

# Pre-sessional English for Business

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# Background

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- Entry requirement for 1 year MSc Conversion degree in the SoB is IELTS 6 overall, minimum of 5.5 in each skill.\*
  - Course started in 2016 with a 10 week programme (1 band below) and a 5 week programme (0.5 band below).
  - Two intakes a year – Summer and Autumn.
  - All PSE programmes are approved and overseen by University QA processes.
  - British Council Accredited.
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- Since 2016 our Pre-sessional cohort has outperformed non-PSE (incl. home students) at the end of S1.
  - Since 2016 100% PSE students have graduated with their intended award from SoB.
  - The longer the PSE course, the better the performance.

# But...

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	2016	2017
IELTS 4.5	9%	28% (33% in Autumn)
Failure to achieve required score*	34%	32% (52% in Autumn)
Failure to progress	2%	12% (35% in Autumn)

- As this course has progressed, we have found ourselves moving from being '*English* for Academic Purposes' tutors to '*Everything* for Academic Purposes' tutors:
  - Core Business concepts
  - Employability
  - Resilience
  - Teamwork

# What does this say about the validity of our assessments?

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Criterion validity – are our expectations of EAP skills too high?

- *IELTS 5.5 to study at PG level?*

Content validity – do we adequately reflect the range of EAP constructs? (Presentation, Group work, Essay, Note-taking, Seminar skills, Case study)

- *Do students attend lectures/take notes/participate in group work/seminars?*

Face validity – do stakeholders have faith in our assessments?

- *Very little! 'Can you test them again?'*

# On paper...

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- ILOs – Developed in consultation with SoB staff. Outlined in Module Specification paper which is approved by the University Quality and Academic Standards Committee.
- Assessment Criteria – informed by BALEAP, CEFR, IELTS(?).
- Assessment Tasks – developed to assess the ILOs. Authentic; representative of tasks that students will be expected to do on degree programmes. Moderated by Assessment Working Group but not piloted.
- The whole process overseen by an External Examiner.

# What do we do next?

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- Grapple with defining the EAP constructs in the SoB.
  - *'Report vs essay', lecture presentation*
- Engage with colleagues in SoB to clarify expectations of international students and assessments.
  - *2500 word literature review, group assignment written by 8 people, case study about a garden centre*
- Work with colleagues in the SoB to integrate learning support within the academic programme.
  - *Specialist Management English for Business - EIS module which supports core academic modules in the School.*