



Welcome to the University of Manchester's 2025 Teaching and Learning Conference

The Institute of Teaching and Learning are pleased to welcome you to our second annual conference. This year the conference will take place over two days, 2nd and 3rd July, on campus in University Place, and with hybrid access for attendees. You can [register here](#) and read our [Presenter Guide](#) here. Our Welcome Guide can be found on our [conference webpage](#).

The conference includes three plenary sessions, four conference fringe events and 107 contributions in the form of posters, papers, lightning talks and wicked problem sets. Students are lead presenters or contributors in 75% of the submissions.

As part of our commitment to sustainability we will not be providing a printed copy of abstracts for each of these, but instead are making them available via this online abstract book. The University of Manchester Figshare are hosting this key resource, providing an important permanent online location and DOI for your abstracts.

Navigating this abstract book

In this booklet, you will first find a detailed conference schedule, then the abstracts for our four plenary sessions in the order of presentation. A short section follows this outlining what to expect at the fringe sessions. The rest of the conference is organised into hour long blocks in which there will always be 6 sessions (comprising a mix of standard paper, lightning talks, poster presentations and wicked problem sets). Each block is identified by the code D1 for day 1 or D2 for day 2, then a second number to indicate the slot in the day (slot 1 is 10.30-11.30, slot 2 is 11.50-12.50, and slot 3, on day 1 is 3.30-4.30, and day 2 is 1.40-2.40), and a final number, from 1-7 to indicate which of the seven rooms the session takes place in. For example D1.2.3 would be a session take place on day 1, in the second session slot of the day from 11.50-12.50, in room 3.

In the information below, for each block you will find the title of the session, the title, abstract and authors for each paper within the session, and details of the theme or themes the session or papers speak to.

You can click on the quick links below, or in the detailed schedule, to jump to the abstracts for each session easily. You can also use the 'Find' function to search both this abstract booklet and the programme to find terms of interest or specific authors.

Quick Links Day 1	Quick Links Day 2
Plenary 1	Plenary 2 Plenary 3
Fringe Session D1.2.7 Fringe Session D1.3.7	Fringe Session D2.2.7 Fringe Session D2.3.7
Sessions D1.1.1 , D1.1.2 , D1.1.3 , D1.1.4 , D1.1.5 , D1.1.6 , D1.1.7 D1.2.1 , D1.2.2 , D1.2.3 , D1.2.4 , D1.2.5 , D1.2.6 D1.3.1 , D1.3.2 , D1.3.3 , D1.3.4 , D1.3.5 , D1.3.6	Sessions D2.1.1 , D2.1.2 , D2.1.3 , D2.1.4 , D2.1.5 , D2.1.6 , D2.1.7 D2.2.1 , D2.2.2 , D2.2.3 , D2.2.4 , D2.2.5 , D2.2.6 D2.3.1 , D2.3.2 , D2.3.3 , D2.3.4 , D2.3.5 , D2.3.6

Key

	Plenary Sessions
	Inclusive education
	Building belonging & raising student voices
	Redefining learning & teaching in HE
	Fringe and other events

University of Manchester Teaching and Learning Conference Wednesday 2nd July 2025

Detailed Schedule

Exhibitors arrive at 9.00

All Day: The Drum - Exhibition stalls & Posters; Prayer room - **University Place 2.217**; Quiet room - **University Place 2.219**

	Room 1 4.206	Room 2 2.20	Room 3 2.218	Room 4 4.205	Room 5 tbc	Room 6 tbc	Room 7 3.204
9.15 - 9.45	University Place, The Drum: Registration and Coffee Move to University Place Theatre B from 9.45 for prompt start at 10.00						
10.00 - 10.20	University Place Theatre B: Opening remarks – April McMahon Then 10 minutes to move to first session						
10.30 – 11.30	<u>D1.1.1. Standard Papers – Belonging and Inclusion</u> 1. Andrew Gridley, Catherine Collin, Catherine Porter, William Holmes; 2. Amber Ruigrok, Stefan Perryman, Lorna Brown, Jowan Khalid, and Emma Gowen; 3. Luke Wookey, Ruth Bromley	<u>D1.1.2. Standard Papers – Raising Student Voices</u> 1. Students' Union Education Team; 2. Emma Hollenberg and Mario Pezzino; 3. Stephie Tsai, Aurelie Le Normand, Elisabeth Allen, Zeeshan Azam, Clare Richardson, Darya Badiei Khorsand, Md Abdullah Mamun, Xiaoqing Zhang	<u>D1.1.3. Standard Papers – Innovative and Authentic Assessment</u> 1. Verity Wainwright, Polly Turner, Zaynab Khan; 2. Louisa Dawes & Craig Thomas; 3. Maria Canal, Ben Chapman, Lisa Swanton	<u>D1.1.4. Lightning Talks – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in T&L</u> 1. Anna Forringer-Beal; 2. Emily Hynds, Nida Yeserdir, Maria Merce Canal, Tristan Pocock; 3. SU Education Team; 4. Kevin Harding; 5. Siobhan Cartwright / Helen Chilton	<u>D1.1.5. Wicked Problem Set - Starting Conversations: Creatively supporting the transition to university</u> Doron Cohen, Louis Flintham, Karen Lander, Donna Lloyd, Elizabeth McManus-Day, Ellen Poliakoff, Annie Pye, Debbie Smith, Ming Wai Wan	<u>D1.1.6. Wicked Problem Set - Leveraging AI to enhance inclusive teamwork</u> Haris Chaudhry, Maryam Malekshahian, Wennie Subramonian	<u>D1.1.7. Wicked Problem Set - Amplifying Student Voices to Transform Medical Education: Advocating for Planetary Health through the 2024-2025 Report Card</u> Yasmin Tyrrell, Simonne Weeks, Nia Coupe, Noelle Caruso-Kelly, Hau Ying Yan, Harshini Suresh
11.30 – 11.50	University Place, The Drum: Morning Coffee						

11.50 – 12.50	D1.2.1. Standard Papers – Inclusion in Digital and Online Teaching 1. Catherine Stanton; 2. Lisa Taylor; 3. Lijing Lin	D1.2.2. Standard Papers – Raising and hearing student voices 1. Student's Union Education Team (103); 2. Rachel Studd, Rachel Parker-Strak, Thomas Pierce-Jones; 3. Philip Drake, Caroline Hoyle, Jenny Gibbons, Naomi Lumsdaine, Chloe Cheadle, Milena Bologan, Jackson McGuire, Melissa Smith, Eve McLaughlin, Aoife Baxter and Abhishu Chatterjee	D1.2.3. Standard Papers – Interdisciplinary learning 1. Maria Kopsacheili; 2. Alison Fisher; 3. Donna M. Lloyd, Ruth U. Ingram, and Ellen Poliakoff	D1.2.4. Posters Xinxin Chen & Yanxi Liu; Kai Prince, Rachael Howe, Rachel Cox, Rachel Cynthia Valavan Vetrigo and Sarah-Sonia Balan; Zainab Shah, Hannah Zaman; Sara Cabral & Grazyna Grace Lipowska-Bhalla; Kieron Allison, Karina Lear, Yasmin Yamak, Grazyna Grace Lipowska-Bhalla; Chris Millson; Shehleen Arbab Khan, Anjali Vaidyanathan, Amy Bradshaw, Rebecca Marks; 'Dunni Adeniyi; Amy Bradshaw; Sarah Sharp; Rebecca Marks; Alison Luke & Sara Ahsan; Duncan Hull	D1.2.5. Wicked Problem Set - How can digital wellbeing be embedded within the Teaching, Learning and Student Experience? Sharing lessons learned from the Digital Peer Learning Network Digital Capability Student Reps, Gabba Sutcliffe de Oliveira, Emma Bramwell, Kai Prince, Carlene Barton, Yamin Mushtaq and Jane Mooney	D1.2.6. Wicked Problem Set - Redefining employability development–challenging the status quo through the lens of social responsibility and entrepreneurship Jennifer Rose, Shirley Jenner, Javed Siddiqui, Adam Frost, Alex Wong	D1.2.7. FRINGE – Belonging Network Jennie Blake, Sarah Hatherill, student and staff representatives
12.50 – 1.50	University Place, The Market: Lunch						
2.00 – 3.00	University Place Theatre B: Plenary Session 1 Strategy, Teaching and Learning Prof. Duncan Ivison in conversation with Prof. Adam Danquah (BMH) and student Szaifi Jarbath (Humanities)						
3.00 – 3.20	University Place, The Drum: Afternoon Coffee						
3.30 – 4.30	D1.3.1. Standard Papers – social justice and challenging western normativity	D1.3.2. Standard Papers – Building belonging through relational pedagogies, co-	D1.3.3. Standard Papers – Enhancing and Innovating in Assessment 1. Jen McBride, Sally Hickson, Nicky	D1.3.4. Lightning Talks – Inclusive teaching innovation 1. Neil Morrison, Kai Prince, Sonia	D1.3.5. Wicked Problem Set - From Users to Co-Creators: Shaping Responsible AI Use	D1.3.6. Wicked Problem Set - Starting with empathy: using human-centred design tools to	D1.3.7. FRINGE – The Students' Union

Key

	Plenary Sessions
	Inclusive education
	Building belonging & raising student voices
	Redefining learning & teaching in HE
	Fringe and other events

	1. Doron Cohen, Stacey McKnight; 2. Wahida Walibhai, Louisa Shirley; 3. Christopher Sutton	creation and group work 1. Elaine Clark & Charlotte Hoyland; 2. Dave Hirst & Rachel Cox; 3. Sofia Izquierdo Sanchez and Sara Jabeen	High; 2. Hannah Wilkinson; 3. Harry Potter	Bălan; 2. Lindsay Pressdee; 3. Genevieve Shimwell & Helen Marsden; 4. Michelle Keown & Elizabeth Sheader; 5. Maiedha Raza, Liz Sheader, Nathan Betteridge	in Student Learning Wennie Subramonian, Maryam Malekshahian, Ahnaf Saumik	improve our students' experiences Sarah Dyer Chiachi Ming	
4.30 – 6.30	Christies Bistro: Drinks Reception						

University of Manchester Teaching and Learning Conference Thursday 3rd July 2025

Schedule Summary

All Day: The Drum - Exhibition stalls & Posters; Prayer room - **University Place 2.217** ; Quiet room – **University Place 2.219**

	Room 1 4.206	Room 2 2.20	Room 3 2.218	Room 4 4.205	Room 5 tbc	Room 6 tbc	Room 7 3.204
9.00 - 9.30	University Place, The Drum: Registration and Coffee						
9.30 - 10.20	University Place Theatre B: Plenary Session 2 Beyond satisfaction surveys: what university teaching really means to students Prof. Steve Jones (MIE) and student panel Fariha Agha, Rachel Cynthia Valavan Vetrigo, Olivia Shaw						

10.30 – 11.30	<u>D2.1.1. Standard Papers – Foundation and Transition</u> 1. Doron Cohen, Louis Flintham, Karen Lander, Donna Lloyd, Elizabeth McManus-Day, Ellen Poliakoff, Annie Pye, Debbie Smith, Ming Wai Wan; 2. Sarah Hatherill and Suzanne Thatcher; 3. Sanket Vilas Chaskar, Lei Zeng	<u>D2.1.2. Standard Papers – Assessment, Feedback and AI</u> 1. Louisa Dawes, Yaoyao Shi, Ruohan Luo, Fiona Velez-Colby; 2. Rachel Heasley, Chuning Xu, Shiyu Zeng; 3. Jon Shute, Emily Turner, Charlotte Warden.	<u>D2.1.3. Standard Papers – Climate crisis, Environmental sustainability and SDGs</u> 1. Maggy Fostier, Denis Alferez; 2. Rebecca Champion and Rachel Ashworth; 3. Maggy Fostier, Ruth Grady	<u>D2.1.4. Lightning Talks – Assessment & Feedback, Collaboration to Empower Students</u> 1. Olivia Shaw; 2. Emily Cooksey; 3. Theo Abbot, Shadia El Mokdad; 4. Peng Khoon Gerald Chan; 5. Harriet Palfreyman	<u>D2.1.5. Fragile, messy, slow, and fun: Interdisciplinary inclusive education</u> Wren Radford	<u>D2.1.6. Wicked Problem Set - Academic advisors – how can we enhance student belonging?</u> Helen Jopling, Krystyna Drewenska	<u>2.1.7. Wicked Problem Set - What could Service/Community Engaged Learning look like in my programme?</u> Rachel Lindley, Julian Skyrme, Lynne Bianchi, Phil Drake,
11.30 – 11.50	University Place, The Drum: Morning Coffee						
11.50 – 12.50	<u>D2.2.1. Standard Papers – Active learning and innovative assessment for inclusion</u> 1. Francisco Eissa-Barroso; 2. Alison Harvey, Aurelie Le Normand, Erika Aminian, Louise Walker, Martin Simmons, Simon Raw; 3. Erika Aminian, Jillian Yeow, Ian Stewart	<u>D2.2.2. Standard Papers – Academic Advising, collaborative working and enhancing independent learning</u> 1. Jessica Leather, Shubhi Kohli, Amber Ruigrok, Elizabeth Mcmanus-Day, Leone Buckle, Ruth Ingram, Doron Cohen, Rebecca	<u>D2.2.3. Standard Papers – Digital competencies, blended learning and AI</u> 1. Tatjana Kecojevic; 2. Grazyna Grace Lipowska-Bhalla; 3. Karen Kilkenny, David James, Natalie Jayson, Liz Birchinall, Andrew Rhodes	<u>D2.2.4. Lightning Talks – Sustainable Development, Inclusive and Reflective practice</u> 1. Karen Lander; 2. Susana Lorenzo-Zamorano; 3. Helen Jopling, Philip Macdonald; 5. Jessica Grundy, Dianne Burns	<u>D2.2.5. Wicked Problem Set - Can Higher Education truly be Decolonised</u> Sohini Biswas & Becca Annoh	<u>D2.2.6. Wicked Problem Set - Communicating in the international classroom</u> Ruth Fordham	<u>D2.2.7. FRINGE – UoM Advance HE Fellowship Scheme Information Session/Drop-in</u> - An overview of the scheme and an opportunity to ask questions whether you're looking to start an application or are already in the process of creating one

