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Evaluating ESAP: Challenges in developing an evaluation framework for an ESAP Programme in HE

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Introduction

- UK Context
- Relationship between curriculum & evaluation
- UoS ESAP
- Existing evaluation frameworks
- Propose new framework
- Suggestions /comments/feedback

UK Context



- Increases in UK HE overseas students (OECD,2008; EU, 2008;International Unit of Higher Education, 2010)
- UOS 2010-11: non-EU international students +20% (UOS Planning and Governance Services, 2010) (2010-11: 4,379; 2009-10: 3,566)



- Overseas student experience in UK not meeting expectations (THES, 29.07.2010)
- Perception internationally UK HE "money hungry" (THES, 29.07.2010)
- British Council warning: "cash cows" (THES, 29.07.2010)
- Effect of cuts to HE funding



Evaluation necessary

- Evaluation of language support programmes
 - yield useful data for use in future programme /course design
 - improve student performance
 - enhance a student's learning experience
 - demonstrate value for money



Curriculum Recap

Specific body of knowledge, how it is taught & sequenced, and assessed

Product approach (Tyler, 1949:53)
includes goals and outcomes for the learners

Process approach (Stenhouse, 1975);
how achieved/curriculum evaluated

Praxis approach (Grundy, 1987:105)
emancipation: collaboration & negotiation



Student Services Department ELTC Language Support

English
Language
Support (ELS)

Writing Advisory
Service (WAS)

Online
Language
Support (OLS)

Departmental
Language
Support
(DLS/ESAP)

*Distance
Learning
Support*



Departmental Language Support (DLS)

- UoS central funding
- 5 Faculties(Social Science; Engineering; Science; Medicine, Dentistry& Health; Arts & Humanities)
- 33 depts ; 60 + groups; c. 600 ss;
- 19 teachers
- ‘Embedded’
- Mostly optional



Aims & Approach

- To help students access their course and demonstrate their knowledge, learning and critical thinking skills
- To help students become members of their subject discourse community
- Negotiated course content (Dept, SS, ELTC) drawing on participants' experience and attempting to resolve a 'problem': ***praxis approach***



Evaluation

Effectiveness

- achieving goals
- measurable improvement > e.g. formal assessment of student progress
- student feedback

Efficiency

assumes delivery in a well-organised and cost-effective way



Challenges in Evaluating ESAP

Variety

- Students
- Format
- Content
- Strength : tailored, flexible courses
- Weakness : inconsistent evaluation?



Existing evaluation

Robinson (1995 p.65): *[ESP] courses and syllabuses describedoutcomes not objectively measured.*

UOS DLS Student feedback on performance:

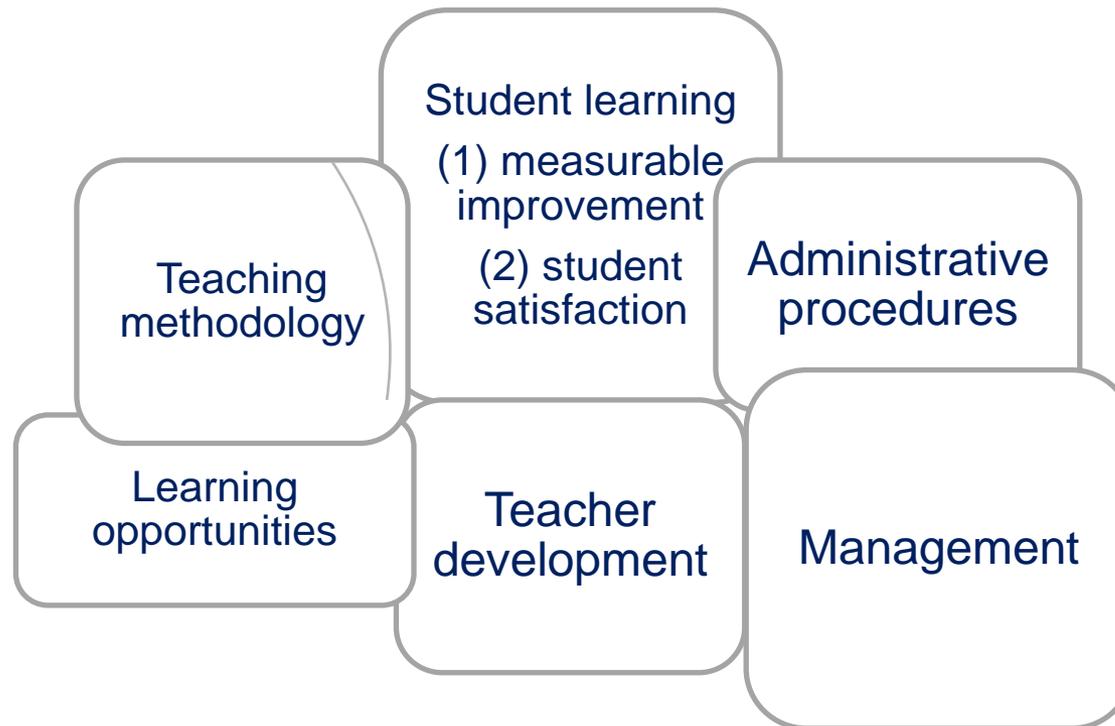
- Low response rates
- Perception of progress (subjective)

Departmental /subject tutor feedback:

- Anecdotal

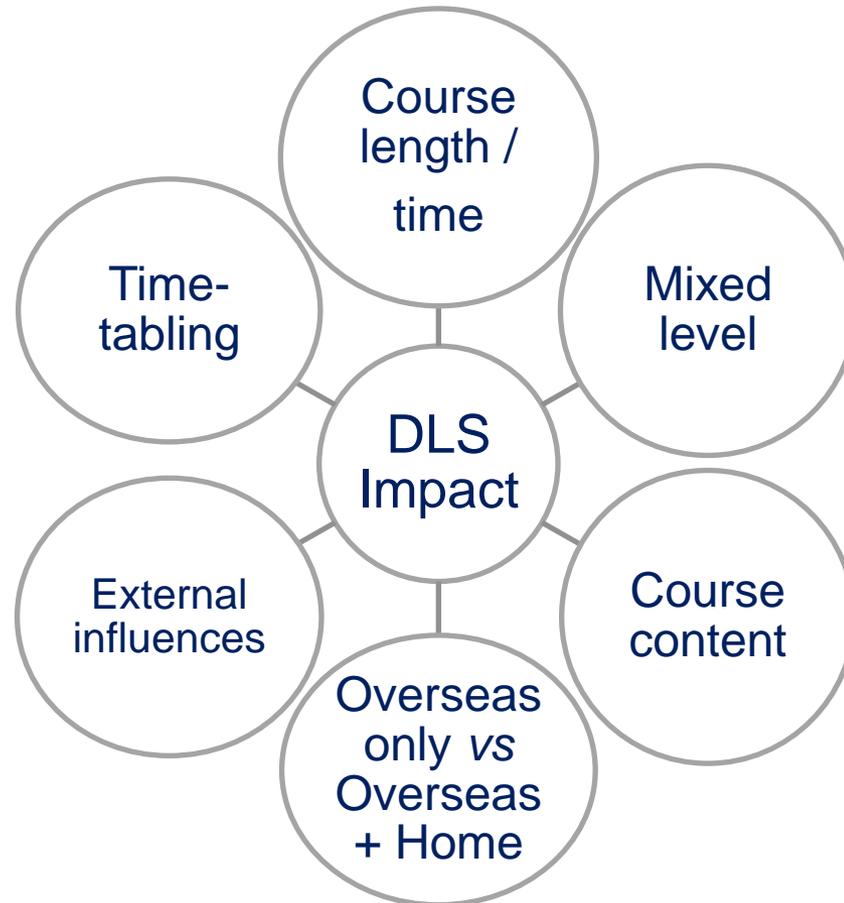


Holistic Evaluation (Course/programme/curriculum)





Evaluating DLS Impact: measurable improvement



Types of ESP Evaluation (Robinson, 1991: 92)

*Formative Evaluation during
a course/programme*

*Summative Evaluation end
of a course/programme*

*Ultimate Evaluation
(Swan's term, 1986) after
ESP course completion*

Process Evaluation:
processes related to
administration, decision-
making, and teaching and
learning strategies:

Product Evaluation: student
'product', e.g.
assignments, writing
/other performance, exam
results etc.



Common forms of course evaluation in ESP/ESAP (Hedge, 2000: 355)

In-course evaluation
(variety of formats)

Observing students

End-of-course surveys

Focus group interviews
with students;

Student diaries

Final test results

Teacher/lesson
observation

Feedback from teachers
on the course



Evaluation Frameworks used in HE

- HE Quality Assurance Agency Code of Practice (2006) > named award routes
- Baldrige's Criteria for Performance Excellence (2009-10) > links leadership and results for successful organisational performance
- European Framework for Quality Management (EFQM) > self-assessment of organisation's holistic performance (ESAP: Rudzinska, 2009)



EFQM - Rudzinska, 2009

- Issues with stakeholder involvement
- Courses not sufficiently oriented to competence and development skills
- Classroom activities not sufficiently deep-learning oriented

A new holistic framework?

Short-medium term

Curriculum development

Resources/materials
development

Measure noticeable
improvement

Identify improvements in
student confidence

Language performance

Assignment marks

Long term

Long-term tracking

Teacher development

Management

Processes

?cost effectiveness (VFM)





Challenges

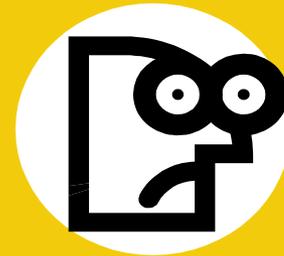
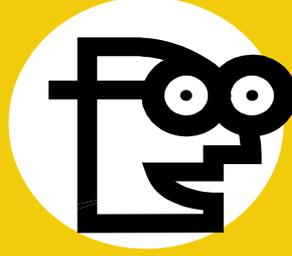
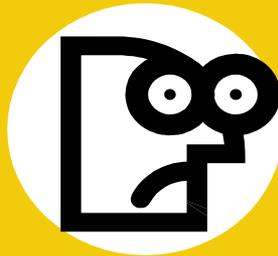
- Quantitative measures of improvement (short term)
- Tracking student progress (longer term)
- Engaging ESAP tutors in evaluation process
- Engaging 33 departments in evaluation process
- Getting consistent processes across a varied programme



Suggestions?



- How can we measure impact - more ideas?
- 10 minutes to suggest, comment on post-it notes and put on A3 sheets



It's QUESTION TIME!!



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Thanks for listening



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