Suggesting Choice: Inclusive Assessment Practices

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Introduction

Aims:

- To explore the conceptualisation of inclusion and the implications of Additional Learning Needs, disability and dyslexia, with a specific emphasis on assessment.

Impetus:

- Quality, nature and processes of assessment
- Elimination of exclusion
- Universal design - choice

Objectives:

You will be able to:

- Discuss the debates in inclusive practice and additional learning needs in a higher education setting.
- Explain findings on inclusion in assessment in CU and in the UK HE sector
- Explore inclusive pedagogy and the implications for practice, with particular emphasis on assessment and feedback

What is Inclusive Pedagogy?

What is Inclusion?

'Inclusive education is an ongoing process concerned with ensuring equality of educational opportunity by accounting for and addressing the diversity present.' (WG 2014)

UNESCO views inclusion as "a dynamic approach of responding positively to diversity and of seeing individual differences not as problems, but as opportunities for enriching learning."

- Each learner has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs

- Education systems should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs

(UNESCO Salamanca Statement 1994)

Inclusion

- Acknowledges cultural pluralism

- A form of social justice and social recognition

- A social movement

The 'Dilemma of Difference'

'The twin realities of difference and commonality'

(Dyson 2001: 26)

'Recognising difference can lead to different provision which might be stigmatised and devalued; but not recognising difference can lead to not providing adequately for individuality…Provision should be planned and delivered to accommodate the greatest diversity without high visibility identification and additional provision systems.'

(Norwich 2002: 496)

The University System

- Inclusive or ALN model?

- Issues in labelling and disclosure

- Learning needs within the lecture hall or seminar room – non-labelled or non-declared students.

Findings on Inclusion in Higher Education

Fuller et al. (2008) *Disabled Students in Higher Education*:

- The majority of adjustments were formulaic, e.g. provision of a laptop, lecture notes and extra time in examinations.

- Students found they had to engage in multiple negotiations with different lecturers to ensure that agreements on reasonable adjustments were understood by all.

- There were major differences in lecturers' willingness to make adjustments, and in the inclusiveness of their teaching style.

- However in some disciplines there was evidence of willingness to make adjustments to pedagogy to accommodate different students' needs.

A Little Bit of Task Analysis:

- Make a cup of tea!

- Breaking down the skills, barriers and affordances of pedagogy

Task analysis

Type	Sub-task	Student activity	Which groups of students might experience barriers?	Adaptation to pedagogy to eliminate barriers
Lecture	Teacher talk	Listen Take notes Comprehend structure	Hearing impairment Dyslexia EAL Dyslexia. Processing issues	Lecture capture Subtitles for audio Issue notes/ notetakers Provide summary of structure of lecture
	Small group discussion and feedback	Discuss with peers Respond to whole room	Students with social interaction issues Speech impairment Shy	Think pair share Allow individual working Volunteer/ agree respondent

Focussing in on Assessment and Feedback

The 'Suggesting Choice' Project

- Aim

- Sample

- Method

Assessment and Feedback Context

- Assessment exerts a major influence on students' approaches to study in Higher education'

  (Sambell, 2016 p.1)

- 'Students... cannot (by definition if they want to graduate) escape the effects of poor assessment'

  (Boud, 1995, p.35)

- Poor assessment and feedback experiences can negatively impact students' experience of university leading to disaffection and distress.

  (Mann, 2001)

Assessment and Feedback Context

- There should be an interrelationship of the three 'core' elements
    - assessment literacy (the specific requirements of assessment),
    - assessment feedback (giving, receiving, understanding, interpreting and acting on feedback)
    - assessment design (including authenticity of assessment task, volume and nature of assessment and collaborative development to support shared understandings).
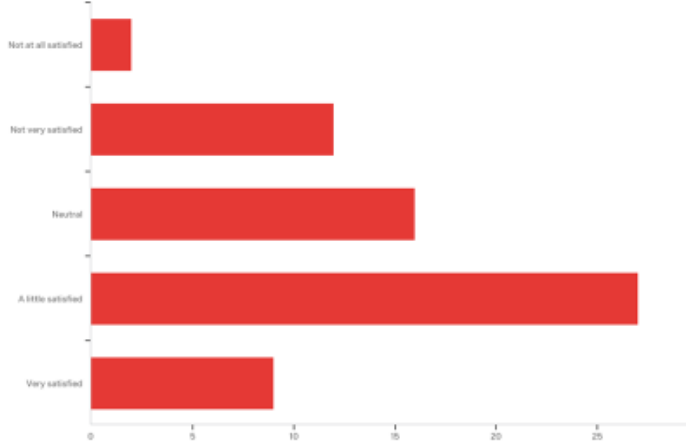
(Evans, 2016)

- Authentic, 'outward-facing' assessments have positive impacts on both learners and staff.

