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PgCert Academic Practice in Art, Design and Communication

Action Research Project Ethical Enquiry Form

Participant name: __Silva Hrabar-Owens ___

Cohort: 3 (online)

Tutor name [delete as appropriate]: Rachel Marsden

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1. What is your research question?

How to make students with learning difficulties feel more supported within their course and whose responsibility is it to deliver the support.
The aims of this project are to identify ways to improve the learning experience for the students with learning difficulties. What needs to change for the students to feel supported not only in their studying but also in their assessments. The project will look at the timings and structure of the learning phase (the timings of lectures, seminars and workshops) as well as the timings and the structure of the assessments, being exams, essays, presentations. The balance between the individual and group assessments will also be examined and evaluated.
The aims will be achieved by examinations of the current process and identifications of the needs gathered through the interviews. The findings and the final proposal will be presented to the Course Leader and Programme Director of Fashion Business School in LCF.

This project addresses learning difficulties such as Dyslexia (reading), dyscalculia (math), dysgraphia (writing), ADHD (attention). With proper support and strategies, people with learning difficulties can often improve their skills and achieve academic success.

2. Who will be providing you with information to help you answer your question, and how will you approach and/or select them?

Students at UAL LCF Buying & Merchandising
Course leader and course director at UAL LCF Buying & Merchandising

I have identified which students have ISAs in place from the register and will approach them personally and via email to see if they are willing to participate in the research project. My course leader and director have already been approached and initial conversation have been held.
The participants will not be asked at any stage to disclose information / insight about their specific learning difficulty. The selection of students is purely based on having an ISA in place.

3. What will you be asking participants to do?

- Consent to their participation in an interview which will be documented.
- Conduct an interview about their experience of support at UAL

DRAFT QUESTIONS
- Have you received any individual support?
- In what capability? How often? Was it useful?
- Has it improved your grade (only for students in year 2 or 3).
- Has it improved your well-being?
- Please comment on the structure of the course delivery and any impact that has on your ability to retain information?
- Please comment on the structure of assessments, extra time given?
- Do you have any recommendations for improvement?

Commented [RM1]: Could you tell us a little more about your project? What are the project aims? How might these aims be achieved? Could you tell is a little more about the project here?

Commented [SHO2R1]: updated

Commented [RM3]: Is it learning differences rather than difficulties? Or is it taken from Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD)? Often the terms are used interchangeably.

Commented [SHO4R3]: updated

Commented [RM5]: I'd choose one or the other rather than both based on the time remaining - an online questionnaire might be easiest?

This link to Online forms and survey tools might be helpful: https://canvas.arts.ac.uk/sites/explore/SitePage/61013/online-forms-and-survey-tools

Commented [SHO6R5]: interview chosen, as I would like to get more out of a few questions and start a deeper conversation with a student.

The above questions have been left wide on purpose, to leave room for discussion.
The questions have been looked at and feedbacked on by my course leader.

4. How will you get informed consent from these participants?

~~I will be using a questionnaire that provides information about my enquiry.~~

Information sheet will be provided as well as the consent form. The consent will ask for confidentiality. Both forms will be sent to the interviewees before the interview. I will remain sensitive and open to the possibility that participants may wish, for any reason and at any time, to withdraw their consent.
It will be made clear to participants that they can withdraw at any point without needing to provide an explanation.

I will do everything I can to ensure that all potential participants understand, as well as they can, what is involved in a study. They will be told why their participation is necessary, what they will be asked to do, what will happen to the information they provide, how that information will be used and how and to whom it will be reported.

An important consideration has also been taken with regards to the extent to which a my reflective research into my own practice impinges upon others – for example, in the case of power relationships arising from the dual roles of teacher/lecturer/ and their impact on students. Dual roles may also introduce explicit tensions in areas such as confidentiality. These will be addressed appropriately by, for example, making the my researcher role very explicit; and ensuring that everyone's identity remains confidential.

5. What potential risks to the interests of participants do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks? A participant's interests include their physical and psychological wellbeing; their commercial interests; and their rights of privacy and reputation.

