

# What is Writing-Enriched Curriculum?

**Writing-Enriched Curriculum** or **WEC** is an approach to supporting students as writers in higher education. WEC is a collaborative approach between writing and discipline experts who work together to articulate writing expectations across a programme. These expectations are used as a framework for the integration of writing within the curriculum.



As Flash notes, WEC 'is a facilitated process designed to support the integration of relevant writing and writing instruction into departmental curricula and to increase the rate at which students' writing meets local faculty expectations' (2021, p.18).

In many settings, particularly in the United States, WEC involves the development of writing plans, in collaboration with writing experts, based on the articulated writing expectations of staff in an academic department.

**The US** has strong traditions of module or programme approaches to the development of student writing. These are most recognisable in the disciplines of Rhetoric and Composition, and Writing Studies, and in movements such as Writing in the Discipline, Writing Across the Curriculum and Writing Intensive Courses.

**In Ireland, and Europe** more broadly, these traditions are not as pronounced. Students are supported in their writing first and foremost by academic staff with complementary help provided by teaching and learning centres, student learning centres or learning commons, and more recently by writing centres.

Given the existing location of support for students as writers in the academic discipline, WEC offers a feasible and desirable framework for more intentional and incremental writing support which taps into the different strengths of discipline experts and writing professionals.





As noted by colleagues in the University of Minnesota, a WEC leader in the US, 'The University of Minnesota's [U of M] innovative Writing-Enriched Curriculum Program (WEC) provides academic departments with a way to ensure that discipline-relevant writing and writing instruction are intentionally infused into their undergraduate curricula'. Similarly, colleagues in University of Mississippi note the importance of working with disciplinary experts where students are writing and learning in that discipline; they remark 'that faculty in the disciplines are best suited for teaching students how to think like, argue like, and write like members of a given field.'



## References

Flash, P. (2021). 'Writing-Enriched Curriculum: A Model for Making and Sustaining Change' 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. 17-44.

University of Minnesota Writing Across the Curriculum (n.d.). *Writing-Enriched Curriculum - FAQs*. Accessible at: <https://wac.umn.edu/wec-program/wec-faq>

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Writing-Enriched Curriculum (WEC) is a Maynooth University Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) professional learning and curriculum initiative towards supporting students as writers.

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