Exploring Pedagogic and Practical Intersections of Academic Writing Support for Faculty in Higher Education.

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Abstract.

This is a case study of Faculty perceptions of the nature and effectiveness of academic writing provision and practice in a university in Ireland. It discusses the pedagogical approach adopted by a pan-university initiative. The focus of this case study is a Professional Development module for Faculty designed with a dual purpose - to support them to develop their own professional writing for publication, and to enable them to use the same strategies to support and reinforce their students' academic writing. The research design used a qualitative approach to gather three forms of data for capturing the perception of Faculty: a survey (n=30) and a Faculty focus group (n=6).Findings indicate that Faculty holds clear perceptions about the nature and effectiveness of academic writing support that is most of use to their own practice: the opportunity for critical (reflective) thinking, reading and writing, using technologies and strategies to support the writing process such as audio feedback and peer review, formative feedback on article structure and development, and supports on the literature review. The results help validate, consolidate and support the current approach and inform the future role of writing support within the institution.

Keywords: Affective Domain; Critical Thinking; Faculty Professional Development; Feedback; Pedagogy; Writing Instruction.

1.   Introduction.

This research was conducted in a higher education institution (HEI) in Ireland in 2016-18, and is joining the broader pedagogical and scholarly discussion on the focus and challenges of Professional Development (PD) modules and academic writing centres in supporting and

sustaining the development of academic writing for Faculty and students respectively. We have chosen to present the research as two connected case studies but only the faculty-facing perspective is reported here – the second case study which will be published in a later AISHE-J issue, highlights the student-facing approach. There are strong inter-related dimensions across both case studies. This dual format will allow readers to engage with the specific case study that interests them most or to read both and better understand how the two strands of the Academic Writing Centre (AWC) and the Academic Writing & Publishing module (AWP) worked together.

A study by Ntereke & Ramoroka (2015) was an important influence on this research, due to its dual focus on perceptions of Faculty and students. This paper brings insight into the perceptions about academic writing held by those who engage in the writing process in HEIs. The institutional support that are explored are a Professional Development (PD) module for Faculty and postgraduate students entitled '*Academic Writing and Publishing*' (AWP), which is the focus of this case study.

Ntereke & Ramoroka (2015) have previously reported that effective academic writing skills are a requirement for success in higher education (HE) because academic disciplines use them as a form of assessment, and have drawn on a number of studies to support this, including Hyland (2011) and Zhu (2004). Taking this on board, regardless of whether it happens in class or at the writing centre, academic writing support should take into account students' views on how effective are the activities and instruction they receive.

Faculty across disciplines have a concern that their students' writing skills are not meeting generic academic writing expectations. As a result, we wanted to explore Faculty perceptions on the in-class instruction they provide to students and to do so, it was important to establish the Faculty experience of the PD module as its purpose was to positively affect Faculty's own academic writing practices and subsequently on its potential for supporting their students' writing.

Thus, while there were two research objectives identified for the dual study, this particular case study presents the findings only from the Faculty PD module:

- How are initial approaches to academic writing support provision being perceived by Faculty in an Irish HEI, and what support strategies are preferred in academic writing?

2.   Context and Rationale.

The context for the work is a HEI in Ireland (Technological University Dublin) with 22,000 students and over 1000 Faculty. Two organizational units play a key role in supporting academic writing at Institute level: the Academic Writing Centre (AWC) and the central Learning and Teaching Unit. The central Learning and Teaching Unit provides a range of Faculty modules at postgraduate level focusing on learning, teaching, and assessment. Collaboration between the two units has been a feature since the AWC's inception. This productive collaboration has translated into a range of activities such as workshops, development of resources and materials as well as research projects.

