



**Tracking Foundation, Pre-sessional and EAP students**  
**A BALEAP Professional Issues Meeting**  
**and**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Research Training Event Series (ResTES)**  
**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2012**

**Travel and Accommodation**

[University of Kent Location](#)

[Pubs in Canterbury](#)

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[Train Stations](#)

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**Venue**

[University of Kent](#)

[Keynes College](#)

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[Kent](#)

[CT2 7NP](#)



9.00-10.00	REGISTRATION			
	KEYNES ATRIUM			
	WELCOME COFFEE AND PASTRIES			
	KEYNES TEACHING FOYER 1 <sup>ST</sup> Floor			
10.00 - 10.15	WELCOME KLT 5			
	KS16	KLT5	KS17	KS14 Research Training Event Series (ResTes)
10.20 - 11.00	Evaluating the effectiveness of EAP/ESP pre-sessionals. Jonathan Rees & Sophia Butt  University of Birmingham	Tracking the progress of Chinese students from LLM Pre-sessional to LLM graduation Elizabeth Hauge University of Southampton	Tracking International Foundation Students - Do we make a difference? Amanda Fava-Verde  University of Reading	
11.10 - 11.50	Designing a Subject-specific EAP In-sessional Support Module by Tracking the Academic Needs of MA Business Students (work-in-progress: Autumn 2011-Spring 2012) Jo Kingsford & Yi-Ching Huang University of Essex	Solving the maze: Tracking students' assessment experiences. Andy Gillett  Andy Gillett Consulting Ltd	Tracking student experience and academic skills development of pre-sessional students during their Management Master's programmes: a study to inform discipline specific pre-sessional EAP design. Bill Soden & Helen Alcelik University of York	Qualitative Data Analysis in EAP Research  Master Class  John Wrigglesworth  University of Portsmouth



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12.00 - 12.40	Listening to international students Colin Campbell  University of Reading	Tracking the development of source use by international postgraduate students Mary Davis  Oxford Brookes University	The Impact of Assessment Change on Language Learning Strategies: The Views of a Small Group of Chinese Graduate Students Studying in the UK Gerard Sharpling University of Warwick	
12.40 - 13.40	<b>Lunch</b> <b>Keynes Teaching Foyer and Senior Common Rooms</b>			
13.40 - 14.20	Understanding pre-sessional students' "provenance" and managing their expectations  Interactive Workshop  Jonathan Rees, Sophia Butt, Hasan Shikoh, Philip Treece  University of Birmingham	Tracking Foundation and Pre-sessional Students  Interactive Workshop  Sebastien Cadinot (Kent) Emma Guion Akdag ( Heriot Watt) Pippa Whitton (Exeter)	Student Tracking and Pre-sessional Course Enhancement  Gavin Floater  University of Surrey	Finding pathways through the data: interpretations of participant perspectives on Exploratory Practice in EAP  Judith Hanks  University of Leeds
14.40 - 15.20				Bringing teaching and research closer together in EAP: Participatory action research and the BALEAP Competencies Framework Julio Giménez University of Nottingham
15.20 - 16.00	<b>Tea and Final Round Table Review</b> <b>KL T5</b>			



