



Name: **Aaron Woodcock**

Teaching Fellow in English for Science and EAP

Institution:

International Study and Language Institute, University of Reading

Biography

Aaron Woodcock has a background in teaching both science and language. He currently uses his joint expertise to convene and co-ordinate English for Science provision at the University of Reading, where he works on both the in-sessional and pre-sessional programmes. Caught between two quite different worlds, he is an advocate for more communication skills in science teaching and more science in EAP and modern foreign languages teaching.

Presentation:

Two in One: Meeting the challenge of specificity and developing scientific communication skills

Abstract:

One of the key challenges of teaching ESAP writing for many EAP teachers is understanding subject-specific student writing, especially in highly technical subjects such as Chemistry. This presentation offers one way of getting around this challenge. When designing undergraduate ESAP modules for Chemists and Food Scientists, the speaker found one solution to this challenge was empathy writing (Nesi & Gardner, 2012, p. 42), whereby writing tasks involve setting up a fictitious audience of non-specialists, such as company managers or high school students. This approach not only resulted in subject-specific student texts comprehensible to EAP teachers, but also a course that broadens students' communication skills beyond the confines of academia, a graduate attribute (University of Reading, 2016, p. 2) that is becoming increasingly valued in the 21st century. This reconfiguration of complex scientific ideas into non-academic genres also had the knock-on benefit of developing students' paraphrasing skills and comprehension of scientific texts (a finding supported by English, 2015). This presentation showcases examples of teaching materials and ends with an opportunity for open discussion on the benefits and drawbacks of adopting such an approach.

N.B. The phrase 'two in one' in the title makes reference to the title of a chemistry article (Dux, 2013) that is used as a model text in the ESAP modules.