

# ReadRight: A One Year Action Research Project That Seeks Ways of Encouraging Public Service Students to Read for Their Degree

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## Introduction

*“The routine deconstruction of scholarly texts, its integration into weekly tutorial and workshop activities, and its explicit discussions as a means of becoming scholarly subjects – opens up the possibility for making more transparent those disciplinary norms associated with both research and publication, as well as those academic conventions associated with scholarly critique.”*

(Saltmarsh and Saltmarsh, 2008)

Impetus for ReadRight came from tutors' feedback, which over the past seven years consistently suggests public service students' failure to adequately read for their degree results in them missing out on higher education skills.

This concern over reading has also been raised by some students who *do read for their degree* and consider the quality of their seminar discussion is hindered by those students who fail to prepare.

Findings from research carried out by Cabral and Tavares (2002) suggest that the lack of reading 'problem' is widespread in higher education. In some cases it was also suggested that undetected learning disabilities may be a deeper underlying cause. However, ReadRight data suggests that public service students *can read*, and whilst most students do read to provide a written assignment, many of them are not motivated to read during their course (in particular for their seminars).

## The ReadRight Fellowship

ReadRight action research sought ways to:

- Make reading relevant
- Encourage students to break away from the 'activist' mode of learning
- Increase students (academic) and critical skills
- Provide a framework for teaching and learning
- Develop the Learning and Skills module
- Contribute to the broader debate about widening participation

To do this we have held two hour formal but voluntary reading workshops twice weekly over both semesters.

The workshops were well attended by an eclectic mix of students ranging from those who now regularly score high marks to those whose lack of reading appears consistent with their poor results.

The Original proposal appears as Appendix One.

## Methods/Methodology

### Methods

We have used a range of data collection methods – observation; questionnaires; short interviews; and discussions directly with students and tutors.

It has been difficult not to be subjective during the research and many of our findings are based on our considered thoughts about the data we collected. A second year of research would have allowed more rigorous findings but our application was unsuccessful.

## **Our Methodology**

We aimed to 'socialise' students into basic scholarly practice through reading small pieces of text in the workshop, then noting, discussing and analysing the contents (and through action research gradually develop a plan for teaching).

Students were encouraged to work only from the information in the readings in a kind of 'free fall' exercise, which facilitated techniques for learning rather than focusing on the weekly topic. For our part, we concentrated on providing immediate feedback and in following up any apparent gaps in learning skills.

## **Readings**

Starting with newspaper articles, the selected readings were gradually increased in complexity to a point where students were reading sophisticated pieces of theory copied from textbooks. Readings were always less than one page of A4 (some weeks we used a number of readings).

Students were canvassed each week for their views on the next week's topic.

## **Example of Methodology in Action**

One week our workshop focused directly on 'essay writing'. As in other weeks, the topic was introduced through reading about essay writing (Payne and Whittaker, 2006).

Following the ReadRight approach students were then required to

- read and take notes
- debate their thoughts in small groups
- feed back to the whole group
  
- outcomes were put on the board
- the debate was then facilitated to produce a plan for essay writing

Rather than being lectured on how to write an essay (a lecture many public service students appear to have missed), they actually participated in recognising what was required. One student remarked, "I must try doing plans that way."

Essential to this process was the ReadRight development of 'guided questioning'. 'Guided questioning' keeps debate in an academic context based on the reading and requires the tutor to use their skills to guide students through using prompts and questions rather than directly intervening to 'lecture'.

## **Atmosphere**

In many ways we sought to work with what we perceive as a public service culture (see analysis) rather than try to change that culture (head-on). We created a relaxed atmosphere that was free from strict time constraints and allowed space to provide intensive support to encourage individual students. Refreshments (drinks and chocolate) were provided and students were very grateful – this seemed to add to their confidence and encouraged our relaxed approach. See video: [http://fitting-in.com/0\\_thebigdebate/pictures/readright.AVI](http://fitting-in.com/0_thebigdebate/pictures/readright.AVI)

## **Process**

Cabral and Tavares (2002, p. 2) suggest that "students must develop techniques for reading, understanding and remembering what they have read."

