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## PgCert Academic Practice in Art, Design and Communication

### Action Research Project Ethical Enquiry Form

Participant name: Amy Urry

Cohort: 4

Tutor name: TBC

I've made a start here and put my questions and things I'd like to discuss in blue. I hope that's ok.

#### 1. What is your research question?

To what extent does our Moodle design template support inclusive practice?

The aim of this enquiry is to generate new knowledge about the experience of specific groups of students and staff when using Moodle pages designed according to a template which aims to be accessible and inclusive. This knowledge will allow us to tailor the template to better meet staff and students' needs and make more informed recommendations to course teams as well as the digital learning community across UAL.

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

I'm not sure whether to focus on staff and students from Foundation or BA PID – I'm not sure if it introduces too many variables to use two course sites or if it is ok because the features of the pages are very similar. BA PID has the advantage that it's a recent redesign and so Stage 2 and 3 students will remember the previous version. However, it's also an ongoing project. This is something I'd like to discuss. I will also need permission from the course team in either case.

Course team staff and students from the course will be contacted via email to ask if they would be willing to take part in the action research project. The staff will have been briefed beforehand and may already have volunteered (please see below). The email will explain that we are particularly hoping to hear the views of students and staff who identify as neurodivergent, visually impaired, come from non-academic backgrounds, or who have English as an additional language. This will be set in the context of trying to make the page as inclusive as possible and to break down potential barriers to learning. We want to test if the page works or if students/staff from these groups have other suggestions.

I anticipate this email will be tricky to word and I'm not sure if this is the best way to ask. There is the risk of 'othering' these groups or making people feel too much in the spotlight or oddly grouped together.

I will need to get permission from the course team to run this project and I can ask for staff volunteers in a meeting but also anonymously as they may not wish to disclose in front of colleagues.

I specifically want to get feedback from at least some of these groups of students, as I've asked for general feedback from student cohorts before. However, I'm conscious that it poses some potential risks and I would really like to discuss the way I might be able to do this, or changes to this approach that I might need to make.

**Commented [RM1]:** This section is clear and concise and tells us immediately the focus and aims of your ARP.

How will you achieve these aims/through what objectives?

**Commented [RM2]:** Would this create a comparative study? I agree that you need to consider what's feasible in the timeframe for ARP - less is often more.

**Commented [RM3]:** If feels like your inclined to work in the BA PID context?

**Commented [RM4]:** Brilliant to see this acknowledged - how will you approach this, gain and document permissions?

**Commented [RM5]:** We recommend informed consent is the same for staff and students, as such similar approaches to providing information on the research, and gaining consent.

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

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

**Commented [RM6]:** If seeking information on protected characteristics, how might you further keep this information safe/confidential?

**Commented [RM7]:** It is good to see you are aware of potential 'othering' and positioning of participants.

Take a look at these resources - it might be helpful:

Chapter 2: Considering Positionality: The Ethics of Conducting Research with Marginalised Groups <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/326762924.pdf>

Inclusive Research <https://user-research.education.gov.uk/-/inclusive-research/> - here they say *Researching with people with disabilities and access needs is critical, and is one part of researching inclusively. Inclusivity goes further than accessibility: it means considering all marginalised groups.* - This might help guide your thinking.

Ethical considerations related to the inclusivity of data for research and statistics <https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/ethical-considerations-related-to-the-inclusivity-of-data-for-research-and-statistics/>

AND

<https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/ethical-considerations-related-to-the-inclusivity-of-data-for-research-and-statistics/pages/9/> (potentially look at the research design links here)

