



UNSW Global
A U S T R A L I A

Relevance is the key: Engaging learners in an EGAP course

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Who are our students?

Environmental
Engineering

Electronic
Engineering

Architecture

Civil Engineering

Information
Technology

Commerce

Graphic
Design

Journalism



Research

Goals of an EAP Direct Entry Pathway

EGAP or ESAP?

English for General Academic Purposes Course (EGAP)

- designed to teach language, skills and strategies which can be **transferred** across various degree programs

-orientate students to the receiving institute and academic culture



Research

Examples of transfer from an EGAP course

Increased level of confidence, academic conventions, presentation skills, critical thinking, writing structure (Dooey, 2010; Terrashke & Wahid, 2011)

Presentation skills, discussion management skills, working in groups, confidence in speaking skills
(MacAulay, 2016)

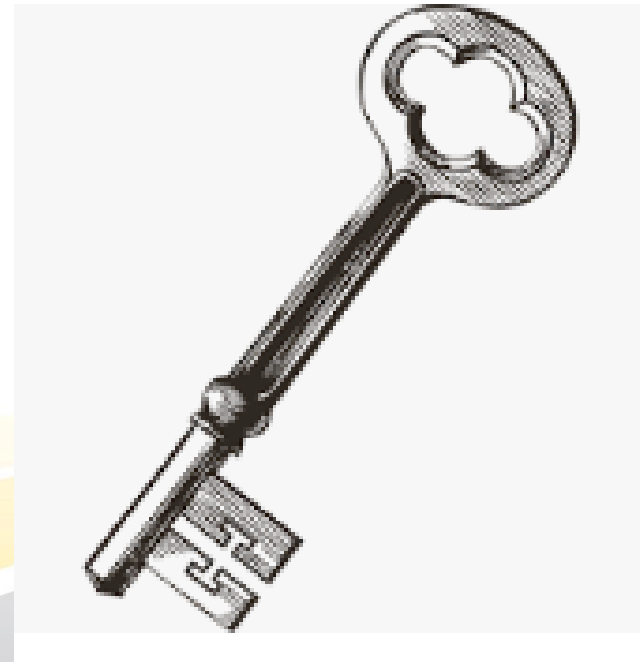
Research

Issues with EGAP courses

- Failure to transfer generic skills to discipline specific tasks (Counsell, 2011; Ong, 2014)
- Lack of discipline-specific language and knowledge (Dooey, 2010; Terraschke & Wahid, 2011)
- Failure to see connection between EAP course and future course
- Low motivation



- Relevance is the key.



Establishing relevance



Perceived relevance of a task or activity

→ motivation

Keller (2010)
ARCS theory of motivational design;
Woodrow (2013)

People are motivated to learn if
...they perceive value in the knowledge presented
...there is an optimistic expectation for success.
(Keller 2010)

ARCS model of motivational design

- Attention
- **Relevance**
- Confidence
- Satisfaction

How?

1. **Address** learners' content needs
(relevance)

2. Help learners see **connections**

Perceived relevance + anticipation of transfer

Hugging

- Setting expectations
- Matching
- Simulating
- Modelling
- Problem-based learning



Bridging

- Anticipating application
- Generalising applications
- Using analogies
- Parallel problem solving
- Metacognitive strategies