		Champion; 2. Sandra Torres; 3. Jo Cartwright & Amal Al-Amin					
12.50 – 1.40	University Place, The Market: Lunch						
1.40 – 2.40	<u>D2.3.1. Standard Papers – Feedback and Experiential Learning for Inclusion</u> 1. Hawraa Abid, Jack Delaney, Alex Sturrock, Stephanie Greenwood-Davies; 2. Karen Beswick, Nghi Lam, Tanya Chandi; 3. Pat Cartney and Dharman Jeyasingham; 4. Craig Davis	<u>D2.3.2. Standard Papers – Social Networks and Digital tools</u> 1. Emma Brewin-Caddy, Sophie Coller; 2. Helen Jopling, Philip Macdonald; 3. Sofia Izquierdo Sanchez and William Tayler	<u>D2.3.3. Standard Papers – Team Based Learning</u> 1. Claire Burns, Lisa Donlan, Maryam Al-jeddal; 2. Michael Smith, Elizabeth Sheader, Lisa Donlan; 3. Hannah Serrage, Stavros Panagiotou, Jenny Herbert, Moustafa Alissa Alkhalaf	<u>D2.3.4. Lightning Talks – Peer learning to build belonging, and SU Initiatives Raising Student Voice</u> 1. Anna Melenikiotou; 2. Catherine Collin; 3. Krystyna Drewenska, Fatema Khartbotli; 4. Elizabeth Toon; 5. Beck Heslop	<u>D2.3.5. Wicked Problem Set - Wicked Problem Set - How can digital capability be effectively embedded within the curriculum?</u> Francesca Demontis, Emilie Greathead, Alice Godliman, Emma Bramwell, Digital Capability Student Reps, Caroline Bowsher and Jane Mooney	<u>D2.3.6. Wicked Problem Set - How can students become empowered partners when evaluating the impact of teaching and learning?</u> Fran Hooley and Jiya Grover	<u>D2.3.7. FRINGE – The Teaching and Scholarship Network (TASN): Finding your Scholarship Community</u>
2.40 – 3.00	University Place, The Drum: Afternoon Coffee						
3.00 – 3.50	<u>University Place Theatre B: Plenary Session 3</u> <u>Supporting a-typical pathways?</u> Dr. Perpetual Idehen, Emma Lewis-Kalubowila and student panel						
3.50 – 4.00	Closing Remarks: Lexie Baynes, Student Union Affairs Officer Conference Close						

Plenary Sessions

Day 1

Plenary 1: Strategy, Teaching and Learning

Prof. Duncan Ivison in conversation with Prof. Adam Danquah (BMH) and Szaifi Jarbath (student from the Faculty of Humanities)

Abstract:

University of Manchester President and Vice Chancellor, Professor Duncan Ivison will lead a keynote on the University's teaching and learning strategy. Duncan will be joined by a panel made up of a member of teaching staff and a current student at the University to discuss and reflect on strategy, teaching and learning. The panel discussion will be followed by a Q&A with the audience.

Day 2

Plenary 2: Beyond satisfaction surveys: what university teaching really means to students

Prof. Steve Jones (MIE) and student panel Fariha Agha, Rachel Cynthia Valavan Vetrigo, Olivia Shaw

Abstract:

Within many institutions that perform poorly against student satisfaction surveys is a growing sense of exasperation. What more do our students want? How else are we supposed to teach them? Why can't they appreciate everything we're doing? The purpose of this plenary session is to move beyond survey outcomes to unpick some of the assumptions about students and teaching that we all hold and develop more creative ways to facilitate learning. The session will be delivered in partnership with the real experts when it comes to teaching and learning: our students.

Plenary 3: Supporting a-typical pathways?

Chairs: Perpetual Idehen, Emma Lewis-Kalubowila

Panel: This session will involve an all student panel facilitated by Emma Lewis-Kalubowila (Access and Success) and Dr. Perpetual Idehen (FSE).

Abstract:

In this engaging plenary session, we will hear directly from current students at the University of Manchester as they share their lived experiences of teaching and learning. Representing a diverse range of backgrounds and perspectives, these students will offer honest reflections on what has supported their academic journey and where improvements can be made. Their voices are vital in shaping a more inclusive, responsive, and effective learning environment, and this session provides a valuable opportunity to listen, learn, and reflect together

Fringe Sessions

Day 1

D1.2.7 Fringe: Belonging Network

What does it mean to belong? Do you feel you belong at the University of Manchester? Do our students feel a sense of belonging at our institution? What barriers and challenges exist that can prevent belonging?

The University of Manchester Belonging Network invites you to meet the students and staff that have come together to reflect on, advocate for and work toward belonging and mattering. Come join us and learn more about the belonging activities happening across the university in a fun and interactive way. Hear about how embracing belonging can lead to positive outcomes for both students and staff, and explore the small steps and deliberate choices we can all make, no matter our role or context, to create communities where people feel they belong and know they matter.

D.1.3.7 Fringe: The Students' Union

The enhancement of Student Voice continues to be a priority for the Students' Union and University of Manchester. Join the Students' Union for a chance to share best practice and generate new ideas for the year ahead!

Day 2

D2.2.7 Fringe: UoM Advance HE Fellowship Scheme Information Session/Drop-in

An overview of the scheme and an opportunity to ask questions whether you're looking to start an application or are already in the process of creating one.

D2.3.7 Fringe: The Teaching and Scholarship Network (TASN): Finding your Scholarship Community

Are you starting out in scholarship? Or are you just looking to find your scholarship community? Do you wonder who else across the university shares your scholarship challenges and interests? If the answer to any of these is yes, then this fringe session is for you! In this fringe session we will provide a relaxed, informal and welcoming opportunity to talk about all things scholarship!

Members of the University's T&S network steering group will present some of their scholarship and then attendees will have the opportunity to identify and talk through their own scholarship challenges in supportive smaller groups. Feel free to bring your scholarship questions, or let them bubble up in the discussion - either way we look forward to meeting you!

Conference Sessions - Day 1

Session D1.1.1

Session Title: Belonging and Inclusion

Session Type: Standard papers

Themes: Inclusive Education

Paper1 Title: Learning to learn – building belonging from the beginning

Speakers: Andrew Gridley, Catherine Collin, Catherine Porter, William Holmes – School of Health Sciences, FBMH

Abstract: In 2024 the Optometry Learning to Learn team organised and delivered 4 weeks of welcome/induction activities, which were aligned with the pillars of belonging (connection, inclusion, support, autonomy) found in the WONKHE research “Building Belonging in Higher Education”. In this session we describe how we mapped activities onto these pillars, in particular the pillar of “support”: initial support, supporting learner transition, building academic confidence and support at the point of need. Students undertook a variety of events from staff speed dating, maths games, visits to the Whitworth Art Gallery and the Manchester Museum, as well as a sound bath. Our aim was to enable students to build a sense of connection (between themselves, staff, different year groups & the wider university) and belonging from the beginning. The impact was significant. 48 students responded “yes”, 20 students responded “partly” to the question “Do you feel part of the optometry community?”. No students responded negatively, the response rate was 85%. The evaluation results (surveys and focus groups) are overwhelmingly positive. “I appreciate that this experience helped me gradually settle into university life, with it being a huge change. It was definitely supportive of my wellbeing. Thank you for creating this for us!”. Whilst this was designed specifically for our new course there are many ideas which should be adopted and/or adapted as standard practice welcoming students to university.

Paper2 Title: Co-developing a 1st year BSc Psychology Unit on Autism

Speakers: Amber Ruigrok, Stefan Perryman, Lorna Brown, Jowan Khalid, and Emma Gowen – School of Health Sciences, FBMH

Abstract: We are developing an autism unit for 1st year students on the Psychology degree programme at The University of Manchester. In line with our values, we are taking a neurodivergent affirmative approach and co-producing the unit with autistic people in several different ways. First, our team contains autistic undergraduate students. Second, we are running focus groups with autistic students at The University of Manchester. Third, we are asking for input from the Autism@Manchester Expert by Experience group. Fourth, autistic people will teach on and contribute to the course. As far as we are aware, we are the first team to co-produce an undergraduate unit on Autism. Autistic people have historically been underserved and excluded from society. By co-producing this unit, we hope to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment that is beneficial for people across the neurodiversity spectrum. Furthermore, we aim to ensure the topic and content reflect the values of autistic people, challenging common myths around autism and autistic people. We will be sharing our experiences co-producing an undergraduate unit, including the impact on the unit development and reflection on our practice and approach. This work will hopefully inspire others to co-produce undergraduate units in the future. By doing so, we aim to ensure that the voices of people that are often overlooked are heard, acknowledged and included in higher education settings. This work addresses SGDs 3, 4, 5 and 10.

Paper3 Title: LGBT Affirmation in Undergraduate Medical Education

Speakers: Luke Wookey, Ruth Bromley – School of Medical Sciences, FBMH

Abstract: LGBT individuals face significant barriers to healthcare, greater health inequalities, and poorer health outcomes. Research indicates that most UK medical schools offer limited training on LGBT healthcare needs, with student feedback highlighting this gap in education. In response, Manchester Medical School launched its LGBT affirmation workstream in 2019 as part of a health inequalities strategy, aiming to improve healthcare outcomes for LGBT individuals. This initiative expands learning objectives to enhance students’ confidence and competence in

supporting marginalised patients. A clinician with lived experience was appointed as the lead for LGBT affirmation, and a micro-faculty was created to integrate LGBT content across the five-year curriculum. These efforts are co-produced with students and delivered in partnership with community organisations like the LGBT Foundation, highlighting the value of lived experience in shaping education.

The project aligns with the conference theme by promoting inclusive, equitable, and accessible medical education. It also supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) and Goal 10 (Reduced Inequality).

This initiative has broader implications, potentially serving as a model for other medical schools to adopt LGBT-inclusive curricula. By pioneering LGBT affirmation work, Manchester Medical School aims to improve healthcare for LGBT individuals, inspire innovation in inclusive medical practice, and influence wider policy and sector changes.

This presentation will share our strategic journey, highlighting our successes and what we have learned to do differently along the way. It will also provide a safe space for colleagues to share ideas and help inform the priorities of our next five-year strategy.

D1.1.2

Session Title: Raising student voices

Session Type: Standard papers

Themes: Building belonging and raising student voices

Paper1 Title: Redefining Student Voice Meetings: The Students' Union Review of SSLCs

Speakers: Students' Union Education Team

Abstract: This paper presents findings from a series of focus groups conducted with academic staff, professional services staff, and academic reps to examine student feedback meeting. We sought to better understand the challenges and barriers that hinder these committees' success, while also gathering suggestions for change. In this presentation, we will share key insights from the focus groups, including common issues faced by both students and staff, and explore how SSLCs can be restructured to better meet the needs of all participants. We will also discuss potential barriers to implementing these changes and provide actionable recommendations for making SSLCs more effective, inclusive, and impactful. This work aims to contribute to the ongoing development of student-staff relations and enhance the overall educational experience.

Paper2 Title: Redefining Peer Review of Teaching: Partnering with Students for Meaningful Feedback

Speakers: Emma Hollenberg and Mario Pezzino – School of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities

Abstract: The School of Social Sciences is piloting a collaborative peer review of teaching (PRT) model involving students. Currently, PRT follows a mixed evaluation and developmental model (Gosling, 2002, 2014) and is mandatory for probationary staff, with periodic reviews thereafter. However, challenges exist, including potential alienation and limited professional development (Zeng, 2020).

Led by the School's Director of Teaching and Learning and the Students' Union Education Coordinator, our project introduces a voluntary, informal PRT scheme where trained students collaborate with academic reviewers to provide constructive feedback. Students are paired with academics to review teaching, submitting reflections on the process alongside reviewees and reviewers.

Engaging students as partners (SaP) in PRT benefits both staff and students. Staff receive structured, constructive feedback beyond course surveys, while students gain soft skills and deeper insights into teaching. This approach enhances accessibility and equity by valuing student voices in teaching development, allowing diverse perspectives to be integrated into feedback.

Aligning with the conference themes of 'Building belonging and raising student voices' and 'Redefining learning and teaching in HE', this session will share an initial evaluation of the pilot, discussing its impact, challenges, and future development. Attendees will explore how student-inclusive PRT can enhance teaching and learning in their own departments and schools.

Paper3 Title: Fostering Belonging and Student Voice through GTA Development

Speakers: Stephie Tsai, Aurelie Le Normand, Elisabeth Allen, Zeeshan Azam, Clare Richardson, Darya Badiei Khorsand, Md Abdullah Mamun, Xiaoqing Zhang – School of Natural Sciences, FSE

Abstract: Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) play a crucial role in Higher Education, yet many experience limited pedagogical training, uncertainty in their role, and a lack of institutional belonging (Smith et al., 2023). These challenges impact both professional development and ability to foster inclusive, student-centred learning environments. This presentation examines a GTA Development Programme designed by GTAs for fellow GTAs to enhance teaching confidence, institutional integration through structured mentorship, peer learning, and reflective practice.

The programme directly supports 'Building belonging and raising student voices' by enhancing GTAs' capacity to create inclusive learning environments. Through mentorship and student feedback mechanisms, GTAs develop pedagogical approaches that amplify student voice, promote engagement, and address diverse learning needs. The initiative strengthens GTA identity within the academic community, improving their ability to connect with students and foster inclusive classroom experiences.

This initiative offers a scalable model for GTA development in partnership with GTAs contributing to collaborative discussions on teaching training, inclusion, and student voice in Higher Education. The presentation will provide practical insights into the challenges and successes of GTA support structures, offering applicable strategies for programmes and institutions seeking to enhance GTA integration and improve student learning outcomes.