Time	Room	Session 1
10.20 -11.00	KS16	<p><b>Evaluating the effectiveness of EAP/ESP pre-sessionals</b></p> <p><b>Jonathan Rees and Sophia Butt (University of Birmingham)</b></p> <p>This paper will start by highlighting the growing imperative for multi-faceted evaluation of the effectiveness of EAP/ESP pre-sessionals at HEIs in the UK, drawing attention to the very limited nature of the research conducted so far in the area.</p> <p>The paper will then seek to clarify the options for evaluating EAP/ESP pre-sessionals, including quantitative, qualitative and mixed research design approaches. It will draw on data from three different research projects to illustrate these different approaches, including data from the largest quantitative pre-sessionals student tracking project conducted to date in the UK (hitherto unreported). This project, conducted at a leading UK university, tracked the performance of a cohort of students on a MSc marketing programme. The cohort contained both “ex-pre-sessionals” and “direct entry” international students as well as a small number of “home” students, providing scope for a comparative analysis of academic achievement.</p> <p>It will conclude by proposing a more unified approach within the EAP/ESP field to the description and evaluation of pre-sessionals.</p>
10.20 -11.00	KLT5	<p><b>Tracking the progress of Chinese students from LLM Pre-sessionals to LLM graduation.</b></p> <p><b>Elizabeth Hauge (University of Southampton)</b></p> <p>Since the LLM Pre-sessionals (LLM PS) course at the University of Southampton began in 2004, the number of Chinese students taking the course has grown exponentially; yet it is this nationality group each year which generally experiences the greatest difficulties coping with course materials and acquiring the language and legal skills which are necessary to achieve success on the LLM.</p> <p>Despite having high IELTS scores in Reading and Listening, most of the Chinese students on the LLM PS each year actually have very poor receptive skills. The students’ perception, however, is that their much weaker IELTS scores</p>

		<p>for Writing and Speaking indicate the areas they need to improve.</p> <p>This research tracked the 2009-10 cohort of Chinese students, aiming to establish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the reasons underlying the weak linguistic skills of the Chinese students (and to try to find ways of helping the students to improve);</li> <li>• how students coped with seminar and tutorial participation;</li> <li>• how they coped with the demands of written assignments and the dissertation.</li> </ul> <p>The hope was that this research would enable us to target more precisely the support we need to give Chinese LLM students, which, in turn, should have a beneficial effect on their final results.</p>
<b>10.20-11.00</b>	<b>KS17</b>	<p><b>Tracking International Foundation Students - Do we make a difference?</b></p> <p><b>Amanda Fava-Verde ( University of Reading)</b></p> <p>This presentation will discuss the variety of approaches taken to track International Foundation Programme students through to graduation at the University of Reading. It will provide an overview of past and ongoing tracking projects, all undertaken with the ultimate aim of determining how well we prepare our students for undergraduate study. An evaluation of qualitative vs. quantitative methods will conclude that both have their place in successful tracking.</p>
<b>Session 2</b>		
<b>11.10-11.50</b>	<b>KS16</b>	<p><b>Designing a Subject-specific EAP In-session Support Module by Tracking the Academic Needs of MA Business Students (work-in-progress: Autumn 2011-Spring 2012)</b></p> <p><b>Jo Kingsford and Yi-Ching Huang (University of Essex)</b></p> <p>Our presentation reflects on our experience of designing and teaching a bespoke postgraduate in-session ESAP course in partnership with Essex Business School. This course has been designed in response to concern that their international postgraduates, after completing Pre-session, still did not have sufficient academic English and study skills to meet departmental assignment requirements.</p>



		<p>The research methods materials for this business module were produced by the subject lecturers weekly. Therefore, the challenge for us has been to respond to the subject-specific materials and to track the students' EAP needs within their subject discipline, as an on-going and immediate process. In order to do this, we have attended lectures and seminars and incorporated their materials into our class materials design. Through this we have observed and recorded the development of their EAP needs throughout the autumn term, and have identified three specific interrelated areas of support which need to be addressed for students to successfully fulfil disciplinary requirements: academic language, EAP study skills and cultures of learning assimilation.</p> <p>While this is work-in-progress, the aim is to establish an Academic Skills Development framework that can be replicated in other disciplines, and to provide feedback for materials design in our Pre-sessional and In-sessional programmes.</p>
<p><b>11.10-11.50</b></p>	<p><b>KLT5</b></p>	<p><b>Solving the maze: Tracking students' assessment experiences.</b></p> <p><b>Andy Gillett ( Andy Gillett Consulting Ltd)</b></p> <p>In my presentation, I'd like to discuss a tracking study that colleagues and I carried out which explored the possible mismatches between students' varying experiences of assessment before they entered HE and the realities of assessment in Higher Education. Our students came from a variety of routes (traditional A levels, vocational qualifications, Access to Higher Education, Foundation Programmes, international qualifications) but all were submitted to the same assessment practices once they began university.</p> <p>Within the context of widening participation and the need for assessment to be fit for purpose, we carried out a study to find out to what extent students are prepared for the wide range of assessment tasks we know to take place at UK universities. Looking first at the entry qualifications of a years' cohort of students on a Combined Studies degree, we classified the skills and knowledge tested in those examinations. We then looked at the assessment practices built into selected modules taken by the students and again analysed the skills and knowledge being tested. Finally we compared the performance in the two sets of assessments.</p>



