

# Getting started with WEC

## WEC-Inspired Ideas for Understanding Writing and the Curriculum

Adopting a Writing-Enriched Curriculum or WEC approach might not be feasible in your higher education setting. Nevertheless, WEC principles and practice can help to inform how we support students as writers even where an institution or department is not fully implementing this approach.

One of the particularly beneficial aspects of WEC is how it prompts faculty to consider the relationship that writing has with the curriculum. WEC inflected discussions urge faculty and Writing Studies colleagues and colleagues working in academic writing support to work together to clarify expectations about writing at module, year and programme level.

### Four WEC inspired ideas for exploring this relationship

#### Connect with Writing Studies or academic writing experts on campus

Consider connecting with Writing Studies or academic writing experts on campus. Such a conversation will help both the writing experts and the disciplinary colleagues to share knowledge and expertise about how they each work with students to help them to develop as writers. This has professional learning benefits for staff as they learn more about how writing works within the curriculum and they gain insight into different ways of supporting students.



#### Discuss your shared expectations for undergraduate writing within your department

Start a conversation about writing within your department. Very often expectations about undergraduate writing are recognisable to faculty but they may not be explicitly surfaced or shared. Discussing shared expectations for undergraduate writing can surface tacit understandings and contribute to departmental writing knowledge as together colleagues articulate what 'good' writing looks like in their discipline at a variety of levels, for different audiences, in different forms and for a range of purposes.



#### Share written assignment briefs

In some departments and across programmes sharing written assignment briefs may be standard practice. Where this is not currently happening this activity at departmental level could contribute to an assessment mapping exercise and/or a discussion about written assessment more broadly. This approach might illuminate other concerns such as assessment bunching, over assessment, over-reliance on one approach, and opportunities such as the use of technology in assessment and choice in assessment.



#### Enquire or co-enquire into writing

Writing Studies is a vibrant discipline and ever evolving. Exploring writing with colleagues and/or students expands knowledge about writing and can contribute to evidence informed decision making around teaching, learning and assessment. Researching a question about writing in your discipline can push the boundaries of how writing enriches the curriculum and how it is used in student learning. In turn, researching writing may be useful in terms of learning more about and enhancing one's own writing.



### References

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Blank, G. B. (2021). 'Forty Years of Writing Embedded in Forestry in North Carolina State University' in Anson, C. M., and Flash, P. (eds.) *Writing-Enriched Curricula: Models of Faculty-Driven and Departmental Transformation*. The WAC Clearinghouse; University Press of Colorado, pp. 123-144.

### How to cite this resource:

Centre for Teaching and Learning (2024). 'Getting started with WEC', Maynooth: Maynooth University.



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