## **Note Taking**

At the start of ReadRight students used very basic note-taking techniques (such as highlighting or underlining). For these Internet-age students this approach closely resembles the immediacy of 'cut and paste': a short-term technique that fits with the 'Activist Learner' (Honey and Mumford, 1992). This activist approach also fits in with the quick fix solutions that emergency service workers use at critical incidents (discussed in analysis).

No student used the SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review) technique (Appendix Two) at the start of the research; some were persuaded to follow this technique by the end of the research.

### **Small Group Work**

We divided the students up into small (mixed ability) groups to actively encourage development and debate.<sup>1</sup>

- Students were required to write down the results of their small group discussions.
- These written notes then acted as a prompt during feedback/the debate.

The aim was to get students to recognise that their considerable verbal skills could become more academic if they worked from notes (and the reading).

By visiting each of the groups during their discussions it was possible to guide the debate and allow for a more informal opportunity for students to raise queries – it also ensured they stayed on topic.

### **The Debate**

*At all times* we kept the debate in an academic context based on the reading. This was achieved through a process we have called 'guided questioning'. 'Guided questioning' requires the tutor to use their skills to *guide* students through using prompts and questions rather than directly intervening to 'lecture'. All 'relevant' points were put onto the whiteboard. The contents on the whiteboard then became the focus for discussion from which we jointly developed an essay plan.

The debates were always lively. Sometimes tutor involvement was at a minimum (to keep students on focus) and this largely related to debates about current affairs (knife crime, religion, terrorism, policing). When the debate focused on the academic (Weber, Marx, Durkheim) then tutor involvement increased.

### **Data/Evidence Collected Questionnaire**

Each week students were asked to complete a one-page questionnaire. This provided a considerable amount of data that was put into SPSS.

### **Satisfaction**

Some of the answers provided in the questionnaire provided a clear insight to why students attended, what they enjoyed and how they considered the workshops improved their knowledge. However, because those that attended did so voluntarily it might reasonably be expected that most of the answers would be positive – and they were (Appendix Three).

### **How Much Reading Did Students Do?**

In particular we hoped to monitor module by module and week on week

- if students increased their reading;
- the reasons for reading (or not reading).

The answers provided some very complicated data and the results were largely ambiguous. Some students indicated they did not even receive a reading for some modules and therefore did not do one. Often this data was contradicted by another student who indicated that he or she did receive and complete a reading for the same module in the same week.

There did appear to be one trend (supported by qualitative data) that suggested students may have read more for some modules than others.

### **Attendance**

The students attending are of mixed ability; they range from the highest achievers to those who really need help in obtaining higher education skills<sup>2</sup>. Attendance averaged 14 students.

We managed to sustain two workshops a week until week four of the second semester. At this point attendance at the Monday workshop (primarily aimed at first years) reduced to a point where it was not sustainable, and then we only held a workshop on Thursdays. The way first year students stopped coming to the workshops fits with tutor experience that suggests students are distracted during their first year (and that some never recover).

### **Students Failing to Prioritise Academic Agendas**

ReadRight provided students with a real opportunity to develop their learning, and as attendance reduced we raised a question that colleagues often refer to – “Where do students’ priorities lie – paid work, pleasure or University?” Whilst recognising that the cost of University is often offset by taking employment, if a student has an expensive social life and telephone bill then this increases the need for paid work. Juggling these agendas are difficult – perhaps the following data provides examples worth sharing.