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		<p>Our findings suggest that different assessment experiences of students and more significantly different routes into Higher Education influenced subsequent performance. The presentation will conclude with recommendations as how best to address this issue.</p>
<p><b>11.10-11.50</b></p>	<p><b>KS17</b></p>	<p><b>Tracking student experience and academic skills development of pre-sessional students during their Management Master's programmes: a study to inform discipline specific pre-sessional EAP design</b></p> <p><b>Bill Soden and Helen Alcelik( University of York)</b></p> <p>The talk connects with two conference themes, namely the international student experience and academic skills development. It focuses on research conducted in 2009/2010, investigating the impact of a pre-sessional on the academic and cultural experience of Master's students entering Management programmes.</p> <p>Data were collected from interviews with students and module leaders, focus groups and lecture and seminar observations. A 'control' group of non-pre-sessional students was also tracked for further data triangulation.</p> <p>Findings highlighted the difficulties involved in preparing students for programmes with demanding workloads and focused on the role of the pre-sessional in preparing students for assessment. Other issues emerging from the study were the importance of developing a holistic approach to criticality and the issue of transferability-the tendency for students to compartmentalize knowledge and skills. Finally, the research highlighted the contrast between the experience of a supportive pre-sessional in small L2 learner oriented classes, with that of a less supportive, often L1 learner oriented experience on the main Master's programme.</p> <p>These research outcomes informed the subsequent design of a Management specific pre-sessional.</p> <p>Some discussion is expected regarding the nature of insider research and the challenges of qualitative research design for early researchers in the EAP context.</p>



<p><b>11.10 – 12.40</b></p>	<p><b>KS14</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Research Training Event Series ( ResTes)</b></p> <p><b>Collecting and Analysing Qualitative Data</b></p> <p><b>John Wrigglesworth ( University of Portsmouth)</b></p> <p>Qualitative research is now firmly established in applied linguistics. Qualitative techniques have been profitably used to throw light on many issues within EAP. In this session, I will briefly outline what makes research qualitative, some of the approaches to qualitative research, and the methods of collecting qualitative data. However, my main focus will be on discussing what to do with qualitative data once it has been collected: coding, thematizing, and presenting it as evidence. There will be a hands-on session of data analysis and time to discuss participants’ own experiences of qualitative analysis.</p>
<p><b>Session 3</b></p>		
<p><b>12.00- 12.40</b></p>	<p><b>KLT5</b></p>	<p><b>Tracking the development of source use by international postgraduate students</b></p> <p><b>Mary Davis (Oxford Brookes University)</b></p> <p>One of the areas of academic writing that generates most attention is the use of sources, particularly by international postgraduate students, but to date no longitudinal studies of these students’ development of source use have been made. Therefore, this study was set up to track the source use of a number of international students through an EAP Pre-Master’ s Diploma over one year, and through their subsequent Master’s in the second year. The two year period was separated into four stages and involved the collection of seven assignments from eight participants (Chinese, Japanese, Sri Lankan and Algerian) who were students of business or technology, had a non-UK undergraduate degree and English as their L2 or L3. To enable further insights, interviews with participants were also made at each stage, and in the final stage interviews were also carried out with Pre-Master’ s and Master’ s tutors. The assignments were analysed for specific features of source use: citation, paraphrase, reporting verbs and attribution. These were then graded at the levels of novice, intermediate and competent. In this way, the progress of each participant was examined and from this analysis, a model of development of source use was created, which could inform EAP teaching.</p>



