Developing a student-centred approach to academic referencing support for postgraduate distance learners

Irene O'Dowd & Ann Byrne

Digital Learning Department, Hibernia College

@hiberniacollege
hiberniacollege.com

The need for academic referencing skills

- Programmes emphasise academic writing as a key skill for student success.

- Student teachers need to be able to develop an argument, synthesise knowledge and evaluate evidence.

- Dissertation places emphasis on students' ability to handle secondary sources.

Assessment overview (blended PME programmes)

Module	Credits
Module 1. Foundations of Education & Curriculum Studies	15
Module 2. Pedagogy 1: Physical, Arts & Inclusive Education	10
Module 3. Pedagogy 2: Language, Literacy, Numeracy & ICT	15
Module 4. Pedagogy 3: Ethical, Social, Personal, Health & Early Childhood	10
Module 5. Pedagogy 4: Social, Scientific & Development Education	10
Module 6. School Experience: Research & Evidence Based Practice	20
Module 7. Advanced School Experience	20
Module 8. Research Methods	10
Module 9. Nua-Ghaeilge 1	5
Module 10. Nua-Ghaeilge 2	5
Total	120

- Academic writing (essays)
- Portfolios & artefacts
- Reflective writing
- Dissertation project
- Marks assigned specifically for quality of academic writing and referencing

The need for academic referencing skills

- Librarian receives numerous student queries related to referencing – up to a third of the total number of queries.

- Referencing is the most frequently consulted section of the Academic Writing Toolkit.

Evolution of referencing support project

Update online Referencing guides

Encourage use of the new guides

Updates to library website

Drop-in workshop series on Zoom

Updating the Referencing Guides

- User-centred decisions:
  - Informed by student queries
  - Own experiences of being postgraduate students
- Added guidelines for new formats
- Removed anachronisms
- New section on general hints & guidelines
- Restructured and redesigned for ease of use (editorial and visual design input)
- Quick guide also completely redesigned
- Promoted through emails to student cohorts, news item on the library page, direction given in query replies

Hibernia College
Referencing Guide

HIBERNIA COLLEGE

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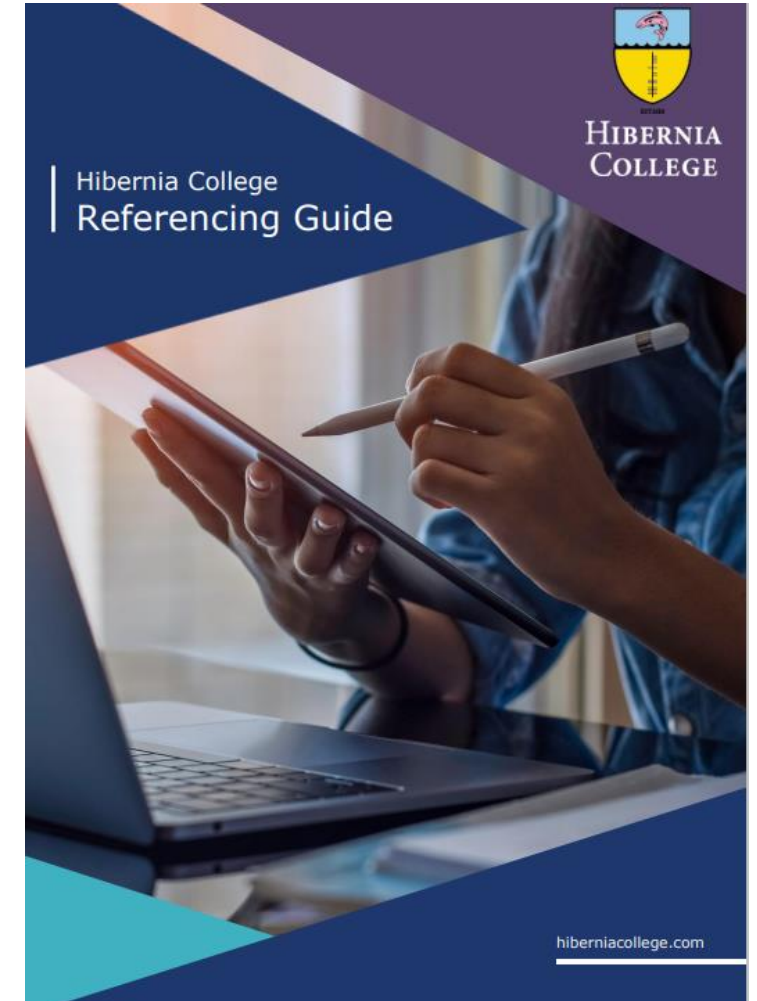
Updating the Referencing Guides

