# 4.a. ‘Try your best, one assignment doesn’t define you’ - Insights on assessment and feedback from widening participation students in the Law School

## Presenters:

Alice Mills, Joe Price, Tina McKee, Gina Collins, Claire Fitzpatrick, and Georgina Firth

## Chair:

Abdul Aziz Hafiz

## Subtheme:

Inclusive Assessment

## Abstract:

Widening participation (WP) students are from backgrounds, or groups, that are often under-represented in higher education. In the current policy climate, characterised by austerity and a cost-of-living crisis, efforts to improve support for WP students are arguably more important than ever.

Whilst there exist many successful recruitment initiatives supporting access to university education for WP students, there remains scope to enhance WP student success once they start their studies. Sadly, there are established awarding gaps in the university sector reflecting differences in attainment for some groups of WP students (Universities UK, 2022). One significant challenge is that assessment design, instructions, and feedback may be framed in ways that are less accessible for some WP students than for non-WP students.

This presentation will outline the initial findings from the first stage of the ‘Law School Widening Participation Project’, which aims to explore the experiences of current WP students through an ethically approved empirical study. The initial findings have shown barriers for WP students in assessment and feedback practices, notably specific difficulties around the transition to in-person exams post-COVID and language barriers for international students in academic writing and subsequent feedback. The experiences of WP students more widely have also demonstrated impact on completing assessments to the best of their ability. These initial findings will inform ongoing initiatives in the Law School to develop inclusive assessments and assessment literacy. By listening to the perspectives of our WP students, we hope to not only share, but learn from their insights.

## Time:

10:40 to 11:10

## Location:

Welcome Centre Lecture Theatre 1

# 4.b. Skills 'teaching' in an HEI context: creating classroom cultures of worth, safety and fun!

## Presenters:

Laura Somerville and Jane Pye

## Chair:

Dr Sunita Abraham

## Subtheme:

Marking and Feedback

## Abstract:

It is usually a requirement that professionally accredited HE programmes prepare students for the career they are likely to pursue on successful completion of their degree. Social work is no different to other qualifying courses in this respect. University-based social work programmes in the UK all involve assessed practice placements which include the expectation that students can demonstrate knowledge, skills and values in practice that they have learnt in the classroom context. Although social work as a profession does not state exactly what skills students should have on qualification, or how these skills should be taught, there is a growing recognition that students should have opportunities to practise skills experientially in the classroom before embarking on their assessed placements. Social work educators have a responsibility to support students to develop skills which will enable their practice to be fulfilling and successful. This presentation will aim to share some insights into how such skills ‘teaching’ can be done in a way that feels worthwhile, safe and fun for students.

## Time:

10:40 to 11:10

## Location:

Welcome Centre Lecture Theatre 4

# 4.c. Innovative assessment methods for studio-based design modules

## Presenter:

Dr Chaoran Wang

## Chair:

Phil Devine

## Subtheme:

Academic Integrity

## Abstract:

Assessment as a means evaluation or appraisal, has in fact been in use in almost all of the subjects as part of the curriculum design. The choice of the assessment approach is due to the nature of the subject and its reflection of the module aims. Design as an inter-disciplinary subject, usually reflects culture and social issues that occurs in lifestyle, aesthetics, economics, and technology has been developed from practice over a hundred years. There are 8 types of assessment methods in art and design education. In which course work, project and portfolio have been chosen to assess studio-based modules in Lancaster University. For example, the assessment of Lica 243: Design Interaction: Material is 100% course work, including 2 annotated portfolios. However, 7 out of 28 submitted portfolios were found to have plagiarism. Which indicated that portfolios may not be the best approach to assess studio-based design works. This paper explores novel assessment methods by identifying the assessment methods in studio-based modules in other subjects and their fulfilments in design subjects. The possibility of curriculum development and the influence on department policy is thus the focus of attention. An insight into the assessment methodology for design studio-based course is thus provided.

## Time:

10:40 to 11:10

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 6

# 4.d. Groupwork and oral exams

## Presenter:

Mark MacDonald

## Chair:

Susan Armitage

## Subtheme:

Using AI in Assessment Design

## Abstract:

In this talk I will focus on two assessment types which develop important employability skills (and will continue to do so even after AI replaces the bulk of human labour): groupwork and oral exams (vivas). In Maths and Stats we currently have very little of either of these. Nevertheless, in this talk I intend to describe the experience of 40 groups in a large (~200) core Year 2 maths module, based on my reading of the individual student reflections about their groups. I will explain why those reflections convinced me of the importance of groupwork, and the changes they have prompted me to pursue regarding the groupwork provision across our curriculum.

Although somewhat provisional, I also will touch on our plans to introduce some oral exams across our curriculum. Oral exams have the potential to develop important skills which we don't develop elsewhere, and they are arguably one of the most "authentic" forms of assessment for many professions. Although there has been interest in introducing oral exams into large undergraduate modules in the past, the administrative burden together with the risk of increased workload have prevented it. The alarming AI developments are now pushing us to accept those risks, given our desire to ensure the integrity of our assessments, and in particular the assessment of substantial projects.

