**ID\_MI06\_F\_Pathway\_N**

**Voice075\_F\_N\_Pathway**

I would you like to give a brief background about yourself?

MI06 okay, this is the first year I taught this module. I don’t have background specifically in engineering I do have background in science and I’ve taught for ECS regularly, a bit if different discipline really. Umm, do you want more details than that my qualifications or anything? I don’t know what you want…

I what modules are you teaching…

MI06 so, I’m teaching Pathway A Engineering Foundation also teach the Engineering Support class which is Pathway A & B and I also teach the Science Foundation Support class which no body turns up. That’s what I’m teaching at the moment, or, I’ve finished actually, maybe I’ll be doing next year

I so, what this Support class is?

MI06 Support class in semester one I was very enthusiastic to make my students in my class turn up for the support class

I right

LANGUAGE

MI06 and what I did was identify areas of weakness or specific, particularly related to the types of writing and things. So, what I did was I went and found out what writing task they had on other modules and we do a lot of specific work in Support class on, for Routes to Success they have to do reflective writing and none of them have done anything like that before so we did some work on reflective writing. Also, they had to start writing up lab reports which another specific style of writing which most of them hadn’t engaged in certainly not in English

I umm

MI06 so, we did quite a lot of work on how to write the language and grammar you need for writing lab reports and then it was just really responding to students’ need. Umm, for example we did a session on referencing because they just couldn’t get it

I that fall in academic skills isn’t it?

MI06 yeah, so academic skill and relating it specifically to actual task that they have to complete in the rest of the course or for me, obviously they have to do written task for me. So, we've done extra work on paraphrasing, extra work on summarising as well. Yeah, that’s what the Support class, semester one I can make them come along and have classes, semester two, I mean it’s voluntary. So, they don’t have to attend support class, so getting them to come along I kind of I pressed on them particularly in semester one I like them to come to classes and probably four or five out of seven would come

I umm

MI06 so, in semester two what I did in agreement with John Mills the Course Leader was move this Support class over to being individual tutorials. So, I do for everybody tutorial slots every week to cover the time that I would have been giving class. Umm, because obviously they had, then they would start to have assignments for me to hand in, so then we work on specific you know, actual task they’re working on, so I’ll be looking at their essays, whether it’s a summary or help them with their presentation. Those kind of things we do individually in tutorial rather than having a support class

I so, in semester two it becomes more of a one to one tutorial session?

MI06 later, yeah

I okay. So, Pathway programme, this language course is it meant for everyone or, what are the target group like

MI06 Pathway A?

I both Pathway A and Pathway B

MI06 Pathway A just engineering so it could be, and Pathway B that Zahra teaching has Science and Engineering, she had one Science student

I so, what types of students enrolled for this course?

MI06 I think if the didn’t get IELTS 6 in writing, probably 6 or 6.5, got to check with John with that

I okay

LANGUAGE

MI06 I don’t know, but they didn’t make the right qualification. Umm, basically, the module is essentially placed around writing skills, not even that much focused on reading to be honest. Umm, because it’s also very, the kind of reading they have to do, because I’ve looked at their text books I’ve looked at what they have to read

I umm

MI06 and actually much of it is you know, interspersed with diagrams and equations, so they have a lot of supporting kind of evidence information and to support written text parts

I umm

MI06 so, because of their discipline I think reading skills they can get away with being probably less efficient readers of texts (laughs)

I yeah

MI06 but obviously they need to be able to understand the equations and the diagrams that go with it. So, the module is focused on their ability to summarise, paraphrase, write suitable data commentary

I umm

MI06 data analysis. They had to do kind of descriptive essay but that actually is not for my module. The credits for the descriptive essays go to the, what is it call? oh! Not research of something or was it their course work module

I right

MI06 but I oversee them doing

I is that the Computer Application?

