

Lesson Plan

Course Title: Prep for HE

Year of Course: 1

Room: Training room

Unit Title: Session 4

Tutor:

Date:

Subject: Writing assignments (1); Preparation, planning & structure

Scheme of Work: Week 4

Time:

Learning Aims:

To equip learners with the skills to successfully prepare for, plan & structure a written assignment to a level equivalent to Year 1 Degree.

Learning Objectives:

Learners will:

- Identify what constitutes an assignment (as opposed to a report or seminar paper) in terms of presentation style
- Use the 'BUG' technique to de-code 'real' 1st year degree assignment questions
- Use the 'BUG' technique on the 'Prep for HE' final assignment question
- Undertake the basic stages of essay preparation
- Structure an assignment according to expected academic convention
- Update their personal action plan.

Learner Evaluation:

This session was evaluated very positively, with the majority of learners scoring it as 'very useful' & the remainder as 'useful'. Learners valued acquiring techniques to interpret essay questions & commented specifically on increased knowledge and skills in essay preparation & planning. One learner commented that they had previous knowledge of essay planning, so the session proved less informative, though they still rated it as 'useful'. There were many positive comments about increased confidence & skills in the class.

Tutor Evaluation & Reflection:

I set fewer learning outcomes for this session, as session 3 had been rather 'packed'. Learners had repeatedly raised assignment preparation & writing as a major anxiety, so I decided to devote sessions 4 & 5 to this area. In this session I made no assumptions of prior knowledge & introduced learners to the difference between assignments & other written formats, e.g. reports. This was useful & valued, as the majority of learners had completed NVQ assignments in report style, often exclusively using lists/bullet points. They had been unaware that this was not appropriate in essays.

For home study in week 3, I had asked learners to produce a draft plan of the final Prep HE assignment, the intention being for them to continually revise & improve their draft after the learning from each session. However, some learners had produced virtually completed draft essays & were somewhat frustrated at having to revisit their work as a result of the input in the session.

In future I will stress more clearly that learners should only produce a draft plan at this stage, as I recognise that continued revision could prove frustrating. I will, however, keep to the model of setting the final assignment in week 3 so that the assignment is a 'work in progress' that can be revised & improved week by week. Having a concrete 'product' to discuss worked very well & was much more effective than talking in the abstract.

Lesson Plan Details

Time	Content	Teacher Activity	Learner Activity	Learner Assessment	Learning Resources
9.00	<p>Introduction</p> <p>1. Welcome</p> <p>2. Brief recap of last week's session</p> <p>3. Review home-study tasks:</p> <p>(a) Reading: Ch 2 of Price & Maier's 'How to get the most out of lectures'</p> <p>+ (b) Start work on draft of final assignment to bring into this session</p> <p>4. Any questions?</p>	<p>Input</p> <p>Directed questions to stimulate recall</p> <p>Large group round</p> <p>Group discussion on if/how learners had begun assignment</p> <p>Respond to issues raised on home study</p>	<p>Listen</p> <p>Recall last week's session</p> <p>Learners contribute 1 point of learning from their reading</p> <p>Learners reflect & contribute</p>	<p>Via answers to directed questions</p> <p>Via verbal contributions</p>	
9.15	<p>Aims of day</p> <p>Aims of session</p> <p>Structure of day</p>	<p>Input on Aims of day</p> <p>Link to last week's session where we covered WHY we do essays; now we will cover HOW to do essays.</p>	<p>Listen/ask questions</p>		<p>PowerPoint 'Session 4 Aims'</p>

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9.20	What is an Essay? Input	Tutor defines an essay & introduces learners to the 4 steps to essay-writing from Price & Maier (2007)	Listen & reflect on previous written work		Brief PowerPoint based on pp 281-2 of Price, G. & Maier, P. (2007) <i>Effective Study Skills: Unlock Your Potential</i> , Essex, Pearson Education Ltd.
9.30	Writing an Essay Step 1: Crack the Code Input The 'BUG' Technique	Tutor explains the BUG technique	Listen		'Bug Technique' from p 284 Price & Maier (2007)
9.40	Exercise in Pairs Apply 'BUG' technique to 'Criminal Justice' essay	Set up pairs & facilitate	Learners apply BUG technique to 'criminal justice' essay	Understanding & application of the technique	'Bug Technique' exercise on 'Criminal Justice' example on p 285 Price & Maier (2007)
9.45	Large Group Compare answers & discuss	Facilitate discussion	Learners compare own answers to textbook example	Accuracy of answers	
9.50	Exercise in Pairs: Apply BUG technique to final 'Prep HE' assignment title Large Group Round Group feed back their answers & reach agreement on action words & keywords for final 'Prep HE' assignment.	Tutor instructs pairs to apply the BUG technique to the Prep HE final course assignment title	Learners reflect on new technique & apply it to the final course assignment title	Understanding & application of the technique	Spare copies of final assignment title & guidelines for 'Prep HE' course

