

# Implementing Integrated Skills Assessment in EAP

*"...integrated tasks are authentic because they provide a realistic context for speaking performance and require test-takers to perform tasks that are relevant to academic study such as reading texts, listening to lectures, and discussing work with others in preparation for written and oral assignments (Weir 1910; Cumming et al. 2000 : cited in Barkaoui et al. 2012*

This project was a result of an Annual Monitoring Review (AMR) by tutors and from student feedback on our summer pre-sessional bridging course in Bio-medical Sciences (Bio-med). Teachers wanted more evidence of independent paraphrasing. Critical thinking and Informed discussion skills to support them when providing final grading of students' speaking. Students wanted more discussion time in class. The feedback also indicated that we needed to update our course material to be more aligned to the changing demographic of subject-specialisms which come under the umbrella of Bio-med. Through the process of future-proofing the course and aligning it to the skills PG students needed, it also meant **changing the assessment to reflect the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) of the course and to promote the skills students require to be successful in their studies.**

## What we did

- Implemented action plan response to AMR
- Met with Bio-med course convenors to discuss student needs
- Observed Bio-med lessons.
- Identified skills needed for Problem Based Learning (PBL)
- Identified writing & speaking skills required by Bio-med students
- Identified the need for more reading into writing and reading into speaking tasks.
- Researched integrated assessment literature.
- Agreed Text selection criteria
- Agreed marking criteria
- Design of input sessions to support students with the integrated tasks.
- Design of assessment tasks

## Integrated Reading into Speaking Assessed Task

- Students provided with a selection of related to academic texts on 'Stress' disciplines to choose from in advance of assessed discussion.
- Students to prepare an oral summary of text to include main ideas, a critique of content, state its relation to the discussion and the reliability of the source.
- During the discussion students can refer to the text and notes from other sources to support ideas in the discussion.
- Students discussed questions related to topic of stress.

## Results and further work

- ✓ 30% increase in higher levels of student satisfaction on the Bio-med course from previous year.
- ✓ 30% increase in student satisfaction with course material.
- ✓ Positive feedback from course tutors in relation to confidence assessing skills, alignment of skills to PG course requirements.
- ✓ Integrated assessment being implemented across other EAP bridging courses.
  - Create working party to develop assessment criteria further.
  - Improve clarity of criteria in relation to overarching grading system.
  - Add two texts into integrated writing assessment to help provide clearer opportunity for critical engagement and assimilation in paraphrasing.