These changes should be considered ongoing, so I would warmly welcome any comments or suggestions from colleagues, both during the talk and also afterwards.

## Time:

10:40 to 11:10

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 10

# 4.e. Generative AI: the new calibration floor for assessment

## Presenter:

Paul Dempster

## Chair:

Dr Sarah Robin

## Subtheme:

Using AI in Assessment Design

## Abstract:

Discussion on the place of generative AI in assessment has escalated significantly with the latest generation of such tools like chatGPT, Copilot, and Stable Diffusion. However, education doesn’t take place in a vacuum. These tools are already being used by some companies in industry and they are expected to be widespread in a relatively short period of time. This has resulted in companies, applicants, and academics asking how generative AI is built into courses and taught, so that students graduate with the skills to use these tools in jobs. This, of course, then feeds back into the discussion of assessment and how to integrate the use of these tools to assess at different cognitive levels and how to prevent them being used when not appropriate. This speaker takes a deliberately provocative position – AI should be the new zero-point in the marking scale. If you can’t do better than what an AI can trivially generate then it’s not worth any marks because you are not adding any value to future research or employment. Being able to generate original work, or advanced prompt engineering, or modification of AI output is worth marks, but neither source (brain or AI) is a privileged origin over another. Such a change could also significantly increase the failure rate of current H.E. students – is that a problem if they are no better than a machine?

(This is an audience debate session; 5-10 minutes of introduction then the rest of the time will be discussion).

## Time:

10:40 to 11:10

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 20

# 5.a. and 6.a. ChatGPT: knit me a duck!

## Presenters:

Pam Pickles and Rachael Sterrett

## Chair:

Dr Sandra Varey

## Subtheme:

Using AI in Assessment Design

## Abstract:

What happens when you ask ChatGPT to design a knitting pattern? This session considers the possibilities and limitations of Generative AI when asked to do a creative activity. We will showcase the variety and range of a number of ChatGPT generated ‘ducks’.

## Time:

11:15 to 12:20

## Location:

Welcome Centre Lecture Theatre 1

# 5.b. Feedback to feedforward: How to build assessment literacy using video examples.

## Presenter:

Dr Jenni Carter

## Chair:

Dr Amanda Chapman

## Subtheme:

Assessment and Feedback Literacy

## Abstract:

Feedforward is more important to students than feedback but is often not possible to provide in advance of submissions (Hendry, White and Herbert, 2016), especially for non-traditional assignments that they may not have engaged with before. This leaves students unclear on how to achieve well and how to utilise their feedback once they do receive it. To improve student assessment and feedback literacy, exemplars are often used before-task (To & Liu, 2018).

Given that students value more from hearing the marker’s perspective than they do from attempting to mark a previous submission themselves (Hendry, White and Herbert, 2016), my exemplar videos have been a hit. This presentation will explore the innovative use of ‘guided tour’ videos, developed to share with students examples of written assignments and their associated feedback and explicitly differentiate the marker’s expectations at each grade point. The videos provide a timely and pre-emptive opportunity for task and marking clarification (Sadler, Reimann and Sambell, 2023).

While instructional videos are commonly used for teaching (Dunne et al, 2020), there is little acknowledgement of how they can be used to support assessment and feedback literacy through examples beyond skills-based examination (e.g., Massey et al, 2017). By sharing this part of my practice, I hope to inspire and encourage others to consider such effective and efficient methods of supporting students. From the questions and feedback, I plan to take on board ideas to further improve the content and accessibility of my videos.

## Time:

11:15 to 11:45

## Location:

Welcome Centre Lecture Theatre 4

# 5.c. Thinking like a lawyer: Using novel forms of assessment to close the Law student skills gap

## Presenters:

Sadie Whittam, Tina McKee, Kathryn Saban and Ben Mayfield

## Chair:

Susan Armitage

## Subtheme:

Creative Approaches to Assessment and Feedback

## Abstract:

Law students and the legal profession increasingly expect that a legal education will transcend teaching students the letter of the law and will equip students with key employability skills. However, traditional methods of assessment in Law test only a narrow spectrum of the skills that law students will require upon entry into the profession (Schultz and Zedeck, 2008). The researchers have conducted an ethics-approved study to examine: (1) the skills that are currently taught and assessed in an undergraduate law degree; and (2) the views of key stakeholders, such as students and employers, regarding the skills that should be taught and assessed in an undergraduate law degree. Drawing on the initial results of their research, the presenters explore the potential for creative forms of assessment to close the skills gap in legal education.

## Time:

11:15 to 11:45

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 6

# 5.d. Seeking authentic and positive change: using reciprocal mentoring to rethink ethnicity awarding gaps

## Presenter:

Dr Sarah Robin, Dr Elizabeth Caldwell and Ruqayyah Jhanji

## Chair:

Dr Ruth Mewis

## Subtheme:

Closing the Awarding Gap

## Abstract:

In 2022, 4 Learning Developers were awarded Widening Participation funding to launch a new reciprocal mentoring project. This project sought to better understand Lancaster’s ethnicity awarding gap and to contribute toward positive change. At its heart, the project has paired students from ethnic minority backgrounds with white teaching staff at Lancaster, Bailrigg campus. The two parties have mentored each other; they have shared learning experiences and are now moving towards practical and positive teaching interventions to address the awarding gap.