The setting and nature of the academic writing support for Faculty took the form of a semester-long module with dedicated instruction and specified blended learning tasks. This module is part of the Institution's support for early and mid-career academics in their role and is particularly useful to early career academics as Sword (2017) argues that new academics can be left to sink or swim when navigating the choppy waters of learning scholarly writing. Her advice on providing a more formal, research-informed, practice-focused, interdisciplinary iterative, communal approach for new and experienced academics reinforces the AWP module's approach. She reported from a research project with more than 1,300 academics, PhD students and other researchers from across the disciplines that successful writing would equip early career and experienced academics alike with the confidence and courage to question received knowledge, push back against disciplinary conventions, and remain resilient in the face of criticism and rejection in the publication process.

There was a clear rationale for undertaking this study - to inform the review of the AWP module and thus provide future participants with the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding on the academic writing issues that affect their academic peers and students (dual perspective). Clarence (2011) argued that there is a gap between what Faculty and tutors think students need to do to develop as competent writers and thinkers, and what these Faculty are doing to help students achieve this goal.

A Writing Centre, focused as it can be on holistic student writing development, can reach out to Faculty to begin to close the gap, and grow from knowledge to practice through collaboration and joint production of research and scholarship. Such a partnership between a Writing Centre and disciplinary Faculty, in this instance via the central Learning and Teaching Unit's mediation,

is needed to ensure that student writing development is more holistic, better supported, and more sustainable in the long term. After all, writing development is an '*institutional*' issue (Lea & Street, 1998) or should at least be considered thus as the institution's rules and regulations shape the conventions and boundaries of the writing practices. This current study is a first step towards such a partnership in this Irish HEI.

3.   Bridging Literatures.

This study aims to highlight writing development by considering Faculty's views on perceptions of effectiveness of the pedagogic approach and writing activities they engaged with. While an earlier study by Lea & Street (2006) examined the contrasting expectations and interpretations of Faculty and students regarding undergraduate students' written assignments, this current research continues the discussion on the nature of writing practices from the Faculty perspective.

There were three intersecting areas of literature explored to support this research, and the latter two are presented in this Faculty-focused case study:

- In order to investigate the current nature of student-facing support in academic writing provision, the tutoring approach and self-efficacy were explored.

- Complementing this is an exploration of Faculty needs, with a particular focus on the effectiveness of current PD opportunities in academic writing provided for them.

- An exploration on reflection and feedback for writing, and in particular how to best raise awareness among both students and Faculty about writing practices.

3.1 Faculty-facing Support: Professional Development in Academic Writing.

This case study involves a PD module for academic writing and publishing. A study by Ellis, Taylor & Drury (2007) reports that instructors need to be aware of students' perceptions about writing so that they can effectively support them during their writing process. Therefore, it was useful to explore current and previous literature which examined Faculty's attitudes and beliefs, self-reported or observed, regarding the development of their students' writing competence, both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. In particular, Ntereke & Ramoroka's (2015) work provided insights that students and Faculty held different perceptions about the

effectiveness of the academic writing activities and instruction.

There is a shared sense of recognition by students and Faculty for good communication skills both while studying for a degree and in the professions after graduation. As a result, student academic writing continues to be at the centre of teaching and learning in HE, but arguably is often an invisible dimension of the curriculum. Many useful texts exist which are aimed at Faculty who wish to help undergraduates improve their academic writing in both discipline-specific and writing/study skills contexts, e.g. Coffin *et al.* (2003). Several of these resources offer practical advice about how academic writing can be taught, with suggestions meant for Faculty to implement as part of their subject teaching. Useful insights are provided in a study by French (2011) which focused on the different ways Faculty had tried to support students' writing development as well as the extent to which they felt responsible for developing writing as part of their specific subject teaching. Many of those in the study identified a lack of knowledge and confidence about how to develop their students' writing, and the work recommended adopting a coherent and systematic writing development programme for Faculty.

In this vein, the remit of the central Learning and Teaching Unit is to support the institution's Faculty in all areas of PD. It was important to consider how the AWP module fitted in with the overall provision of support for Faculty to develop their teaching practice. The general principles of PD were borne in mind when the module was designed - of keeping abreast of new knowledge, techniques and developments related to Faculty roles; individual participants are responsible for determining what they need to learn; and PD is a continuing process of assessment, analysis, action, and review. Table 1 (overleaf) gives an orientation of the module where participants experience writing strategies, technologies, key pedagogies and theories. It illustrates the range of learning theories explored in the AWP module and associated in-class activities and supporting technologies to develop writing strategies.