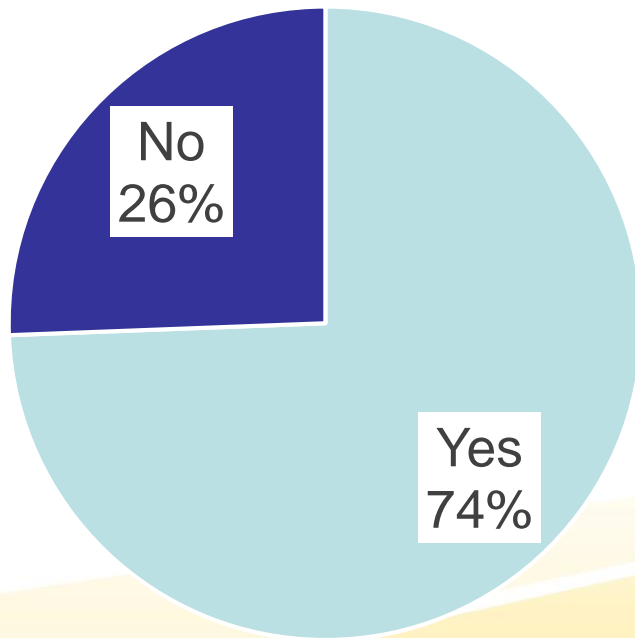
Applying the hugging and framework

Which strategies are being used?

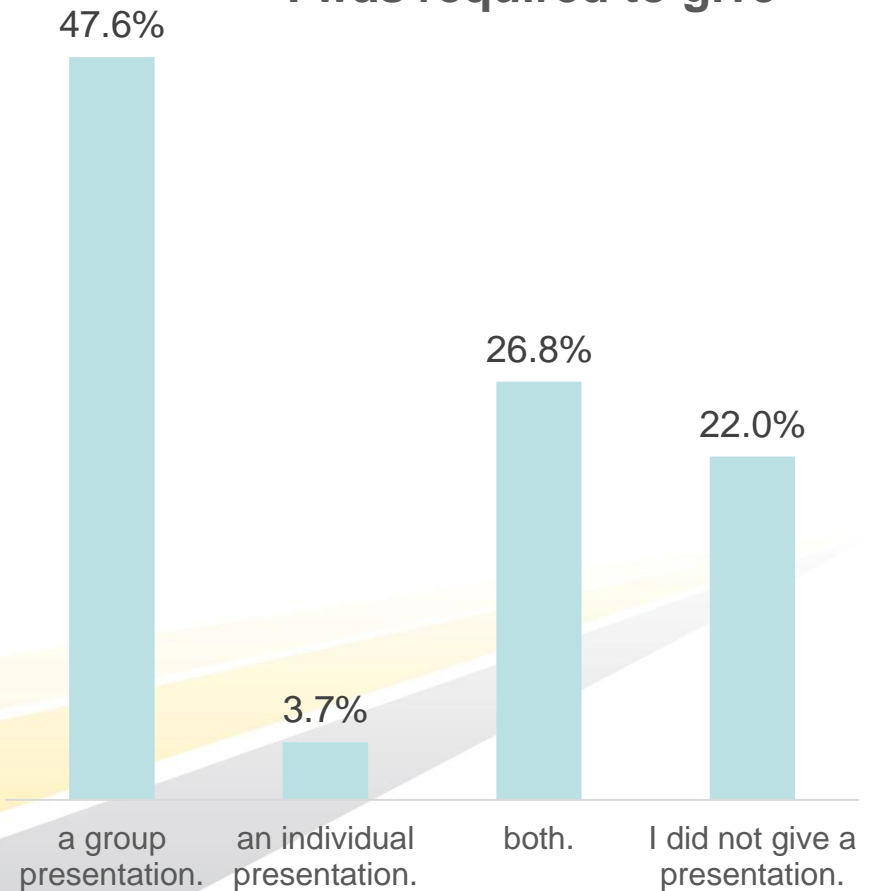


Presentations

I was required to give a presentation in my first semester at UNSW.



I was required to give



Source: UEEC graduate survey (completed after one semester at UNSW)



Hugging and Bridging

Discussion Board Activities

Re: Impacts of tourism

by [redacted] - Monday, 6 March 2017, 6:54 PM

Hi everybody, this is Tian.