D1.1.3

Session Title: Innovative and Authentic Assessment

Session Type: Standard papers

Themes: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Paper1 Title: Bringing applied practice into the classroom through authentic assessments in Forensic Psychology: A qualitative exploration of master's students' perspectives

Speakers: Dr Verity Wainwright, Dr Polly Turner and Ms Zaynab Khan

Abstract: An assignment strategy review was conducted for the MSc Forensic Psychology and Mental Health with input from stakeholders including current and former students. Several assignments were revised, introducing a variety of new assessment formats. The 2023/24 cohort were the first to experience the new assessments and thus, were best placed to consider perceived impact in terms of employability, transferable skills and support for learning. Seven students participated in either individual interviews or a focus group discussion, facilitated by a student intern. Analysis identified four themes that will be discussed: embracing challenge, developing identity as a forensic psychologist, positive views on diverse assessments; easing the load and navigating feedback. Aligning with the conference theme of redefining teaching and learning in higher education, this study challenges traditional assessment models, advocating for approaches that better reflect professional practice while fostering more inclusive and equitable educational experiences. This study not only informs best practice in higher education but also has potential to influence assessment policies more widely, inspire innovation in curriculum design, and enhance the real-world applicability of forensic training. By exploring student experiences, the research highlights considerations of inclusion, accessibility, and equity in assessment design, ensuring that authentic assessments support a range of learners and needs.

Paper2 Title: Developing oral skills and critical thinking through problem-orientated group work and assessment

Speakers: Louisa Dawes & Craig Thomas

Abstract: This presentation reports on and evaluates a Flexible Learning Pilot project integrating problem-oriented project learning (PPL) with viva voce summative assessments in two Humanities course units at the University of Manchester. While both units traditionally employed oral presentations based on research projects as summative assessments, within the pilot we drew on the PPL principles developed at Roskilde University, Denmark, to inform pedagogical practices that facilitated structured oral interactions, project work and group activities that foster critical thinking and communication skills.

The rationale for this innovative approach was rooted in the role of formative assessment in maximising student learning outcomes. By incorporating formative oral interactions with extensive feedback, we aimed to develop oral competencies that were designed to develop an inclusive environment, thereby alleviating anxiety associated with oral assessments, particularly for students for whom English is a second or additional language. The pilot project also incorporated group work and problem -orientated activities as a means to address the increasing demand from employers for transferable skills that are best developed real-world learning experiences and good communication skills.

Finally, the presentation will report on evaluations by staff and students on the efficacy of this pedagogical shift, analysing staff workload implications, student performance quality, and levels of student satisfaction. We also aim to explore the potential adaptability of this approach across additional courses within the University. We hope that the findings from this project will contribute significantly to the discourse on innovative assessment methodologies across the University, advancing the pedagogical landscape in higher education.

Paper3 Title: Advancing digital exams: piloting Cadmus for secure bring-your-own-device assessments

Speakers: Maria Canal, Ben Chapman, Lisa Swanton (presenting)

Abstract: This presentation reports on a pilot using the Cadmus digital assessment platform with a lockdown browser to deliver a secure on-campus bring-your-own-device (BYOD) exam for a Level 4 unit of >100 students. Building on two years successful delivery of open-book assessments with Cadmus, the pilot aimed to combine the benefits of digital assessments and BYOD, whilst ensuring integrity with a lockdown browser.

Student engagement was built into the pilot, with pre-exam support ensuring accessibility, familiarity with the platform and technical support. Post-exam feedback on usability, logistics, and overall exam experience was captured, with 74% of respondents saying they preferred BYOD over handwritten exams. Concerns included device compatibility and the potential impact of the digital interface on time management. Attainment data across different student groups will be presented to provide insight into the inclusivity of this approach.

The presentation aligns with the conference themes of inclusive education and student voice by involving students in the pre-exam support and evaluation processes, and resonates with sector-wide aims to transition towards secure, flexible, digital examinations that accommodate diverse student needs.

D1.1.4

Session Type: Lightning Talks – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Teaching and Learning

Themes: Inclusive Education

Paper1 Title: Evaluating the effectiveness and comfort of the University's study spaces

Speakers: Emily Hynds, Nida Yeserdir, Maria Merce Canal, Tristan Pocock

Abstract: The university environment plays a crucial role in supporting students' academic success, yet it may not fully accommodate the sensory needs of all individuals. Neurodiverse students, in particular, may experience heightened sensitivity to sensory features such as light, noise, temperature and texture of seating and surfaces, potentially leading to sensory overload and hindering their ability to focus and learn. The aim of our final year Bioscience Stakeholder Project was to evaluate the comfort and effectiveness of various features of University of Manchester study spaces, comparing the responses of neurodiverse and neurotypical students. A survey was designed to assess students' experiences of different study spaces and preferences regarding key sensory aspects, and their priorities for elements that contribute to a supportive and effective learning environment. The survey was

completed by over 150 undergraduate and taught postgraduate students, across all programmes within the University of Manchester. Following the survey, participants who identified as neurodiverse were invited to take part in a focus group to gather more in-depth insights into specific challenges and preferences. Initial observations suggest that individuals, regardless of neurotype, have diverse sensory preferences. Analysis of the survey results, combined with qualitative data from the focus groups, will help identify the most effective strategies for creating inclusive study spaces that support diverse learning needs. Ultimately, the goal is to provide actionable recommendations to key stakeholders (i.e. Estates) to improve the university environment, in order to prevent sensory overload and enhance focus and comfort for all students.

Paper2 Title: Academic Community Grant: Enabling Student-Led Course Belonging

Speakers: Students' Union Education Team

Abstract: In January 2025, the Students' Union launched the 'Academic Community Grant' for Academic Reps and Academic Societies. This grant has the specific aim of working towards the first strand of the Student Voice Strategy: 'Belonging' by encouraging new and innovative ways of bringing students together at a course level for either social or long term educational gain. In this lightning talk, we will be providing insights from the first rounds of applications for the funds, the impact of projects that were funded alongside exploring the importance of providing ways to empower students to build communities.

Paper3 Title: Coaching for Equity in Higher Education: Reflections from a Coach on the University of Manchester Grow Beyond Limits Coaching Programme

Speakers: Kevin Harding

Abstract: Higher education institutions continue to grapple with awarding gaps and inequalities that disproportionately impact underrepresented students. Coaching has emerged as a potential intervention to support student success, confidence, and belonging. The Grow Beyond Limits coaching programme was introduced at the University of Manchester to address disparities in academic outcomes, particularly among Black and South Asian heritage students.

This lightning talk presents a critical reflection on my experience as a coach in this programme. Drawing on personal insights and student interactions, it explores how coaching fosters confidence, self-reflection, and goal setting, contributing to students' academic journeys. It also considers the emotional labour involved, challenges in engagement, and lessons learned from supporting students navigating systemic barriers.

Using self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1997) and transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991), this reflection highlights the complexities of coaching as an inclusive practice. While coaching offers valuable support, questions remain about how universities can embed such interventions sustainably.

This talk aligns with the Inclusive Education theme by considering coaching as a scalable model for fostering belonging and student success. It also connects to UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by advocating for student-centred support structures.

Paper4 Title: Neurodiverse Writing Groups - Helping Every Student

Speakers: Anna Forringer-Beal

Abstract: Writing practices developed by neurodiverse researchers can be used to benefit everyone. It is vital that as scholars, we provide the best research and writing space possible for our students and ourselves. The most productive writing spaces for every participant are those informed by disability practice. In a 12-week long writing group held at the University of Cambridge from April-July 2024, over twenty self-identified neurodiverse researchers and students came together to produce academic scholarship. The results shared in this 5-minute lightning talk point to higher productivity, increased confidence, and even higher enjoyment of the work by using concrete, achievable inclusive learning techniques. This talk proposes learning and teaching conditions that redefine education in HE, build practices of belonging, and work to include a diverse range of scholars.

Paper5 Title: Establishing a "First Generation at University of Manchester" Staff Network

Speakers: Helen Chilton and Siobhan Cartwright

Abstract:

D1.1.5

Session Title: Starting Conversations - Creatively supporting the transition to university

Speakers:

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Building belonging and raising student voices

Abstract: This talk seeks to inform participants about the newly formed staff network, rationale for it and its goals. The aim of the founders of the network originally, was to focus on the experiences of staff (both PS and academic) who were first generation university students. However, early on in its development the discussions around shared experiences inevitably brought us to reflect on the experiences of current and future students. Therefore, in the design of this network, working collaboratively with students has been at its core to support them through their journey.

We intend to familiarise participants with some of the initial debates from the network including the various experiences of staff, the impact of social class, accent, not understanding the hidden protocols, confidence and impact on promotion. This is the first staff network focussed on the experiences of first generation staff and the first time we are able to harness the wealth of experience we have to support student inclusivity.

Ultimately by understanding these experiences we will be able to powerfully impact on the learner experience. One of the aims of the network is to feed into wider university strategy around how we create equality of opportunity for both staff and students. This will support a sense of belonging for both.

D1.1.6

Session Title: Leveraging AI to enhance inclusive teamwork

Speakers: Haris Chaudhry, Maryam Malekshahian, Wennie Subramonian

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Inclusive education

Abstract: The increasing use of AI-driven digital tools in higher education presents new opportunities to improve student collaboration, inclusivity, and engagement. However, teamwork remains a challenge, particularly for underrepresented students who may face confidence gaps, language barriers, or unequal participation in group work. This presentation introduces an AI-enhanced teamwork skills toolkit, developed as part of a 4th-year dissertation project, in direct collaboration with students. It explores how AI-powered communication, task management, and conflict resolution tools can foster more structured, accessible, and inclusive teamwork across disciplines. Aligning with the conference themes of inclusive education and raising student voices, this research highlights how AI can democratise teamwork by making collaboration more structured, accessible, and fair.

This session will follow an interactive format. We will begin with an overview of the project and toolkit, followed by a group-based case study, where participants will use the toolkit to work through a scenario. The session will conclude with a discussion and reflection on how AI-driven tools can enhance teamwork and be adapted to different learning environments.

Beyond this conference, this work has sector-wide impact, offering insights for higher education policy and curriculum design by integrating student voices and AI technology, this research promotes fairer group dynamics, supports diverse learning needs.

D1.1.7

Session Title: Amplifying Student Voices to Transform Medical Education: Advocating for Planetary Health through the 2024-2025 Report Card

Speakers: Yasmin Tyrrell, Simonne Weeks, Nia Coupe, Noelle Caruso-Kelly, Hau Ying Yan, Harshini Suresh

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Abstract: Students play a key role in evaluating and advocating for planetary health (PH) integration into medical education through the Planetary Health Report Card (PHRC) Now in its sixth cycle, our interdisciplinary student-faculty team assessed our medical school's curriculum, research, community engagement, and sustainability efforts.

We followed a structured process of metric review, data collection, scoring, and analysis, identifying strengths in interdisciplinary research (A-) and campus sustainability (A) alongside areas for improvement in curriculum integration (C-) and student support (C).

D1.2.1

Session Title: Inclusion in Digital and Online Teaching

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Inclusive Education

Paper1 Title: 'Reflections on two decades of online teaching'

Speakers: Catherine Stanton

Abstract: I have been teaching on the university's online postgraduate programmes in healthcare ethics and law since 2002. Our students are usually working full-time work in the healthcare, legal and regulatory sectors. Our online courses therefore enable them to gain qualifications whilst continuing to work. This presentation will reflect on the last two decades and the lessons learnt about teaching and learning online. The presentation draws on feedback from students and reflects on how this has helped us to develop our provision. It recognises the inclusiveness of online learning, which can enable students to study who would not be able to come to campus, whether due to their location, work and family commitments or disability. Online learning sits within the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 4 which calls for the promotion of lifelong learning, together with the University's ongoing strategy to develop flexible learning. The presentation may therefore be of interest to colleagues who are setting up online courses, or are considering doing so.

Paper2 Title: Advancing Inclusive Education: Strengthening Learning Autonomy with Digital Innovation and Universal Design for Learning

Speakers: Lisa Taylor

Abstract: This project explores the impact of inclusive digital learning tools on student engagement and accessibility in technical education. Spearheaded by Lisa Taylor and the eLearning team, the initiative developed the Micro Sewing Site, an interactive platform providing accessible technical resources for garment technology students. The platform, grounded in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, ensures diverse learning needs are met by integrating multimodal resources such as video tutorials, step-by-step guides, and peer-feedback opportunities.

Accessed over 17,000 times in the 2023–24 academic year, the platform has significantly enhanced student autonomy, problem-solving skills, and industry readiness. By embedding UDL, the project fosters flexible, student-centred learning, particularly benefiting international students and those with diverse learning styles. The initiative has reduced barriers to hands-on learning by extending access beyond traditional lab settings, improving equity in education.

Aligning with the conference themes of Inclusive Education and Redefining Learning in HE, this project challenges conventional teaching methods by demonstrating how digital interventions elevate student voices, enhance belonging, and transform technical education. Beyond this conference, the model has influenced wider HE practices, contributing to open educational resources (JORUM) and fostering interdisciplinary applications in STEM education.

This research supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals, SDG 4: Quality Education by advancing equitable, inclusive learning environments. SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production promotes sustainable decision-making in garment technology, helping students and industry professionals minimise fabric waste, energy use, and excess material purchases. By providing technical guidance and digital tools, it fosters a circular economy approach in fashion education, ensuring materials are used efficiently and responsibly.

Paper3 Title: Empowering Inclusive Education through eLabs

Speakers: Lijing Lin

Abstract: This session explores the transformative impact of eLabs in fostering inclusive, accessible, and student-centred learning environments across diverse programmes at the University of Manchester. Developed within the School of Health Sciences, eLabs are digital platforms that enable seamless access to data science and collaborative team-working tools, addressing challenges in research and health education.

Through case studies from undergraduate and postgraduate programmes—including AI, Machine Learning, Modern Information Engineering, Standards and Interoperability, and the Clinical Data Science Programme—we demonstrate how eLabs overcome barriers in technical complexity, accessibility, and varied learning needs. The platforms provide browser-based environments, ensuring that all students—regardless of technical background or institutional IT restrictions—can engage with course materials without complex installations. By offering self-paced learning through tools like Jupyter notebooks, eLabs promote equity in education, enabling students from diverse disciplines to develop technical competencies. They also provide collaborative tools that help students develop team-based skills, essential for academic/career growth.

