


# Can you hear me at the back?

## Teaching writing through lectures

**Miranda Armstrong**  
**Diana Hopkins**

**University of Bath**





You can only  
learn writing  
from writing

You can't learn to  
write just by being  
told about it

Without actually  
doing any writing it  
will be really boring

Unless students get  
feedback on their  
writing they can't  
improve

# Academic & Professional Communication Skills (APCS)

- Series of lectures
- Key skills for academic & professional communication
- Discipline specific
- Y1 undergraduates

# Academic & Professional Communication Skills (APCS)

- Series of lectures
- Key skills for academic & professional communication
- **Discipline specific**
- Y1 undergraduates

- Lab reports
- Technical reports
- Essays
- Individual and group work

## Pharmacy

- Lab report
- Magazine article
- Journal
- PIL

## Architecture

- Brochure

# Academic & Professional Communication Skills (APCS)

- Series of lectures
- Key skills for academic & professional communication
- Discipline specific
- **Y1 undergraduates**

## **Social work**

Mature students  
18 year olds

## **Physics**

Writing is not their  
priority

## **Sports & Social Sciences**

NVQ route

**Authenticity**

**Delivery**

Sources

Assignments

Assessment  
criteria

**Authenticity**



# Assessment Criteria

		Quality of Writing	Presentation	Abstract and Introduction	Experimental Details	Analysis and Discussion
First Class	80+	<input type="checkbox"/> Negligible spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors <input type="checkbox"/> Exemplary writing style; lively and articulate writing, showing excellent command of technical terminology and strong arguments	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent presentation, layout and formatting; coherent and logical structure <input type="checkbox"/> Creative use of well designed and relevant figures and/or tables <input type="checkbox"/> Perfect formatting of figures and/or tables, equations and references	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent description of the experiment's aims & objectives, its context and any applications of the work <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent description of the academic relevance of the experiment. <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent description of physical background to the experiment, at a level exactly appropriate for the audience	<input type="checkbox"/> Student achieved much more than would normally be expected <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of excellent experimental skills <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent quality and quantity of results, presented clearly <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of creativity, innovation and initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/> Insightful critical assessment, with an excellent discussion of the advantages and limitations of the techniques used <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent analysis of the results, including insightful comparisons with relevant theoretical or experimental results <input type="checkbox"/> Errors and uncertainties treated and discussed entirely rigorously and appropriately <input type="checkbox"/> Clear, justifiable and complete conclusions.
	75%	<input type="checkbox"/> Entirely succinct, clear and precise descriptions and explanations <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent linkage of the text with figures, tables and equations	<input type="checkbox"/> Good presentation, layout and formatting; coherent and logical structure <input type="checkbox"/> Well designed and relevant figures and/or tables <input type="checkbox"/> Good formatting of figures and/or tables, equations and references	<input type="checkbox"/> Good description of the experiment's aims & objectives, its context and any applications of the work <input type="checkbox"/> Description – with good reference to the available academic literature in the experiment's field <input type="checkbox"/> Good description of physical background to the experiment	<input type="checkbox"/> Student achieved more than would normally be expected <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of strong experimental skills <input type="checkbox"/> Good quality and quantity of results, presented clearly <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of some creativity, innovation and initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong critical assessment, with a very good discussion of the advantages and limitations of the techniques used <input type="checkbox"/> Good analysis of the results, including comparisons with relevant theoretical or experimental results <input type="checkbox"/> Good treatment and discussion of errors and uncertainties <input type="checkbox"/> Clear, justifiable and complete conclusions
	72%	<input type="checkbox"/> Very few spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors <input type="checkbox"/> Good writing style <input type="checkbox"/> Nearly all descriptions and explanations are succinct, clear and precise <input type="checkbox"/> Text links well with figures, tables and equations	<input type="checkbox"/> Good presentation, layout and formatting; coherent and logical structure <input type="checkbox"/> Well designed and relevant figures and/or tables <input type="checkbox"/> Good formatting of figures and/or tables, equations and references	<input type="checkbox"/> Good description of the experiment's aims & objectives, its context and any applications of the work <input type="checkbox"/> Description – with good reference to the available academic literature in the experiment's field <input type="checkbox"/> Good description of physical background to the experiment	<input type="checkbox"/> Student achieved more than would normally be expected <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of strong experimental skills <input type="checkbox"/> Good quality and quantity of results, presented clearly <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of some creativity, innovation and initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong critical assessment, with a very good discussion of the advantages and limitations of the techniques used <input type="checkbox"/> Good analysis of the results, including comparisons with relevant theoretical or experimental results <input type="checkbox"/> Good treatment and discussion of errors and uncertainties <input type="checkbox"/> Clear, justifiable and complete conclusions
Upper Second Class	69%	<input type="checkbox"/> A few spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory writing style <input type="checkbox"/> Most descriptions and explanations are succinct, clear and precise <input type="checkbox"/> Text mostly links well with figures, tables and equations	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory presentation, layout and formatting; coherent and logical structure <input type="checkbox"/> Generally well designed and relevant figures and/or tables <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate formatting of figures and/or tables, equations and references	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory description of the experiment's aims & objectives, its context and any applications of the work <input type="checkbox"/> Description – with satisfactory reference to available academic literature in the experiment's field <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate description of physical background to the experiment	<input type="checkbox"/> Student achieved as much as would normally be expected <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of good experimental skills <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory quality and quantity of results, presented clearly	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear discussion of the advantages and limitations of the techniques used <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate analysis of the results, including comparisons with relevant results <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory treatment and discussion of errors and uncertainties <input type="checkbox"/> Clear and justifiable conclusions
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Lower Second Class	59%	<input type="checkbox"/> A few spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory writing style <input type="checkbox"/> Most descriptions and explanations are succinct, clear and precise <input type="checkbox"/> Text mostly links well with figures, tables and equations	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory presentation, layout and formatting; coherent and logical structure <input type="checkbox"/> Generally well designed and relevant figures and/or tables <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate formatting of figures and/or tables, equations and references	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory description of the experiment's aims & objectives, its context and any applications of the work <input type="checkbox"/> Description – with satisfactory reference to available academic literature in the experiment's field <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate description of physical background to the experiment	<input type="checkbox"/> Student achieved as much as would normally be expected <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of good experimental skills <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory quality and quantity of results, presented clearly	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear discussion of the advantages and limitations of the techniques used <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate analysis of the results, including comparisons with relevant results <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory treatment and discussion of errors and uncertainties <input type="checkbox"/> Clear and justifiable conclusions
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	52%	<input type="checkbox"/> A few spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory writing style <input type="checkbox"/> Most descriptions and explanations are succinct, clear and precise <input type="checkbox"/> Text mostly links well with figures, tables and equations	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory presentation, layout and formatting; coherent and logical structure <input type="checkbox"/> Generally well designed and relevant figures and/or tables <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate formatting of figures and/or tables, equations and references	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory description of the experiment's aims & objectives, its context and any applications of the work <input type="checkbox"/> Description – with satisfactory reference to available academic literature in the experiment's field <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate description of physical background to the experiment	<input type="checkbox"/> Student achieved as much as would normally be expected <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of good experimental skills <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory quality and quantity of results, presented clearly	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear discussion of the advantages and limitations of the techniques used <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate analysis of the results, including comparisons with relevant results <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory treatment and discussion of errors and uncertainties <input type="checkbox"/> Clear and justifiable conclusions