Section 3: General points of note

	Reference list
Authors	- All authors, editors or contributors listed on the title page of the work must be included in the reference list. - Where an editor is listed instead of an author, credit the editor(s) by using (ed.) or (eds.) after their name(s). - Where no author or editor is listed, begin the reference with the title of the work followed by the year of publication and continue the reference in the typical order. - When referencing a document (such as a report) published by a government agency, organisation or corporation and no individual is named as the author, name the department or body that issued the document in the reference list. Include the full name of the department or body followed by the abbreviation in brackets, for example, World Health Organization (WHO). If a report has an author(s) or chairperson, they are referenced in both the in-text citation and the reference list.
Date	

In-text citations

Citation format	- Citations are given in the format (Author/s, year). When quoting directly from a source, also include the page number (Author/s, year, p.). - Don't split an in-text citation, e.g. when quoting an author, put the entire citation prior to the quote including the page number, e.g. As Piaget (1972, p.69) suggests, 'children do not…'. - Use p. when quoting from a single page, and pp. for a page range. For example, p.23 or pp.23-24.

Web pages

Web pages with an author

Author (person who authored the page)
Year (when the site was published or updated – whichever is available)
Internet site name
URL and date accessed

Nolan, M. (2010) *Expad.ie*. Available at: http://expad.ie (Accessed: 1 June 2010).

Nolan (2010) discusses…

Web pages

Author (person or organisation)
Year (the page was published or site last updated)
Title of page
URL and date accessed

Reference: Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) (2017*) Zero emissions challenge*. Available at: https://www.sfi.ie/challenges/zero-emissions/ (Accessed: 16 July 2020).

In-Text: The zero emissions challenge (Science Foundation Ireland, 2017) aims to encourage novel solutions…

Library website update

Referencing FAQs

Why reference? +	What if there is 'no date'? +
What is common knowledge? +	How do I capitalise my reference? +
What is an in-text citation? +	How do I punctuate my reference? +
What is a reference list? +	How do I list items from the same author in the same year? +
What is a bibliography? +	How do I cite a work that is referenced in a source I am using? +
What if there is no author? +	
What if there is no author but there is an editor? +	What does ibid. mean? +
Do I have to list all the authors if there are more than two +	How do I cite more than one source in an in-text citation? +

Academic writing and referencing guides

Academic writing guide	Academic Writing Toolkit	Academic Writing Toolkit for Nursing	Academic Writing Toolkit
⚡	✏️	✏️	✏️
PDF	Course	Course	Data Analytics

Quick referencing guide	Referencing guide
⚡	✏️
PDF	PDF

Referencing workshop videos

View these five recordings of workshops that explore topics such as plagiarism, constructing references, evaluating sources, referencing different item types and some frequently asked questions.

Webinar 1 Plagiarism and common knowledge	The final webinar reviews the content of the earlier webinars and answers some common referencing FAQs.
Webinar 2 Constructing references from scratch	Webinar topic minus recap: 10:40–41:12 Student queries: 41:13–47:51
Webinar 3 Critically evaluating sources and peer review	To play the video, select **Play**:
Webinar 4 Identifying and referencing different item types	
Webinar 5 Series recap and referencing FAQs	

Can't find what you are looking for?