(Fung, 2017)

Findings

Student satisfaction with assessment processes in SOCSI
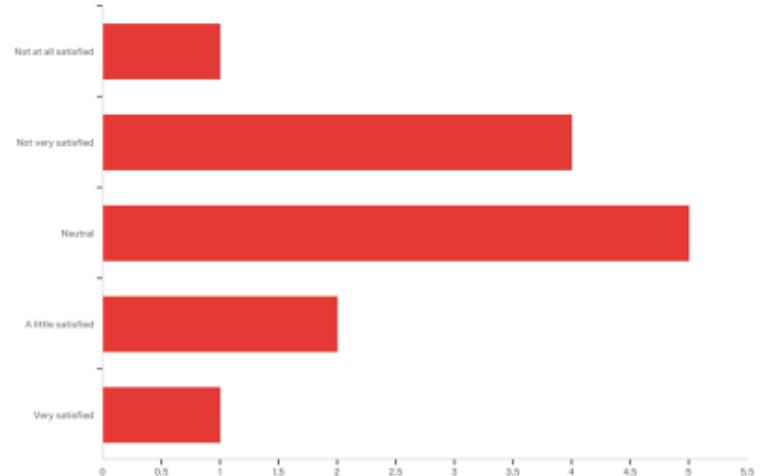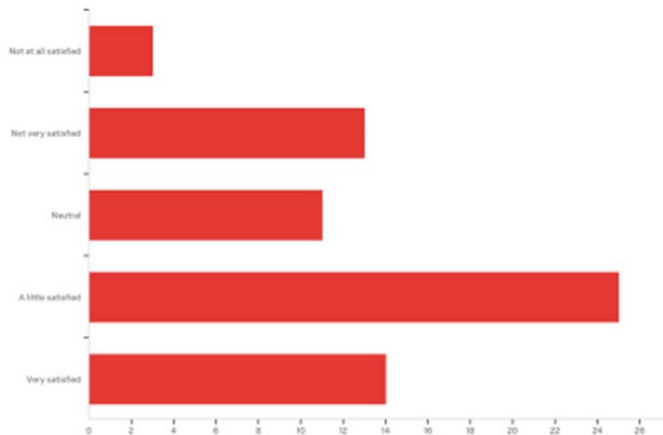
Non-ALN students
21% not satisfied

Q17 - Please indicate how satisfied you are with the current methods of assessment in the School of Social Sciences (methods of assessment include exam, assignment, portfolio, multiple choice, presentation)

ALN
38% not satisfied

Q17 - Please indicate how satisfied you are with the current methods of assessment in the School of Social Sciences (methods of assessment include exam, assignment, portfolio, multiple choice, presentation)

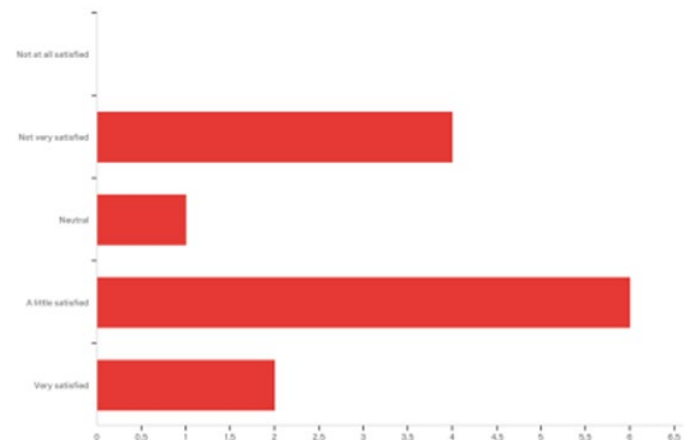**Student satisfaction with feedback processes in SOCSI**

Non-ALN students
24% not satisfied

ALN students
31% not satisfied

Q23 - Please indicate how satisfied you are with the current feedback mechanisms for assessment in the School of Social Sciences:

Testing the mode not the content:

The marker should know [that the student has dyslexia], but that is never represented in it. They never, they still highlight words saying you've got the wrong word there. Saying that the structure's not right and they're constantly on about the structuring in the feedback, one even said if the structuring was better I could have given you more marks. I never get feedback on the content, it is just the words and the structure.