I would like to tell you something about the impacts of tourism in Beijing. It is well known that Beijing is famous for its long history and culture. Therefore, Beijing has developed international tourism. Especially after the Olympic games in 2008, there are more and more international tourists in Beijing. On one hand, Beijing indeed gets many positive benefits because of the developed tourism, such as the multicultural environment, investment in the industry employment growth and so on. However, on the other hand, there are also some negative benefits caused by international tourism. The main problem is the environmental pollution. The developed tourism means there are more and more cabbage and carbon emission in this city, which leads to water pollution, air pollution and other problems. Because of that, government should advocate and develop the green tourism in Beijing. Only in that way, tourism can become the industry which is mutually beneficial for tourists and the local people.

Re: Impacts of tourism

by [redacted] - Tuesday, 7 March 2017, 1:08 PM

Hi Tian,

This is Oliver.

I cannot agree more with you and I am glad to see you have been becoming aware of the importance and necessary to protect our antique capital as a citizen of Beijing. People all over the country were disappointed when the old countryyards and lanes were destroyed by the investors for the tourism construction. The public should be given the right to supervise the authority to protect the local buildings and culture rather than focusing on the economic benefits only.



Hugging and Bridging

Students analyse a case study and make recommendations based on it.



Hugging and bridging

Students identify similarities between their EAP course and a course in their discipline.

What skills can they apply from their current course? What might be challenging?

Assessment Task

Mechanical Engineering

Task	Activity	Weight		LOs	GAs
		<i>Individual</i>	<i>Team</i>	Assessed	Assessed
T1	Project Selection	-	-	-	-
T2	Client Interview	-	-	1, 4.	1f, 2c, 4a.
T3	Reflective Writing	10	-	3, 4.	1c, 1e, 1f, 3b.
T4	Consultation	-	10	2, 3.	1d, 1f, 2a, 3a.
T5-A	Bear Pit 1/2	10	-	2, 4.	1c, 1f, 3a.
T5-B	Bear Pit 2/2	-	10	2, 4.	1c, 1f, 3a.
T6A	Final Presentation	-	10	2, 3, 4.	1c, 1f, 2a, 2c, 3a, 4a.
T6B	Feedback from Mentor	-	5	2, 3.	1d, 1f, 2a, 3a.
T7	Final Design Report	-	20	1, 2, 3, 4.	1a-d, 1f-h, 2c, 3a, 3c.
T8	Feedback from Client	-	25	1, 2, 3, 4.	1d-f, 2a, 3a, 4a.
T9	Peer Assessment	-	(-40)	1, 3.	1b, 1c, 1e, 2c.
Total		20	80		

Hugging and bridging

After a presentation, students evaluate their own performances and how they could improve in the future.



Hugging and bridging



Graduate
talks

Making Connections:

Student investigations of their future disciplines within
a Direct Entry EAP course

English Australia Action Research program

Meredith MacAulay
& Tania Bencic



Research Questions

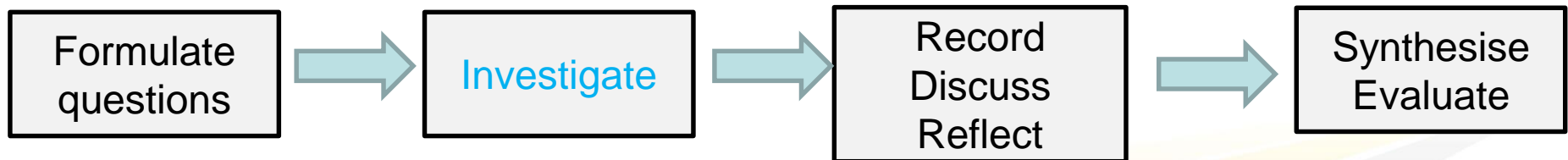
- *How can UEEC students make greater **connections** with their future university disciplines?*
- *What effects will these **connections** have on students?*



Research Design

Students became **researchers** of their future disciplines.
(ethnographic approach)

Investigated their fields using **authentic course information**,
students and **staff**



Reflective Learning Journals

Cycle 1 (5 weeks)

9 x 2-hour slots

Discussion + Presentation class

Students worked in faculty groups.

Figure 1: *Student Investigations-Overview- Cycle 1*

	Task	Source
Investigation 1 (week 1)	'What is my course? What will I study?'	UNSW Faculty website
Investigation 2 (week 2)	'What assessments and tasks will I need to do?'	course outline
Investigation 3 (week 2-4)	'Tasks/Assignments/Challenges and Strategies'	Interviews with former UEEC students
Investigation 4 (week 4)	'Issues in my field'	media articles + UNSW website/links
Investigation 5 (week 2-4)	'Student spaces' photo capture	UNSW campus

Discussion class: Discuss the investigations/lead discussions

Presentation class: Learn/practise presentation skills and present investigations

Cycle 2 (10 weeks)

Focus on field-related presentation and research project
+ two investigations

Cycle 2 Investigation Choice

A. UEEC Graduate Talks
B. UNSW Faculty Orientations
C. Making Connections videos
D. Lecture Attendance at UNSW
E. Focus on Career Pathways and Job Qualifications
F. Create your own investigation

Key Findings

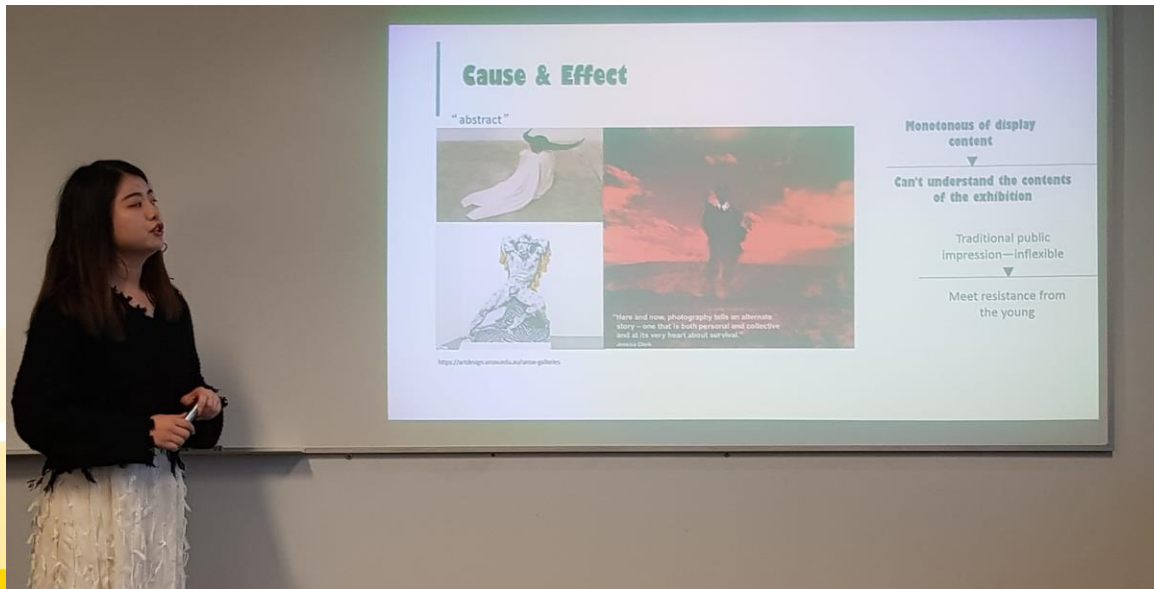
Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

- Increased knowledge
- Increased motivation and overall confidence
- Peer connections
- Improved skills

Cycle 2 Transfer

Transfer of skills and knowledge from UEEC 15 to UEEC 10

- Confidence to do more in-depth research
- Impact on topic choice for presentations
- Confidence in presentation skills



Conclusions

- Various ways to make connections
- Relevance of tasks linked to student motivation
- Benefits of reflection
- Recognition of student capabilities

Implementation of the Cycle 1 activities into the UEEC 15 curriculum!

Discussion

What types of activities could you include in your course to increase learners' perceptions of **relevance**?

References

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