Presenters

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Humanities Academic Guidance

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University

DMU Library

- Hums 1000
- Library Workshops

Special Events
- 2nd year Dissertation Workshop
- 1st year Introduction to Research Workshop

University
SLAS & CLaSS

- Induction Self Assessment Exercise
- Writing Workshops & Tutorials
- General Liaison/Mutual Promotion to Students

University

Other

- Royal Literary Fund Fellow
- Richard Hall: Blackboard
- Maths Learning Centre
- Learning Development Network (LDN)

Faculty

Centre for English Language Learning (CELL)

- Improve Your Writing Workshops
- Individual Tutorials
- Special Events

Faculty
Subjects

HUMANITIES

All Humanities Lecturers

- Recommending Students to Visit Academic Guidance

Subject and Module Leaders

- Study Skills Inputs to Subject Modules

Faculty
Other

- Heather Conboy: E Learning Co-ordinator

- Anne Reck: Academic Liaison Disability Co-ordinator

Academic Guidance (AG) inputs to subject modules

15 subjects in our Faculty:

English, English Language, Creative Writing, Education Studies, History, International Relations, Politics, Film Studies, Journalism, Media & Communication, Arts & Festivals Management, Dance, Drama Studies, Music Technology, Performing Arts.

The process

- AG inputs are invited, to 1st year core modules
- Programme teams consider: AG topics, timing
- Endorsed by Faculty management
- Faculty no longer has a 'skills module'

But:

- system does not develop skills across three years of study, suggested as the ideal (Allan & Clarke, 2007:73; Wingate, 2009:459)
- 2nd, 3rd yr & postgrad modules rely on 'ad hoc' arrangement

AG contributions, total number of modules 2000-01 to 2010-11
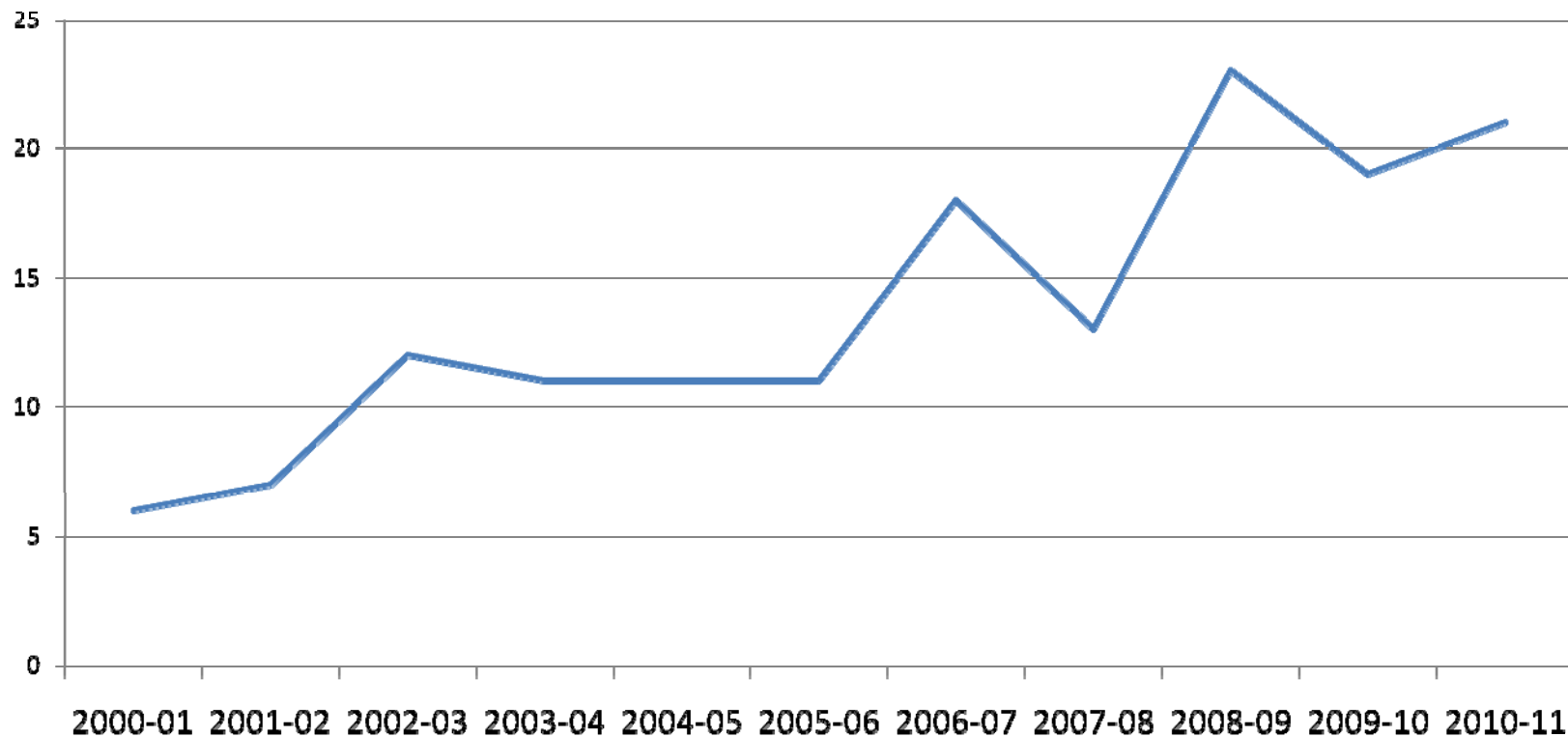
Strengths of inputs system (1)

- Tailored to programme, by programme team
- Is usually part of module: handbook, timetable
- Reminds students who AG tutors are, what we do
  - increases student visits to AG Centre and Blackboard site
  - 'I wouldn't approach study support because I don't know much about them or how they'd be able to help' (DMU student quoted by Pillai, 2010:132)

Strengths of inputs system (2)

- Explicit links with module assessments

  - 'the more that skills sessions are linked to a particular course of study, the more the student is likely to feel confident in how to apply them' (Cottrell, 2001:98)

- Enables AG to improve and increase resources
  - e.g. handout, *The Importance of Accurate Referencing*

- Collaborations with Library
  - e.g. joint lecture/demos to Education, Dance

Weaknesses of inputs system

- Last-minute requests
- Varying levels of colleagues' familiarity with AG

  - new colleagues not always introduced to AG

- Skills addressed in subject, e.g. Journalism
- Difficult to obtain student feedback/evaluation

The 'What': AG topics offered

- Research
- Time management
- Effective reading
- Note taking
- Academic writing (essays, report, reviews): overview, structure, argument, style, referencing
- Reflective writing
- Verbal presentations
- Revision & exams

# Topics most requested by modules, 2000-01 to 2010-11
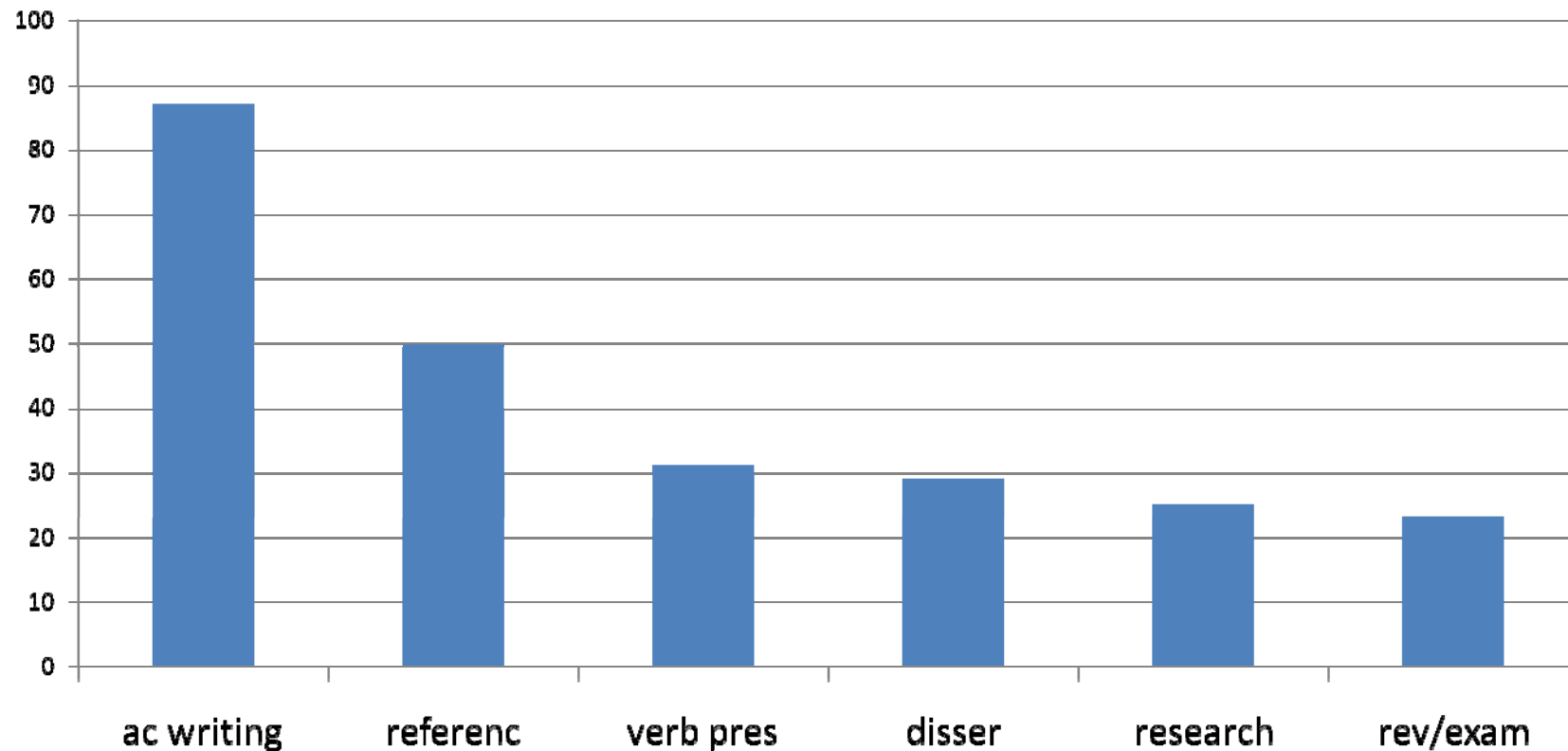
All topics requested by modules: 2009-10