A key outcome will be advocating for eLabs integration into teaching, offering insights for our colleagues. This contributes to discourse on technology in education, influencing policy and supporting UN SDGs on Quality Education and Reduced Inequalities.

D1.2.2

Session Title: Raising and hearing student voices

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Building belonging and raising student voices

Paper1 Title: Building Belonging and Raising Student Voices: Insights from the ABC Toolkit Fellowship

Speakers: Rachel Studd , Rachel Parker-Strak, Thomas Pierce-Jones

Abstract: This study shares findings from a fellowship project, exploring student support through the creation of an ABC Toolkit, a strategic and scalable approach to foster belonging, inclusion, and student partnership. Our research shows the importance of trust, autonomy, and peer relationships in shaping an inclusive and accessible student experience. By embedding co-creation, the ABC Toolkit empowers students to take ownership of their journey, strengthening their sense of community. Our data collection and analysis demonstrate that structured yet flexible support, delivered at the right time and approach, significantly enhances engagement and confidence. The toolkit provides a model for broader institutional implementation, supporting equity across disciplines and diverse cohorts. Collaborating with student partners, student voices were critical in the design of support mechanisms, ensuring the interventions are meaningful, timely, and adaptable to evolving needs. By addressing barriers to participation and fostering a proactive rather than reactive support model, our work contributes to a sector-wide conversation on inclusive educational practices. Beyond this conference, our findings hold wider implications for policy and practice.

The ABC Toolkit offers a transferable model that aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals on quality education and reduced inequalities, providing a framework for embedding belonging and co-creation across higher education institutions.

Paper2 Title: Recognising and Listening to the Student Voice in Service-Learning

Speakers: Philip Drake, Caroline Hoyle, Jenny Gibbons, Naomi Lumsdaine, Chloe Cheadle, Milena Bologan, Jackson McGuire, Melissa Smith, Eve McLaughlin, Aoife Baxter and Abhishu Chatterjee

Abstract: With the current trajectory of The University of Manchester moving towards more creative experiential and service based student learning (<https://www.manchester.ac.uk/about/manchester-2035/>), it is essential that we recognise and listen to the student voice in this innovative pedagogical base for learning (Morgan & Streb 2001). This presentation will explore the concept of service-learning from a student perspective, through the views and reflections of four year 2 students employed as interns by the Justice Hub. The Justice Hub is an umbrella term for all the pro bono (free legal advice) projects and activities in the School of Social Sciences (including the Legal Advice Centre ('LAC') and Manchester Free Legal Help ('MFLH')). It will consider how the students experiences as interns may develop their learning; including what they learn, how they learn and why they learn. It will consider not only their 'sense' of how to be, but also 'sensitivity': requisite feelings and morals' and how this may contribute towards a development of their 'professional', as well as academic identity or habitus (Colley et al., 2007). These are especially important considerations for the students, as the ethos of the Justice Hub is not only around developing 'legal skills and knowledge' but also adopting a humanistic approach to the law and legal practice, where the individual client is at the centre of the help provided (Parker 2004).

Importantly this presentation will be the students voice around their learning and a start to their professional identity formation within a service-learning context.

Paper3 Title: Recognising and Listening to the Student Voice in Service-Learning

Speakers: Students' Union Education Team

Abstract: In 2022, after identifying a gap in existing student academic representation structures, the Students' Union introduced the volunteer "School Rep" position. In 2023, as part of a wider review into the different types of student leadership, these roles became paid roles in recognition of increased responsibility and accountability. 2 years into the paid role, join the Student's Union in exploring the successes of the 2024/2025 Academic year, the impact of these roles on both Student Voice in Schools and building community and also find out how you can get involved. In this session you can expect to find out more what they do, how they can positively impact the student voice in your school and how you can collaborate with them into the next academic year.

D1.2.3

Session Title: Interdisciplinary learning

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Paper1 Title: Why interdisciplinary degrees will produce the graduates of the future

Speakers: Donna M. Lloyd, Ruth U. Ingram, and Ellen Poliakoff

Abstract: If it were possible to reverse engineer the employable graduate what would the ideal degree to produce this person look like? Research shows surprising advances occur when researchers work across/outside their disciplines (Shi & Evans, 2023). Yet, interdisciplinary degrees are still seen as the educational anomaly when the dominant social group is single honours, and this perception is reinforced by subject-specific QAA benchmarks. It's time for greater flexibility in the programmes we offer, and a better understanding of the challenges faced by students enrolled on such courses. To this aim, we surveyed a cohort of students enrolled on a joint honours degree (neuroscience and psychology) to identify the reasons why they enrolled on a degree combining subjects, how they identify with the different subjects, and the positive/negative experiences they've had, in order to make recommendations for future delivery of such programmes. The results showed that the choice of a joint honours degree is driven by the perceived benefits having broader knowledge/skills will bring when looking for graduate

opportunities. Negative experiences relate to having higher workloads than single honours, yet simple adjustments can be made to ensure learning outcomes/assessments are not duplicated. Such a transdisciplinary education (Russell, 2008) has the potential to redefine learning and teaching in HE and is valued by students and employers, but education providers are slower to see the benefits.

Paper2 Title: Expanding the Reach and Impact of Interdisciplinary Learning at Manchester

Speakers: Alison Fisher

Abstract: Higher education in the UK remains predominantly discipline-focused, yet the challenges graduates will face - climate change, global health crises, geopolitical instability, and the urgent need for sustainable development - demand interdisciplinary collaboration. The University of Manchester has long been a leader in this space, with the University College for Interdisciplinary Learning (UCIL) recognised as a sector-leading model for offering students the opportunity to engage with interdisciplinary learning beyond their core discipline.

UCIL provides a highly valued route for students to develop interdisciplinary skills through free-choice units.

Examining the profile of students who opt for UCIL units, their academic outcomes, and their feedback offers insight into the reach and impact of interdisciplinary education at Manchester. At the same time, this analysis highlights learners UCIL struggles to engage and the barriers they may face.

This presentation will propose scalable models to ensure all students benefit from interdisciplinary learning - including embedded interdisciplinary resources, bespoke interdisciplinary units, interdisciplinary research projects, and extra-curricular opportunities. It will demonstrate how UCIL's expertise in designing and delivering effective interdisciplinary education can be leveraged to expand its reach and impact while ensuring inclusivity and student success.

By further integrating interdisciplinary learning within the student experience, Manchester can consolidate its position as a leader in preparing students for complex, real-world problem-solving. This session will spark discussion on institutional barriers, practical implementation, and the role interdisciplinary learning should play in shaping the future of higher education.

Paper3 Title: Supporting Undergraduate Interdisciplinary Engagement and Meta-Cognition: UCIL's Introduction to Interdisciplinary Learning

Speakers: Maria Kopsacheili

Abstract: The development of higher-order cognitive skills through interdisciplinary learning is widely supported by systematic reviews of pedagogical scholarship and empirical research (e.g. Oudenampsen et al. 2024; Ivanitskaya et al. 2002). Some of the most commonly identified outcomes include the ability to analyse complex problems, collaborate within teams, change perceptions, and synthesise multiple perspectives. However, students often feel overwhelmed at the beginning of their interdisciplinary learning journey and lack awareness of their own development when they reflect on their experiences (Xu et al. 2022).

At the University College for Interdisciplinary Learning (UCIL), appr. 3000 undergraduate students annually complete a 10- or 20 credit interdisciplinary course unit of their choice offered in different formats (online, blended, and face-to-face). Student feedback, collected through unit surveys, end-of-module questionnaires, and focus groups, aligns with the scholarly consensus on skills development and highlights challenges related to student meta-cognition.

This paper summarises key findings from student feedback regarding their experience of interdisciplinary study. It also presents UCIL's new development project in response to this feedback: the online asynchronous resource Introduction to Interdisciplinary Learning. This resource is designed to guide students through their learning journey and support them in articulating the value of their experience. The presentation focuses on the conception and planning stages of the development process, including observations from co-creation with students and academic staff. Through an interactive activity, the delegates are invited to share their own ideas about empowering the interdisciplinary learner.

D1.2.4

Session Type: Poster Presentations

Paper1 Title: Rethinking Cooperative Learning: Culturally Responsive Approaches for EFL Students in Inclusive Classrooms

Speaker: Xinxin Chen and Yanxi Liu

Abstract: Cooperative learning is widely recognized as an effective strategy for fostering peer interaction. However, traditional cooperative learning models often overlook cultural differences, which can particularly affect English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. This poster rethinks cooperative learning through a culturally responsive lens, exploring how adapted strategies can better support EFL students in inclusive classrooms by addressing linguistic and cultural anxiety.

This project is led by two EFL students who have firsthand experience navigating group-based learning in a second language. As universities increasingly prioritize diversity and welcome international students, our work refines cooperative learning to better support EFL learners. By integrating educational psychology research and student voice, we propose practical strategies to foster meaningful peer interaction and equitable participation.

Aligned with the conference theme of Inclusive Education, our work emphasizes the need for teaching practices that accommodate diverse learning needs. Beyond the conference, this discussion has implications for classroom practice, equipping educators with tools to create more inclusive environments. Additionally, we particularly focus on SDG 4.7 (Education for Global Citizenship and Appreciation of Cultural Diversity), as rethinking traditional cooperative learning through culturally responsive pedagogies helps foster globally inclusive learning environments.

Paper2 Title: Generating and Communicating Ideas: How co-creation empowers the student voice within teaching materials and beyond

Speaker: Kai Prince, Rachael Howe, Rachel Cox, Rachel Cynthia Valavan Vetrigo and Sarah-Sonia Balan.

Abstract: The CATE and Teaching Excellence Award-winning Student Library Team at the University of Manchester have led the development and delivery of a workshop offered on their Library's Open Programme. Primarily inspired by neurodivergent students' postgraduate research experience and influenced by the Universal Design for Learning guidelines (CAST, 2024), the workshop is a space where students explore their learning strengths through different formats of working (i.e. visual and audible). Students use the workshop to explore how they could apply these methods through the requirements of their assessments. This promotes inclusive education practice by reducing barriers for students who feel limited in their expression of ideas by traditional written assignments. In line with the UN Sustainability Goal 4., Quality Education, this is to encourage students to become familiar with their strengths when generating and communicating their ideas in academic spaces and learning environments. This follows on from a previous poster presentation delivered at the ITL 2023, which was to gather more ideas and inspiration for creating resources as part of the project. The workshop and wider project is a window to how the Student Library Team empowers student voices to build belonging through co-creation (Blake et al., 2020) through the context of library teaching resources. More broadly, this also builds greater understanding of student needs and preferences around different forms of assessment, learning and retaining knowledge. Future plans include an a-synchronous resource as well as working further with academics to open the conversation about making curriculums and academic assessments more accessible.

References:

Blake, J. R. S., Aston, S. and Grayson, N. (2020) 'From the Outside in: Bringing Student Engagement to the Centre', *New Review of Academic Librarianship*, 26(2–4), pp. 419–432.

CAST. (2024). Consideration 5.1 use multiple media for communication, Universal Design for Learning Guidelines version 3.0. [online]. Available from: <https://udlguidelines.cast.org/action-expression/expression-communication/multiple-media/> [Accessed: March 6, 2025].

Paper3 Title: Scrubbed Up: Making Medical and Dental School More Accessible to Students From Lower Socioeconomic Backgrounds

Speaker: Zainab Shah and Hannah Zaman

Abstract: Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds face several barriers to becoming a doctor or dentist - from limited access to support during the application process, to the financial constraints during training, and beyond.

Scrubbed Up was founded by two University of Manchester medical students in May 2020, with the aim of helping students from all backgrounds enter and navigate medical/dental school. We have held over 30 events, including mock Multiple-Mini-Interviews (MMIs), virtual open days and weekly clinical teaching. Partnerships with local schools and community groups for underrepresented backgrounds enable us to take a grass-roots approach. Our initiatives aim to provide prospective students with information, and opportunities to practice and gain feedback, all at a low cost. The impact of these events is assessed using attendee feedback forms, providing both qualitative and quantitative data. Feedback has been positive, with 100% (in 2024) and 96% (in 2025) of students recommending our mock MMIs.

Our events also allow current students to volunteer and gain experience for their personal and professional development, as well as creating a supportive network of medics and dentists at different stages of training.

Our main aim is to make medical and dental school as inclusive as possible. We hope to continue to expand our initiatives to reach more prospective students, to ensure that future cohorts are representative of the diverse populations we serve.

Paper4 Title: Parity of Experience for In-Person and Online Learners in Hybrid Tutorial Sessions

Speaker: Sara Cabral and Grazyna Grace Lipowska-Bhalla

Abstract: This study explores the implementation of hybrid tutorials within an online taught module offered simultaneously to online and on-campus programmes. The aim was to evaluate the parity of learning experience and feasibility of the hybrid format for this mixed delivery approach.

The presenters include a PhD student who supported the tutorials as a GTA, alongside the module lead.

Previously, the tutorials were delivered as online synchronous sessions. However, in response to on-campus students feedback and the introduction of the SEAtS system, the tutorials were delivered as hybrid sessions for the first time. This brought together in-person learners in the classroom and remote learners online.

To evaluate the parity of experience, feedback was collected through questionnaires with both closed and open-ended questions. This poster will also address the challenges encountered and share practical strategies for successful hybrid tutorials.

This project aligns with the conference themes of "Inclusive Education" and "Redefining Learning and Teaching in HE." It promotes Inclusive Education by ensuring equitable access and participation. It also contributes to Redefining Learning and Teaching by challenging traditional boundaries between in-person and online learning through innovative hybrid teaching practices.

Additionally, this project supports the UN Sustainable Development Goal of Quality Education by promoting inclusive, accessible, and high-quality learning experiences.

Paper5 Title: Embedding Student Voice to Enhance Assessment Practices

Speakers: Kieron Allison, Karina Lear, Yasmin Yamak, Grazyna Grace Lipowska-Bhalla

Abstract: Although the University of Manchester observed an increase in satisfaction scores for some aspects of assessment and feedback in the latest National Student Survey, overall satisfaction in this area remains below the sector benchmark, highlighting the need for improvement. To address this, a programme-wide audit of assessments was conducted within the MSc Molecular Pathology of Cancer programme. Findings from this audit, presented at the 2024 Teaching and Learning Conference, informed the development of an assessment enhancement framework.