Group work issues

Class tests in [one module] are unfair as you are allowed to confer with friends, but not everyone may feel comfortable doing this/may not have friends/be talkative and thus will suffer marks wise.

Suggesting Choice:

Students would be able to choose the modes of assessment that best suit them, meaning they should be able to achieve a higher grade. More autonomy and choice. More of a say when we are paying huge tuition fees is good.
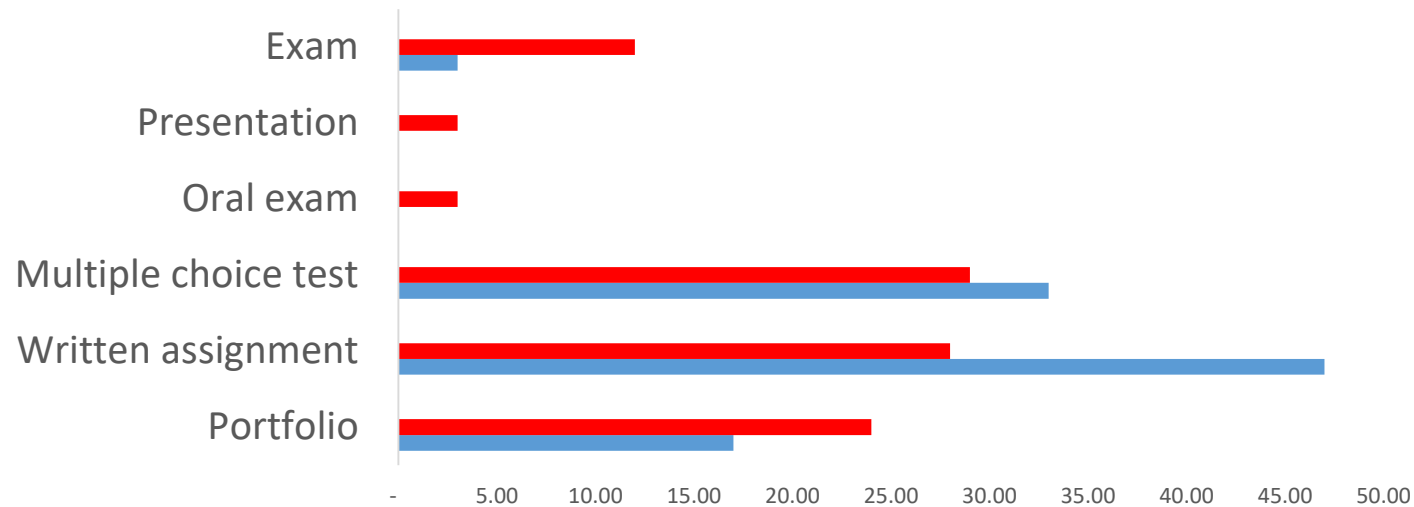
Would create less pressure on those who may struggle with certain assessment methods, whilst allowing those who have a preferred one to flourish and use their skills.

I would love the chance to take an oral exam as I have always had written communication issues. [student not identifying as having an ALN]

Negative responses to choice:

...it may not stretch or challenge people to improve on unfamiliar skills e.g. choosing multiple choice all the time over presentation - does that reflect working environments? Not really.

Staff perceived and actual student preferences for assessment method (%).

What do you think?

- https://socsi.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6rLZ3yhjrrkei7H
- https://tinyurl.com/y57mycbv

Ideas...

(c) workhouses.org.uk

Transferring to Different Disciplines

- Promise and challenge

- Over to you!

- Groups of similar disciplines

Workshop activity

T&L or Assessment Task	Barriers to learning or attainment	Which groups of students might be affected?	Potential solutions/ alternative assessments	Feedback methods	Professional Standards/ Fitness to Practice Issues	Persons/ processes to be addressed to achieve change
Small group presentation in seminar	Social skills required. Confidence in presenting orally	ASD students may have issues with group working

Speech impairment may impact on oral assessment

Shy /unconfident students | Scaffolded support/ practice with tutor/ written assignment | 1:1 feedback given, with written notes. Feedback to focus on strengths and weaknesses not associated with disability | Employability skills – oral presentation with support the preferred option | Workload – access to study skills support? Use of GTAs for practice in seminars? Formative first? |

Feedback

- Survey results

- Key challenges

- Potential improvements to Practice