**Commented [RM8]:** See my previous comment on this.

**Commented [RM9]:** Such as?

**Commented [RM10]:** Happy to have a 121 to discuss if more helpful.

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| <p><b>3. What will you be asking participants to do?</b></p> <p>Students:<br/>Attend a single in person focus group of up to 6 students for 1 hour.<br/>OR<br/>Meet 1:1 (ideally in person) for max 20-30mins</p> <p>Staff:<br/>Attend a single in person focus group of up to 6 members of staff for 1 hour.<br/>OR<br/>Meet 1:1 (ideally in person) for 20-30mins</p> <p>Focus group to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A short task to find information on the Moodle page.</li> <li>A short anonymous questionnaire – either completed online or by hand (I won't look at them until they are all to maintain anonymity)</li> <li>30min structured discussion</li> </ul> <p>The focus group will need to be recorded (audio) - we might need to video too just to see who is speaking – is this too stressful? I can assure them that in the transcript their identities will be anonymised and the video deleted.</p> <p>I'd like to incorporate a more creative means of gathering responses e.g. drawings, but I haven't had time to look into this yet. It would be great to get some ideas.</p>  | <p><b>Commented [RM11]:</b> Consider what either research method - focus group or interview - affords/provides, positives/negatives to decide which approach you will take. This article might be of help:</p> <p>'Focus group methodology: some ethical challenges' (2019) by Julius Sim and Jackie Waterfield<br/><a href="https://eprints.keele.ac.uk/id/eprint/6585/1/Sim%20%26%20Waterfield%202019%20Ethics%20of%20focus%20groups.pdf">https://eprints.keele.ac.uk/id/eprint/6585/1/Sim%20%26%20Waterfield%202019%20Ethics%20of%20focus%20groups.pdf</a></p> <p>Also, in the limited timeframe of ARP, consider what's feasible - a student focus group, and a staff focus group would be sufficient.</p>   |
| <p><b>4. How will you get informed consent from these participants?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Question and tick box in the questionnaire.</li> <li>Paper consent form for focus group covering participation, recording for the purposes of the project only and possibly video, again, only for the purposes of making sense of the responses. Include option to withdraw responses at any time.</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Commented [RM12]:</b> Are these interviews? Tell us what type of interview you will be asking participants to engage in (structured? Semi-structured? Unstructured? 121? Conversation? Narrative inquiry? There are lots of types!)</p>  |
| <p><b>5. What potential risks to the interests of participants do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks?</b> A participant's interests include their physical and psychological wellbeing; their commercial interests; and their rights of privacy and reputation.</p> <p>Given that I will be trying to focus specifically on students and staff who identify as neurodivergent, from a non-academic background or who have English as an Additional language, I think there is a significant risk that they might individually feel 'othered'. They may also be stressed by the situation, embarrassed and may feel unable to speak openly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I will arrange to speak to staff and students separately to try and minimise the stress, allow openness and maintain privacy.</li> <li>I will offer both staff and students the option to meet with me 1:1 if that would be easier for them to give feedback.</li> <li>I will make it clear that the responses of participants will be anonymised and used only to improve the recommendations that we make about Moodle in order to make it more inclusive. Under no circumstances would they be shared with the course team unless the participant requested it.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Commented [RM13]:</b> In asking participants to complete a questionnaire in a time-limited way, what might this change/impact in terms of findings/results? Is it appropriate to do this if thinking about accessibility/being inclusive? Could they complete this in advance of the session?</p> <p><b>Commented [RM14]:</b> Again, how might recording the focus groups impact response? I'd encourage audio over video (also easier to transcribe via AI softwares too)</p> <p><b>Commented [RM15]:</b> Use of creative and everyday methods for documentation and evaluation are always welcomed.</p> <p>Emerging Methods: Creative Research Examples<br/><a href="https://www.methodspace.com/blog/emerging-methods">https://www.methodspace.com/blog/emerging-methods</a></p> <p>The work of Helen Kara might be a good starting point:</p> <p>Creative research methods in the social sciences<br/><a href="https://libsearch.arts.ac.uk/cgi-bin/koha/opac-detail.pl?biblionumber=1451005&amp;query_desc=kw%2Cwrdl%3A%20helen%20kara">https://libsearch.arts.ac.uk/cgi-bin/koha/opac-detail.pl?biblionumber=1451005&amp;query_desc=kw%2Cwrdl%3A%20helen%20kara</a></p> <p>And<br/><a href="https://www.ncrm.ac.uk/resources/online/all/?main&amp;id=20582">https://www.ncrm.ac.uk/resources/online/all/?main&amp;id=20582</a></p> |
| <p><b>6. What potential risks to yourself as the practitioner do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks?</b></p> <p>Any 1:1 meetings will be held in an open place, for example KX 4<sup>th</sup> floor or the street.<br/>Audio will be recorded using my phone. (Recordings will be stored on my UAL OneDrive and deleted from my personal device.)</p>   | <p><b>Commented [RM16]:</b> Consent should ideally be requested prior to the start of any research activities rather than within the questionnaire.</p> <p>Is there an example consent form to review? (There is one ...)</p> <p><b>Commented [RM17]:</b> What will participants be consenting to?</p> <p><b>Commented [RM18]:</b> Will you also consider anonymity, confidentiality...</p> <p><b>Commented [RM19]:</b> Is there also risk of harm from potential of disclosure? Are there other resources and services you can signpost participants to if required?</p> <p><b>Commented [RM20]:</b> Are there any risks to you as the researcher in terms of disclosure.</p> <p><b>Commented [RM21]:</b> Why?</p> <p><b>Commented [RM22]:</b> This is relevant to section 8.</p>   |

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| <p><b>7. Does your project involve children or vulnerable adults e.g. a person with a learning disability?</b></p> <p><b>YES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide reassurance that the purpose is solely for the improvement of the VLE to remove potential barriers to learning.</li> <li>• There will be absolutely no repercussions from anything they say.</li> <li>• Provide clarity in advance about privacy, recordings, use and retention of data, etc..</li> <li>• Use a reassuring and friendly tone at all times, written and verbal.</li> <li>• Remind participants that the content of the session is private (confidential?).</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>8. How will you store the information you gather from participants?</b></p> <p><b>Online form:</b> stored in my MS Forms account</p> <p><b>Focus group and meeting audio recording:</b> Taken using a Meeting Owl or my phone. Recordings will be transferred to my UAL OneDrive account and deleted from the initial device. File names will be Group1, 2, 3 and date. Participants will be A, B, C, D, etc.. The identifiers for these participants will be stored in a separate file on OneDrive.</p> <p>Interviews will only be transcribed electronically and only A, B, C, etc used to identify participants. Any video to deleted as soon as transcription is complete.</p> <p>All data will be permanently deleted in April 2024 after the PG cert is complete. The original responses will not be needed once the results are collated and analysed.</p> |
| <p><b>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:</b></p> <p>a) The form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.<br/> 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.</p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p>   |
| <p><b>I support this project and have reviewed it with the participant:</b></p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p>  |

**Commented [RM23]:** Can you provide more detail here?

**Commented [RM24]:** Anonymity, confidentiality are key here. See earlier links about inclusive research.

**Commented [RM25]:** Is this for initial interest/register interest in participating in the research? Be clear on what the online form is for here.

**Commented [RM26]:** You have provided an established start to this section.

Do any devices have password protection?

Some additional links to help guide this section:

Information Governance, Records Management and Data Protection  
<https://canvas.arts.ac.uk/sites/explore/SitePage/45194/records-management-and-information-governance>

Managing Participant Data  
<https://user-research.education.gov.uk/-/managing-participant-data-correctly/#content>

Managing user research data and participant privacy  
<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/user-research/managing-user-research-data-participant-privacy#user-research-and-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr>