

## Notes for BERA 2009 conference presenters

Firstly, I'd like to thank you for your contribution to BERA 2009. I hope that you have found the submission and registration procedures to be satisfactory.

### Discussion time

There was a consultation with BERA members held in January 2009 and one of the findings was to increase the amount of time within sessions for discussion. With this in mind, you'll see that we have been able to schedule many sessions with three papers rather than the customary four papers per session. However providing more discussion time does require a certain level of discipline from presenters. Colleagues who are chairing sessions will be asked to keep a tight reign on time and to ensure a fair distribution of time between presenters. They will show you a warning card '5 minutes to go', then a '2 minutes to go' card and finally, if required, the 'Stop' card.

You can help by preparing your presentation (including any PowerPoint slides that you may be using) to fit into your allocated time and to keep to time when presenting your paper. There is a maximum of 20 minutes per paper (which includes some discussion time) and any time remaining in the session is to be used for general questions and discussion.

### Giving a presentation

Giving a presentation is a skill that comes more easily to some than others. It does not necessarily follow that good researchers are good communicators. Engage with your audience by talking about your work rather than reading to your audience. The following comments have been taken from the evaluation of BERA 2008;

- *"Some presenters, despite the value/interest of their papers, could improve their presentational skills"*
- *"We need some sort of visual prompts ..... ALL talk is hard to take on board when one has paid close attention to a number of papers"*
- *"Why do people read their papers .... I can read it myself!!! There is no great merit in reading a paper, the skill in conveying your ideas/thoughts etc comes in communicating those ideas by talking .... People should PRESENT not read their papers. It is very patronising to be read to!"*

### Preparing your presentation

When preparing your presentation you may find the following suggestions useful;

- Prepare for a maximum 20 minute presentation. Note this should include 5 minutes discussion time.

- Decide how much of your time will be allocated to various sections of your paper (e.g. background, methodology, data analysis and interpretation, issues, implications and conclusions).
- Plan and practice so that you don't become a victim of the 'I'm running out of time' syndrome.
- Keep the number of slides manageable - you are not going to be able to use 30 slides in a 15 minute presentation !
- Keep the amount of information on each slide manageable and relevant – both from your perspective of delivering it and from that of your audience having to read and understand the slide while listening to you.
- It is probably not sensible to offer rules on minimum font sizes, as much depends on precisely what you want to put on your slides; but as a general rule, the font should be at least 18 pt. It is also worth noting that if using PowerPoint, please make sure that the colours or animations do not distract from what you want to say, or hinder the legibility.
- Have respect for your audience by preparing a presentation for BERA rather than using something that you may have prepared for another purpose and skipping various slides or sections.

### **British Education Index**

All conference presenters are encouraged to submit their full conference paper to the British Education Index's Education-line collection for indexing and permanent on-line archiving. Education-line currently contains many BERA papers among its collection of texts. Papers in the Education-line collection are also listed in all forms of the main BEI database. Papers can be submitted before, during or after the conference. As soon as your paper has been completed, it can be sent as an email attachment (as a Word document) to [education-line@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:education-line@leeds.ac.uk). Further details can be found in the "More about the BEI" area at <http://www.bei.ac.uk>. (*click Education-line inclusion criteria and submission procedure*). Phone (+44) (0) 113 343 5525. Email: [bei@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:bei@leeds.ac.uk)

### **Paper copies**

The expectation is that you will provide your audience with a hard copy of your paper. These comments came from the evaluation of BERA 2008;

- *“Many delegates were not providing papers to support their presentations (some did provide slide pages) and it is increasingly evident over the years that less and less hard-copy papers are available. Either we all provide them or we don't. Many presenters asked delegates to email them for electronic copy of papers which is not appropriate practice.”*
- *“the majority of sessions I attended had no papers to issue. I do not feel that this is acceptable when others (like myself) go to great lengths to fulfil this aspect of the conference.”*
- *“I also want easy access to papers in other sessions when there are time clashes.”*

- *“There were generally insufficient paper copies of the articles”*

## **Press**

In addition, please submit two hard copies of your paper to the Registration Desk when you arrive so that we can log them in case of queries from the press or other news media. BERA has sought to raise the profile of the conference through increased press exposure. In 2008 there was unprecedented interest from the press in the BERA conference thanks to the efforts of a dedicated press officer, David Budge. David is in charge of press releases again for 2009 and we would like you to be aware that he may contact you in advance of, or during, the conference about your paper if it is going to be included in any publicity for the conference. If you do not want press comment on your paper, please make this clear to David. Do note, however, that you are presenting in a public arena. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

## **Technology**

Computers (Windows XP and Office 2003) and data projectors will be provided as standard in each room. However we have been assured that Manchester University AV department will ensure that the Office 2007 conversion software is installed on all computers, so bringing your presentation in Office 2007 format should not be a problem. If you are planning to use a data projector, it might be advisable to bring copies of your presentation in both formats and on a CD and a memory stick (to cover all eventualities !). If you wish to hire extra equipment or if you have any queries about the facilities that will be available, please email [amy@in-conference.org.uk](mailto:amy@in-conference.org.uk)

## **Timing**

Please, if at all possible, turn up at the session venue in good time to introduce yourself to the Chair, check if there are any last minute changes to the running order or timing etc. and, if applicable, to load your presentation onto the computer.

## **Evaluation**

As in previous years, there will be an online evaluation after the conference, but I am happy to receive your comments and suggestions at any time.

Thank you and enjoy BERA 2009.

*Danny Durant (Conference Committee Chair)*

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