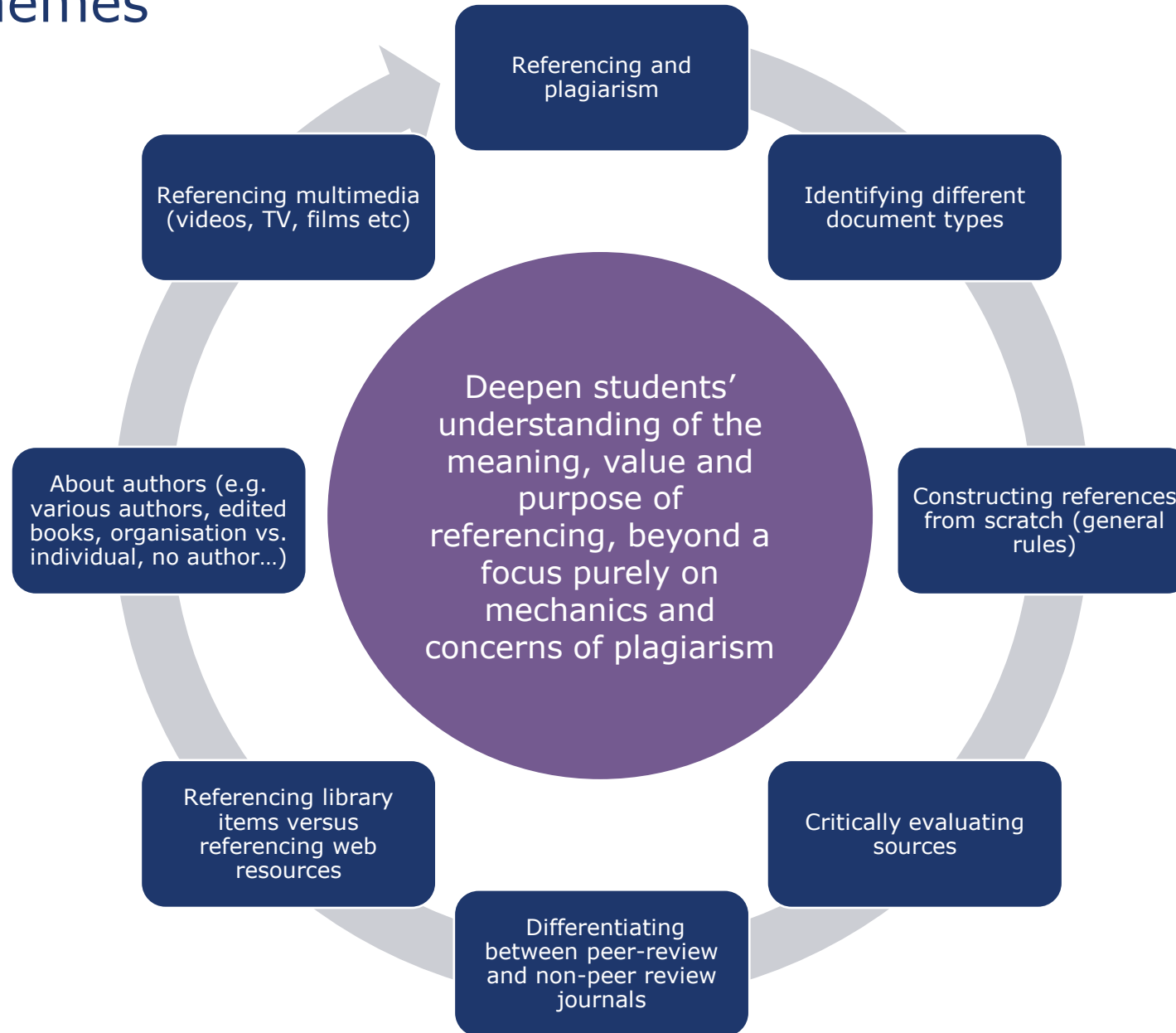Please contact us and we will help you find the information you need.

Contact the library
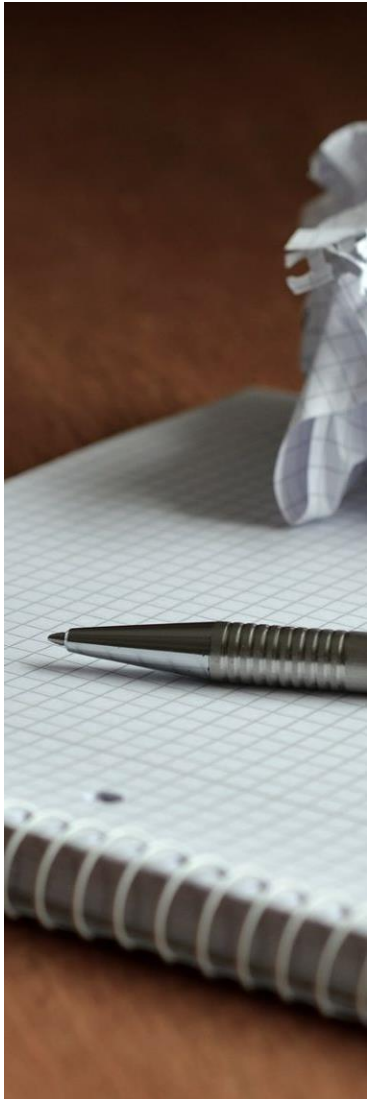
Literature review

- Complexity of relationship with referencing
  - Plagiarism anxiety
  - Acknowledgement
  - Criticality
  - Own voice

