



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Developing an Online Writing Advisory Service

David Read

Technology Coordinator

ELTC, the University of Sheffield

BACKGROUND

Until recently the ELTC....

...offered writing tutorials to international students at the university of Sheffield

...but no option for distance learning (DL) students

...began to see increased requests for writing help from DL students



INITIAL PILOT

Google+

Integrated
Google
Docs

Positive
Feedback

Some
limitations

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying a Google Hangouts with extras session. The browser's address bar shows the URL: <https://plus.google.com/hangouts/extras/talk.google.com/109310290306060614500-1812264253?authuser=0&hl=en-gb&eid=>. The page title is "Hangouts with extras".

The main content area displays a Google Docs document titled "Safeema abstract". The document text includes:

life of a religious leader. This paper focuses on the challenges that may be encountered in both the interpretation of the data collected using this method and the focus of the research itself. Religion and religious leaders may be seen by researchers and educators as point of contention, however knowledge can be gained from an in -depth inquiry into the life of a religious leader. Although both method and focus may not meet the criteria by those positivists whose epistemological outlook may differ, its impact may prove significant to the development of the field of education.

Informative abstract (250 words) summary of the whole essay
Descriptive abstract (100 words) shorter, doesn't include results/conclusions

Very useful advice:
<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/resources/hangouts-demos/specific-writing-assignments/abstracts>
http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/presentations_abstracts_examples.html

The interface also shows a "Documents" sidebar on the left with "Notes", "Sketchpad", and "Safeema abstract" listed. A "Group Chat" section on the left shows a message: "You are now off the record. Learn more Cancel. Safeema Hyatali joined group chat." The video feed on the right shows two participants: a man and a woman. The bottom of the screen shows a video player control bar with a play button, a volume icon, and a progress bar indicating 0:08 / 1:24.

SUMMER PILOT PROGRAMME

Stage One: Contacted Distance Learning Tutors

Stage Two: Set up Google Site for registering

ELTC Online Writing Advisory Service



Home

Submit Your Writing
Book Video Conference
Guide to submitting your writing
Guidance for focus points
Useful Links and Resources

Welcome to the online version of the ELTC's [Writing Advisory Service](#). This is a pilot project to provide students with the option to submit their essays online and to have an optional video conference with the tutor who looked at their essay. There is also a section with useful links and materials to help you improve your writing.

We advise you watch [this video](#) first which explains how to use the service.

What would you like to do? Click one of the speech bubbles below...



Stage Three: Created help documentation

Stage Four: Sent out email instructions to DL tutors

ELTC



Online Writing Advisory Service

Submit Your Writing

If you wish to just submit a piece of writing and get written feedback from an ELTC tutor, please follow these instructions:

1. Look at the calendar below and select a thirty minute slot that suits you. This is **NOT** an appointment for an interview but simply indicates the day and time by which you would like your writing returned. If there are no slots available on one, move forward on the calendar to find future slots. If there are no slots available, this means you cannot currently submit your essay. Please come back and check later to find future appointments.



Click on an open appointment slot to sign up. If no slots are available, please try a different time range. To cancel an appointment slot that you've already booked, leave this sign-up page and delete the event from your own calendar.

| Today | 5 – 11 Nov 2012 | Refresh | Day | Week | | |
|----------|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Mon 5/11 | Tue 6/11 | Wed 7/11 | Thu 8/11 | Fri 9/11 | Sat 10/11 | Sun 11/11 |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

And then we waited...

And waited...

And waited...

But noone signed up



Sort ▾



My Drive > Online WAS summer pilot docs > Student essay submissions summer archive

| <input type="checkbox"/> | TITLE | OWNER | LAST MODIFIED |
|----------------------------|--|-----------|------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ☆ | [redacted] Writing Advisory Service Appointment, July 30th, 14.00 | me | Jul 30 me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ☆ | [redacted], Writing Advisory Service Appointment, July 31st, 14.00 | St me | Jul 28 me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ☆ | [redacted] Writing Advisory Service Appointment, July 26th 14:00 | Shi me | Jul 26 Jihyun Choi |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ☆ | [redacted] Writing Advisory Service Appointment 1st August 14.00 | Shi me | Jul 26 me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ☆ | [redacted], Writing Advisory Service Appointment, July 25t | me | Jul 25 me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ☆ | [redacted] Writing Advisory Service Appointment, July 24th 14:00 | Sharei me | Jul 24 Mykhailo Galian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ☆ | [redacted], Writing Advisory Service Appointment, July 27th 14.00 | Si me | Jul 24 me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ☆ | [redacted], Writing Advisory Service Appointment, July 18th 14:00 | Sharei me | Jul 24 me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ☆ | [redacted], Writing Advisory Service Appointment, July 23rd 14:00 | Shi me | Jul 23 me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ☆ | [redacted], Writing Advisory Service Appointment, July 20th 14:00 | Sh me | Jul 19 me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ☆ | [redacted], Writing Advisory Service Appointment, July 17th 14:00 | me | Jul 18 me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ☆ | [redacted], Writing Advisory Service Appointment, July 16th 14:00 | me | Jul 17 me |

Google Docs proved versatile...