# Sample Feedback

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	52%					

# Sample Feedback

	Quality of Writing	Presentation	Abstract and Introduction	Experimental Details	Analysis and Discussion	
<b>Third Class</b>	49%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Numerous misspellings, punctuation or grammatical errors</li> <li>✓ Clumsy or inappropriate writing style, often lapsing into colloquialisms, inappropriate tense, mixture of writing styles</li> <li>☐ Sloppy and confusing descriptions and explanations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Passable presentation, layout and formatting; structure sometimes incoherent and confused</li> <li>✓ Adequate figures and/or tables</li> <li>✓ Formatting of figures and/or tables, equations and references sometimes incorrect or incomplete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Poor description of the experiment's aims &amp; objectives, its context and any applications of the work</li> <li>☐ Description with poor reference to the available academic literature in the experiment's field</li> <li>☐ Poor description of physical background to the experiment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Student has not achieved as much as would normally be expected</li> <li>☐ Weak experimental skills</li> <li>☐ Poor quality and quantity of results, or results presented poorly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Little or flawed discussion of the advantages and limitations of the techniques used</li> <li>☐ Weak analysis of the results</li> <li>☐ Treatment of errors and uncertainties weak or flawed</li> <li>☐ Weak, unclear or unjustifiable conclusions</li> </ul>
	45%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Text links poorly with figures, tables and equations</li> </ul>				
	42%					
<b>Fail /Unclassified</b>	39%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Riddled with spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Shoddy layout, presentation and formatting;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Very weak description of the experiment's aims &amp; objectives, its context and any applications of the work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Student achieved very little throughout experiment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ No discussion of the advantages and limitations of the techniques used</li> </ul>
	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Totally incoherent writing style</li> <li>☐ Largely incomprehensible descriptions and explanations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ incoherent structure</li> <li>☐ Poor figures and/or tables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Very poor or missing description of the available academic literature in the experiment's field</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Very weak, experimental results.</li> <li>☐ Very poor quality and quantity of results, or results presented very poorly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Very weak analysis of the results</li> <li>☐ Treatment of errors and uncertainties weak, flawed or missing</li> </ul>
	32%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Very poor or missing linkage of the text with figures, tables and equations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Missing or incorrect formatting of figures and/or tables, equations and references</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Very weak description of physical background to the experiment</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ Very weak or missing conclusions</li> </ul>
<b>Mark</b>	<b>Quality of Writing</b>	<b>Presentation</b>	<b>Abstract and Introduction</b>	<b>Experimental Details</b>	<b>Analysis and Discussion</b>	
(%)	15	15	15	25	30	
Awarded	6	6	10.5	16.5	18	

# Assessment Criteria

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<b>Mark</b>		<b>Quality of Writing</b>	<b>Presentation</b>
( <b>%</b> )		<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>
Awarded			

Sources

Assignments

Assessment  
criteria

**Authenticity**

Students'  
writing

Sources

Assignments

Assessment  
criteria

**Authenticity**

Students'  
writing

Tutors'  
comments

Poor organization.

The summary doesn't contain the quantitative results of the report with their uncertainties.

As a reader, I am in no way convinced that you understood the experiment, understood the theory and understood the importance of the results.

The figures must always be linked to the text and their features explained.

Highly unacceptable or missing citations.

Poor writing style with frequent grammatical errors and spelling mistakes.

Your style is too colloquial at times and not academic.

Describe all your own work in the past tense.

Grammar!

Long, rambling sentences with incorrect verbs.





Sources

Assignments

Assessment  
criteria

Mapping

**Authenticity**

Students'  
writing

Embedded

Tutors'  
comments

Powerpoint  
slides

**Delivery**

**Many cities have hoped that hosting a mega sporting event such as the Olympics would improve the way in which they are perceived internationally.**

How do I  
start??\*!\*



Introductions

# What you can include in your introduction

Statement about the topic. A little background to the topic

A reference to a respected source

Why this question is an important one to address

Problems or issues that arise in answering the question

Introduction

The subtopics you plan to include

Definition of key terms when necessary

A thesis statement giving a plan of action for essay

Up to 10% of total length of assignment

Powerpoint  
slides

Task  
booklets

**Delivery**

Every sport has rules which are intended to be followed to ensure fair play and correct procedure. Two types of rules are enforced in sport, rules of decency and constitutive rules. Rules of decency refer to rules enforced to protect the safety of other players, to ensure that fair play is present within the sport and that players compete with morality (Boxill, 2003). Constitutive rules refer to the rules that construct the framework of the sport which state which techniques and actions can be used and the conditions to which a winner is produced (Boxhill, 2003). Rules are enforced in sports by governing bodies, whose responsibility it is to ensure that there is an appropriate response to any violations of the rules (Coakley, 2007), whether these violations involve breaking rules, that is, not complying with the laws of the sport, or bending rules by pushing them as far as possible without committing an actual foul. However, with stakes being so high in professional sport, the temptation to cheat is powerful and athletes and coaches not only devise ways to break or bend rules but also create excuses to justify their actions. For example, although Thierry Henry admitted to a handball in 2009 when playing for France against Ireland in a crucial qualifier for the World Cup, he absolved himself of any responsibility by insisting that it was the referee's job to enforce the rules (BBC Sport, 2009). This assignment will explore the arguments both for and against strict enforcement of rules in sport and come to a conclusion as to whether fair play and rule bending and breaking can co-exist.

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Background

Definition of terms

References to respected sources

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Thesis statement

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Powerpoint  
slides

Task  
booklets

Reference  
booklets

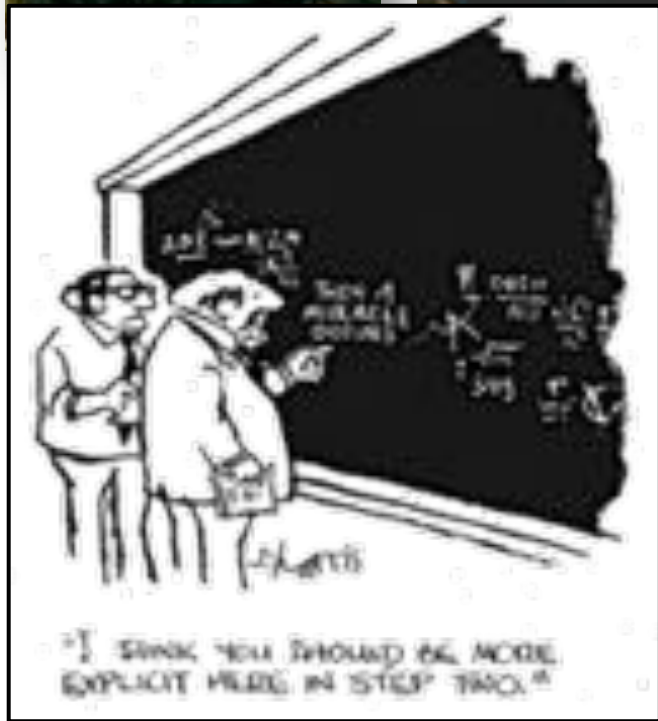
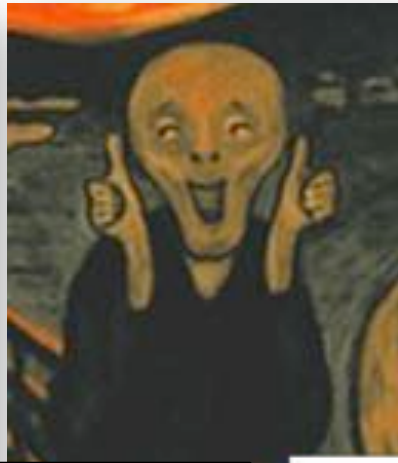
Video clips