This paper focuses on the student consultation phase of this framework, which actively involved students in enhancing assessment practices. A student-led focus group was established to collaborate with the academic team, ensuring representation of student perspectives. Data collection methods included group discussions, structured interviews, and questionnaires.

This submission aligns with the theme of "Building Belonging and Raising Student Voices" by actively involving students in decision-making processes, fostering a sense of ownership and connection.

Beyond this conference, this collaborative approach has the potential to inform School and Faculty strategies for enhancing assessment practices through meaningful student engagement, contributing to improved satisfaction scores in subsequent NSS.

This initiative contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals related to Quality Education and Partnership for the Goals.

Paper6 Title: Learning to save the web, saving the web to learn, and maybe saving the world too

Speakers: Chris Millson

Abstract: Much of the world's information, knowledge and culture is stored as data on the web. Data, however, is not permanent. Web archiving is a practice related to the preservation of web content, including archiving webpages to make them available in future. But archiving is more than just a set of capabilities; it can be a learning opportunity – having potential to foster critical thinking and problem-solving, and to provide a context for interdisciplinary study – and a proactive practice for the common good, preserving knowledge and culture for society.

In this poster we introduce these opportunities through outlines of learning activities structured around web archiving. The poster will be accompanied by a blog post including real implementations of such activities, which readers can try out for themselves – these serving both as direct learning opportunities, and as illustrative examples of the activities described.

This submission aligns with "Redefining learning and teaching in HE", as web archiving as a platform for learning and teaching is under-explored in higher education. It has the potential for impact through influencing teaching practice and relates to UN SDG 4: Quality Education.

The poster will be planned as an open access text-based accessible blog post, published in advance, so as to benefit a wide audience. Working with the Library Student Team, we will aim to develop the poster to reflect and consider diverse perspectives.

Paper7 Title: Community Entrustable Professional Activities (CEPA)

Speakers: Shehleen Arbab Khan, Amy Bradshaw, Rebecca Marks, Sarah Sharp

Abstract: Community Entrustable Professional Activities (CEPA) provide inclusive, equitable opportunities for Year 2 medical students to develop essential clinical and communication skills, while practicing taking consent from patients to practice these skills. CEPA 1 is embedded within mandatory Early Clinical Experience (ECE) GP placements, where students, under supervision of their clinical placement supervisor, take patient observations such as blood pressure, pulse, temperature and oxygen saturations. CEPA 2 extends this experience to optional community settings, such as mosques, ensuring wider community accessibility for students and additional opportunities this provides, and this maybe suited to those students who may face certain constraints due to either caring responsibilities or part-time work but is open to all students to sign up and therefore inclusive.

This dual approach encourages inclusivity by providing equitable access to service learning opportunities through student participation in community settings. By offering such experiences in diverse settings, students gain valuable communication and practical skills but this also has the added benefit of enhancing trust and health awareness within underrepresented communities.

Student feedback is integral to the continuous improvement of CEPA. Evaluations completed after each visit fosters ongoing improvements.

CEPA aligns with the conference themes of accessibility, inclusion, and student engagement, while also ensuring that UN Sustainable Development Goals are kept in mind by promoting accessible healthcare education and community

service learning. CEPA offers a model that demonstrates how experiential learning can be adapted to enhance student experience of diverse communities, skills development, while ensuring positive community impact.

Paper8 Title: Team Placement: Redefining Medical Education with Inclusive, Community-Based Experiential Learning for Medical students.

Speaker: Dr 'Dunni Adeniyi; Amy Bradshaw; Sarah Sharp; Rebecca Marks

Abstract: The team option placement is a half-day community-based placement that offers second-year medical students an opportunity to explore the community's diverse social and healthcare environments, understand how multidisciplinary teams work to improve population health and enhance their communication skills with service users and team members.

Students attend the placement with community-based services such as food banks, hospices, rapid response, third-sector community care organisations, pharmacies, physiotherapy, social prescribing, and district nursing teams, observing the day-to-day activities and performing supervised hands-on tasks followed by a debrief. This initiative fosters inclusive education by broadening students' understanding of the social determinants of health and the complex realities of patients' lives beyond clinical settings.

The placement cultivates a sense of belonging by embedding students within multidisciplinary teams, encouraging them to reflect on their role within a collaborative health and care system. Their engagement with these services enhances their clinical awareness and challenges traditional teaching models by integrating experiential, community-based learning into medical education. Students are empowered to share their insights during the placement, complete the evaluation afterwards, and attend focus groups, elevating their voices in shaping the placement. After successfully running as a pilot, the placement was expanded last year to the first cohort of Graduate Entry Medicine (GEM) students.

This placement exemplifies redefining medical education, challenging the status quo by embedding hands-on, socially responsible experiences into training.

By placing students at the intersection of healthcare and community support, this placement nurtures future doctors who are clinically proficient, socially responsible, and patient-centred.

Paper9 Title: Using the student voice to inform a call to embed interdisciplinary AI literacy in Higher Education

Speakers: Alison Luke and Sara Ahsan

Abstract: FSE Foundation students were anonymously surveyed on their current uses and views on GenAI tools to assist in academic tasks. The majority (83%) of the 183 respondents already regularly employ AI tools in multiple and innovative ways such as: understanding lectures and academic texts, problem solving and preparing for presentations. Their reported uses are consistent with those summarised in a recent HE Policy Institute study: 'explaining concepts, summarising articles and suggesting research ideas' (Freeman, 2025). Students who reported not using GenAI tools perceive its use as unreliable, 'cheating' or not useful, preferring to do the work themselves. Responses were very similar across first, second and bilingual English speakers. Students requested clarity and support from the University on the ethical use of this technology.

The survey results highlight the necessity to develop AI literacy skills to meet students' ongoing academic and future professional needs. This would involve embedding AI literacy across disciplines into teaching, learning and assessment consistently throughout a student's University career. Guidance through embedded input, would develop confident, effective and ethical academic GenAI practice, to enhance academic progress. Thus, based on relevant literature (Ng et al., 2021) and providing examples from our own practice, we propose an integrated AI literacy framework modelled around revised Bloom's taxonomies: Know and Understand, Use and Apply, Evaluate and Create. Embedding course input around this framework has the potential to create a model for interdisciplinary AI education in Higher Education, but is dependent on equitable GenAI access for both students and educators.

References

Freeman, J., 2025. Student Generative AI Survey 2025. [online] HEPI. Available at: <https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2025/02/26/student-generative-ai-survey-2025/> [Accessed 6 March 2025].

Ng, DTK, Leung, JKL, Chu, SKW & Qiao, MS (2021), 'Conceptualizing AI literacy: An exploratory review', Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence, vol. 2, 100041. Available from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666920X21000357>

Paper10 Title: Hold the front page! How newsworthy is your scholarship of teaching and learning?

Speakers: Duncan Hull

Abstract: A good quality education unlocks the imagination. It is the key to prosperity and opens a world of opportunities for our students, making it possible for them to make valuable contributions to society before and after they graduate.

The teaching that students engage with at university is therefore a key part of the story of every Higher Education Institution. The skills and knowledge that students learn during their study are a crucial part of the impact, reach and value that any University has in its local, national and international communities. Teaching and learning are a fundamental part of the organisational vision of the University of Manchester in 2035 and beyond.

However, unlike research, scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) rarely makes headlines externally, either through the media relations team or other channels like mainstream and social media. SoTL often fails to make headlines internally within the University as well.

This paper looks at the reasons why SoTL is (and isn't) newsworthy and how we can make this important work more visible through storytelling. We'll provide some case studies and suggestions on how we might tell better stories in the future. With over 40,000 students there are lots of stories that remain untold and excluded. While not all of them are newsworthy, we argue that many more of them should be more widely shared internally and externally.

D1.2.5

Session Title: How can digital wellbeing be embedded within the Teaching, Learning and Student Experience? Sharing lessons learned from the Digital Peer Learning Network

Speakers: Digital Capability Student Reps, Gabba Sutcliffe de Oliveira, Emma Bramwell, Kai Prince, Carlene Barton, Yamin Mushtaq and Jane Mooney

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Building belonging and raising student voices

Abstract:

Digital-wellbeing is crucial to the contemporary student's life and this session, informed by student feedback, will challenge participants to place a digital-wellbeing lens over their practice to address the question of how digital-wellbeing can be synthesised within the curriculum.

The Digital Capability Student Rep role was successfully introduced in 23/24, in recognition of the importance of digital capability peer support, featured annually in the Jisc Digital Experience Insights reports. To provide further peer support development, a Digital Peer Learning Network Event was established with MMU, bringing together students from both institutions to collaborate and share practice.

At the March 2025 Network Event, students will identify what would help their digital-wellbeing. Both institutions will continue to work with students to curate and cascade resources to scaffold student support further and realise impact of students' contributions.

This session addresses all 3 conference themes:

Digital-wellbeing affects all students, contributes to digital equity and thereby UN SDG Goal 4.

The Network's intention is to integrate the students' ideas and cascade subsequently curated resources. This enables students to directly influence teaching development in the Library. The hope for this wicked problem set is to amplify and further cascade their ideas to effect change enhancing support for digital-wellbeing. Students will be invited to cofacilitate this session.

Using the model of student staff taking a direct role in influencing teaching. The upskilling of students in digital-wellbeing will give them the expertise to cascade knowledge and support through their peer-to-peer interactions and support networks.

D1.2.6

Session Title: Redefining employability development– challenging the status quo through the lens of social responsibility and entrepreneurship

Speakers: Jennifer Rose, Shirley Jenner, Javed Siddiqui, Adam Frost, Alex Wong

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Abstract: Higher education institutions face the wicked problem of global inequality. We want to send out graduates who are ready to be change agents for the future but how can we amplify what they do in the curriculum already and help them to articulate their learning so that they can make a difference?

We will explore how we are already challenging the status quo to embed social responsibility and entrepreneurship in teaching. We will briefly share ideas from those teaching employability, entrepreneurship and social responsibility as well as experiences from student partners.

Then discuss:-

Why do we need to change the status quo on teaching employability skills, the social responsibility of students and cultivating entrepreneurial mindsets?

What is already there from innovative pedagogy and within the curriculum?

What small incremental changes can make a big difference to our students?

How can we help students articulate how their capabilities are being developed through the curriculum?

Beyond the conference, we hope to audit existing innovative practice to promote a holistic approach to education and advocate for curricula that embeds sustainability and entrepreneurship at scale, across the university and beyond. It directly contributes to UN SDGs, particularly those related to quality education, decent work and reduced inequalities. By cultivating a generation of socially responsible graduates with an entrepreneurial mindset, we aim to drive meaningful and lasting change.

References

- Bourn, D. and Massimiliano, T. (Eds.) (2024) *Pedagogy of Hope for Social Justice. Sustainable Futures for People and the Planet*, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- Mezirow, J. (1991) *Transformative dimensions of adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Nelson, V. and Flint, M. (2021) Critical reflections on responsible business initiative and systematic constraints for achieving a safe and just operating space for humanity, in Lund-Thomsen, P., Hansen, M.W. and Lindgreen, A. (Eds) *2021 Business and Development Studies*, Routledge, Abingdon.
- Sørensen, K. B., & Trolle Gronemann, S. (2024) Broadening the entrepreneurial mindset to meet sustainable goals – Introducing the 4-foci mindset. *Industry and Higher Education*, 0(0).
- Visser, W. (2011) *The age of responsibility: CSR 2.0 and the new DNA of business*. J. Wiley & Sons, Chichester.

D1.3.1

Session Title: Social justice and challenging western normativity

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Inclusive Education

Paper1 Title: Teaching About Inequality: The Psychological Impact on Students

Speakers: Doron Cohen, Stacey McKnight

Abstract: Diversity and inclusion form a cornerstone of undergraduate curricula, aiming to equip students with the skills to navigate social and cultural differences. Research studies routinely demonstrate discrimination in employment, education, and healthcare; yet little is known about the unintended psychological effects that discussions of inequality may have on students, especially those from minoritised backgrounds. Our project, developed with students from varied backgrounds, examines how social justice topics are taught and their impact on student wellbeing and engagement. Using focus groups and co-created qualitative surveys, we identified effective practices for presenting these topics in ways that promote inclusion and accessibility. Findings show increased social activism among both minority and non-minority students, greater validation for minority voices, and shifts in perspective for some non-minority learners. Grounded in equity-centred teaching, our work offers recommendations that can inform teaching policies and create psychologically safe learning environments. Aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 10, our project reinforces a global commitment to quality education and reduced inequalities. The session offers interactive elements and practical strategies to help educators integrate inclusive approaches into their teaching, fostering learning environments that are psychologically safe and responsive to diverse student needs.

Paper2 Title: Challenging the West as the standard: Students' views on the representation of cultural understandings of mental health in the psychology curriculum

Speakers: Wahida Walibhai, Louisa Shirley

Abstract: Previous research has described the ways in which culture influences mental health, yet mental health teaching on undergraduate psychology curricula have remained over-representative of White and Western ideas while underrepresenting other cultural groups. Semi-structured interviews with 19 undergraduate psychology students who identified as coming from a non-majority cultural background explored their views on current cultural representation in the psychology curriculum at the University of Manchester. Interviews were conducted by four undergraduate psychology students who identified as coming from non-majority cultural backgrounds themselves. Reflexive thematic analysis conducted by one of those students suggested that the psychology curriculum, and psychology as a wider discipline, frames Western understandings of mental health as universal, leading students to doubt their belonging in psychology and at the university. Students challenged the Western standard by outlining how cultural experiences contextualised experiences of mental health issues. Simultaneously, they discussed widespread cultural stigma relating to mental health, highlighting the importance of nuanced and sensitive representation of cultural views.

This paper promotes inclusive psychology education through better representation of cultural understandings of mental health, providing some suggestions on how teaching staff may implement this, and emphasising the importance of the curriculum in psychology students' sense of belonging. Furthermore, it amplifies the voices of underrepresented students as both interviewees and researchers.