The AWP module has an active and interactive structure - participants are continuously writing, sharing, critiquing, and discussing their work in each class. At the end of the module, each participant has a "*product*" (a journal paper), which can have a positive impact on their own students, and which they can share with other teachers in their School. Faculty do not often have time to think intensely about or to truly scrutinize their practice, and providing them with this PD opportunity to do so is important. In the module delivery, traditional strategies such as disciplinary writing seminars to improve interactions among participants are blended with an exploration of these innovative pedagogical approaches to integrating writing to professional

practice.

Table 1: AWP Module Learning Theory and Related Activities.

Learning Theory	Activities/Writing
Social Constructivist	• Establishing online dialogue between participants from different disciplines who are reading the same journal articles on writing strategies. • Helping novice writers by pairing them with expert reading/writing 'buddies', later evolving into a critical friend.
Constructivist	• Encouraging them to articulate and explore commonalities and differences across a range of writing experiences. • Deepen their understanding by observing synergies and distinctions among related module writing concepts and practices.
Cognitivist	• Fostering inquiry and reflection in ways that broaden knowledge about writing practices (while recognising and appreciating disciplinary distinctions), and providing the opportunity to establish linkages across the various disciplinary divides.
Self-efficacy: Social Learning theory	• Supporting them in analysing texts by encouraging them to imagine a dialogue taking place between authors and building confidence in for them to join this scholarly conversation.

One of the most useful aspects of the module delivery is modelling best practice - the module tutors aim to use recognised best practice strategies and technologies, and one of the most popular has been the use of audio and screen-casting to give feedback on writing and encourage reflection on the feedback. While written feedback remains valuable on the module, allowing the participants to directly experience other forms such as audio feedback is important. Carless (2006) has argued that feedback is central to the development of effective learning, yet is comparatively under-researched. He examined the notion of written feedback on assignments and argued that this feedback process is more complex than is sometimes acknowledged. Although it is recognized that feedback on student essays can come in different forms which inter-relate in complex ways, Pitt & Norton (2017) in their study with undergraduate students encouraged them to reflect on their perceptions of feedback written on marked assignments. The AWP module in this current study embraced these learning technologies to provide feedback to the participants on their writing.

In relation to encouraging reflection on feedback, the primary trend within the existing literature is to emphasize the failure of students to understand teachers' comments on their written work, an issue which was pointed out in the undergraduate context by Street & Lea (2000). The study indicated that typical feedback discourse (e.g. references to structure and argument) tended to be 'rather elusive' to students. Further studies (Wahyuni, 2017) flag a concern that students are

not receiving the kinds of feedback that will help them improve their writing. Figure 1 shows the design of the AWP module, showing the underpinning philosophy, based on the triad of writing competencies, skills and values, and the three contexts that are considered in all the writing strategies delivered on the module: pedagogic, research and professional.

Figure 1: AWP module design – aligning participant learning needs with module philosophy.
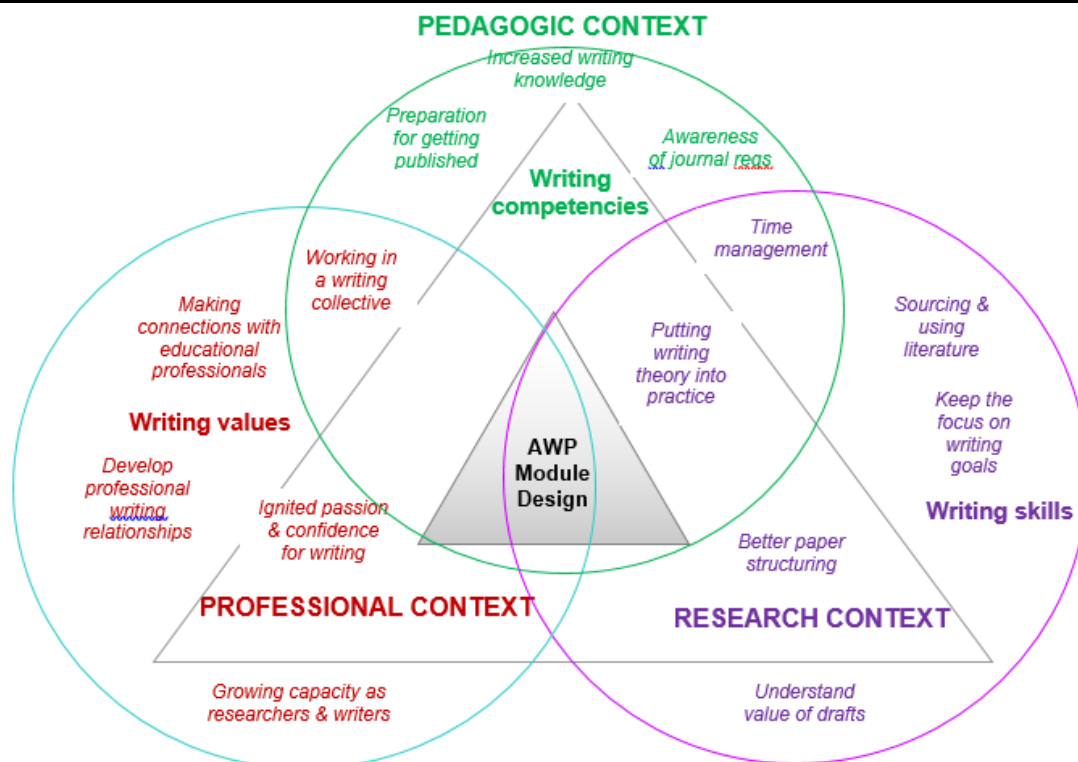

Figure 1: AWP module design - aligning participant learning needs with module philosophy

4.   Methodology.

The research design can be characterised as qualitative, with data collected via a cross sectional survey of Faculty based on purposeful sampling on their perception and beliefs about academic writing support. An online survey was used to explore the Faculty perception of the effectiveness of activities and instruction given in the AWP module. Additionally, Faculty participated in a focus group session to gain more depth on their perceptions on academic writing support.

In this case study, we present findings from this institute-wide evaluation of Faculty perceptions and examine trends and patterns as well as contradictions in the data. The sets of data in this

case study (Faculty survey and focus group interview) are all directed at the same topic, and we are using these sets of data to explore the research objectives. As part of the ethical dimension to this study, we consulted BERA guidelines (2011) and all participants' permissions had been obtained through statements of informed consent. This was so that they understood the process in which they were to be engaged, including why their participation was necessary, how it would be used, how and to whom it would be reported, and by signing, they indicated their agreement to participation without any duress prior to the research getting underway. This research project complied with the Institution's guidelines and standards for ethical research and was approved by the Institution's Research Ethical Committee on 23rd June 2016 (Ethical Clearance reference is 16-42).

4.1 Findings, Analysis and Discussion of the Faculty Perspective.

Within the two-week period for data collection in 2016, there were 30 full responses to the faculty/postgraduate survey, from the 45 invitations issued; a focus group interview was subsequently held with 6 Faculty who completed the AWP module.

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was employed to analyse responses and to generate themes in relation to the initial approaches to academic writing support provision being perceived by students and Faculty in an Irish HEI, and what support strategies do students and Faculty prefer in academic writing. A number of common themes emerged across the survey and focus group: motivations for engagement with AW supports; most valuable writing strategies; and common perspectives on AW support provision.

4.2 Faculty Profile and Motivations.

The Faculty survey helped to establish some profile information about the participants undertaking the AWP module (Table 2). Respondents were asked the year in which they completed the module; it was important to explore the length of time elapsed since module completion and potential impact on practice of the academic writing and publishing strategies developed during the AWP module.