Writing Advisory Appointment, August 14th, 14.00 ☆

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Table Help Last edit was made on August 14 by d.p.read

Normal text Arial 11 B I U A A

Introduction

The past two decades have seen colossal growth of capital and it means that international investors achieve a capability to interchange enormous amounts of money out of one currency into another one very easy and fast. What public expect to happen to the currency exchange rate plays an important role in determining which currency to buy or sell – thus the investors will decide if it is beneficial to switch out of the currency is expected to depreciate into the currency that is expected to increase. In the 1970s huge amount of theoretical approaches were investigated in order to interpret the experience with flexible exchange rates. What causes movements in the exchange rates of the currencies? What factors estimate the rate of exchange between two currencies? These questions have been the main centre of attention amongst policy-makers and economists. The exchange rate contributes the key linkages between the domestic economy and the other economies of the rest of the world. It implies the importance of explaining and understanding the behaviour of the exchange rates (Moosa, 2010).

Since the transition from the fixed exchange rate regime to the floating, a lot of economists have been interested in examining and testing the movements in the exchange rate under the monetary approach (for instance, Meese and Rogoff (1983)).

 **David Read**
10:27 AM Aug 14
unnecessarily wordy, try to reduce to a smaller number of words.

 **David Read**
10:27 AM Aug 14
missing word

 **David Read**
10:29 AM Aug 14
link these sentences

And Google+ Hangouts reliable..

The screenshot shows a Google+ Hangout window titled "Online Writing Advisory with Qingqing Wang". The main content is a Google Docs document with the following text:

Please complete the following table giving information about the areas you wish the tutor to focus on when reading your essay and then paste in your writing in the space provided below:

| |
|---|
| When reading my writing, I would like the tutor to focus on....(max of four points) |
| is the writing style academically? |
| the grammar |
| is it critical? |
| coherence |

Paste your writing between the two horizontal lines below:

2.2.3 The Criteria of Successful Second Language Academic Writing According to the

At the bottom of the window, there is a "People" section with two video thumbnails. The first thumbnail shows a man speaking, and the second shows a woman with glasses. In the bottom right corner, there are links for "Report an issue" and "Help".

FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS

'it was very useful to me because i live in manchester. i would have wasted valuable time and limited resources by coming to sheffield, whilst the video conference felt like a face to face encounter and was interesting to take part in at the same time.'

'the most useful thing is it saving us to go to the ELTC, and can have the appointment at anywhere, and the result can be recorded.'

'Being an international student, sometimes face to face appointment gives me pressure because I will feel embarrassed due to the errors I made on my writing. I feel more comfortable if I simply submit a piece of my work and get comments on it.'

'It's more convenient to make and appointment online than by phone or in person.'

'the tutor is really very nice and explains everything in detail.'

'make it easier to access. i say this as a mature person who is not comfortable with computers and social networking interfaces. for instance without a link to my writing i would be at a loss to retrieve it once it had been commented on. so just clear steps about what you do each time you want to submit and retrieve comments.'

'As I would like to make another appointment after I got my essay back, the other appointments are fully booked. So it will be better to have more appointments available during summer, for most postgraduates need it. Thank you.'

'i think the way to submit the essay is a little confusing.'

CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

Some confusion using Google Docs

- Formatting lost when copying and pasting
- Students struggled with the idea of shared documents

Technical issues with Google Hangouts

- Issues with webcams and audio
- Accessing the Google Docs app from the Hangout

GOING FORWARD

Extending pilot to distance learning students

Training up two teachers to work on the programme

Teacher's Guide to Online WAS

Please use the table of contents below (in blue) to navigate to the section that is relevant to you.

[General Overview](#)

[How essays are submitted and allocated to teachers](#)

[How much time to spend on students' essays](#)

[How to comment on students' essays](#)

[How to make comments in the margin](#)

[Advice for making margin comments](#)

[How to make end comments](#)

[Useful generic comments to use in end comments box](#)

[Grammar](#)

[How to give feedback on their work](#)

FUTURE PLANS

Make it available as a permanent service

Train more teachers in how to use it

Set up a more robust sign-up procedure

THANK YOU.....

.....AND ANY QUESTIONS?