

Research Skills Workshops

Department of Modern Languages and Cultures

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The problem



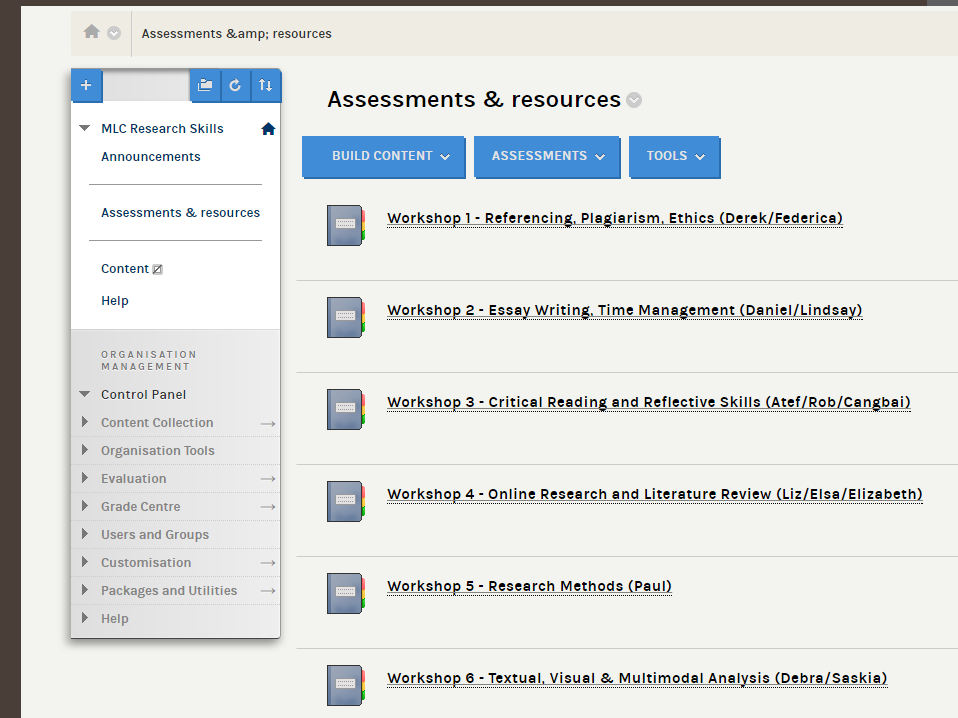
- Students may not be experienced in writing essays or doing research when entering university
- Essay writing & research convention differs by country & from school to university
- Students have often not learnt to reference at school

Previous solutions

- Students were taught essay writing in individual modules
- Students doing the dissertation also took a course of skills in the first term of level 6
- Why this changed:
 - To avoid duplication in individual modules
 - To streamline & integrate all research skills into the same module & thereby free up teaching time
 - Wanted to avoid giving up a 20 credit core module – more space in curriculum

Research Skills Workshops

- Included in student timetables in non-standard teaching weeks 6 & 12 as part of the core modules
- Six mandatory 3-hour workshops completed at levels 4 & 5
- Level 4 students take 4 modules
- Level 5 students take 2
- Any missed modules can be caught up in week 6 of L6
- Resources on Blackboard



Workshop 1: Referencing, Plagiarism, and Ethics

- Primary & secondary sources
- Westminster-Harvard referencing system
- Why we reference
- Plagiarism (including paraphrasing/quoting guidelines)
- Ethics scenarios related to dissertation projects