Table 2: Faculty Profile in the Study.

2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
10	3	6	3	1	2	2	3

Faculty (and PG students) belonged to a wide range of subject disciplines:

Science (2); Engineering (2); Business administration; Electronics; English as a second language; Design; Accounting; HRM; Architecture (2); Marketing; Strategic Management; Computer Science; Writing, Communications, Career Development; Physics; Supply Chain Management; Business (3); Geomatics; Law; Visual Merchandising and Display; Optometry; Design for Animation; Video Game Programming; Academic English; Civil/Structural Engineering.

Faculty alone reported on the duration of their teaching experience in higher education. It ranged from 25 years (1); 15-20 years (8); 10 years (8); 1-5 years (12); one month (1).

From Faculty's perspectives, career progression was the leading motivation for undertaking the module (60%) – Table 3. This is revealing in terms of the current drive nationally in Ireland for a professional development framework for teachers to support Faculty mobility across their careers (National Forum, 2016). An interest in developing new writing strategies was identified by 43% of the respondents. Increasing their own publication record (37%) and supporting students' writing (33%) were also identified as a motivating factor for participation.

Table 3: Faculty Motivations for Undertaking CPD in Academic Writing and Publishing.

Career progression	Increasing your publication record	Interest in developing new writing strategies	Supporting your students' writing	Other (Please Specify)	Responses
18 (60%)	11 (37%)	13 (43%)	10 (33%)	8 (27%)	30

Eight respondents indicated other motives:

These mainly centered on the fact that the module was taken as part of an accredited MA in Higher Education programme (5); *In preparation for doctoral research; Learning how to write academically; Learning how to write with academic purpose.*

Specific comments from those who were fully satisfied with the outcome of the module show the range of immediate impacts from the module, with a strong emphasis emerging on the

affective domain and achieving increased confidence in the writing and publishing processes:

Table 4: Immediate impacts reported from the AWP Module.

Improved confidence in writing and publishing (tapping into the affective domain) [42/45 responses reported this]	*Helped to motivate my writing as I found it very difficult to get going prior to the module. I also felt enablement, as had improved confidence in my writing ability.* *Met my expectations above and beyond what I was hoping for; have been in retail and management all my career, and never believed I had the mindset, capabilities or confidence to achieve writing an academic paper…scaffolding and strategies explored made all the difference.*
Deeper understanding [38/45 responses reported this]	*Had a far greater understanding of what was required and how to approach an academic writing task. Previously my writing experience was limited and had been uncomfortable approaching it, now am much more at ease with writing.* *It was about enablement and depth - was encouraged to aim for quality writing and know that it was within everyone on the module to achieve this.*
Writing skills development [33/45 responses reported this]	*As I had come from industry my writing had become report-like and supervising students' writing made me realise I needed to learn academic writing styles and structure.*
Merging theory and practice [27/45 responses reported this]	*Enjoyed and benefited from the use of academic language by all the lecturers.* *It is very hard to explain what a complete novice writer I was, how much support I needed from the basics onwards, and how much the module provided knowledge and theory on writing as well as excitement trying it in practice; this gave me the impetus and ability to discuss writing with fellow academics.*

In their study, Palmquist & Young (1992) had discussed writing apprehension being related to a number of factors that are not fully understood. Further work added to the knowledge base about students' lack of confidence in writing. Over several decades, practical strategies have been put forward to help build confidence in writing: from Maguire's (1989) general work to more specific recent offerings in supporting writing with doctoral students (Kamler & Thomson, 2016). Having a focus on the affective domain (emotion and feelings about writing) in this module undoubtedly pays dividends for the participants; placing an emphasis on exploring their motivation for writing, self-efficacy, and confidence-building was important (McLeod, 1991; Bruning & Horn, 2000; Lavelle, 2006; Carter, 2007). Reporting that the social and emotional dimensions of academic writing are less frequently addressed, Sword (2017) poses useful questions: For whom do we write, and why? How is our writing supported by the various communities we belong to, and how might we better support the writing of others? How can we learn to overcome inhibiting

negative feelings of anxiety, frustration and fear, and to draw strength from positive feelings such as passion, pleasure and pride? However, equally, taking time to deconstruct the cognitive and technical domain in academic writing support through in-class discussion was useful (Benton *et al.*, 1984).