MI06 I think there a module made up of several sets of things, I don’t really know because I don’t actually manage that side of it

I right

MI06 and the language project that I get them to do is descriptive essay so it describes how mobile phone works, describes how plastic are made, so they’re not argument essays as such. They are descriptive reports on a process of thing, you know like describe how MP3 player works, describe how plastic is made. There’re no arguments, I wasn’t teaching them descriptive essay structure or things like that. In argumentative essay structure they just describe of something

I right. so, who design the module?

MI06 Laura

I Laura Duncan

MI06 uhm. She design the module from the scratch originally how many years now

I umm

MI06 semester one there’s massively heavy focus on grammar and sentence structure and some other skills like summarising and paraphrasing. Yeah, there’s a huge emphasis I would say probably over emphasis on

I umm

MI06 which was why we supposed to have Support classes where I focused on the skills basically rather than dragging them through another chunk of achievement

I so, how frequently you think the module has been revised? Is every year or is it…

MI06 no

I oh! You’re not sure

MI06 I don’t know. I mean I only work on this because Laura is on maternity leave

I alright, okay

MI06 so, basically it means I just run what there is and we really haven’t had you know, we just done what’s in the book really, what’s in the syllabus. But, I think it’s fairly very similar to how it started, not many changes has been made. I think, don’t know, this is my first year and Laura is not here so

I okay. So, now the third question directly related to the research which I’m focusing on which is critical thinking skills for Engineering Foundation Year. So, through your observation so far what types of students do you think lack critical thinking skills? Have you ever come across this kind of students or your students are fine?

MI06 well, it depends on what you mean by critical skills? I think you know, so ( \_ )

I in engineering context

MI06 for engineering context, it’s still hard to say for them because they’re foundation. So, to be honest, they’re A Level Level

I umm

MI06 so, quite what we’re expecting on a critical, you know what I mean

I umm

PRACTICE

MI06 see at the moment they’re still been spoon fed with everything

I right

MI06 I think they’re not really you know, on the foundation year course they really are, you know, if you managed to get you're a Level Physics than you’re better to a foundation course, so you know, they very, all of mine kind of just finished high school really. So, they’re still at that level. So, I mean, you know the idea that they have more sophisticated to ideas or information is I think unreasonable for them. So, at the moment they’re just being taught, you know, they’re literally being quite, you know, in other modules you know, they get lab works with very simple experiments in it and the ideas is you’re learning how to follow a lab work set of instructions and write them down and write in a suitable language. Umm, the only kind of, you know, the only critical thinking skills really that they require is a little bit of analysis of data, so for example looking for anomalies, that’s what they do in their writing task for me as well. Identify anomalies and suggest you know how the experiment might be improved that’s by the only area I see they’re being asked to think for themselves. When they do those exams for me I say I don’t care if you say the anomaly was caused by an elephant sitting on the weighing scale because I’m not her to mark you I’ve no engineering knowledge I’m just here to see if you can write effectively in English so I’m not, you know, we can’t mark on, even they say ridiculous things really ridiculous reasons or just stupid I can’t, I don’t make them down for that if they written it in a reasonable English. They’ve achieved, you know what I’ve asked them to do#

I umm

MI06 I don’t know what John asking them to do as far as lab reports go there are, you know obviously analytical aspects towards the ends, but they’re learning really it is procedures. They just learning procedures really, so how to, you know, how to use equipment in the lab, how to follow a lab book, how to follow the health and safety, you know how to report things, being accurate, do you know what I mean?

I umm

MI06 that kind of, but to be honest they’re doing all that in their other modules they’re not doing that with me, so critical thinking, umm, for example you know, you were in my class when we played the vocabulary game on board

I umm

Practice

MI06 they really liked that, that’s why I give them crossword or something. But, the beginning of the year they found it really hard to do like pictionary or to do, they just didn’t get, you know, and that’s one that’s a kind of critical thinking, ‘can you think of a way to describe a word or explain something without saying the word’, is a form of, you know what I mean, how do I approach this problem

I problem solving?