- Support provision often inconsistent

- Gap between what is assumed to be known and what is known

- Challenge of supporting online distance learners
  - Embedded approach not always possible
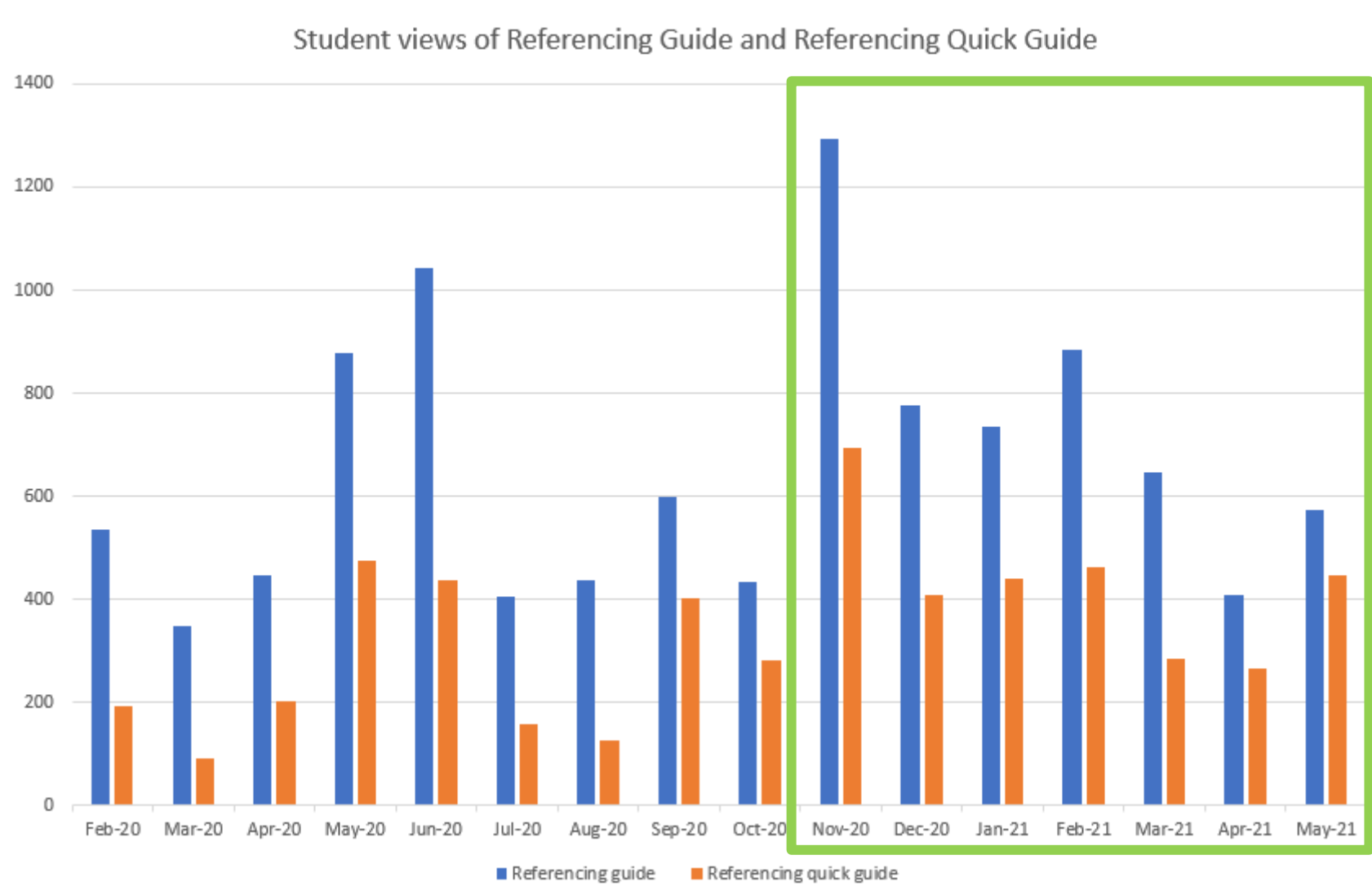 - Pre-service teachers and research

Key support themes

Deepen students' understanding of the meaning, value and purpose of referencing, beyond a focus purely on mechanics and concerns of plagiarism