Self-efficacy refers to our own belief in our ability to do something, such as write a good essay or to paraphrase material effectively. Self-efficacy was developed as a construct by Bandura (1977) and is one of the most important constructs in contemporary psychology (Maguire, Everitt Reynolds & Delahunt, 2013). Two decades of research on the influence of self-efficacy beliefs in academic functioning have strengthened Bandura's claim that self-efficacy beliefs play an influential role in human agency. Consequently, an important pedagogical implication to emerge from these findings is that teachers would do well to take seriously their share of responsibility in nurturing the self-beliefs of their students, for it is clear that these self-beliefs can have beneficial or destructive influences (Pajares, 2003). This is relevant to the findings of our study; the interview had asked: *How do you currently support your students to develop in their academic writing within your discipline?* Faculty who completed the AWP module were able to extrapolate from their own experience as participants on the module, and appreciate the support received in relation to confidence-building and in turn, include it in their pedagogical approach with their own students.

4.3 Faculty's most valuable writing strategies.

Participants were asked questions that required them to reflect on the writing strategies they explored as part of the AWP module to support them in writing the journal paper and evaluate their usefulness in helping them to produce a publishable paper. Valuable micro-activities they engaged in included paraphrasing and summarising, paragraph writing, integrating sources, writing a reference list, topic analysis and writing an outline. AWP participants' survey opinions on the main activities they experienced were associated with the module themes of critical thinking, reading and writing, and technologies and strategies to support the writing process such as audio feedback and peer review.

Table 4 shows the interview responses on the most valuable perceived writing strategies were those associated with formative feedback on article structure and development, the literature review, and the opportunity for critical (reflective) thinking. Yancey (1998, p.6) suggests that "*reflection, then, is the dialectical process by which we develop and achieve, first, specific goals*

for learning; second, strategies for reaching those goals; and third, means of determining whether or not we have met those goals". The approach to giving feedback was constructive, meaningful, and specific to the task in hand. Perceptions from Faculty were that feedback aids in becoming reflective about their writing processes, about the writing task itself, and about their current competence.

The AWP semester-long module also offers Faculty ample opportunities for reflection. Bergman (2016) has reported on how a group of university teachers from different disciplines reflected on and gradually extended their knowledge about how to support their own and their students' academic literacy development. One of the phases they discussed, '*exchange of experiences and knowledge*', is similar to the sharing of strategies on the AWP module via blended and collaborative approaches such as peer review (Klucevsek*, 2016*) and reflective discourse and feedback on critical thinking (Carless, 2013).

Table 5: Faculty's most valuable perceived writing strategies.

Importance of formative feedback	• *Inspired me to take on a PhD and has improved my own feedback to students to support their written dissertations.* • *Got powerful formative feedback and learned how to do self-reflection.* • *Reinforces how quality feedback impacts on learning and caused me to change my approach to writing a paper.*
Technologies in the formative feedback process	• *Receiving feedback from the audio and screencasting apps during the writing process developed my critical thinking as it challenged me to think laterally.* • *Have used audio feedback as it is a great way to connect without being present…it shows the tutor has an interest in the student and has put in effort for the student to improve; it was a great experience and I was keen to use it myself as many of my students have reading difficulties.*
Reflecting on preferred writing strategies to bring into teaching practice	• *Analysis of high volumes of <u>literature</u> has become more efficient, synopsizing concepts and content is more accurate, and demonstrating/imparting the importance of structure has been elevated in my priorities when writing and guiding my students.* • *<u>Critical thinking</u> helped me tremendously in my writing… have supported my students to understand the need of planning for writing and to think critically in the process. I now have the strategies to teach simple writing tasks with undergraduates moving from 1st-4th year.* • *<u>Online journal club</u> is a worthwhile activity to help with group thinking and eLearning as it can focus minds that may otherwise drift.* • *When supervising students, I discuss <u>close reading</u> and <u>developing argument</u> - this provides a structure to feedback. So as a Thesis Supervisor, am now in a stronger position to assist my students in writing process and techniques.* • *As a young academic, had numerous negative experiences with <u>peer review</u> which had an impact on my confidence; the intelligent, thoughtful approach…went a long way towards rectifying this.*