12.00-12.40	KS17	<p><b>The Impact of Assessment Change on Language Learning Strategies: The Views of a Small Group of Chinese Graduate Students Studying in the UK</b></p> <p><b>Dr Gerald Sharpling ( University of Warwick)</b></p> <p>Chinese students embarking on further studies within an English-speaking higher education environment face significant changes in assessment. This study, undertaken at University of Warwick (UK), reports on Chinese graduate students’ retrospective views of their developing language learning strategies, in the light of changes in assessment during their courses. The study charts the students’ perceptions of their own experiences over one year of study, beginning with their preparatory English course and ending upon completion of their Masters’ degree programme. The findings of the study show that the College English Test (CET) in China remains fixed within the learners’ mind-sets, at least in the early stages of their study, but that greater attention is paid to process-oriented learning strategies as their academic studies progress. The increased use of process-oriented strategies is closely connected with the nature of the changing learning environment available to the students, as well as the increased use of formative assessment. Findings from the interview data suggest that the learners demonstrate a variety of approaches to their studies, and that their strategies are, in all likelihood, shaped as much by individual, contextual and pragmatic factors as cultural ones. In spite of this diversity, participants do not seem to recognize the potential transferability of product-oriented learning strategies to their later academic studies.</p>
<p><b>LUNCH</b> <b>Keynes Teaching Foyer and Senior Common Rooms</b></p>		
13.40 -14.20	KS17	<p><b>Student Tracking and Pre-sessional Course Enhancement</b></p> <p><b>Gavin Floater (University of Surrey)</b></p> <p>This talk reports on a small-scale project carried out in the Student Services Department at Sheffield University during 2009. In common with many courses students provided written feedback in the form of a questionnaire on the final day of the pre-sessional course. However, the full impact of the course is often not seen until much later. In order to elicit richer, more meaningful data, a series of focus groups were set up several months after</p>



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		<p>completion of the pre-sessional. The findings from these group interviews will be presented, together with the problems faced in selecting, contacting and interviewing the students.</p>
<p><b>13.40 -14.20</b></p>	<p><b>KS14</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Research Training Event Series ( ResTes)</b></p> <p><b>Finding pathways through the data: interpretations of participant perspectives on Exploratory Practice in EAP</b></p> <p><b>Judith Hanks ( University of Leeds)</b></p> <p>Qualitative data analysis in EAP research raises a number of intriguing issues. Who does the research and what counts as ‘research’? What is ‘qualitative data’ and how may it be analysed? Should we in fact be talking about ‘analysis’ at all? In this paper I will discuss these questions with reference to the ongoing ‘qualitative data analysis’ involved in writing up two case studies for my PhD thesis.</p> <p>Holliday argues that “...thick description is not so much a collection of interconnected data as the result of the researcher’s intent and strategy in [...] actively making sense of the data” (2002:194) while Richards (2003) follows Denzin &amp; Lincoln (2003) in framing such work as ‘Qualitative Inquiry’, acknowledging the complexity involved in representing research and education. In the same vein, Allwright &amp; Hanks suggest Exploratory Practice (EP) as a principled approach to classroom research and recommend working for deeper understandings “...to reflect our acceptance of all the complexity we live with and through every day” (2009: 148). Although much has been written about qualitative research and data analysis/ interpretations in general, little attention has been given to qualitative inquiry in an EAP context to date.</p> <p>Consequently, I consider a case study of practitioner research during an EAP Pre-sessional programme and discuss the practitioners’ perspectives to trace their cultural adjustment(s) and academic skills development. In doing so, I examine data generated by the study and invite interpretations of the data.</p>



