overseas students vulnerable? Encourage participants in small groups or pairs to discuss the possible reasons for this.

b. Workshop leader elicits contributions to build up a list on whiteboard/OHP slide. Some of the following points might be raised:

- More likely to quote verbatim due to lack of linguistic ability
- Heavier reliance on fewer sources
- Lack of knowledge of referencing conventions
- Poor paraphrasing skills
- Close collaboration with colleagues

3. Initial viewing of video clip.

Participants can view the clip as a group or in smaller units depending on venue/resources. At this stage only the first part of the clip should be shown (up to 4.12 mins). The focus of the viewing is to confirm ideas elicited in the previous activity and to add any new points to the list.

4. Further viewing.

PDS software identifies plagiaristic behaviour and associates it with a desire to cheat, but what else can it signal?

Worksheet 1 is a viewing guide to be given to participants to fill in as they view the rest of the clip.

Give participants a few minutes to compare notes with another member of the group before general feedback.

5. Group discussion of implications.

Use the questions recorded in the final section of the Worksheet 1 to stimulate a group discussion (plenary or in smaller groups depending on numbers).

Participants should think particularly about how the implications might impact on their teaching practice e.g. specifically targeted study skills training for students, close examination and sharing of expectations for the type of written assignments given.

Minutes can be taken during the discussion to be written up as a handout and circulated to group members later.