MI06 yeah, that way. So, they get better at it over the year I would say

Language (16:19)

I so you mentioned about, when assess or mark their work

MI06 yep

I you focused more on language rather than the analytical bit

MI06 yeah, I don’t mark them on that. It’s not in the assessment criteria and I’m just, so I said to them, ‘I don’t care how stupid your suggestion is, for example why the anomaly in the data the sort of section you should put in the data analysis bit’. I said, ‘I don’t, I’m not here to judge, but I’m here just here to work out if you’ve put in a decent sentence’. … to be honest on the other modules that’s what they should be looking for. You know, I’m not in a position to judge what is a sensible question for anomaly in a Physics experiment, you know

Maturity

I so do you think maturity is important for critical skills?

MI06 absolutely. You can even see, you know Bora is deaf and has other problems as well is not only deafness, but his ability, I mean it’s also cultural we have to say. But, so his ability to give you know what you, like it’s more mature complex responses to things was much better than the rest of my group but, there’s also culture,. Cultural differences cause they’re all different nationalities, so ( \_ )

I So, how are they different, are they different among them or, in what way they are different?

MI06 well, it’s cultural

I yeah, because you mentioned just now there are cultural differences in the way they approach things

MI06 umm

I so, how is it different?

MI06 I say, for example social and kind of cultural, people from Hong Kong and Taiwan is more western than mainland China particularly Hong Kong I’d say

I okay

MI06 obviously, there’s a colonial history

I yeah

MI06 umm, and Greek and the Turkish have a similarities even though there’s political issues, but so somewhat umm

I how about the Vietnamese

MI06 Vietnamese, a bit hard to judge with him actually because I think he spend a lot time in international school judging by his accent

I alright

MI06 and obviously very rich parents, so Vietnam also…

I western education, then?

MI06 yeah, western education, so yes obviously he had international school education so, not necessarily in English probably both because his writing was pretty awful, but yeah judging by just you know, and also Vietnam you know, a bit like Thailand I suppose it’s very, you know what I mean, a bit westernise in lot of ways. Where else the Chinese might, I don’t know, socially a bit, more social difference. Umm, and Greek and Turkish tend to be a, it’s hard as well because they’re individuals as well, so there’s like a little cross over, isn’t there?

I umm

MI06 so, my Greek student is actually not very bright in a general kind of, and tend to be somewhat lackadaisical with rules and time keeping and you know that kind of thing. But obviously, my Cyprus Turkish student obviously you know has been deaf all his life, so he is you know his relationship with language and to communication is quite different because of his disability so ( \_ )

I having said that, even though this mature student has some impairment

MI06 yeah

Pedagogies

I so this question is about your lecture, so how do you run your class?

MI06 well, the way the module is set up is basically, what’s it’s called, teach, what the traditional model, I not, I forgot now, my teaching training has gone again. Yeah basically, the way the module is set up is quite traditional in its approach. Umm, so semester one is a massive focus on sentence structure and using Hashime and Ho. So really, I present them with a grammar point, they do a bit of practice you know, a bit of presentation practice don’t know what ever it is I still can’t remember. So yeah, I mean it’s very, I would say you know, it wasn’t very exciting. But you know, the course said so I had to teach them, you know, ‘adjective clause’, is this week and you know that…

I more focused on grammar

MI06 very focused on grammar and much less focus on skills so, I sort of did bit of my one

I right

MI06 and that’s why I use particularly, academic skills, I use Support classes for. Umm, yeah, I would say you know a power point with some sort of grammar point on it, go you know, turn page Hashime and Ho page 227 (28:33)

I so, do they have classroom practice?

MI06 uhm, yeah. No, some of it I made them do or bits of it I made them do with me in the class and I go around and monitor, and see what they were doing and some of it will be for homework

I So, if you give in-class practice what, how much time you allocate for this?

