

Measuring Student Performance: Developing Students' Academic Writing and Speaking Skills to enhance Performance and Success.

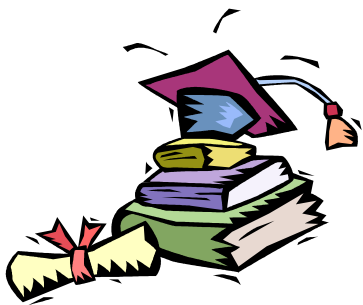
Dr Karen Lipsedge, WOS Project Leader &
Associate Professor in English Literature, Kingston
University, K.Lipsedge@Kingston.ac.uk

Eglè Butt, Data Analyst, Planning Office, Kingston
University, E.Butt@kingston.ac.uk



Proposal Abstract:

The Writing and Oral Skills (WOS) Project utilises institutional data to demonstrate how enhancing students' key academic skills in an interactive and inclusive environment increases their engagement and helps to facilitate students' education.



Presentation structure

- 1) Writing and Oral Skills Project: Aims, development and implementation
- 2) Evaluation findings
- 3) Observations and comments
- 4) Questions



1) What is WOS?

- ✓ Interactive and inclusive workshops
- ✓ Focus is on generic academic writing and speaking skills
- ✓ In 2013-14: received central Government funding

Two types of academic writing support:

a) From 2013/14: Weekly extra-curricular workshops aimed at FASS 1st year students, primarily

b) From 2015/16: Field-specific workshops designed to enhance the academic writing/speaking skills students need to complete course assessments

2) Aim:

- ✓ To improve & enhance generic writing & speaking skills of our students
- ✓ To complement & extend existing curricular & co-curricular skills provision
- ✓ Employability agenda
- ✓ Help all our students to reach their full potential

Inclusive and Interactive Teaching and Learning Strategies

- Combination of lecturer-led presentations, student-led activities (including peer review, small and whole group activities, PAL students)
- WOS students as community of learners: WOS cards
- ‘Excellence’ not ‘deficit’ approach
- Expectations : students and staff
- Seeking to foster the type of supportive and collaborative environment essential for enabling students to become autonomous, confident and successful learners



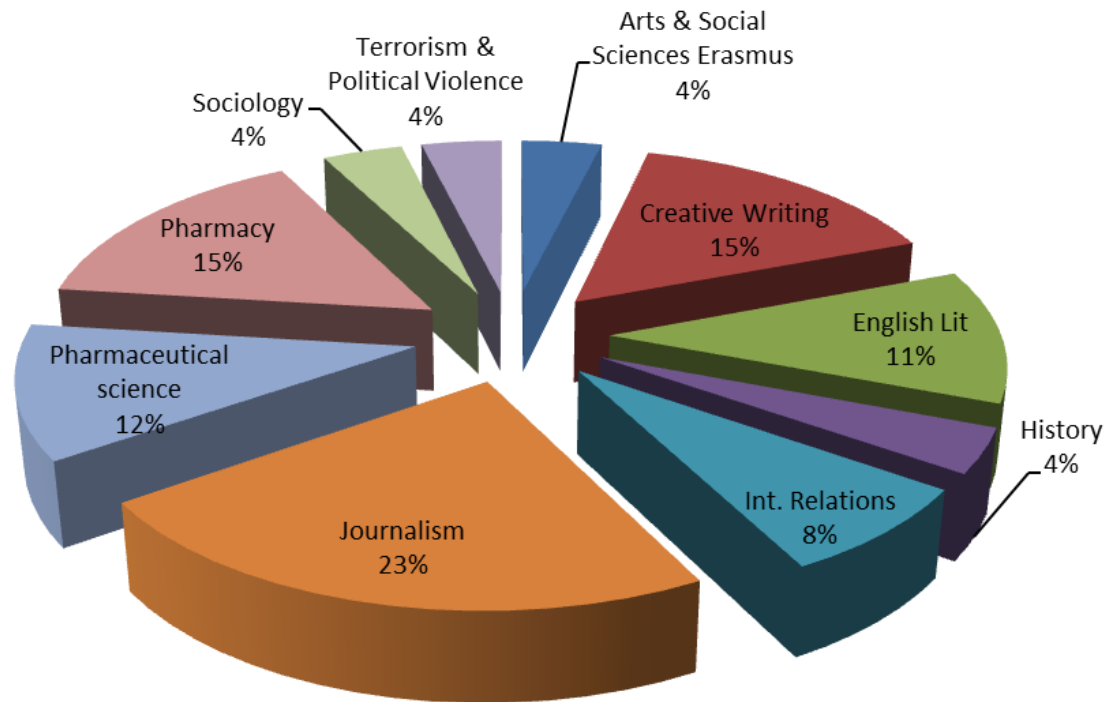
Student participation in WOS workshops

Academic Year	All WOS	Regular WOS
2013/14	234	51
2014/15	300	65
2015/16	256	26

Table 1. Student attendance to WOS workshops in 2013/4 - 2015/6 Academic Years.