Paper3 Title: A systemic approach to inclusive education: the Learning for Every Body project

Speakers: Christopher Sutton

Abstract: For much of healthcare education, the 'normal body' as presented in visual teaching resources is White, slim, young, non-disabled, cis-gender and male (Daodu and Ruzyski, 2023). In addition to being 'inadequate and unrealistic' (Parker, Larkin and Cockburn, 2017), this 'normal body' is a factor in the disparities, biases and barriers faced by many equity-deserving groups regarding student attainment and belonging, career progression and patient outcomes.

With a small team of artists, models and student partners as well as the support of the Institute of Teaching and Learning, the 'Learning for Every Body' fellowship project piloted commissioning inclusive anatomical illustrations. We approached the issue systemically and identified good practices that prioritised collaboration, equity and social justice.

This presentation expands on the project's outputs and findings, including reflections from some of the project's contributors. While the pilot was healthcare focused, we identified effective practices for inclusive education more broadly, and this presentation invites all educators and PS staff to reflect on the exclusionary and discriminatory systems in which they work and consider achievable individual and systemic solutions.

D1.3.2

Session Title: Building belonging through relational pedagogies, co-creation and group work

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Building belonging and raising the student voice

Paper1 Title: Designing, delivering and sustaining the mutually beneficial relationship between belonging and self-esteem.

Speakers: Dr Elaine Clark, Charlotte Hoyland

Abstract: A sense of belonging can enhance student motivation, retention and academic achievement (Pedler et al., 2020; Veldman, Meeussen and van Laar, 2022), and there is a growing recognition of its impact upon mental well-being and confidence (Kahu, Thomas and Heinrich, 2022; Lister et al., 2023).

The Interdisciplinary unit 'Communicating with Confidence' seeks to enhance student's self-esteem, confidence and efficacy by drawing upon relational pedagogies, inter-disciplinary theory, scaffolded reflection and participation. It is a popular, over-subscribed course and student feedback repeatedly highlights the strong sense of belonging within the class and its contribution to their growing confidence. Students report resultant gains in interviews, ability to manage anxiety, motivation, engagement and academic performance and course alumni share that this impact is sustainable.

An ITL Fellowship enabled course adaptation to a blended unit, therefore enhancing accessibility and reach. But this raised concerns about how to maintain the mutually enhancing connection between belonging, and self-esteem, online. In addition how could we ensure that students at greater risk of a lack of belonging (e.g., first year students, international students, those returning from an exchange or industry year) were not left feeling disengaged, lonely and lacking confidence to seek support as a result of this new mode of delivery?

This presentation seeks to address these questions through sharing our experience of designing, delivering and assessing a blended unit in partnership with students and student intern.

We will discuss how we have developed multiple 'touch points' where belonging and confidence can be scaffolded within a blended unit and describe the techniques we have used to maintain belonging and amplify student confidence within a new mode of delivery. Our work supports UN sustainable goals 3, 4 and 10 and advocate that enhancing belonging and confidence for our students is something that everyone can, and should, do.

Paper2 Title: Creating open and collaborative learning spaces for staff-student co-creation.

Speakers: Dave Hirst, Rachel Cox

Abstract: In this short paper we will introduce a credit bearing unit led by the TLS team within the Library: Digital Society. Digital Society explores the relationship between digital technology, society, and the individual using course material and podcasts. The majority of the material is written by the student participants and co-created with the Library Student Team. The module uses a staff student collaborative model to develop content for the course with a cohort from across all disciplines bringing their own unique perspective to the learning experience. Digital Society

lead Dave Hirst and Rachel Cox from the Library Student Team will reflect on the open and accessible nature of the course and how it has evolved over the last 10 years to include a model of staff student co-creation of content.

Paper3 Title: Developing Employability Skills and Critical Thinking through Interdisciplinary Group Work and Peer Review

Speakers: Sofia Izquierdo Sanchez and Sara Jabeen

Abstract: This paper examines the integration of interdisciplinary group work and a peer-review process within large undergraduate modules formed by students from diverse academic backgrounds. The initiative aims to simulate real-world professional environments, improving employability skills, critical thinking, and teamwork through structured collaboration. Group work was introduced to address disparities in academic performance, promoting interdisciplinary peer-to-peer learning and mitigating challenges related to uneven contributions and grade distribution. Building on this foundation, subsequent academic years incorporated a peer-review component to further enhance learning outcomes.

The peer-review process, implemented as a formative activity during tutorials, involved students exchanging draft reports, guided by detailed assessment rubrics and tutor facilitation. Data collected through student surveys (80% response rate), reflections, and observations reveal that 78% of students perceived interdisciplinary collaboration as beneficial to their outcomes. Additionally, students reported improvements in analytical thinking, critical evaluation, and the ability to integrate diverse perspectives.

The results from this paper offer evidence-based insights into how peer-review mechanisms, combined with interdisciplinary group work, promote equitable, impactful learning experiences and better prepare students for the complexities of globalised professional environments.

D1.3.3

Session Title: Enhancing and Innovating in Assessment

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Paper1 Title: Enhancing Assessment Review (EAR): A model for Assessment Review and Enhancement

Speakers: Jen McBride, Sally Hickson, Nicky High

Abstract: Student satisfaction with assessment and feedback is low – both at UoM and beyond - and many educators report lacking the time and/or expertise needed to enhance their assessments. To address this, we developed the Enhancing Assessment Review (EAR) process; a collaborative process incorporating data on timing and type of assessment, awarding gaps, student voice meetings & focus groups, and staff insights. After considering these elements, the review team made recommendations focusing on 1) reducing assessment load for students and staff; 2) assessing learning outcomes & avoiding duplication; 3) increasing authenticity, creativity, and diversity of assessment; and 4) addressing awarding gaps.

After a successful small-scale pilot, we have now used the EAR framework to review all assessments in Level 5-6 lecture-based units across in the School of Biological Sciences (15+ programmes; 70+ units). We have successfully reduced assessment, improved balance of formative/summative assessment, identified creative and authentic assessments for wider dissemination, and adjusted weightings to reflect student effort, all aimed at enhancing students' experience of assessment.

This session will share key insights, discuss best practices, and explore opportunities for wider implementation across UoM and beyond. As well as Redefining Learning & Teaching, this submission also addresses conference theme of Inclusion, Accessibility, and Equity by addressing disparities in assessment outcomes.

Paper2 Title: Using Cadmus to Scaffold Higher Education Assessments

Speakers: Dr Hannah Wilkinson

Abstract: Students entering into higher education face a transition in their studying and assessments experiences (Lowe & Cook, 2003). Prior levels of study prioritise knowledge acquisition, whereas, upon entering higher education, successful performance shifts towards the demonstration of higher order cognitive skills such as synthesising information, problem solving and critical thinking (Wong & Chui, 2020). As prior research indicates the importance of students feeling competent in understanding what they need to do in order to complete assessments, and feeling confident in their ability to undertake these steps (Wilkinson, 2024), it is important for HE educators to support students in understanding how they can demonstrate these skills. Cadmus is an online assessment software, offering students scaffolded assessment experience, through tools such as checklists and supplementary support and information. Whilst Cadmus has many effective features, this presentation will focus on outlining the psycho-educational theory underpinning the importance of students understanding assignment tasks, offer reflections on how to effectively use Cadmus to scaffold assessments, and relay student feedback on their experience of using Cadmus. As UoM aims for this software to become widely used, this presentation hopes to support colleagues in effectively using it to support students, and therefore aligns to the conference theme of Redefining Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.

Paper3 Title: Write or wrong? Rethinking essays: a comparative study of very short answer vs. multiple choice questions.

Speakers: Harry Potter

Abstract: Many HE departments, including SBS, historically rely on essays for high-stakes exams, with a large staff/student assessment burden. Essays assess depth of knowledge well but poorly assess breadth, likely widening attainment gaps and encouraging question spotting. Students report unfavorability of essays over contemporary formats and desire more varied assessments (EAR 2025), supported by current best practice in inclusive assessment design. Multiple choice questions (MCQ) are favoured for efficiency, coverage and reliability, but may lack depth in assessing critical thinking. In contrast, very short answer questions (VSA) require students to generate responses, possibly enhancing recall and depth of knowledge. Here, we aimed to understand the utility of VSA in a varied and inclusive assessment design. We compared 3 years of parallel MCQ/VSA exam data in an undergraduate immunology unit. MCQ/VSA performance were highly correlated ($R^2=0.804$), but VSA had lower mean scores, longer time per question, and higher discrimination ($p<0.001$ for all). VSA are reliable and may enhance assessment breadth when set alongside other formats. Integrating VSA reduces the impact of low choice, high-stakes essays, providing an inclusive assessment strategy (UN SDG4: Quality Education) supporting learning across diverse groups of students. Future research should focus on understanding standard setting and predictive validity of VSA (e.g. on workplace competence), which are yet to be established.

D1.3.4

Session Type: Lightning Talks – Inclusive teaching innovation

Themes: Inclusive education

Paper1 Title: Classic UoM - student experience issues

Speakers: Neil Morrison, Kai Prince, Sonia Bălan

Abstract: Academics are often asked to think of teaching related initiatives to improve student experience and hopefully to affect a key metric used by universities, the National Student Survey (NSS). However, when talking to advisees, students, and graduates about their student experience, academics often find that many of the issues raised are related to administration rather than teaching. Students cite the extra workload and stress caused by having to chase things up themselves, lengthy delays in responses to queries, marks released and then adjusted, red herring emails that don't apply to them, confusing information on whom they need to contact about a particular issue, etc. While some of these can be viewed as minor gripes, or issues inherent in any large organisation (a common excuse for inertia), more worryingly there are issues of process that disproportionately impact disabled students and/or overseas students - for example, the over-reliance on resit exams as mitigation, or transcripts being provided late and without any information about mitigation. In this talk we discuss some recurring issues affecting students and graduates, and explore possible solutions.

Paper2 Title: Game Changers: Engaging Communities in Experiential and Service Learning**Speakers:** Lindsay Pressdee

Abstract: Game Changers is an inclusive initiative that bridges the gap between the university and the wider community, fostering engagement both within and beyond the campus. The project directly addresses key barriers to a circular economy—such as limited consumer skills, time constraints, and low awareness (Laitala et al., 2021)—by integrating experiential learning with real-world sustainability challenges.

In collaboration with the Manchester United Foundation, the project repurposes donated football shirts through upcycling workshops. These workshops bring together student volunteers, academic and technical staff, and local community groups to explore sustainable practices through hands-on learning. By engaging in the upcycling process, participants reflect on their own consumption habits and develop practical skills that contribute to a more circular approach to fashion.

This presentation will highlight the pedagogical impact of the project, showcasing how community-based learning fosters social responsibility, enhances student engagement, and equips participants with the skills necessary to drive sustainable change. Addressing SDG goals 12, responsible consumption and production and SDG 11, sustainable cities and communities.

Paper3 Title: Fostering Inclusivity in the Year 4 GP Block: A Collaborative Approach to Enhancing the Learning Environment**Speakers:** Dr Genevieve Shimwell and Dr Helen Marsden

Abstract: Over the past five years, the Year 4 GP Block team at Manchester Medical School has worked to enhance the inclusivity of our learning environment, ensuring all students, particularly those with diverse learning needs, feel a sense of belonging. In response to identified gaps, we've used technology to create a more accessible and engaging learning experience.

NearPod, an interactive learning platform, has been integral in this process. It allows for customisable slides, student anonymity, and interactive features such as gamification, visual aids and videos, ensuring a dynamic and inclusive learning environment for all.

In addition, we have collaborated with students to design and produce podcasts as an alternative form of asynchronous learning. After conducting student-led literature reviews, surveys and focus groups, we created podcasts that cater to diverse learning preferences, offering students an auditory option to consolidate their knowledge.

Our approach aligns with the conference theme by actively promoting inclusive education, fostering a sense of belonging, and raising student voices in the co-design of learning tools. By consulting with students, we ensure that our learning environment meets their needs and empowers them to shape their educational experience.

Through these initiatives, we are committed to creating an equitable, inclusive, and student-centred learning environment, with plans for further collaborative projects that continue to build belonging and amplify student voices and enhance inclusivity.

Paper4 Title: Collaborative group work in Exercise Physiology - an opportunity for inclusivity and learning**Speakers:** Michelle Keown and Elizabeth Sheader

Abstract: Collaborative group work is recognised as a highly effective educational approach boosting student engagement and learning. It provides students with diverse team working opportunities preparing them for today's globalised world of work (McKay & Sridharan, 2023).

Our study examines how a collaborative approach to experimental design in an exercise physiology module influences student confidence, motivation, and subject understanding. The teams consisted of students from various backgrounds and different abilities allowing them equal contributions ensuring multiple perspectives are valued. This approach promotes accessible learning & inclusivity by encouraging varied types of participation utilising different expertise. 31 undergraduate bioscience students were surveyed. 97% of students felt motivated to engage fully in the experimental design process, 71% felt confident in developing the experimental plan. After design and implementation, 97% reported feeling satisfied with the overall experience of planning and conducting the experiment. 100% reported effective teamwork and a better understanding of the scientific method.

These findings indicate that collaborating in small groups benefits students through sharing responsibility in troubleshooting experimental challenges. This collaborative approach promotes inclusivity and allows for the integration of different perspectives. The implications of this study are far-reaching, helping inform how to balance individual and group work to maximize learning outcomes. This is not only in courses where experimental design is critical but in other areas where collaborative approaches to learning can promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (SDG4), help students be better equipped for the workforce (SDG8) and to bridge gaps among students and help reduce inequalities (SDG10).

Paper5 Title: Bringing the Clinic to Campus - Introducing the Expert Panel

Speakers: Dr Maiedha Raza, Dr Liz Sheader, Dr Nathan Betteridge

Abstract: Our innovative Team-Based Learning (TBL) curriculum for first-year medical students hosts an expert feedback panel which has proven to be an effective educational tool. It has been designed to address students' "burning questions" submitted through the LAMS system. These panels bring together expert clinicians and researchers to provide live answers to the student submitted questions, streamed out to their rooms over Zoom™. This initiative bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and its practical application, enabling students to better understand complex topics.