- ac writing
- referenc
- dissert
- research
- verb pres
- rev/exam
- reading
- time man
- note tak
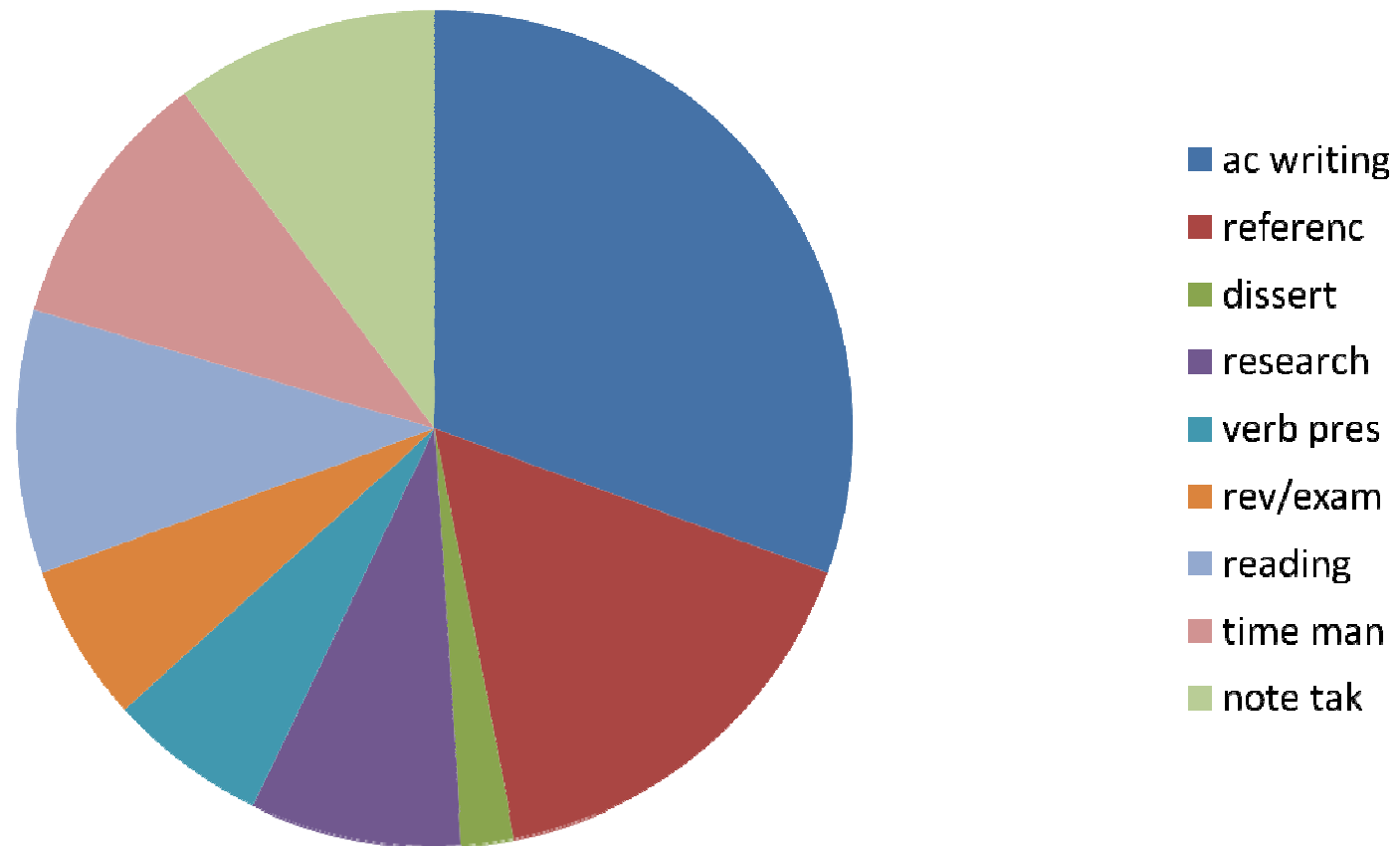
Issues of topics requested by modules

