Building a community of writers in a university


For guidance on citations see FAQs.
Building a community of writers in a university

Take one university...
- 20 hours teaching per week
- High number of ‘second-career’ academics
- Focus on applied courses
- Key priority: improved position in REF

...one writing group

An ethnographic study: telling their stories

Thinking differently about writing
- "Writing is much more of a priority...I've been more intentional about setting aside specific parts of my week for writing."

Making the tacit explicit
- "[It was] a space to acknowledge that the writing process is complex and emotionally draining but ultimately potentially satisfying."

Co-constructing ideas and understanding
- "[A space] for discussion and debate...you test and work through those ideas that are kind of bubbling up from the surface."

Building a community
- "It feels like I am among friends who share my goals and can help keep me on track."
- "I learned about how other people work, how they think about writing."

Producing writing
- "The story paints a picture of progress with writing, but also some false starts, derailments and changes of direction... challenges and triumphs."

Writing spaces need to be:
- About process before productivity
- Both social and individual
- Both visible and protected

Participants developed a more coherent sense of their wider academic identity and began to see writing as a legitimate and valuable activity.

The interplay between individual and institutional is key: the University needs to clearly articulate the nature and purpose of writing within the institution.

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