One student commented, "The expert panel in Semester 2 has been really great and interactive!" This reflects the success of the panels, where students explore their questions submitted earlier and gain insights into professional decision-making and inter-professional education. This approach highlights our emphasis, which is to encourage greater student interaction & involvement in their own education.

Another goal of this initiative is to introduce students to professional discourse and encourage critical thinking about the application of theory in clinical practice.

Each week, a panel of three to four specialists is invited to share their expertise. These experts, including researchers and clinicians, provide different perspectives on the subject, offering students real-world examples. Discussions are facilitated by a GP and consultant anaesthetist, who ensure an engaging learning environment.

D1.3.5

Session Title: From Users to Co-Creators: Shaping Responsible AI Use in Student Learning

Speakers: Sarah Dyer and Chiachi Ming

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Building belonging and raising student voices

Abstract: As higher education evolves and responds to its changing context, how do we forefront the needs of diverse and changing student cohorts? One area of practice we could learn from is Human-Centered Design (HCD). An approach that is widely used outside HE, it offers tools and process to put empathy and people's needs at the heart of any problem-solving.

The Student Change Lab is a pilot initiative experimenting with HCD tools, such as empathy and journey mapping, to support student reps. We are working closely with the Student Union and student representatives to train and support reps to use these tools. We aim to co-designed possibilities that not only capture students' diverse experience and challenges but move forward to actionable solutions. These tools offer an innovative alternative to traditional surveys, enabling richer, more context-specific insights into the student experience.

This ITL conference session will explore the question: how can human-centered design tools be used to create inclusive and authentic student-driven educational experience? Participants will engage in a collaborative, action-learning approach to discuss how HCD tools might be incorporated into student feedback and course (re)design.

The discussion will shape practical recommendations for integrating HCD tools into HE practices, fostering inclusive pedagogies that reflect the real, diverse needs of students and encouraging wider sector-wide adoption. There is no need to know anything about human-centred design to participate.

D1.3.6

Session Title: Starting with empathy: using human-centred design tools to improve our students' experiences

Speakers: Wennie Subramonian, Maryam Malekshahian, Ahnaf Saumik

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Abstract: This session, co-led with a student, explores how the responsible use of AI can enhance student learning and engagement while maintaining academic integrity. Through student partnership, our project developed a user guide and learning activity on responsible AI use, designed to help students navigate AI as a learning tool while upholding ethical standards. Written by students, for students, the guide and learning activity reflect real concerns and needs, empowering them to utilise AI. Insights from student-led focus groups helped shape its content, addressing key challenges such as academic integrity, data privacy and bias.

In this session, participants will engage in a discussion on the complexities of AI in education. Following an introduction to the user guide and a learning activity using AI, participants will critically evaluate its effectiveness and explore strategies for maintaining responsible AI use in learning. This session challenges conventional AI integration in higher education and considers how institutions can meaningfully involve students in shaping AI practices. This discussion will spark a university-wide conversation on AI's evolving role in education, with implications for policy and practice.

The session strongly focuses on redefining learning and teaching, whilst incorporating student voices. Participant contributions will inform future iterations of the user guide and learning activity, ensuring AI remains a tool for student empowerment and innovation.

Day 2

D2.1.1

Session Title: Foundation and Transition

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Inclusive education

Paper1 Title: Starting Conversations: co-creating of resources to support the transition to university

Speakers: Doron Cohen, Louis Flintham, Karen Lander, Donna Lloyd, Elizabeth McManus-Day, Ellen Poliakoff, Annie Pye, Debbie Smith, Ming Wai Wan

Abstract: Starting university is a daunting experience for many students, particularly those from widening participation and non-traditional backgrounds. In this presentation, we introduce an innovative project co-produced with students, designed to dispel myths about university life and ease this transition. Specifically, we have developed a suite of resources that demystifies academic experiences and humanises academics by revealing their backgrounds, struggles, and successes. These materials include student-led video interviews with academic staff, comic strips that use humour to illustrate expectations and misconceptions, and short social media content that can be embedded in pre-arrival guides and orientation sessions. Moreover, these resources address experiences of failure and mental health challenges, encouraging students to seek support. Our presentation will detail the creative process behind these materials, preliminary feedback from students and offer strategies for integrating them into teaching and

student support. This project embodies inclusion and belonging in higher education, while advancing the United Nations SDG 4 (Quality Education) by improving access to transition support, SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by removing barriers for underrepresented students, and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) by promoting mental health support. Within and beyond UoM, these materials can be embedded in diverse academic programmes to support inclusive education.

Paper2 Title: Inclusive education for international students – from students’ perspective

Speakers: Sanket Vilas Chaskar, Lei Zeng

Abstract: Every year, a significant number of international students move to the UK to pursue higher education. The transition from home country to a completely new country poses a lot of new challenges for the students. The sense of belonging and inclusivity become the major concerns. Studies have proven that a sense of belonging can lead to positive outcomes such as academic motivation, retention, engagement, and enjoyment (Pedler et al., 2022). This project aims to identify and examine the challenges faced by international students from a student’s perspective, focusing on developing effective, student-driven solutions.

Through engagement with students from diverse cultural and social backgrounds, we explore their lived experiences, expectations, and needs from higher education. By analysing their responses, we identify common barriers to inclusion and use their insights to co-create practical strategies, which will inform innovative programs and guidelines to support international students.

At the end of this project, a comprehensive guide will be created to support international students in navigating these challenges and fostering a sense of inclusion and belonging. By amplifying student voices, this research provides innovative, student-led recommendations to enhance inclusivity in teaching and policy in higher education.

Reference

Pedler, M. L., Willis, R., & Nieuwoudt, J. E. (2022). A sense of belonging at university. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 46(3), 397-408.

Paper3 Title: Foundation Years in SBS: Providing ‘a fair short’ (or not) for students

Speakers: Sarah Hatherill, Programme Director Biosciences Foundation Year, SBS

Abstract: The biological sciences foundation year (FY) is a 1-year, level zero, programme aimed at providing entry to biosciences at Manchester for those who do not meet the entry requirements for Y1 study. Our cohort is educationally diverse: ~80% join with science A-levels but at grades that didn’t meet our Y1 entry offer. The remaining 20%, include both international students with non A-level equivalent qualifications and those with non-science A-levels wishing to transition into the biosciences. 35% of the cohort are from a widening participation background. The FY is challenging, with an average pass rate of 83.5% (22-23/23-24 cohorts). However, for students without science A-level, this drops to 69.6%. FY Students who progress into Y1 continue to struggle throughout their degrees, with continuation and completion rates and ‘good degree’ awards significantly below their direct entry counterparts.

We present results of our full programme review and student consultation alongside preliminary evaluation of academic skills initiatives delivered in the programme in 24-25 aimed at addressing the significant awarding gaps present within the programme. This work represents the starting point for listening to what students, from a range of backgrounds, need to succeed in a bioscience degree at Manchester. We acknowledge and demonstrate that foundation year students often face an uphill struggle to ‘catch-up’ with their peers and often are unable to do so within the current educational structures. We challenge colleagues not to accept the status quo and to assess whether programmes are providing an equal educational opportunity for all.

D2.1.2

Session Title: Assessment, Feedback and AI

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Building belonging and raising student voices

Paper1 Title: Bridging Teaching and Assessment: developing assessment literacy for all through co-produced Rubric design development

Speakers: Louisa Dawes; Yaoyao Shi (student) Ruohan Luo (student) Fiona Velez-Colby

Abstract: This presentation reports on a university-wide project aimed at developing both the design and use of assessment rubrics that, through a co-production methodology, actively engaged students throughout the evaluation and design process. By actively involving students at each stage, from initial student voice activities and collaborative research through to the co-production of rubrics and university-wide guidance, we aimed to bridge the gap between teaching and assessment and deepen our collective understanding of how rubrics can enhance teaching learning and assessment.

The session focuses on feedback from student participants as we explore their experiences and reflections on being involved in the project on rubric development. The insights gained from this project underscore the importance of co-production in higher education assessment, offering a model for enhancing both student satisfaction and performance as well as developing assessment literacy.

Paper2 Title: The Power of the Peer: Raising Student Voices with Student-led Feedback Groups

Speakers: Rachel Heasley

Abstract: The University Centre for Academic English (UCAE) provides Academic English workshops available to all registered international students. Student feedback on workshop content, format and style of teaching is often provided by those who have chosen to attend the workshops with limited opportunities to hear the voice of the international students who do not choose to attend.

A group of PGT international students were therefore recruited to organise, carry out and report data from focus groups collecting information on international students' perceived Academic English needs, their perceptions of UCAE publicity/ communications, and their views on the role Gen AI plays in their Academic English. In contrast to the common practice of a 'student rep' role which often enables student-led feedback on a particular course, the students in the 'focus group leader' roles in this project were unfamiliar with (and therefore arguably neutral towards) the courses and department about which they collected feedback. Over the course of six months, I collaborated with this group of focus group leaders to guide and equip them with the necessary research skills, but decisions on the focus group design, questions and data analysis were all made by the focus group leaders.

This talk aims to outline the project and its key findings before providing insights into what was learnt about the potential power as well as challenges of peer-to-peer feedback, both from the perspective of students and those involved in course design and teaching. The talk will conclude with thoughts on how similar mechanisms might be applied in other departments to enable students to become active participants in feedback and to mitigate the power dynamic often present between academics and students in feedback cycles.

Paper3 Title: Developing AI-informed rubrics in light of students' use of feedback: a partnership approach.

Speakers: Jon Shute, Emily Turner, Charlotte Warden

Abstract: Assessment and feedback (A&F) are fundamental aspects of the learning process, however, in a financially pressured, marketized sector competing for a diminishing pool of students, they are also of particular concern to institutions responding to the National Student Survey where satisfaction with A&F is found to be both variable across institutions and relatively intractable. The psychology of effective feedback is surprisingly complex (e.g., Winstone et al, 2017), however, institutional policies are not often shaped by this literature or by local data on student behaviour. What are students' perceptions of the purposes of feedback, how and to what extent do they use different forms, and how does this vary over their period of study? This paper describes a collaborative project between students and staff in Criminology and e-Learning that first generated rapid data on thoughts, feelings and behaviour associated with patterns of summative feedback usage and then used this to inform attempts to improve feedback using AI-facilitated rubrics. Proceeding from an initial, student-led focus groups were held to explore the potential of rubrics to improve engagement with and understanding of feedback. The rubrics presented were

developed using AI (MS Co-Pilot) to better articulate dimensions of scholarship underlying existing assessment criteria. Student feedback was then incorporated into a further AI-iteration and the resulting rubrics piloted as supplementary feedback mechanism in several semester two units. We present tentative evaluation data on student's resulting patterns of usage and preference. The paper speaks to the 'raising student voice' and 'redefining learning & teaching in HE'.

D2.1.3

Session Title: Climate crisis, environmental sustainability and SDGs

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Paper1 Title: Student experiences of completing a final-year project on the climate crisis

Speakers: Rebecca Champion and Rachel Ashworth

Abstract: The 1in5 project (www.1in5project.info/) encourages one in five final-year undergraduate students, in any discipline, to carry out a substantial final-year piece of work (e.g. research study, dissertation, production, exhibition, etc) on a topic related to climate change, sustainability or loss of biodiversity. This novel approach to embedding sustainability in the undergraduate curriculum has the following goals:

- * To provide an opportunity for students to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in this area, to improve their sense of agency and the ability and confidence to make a difference and influence others.
- * To produce outputs that have the potential to have a real-world impact.
- * To empower all academic staff, including those without expertise in environmental issues, to use relevant aspects of their research expertise to tackle climate-relevant issues.
- * To provide an opportunity for higher education institutions to achieve their social responsibility goals in collaboration with their staff and students.

On the BSc Psychology we have been running 1in5 projects over several years. The present study looks at the experiences of students undertaking these projects, what motivated them to choose a 1in5 project, what they learned and what they felt the benefits were once completed. Our presentation aims to encourage academics from across disciplines to embrace the 1in5 initiative and offer such final year projects to achieve the goals outlined above.

Paper2 Title: Exploring how my discipline links with the SDGs via a group poster

Speakers: Maggy Fostier, Alferrez

Abstract: The QAA's requirement to embed Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Higher education curricula allows us to explore our disciplines through the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), addressing complex problems using system and anticipatory thinking as per UNESCO's ESD competency framework.

In the School of Biological Sciences, we identified our Year-1 tutorial program as an ideal venue to reach all students in small group-based-learning. We transformed the existing group poster assignment into one exploring the various connections between Bioscience topics and multiple SDGs. Since this approach was new to both students and most staff, training was essential.

We developed a PowerPoint & Softchalk online resource with examples in four categories: environmental crisis (EC) impact on our discipline, our discipline's impact on EC, studying EC with our discipline, and finding EC solutions through our discipline. This raised awareness and we added starter references for tutors. Students individually selected topics and sources before a face-to-face plenary providing feedback and clarifications of expectations using poster examples created by a student volunteer. Students then collaborated for three weeks with tutor support.

The undergoing review of 130 posters demonstrates positive outcomes. Both students and tutors engaged well, the posters quality is good or high, and the feedback on lessons learnt and guidance is positive. We now have examples to use as outreach resources or for training. Our next step is developing a second-year activity to critically review solution posters using system and anticipatory thinking frameworks. We believe our approach could be applied across various disciplines.

Paper3 Title: Environmental sustainability (ES) projects: authentic final year projects assisting with the University and Faculty ES strategy

Speakers: Maggy Fostier, Ruth Grady

Abstract: All our Biological Sciences undergraduates undertake a research project in their final year. In 21-22, we developed the environmental sustainability (ES) project to assist with our endeavours to make our laboratories and campus more sustainable. It is now embedded with >15 students per year and has already provided a tangible legacy.