<p><b>13.40 -15.20</b></p>	<p><b>KS16</b></p>	<p><b>Understanding pre-sessional students’ “provenance” and managing their expectations</b></p> <p><b>Interactive Workshop</b></p> <p><b>Jonathan Rees , Sophia Butt, Hasan, Philip Treece (University of Birmingham)</b></p> <p>The first part of this session will be devoted to the presentation of socio-cultural data from a questionnaire administered to a cohort of 6 week ESP pre-sessional students at the University of Birmingham. Findings will be presented relating to students’ identity, students’ religious beliefs and their linguistic backgrounds. Particular attention will be down to findings related to previous levels of mobility and to the various influences on students’ current study location. The presenters will demonstrate how this type of ‘mobility capital data’, may prove very useful in supplementing standard biographical data in pre-sessional student tracking projects.</p> <p>The second part of this session will be an audience discussion in small groups of the relevance of this kind of data to tracking projects. It is hoped that groups may also generate ideas for other types of ‘background’ data useful for tracking projects.</p> <p>The third part of this session will be devoted to the presentation of further questionnaire data related to pre-sessional student expectations in three distinct areas: levels of teacher support and assistance, responsibility for social integration, the meaning of the term ‘successful/satisfactory completion’ with reference to an ESP pre-sessional programme. The presenters will argue (controversially) that the design of many EAP/ESP pre-sessionals, whilst delivering strong linguistic and academic benefits, may actually reinforce ‘unrealistic’ student expectations concerning academic life on campus.</p> <p>The final part of this session will allow for an audience discussion in small groups of the points raised in the previous section of the session.</p>
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<p><b>13.40 -15.20</b></p>	<p><b>KLT5</b></p>	<p><b>Tracking Foundation &amp; Pre-sessional Students</b></p> <p><b>Sebastien Cadinot ( University of Kent), Emma Guion Akdağ ( Heriot Watt), Pippa Whitton (University of Exeter)</b></p> <p>This workshop will look into the tracking processes used at Exeter, Heriot-Watt and Kent, looking at Foundation students and their progress on their Undergraduate programme along with Postgraduate students' language development post pre-sessional. This workshop will endeavour to shed light on the most useful tracking system and the challenges to be overcome in setting up such a project. Main trends and responses will also be outlined with a view of encouraging discussion amongst audience members on both the methods and results of the projects. The workshop will be task-based with an introductory talk and activity followed by presentations on IFP projects from Exeter and Kent. An open discussion on these two projects and the expected differences from a Pre-sessional project will follow. Herriot-Watt's Pre-sessional project will then be explained before time is given to a final Q&amp;A session.</p>
<p><b>14.40- 15.20</b></p>	<p><b>KS14</b></p>	<p><b>Research Training Event Series ( ResTes)</b></p> <p><b>Bringing teaching and research closer together in EAP: Participatory action research and the BALEAP Competencies Framework</b></p> <p><b>Julio Giménez, ( University of Nottingham)</b></p> <p>The rush of interest in qualitative research in the past 25 years has generated a great deal of (spoken and written) debate, most of which has aimed at differentiating qualitative from quantitative inquiry, mainly by dichotomising both paradigms (e.g. Denzin &amp; Lincoln, 2005; Guba &amp; Lincoln, 2005; Taylor &amp; Bogdan, 1998). Useful and illuminating as these debates have been, many have failed to recognise that reality is far more complicated and</p>



		<p>multifaceted than either conceptualisation would want us to believe. This tendency to favour either method of enquiry has been largely reflected in research in EAP despite its strong focus on and pre-occupation with students. By the same token, EAP research has shown a marked tendency towards research-informed teaching at the expense of pedagogy-led research.</p> <p>This presentation examines participatory action research (PAR) as a method for engaging in a new paradigm of inquiry (Heron &amp; Reason, 1997) within the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) framework, and a strategy for facilitating the coming together of pedagogical and research practices (Chiu, 2006; Gimenez, 2009). After a brief theoretical discussion of the main tenets of PAR, the presentation looks at a number of data sets from EAP-contextualised research to demonstrate how we can use PAR to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance the level of criticality in our teaching and research practices as part of our personal learning, development and autonomy;</li> <li>• Increase epistemic participation (i.e. researchers as participants) and political participation (i.e. participants as researchers) vis-à-vis student-centred pedagogical practices;</li> <li>• Re-describe our teaching and research practices; and</li> <li>• Strike a healthier balance between research-informed teaching and pedagogy-led research.</li> </ul> <p>The presentation will finish with a discussion of how PAR can be applied in connection with the research-related competencies specified in the BALEAP Teacher Competency Framework.</p>
<b>15.20- 16.00</b>	<b>KLT5</b>	<b>Tea and Final Round Table Review</b>