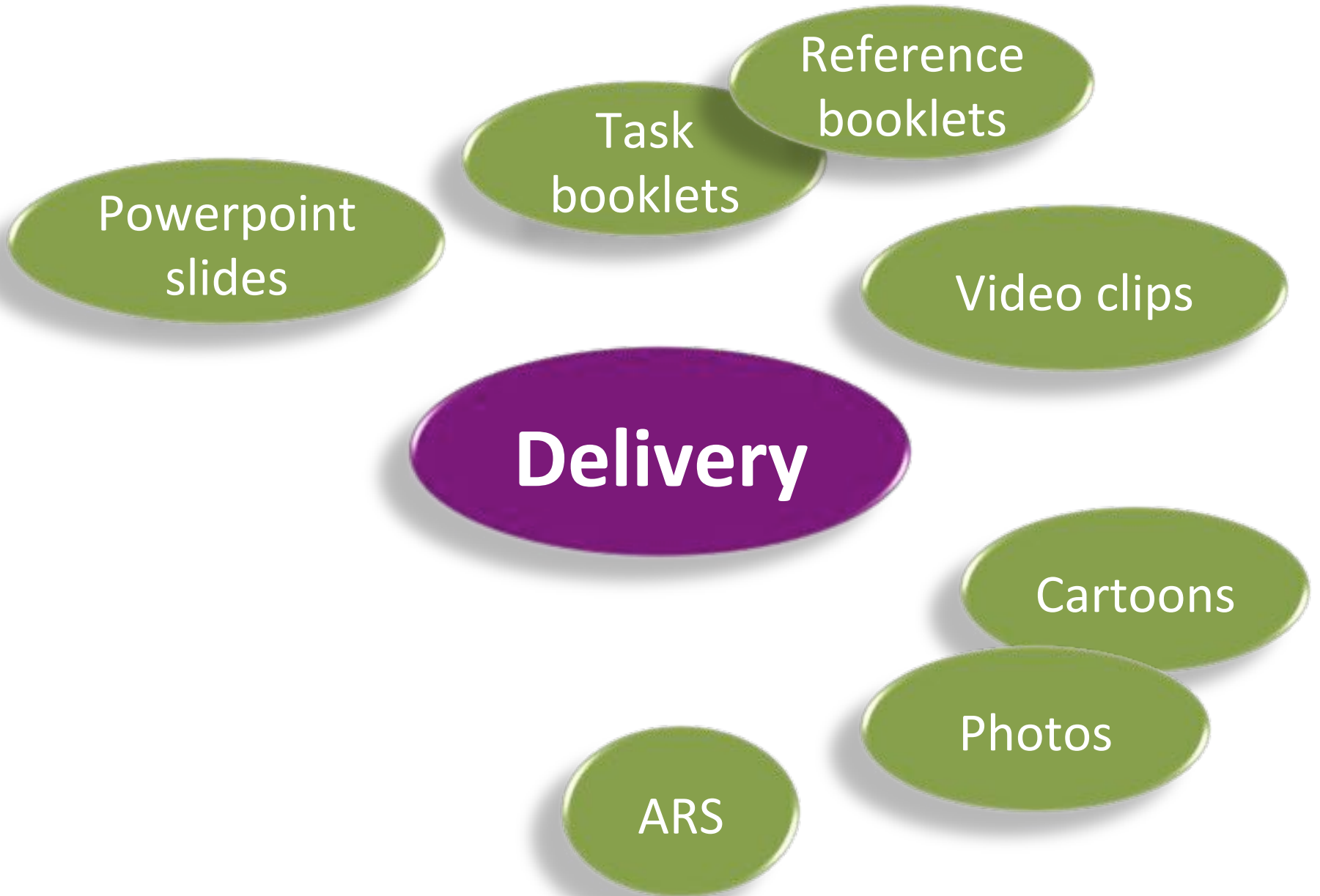
**Delivery**

Cartoons

Photos

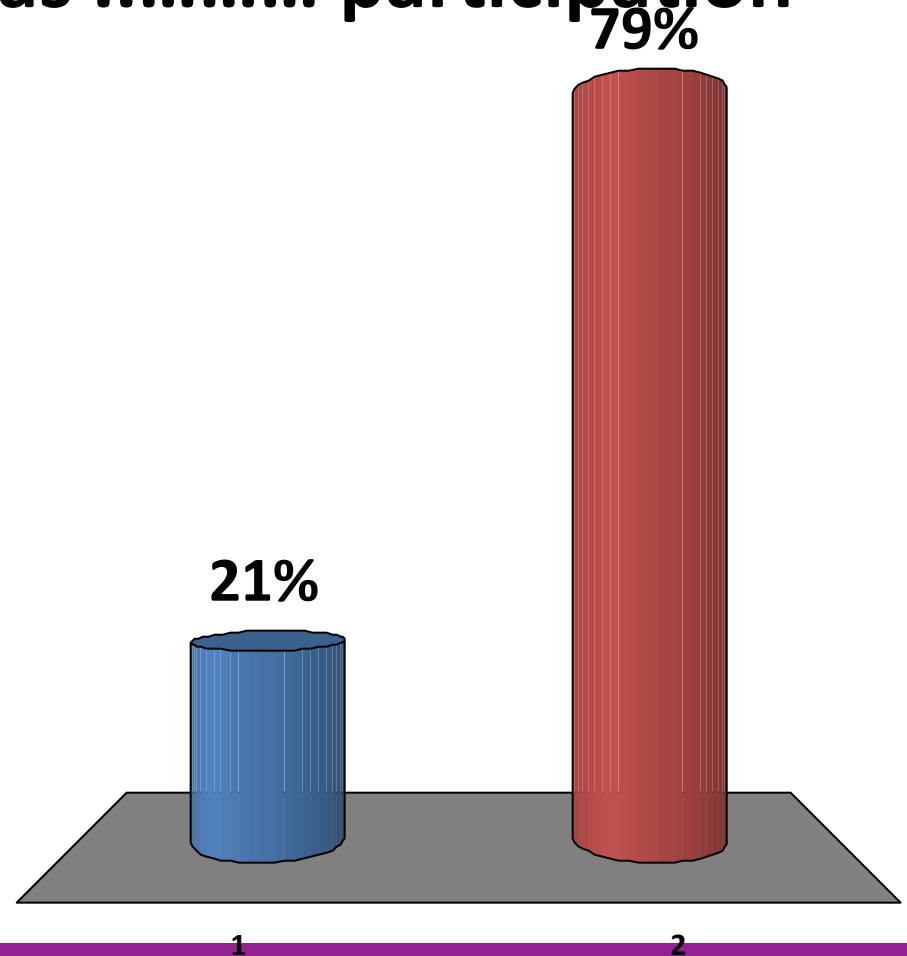






Some countries have different views on what constitutes sport. This has ..... participation rates.

1. effected
2. affected











# APCS: developments

- Mechanical Engineering

Smaller groups

Module assessment

- Physics

Seminars

- Electronic & Electrical Engineering

Seminars: separate  
NS & NNS groups

- Sports & Social Sciences

Writing evaluation

You can only learn writing from writing

*You can't learn to write just by being told about it*

Without actually doing any writing it will be really boring

Unless students get feedback on their writing they can't improve

Pragmatic

Not all native speakers want to spend lots of time practising their writing

Discrete item practice is possible

“We learnt useful and valuable information and skills.”

Mechanical Engineering Student

“The students had a very positive experience of the APCS 'unit'. Anecdotally, fewer fails on written assignments.”

Dr Ant Bush, Director of Studies:  
BA (Hons) Sport and Social Sciences

# APCS: benefits

- Higher profile for the ELC
- Stronger connections within the uni
- Clearer understanding of v... needs

