



Using the English subject benchmark statement: group activity

Collection: The Subject & pedagogy

Resource: Working with the English Subject Benchmark Statement

Approximate duration

One hour

Learning outcomes

After completing this activity you or your students will be familiar with the English Subject Benchmark Statement and therefore with the core values and features of studying for and achieving an honours degree in English. Further, you or your students will be familiar with the way the English Subject Benchmark Statement is useful to distinct members of the subject community. After completing this activity you or your students will also have gained:

1. clearer insight into the challenges presented by the subject, its ways of thought, of writing, of arguing, of quoting;
2. a framework in which to enact a critical understanding of curriculum and assess its current fitness for purpose;
3. the raw material (and possibly confidence) to propose and argue to colleagues for a new module or form of assessment, or of teaching based on the relevant components of the benchmark statement.

Introduction

For all those staff who teach on an English degree it is helpful to be familiar with the English Benchmark Statement (i.e. read it carefully) but how exactly an individual uses it



1 | This resource is part of a set of professional development resources for Higher Education English (including English Literature, English Language & Creative Writing) called 'The Pool'. The resources were developed by the English Subject Centre in 2011 as part of a JISC/HEA Open Educational Resources (OER) Project.

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will depend upon their individual circumstances and needs. It can be useful when introducing the subject to prospective students; it can be useful when helping students at the end of their degree programme to recognise what it is they have learned; it can provide a starting point when thinking about assessment on your own or with colleagues; it has proven indispensable when developing new modules and degrees; it can have advantages in defending programmes and what they do in hostile institutional environments (e.g. we have to be able to teach pre-1800 because the Benchmark says so ...). This activity is designed to focus the reading of the Benchmark according to three targeted uses for it.

The activity

Ask participants to read the Benchmark and make a list (with at least two or three items each) of how the following members of an English department might use the Benchmark:

- Final year undergraduate student
- Early career lecturer designing a new module
- Newly appointed head of department

This exercise can be expanded by presenting more detailed scenarios or asking the students to develop their own scenarios for using or referencing the benchmark.

Links & References

- [The English Benchmark Statement in HTML format](#)
- [The English Subject Benchmark Statement as a PDF](#) (requires the free Adobe Acrobat Reader)

Relationship to the Professional Standards Framework

- **Area of Activity 1:** Design and planning of learning activities and / or programmes of study.
- **Area of Activity 5:** Integration of scholarship, research, and professional activities with teaching and supporting learning



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- **Core Knowledge 2:** Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme
- **Professional Values 3:** Commitment to the development of learning communities
- **Professional Values 4:** Commitment to encouraging participation in higher education, acknowledging diversity and promoting equality of opportunity

More information about the Professional Standards Framework can be obtained from the summary factsheet in the Subject & Pedagogy Collection in HumBox.

<http://humbox.ac.uk/2731/>

Resources in the *Subject and Pedagogy* Collection

- Subject and pedagogy: introduction to the collection
- Working with the English subject benchmark statement: resource overview
 - **Using the English subject benchmark: group activity (* you are here)**
 - Using the English subject benchmark: individual activity
- Working with the Creative Writing subject benchmark statement: resource overview
 - Using the Creative Writing subject benchmark: group activity
 - Using the Creative Writing subject benchmark: individual activity
- Writing and the teacher: resource overview
 - Writing tasks: group activity
 - Metaphors: group activity
- Hearing yourself teach: resource overview
 - Keeping a teaching journal: individual activity
- Working with threshold concepts: resource overview
 - Crossing the line: individual activity
 - Crossing the line: group activity



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