

# ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT

How to make students with learning difficulties feel more supported within their course and whose responsibility is it to deliver the support.



# ABOUT ME

- ❑ Lecturer at LCF
- ❑ BA (Hons) Fashion Buying and Merchandising
- ❑ Part Time
- ❑ First ever teaching role, less than 2 years in
- ❑ Teaching across YR1 & 2 and supervision in YR3
- ❑ ADHD and Dyslexia diagnosed in January 2023
- ❑ UAL EDI committee



# RATIONALE

- ❑ Late diagnosis of ADHD & Dyslexia
- ❑ Low attention span
- ❑ What support & strategies to achieve academic success
- ❑ Course delivery / Tutorials / Assessments
- ❑ No conversation / no appetite for change → continue as before
- ❑ EDI committee influence



***"Leaders who do not act dialogically, but insist on imposing their decisions, do not organize the people—they manipulate them. Freire, 2006***

# ETHICS

- ❑ Losing track of how many versions
- ❑ BERA guidance
- ❑ Stress
- ❑ So many different elements
- ❑ Consent
- ❑ Emotional
- ❑ Support
- ❑ What about me?

## ual:

### 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

<b>1. What is your research question?</b>
How to make students with learning difficulties feel more supported within their course and whose responsibility is it?
<b>2. Who will be providing you with information to help you answer your question, and how will you approach and/or select them?</b>
Students at UAL LCF Buying & Merchandising Course leader and course director at UAL LCF Buying & Merchandising I have identified which students have learning difficulties 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.
<b>3. What will you be asking participants to do?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Consent to their participation in an interview or questionnaire which will be documented.</li><li>Complete a questionnaire about their experience of support at UAL (draft questions have you received any individual support? In what capacity? How often? Was it useful? If yes respect was it useful? Has it improved your grade? Has it improved your well-being?).</li></ul>
<b>4. How will you get informed consent from these participants?</b>
I will be giving a questionnaire and providing information about my enquiry.
<b>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.</b>
Some participants might find their involvement stressful, in case if 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. Barriers are time and fast approaching Christmas break. I might have to conduct some interviews/questionnaire online or ask participants to write down their answers in the questionnaire.
<b>6. What potential risks to yourself as the practitioner do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks?</b>
The potential risk to me is that in the students' lecture and if their suggestions for improvement are not seen through they will be disappointed in me and the institution.

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How to make students with learning difficulties feel more supported within their course and whose responsibility is it to deliver the support.	<b>Comment (DAL):</b> I think it's important to have a clear research question, and I think you've done that well.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Consent to their participation in an interview or questionnaire which will be documented.</li><li>Complete an interview about their experience of support at UAL.</li></ul> <b>DRAFT QUESTIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Have you received any individual support?</li><li>In what capacity? How often? Was it useful?</li><li>Has it improved your grade (only for students in year 2 &amp; 3)?</li><li>Has it improved your well-being?</li><li>Please comment on the structure of the course delivery and any impact that has on your ability to learn/develop?</li><li>Please comment on the structure of assessments, extra time given?</li><li>Do you have any recommendations for improvement?</li></ul>	<b>Comment (DAL):</b> I think it's important to have a clear research question, and I think you've done that well.

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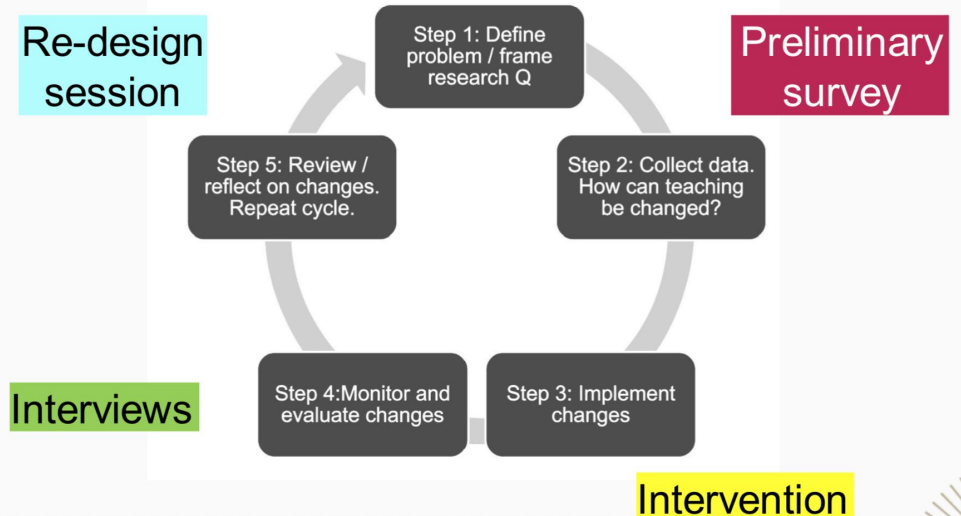
# ACTION PLAN

- ❑ Revisit all the workshops and cross-programme events. Watch any recordings and read the content provided.
- ❑ Schedule and attend any extra tutorials provided for def/ref students.
- ❑ Start the blog, and keep working on it.
- ❑ Draft, review and sign the Ethics Forms.
- ❑ Draft the interview questions and get feedback.
- ❑ Schedule the interviews and conduct them.
- ❑ Transcript the interview responses.
- ❑ Analyse the data.
- ❑ Write up project key findings.
- ❑ Prepare the slides and deliver the presentation.
- ❑ Easy!