### **Interview with Student**

*“For my final year I gave up playing rugby because I realised that there was more to life than getting naked and drinking 15 pints of lager. I came to University to study and I realised that playing for the University team meant I was involved in a whole social situation that took time I should have used for study. So in my final year I gave up playing for the University – I am now scoring firsts.*

*“People know this – it is not like it isn’t known – everyone knows what rugby entails, it’s not like they don’t know – speaking to people this weekend at the rugby reunion they know their sport has affected their results. Everyone knows it. You get dragged into it and you think oh yeah I will be all right. I have seen it with a number of people.*

*“When you come to uni you get given a pack that contains condoms and Rizlas as if it is expected. This is not what I expected! It is as if the University expects you to have fun – sex drugs and rock and roll and you get into that downward spiral. That is what it is. Academic work becomes secondary to people who can’t resist – and that was me in the first and second year. It’s not the cheap booze it’s the culture.”*

### **Social Atmosphere in ReadRight**

There is also the possibility that some students were attracted to the ‘social’ atmosphere during ReadRight:

*“Dave wanted me here and last week was really good fun.”*  
(Jim: First year student)

*“I enjoy the sessions and the information they provide. Enjoyed the topic made a good debate”*  
(Colin: Third year student)

*“I really enjoyed the subject area that was being talked about this week”*  
(Janice: Third year student)

*“[Came] To help with assignment and the research”*  
(Sarah: First year student)

*“Convenient time before football enjoyed last one”*  
(John: Second year student)

The idea that learning can be fun is thought provoking. Would we be legitimate in arguing that a student's first motivation should be to learn or are we missing something that may be relevant to public service students (at least)?

### **Other Students' Views of Why They Attended**

Student's responses in the questionnaires were all positive and this brings no surprises given that their attendance was voluntary. There are over a hundred responses in the following vein (see Appendix Three):

*"Came to get more out of university life and further my education and hope fully improve"*

*"I find these debates interesting and because I hope they will boost my confidence"*

*"To learn more and make the most of university"*

*"I have been to all sessions so far and have really enjoyed them all"*

*"Helpful and will contribute to the assessment"*

*"For interest and to assist my reading and studying skills"*

*"Gain more info for my assignment"*

*"It gives me the chance to express my feelings without the fear of being prosecuted"*

*"To improve my learning abilities and help with assignments because I understood the discussion well and didn't feel nervous about it"*

### **Some More Data to Support Outcomes**

There was a clear acknowledgement from other students that ReadRight contributed to their improved academic performance.

*"ReadRight has been a really positive part of this degree and I have really enjoyed it, in fact it has been the best aspect of the course this year, as I felt really involved and interested in the subjects"*

(Janice: Third year student who scored a first)

*"Very good opportunity to reinforce knowledge. Opportunity for reading that had not been previously explored. Good social atmosphere, informal teaching style encourages student involvement... Other lessons, talked at, copy from books, watch video, take notes – all very ineffective methods for me."*

(Malcolm: Second year student)

Other students tell us they are now reading more and there is some evidence that their levels of debate and marks are improving.

*"These sessions have been highly beneficial to me as a student and at work, as it has widely broadened my knowledge on many concepts, for example, religion, sexism and the functions of the public services. Having this knowledge, I feel that I can apply all that I have learnt to academia and at work. Thank you Dave and Sarah for all your efforts."*

(Raza: Second year student).

*"By providing us new ideas and techniques into reading and analysing, the estimated grade increase means this workshop is definitely worth going to."*

(Tony: Second year student)

*"I find these lessons so interesting, really makes me question different subjects and I love debates, really empowering."*

(Chris: First year student)

However, there are some students who have attended ReadRight regularly yet remain reluctant to read for their core syllabus. For this group of students, we have not succeeded in one intended outcome of the research, which was to socialise them into reading for seminars (and their degree).

### **Feedback in Relation to Reading and Analytical Skills**

There is general agreement amongst the participants that the approach ReadRight has developed is successful in improving their reading and analytical skills. They have also argued that this approach should be used in teaching.

*“Make ReadRight compulsory; is a very useful opportunity for students who struggle to read and understand long texts”*

(Jo: Third year student)

During the Social Science sub committee involving students and staff (25 February, 2009) students spoke in favour of ReadRight.

Kayleigh praised the ReadRight project that she had been involved in. She highlighted that it had been a positive experience, had been extremely helpful with her work and that it had significantly enhanced her academic experience. Dave explained that it was available to all students in the Department and across the University. Jonaide had also found that it had been very beneficial for his assignments.