4.4 Faculty perspectives on AW Support Provision.

In interpreting the data collected for Faculty in relation to the nature of the support they received, it was revealed that there is an important emotional component involved. This emotional support and raising awareness of the affective domain helps Faculty traverse this new terrain and build their confidence and resilience to face up to the challenges of completing a written assignment in the AWP module. Affective attributes identified were: enabling, student-centredness, empowering, motivation, dealing with uncertainty, encouraging, peer support, scaffolding, formative feedback, self-reflection. Findings from Pitt & Norton (2017) suggest that emotional reactions play a significant part in determining how learners will act on the feedback they receive, and they introduce the concept of '*emotional backwash'*.

Faculty comment on the importance of strengthening their confidence, the need to be reassured. Confidence needs to be bolstered, and Faculty can thrive when they see that an expert (a fellow Faculty member in the AWP module), believes in them as writers and thinkers. Provision of positive affirmation about their ability to write, to learn to write, or to complete the writing task is important to Faculty. This positive affirmation is instrumental in making writing a reality, in completing the journey and submitting the written assignment. Such emotional support uses empathy and motivation as its main focus to enable Faculty to strive to complete the writing task, and to encourage them to believe that it is within their intellectual, organisational and personal ability to complete the paper. On the other hand, Faculty require what could be termed as '*technical support'*. This is clear as they emphasise the need for technical help relevant to the different stages of the writing process. Structuring a written assignment, constructing an argument and ideation, the use of appropriate academic language, and undertaking the literature review are some of the most important identified supports. There were common helpful learning and tutoring strategies identified in technical writing and the cognitive domain. Key common areas classified as most helpful were writing as a process, the importance of planning, structuring, scaffolding, editing, technical language, critical thinking, and argument building - which align with findings from both Moore (2003) and Brady and Singh-Corcoran (2016).

Furthermore, engaging in reflection and conversation about the various writing stages is seen by Faculty as central to developing the ability to complete the paper. This iterative process of reflection and feedback allows them to explore the use of new writing conventions, to engage

in critical thinking, to adopt a position and construct an argument, and more importantly to develop and acquire new knowledge about writing and about themselves as writers.

Working collaboratively is one of the cornerstones of the approach taken to supporting learners in developing their academic writing competence. This is evident in many of the Faculty responses. Reflection centres on technical aspects such as relevance of ideas and arguments used, structure, academic language, use of critical thinking, and objectivity.

5.   Recommendations on the intersection of support for the future.

It is useful to underline the common pedagogical approach for the AWP module and the AWC. Both Faculty and students discussed the importance of confidence building in the writing support received. Likewise, Faculty's comments identified confidence building and empowering participation as the underlying foundation to the pedagogical approach to the AWP module. It is also interesting to report that the philosophical underpinnings to the nature of support lent to students on the one-to-one consultations mirrors the underpinnings for the AWP module. Faculty's perspectives evidenced in the interview point to the following: improve confidence in writing ability, community of learners, self-directed learning, academic conversations through writing, reflection on writing style, critical nature of writing, and the non-linear process of writing.