Course distribution of regular WOS attendees in 2015/16 AY



Demographics of WOS attendees in 2015/16 AY

Demographic		Non-WOS	All WOS	Regular WOS
Age	Young	47%	48%	65%
	Mature (>21)	53%	52%	35%
Ethnic group	BME	54%	52%	42%
	White	43%	46%	58%
Socio-economic class	NS-SEC 1-3	28%	23%	25%
	NS-SEC 4-7	25%	15%	21%
Gender	Males	48%	54%	32%
	Females	52%	46%	68%

Table 2. Demographic breakdown of WOS attendees by age, ethnic background, socio-economic class and gender in 2015/6 Academic Year, compared to the demographics of students across the University who did not attend WOS.

Academic performance: 2015/16 module results of level 4 FASS students

Attendance to WOS	student count
Regular WOS	17
Iregular WOS	88
Non-WOS	578
Total	683

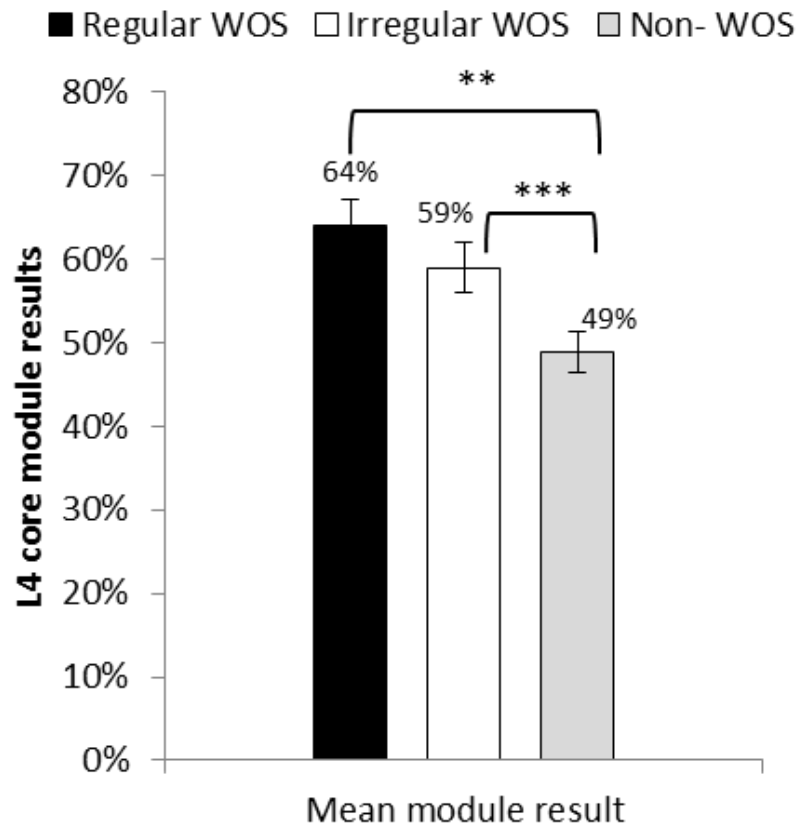


Figure 1. Average module results of Level 4 FASS students in 2015/16 Academic Year by their attendance to WOS workshops. Module results are displayed separately for regular attendees (6 or more sessions), irregular attendees (less than 6 sessions) assessed in the same core modules as regular WOS and the rest of L4 student cohort assessed in the same core modules.