### **Clarification of Words**

By week two Gordon asked for clarification of any words that he did not understand. Our response was to involve the whole class in developing an answer and frequently no one could actually do this. Once an answer was provided we encouraged the participants to use the word in a sentence.

From this stage onwards students increasingly asked for help to clarify the meanings of words. Again, this suggests that the fellowship provided a space to provide an informal setting where confidence, trust and self-esteem is developed (and where no one considered they were intimidated).

### **Terminology**

As confidence grew, students' language was steered towards more academic terms to articulate their points of view and look for alternative ways of using words. This helped in clarifying colloquialisms and encouraged the use of academic terms.

### **Discussions with Colleagues about Public Service Students' Perceptions.**

Colleagues were asked a number of questions about public service students and their answers are summarised below:

#### **How can students be encouraged to read?**

- Needs to be graduated to lead students from lower to higher level
- A well structured set of seminars
- Do not make it an issue, 'demystify', take a more pragmatic approach – focus on how it can be interesting and advantageous
- Keep it brief, focused and relevant

#### **Public service students' skills**

Good at:

- Knowledge of practice and willingness to contribute to group activities
- Verbal contributions – they tend to have confidence in certain areas or issues that relate to equality and diversity issues and/or their own personal experience
- Oral work
- Critical thinking on issues

Challenged by:

- Evaluation and analysis
- Range of skills, confidence displayed
- Discipline – talking too much
- Reading and preparing for seminars – not paying attention in lectures so they miss important points
- Extensive reference research, writing academically

Predominantly reading and writing were rated as a 'challenge', whereas contributions in seminars or presentations were seen as positives (again this points to the naturalistic decision-making approaches suggested by Flin (1996; Baigent, 2001).

Overall lecturers mention students:

- lack analytical skills
- inability to distinguish between important and unimportant points
- inability to adjust to reading different materials

## **Ethics**

### **Ethical Difficulties – Collegiate Responsibility**

Having gained ethics approval we held an introductory session to explain the purpose of the research, talk about the ethics and obtain participants' written permission.

The remit of the research was wide – to find ways of improving students' reading and analytical skills. Equally, the use of grounded theory as both an analytical tool and method of data collection (in this action research project) meant that there was an anticipation that data would lead to hypotheses that in turn would need to be developed and challenged by searching out further data, hopefully to provide some potential 'answers'. As the research continued, the incoming data provided leads that necessarily needed to be followed up and this provided for real dilemmas.

Each week students completed a questionnaire and this data was put into SPSS. What we did not expect was to find data that suggested students were not set readings. When this happens such evidence needs to be investigated. The simplest way of doing this was to look at the data provided by other students to establish if there was some confusion. There were, however, sometimes compelling arguments from the data that students were not provided with readings on a regular basis. At this point we decided not to investigate further. Our approach is just to make it clear in the report that some students are suggesting there are no readings and hope that *if* this is a problem colleagues will recognise our findings and take the appropriate action.

During the course of this research we also looked at the complexity of the readings being provided. Some of these readings were found to be particularly difficult – allowing for the possibility that *some* students would be so challenged by them as to believe that they were 'impossible' to read. This could be particularly relevant in the first year. Again, we have taken the view that we would mention this and then leave it to colleagues to consider our comments.

During the data collecting we also heard many comments on the way students were taught and again this creates a dilemma. From the comments it became clear that for many students their attachment to the tutor or otherwise could have influenced whether they were prepared to read for *the tutor*. Our response to these students was always to point out that it was in students' best interest to always do the readings and to even consider reading further. We also pointed out that whilst individual teaching methods may not always be to their liking, there were bound to be a variety of teaching methods and that students should recognise the advantage in this.

Our subjectivity in this area is a matter of concern. Much of the research we have done in the past is in the fire service, and there we have always followed up leads (such as those provided above) rigorously. However, working with colleagues presents difficulties we have not expected. Whilst it might be easy to suggest that in such a small research project these be left for another time, we are both aware that this is not the complete answer. This is of concern.

