The EAP Toolkit: Student and Teacher Attitudes towards Blending Online Learning Resources with a Pre-sessional Course

The EAP Toolkit is a set of versatile online learning resources in study skills and English for Academic Purposes for international students. Licensed since 2004 and refreshed again for 2011, it contains over 100 learning resources / over 80 hours of teaching and learning activity. For use on pre-sessional and in-sessional courses or as an independent learning tool, it can be web-hosted or delivered through a platform such as Blackboard or Moodle.

In late 2010 and early 2011 we surveyed licensing institutions, pre-sessional teachers and international students to gather data about EAP Toolkit usage. Here is a snapshot of the responses:

What do students say?

- "It is a huge source that especially international students can profit a lot. I am happy to study with it.
- "Great activities. Definitely helpful.
- "It is simple and organized very easy to follow. Categories are well-ordered so it’s easy to find what I am looking for.
- "The feedback parts are up to the point explaining the details and I also liked the variety of activities including different materials like audios or graphs.
- "The topics and activities are good and useful. Everything is covered.
- "The visual elements in activities like charts, graphs and the feedback parts were really practical and useful.
- "The provided explanations were clear and detailed.
- "It is a huge source that especially international students can profit a lot. I am happy to study with it.

What do teachers say?

- "I found them to be very effective and useful for me as a teacher as well as for my students.
- "The degree of scaffolding is about right to allow them to do the exercises independently.
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What do licensing institutions say?

- "Dedicated EAP self-study materials connects well with EAP curriculum; fits well into the assessed independent learning focus of our Pre-sessional Courses.
- "It has been an invaluable resource for us over the years and long may it continue to be so.
- "A very useful complement to the other sources of language and skills support we offer our students.
- "Excellent materials. The content has stood the test of time.
- "Bite-sized chunks so not overwhelming; clearly structured; covers a lot of useful ground.

The EAP Toolkit contains over 100 learning items under 7 main topics:
- Learning skills
- Academic writing
- Reading and critical thinking
- Listening and note-taking
- Communication skills
- Grammar for academic purposes
- Vocabulary for academic purposes