- Fairly typical pattern over 11 years
- Most requested = academic writing, referencing
  - unsurprising – much assessment is written
- Reading, time management, note taking = more requested by modules than students
- Possibility of repetition, e.g. for 'joint' students

Raised by students in voluntary 1-to-1 tutorials 2009-10

- ac writing
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- note tak
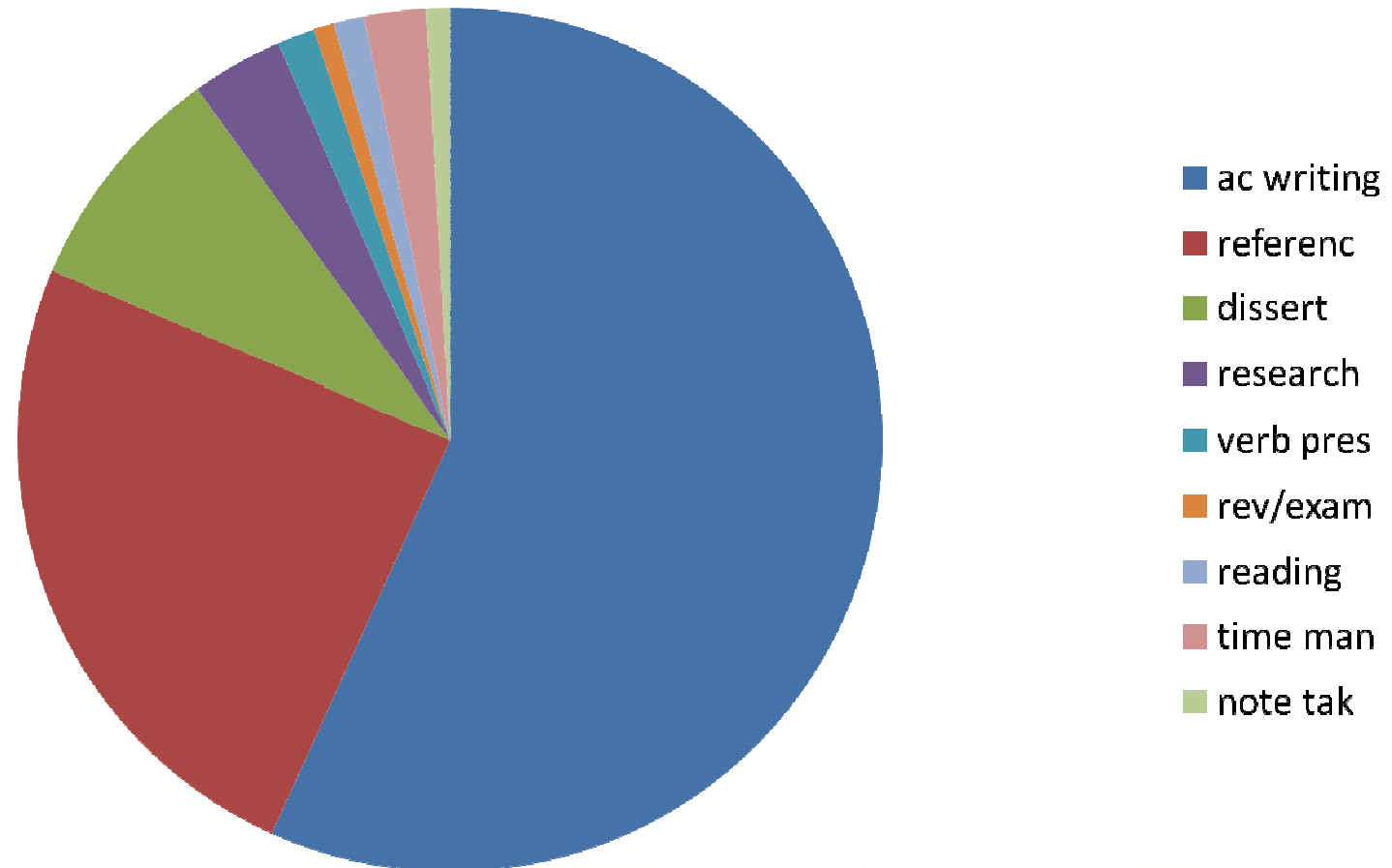
Issues: topics raised by students one-to-one