### **Analysis**

When students are given readings to do in a ReadRight workshop they *can* read and identify key points.

Students approach to note taking varied – a small percentage actually annotated the text. Many continued to use highlighters (it may have been a mistake not to put more emphasis on discouraging this and encouraging SQ3R). Had we been given a second year's funding then this would have been a key aim.

Students have all been able to participate in a debate that turns the key point(s) of a reading into an academic argument. They have also been able to help develop essay plans.

We are, however, less clear as to the overall success of the project in encouraging students to read for their degree. Despite enjoying the workshops (students voted with their feet by attending these voluntary late afternoon sessions), outside of ReadRight we are also involved in teaching and assessment. From this perspective we are able to recognise who is and who is not getting the message about the importance of reading for their degree.

### **Cultures**

Many of the observations made during this research point towards a paradox. At the very core of the public service degree is an attempt to provide a critical reflection on the uniformed public services. Much of this critique is about how emergency service workers (culture) marginalise academic knowledge. Equally, the degree focuses on how informal cultures act to conservatively resist change. At the end of the research we find ourselves asking a question about the extent that public service students (who come to us with a resistance to reading) mirror the attitudes of the informal culture in public services.

It is argued (Baigent, 2001) that emergency service workers have little regard for anything academic, preferring instead their hands-on skills that are passed down homosocially (Lipman-Blumen, 1976) from generation to generation. Despite a large number of the participants 'enjoying' ReadRight, many continue to resist reading as a form of preparation for seminars. ReadRight sought to encourage writing, but for many students this only occurred during the hands-on approach in the classroom during ReadRight. In some ways, the ReadRight approach tried to use what is already known about emergency workers to educate these students. There is one difference between our students and emergency workers and that is the source of knowledge is academic rather than practical in a firefighting/policing sense. There is more research needed here and the opportunity to continue this year would have been useful.

### **Trying So Hard**

An authentic eagerness to do better shown by some students often turns to despondency when they realise that they do not have the tools to improve their writing at this late stage in their educational career.

We ask the question 'If when looking at some students' work tutors feel overwhelmed by how to encourage yet correct, how much worse must it be for the students whose earlier education appears to have given them an award (to enter) but not the skills to succeed in Higher Education?'

### **Difficulties with English**

An area that also needs to be explored and researched further concerns the needs of those students who speak two or more languages and who came from ethnic minority backgrounds.



Many of these students indicate a real desire and determination to succeed. Nonetheless, many of them may have individual learning needs that create barriers to more effective outputs and assignment results (even success).

We also ask how much we can do to help those students for whom academic English is not a traditional way of speaking or writing? This appears as a far wider group than those from a minority ethnic background. Class appears as a significant factor here. Is it too late when these students arrive on a foundation degree, or can we level the playing field to get them to access academic language?

In part it is often difficult to recognise (given some students' limited ability to read and write in any academic sense) how they have got this far in the education system. Currently, the degree has a provision for these students to take modules on advanced English, but few respond to this opportunity.

Putting aside the responsibilities of earlier failings, we may need to consider Anglia Ruskin's response. From one view these students' difficulties become our responsibility when we accept them onto a foundation degree. The staff who teach public service students recognise this problem and it is possible that our reaction may just be too traditional.

One response from a colleague perhaps sums up the dilemma, 'If they can't read and write according to our standards then they shouldn't be here.' The validity of this argument is a matter of debate. Nonetheless, when we accept qualifications that suggest students should be at least prepared for higher education then this is a real dilemma for the University.

The students we work with have obvious intellect. They also have a clear goal – to join the emergency services. However, many lack the formal skills necessary to gain fully from the education they attend University to get. It may be that the University has to take a harder line in the classroom with these students – ReadRight has provided an opportunity to develop a method of teaching that our research suggests can work with mixed ability students and we refer to that below.

## **Learning and Skills Module**

One part of the fellowship was to consider the current Learning and Skills module.