Some participants might find their involvement stressful, in case it feels like they are gossiping about inadequate support they have been getting from UAL. A couple of students I have spoken to last academic year, have been very careful what they were saying and also they found it very emotional.
After speaking to my course leader we have agreed that students should be aware of all the support services available to them. Year leader support, mental health leader support counselling support provided by UAL.
Barriers are time and fast approaching Summer break. I might have to conduct some interviews online.
The interviews will be done privately, online. The participants will be kept safe, but ensuring anonymity and ability to withdraw at any point if they feel uncomfortable.

6. What potential risks to yourself as the practitioner do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks?

A potential risk to me is formally identified as repetitional risk. The risk of I'm the students' lecturer and if their suggestions for improvement are not seen through they will be disappointed in me and the institution.
The project itself is and will continue to be emotionally demanding as I have learning difficulties (dyslexia and ADHD) and I struggle with university work same as they are. Also, as a result of

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Comments:

Commented [RM7]: You need to tell us a little more about you'll provide and enable informed consent. Will you provide an information sheet or email? Will you provide a consent form? What will the consent form ask (e.g. anonymity, confidentiality)?

I'd recommend use of both info sheet and consent form, or embedding these as part of the questionnaire (assuming it's digital questionnaire?). There is an example info sheet and consent form in the Ethics Resources folder on Moodle here: https://moodle.arts.ac.uk/mod/folder/view.php?id=1005709

Some more links on consent here:

Department for Education - Gaining Informed Consent https://user-research.education.gov.uk/-research-ethics/informed-consent.html

BERA Consent - https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018-online#consent

Practising Ethics - Consent https://www.practisingethics.org/principles#consent

UKRI – Consent https://www.ukri.org/councils/esrc/guidance-for-applicants/research-ethics-guidance/consent/

Commented [SHO8R7]: updated

Commented [RM9]: How might you support this stress and disclosure? Are there support services at UAL you could signpost participants to? Some links on disclosure to help inform this section:

BERA - Disclosure https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018-online#disclosure

Commented [SHO10R9]: updated

Commented [RM11]: This would be formally identified as repetitional risk for you as the research and UAL as the institution.

Commented [SHO12R11]: updated

Commented [SHO13R11]: updated

Commented [RM14]: See the PDF on emotionally demanding research in the Ethics Resources folder here on Moodle: https://moodle.arts.ac.uk/mod/folder/view.php?id=1005709

Commented [SHO15R14]: great read, thank you

my disability, my organisational skills are terrible which leads to anxiety, stress and eventual burnout.

7. Does your project involve children or vulnerable adults e.g. a person with a learning disability?

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YES (person with learning difficulty, holding an ISA)

This project addresses learning difficulties such as Dyslexia (reading), dyscalculia (math), dysgraphia (writing), ADHD (attention). With proper support and strategies, people with learning difficulties can often improve their skills and achieve academic success.

Interviews will be conducted in a quiet meeting room but in a public space (East Bank Campus) or online if participants prefer the option. The participants will be disclosed questions pre the interview so there are no surprises. Extra time will be built within the interview, but also post interview to reflect and check in with the participants and continually practicing reflective openness.
The participants will be reminded of personal tutorials and mentoring that is available at university to make sure we are sensitive to any possible outcomes from the interview.

8. How will you store the information you gather from participants?

The participants will be offered anonymity and the data will be stored on a secured password protected computer. All the records will be anonymised. No data will be shared over email, social media or with any 3rd party. Data will be stored for the duration of ARP unit. At which point data will be deleted.

I confirm my responsibility to deliver the project in accordance with the Code of Practice on Research Ethics of the University of the Arts London (the University). In signing this form I am also confirming that:

      a) **The form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.**
      b) **I understand and accept that the ethical propriety of this project may be monitored by the relevant College Research body and/or the University's Research Ethics Sub-Committee.**

Signed: _____ Date: _____

I support this project and have reviewed it with the participant:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Commented [RM16]: Some really important considerations here - researcher safety and wellbeing paramount! Some more info on this from BERA here:

Responsibilities for researchers' wellbeing and development https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018-online#researchers-wellbeing-development

Commented [SHO17R16]: great, thank you

Commented [RM18]: A brilliant response to this question - well done Silva.

Commented [SHO19R18]: Thank you

Commented [RM20]: A clear and succinct response to this section.

Commented [SHO21R20]: Thank you