**BE
ORIGINAL
AND
DON'T
PLAGIARIZE**

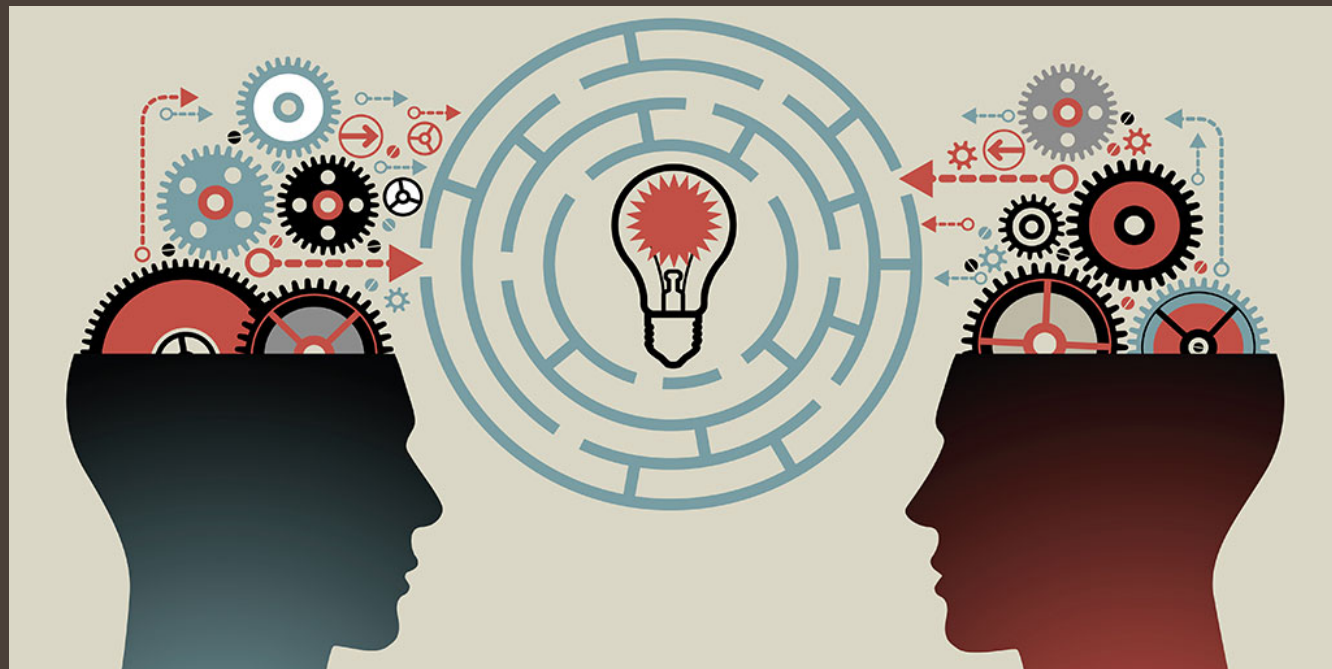
Workshop 2: Essay Writing and Time Management



- Balancing academic, work, and social tasks
- Creative ways of organising time and priorities
- Effective study resources
- Essay writing: the plan → write → revise method
- Writing introductions and conclusions

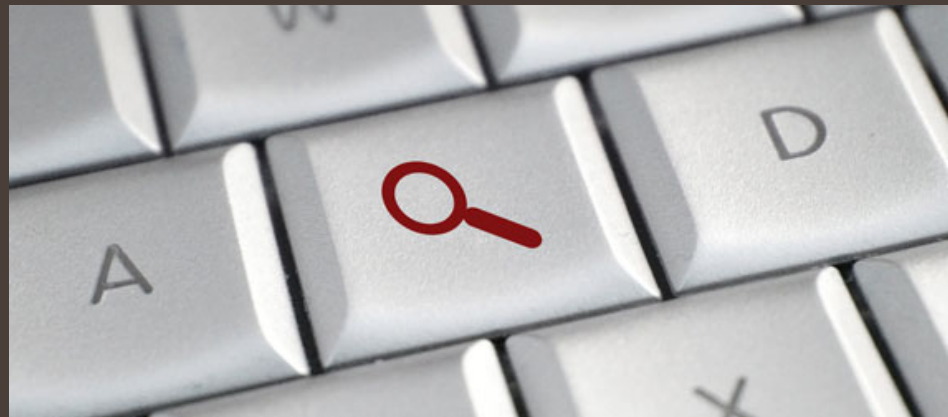
Workshop 3: Critical Reading and Reflective Skills

- Defining critical thinking
- Forming an argument & including it in an essay
- Reading texts and reflecting on them
- Dealing with reading lists



Workshop 4: Online Research and Literature Review

- Online & library resources to find primary & secondary sources
- Practical session to find sources
- Weighing up the veracity of sources
- Collating secondary reading into an essay



Workshop 5: Research Methods



- What methodology means
- Different types of primary research (focused on a dissertation project)
- How to conduct different methods of primary research

Workshop 6: Textual, Visual, and Multimodal Analysis

- Methods of analysing a variety of source materials
- How students conduct analysis and demonstrate this in an essay
- Practical session



Assessment

- To 'prove' attendance, students must take a short multiple choice assessment via Blackboard
- All six completed workshops are needed for the L6 dissertation
- Students receive a 'Research Skills Badge' when all 6 are completed

Outcomes

- Students will be more prepared for essay-based assessments which now form part of the MLC core modules as well as option modules
- Issues with referencing should be solved early on (L4)
- Students are equipped to begin their dissertations at the beginning of L6 or start research even earlier

Issues

- Student attendance
- Retention of information

Questions

- How do other departments deliver research and writing skills?
- How do students respond to learning these skills (i.e. do they find them helpful, do they attend sessions, do they need repeats)?