Recognising that foundation degrees bring in a mixed range of ability we believe:

- Student retention would improve if students were provided with a realistic bridge between an earlier education that on some occasions fails to provide the skills necessary to read and write in accordance with higher education requirements.
- There really is the need for an introductory module that has a main purpose to encourage students to read, (analyse and write).
- There may be some purpose in developing a learning and skills module that follows the ReadRight approach – to introduce a subject through reading and then guide the debate by encouraging learning skills rather than directly approaching the topic through a traditional lecture.
- ReadRight's approach worked equally as well with students who scored firsts as those who were the original aim of the fellowship.
- ReadRight's approach was found to work equally successfully for the weeks when the topic was essay writing and presentation skills as it did for more traditional core topics.
- That the learning and skills module should be delivered by a University-wide team who have specialist skills in making reading relevant for students.

It remains our belief that the Learning and Skills module should be retained and developed along the seven-point plan suggested below (at least on the public service degree).

## **Outcomes**

Cabral and Tavares (2002) suggest that there is a need for lecturers to develop specific strategies to give effective feedback and intensive support. The fellowship gave us the space and time to concentrate on this without affecting timetabled teaching.

The ReadRight seven-point plan (below) developed in this fellowship provides an approach where students learnt as much about the topic as they may have done in a traditional lecture. The plan also had the added value of providing a 'fun' environment, where taking part in a debate focuses students' analytical skills to provide 'deep learning'.

This plan works with a mixed ability group where 'everybody' appears to gain.

## **Seven-Point Plan**

ReadRight has developed a seven-point plan that can be utilised and refined as a systematic process of development:

Students in the classroom environment:

1. Read small pieces of text on the topic for the week.
2. Are required to take notes relating to the main points and arguments in the text.
3. Feed back their notations to their peers in small groups and discuss the validity and reliability of the source and the arguments presented. Each student summarises their group's thoughts in writing.
4. Output of the group work is then fed back to the whole workshop.

Tutor:

5. 'Guided questioning' is an approach developed in ReadRight whereby the tutor actively facilitates the direction that students take. It is used to encourage students to keep discussion on track within academic confines, ground data to academic debates and maintain focus. The tutor's skills in using 'guided questioning' to focus on key issues without directly lecturing is key.
6. The main points are transferred onto the whiteboard (a sort of mind map) to clarify varying perspectives. This 'map' then provides the platform to effect analysis and critique aimed at developing higher order thinking skills.
7. The debate (again heavily guided to keep the topic and focus on the reading rather than the anecdotal) then takes place and answers are annotated on the whiteboard in such a way as to provide an essay plan for the week's topic.

## **The Plan in Action – The Carrot-Flavoured Stick**

There is some evidence that the level of choice the University provides to non-traditional students may be too liberal for some public service students. We have experimented with a more authoritarian approach by making reading compulsory in ReadRight, and by rigorously maintaining a free fall debate within academic confines and a more informal atmosphere.

During teaching on the third year module 'The Job Three' we were faced with a series of complaints by students who considered that their education was being hampered by the students in the class who did not read in preparation for seminars. First we established that at least 50% of students were failing to read in preparation for their seminars. As this was late in

the research we broke from our brief and used the ReadRight approach in four formal lessons (weeks six to ten).

Effectively, we told the students that we were going to run four two-hour workshops in place of their traditional lecture/seminar. We set the students a reading and told them that if they did not read and note the readings prior to the lesson then they should consider if they should attend (as the whole two-hour session was to be a discussion on the text).

Over these four weeks we followed points two to seven from the ReadRight plan. Overnight, students started to read in preparation for the seminar. In addition, students commented on how useful it was to be 'forced' to read.

*"Get us to read!! Dave's idea if you don't do the reading you don't take part in the lecture worked!!*

(Sue: Third year student)

Although a bit late in their academic career we believe this is a very positive result.

We would recommend for students on the public service degree:

- Students experience the ReadRight approach (1-7) in their first semester (perhaps alternate weeks).
- In the second and subsequent semesters the approach is adjusted to one that requires students to read before attending a two hour workshop, as used in the example above of the plan in action (perhaps again in alternate weeks).
- That this research needs to be continued.

