Embedding Inclusive Assessment

A QAA Collaborative Enhancement Project Workshop

Project Partners: Teesside University (lead), Oxford Brookes University, Greenwich University, University of Hertfordshire, University of Brighton, University of West of England, Kingston University, and Birmingham City University.

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Embedding Inclusive Assessment: An Overview

Project Aims and Objectives

- A collaborative analysis of the impact of alternative assessment methodologies and associated regulations introduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Conduct collaborative fieldwork, focus groups and data analysis of assessment outcomes in partnership with students.

- Develop a shared understanding of cross-institution inclusive assessment approaches and policy arrangements.

- Produce evidence-informed inclusive attributes of assessment and recommendations for implementation in policy and practice.

Project Outputs

A series of practical resources with the aim of supporting HE leaders, academics, and students in higher education embed inclusive assessment policies, initiatives, and interventions:

- A set of **Inclusive Assessment Design Attributes**

- **Research Report** outlining inclusive attributes of assessment and recommendations for implementation

- A **Reflective Toolkit** summarising best practice from across participating institutions

- A **Case Study Series** illustrating the types of approaches that were deployed, alongside their impact on student learning and performance

Scan the QR code to access project resources

What is inclusive assessment? (up to 3 words)

confidence building
collaborative   equally accessible
acknowledging difference   level playing field   student focused   developmental
access   learning objectives   choice-giving   holi and flexible
for all   reasonable adjustments   respectful
complex   covering all aspects   removes barriers
attentive to difference   outcomes   decolonised   tailored   autonomy   student-focused
students' own language   supportive   socially just   understood
no detriment   understanding   variety   active   accessibility   considers all
achievable   open   engaging   fair   diverse   suitable for all
open minded   available   prepared   experience   real world   caring   clear   opportunity   equalising   context   engaged   outcome-focused
doable   accessible   life commitment
appropriate   equitable   flexible   co-designed   student-led   enabling
different types   valid   choice   accessible to all   co-constructed
personal   authentic   engagement   for learning
creativity   holistic   inclusive   considerate   authrntic   equity   varied   diversity   relevant   proportionate   formative
everybody   participatory   partnership   rigorous   disabilities   scaffolded
empowering and enabling   flexibility   involved
fairness   student progress   strengths-based
scaffolded to individuals   disability-friendly   quality-driven
opportunities for choice   compassionate

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Definition of Inclusive Assessment

Fair assessments which are rigorous and accessible

Enables all students to be assessed without highlighting disability

Equity of opportunity

Even playing field with no additional hurdles

Designing assessment to enable ALL students to demonstrate learning outcomes to the best of their abilities

Accessible, fair, flexible and transparent

Inclusive assessment is the fair abilty for all to join and participate.

Assessment that enables everyone to achieve to their fullest potential regardless of age or gender.

Students are able to demonstrate their learning and skills development in a way that is not prescribed.

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Definition of Inclusive Assessment

Supports learning and enables success

Inclusive assessment is diverse, accessible and allows all students to perform to the best of their ability.

Assessments that are accessible for all students, that have an element of choice and flexibility.

Students feel there is equity in our assessment strategy

Making things easier for students to improve outcomes across mass-delivery HE programmes.

Assessment that supports individuals to achieve the intended learning to the best of their ability

A checkpoint which is meaningful and accessible to all

A programme of assessment that ensures everyone can achieve to their full potential

Flexible and creative, capturing a wide range of skills

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Definition of Inclusive Assessment

An assessment that enables students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding according to quality standards

Accessible assessments that can be adapted to the needs of the learner

a student centred, flexible and accessible approach which recognizes and values the diversity of the students we serve

Ensures equity of experience and outcomes, and enables all students to do their best work.

Accessible for all through design and/or scaffolding

Equally fair to all students

Equitable, fair and accessible assessment that promotes learning that relates to students' own lives and contexts

Accessible to eveyone

assessment that is suited to all and enables the opportunity for all to achieve

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Definition of Inclusive Assessment

Assessment which is accessible and gives everyone the opportunity to do their best work without the need for personalised adjustments

An approach which acknowledges and recognises individual student journeys as they engage in achieving learning objectives

An evaluation of learning outcomes that embraces different learner types, cultures and ideas

Accessible assessment for all equally available

Every student, across the entire diversity of the student population, can access and participate fully in assessment.