Note: *** $p < .001$; ** $p = .008$

Academic performance over three year period

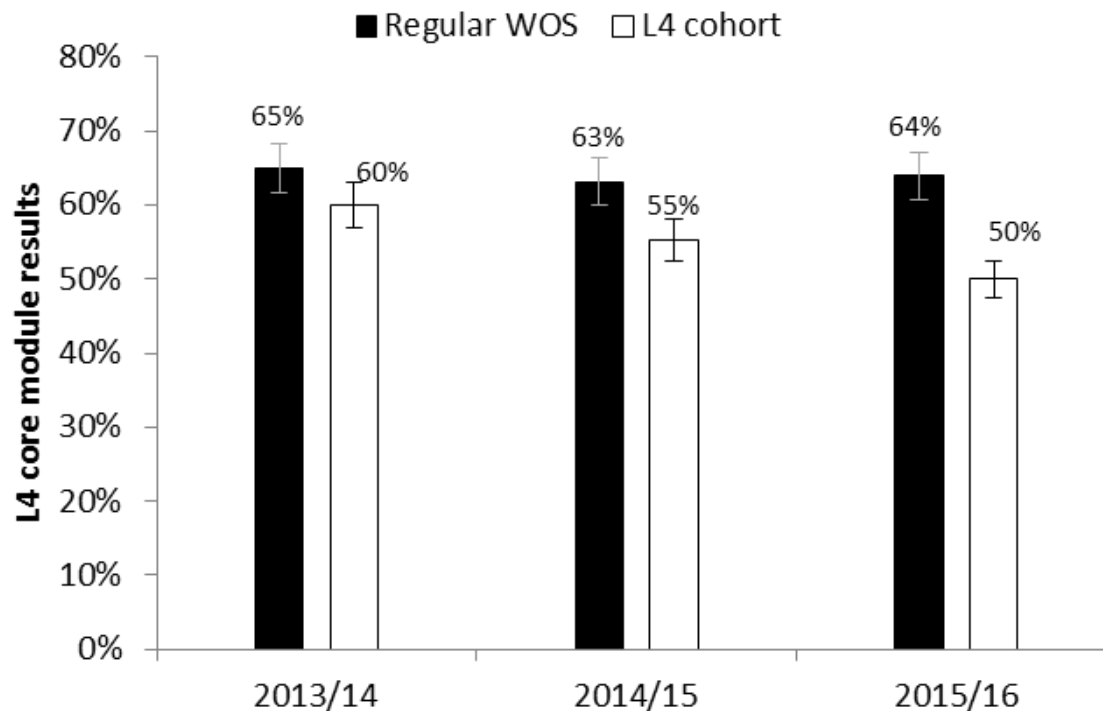


Figure 2. Average module results of regular L4 WOS attendees in over the three year period since WOS was launched. Average module results of regular WOS attendees are compared to the whole L4 FASS student cohort assessed in the same core modules.

Transfer of WOS skills

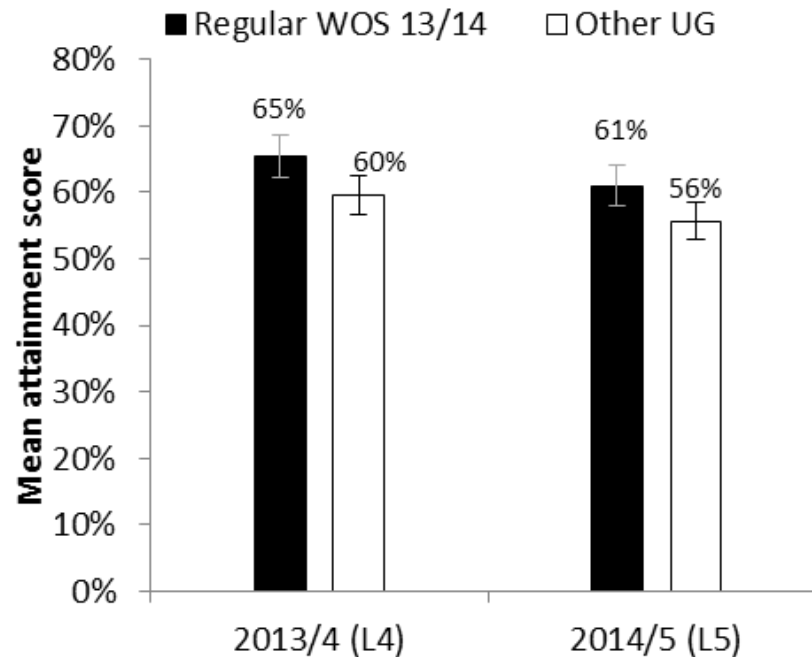


Figure 3. Average module results of 2013/14 regular WOS attendees at level 4 and then the following year at level 5, compared to all students studying the same core modules.

Findings from focus groups and Questionnaires

- WOS workshops distinctive
- Value of enthusiastic and 'nice' staff with varied expertise
- Important emphasis on inclusivity, collaboration, informality and fun (biscuits)
- Highlights the advantage of the extra-curricular environment in terms of character





Discussion and conclusions

- ✓ Our evaluation data shows how the strategies used to develop students' key academic skills enhances their engagement and enables all students to reach full potential.
- ✓ Attendance is likely to raise grades for all including WP groups
- ✓ Importance of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities in enhancing student engagement and motivation
- ✓ Can lessons from WOS feed in to curriculum development and practice?
- ✓ Can lessons from WOS contribute to current debates around Teaching Excellence and Value-Added HE?

Measuring Student Performance: Developing Students' Academic Writing and Speaking Skills to enhance Performance and Success.

Thank you for coming to our presentation.

Any questions?

If you would like further information about the FASS and/or the field-specific WOS workshops please contact Karen: K.Lipsedge@Kingston.ac.uk