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10.00	<p>Step 2: Gather the Information</p> <p>Input Using a matrix system to gather information</p> <p>Tutor Demo of Example Using the matrix system on the 'Criminal Justice' assignment</p>	<p>Ask learners how they usually start to gather info. Note the pitfalls of too many books/ info overload/ poor notes</p> <p>Explain & demonstrate the matrix system.</p>	<p>Learners contribute with how they usually start to gather & record essay information</p> <p>Learners watch Tutor demo of Matrix system on whiteboard</p>		<p>'Matrix System' from pp 288-9 Price & Maier (2007)</p> <p>Matrix example on 'Criminal Justice' title on pp 288-9 Price & Maier (2007)</p>
10.10	<p>Small Group Exercise</p> <p>Applying the matrix system to past subject-specialist assignment titles</p> <p>Groups present their matrix to the large group, explain it & compare</p>	<p>Instruct groups to devise a matrix that would collect & record information for the assignment titles given</p>	<p>Learners work in subject specialist groups to devise an appropriate matrix for 'their' assignment title on flipchart</p>		<p>Copies of old Year 1 Assignment questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B. Sc Social Work • Foundation degree in computing • Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Studies <p>Flipchart sheets & pens</p>
10.40	<p>Apply matrix to Prep HE Course assignment</p> <p>Large Group Exercise Illustration of matrix example</p>	<p>Tutor invites contributions of how a matrix might look for the 'Prep HE' final assignment</p>	<p>All learners contribute to the design of an example matrix for the Prep H.E. assignment</p>		
10.45-11.00	Refreshment Break				

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11.00	<p>Step 3: Putting your Ideas Together</p> <p>Input: Basic Essay Structure & Planning</p>	Tutor inputs on the basics of essay structure; intro, main body & conclusion	Listen & reflect on own written work on draft Prep HE essay		'What Markers are Looking for in Terms of Structure' from page 21 of McMillan, K. & Weyers, J. (2008) <i>How to Write Essays & Assignments</i> Essex; Pearson Education Ltd
11.15	<p>Writing an introduction</p> <p>Tutor Input</p> <p>Small group work In small groups, analyse which is the best introduction & why.</p> <p>Tutor Consolidates</p>	<p>Tutor explains what an introduction should contain</p> <p>Tutor distributes example introductions from past essays</p> <p>Re-emphasise importance of a clear introduction to set out the essay plan</p>	<p>Listen & reflect on own draft Prep HE essay</p> <p>Students evaluate introductory paragraphs</p>		<p>'The Introduction' page 215 Burns, T & Sinfield, S. (2008) 2nd Edition, <i>Essential Study Skills</i> London, Sage Publications Ltd</p> <p>Past Year 1 essays (completed graduates only- permissions gained, redundant essay titles)</p>
11.45	<p>Planning the Main Body</p> <p>Aids to structuring an Assignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matrix (<i>already covered</i>) • Questions • Mind maps • Linear 	Tutor describes & models different approaches to essay planning	Listen & comment on method typically used (if any)		A basic introduction to these planning methods is located in Page 54-55 of Guy, P. (2007) <i>Study Skills - A Teaching Programme for Students in Schools & Colleges</i> , London; Paul Chapman Publishing.

Time	Content	Teacher Activity	Learner Activity	Learner Assessment	Learning Resources
12.00	<p>What makes a Good Essay?</p> <p>Paired work: Structuring writing</p> <p>Individual work : Revisit draft 'Prep HE' essay</p>	<p>Distribute copies of sample text from McMillan & Weyers (2008)</p> <p>Instruct learners to mark topic sentences in orange & signposting sentences in yellow highlighter pen</p> <p>Learners perform same exercise on own draft essay</p>	<p>Learners highlight topic sentences in orange & signposting in yellow highlights</p> <p>As above, using own essay, to check for logical paragraph structure & flow</p>		<p>Sample text pp 48-9 of McMillan, K. & Weyers, J. (2008) <i>How to Write Essays & Assignments</i>, Essex, Pearson Education Ltd</p> <p>I yellow + 1 orange Highlighter pen per learner</p>
12.30	<p>Step 4: Reviewing & Editing, Checking & Proof-reading</p> <p>Allowing time to proof read Spelling errors Limits of computer checking</p>	<p>Brief input stressing the importance of time management & allowing time to proof-read & correct work</p>	<p>Listen</p>		<p>Input based on 'Tidying up & checking your work' Ch 4 section 7 pp 292-296 of Price, G. & Maier, P. (2007) <i>Effective Study Skills: Unlock Your Potential</i>, Essex; Pearson Education Ltd.</p>
12.45	<p>Recap, revisit aims & close</p> <p>Set home study</p>			<p>Q & A Revisit aims</p>	<p>Home study</p> <p>1. Reading 'How to write Great Essays' Ch 14 pp 209-222 in Burns, T. & Sinfield, S. 2nd Edition (2008) <i>Essential Study Skills</i>, London; Sage Publications.</p> <p>(2) Revise draft plan of Prep HE assignment as a result of today's input.</p>