# ACTION RESEARCH CYCLE

- ❑ My limitations
- ❑ Focus on what?
- ❑ How can I get this off the ground
- ❑ Step 1
- ❑ Step 2
- ❑ Is it enough?

## Mapping your project to the AR cycle



# SOCIAL JUSTICE

- ❑ Access to education is not enough
- ❑ Equal treatment
- ❑ Creating a system, a structure that removes barriers to learning
- ❑ Spaces to help everyone thrive based on their strengths and not weaknesses

- ❑ Get students involved - dialogue is a tool of transformation
- ❑ Individual empowerment
- ❑ Collaboration

Freire (2006)

# RECRUITMENT & INTERVIEWS

- ❑ ISA list from Fashion Buying and Merchandising course CSAs
- ❑ Connection
- ❑ Coffee / Chat

(Sage Research Methods, 2024)

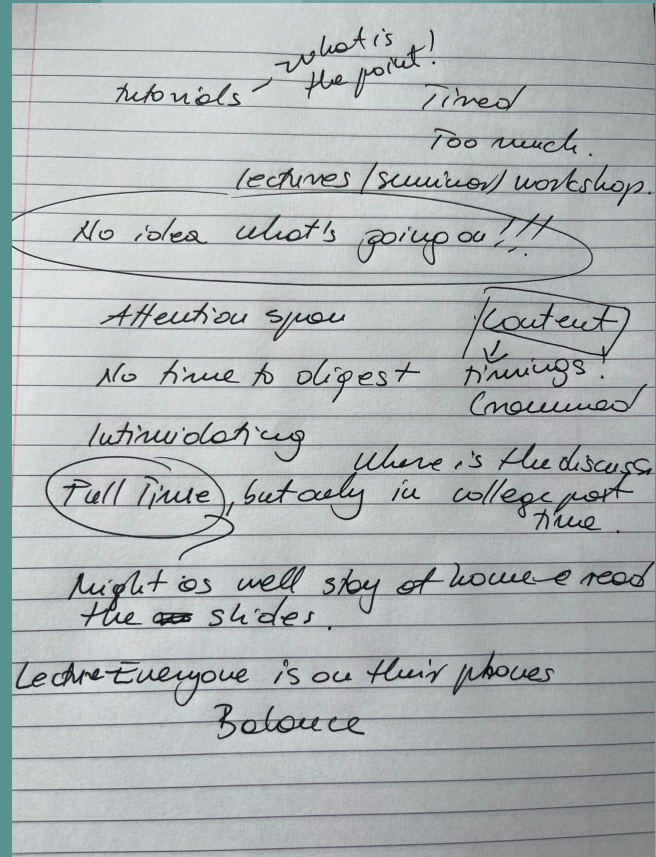
- ❑ Online interviews
- ❑ Questions sent beforehand
- ❑ Plan for 20-25 min turned as an hour long
- ❑ Chit chat, balance of power



# DATA & TRANSCRIPT ANALYSIS

- ❑ Time
- ❑ Curriculum delivery
- ❑ Intimidation
- ❑ Tutorials
- ❑ Attention span
- ❑ Information retention
- ❑ Balance

Tools used Thematic analysis, Brown & Clarke  
(2021)



# THEMES & FINDINGS

## ❏ Structure & Timetabling

*'I lose attention after the lecture' - speaker 3*

*'Not getting the most out of seminars and workshops as I'm disengaged' - speaker 1*

## ❏ Tutorials

*'I don't turn up, no point might as well read the slides' - speaker 3*

*'Online tutorials are so intimidating. I would never sign up. Also how do I do that?' - speaker 2*

## ❏ Assessments

*'I kind of think that extra time is really good. I use it to check my work and spot mistakes.' - speaker 1*

*Online tutorials are just to much, I mean cringe.' - speaker 3*

# LIMITATIONS

- ❑ only 3 students were interviewed, all from the same year and course
- ❑ All the interviews were conducted in the same week
- ❑ No additional research method was used to validate, humanise the data gathered
- ❑ my own positionality could have influenced the students responses
- ❑ Limited literature review



# WHAT'S NEXT?

- ❑ Conversation with course leaders and programme director
- ❑ Propose drop in tutorials and sign off for academic year 24/25
- ❑ Increased the pool of students interviewees
- ❑ Conduct questionnaires
- ❑ Get EDI committee on board
- ❑ Get help
- ❑ Propose restructure in timetabling, splitting delivery across 2 days per unit
- ❑ Delivery restructure proposal for 25/26 academic year

# PRESENTATION REFERENCES

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2021). *Thematic Analysis: A Practical Guide*. London: Sage Publications.

British Educational Research Association (2018). *Ethical guidelines for educational research*. 4th ed. [online] London:

British Educational Research Association. Available at:

<https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018-online>.

Freire, P. (2006). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 30th anniversary ed. New York: Continuum.

Sage Research Method Community, What is “Critical Participatory Inquiry”? (2024) [ online]. Available at:

<https://researchmethodscommunity.sagepub.com/blog/critical-participatory-inquiry>

# IMAGE REFERENCES



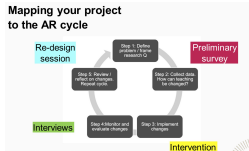
Boy struggling to study -

<https://www.ldrfa.org/the-top-5-most-common-learning-disabilities-their-symptoms/>



My own picture

<https://www.shutterstock.com/search/dragging-weight>



Action Research cycle - UAL ARP presentation slides from workshop 2  
- October 2023



Mind blowing image -

<https://seoforgrowth.com/8-mind-blowing-seo-statistics/>



Dragging weight image -

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