MI06 I don’t know, it varies. Sometimes I get them, you know show them describe what adjective clause and then I get them to do a question. Then we talked about it again sometimes a bit of analysing a bit of writing or something. I get them to do it together, feedback, or I get them to do right kind of sentences and check with their partners and discuss what they had written. They’re very bad I have to say at pair work and group work, so to be honest I just gave up because they don’t bother

CULTURE

I why they’re not good at pair work? Is it language barrier or is it cultural barrier?

MI06 partly cultural thing because obviously we had a you know, sort a bit of Asian students. Umm, those are just come from high schools, they just used being taught at you know, so I try to get them to interact and they were pretty rubbish at it

I so, they prefer to be passive learners?

MI06 umm

I and these are largely what, Asian students?

MI06 yes, apart my Iranian student who is really annoying asking question every, that’s sort of deflection from much of not doing that sort of thing

LANGUAGE and CT

MI06 I don’t think it is necessarily just because they can actually do a lot of what they do in, with Maths because they communicate a lot of it in the language of Maths and through processes, you know what I mean, diagrams, flow charts, computer programming. They do a lot of programming stuffs as well, that’s all in Phython for example. So, to be honest they’re using other languages like Maths and computer languages and visual diagrams and descriptions a lot more to be honest than they are their languages apart from, what they struggle really with are with lectures which is interesting. They just couldn’t follow them, so they just stare at the power point which you know, make a great argument for the fact that caused you don’t just be focused on being able to write a lab report. That obviously is what they get graded on so I could see why their focuses on that because that’s what they produce. But, as far as having the skills to manage on going in their undergraduate they’re gonna really struggle with the spoken language, listening skills particularly

I listening skills?

MI06 umm

I so, just now you mentioned about computer languages, but again computer languages still needs English isn’t it, no?

MI06 what I’m saying is they can get things done they can understand and create and do things in other languages like Maths and computer languages. So, you don’t need to be fluent in English in order to programme a computer you don’t need it, and to read a manual to be honest, you don’t need to be fluent (whispers), you don’t, do you?

I okay

MI06 if you look at the engineering books, you look at the kind of texts in there it very you know, it ‘s very instructional texts, you know and you’ve a lot of other clues like equations, diagrams in order to decode what the written texts is saying using a lot of support and information. They don’t just you know, they will end up doing that, they will end up having to read journal articles but again they’ll supported by theorem which they can understand without having to do any English, Maths diagrams. You know, you look at circuit board, which doesn’t require English. So, the demand for their language skills are you know different than would be for other disciplines

I umm

MI06 even I would say less for example ECS

I less than ECS?

MI06 lot’s of ECS require particularly the Masters one which I’ve taught before require a lot of thinking outside the box, you know what I mean so, and they do write more discursive type argument essays, you know what I mean that sort of thing. But still if you we're doing you know Electrical Engineering a lot of your time you’re gonna spend looking at diagrams, circuits, equations, looking at Physics and mathematical theories, so obviously you know, they do need core language skills in order to engage. That’s where the problem come with their, I think with lectures because they cant’ follow them

I so, for the reading they don’t really need it that much but listening they’ll have problem (35.21.3)

MI06 as a language advisor, I would say you know actually for them listening is quite important and reading you know, as they progress in their undergraduate they will have to do more, but look they gonna be engineers … you the quality and level of writing of engineering is not exactly for native speakers you know what I mean, so

I so, writing is not much required, how about spoken language, because for example if they’ve like poster presentation or, they still need the language

MI06 umm, they did quite well in their presentation. To be honest, it was actually their ability, their critical thinking skills in order to understand what was required in a presentation, and how to, you know give a presentation in a very simple language use they actually did fine. So, to be honest when came to, you know actually better than I expected, so … not you know brilliant by any stretch of imagination but you know they have presentation structure, they use linking words, they make sense you know. They had logical format, they did the slides properly so, you know that was fine

I so, can I say students show case their critical skills more during presentation compared to…

MI06 probably, yeah

I to other kinds of task in the class, can I say that?