- Referencing and plagiarism
- Identifying different document types
- Constructing references from scratch (general rules)
- Critically evaluating sources
- Differentiating between peer-review and non-peer review journals
- Referencing library items versus referencing web resources
- About authors (e.g. various authors, edited books, organisation vs. individual, no author…)
- Referencing multimedia (videos, TV, films etc)
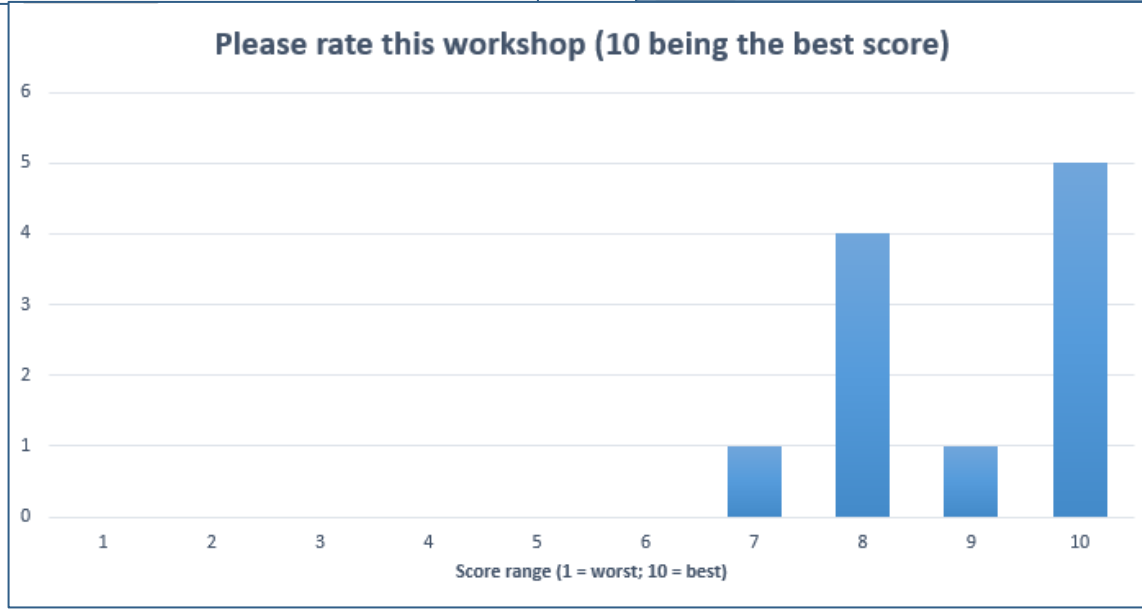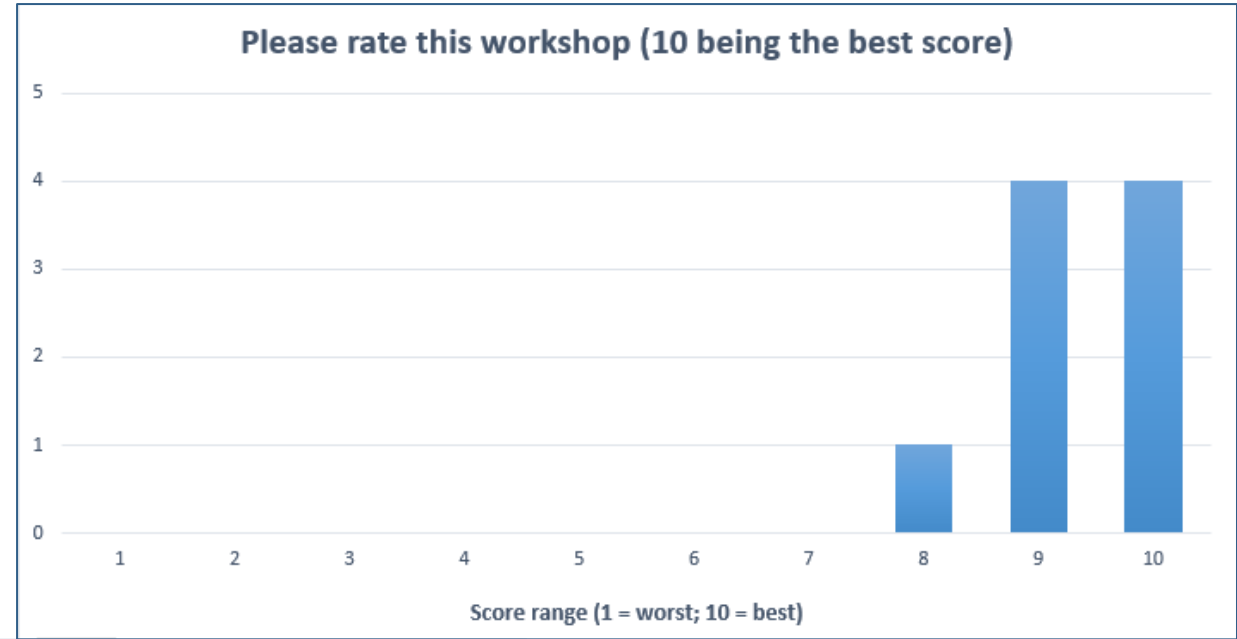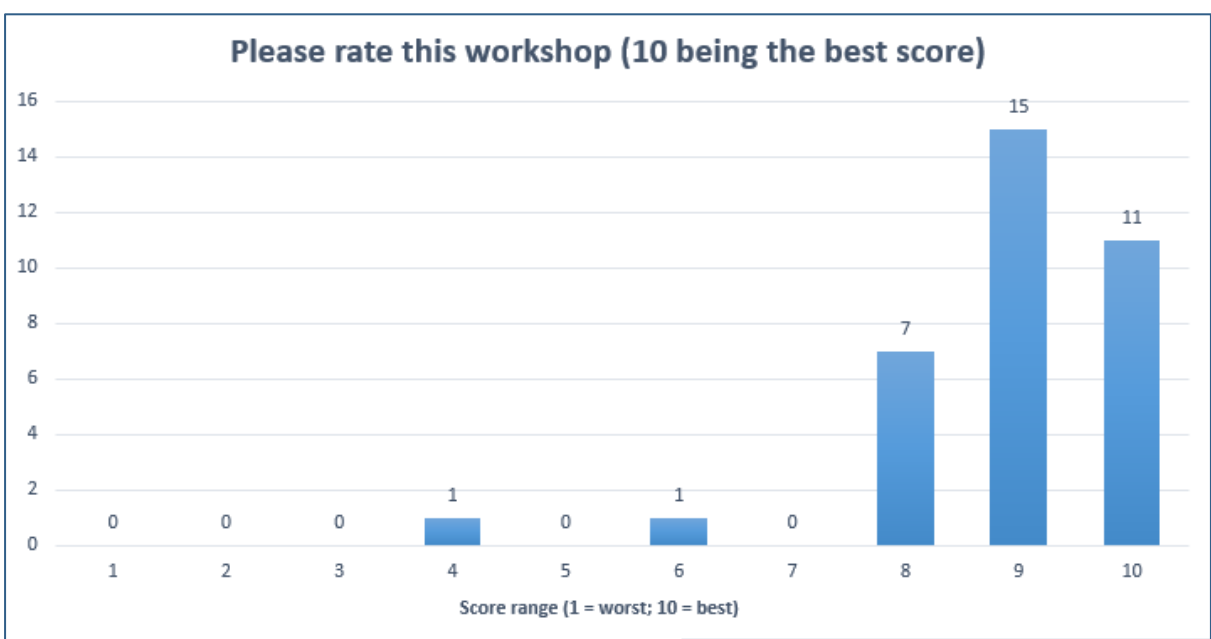
Drop-in referencing workshops