In this paper, we will present findings from the pilot year of this project. These will include students’ perceptions on the ethnicity awarding gap, gained through a series of focus groups. We will also explore initial reflections from the students and staff who have been part of the project, including ideas and recommendations for positive and inclusive change.

## Time:

11:15 to 11:45

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 10

# 5.e. and 6.e. Assessment, Independent Study and AI: the view from the international Lancaster-award campuses.

## Presenters:

Dr Chris Longman plus other members of the APEX network from LU's international partners.

## Chair:

Dr Chris Longman

## Subtheme:

Academic Integrity

## Abstract:

Advanced Practice Exchange (APEX) is a newly established network for staff at Lancaster and the International Campuses in Malaysia, Ghana, China and Germany to work together on salient educational issues. The network provides opportunities for staff to engage with and support each other in the exploration of ways to enhance student learning on Lancaster-award programmes, wherever they are taught. In its first year of operation APEX colleagues are exploring connections between students’ independent learning and assessment, and how artificial intelligence (AI) is impacting on their learning and studies. Data are being collected from both staff and students via events, surveys, and focus groups. Preliminary results will be presented at the Education Conference, giving a snapshot of perspectives from across the international Lancaster-award campus network.

## Time:

11:15 to 12:20

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 20

# 6.b. Disrupting a final exam with poetry: Collective reflections from students and the lecturer.

## Presenters:

Felipe Sánchez, Marco Anabalón, Manuela Atria and Agustina Duarte

## Chair:

Dr Sunita Abraham

## Subtheme:

Creative Approaches to Assessment and Feedback

## Abstract:

In a Learning and Development Psychology module at a Chilean University, a disruptive and collective exam was carried out, where extracts from poems were presented for analysis and discussion in small groups. The exam consisted of analysing and commenting on different poems related to education. The discussion was carried out collectively by students and teachers through contemplative reading. The evaluation was designed to encourage students to apply the concepts built throughout the sessions, connect them with a poem, and reflect on them collectively.

After the term concluded, the lecturer invited three students from the module to reflect on the experience of going through this innovative form of assessment. The aim was to write a paper where this experience could be shared taking into consideration not only the viewpoint of the lecturer but also articulating a common perspective with some former students. In the present submission for the 2023 Education Conference, we want to share our assessment and the reflections we carried out collectively afterwards taking from such a paper.

Overall, the broad conclusions that we drew from the exam were that this evaluation in particular was not perceived as focused on content, but on the creation of new knowledge in the context of and thanks to the exam, which generated in itself a learning experience outside the comfort zone of the students. This assessment was found to have great pedagogical value, as it allowed students to personally engage with the text and construct new knowledge through collective dialogue and reflection.

## Time:

11:50 to 12:20

## Location:

Welcome Centre Lecture Theatre 4

# 6.c. Generative AI: The Art of the Possible

## Presenter:

Brian Green

## Chair:

Phil Devine

## Subtheme:

Using AI in Assessment Design

## Abstract:

The rapid development of generative artificial intelligence (AI) has revolutionized numerous industries, from art and music to healthcare and finance. In this presentation, we will delve into the origins of generative AI and explore its remarkable capabilities.

We will explore the specific ways in which Lancaster University can leverage generative AI for its benefit. We will delve into various domains where generative AI can make a significant impact.

We will showcase and ideate with YOU on how generative AI could drive innovation, improve efficiency, and foster creativity within the university ecosystem.

## Time:

11:50 to 12:20

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 6

# 6.d. Showcasing Street Law: Students taking the lead on formative feedback

## Presenters:

Kathryn Saban, Francesca Jackson and Nadia Patel

## Chair:

Abdul Aziz Hafiz

## Subtheme:

Marking and Feedback

## Abstract:

The value of formative feedback in Higher Education is well-documented, with many authors arguing that providing students with opportunities to receive formative feedback is the single most beneficial thing that tutors can do for their students. This paper will draw on both student and staff perspectives of introducing student led group meetings into a ‘Street Law’ module, in order to offer students formative feedback.

Street Law is an engagement focused module. Working in teams, Street Law students research, design and deliver interactive presentations to members of the public. In order to ensure that students are prepared and feel confident to deliver their presentations, a high level of tutor feedback is required. To facilitate this, we have introduced student led group meetings into our workshops.

Each week a different student is allocated the meeting ‘leader’. The ‘leader’ then provides the tutor with an update on progress, and identifies areas of their group’s work where feedback is required. This method of offering feedback ensures authenticity, by simulating how meetings might be held in the professional workplace.

This session aims to: (1) briefly explain the benefits of an engagement focused module like Street Law (2) explain the benefits and challenges of student led team meetings as a method of delivering formative feedback (3) hear reflections from two postgraduate law students; and (4) provide practical tips about how to utilise this method of feedback in other modules.

## Time:

11:50 to 12:20

## Location:

Bowland North Seminar Room 10