MI06 yeah, because the syllabus really so focused on grammar and writing doesn’t really allow for much, really

SKILLS EXCLUDE AND INCLUDE (39:00)

MI06 don’t know because I’ve just been in this specific course just for one year, I mean for example you know, read you have to go over referencing I don’t know how many times, probably five times at various points either during the lesson or in the Support class. They just didn’t get it. They just didn’t get it, but to be honest native speakers at that age would be in the same situations, so again that’s not language skills that’s just…

I academic skills, yeah?

MI06 umm, they’re struggling to get it … so do you know what I mean, it’s a skill developed over time. So just try to get them sort of produce a language project with five reasonably formatted referencing at the end of and some still didn’t bother to put in in-text references, they just couldn’t be asked to do it, but it’s just too complicated…

I so, you pay more attention to that skill knowing that they need it and how about the skills you exclude. Is there any skills that you exclude? Sometimes, based on you module specification there some skills you think they’re better off so I’m not going to focus on this. Is there anything…

MI06 I suppose when they you know started to put on their presentation together I didn’t spend this, I didn’t really do a lot of input I’d say. Overtime, I give them a video to watch, I’d given them various hand outs and probably have done a short input session on what presentation should or shouldn’t be … what you can do with diagram, I didn’t do that much of input they actually go on with it. So, I didn’t do that much of a input they actually (41:25)

Define CT

MI06 How would I define critical skills for?

I engineering

MI06 well, it’s difficult isn’t it because I again would differentiate between these foundation year students and students on undergraduate, postgrads, so I would have very different expectations. Umm, for example if I teach them again when they moved on to undergraduate my bar would get higher because I would know the bar is becoming higher in their other academic work. But, at this foundation level to be honest I don’t expect a lot and out of the course there’s not much demanded, to be honest and when the get on to their undergraduate course, over the course of first and second year those skills will be developed. So, the fact that they don’t you know, you show them a graph or something and they go, ‘oh! I don’t know’, but you know, you have to kind of you know, guide them along and what might be wrong with it does it follow the line of (44:01.4?), does it start with, ‘0’, does it, ‘oh!’. So, but to be honest they really are kind of high school level because you know, that’s what foundation. Foundation used to be (44:14.4?) college. So, it would have been run along side, you know fluffed up

I yeah

MI06 your A Level Physics, you have to do this, if you didn’t get the grade you know, so it’s really filling in that’s what the foundation is there you know, the end of high school knowledge that they don’t have

I umm, so how would you define then, what critical skills are?

MI06 how would I define what? I suppose as, we bit of on-going joke in my class because I did say to my, at one point I said in class, you know for this something, something you have to think outside the box knowing that it was like a idiom, and I probably had to explain it. They sort of looked at me and immediately my Taiwanese student who’s very funny actually. He didn’t even know, he looked at me and said, I said, ‘yeah, you have to think out the box’, he said, ‘what box’

I he took it literally

MI06 yeah, but actually it’s also such as an engineering thing to say cause engineers are very literal

I umm

MI06 so, interesting … so, to be honest it’s a very literal discipline. So, yes it based on scientific method

I so, can I say for you critical thinking is thinking outside the box?

MI06 at this level?

I generally how would you say it?

MI06 generally critical thinking skills? Yeah, either to be able to think outside the box and being able to approach problem solving with variety of either strategies or perspectives with which trying to solve a problem. I could say something else I’ve forgotten now. Yeah, either to think outside the box or the ability for example to apply scientific methods in a flexible way. So, the ability to adapt your ideas or assumptions, question theories but also apply methods logically is part of critical thinking in that kind of arena I would say, and those sorts of skills I expect them to learn in undergraduate. Not to arrive with the fully form person and able to inspect the scientific methods or you know find novel ways of solving a problem

I so, just now you mentioned about the ability to apply scientific method in a flexible way?

MI06 well the ability to understand you know, if you just apply scientific method like it’s a rubric you know, then if things goes wrong with your process, you know then you need to find ways the feedback (48.22.7)