

Session title: Surfacing and embedding academic skills in the curriculum

Session type: Workshop (60 mins)

Main presenter: Maddy Mossman, University of Leeds

Co-presenters: Jiani Liu & Emily Webb, University of Leeds

Session summary:

In this workshop we will work with participants to identify opportunities to embed academic skills in their curriculum. We will demonstrate how we are successfully using the University of Leeds Capabilities Framework to bring together the core components of academic, digital and professional literacies to support curriculum design and delivery. In facilitated small groups, participants will discuss their own teaching and how they can surface skills in the curriculum to better enhance student outcomes.

Session outline:

Academic skills teaching is often sacrificed for the need for core knowledge teaching and left to the periphery of module or programme design. We rely heavily on students' prior study experience to help them navigate our systems of learning and assessment, and academic skills teaching is kept to the minimum, perhaps taught only as an introduction to a programme of study or seen as a remedial activity based on a model of student deficit.

Skills teaching should not be prioritized over content, nor the other way around. They should be seen as complementary activities. A student can only fully understand the learning expected if they understand how knowledge is created in their own discipline, taught by discipline experts and discussed as part of their continued learning. Embedding academic skills teaching into the curriculum enables students to understand how knowledge is created and communicated in their discipline and how they can utilise those skills learned beyond their degree programme.

The University of Leeds Capabilities Framework has been developed by students and staff from across the university to articulate the behaviours, knowledge, and skills our graduates need to develop for their futures and the explicit coherence between them. In this workshop we will demonstrate how colleagues from across the University are using the framework to successfully embedded academic and assessment literacy teaching in their programmes, aligning teaching to different assessment types.

We will offer participants the opportunity to reflect on the skills required for their modules and programmes and discuss how they can be supported in planned teaching without requiring additional skills sessions or modules. As a group we will identify the small changes you can make to their own teaching and the impact this can have on student outcomes.

References:

University of Leeds. 2023. Capabilities Framework How Might we Guide. [Online]. [Accessed 26 September 2023]. Available from <https://www.leeds.ac.uk/curriculum-redefined/doc/how-might-we-guides>

Hilsdon, J., Malone, C. and Syska, A. (2019) "Academic literacies twenty years on: a community-sourced literature review" □. *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education*, (15).

Maldoni A. M. (2017). "A cross-disciplinary approach to embedding: A pedagogy for developing academic literacies". *Journal of Academic Language and Learning*, 11(1)