- Series of Zoom webinars

- Opportunity for queries to be answered in person and in real time

- Inform students regarding some key referencing related topics

- Themes based on students' library queries

- Promoting and modelling use of the Referencing Guide
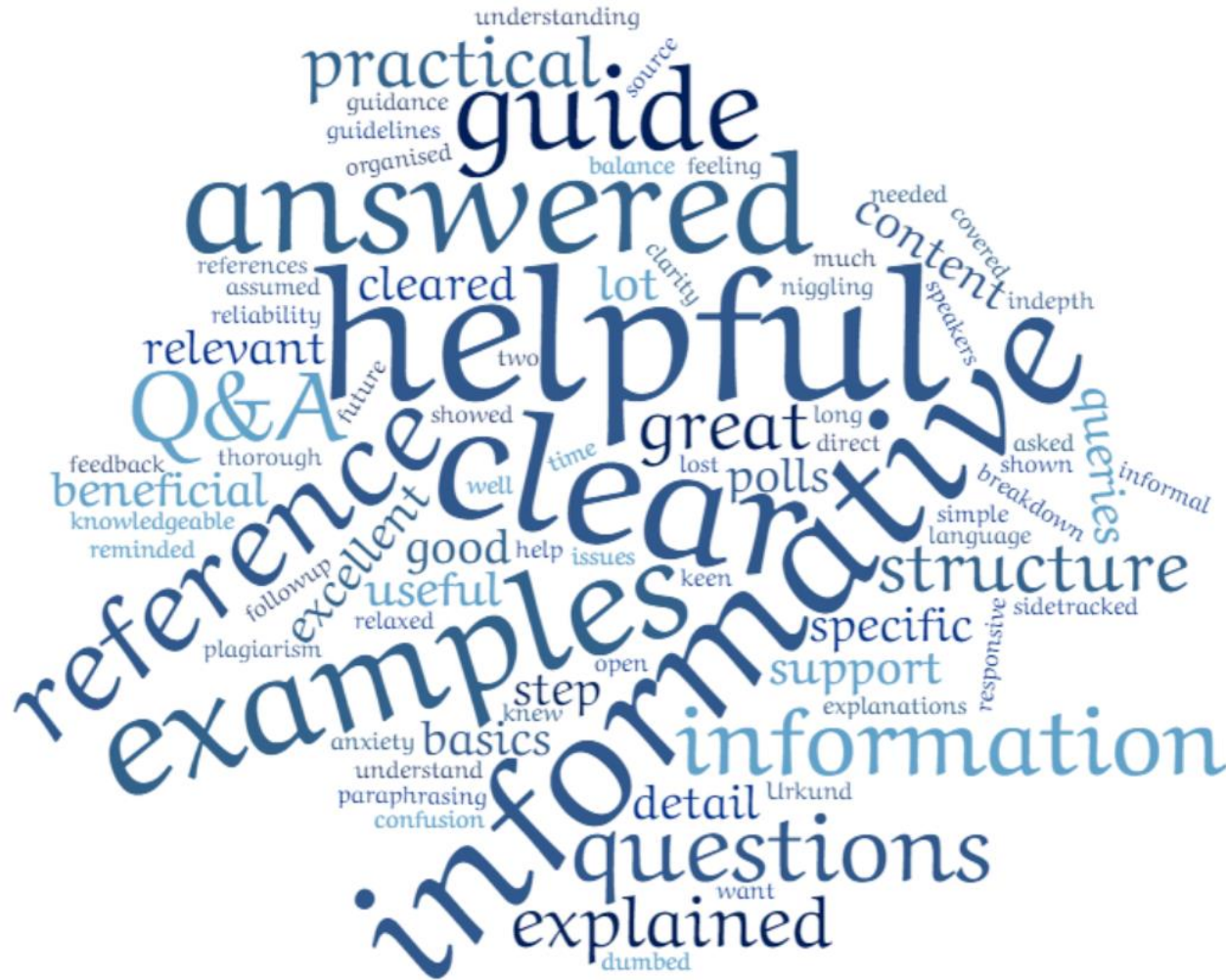
- Scheduled every 5-6 weeks on Tuesday evenings

Engagement with the Referencing Guides

Student views of Referencing Guide and Referencing Quick Guide

Satisfaction rating (feedback surveys 1 to 3) (n=35; 18; 11)

Please rate this workshop (10 being the best score)

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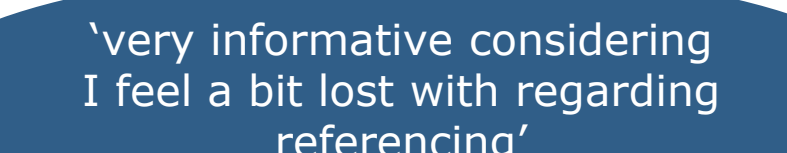
Free-text feedback

