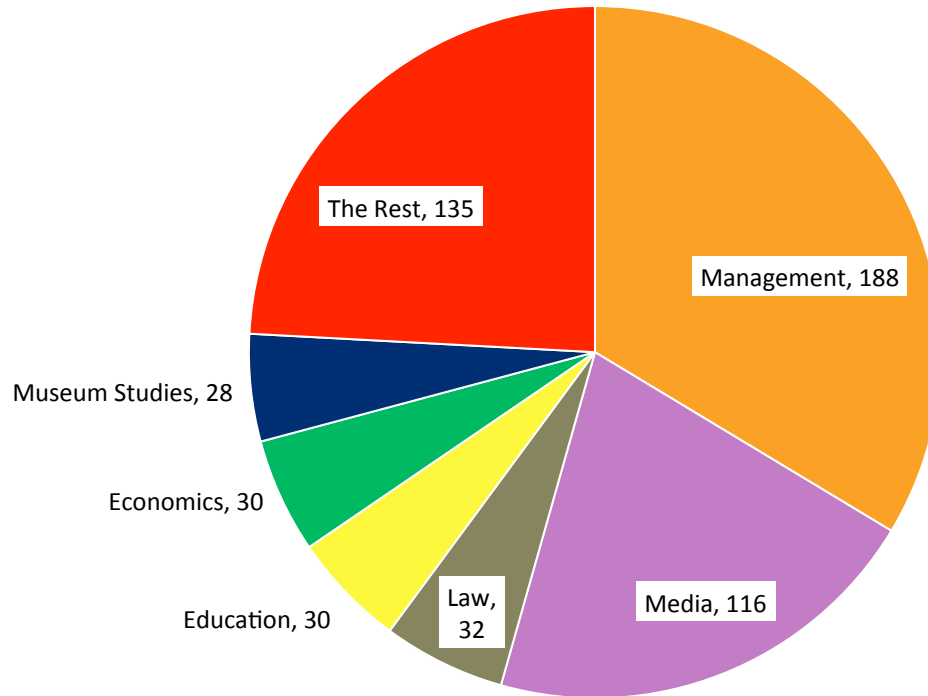
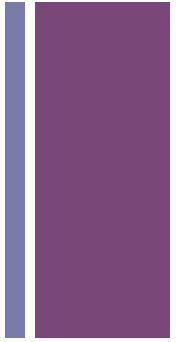




***What do they actually do?
Building a writing syllabus for
research students***

Dan Jones
University of Leicester

+ University of Leicester In-sessional Programme



+ Why are PGTs different from PGRs?

PGT	PGR
We can predict with reasonable confidence what PGTs have to do	PGRs work is varied and difficult to predict
PGTs can monitor and adjust their expectations as they are part of a large, easily identifiable peer group	PGRs can lead a lonely existence



What can inform a syllabus for PGRs?



- A look at published materials
- Text analysis

The central problem in using a genre-based approach to course design is identifying the discourse entities that are most appropriate (Bruce, 2007)

- Ask supervisors

Casanave & Hubbard (1992)

Cooper & Bikowski (2007)

- *Ask the PGRs themselves*
- Ask experts from other institutions

TABLE 2
Most to Least Frequently Assigned Types of Writing

Rank	Humanities/ social sciences (308 assignments)	% of assignments	Science/technology (501 assignments)	% of assignments
1	Critical summaries	(21.4)	Problem solving/analytical	(59.7)
2	Problem solving/analytical	(19.2)	Lab reports	(7.4)
3	Brief research papers	(18.8)	Long research papers	(7.0)
4	Long research papers	(13.3)	Brief research papers	(4.8)
5	Noncritical summaries	(7.1)	Other	(4.0)
6	Lab reports/literature reviews	(6.5)	Critical summaries	(3.4)
7	—		Case studies	(3.0)
8	Other	(6.2)	Literature reviews	(2.6)
9	Group writing	(<1.0)	Noncritical summaries	(1.4)
10	Case studies	(0.0)	Group writing	(<1.0)

³Exams were not included in this survey because we were more interested in the writing students do as part of regular coursework. However, it has been well established that exams constitute a major writing type in university work (e.g., Canseco & Byrd, 1989; Eblen, 1983).

Casanave & Hubbard (1992)

TABLE 3
Writing Problems of Native- (N) and Nonnative (NN)-English-Speaking
Graduate Students

Problem	Humanities/ social sciences		Science/technology	
	N	NN	N	NN
Correctness of punctuation/ spelling	1.6 (8)	2.4 (5)	2.0 (1)	2.6 (1)
Accuracy of grammar	1.5 (10)	2.6 (1)	1.8 (6)	2.5 (2)
Appropriateness of grammar	1.5 (10)	2.5 (3)	1.6 (11)	2.5 (2)
Size of vocabulary	1.3 (13)	2.1 (9)	1.4 (13)	2.1 (6)
Appropriateness of vocabulary	1.5 (10)	1.5 (12)	2.2 (5)	
Quality of paragraph organization	2.0 (4)	2.1 (9)	1.9 (3)	2.0 (7)
Quality of overall paper organization	2.3 (2)	2.3 (7)	1.9 (3)	2.0 (7)
Quality of content	2.1 (3)	2.2 (8)	1.9 (3)	1.9 (9)
Development of ideas	2.3 (1)	2.4 (5)	1.9 (3)	1.9 (9)
Overall writing ability	2.0 (4)	2.5 (3)	2.0 (1)	2.3 (4)
Student addresses topic adequately and directly	1.9 (6)	2.0 (11)	1.8 (6)	1.8 (11)
Student adopts appropriate tone, style, or attitude	1.6 (8)	1.9 (12)	1.7 (9)	1.7 (13)
Student appropriately meets assignment requirements	1.7 (7)	1.7 (13)	1.7 (9)	1.8 (11)

Note. Numbers are group means on a 3-point scale: 1 = *minor/rare*; 2 = *moderate/occasional*; 3 = *large/frequent*. The number in parentheses is the rank. For HSS, $n = 38$ faculty members; for ST, $n = 40$ faculty members. In a few cases, however, category was left blank by respondent.

+ The PGRs



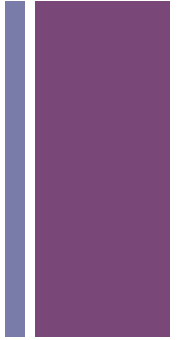
- Questions were developed with a small group PGRs
- Survey Monkey
- Over 100 PGRs who had at one time studied at the ELTU
- 54 responded

+ Constraints & boundaries



- EGAP – by appealing to all fields
- ESAP – by appealing to PGRs specific to level
- 8X2hr sessions

+ Summary of Participants' Discussion



The next three slides show the syllabus overviews that were developed in the workshop.

+ Group 1



- **What you will be expected to do**
- **Explore possible writing tasks**
- **Proposal reviews**
- **Progress reports + personal reflection**
- **Literature review**
- **What makes good writing**
- **Different text types – variety and relating writing to activity**

+ Group 2



- **Communication skills. Establishing the appropriate relationship**
- **Book review. Evaluation/critique. Annotated bibliography**
- **Literature review**
- **Writing a chapter**
- **Writing a proposal/ Writing a proposal for a conference paper**
- **Sentences/coherence/cohesion**
- **Conclusions/limitations**
- **Writing the discussion**

+ Group 3



- **Writing for transfer application**
- **Literature reviews (finding your own voice)**
- **Academic functions**
- **Introductions**
- **Methodologies**
- **Abstracts**