Assessment which is open to all wth no barriers to participation and attainment.

Inclusive assessment enables students access authentic, flexible, developmental variations of assessments that enhance the learning experience.

Equity of opportunity

Inclusive assessment allows all students to demonstrate their learning in ways that work best for them. It is fair and accessible to all.

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Definition of Inclusive Assessment

gives students options of how to demonstrate their knowledge/skills, by different means, to ensure they are not disadvantaged by the assessment type

A particular group of people should not be at an advantage or disadvantage than another. An even playing field

A range of assessment formats that are culturally inclusive

Assessment that best allows all students to engage, and demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding, without additional barriers imposed.

Inclusive assessment breaks down barriers and enables students to play to their unique strengths. It allows them to demonstrate their learning through authentic tasks

Assessment which provides fair and equitable opportunity for all students irrespective of gender,culture,race or disability

Inclusive assessment provides all students with an equal opportunity to succeed.

Innovative approach to assessment!

Inclusive assessment supports assessment for learning, it should be authentic and it should empower learners to learn

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Definition of Inclusive Assessment

Accessible by all students, providing flexibility for students to demonstrate their ability to meet learning objectives

Assessment that helps students demonstrate their understanding and/or ability regardless of attributes that might otherwise impede

Considers the needs of all students, giving them the opportunity to be empowered

Assessment that allows all students to show their learning without inducing mental health trauma.

An assessment of learning outcomes that enables all students to fairly demonstrate their learning assunto ci created criteria

Enabling all

"The only constant is its purpose: that all are able to achieve." (Rodriguez - Falcon et al, 2010).

A co-created, flexible of a students understanding on the topic which is accessible and relevant to that student.

A way to gain understanding of learning through a diverse range of methods

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Definition of Inclusive Assessment

Assessment that is accessible to all and enables all students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills and their achievement of learning outcomes.

On-going activity that allow students to understand their progress and meet the objectives of the course.

Inclusive assessment widens access for learners to succeed on their journey

No need for reasonable adjustments

Assessment that considers the potential need for fair and flexible opportunity for students to demonstrate learning outcomes, whilst factoring in learning barriers and opportunity.

Give everyone the same chance

Choice first instead of adjustment afterwards

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Inclusive Assessment: a position statement

We believe inclusive assessment …

"… is realised through holistic and flexible approaches that recognise value and reflect student diversity, facilitating choice and enabling every individual to demonstrate their achievement with respect to academic/professional standards and empowering them to take ownership of their learning journey.

To achieve this, assessment needs to be strategically designed as an embedded element of the curriculum to proactively consider students' needs and to remove systemic barriers in institutional policies, processes, and practices."

Inclusive Assessment Attributes	**Embeds support.**	Academic and wellbeing support is integrated within teaching and assessment. It is easily accessible, dialogic, responsive, and considerate of individual student needs.
	Develops assessment literacy.	Students are actively engaged with assessment processes with a focus on clarifying learning outcomes and expectations. Students and staff share an understanding of the purposes, requirements and approaches of assessment.
	Provides formative opportunities.	Assessment is framed as a developmental process within which students engage in formative tasks and receive timely, relevant and manageable feedback. Students feel safe to fail, knowing they will be supported to learn from the experience.
	Communicates meaningfully.	The assessment process is clear and transparent to all developed through a constructive dialogue between staff and students. Different levels, and modes, of communication are managed to ensure timely and accessible information.
	Enables personalisation. **Provides formative opportunities.**	Assessment is designed to facilitate ownership and flexibility in how students demonstrate learning outcomes. Students feel empowered to make informed choices over what, when, and how they are assessed where appropriate.
	Fosters digital capabilities.	Assessment design is alive to the opportunities of different technologies. It creates a culture in which students and staff can develop and extend their digital capabilities, facilitating learning and teaching in diverse contexts and environments.
	Promotes authenticity.	The assessment tasks are relevant to students' subject areas, employment sectors and contexts of further study to which students will progress. The assessment culture encourages multi-modal and creative assessment design.
	Assumes considerate policies and processes.	The design of assessment policies and processes are informed by an awareness of student needs, understanding of external pressures, and insights into structural and societal barriers.
	Requires continuous reflection.	Assessment is continuously reviewed and critiqued, using feedback and discussions with students, staff, and key stakeholders, to ensure ongoing enhancement of policies, practices and processes.

Working with the Reflective Toolkit (1)

- Questions for leaders, academics & students for each attribute

- Designed to prompt reflection & aid action planning

- Designed to bring together different perspectives on assessment to ensure all barriers to inclusivity addressed

- Download the reflective toolkit:

Activity

You will be split into 9 groups for 20 mins

- Each group will look at the questions for 1 attribute in the reflective toolkit, from the 3 different perspectives (leaders, academics, students)

Discussion Task

- How inclusive is assessment in your context?
- How could assessment be enhanced in relation to your assigned attribute?

- Agree who will enter the feedback from the group discussion

Activity feedback

You will be asked to record the following information via Mentimeter:

- 3 points about key observations you made about the inclusivity of assessment in your context

- Feedback ideas on how to make assessment more inclusive with regards to the attribute you focused on

Groups: Attribute-in-focus

Group 1 – **Embeds support** (facilitator: Sam)

Group 2 – **Develops assessment literacy** (facilitator: Helen)

Group 3 – **Provides formative opportunities** (facilitator: Karen)

Group 4 – **Communicates meaningfully** (facilitator: Jennie)

Group 5 – **Enables personalisation** (facilitator: Nicola)

Group 6 – **Fosters digital capabilities** (facilitator: Laura)

Group 7 – **Promotes authenticity** (Facilitator: Maggie)

Group 8 – **Assumes considerate policies & processes** (Facilitator: Juliet)

Group 9 – **Requires continuous reflection** (Facilitator: Carolyn)

Discuss:

How inclusive is assessment in your context?

How could assessment be enhanced in relation to the attribute?

What are the 3 key observations about the attribute in your context (please include attribute number)

A3. Important to engage students in reflective practice around feedback and formative assessment.

Personalisation is limited by policies and practicalities

Attribute 4 (communicates meaningfully): Consistent information is really important.

A3. Challenges for academics in terms of turnaround time for formative assessment.

6. Pedagogy comes first. Digital capability is a tool.

5. Enable personalisation Personalisation can have a big impact on staff workload and welfare

Group 2: Assessment literacyReducing anxiety to support engagement; timing of support, the terminology is clear; assessment briefs are clear and exemplars

8. Challenge to know when to make alternative assessments available (need to support, train and resource academics)

A4 (communicates meaningfully): Important to think about the student journey and get feedback from students

What are the 3 key observations about the attribute in your context (please include attribute number)

Personalisation requires high level of assessment literacy for both students and staff

Attribute 9 = Embedding inclusivity into programme educational outcomes to guide assessment vs knee jerk reaction module by module or programme by programme level, reflection on both approaches would help determine outcomes of these approaches

Group 2: Assessment literacy.Wider approaches to tackling improvement of assessment literacy

5 PersonalisationMust work in tandem with developing students assessment literacy so they can make informed choices

6. There are a wide variety of contexts that have an impact.

7. Authenticity. It may be challenging for academics to create authentic assessments if they don't come from industry.

A4 (comms meaningfully): Important to think about language and check for understanding

A3. Time issues make formative assessment difficult to engage in quality dialogue around assessment for staff and for students.

A5. Assessment literacy varies between cohorts can be difficult to navingate and implement personalisation

What are the 3 key observations about the attribute in your context (please include attribute number)

8. A larger number of students do not WANT to do presentations. Difficult to manage when only some have been assessed to have special needs in this area.

Group 2: Assessment literacyChoice is a good thing, but we need structure to help students make informed choices. No secrets and formative activities will also be crucial

A1 embedding wellbeing in assessment is an ongoing requirement and not just an immefiate tesponse to Covid

8. PSRBs have own requirements which may inhibit us.

6. Digital self-efficacy and confidence are as important as the skills (which can be easy to learn).

Attribute 9 = although some approaches may work reflection will help determine strengths and weaknesses to help refine assessment practice - we highlighted the need for a safety net in terms of trial and error learning

8. Online assessments are not necessarily more inclusive.

7. Authenticity. Can exams be authentic?

Attribute 9 = Help academics work smart by embedding reflection into existing practice e.g. end of year processes

What are the 3 key observations about the attribute in your context (please include attribute number)

7. Authenticity. We need a strong definition of authenticity and what we mean by it.

7. Authenticity. Adding flexibility and choice can create difficulties with parity of assessments and staff workload.

A1 consider timing of assessments. Create checklists to ensure assessments are accessible in terms of language. You should be assessing students against LOs and not assessing stidents to understand the task.

How could assessment be enhanced in relation to the attribute? (please include attribute number)

Enables Personalisation (5) - Provide students with an assessment method menu for the student to choose how to meet learning outcomes

8. Policy changes in relation to alternative assessments

A3. Connect the dots better for students in terms of supporting them to create plan of action based on formative assessment and feedback.

5. Menu of assessment choice

2: assessment literacy; ensuring assessment tasks are clearly articulated in well laid out assessment briefs with opportunities for students to explore these within the module

Attribute 1: students could be reassured of the integrity of different assessment types.

Attribute 9 = embedding reflective practice into existing reflective processes e.g. end of year programme reviews

2-Assessment literacy- include in SoW,;engage progression support/PTs for assessment specfic sessions

A4 (comms meaningfully): provide training to academic staff, ask for feedback/ check understanding, check assessment briefs with students, share understandings of staff around assessment and where students are at.

How could assessment be enhanced in relation to the attribute? (please include attribute number)

A3. Make better use of peer to peer learning and support.

5. Get the policy and regulations right!

2. Assessment literacy: allow choice but ensure that there is a structure for students to make them feel safe

Attribute 9 = looking at how this can be included at regulatory level

8. Support for academics and liaison between them and central services.

5Offer appropriate scaffolding to build assessment literacy / enable assessment as learning

A5. Choice across programmes and opportunity to remedy failure using alternative modes of assessment

6. Fostering digital capability requires attribute 1 (embedding support). Allied to this, we need to improve access.

2. assessment literacy: Have exemplars to allow students AND staff to contextualise the assessment. More transparant

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How could assessment be enhanced in relation to the attribute? (please include attribute number)

A3. Link study skills and support more directly to feedback - enhance feedforward and student action planning.

Attribute 1: Provide clear instructions to students to minimise stress.

7. Reconsidering the use of exams and how authentic they are/can be.

6. There needs to be clear scaffolding of skills.

Better information to lecturers to profile groups they will teach and assess to adapt and design assessment engaging the group

6. Work to reduce the ageism around digital capabilities.

A3. Encourage students to take the lead on formative assessment through providing anonymised examples of assessment and feedback.

Attribute 9 = providing space/time for academics to be creative when producing inclusive assessment but also providing a safety net for the reflective process when something doesn't work out so well. Co-creation with students could help with this?

Attribute 1: Think about the concept of time and what that might mean to various groups when assessments are being set e.g., students on degree apprenticeships, carers etc.

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How could assessment be enhanced in relation to the attribute? (please include attribute number)

Encourage innovative assessment appropriate for today's student

Group 6: Digital divide. Teachers require positive training to enable confidence .

If you want to offer a menu of assessment choices then it may be necessary to establish a shared understanding in your organisation on equivalency of different types and modes to make this choice offer transparent and fair for students

6. There is a need to improve resilience/reflection and self-assessment - people should be able to find their own solutions - eg: Google, ask a friend. Knowing how is more important than knowing that.

Focus on digital self-efficacy

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Working with the Reflective Toolkit (2)

- In the Toolkit we recommend ways to use the toolkit individually but also collaboratively

- How would you use it collaboratively? Please post your thoughts in the chat.

Next Steps?

Can you identify ...

A Quick win (Q)

- *That can be integrated into current assessment practice / processes with no need for wholesale change ...*

A medium-term goal (M)

- *A desired change that implicates assessment design (may need approval/mod-change) but is worth the time and investment ...*

A long-term aspiration (L)

- *A fundamental change in approach that would necessitate programme/course review but is a commitment to a broader vision.*

Thank You

Please contact Teesside University Lead for any subsequent enquiries:

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