- As for module inputs, broadly typical pattern over 11 years

- Academic writing/referencing occurs most often

- Dissertation: more requested by students than by modules/subjects
  - comparative importance of dissertation marks
  - 2nd year dissertation event + resources on AG Blackboard
  - 3rd year dissertation modules unlikely to have lecture/seminar pattern

The 'When': Timings of inputs

- Full lecture (50 mins)

- Part-lecture (e.g. 15 mins)

- Handouts

Lengths of inputs, 2008-09 to 2010-11

Issues of 15 minute visits to modules

- up to five per module
- timed to relate to assessments
- 'the right info at the right time can have enormous impact', (DMU student quoted by Pillai, 2010:135)
- allows for variety within subject lecture
- less perceived 'spreading' into subject lecture time
- 15min spell of listening may be optimum for learning (see Biggs, 2000:100 – concentration spans in large lectures)

Issues of 50 min visits to modules

- more chance for detailed/exemplar AG material

- more scope to relate to module work

- lecture theatre setting not always ideal, e.g. for inductive approaches, Q&A

- may be attendance issues if outside timetabled lectures

The 'Who': module tutors present, or not?
AG inputs 2008-09 to 2010-11
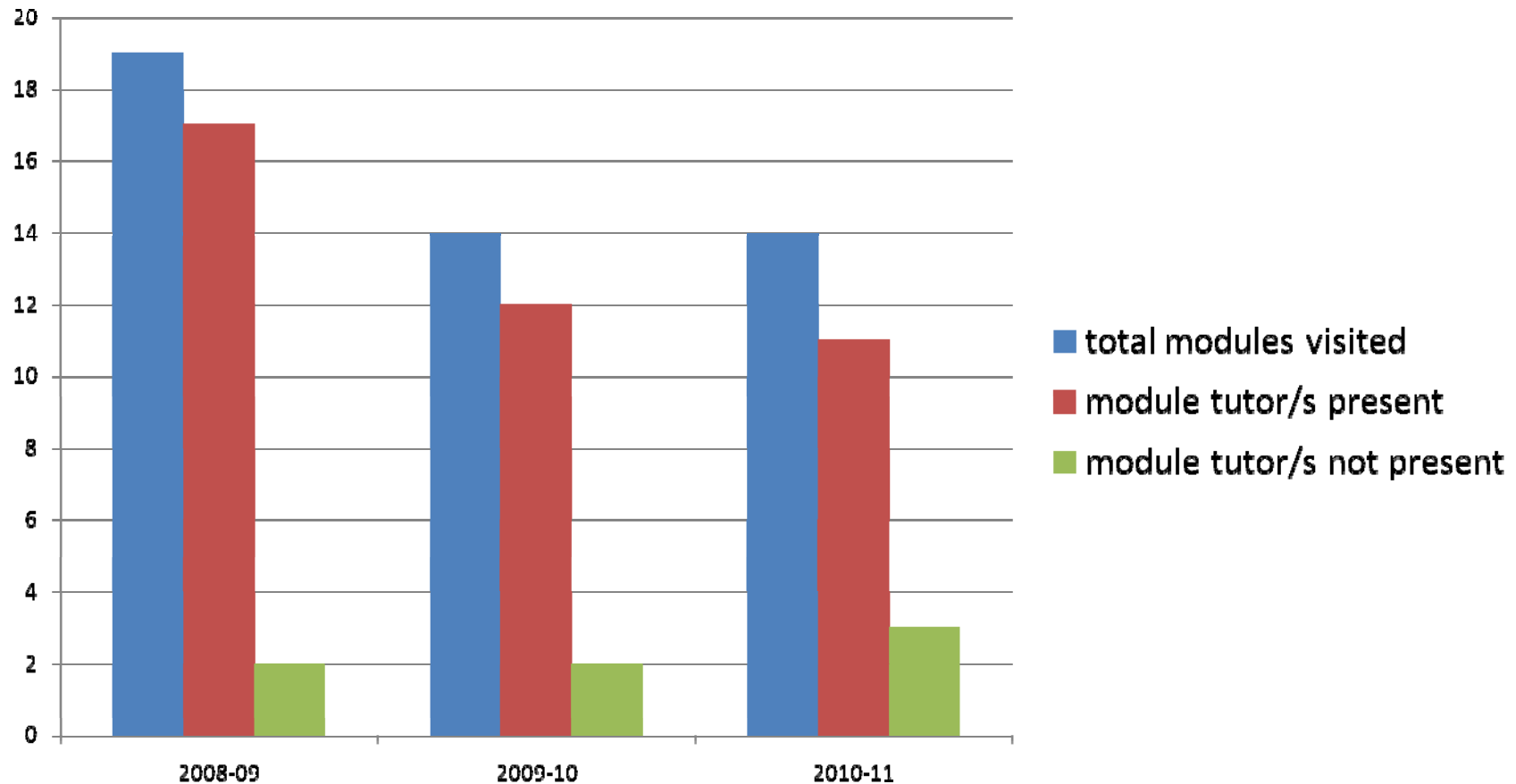
Module tutor present

- Module tutor encouraged to 'chip in'
- Counters a possible 'deficit/remedial' view
  - a benefit of in-curriculum learning development as also pointed out by Johnson and Rooney (2009)
- Reminds colleagues of AG tutorial system, handouts, Blackboard resources
- Builds good working relationships

Case study: Television Studies

- 2nd year module
- 1 lecture, team-teaching: AG tutor + module leader
- 'Students need their lecturers to show they consider the development of study/learning skills to be important [and] relate general study skills to their specific subject area' (Cottrell, 2001:100)