While the research described the current activities in supporting academic writing at institutional level by the AWP module and the AWC, work is ongoing to develop a scalable strategy that could increase the effectiveness of this collaboration between the two Centres as the colleges move to a single campus and include a shared vision for academic writing support at institutional level. Clarence (2011) argues that in order to become a significant part of teaching and learning in HE more generally, writing centres will need to work increasingly with Faculty to address the writing and reading needs of students in a supportive, critical and collaborative space that better serves the needs of both parties. Similarly, Gopee and Dean (2013) argue that institutional provisions for academic writing development, such as a dedicated writing support department, and non-institutional factors such as peer-collaboration should be fully recognised, supported and resourced.

There are implications for supporting academic writing that arise from the findings, illustrated in Figure 2. Findings point to the fact that writing is a skill that develops over time, and requires constant practice and support. Therefore, the need to extend the duration of the support of academic writing in order to help learners master the conventions of writing an academic paper is underscored. We will be exploring ways to collaborate with Faculty after they leave the AWP module wishing to use the strategies they experienced to teach analysis, synthesis, research and critical thinking as a way of supporting their own students' writing.

Figure 2: Recommendations on Academic Writing Support Provision.

It is also important to give due credence to the emotional support needed for AW. Antoniou and Moriarty (2008) have argued that advice is rarely provided on managing creative and emotional facets of scholarly writing - factors that greatly contribute to writing quality and success. Murray and Moore (2006) have previously discussed strategies for supporting the emotional dimensions of writing. The findings in this study indicate that Faculty are stimulated in their own writing practice from engagement in a number of strategies: firstly, having the opportunity to engage in reflections and writing conversations; secondly, from availing of feedback on their own writing

(using appropriate feedback technologies); and thirdly, from receiving emotional support as well as fresh ideas and resources from their peers.

6.   Conclusion.

This qualitative case study set out to explore Faculty perceptions on the effectiveness of academic writing activities and instruction provided in an Irish HEI using a cross sectional online survey and focus group of Faculty on their perception and beliefs about academic writing support.

The findings highlight useful insights to inform the development and future provision of academic writing support across the institution. Faculty are aware of how important writing development and practice is both for their own writing and that of their students. Taken further, having a fusion of critical reading, writing and reviewing strategies with an emphasis on social writing provides opportunities to develop their own writing practice, and we argue if this personal learning is applied to their classroom practice, there is a Faculty perception that it has the potential to subsequently enhance their students' writing experience.

Faculty remain cognisant of the importance of writing development and practice both for themselves and their students. Combining blended critical reading, writing and reviewing strategies with an emphasis on social writing provides opportunities to develop their own writing practice, and consequently influence their students' learning experience. We hope this work adds to the growing discussion and practice on establishing the most effective ways of providing academic writing support. The implications of these findings for improving support should be contextualised within models of practice such as digital literacies in the U.S., and also current Faculty support programmes such as in the UK, the technology-enhanced academic writing programme that runs across a research-intensive university in Scotland (Boyle *et al*., 2019). It can also augment the literature exploring similarity and variance between student and Faculty needs and expectations for academic writing.

The perceptions of what is most important in AW support saw Faculty recognizing the value of critical thinking, argument building, connecting with previous knowledge, being able to adapt strategies for practice and having greater awareness of learning theories. A constructivist learning and teaching approach allows for the integration of considerations pertaining to various domains from the affective to the cognitive and the use of a range of strategies that promotes

reflection as a spin-off of constructive feedback on written production. At a more granular level, academic writing support should concentrate on issues of the overall structure of the written piece and in some instances for some students an appreciation of language accuracy issues (grammar, sentence structure, punctuation).

Finding common ground in the perceptions of the preferred strategies between students and Faculty is significant as it brings to the fore what is effective in supporting the development of a holistic approach to academic writing. These results have implications for classroom pedagogy in that Faculty need to consider the perceptions and needs of students if they are to fully adopt a learner-centered approach. What emerged is that the perceptions to the process approach to writing and the activities given to Faculty are beneficial. Faculty shared views that the time allocated to teaching academic writing was inadequate and that it should be increased. The question for the future then is, with limited human resources and time, how can the academic writing curriculum be extended to benefit the students and Faculty into the future?

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