## Notes

1 We were fortunate in having some motivated third year students who considerably helped in this area.

2 At one end of the scale was the student who would not accept the validity of academic data. Not unlike many of the emergency workers we interview, he believed in hands-on experience and could not accept that academic theory was based on real life. This student stopped attending and subsequently left the University. At the other end of the scale were some students from the third year who attended both sessions each week – they recognised the advantages of attending, and whilst ReadRight may not be able to claim responsibility, their marks did increase in their third year.

## Appendices

### Appendix One

The intended outcomes of this research are to:

- make reading relevant to Public Service Foundation Degree (FdA) students
  - strategy used worked in the workshop – students participated centering their learning around reading
    - use of collective feedback to encourage participation and build on confidence
    - informality of the sessions encouraged students to participate – drinks and sweets – laid back atmosphere
  - questionnaires were used for the whole of the first semester to heighten participants' awareness of what they were doing or not doing by placing a weekly emphasis on their reading patterns
    - the data suggested that students' reading patterns might vary between modules but showed no sign of improving

- encourage students to break away from an 'activist' mode of learning, and to increase their (academic) critical skills and their employability in the 'modernising' public services
  - Making them read
  - Making them make notes – many used highlighters rather than made physical notes
  - Making them discuss
  - Making them feed back on the actual reading
- provide a framework for improving teaching, learning and assessment on the Public Service degree
- subsequently develop the FdA Learning and Skills module
  - Require reading in the class and developing in the class and then writing?
- contribute to the broader debate about widening participation at our University through dissemination via Foundation Degrees Forward, INSPIRE's annual Learning and Teaching conference and journal articles

## Appendix Two

Students were consistently encouraged to use SQ3R annotating techniques to:

- promote writing
- refine the art of paraphrasing
- encourage analysis and 'deep learning'
- improve accessibility to information at a later date for assignments

In particular we encouraged students to form questions out of the paragraphs they read.

- This took some practice!

## Appendix Three: Questionnaire Thursday

Who are you? .....

Why did you come to today's session?  
.....

How many minutes reading have you done this week?

For pleasure, in hours				
What did you read?				
Module	Was there a reading?	Did you do it?	How many minutes did it take?	Why did you do the reading or why not?
Job 2				
Equality				
Enforcers				
Work-Based Learning (WBL)				

How much of today's reading did you understand?

All of it	Most of it	Some of it	Very little	Not at all
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How interesting were the readings?

Very interesting	Interesting	Some parts were	Not very	Not at all
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Any comments on the readings

By the end of the session had your understanding of the reading become clearer?

Very Clear	Clearer	Still unclear
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How confident were you about contributing to the debate?

Very confident	Reasonably	Confident	Not very	Not at all
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Could you explain why this was

Tell us about anything you learnt in this week's session

How would you rate this session?

Very useful	Useful	Neither one nor the other	Not very useful	A waste of time
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What would you like to debate next week?

Any other comments?

Thanks

### Appendix Four

#### Why did you come?

1. I find these debates interesting and because I hope they will boost my confidence
2. I decided to come tonight because I had always intended to and when I found out it was on policing
3. I was looking forward to it more
4. To learn more facts and arguments to help me with this course
5. Thought it would help with my assignment
6. Because I like the lesson
7. Gain knowledge
8. Greater knowledge
9. I like the debate
10. To better my PowerPoint skills
11. To learn about PowerPoint presentations, to learn more
12. To learn more and get tips on assignments
13. To learn more and make the most of University.
14. To learn about presentations. I came because it might be interesting. I was in uni and it could help with the course. Useful for essay? Because I can and haven't for two weeks. To hopefully help me in my studies/improve my reading/use this time of learning that you have kindly given us
15. Join in the research
16. Help with future work hopefully
17. To help with assignment and the research
18. To learn with assignment, join in the research
19. To learn
20. Might help with presentations for an assignment – to be in the research
21. Enjoy lively debate
22. Interested in topic
23. Insight into public service norms, rules and values
24. Related to public services
25. Related to subject
26. First time and I wanted to get some background knowledge
27. Have a presentation to do soon. Came to get more out of university life and further my education and hopefully improve my...
28. To learn about the fire service and to improve my education
29. To learn how religion affects public services, learn about n, r, v (norms rules values) – get info on how to use these in the assignment
30. This session will come to help me with the assignment