- Addressed markers' feedback on previous essay
- Explicitly linked to forthcoming essay
- Examples shown and follow-up exercise in seminars
- One student (unsought feedback): session very relevant & timely
- 2nd years well-placed to contextualise skills
- Marks count towards degree

Module tutor not present

- May be seen by students as less relevant

- More reliance by AG on module handbook, to prepare relevant session

- More difficult to obtain subsequent feedback from colleague

- Cawkwell and Roddis (2009:6) - 'parachute-in model...can be seen by course tutors as a form of outsourcing'

Your comments, please, on...

The 'What'

The 'When'

The 'Who'

in the light of your own experiences/plans, and our experiences, as presented.

References

Allan, Jo and Clarke, Karen (2007) 'Nurturing Supportive Learning Environments in Higher Education Through the Teaching of Study Skills: To Embed or Not to Embed?' *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* Vol.19 No.1, pp64-76.

Biggs, John (2000) *Teaching for Quality Learning at University* Buckingham, SRHE and OUP.

Cawkwell, Jackie and Roddis, Philip (2009) 'Learning development – Models of Support', paper from ALDinHE conference, Bournemouth University, 2009.

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Johnson, Stuart and Rooney, Steve (2009) '*Disciplinary Action* (Working with subject-departments to design and deliver academic skills training and resources)' paper from ALDinHE conference, Bournemouth University, 2009.

Pillai, Mary (2010) 'Locating learning development in a university library: promoting effective academic help-seeking', *New Review of Academic Librarianship*, 16, pp.121-144.

Wingate, Ursula (2006) 'Doing away with "study skills"', *Teaching in Higher Education*, Vol.11, No.4, October 2006, pp.457-469.