'clear information on some things most others assumed we knew already'
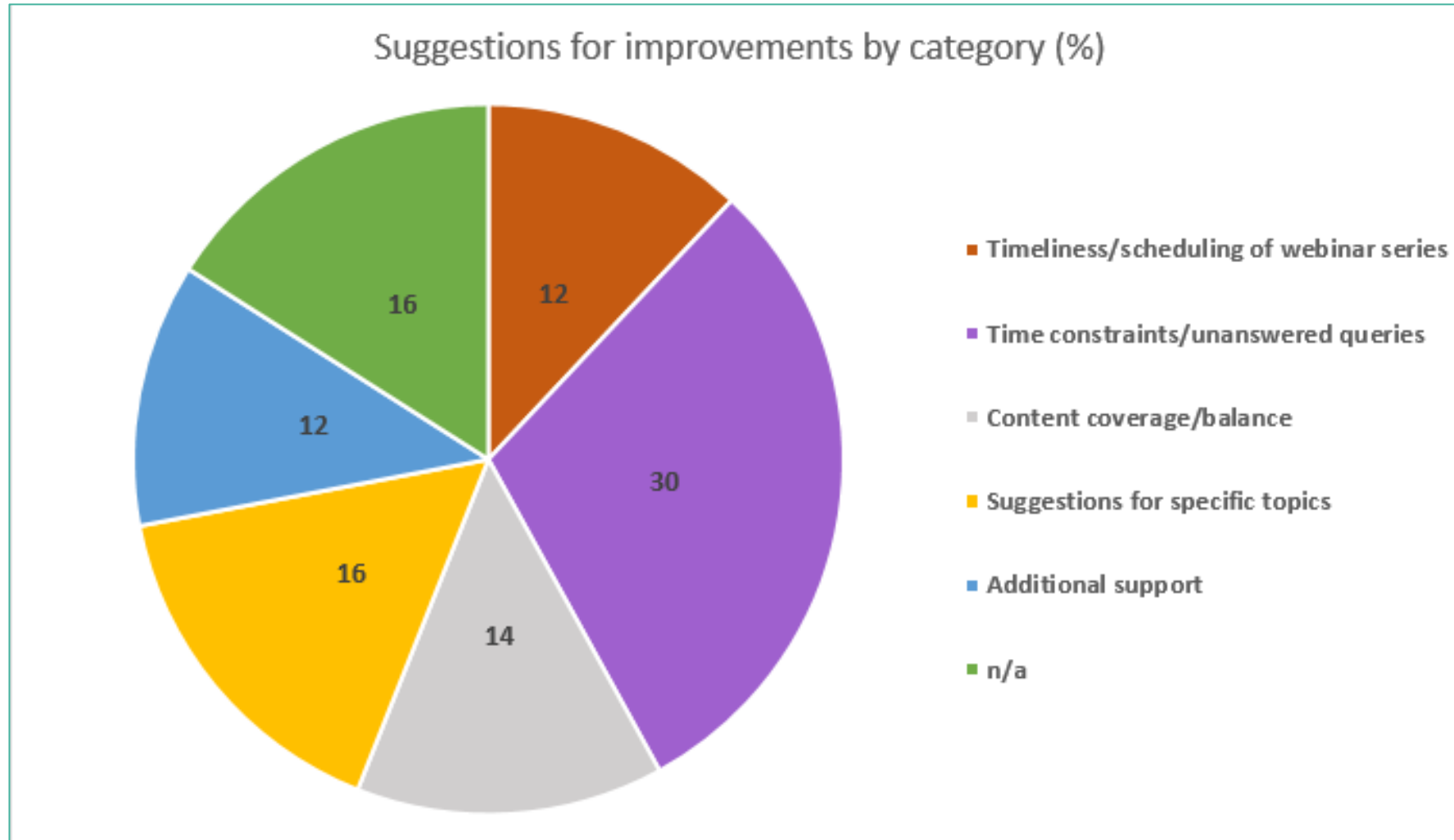
'very dumbed down which was great'

'so helpful in covering the basics'

'very informative considering I feel a bit lost with regarding referencing'

Suggestions for improvements

Suggestions for improvements by category (%)

- Timeliness/scheduling of webinar series
- Time constraints/unanswered queries
- Content coverage/balance
- Suggestions for specific topics
- Additional support
- n/a

12, 30, 14, 16, 12, 16

Feedback responses and future plans

DONE

- Address access by making edited videos available on library site

- Schedule more drop-in webinars

- Further updates to Referencing Guides

- Adapt offerings to needs of new programmes/new student profiles

TO DO

- More engagement analysis (synchronous and asynchronous)

- Deeper qualitative exploration

- Collaboration with faculty

- Use of online collaborative space

- Web-based Guides

For more information...

Bridging the online support gap: developing academic referencing competences among remote-learner PME students

Irene O'Dowd and Ann Byrne

Abstract

In Hibernia College, students are expected to take primary responsibility for maintaining academic integrity in their studies. However, lecturers and support staff have an important role to play in educating students about academic integrity and helping them develop the skills needed to practise it. This paper describes a project initiated by the Digital Learning Department (DLD) to improve the College's online referencing supports, in response to the high volume of referencing queries being received daily by the Digital Librarian. Recent changes to the focus of capstone research projects on the PME programmes, combined with the move to fully online instruction during the Covid-19 pandemic, further highlighted the urgency of ensuring that these resources met students' needs. The project consisted of a comprehensive update of the College's core Referencing Guide and the delivery of a series of drop-in webinar workshops where referencing queries from students could be dealt with directly and specific problem areas addressed. The paper outlines the principles informing both the updating of the Referencing Guide and the structure of the online workshops. A preliminary analysis of library logs and student feedback survey data provides early indications of student engagement with and responses to these new supports.

Thank you!

iodowd@hiberniacollege.net
library@hiberniacollege.net