



LEARNING AND TEACHING CONFERENCE

Centre for Academic Innovation and Teaching Excellence

Engendering teaching excellence in a time of great change: The Empowering University
Thursday 22 September 2022 – Hugh Aston Building, DMU Campus

Post-workshop notes

Title of Session:	Bridging the writing gap
Facilitator:	Emily Forster and Bev Hancock-Smith (LLS)

In this session we looked at strategies to support student's attainment in academic writing. It is well documented that there is an attainment gap between particular groups of students. However, there is also a gap between what students think is expected of them and what lecturers actually expect. This is particularly true around critical analysis.

We asked what critical analysis meant in different subjects. There was a variety of different responses with some common features, in particular evaluation and use of evidence. Here is a thematic analysis of the different definitions workshop participants had of critical analysis.

Use of evidence

Considering both sides backing up opinions with evidence- **forensics**

Nursing - engaging with the subject, breaking it down into different areas linking in evidence

Nursing, review the literature, evidence, and identify the different opinions and discuss positive and negative aspects

Health - evidence based practice understands literature

Engaging with evidence research **HLS nursing**

Evaluation

Subjecting evidence to scrutiny in relation to gender, age, other diverse characteristics- **criminal justice**

Asking, why, who, when, where how going deeper- **Cell- international students**

Law - evaluating principals in relation to values, clarity consistency, fairness etc. questioning assumptions testing the breadth of generalisations.

Community Justice - Giving weight to different aspects of what authors have said about a subject and analysing that.

Nursing Critical writing in health care professions means claims, rules benefits, alternatives for all purposes and actions.

Subject context

Architecture - contextualising the ideas within the history and theory of the discipline

Nursing- engaging with the subject, breaking it down into different areas linking in evidence

Reflection

Business information systems - critical writing is writing that is reflective, evaluative and informed by the literature. Assessments reflective summaries, literature reviews

Considering different perspectives and approaches

Criminal Justice - Some weighted discussion of different perspectives on a theory

Community Justice - Comparing and contrasting authors and view-points, not taking things at face value looking at alternative evidence

Considering strengths and limitations of a different theory or approach, supporting discussion with evidence **Community justice**

We discussed some strategies to support students with their writing including use of feedback and embedding writing support into the curriculum by providing models and guidance. We also signposted to resources that lecturers can use such as the [Skills and assignment](#) page and bitesize videos.