31. To learn more. Help with PowerPoint. I have been to all sessions so far and have really enjoyed them all. Because I find them interesting
32. Have been to most of the other sessions and I found them useful
33. Because I really enjoy these lessons. They are my favourite lessons at uni
34. Dave wanted me here and last week was really good fun
35. It gives me the chance to express my feeling without the fear of being prosecuted
36. Because I'm interested. I went to have greater knowledge in my subject
37. Session is going to provide us with help for the assignment
38. To gain a better understanding about the norms and values in public services
39. It was recommended that I came
40. For interest and to help extend my knowledge
41. Invited/education/planned/socialise with other year groups
42. I'm here to be educated
43. Helpful and will contribute to the assessment
44. Interesting/meet other students
45. Some questions to ask
46. How to overcome things that make me anxious
47. I enjoy the sessions and the information they provide
48. For the debate and to learn about a new topic. To get more knowledge on the topic
49. To learn how to lay out a PowerPoint
50. To further my knowledge from Tuesday's session
51. To learn and develop my knowledge
52. For info on essay writing. Interested/learn more about topic
53. Share ideas with other years' groups, better use of and understanding of academic books. Topic is same as my dissertation
54. To extend my knowledge on norms, rules and values
55. To learn more off other people and I'm interested to be there
56. Interest, reasons: help with reading, etc
57. For interest and learning experience
58. For interest and to assist my reading and studying skills
59. For interest reasons and to aid my studies
60. Interest reasons and to gain
61. Because I want to aid my learning and I find it interesting
62. To improve my presentation skills
63. I believed it would help me with reading and extracting the necessary information (and the drink)
64. I have found them to be interesting and I hope they will be beneficial to me
65. I thought the debate would be interesting
66. Because I have concerns over presentations
67. Convenient time before football enjoyed last one Related to job 3 module!
68. Need to improve skills
69. To get help
70. For the diet coke and KitKats, cause Dave's helpful
71. I wanted to conform with my peers
72. Because I want to learn, improving my skills
73. For my assignment benefit
74. For assignment support
75. Help with assignments
76. Gain more info for my assignment
77. Gain more information
78. To help me on my coursework assignment
79. To gain more skills. Interesting topic
80. Very interesting topic
81. Assignment work
82. Computers are interesting
83. Because I am interested in the topic of the military and want to improve my grade
84. To gain knowledge
85. Increase my knowledge to gain better mark
86. To help me with uni work
87. Boredom, learn – free food helps

88. To discuss today's topic
89. I found the topic interesting
90. I am interested in the topic
91. To gain more knowledge for my assignment
92. To learn how to make great presentations
93. I would like the job 2 seminars to be two hours long as one hour is not long enough to cover the debate fully
94. For help with PowerPoints
95. To help with progress in the course. Because Dave encouraged us to
96. To improve my academic ability and to help one's research
97. To improve my understanding of my degree and to support Dr Baigent's research project
98. Help with assignments
99. To obtain more reading guidance
100. Imperative to learn and study
101. To learn and extend my reading skills
102. To learn more and build on existing skills
103. To gain more knowledge so that I can do my essay on modernisation
104. To gain more knowledge on the specific module
105. The topic interests me
106. To gain extra knowledge and share views on religion
107. It gives me the chance to express my feelings without the fear of being persecuted
108. Boredom
109. 'Cause it will be interesting
110. Subject is good
111. Gain knowledge
112. The possibility of increasing my overall grade
113. To understand modernisation better
114. To help with the course. Help assignment
115. To improve my learning abilities and help with assignments
116. Because it links in with my current assignment
117. To improve my learning and give me a greater understanding of my task in the job 2 and mostly to help Dave with his research
118. To see what it is all about
119. Seems interesting

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