In semester 1, we introduce the faculty ES strategy with its targets (Carbon, Nature, Resources, Education and Outreach) and provide weekly workshops to equip the students to tackle lab or non-lab sustainability issues: sustainability at UoM, circular economy, psychological models for behavioural change, campaigning and influencing, conducting a consultancy project, and evaluating impact. We also introduce some tools: LEAF (Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework; a UK certification program), our 6R method to manage plastics sustainably in the lab, at home and on campus, and iNaturalist. Concomitantly, students research and present the science behind their project.

The projects take place in semester 2. So far, they have included assessing more sustainable laboratory products (less toxic or better environmental footprint), reducing plastics, increasing recycling compliance, exploring ways to increase our bio-positive spaces, campaigning to engage students and staff with 6R, biodiversity on campus, and plant based dietary options. Two projects focused on designing educational resources on green washing and eco-influencing. These projects give students the opportunity to develop skills necessary to address environmental issues, some help solve problems or make decisions and some help raise awareness of our actions to students and staff.

D2.1.4

Session Type: Lightning Talks – Assessment, Feedback, and Collaboration to Empower Students

Themes: Inclusive education

Paper1 Title: Lessons learnt from trialling optionality in Chemical Engineering assessment.

Speakers: Emily Cooksey

Abstract: Optionality is the practice of giving students choice within their assessments. In this case, optionality was used to provide third year chemical engineering students a choice in how they presented their summative assessment. The aim of this was to give students the opportunity to present their technical work in a format they felt would best display their ability. Literature indicates this can provide a more inclusive assessment for disabled learners, international students, widening participation students and distance learners [1] [2], as well as improve student experience of assessment [3]. This aligns directly to the conference theme of inclusive education. The assessment has now been implemented for two academic years, student feedback was collected from each cohort, which allowed for the assessment to be improved in-between each iteration based on student feedback. This has provided insight into the decision-making process the students followed as well as how to structure support and rubrics effectively in the future.

When asked about their approach to choosing a method the biggest concern for all students was their own confidence in completing work in a different format to what they were used to (written vs pre-recorded presentation). Peer influence and access to adequate technical equipment were the least concerning factors. This lightening talk will talk through the practical learning of running optionality in engineering and insights provided by students.

Bibliography

[1] M. Firth, J. Ball-Smith, T. Burgess, C. Chaffer, G. Finn, M. Guy, J. Hansen, L. Havemann, N. Glover, M. Kingsbury, M. Pazio, J. Penn, F. Trzeciak, K. Shackleford-Cesare, S. Walker and J. Webb, "Optionality in Assessment: A cross

institutional exploration of the feasibility, practicality & utility of student choices in assessment in UK higher education,” Quality Assurance Agency, 2023.

[2] B. Irwin and S. Hepplestone, “Examining increased flexibility in assessment formats,” *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, vol. 37, no. 7, pp. 773-785, 2012.

[3] R. Jopp and J. Cohen, “Choose your own assessment—assessment choice for students in online higher education,” *Teaching in Higher Education*, vol. 27, no. 6, pp. 738-755, 2022.

Paper2 Title: Fostering belonging through a Student Partners Network: collaborating with students to shape their success and development opportunities

Speakers: Theo Abbott and Shadia El Mokdad

Abstract: Student-staff partnerships offer the opportunity for a stronger sense of belonging among both parties. By incorporating student voice into initiatives to improve teaching, learning, and student experience, and collaborating with students as partners to implement these initiatives, staff have the chance to build a new sense of camaraderie, connectedness, and shared purpose with students.

This lightning talk will share how the Student Partnership Team have worked to foster a greater sense of belonging in this way across the Student Partners programme by creating a Student Partners Network.

The Student Partners Network is the most recent addition to the University’s ‘Students as Partners’ offer. It is a series of sessions where Student Partners from across different projects get the chance to socialise and take part in developmental opportunities together. The Student Partnership Team have worked to embody the offer they facilitate across other teams and closely collaborate with Student Partners in shaping these sessions.

The lightning talk will cover the initial Student Partners Network sessions held this academic year, including facilitation training and presentations led by Student Partners. It will focus on how the team sought to iteratively develop the contribution of student voice to each session, how these student contributions helped the programme embody effective practice around inclusive and accessible education, and how this ultimately created opportunities for a greater sense of belonging among both students and staff. Finally, the talk will offer some recommendations for how colleagues might bring similar belonging-oriented partnerships into their practice.

Paper3 Title: Gamification Management Education: Bridging the Gap for Non-Management Students

Speakers: Gerald Chan

Abstract: In my three years of teaching BMaP (Business Management for all Programmes) modules, a key observation I have made is the presence of an attainment gap as well as diminished levels of engagement. This in part could be due to the different approaches in learning across faculty which could make it challenging for students to follow the logic of teaching and learning in business schools. Thus, given the extensive nature of cross-faculty teaching across the University, it is crucial to ensure that students are not disadvantaged when trying to engage in cross-faculty learning, and that education is more inclusive.

Over winter, I embarked on an attempt to gamify a BMaP module (Fundamentals of Technological Change). The objective is to develop a more inclusive and engaging approach towards, through interactive activities that promote active participation. One of the biggest challenges has been to introduce competitive elements across the activities. This is the next step of the module redesign.

Although the redesign is not complete, early observations indicate a positive impact, with attendance rates increasing and student engagement surpassing previous years. Future assessments will explore the long-term effects of these changes on student learning outcomes and overall satisfaction.

Paper4 Title: Engaging the student voice through creative projects in science and health communication

Speakers: Harriet Palfreyman

Abstract: As part of Science and Health Communication MSc programme at the Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine, students undertake a 30-credit practical project. Students can choose between an

‘organisation-based project’, where they are placed with a university, or external science communication institution to work on a predefined project, or a ‘creative project’ in which they work with an academic to devise and create their own science communication product. In past years, students on the creative project have produced social media content, journalism portfolios, art, and creative writing on a variety of science and health subjects.

This talk outlines some key aspects of the creative project including 1) accessibility: the project offers students who may struggle with external expectations (for reasons involving disability, care, or working arrangements) to work to their own schedule, and 2) student voice: through engaging creativity we aim to empower students to take ownership of their studies and develop a range of communication skills beyond the academic. Ensuring that the ‘student voice’ theme is central to this talk, I use feedback from students who have previously chosen creative projects to critically reflect on the creative project, consider how to further develop and improve the project offering in future, as well as consider how creative assessments might be successfully adapted for other teaching.

Paper5 Title: Student Feedback and University Inaction: Message from the front

Speakers: Olivia Shaw

Abstract: Directly from Library Student Team members to field experts this talk readdresses the student struggles with assessment and feedback that appear annually at the T+L conference. From reviewing Lead MCR agendas, discussing with the active student team and evaluating previous team contributions on the subject this talk addresses inaction surrounding assignment feedback and support. Based on first hand experiences facilitating student workshops, MLE resources and peer led teaching spaces (including Peer Assisted Study Sessions) the team stand at the forefront of student engagement and support. We represent and encourage the collaborative opportunities staff and student engagement (including participating in this event) that open communication and feedback brings. Our own response to student feedback is continually clear including our alternative assessments sessions, so when will the universities response be clear also? What does the university inaction suggest to those already unseen and unsupported that the university is not as fully aware of - those who from underrepresented backgrounds and experiences that already may find university less accessible. Our call challenges current HEI frameworks and raises the problem of feedback onto the agenda once again. We aim to both speak to the education sector and model participation and advocacy to other university student teams. Through this we aim to challenge practice and encourage innovative participation in conversation and wider education policy prioritisation.

D2.1.5

Session Title: Fragile, messy, slow, and fun: Interdisciplinary inclusive education

Speakers: Wren Radford

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Abstract: This session takes the form of an intervention collaboratively designed with final year students in Liberal Arts that reflects on the messy, slow, fun, and fragile nature of inclusive interdisciplinary learning. A short overview of the values and methods of developing the intervention will be presented at the start, before facilitating the session participants’ reflection through this student-designed intervention.

Using visual ethnography and values-led inquiry, students contributed as co-researchers to two in-person workshops (with follow ups online) to explore the everyday realities of interdisciplinary study. This attended to experiences at the intersections of disability/neurodiversity, queerness, class, and language. By focusing on the everyday, this enabled a consideration of how University structures, policies, and practices have ‘lived and felt’ dimensions impacting student’s learning and relationships. In workshop 1, students contributed photographs as evocative discussion starters and designed a further research method that prioritised how they wanted their experiences to be heard and recognised (e.g. enabling relationality but anonymity where needed; recognising difference). Students contributed both their experiences and also the skills in reflexivity, qualitative research, and ‘thinking through making’ (Tim Ingold) developed in the final year of their degree. Workshop 2 focused on identifying key images, quotes, and themes to develop a visually engaging, accessible intervention that promotes reflexive learning for participants.

This intervention could be used to facilitate action-reflection with teaching and support staff, SLT, or fellow students to encourage discussion on the purposes and practices of inclusive education, and on how 'student voice' is incorporated across the university.

D2.1.6

Session Title: Academic advisors – how can we enhance student belonging?

Speakers: Helen Jopling, Krystyna Drewenska

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Abstract: Academic advisors are a key component of the student experience. At best academic advisors can help improve academic achievement by supporting reflection on current progress and helping to develop skills for future employment. Evidence from research studies across higher education also indicates how effective academic advisors can enhance the sense of belonging and reduce differential attainment. Whilst toolkits and expectations of academic advisors have been developed within the University of Manchester many pre-date the COVID-19 pandemic. With increasing challenges of academic workload, and a large student population with ever changing needs, this wicked problem set will consider how can we ensure that our academic advisor system is fit for purpose and adds to the student experience. Working with the student's union we will consider how we can develop the academic advisor role to ensure it is both sustainable but also achieves a sense of belonging at the institution.

D2.1.7

Session Title: What could Service/ Community Engaged Learning look like in my programme?

Speakers: Rachel Lindley, Julian Skyrme, Lynne Bianchi, Phil Drake

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Abstract: Service/ Community Engaged Learning is when students achieve their course outcomes by working with a community partner to meet a community need. S/CEL activity is a natural step between university and employment. It gives students the opportunity to make a difference and have powerful learning experiences, which help build skills and allows them stand out in the future workplace.

In Manchester we have a diverse local population, very high levels of need compared to the rest of the country and a wide variety of different programmes.

If as is hoped, the Manchester 35 strategy will commit to every student being given the opportunity to do service learning as part of their programme, but what could it look like for YOUR programme?

How can we ensure there is a range of types of opportunity to allow flexibility for different programmes, different students, different populations, different locations and different interest?

There will be an outline of what high impact S/ CEL looks like, current working models will be discussed, and participants will discuss what could work well in their own programmes.

The session will be vital in shaping what the S/CEL offer looks like across the University over the next 10 years and help to make UoM communities of practice to develop similar projects between faculties, local, national and international populations.

D2.2.1

Session Title: Active learning and innovative assessment for inclusion

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Inclusive education

Paper1 Title: FSE Peer Action Learning for Inclusive Teaching and Learning Practices

Speakers: Alison Harvey, Aurelie Le Normand, Erika Aminian, Louise Walker, Martin Simmons, Simon Raw

Abstract: It is widely acknowledged that widening participation in higher education (HE) has resulted in a student population that is probably more diverse than at any point in history. With this, teaching staff in HE have a responsibility to support and enable all students to thrive and feel like they truly belong.

High levels of student diversity however, mean a wide range of barriers to learning that need to be overcome. Addressing these can feel overwhelming for staff, especially if they don't feel equipped with sufficient teaching strategies. As such, there is a secondary need to offer training activities in this area.

This presentation reports on a project combining an innovative Peer-Action-Learning approach with a Quality Assurance Agency Framework to improve the inclusivity of teaching in the Faculty of Science and Engineering (FSE). Our project sought to give teaching staff opportunity to receive training, reflect on teaching practice and make effective changes.

Central to this has been collaboration with members of the library's student team in planning and delivering activities. Presence of student voices throughout has ensured that actions planned by staff are informed by authentic experiences.

So far, over 20 colleagues from across FSE have engaged with the project and implemented changes. Looking ahead, there is potential to develop a toolkit, offering practical and tangible guidance to impact the practice of colleagues across the university and beyond.

Paper2 Title: Play to your strengths: the unessay project as inclusive, flexible assessment and learning as a process

Speakers: Francisco Eissa-Barroso

Abstract: This paper draws on the experience of using a scaffolded unessay project as the main assessment mechanism in SPLA31151 History of the Spanish Atlantic world and the feedback received from students on this practice. The paper explores the ways in which an unessay allows for a more flexible approach to assessment, letting students choose how they present their research in ways that suit their individual strengths and interests. Simultaneously, scaffolding the final project with preliminary, formative and summative, submissions both emphasises learning as process and creates a more inclusive and supportive assessment practice. The paper explores some of the challenges in designing an unessay project that adheres to rigorous academic standards while allowing students as much flexibility as possible in terms of both topic and medium. It hopes to encourage other colleagues to try the unessay as an assessment option, dispelling some myths about its laxness and emphasising the advantages students can derive from it.

Paper3 Title: Lessons learned from gamification of teaching and learning to enhance students' engagement

Speakers: Erika Aminian, Jillian Yeow, Ian Stewart

Abstract: Active learning and bringing a sense of community to diverse large student cohorts through innovative teaching are widely accepted challenges in higher education today. Gamification has been known as one of the notable solutions for human engagements. Therefore, it is not surprising that recent pedagogic literature places emphasis on gamification of Teaching and Learning, which involves integration of game elements into learning contexts, as a solution for engaging students to construct knowledge actively. Additionally, there is evidence in the literature that engagement in group games with appropriate designs helps with feelings of connection, inclusion, and sense of autonomy within students which all support a sense of belonging for them. Nonetheless, gamification of T&L for large cohort postgraduate courses has its own challenges. This paper reports on lessons learned from the implementation of a LEGO-based gamification of T&L in project management education to a student cohort consisting of largely international students, many of whom have come to the UK to study for the first time. Consequently, language barriers and feeling unsure if they will fit in the new education setting were high. Also, the

majority of the student cohort had no or very limited prior working experience. This can impact negatively on students' engagement as they do not have relatable practical examples to draw upon in the class. The paper attempts to analyse the lessons learned using literature concerned with mechanisms of successful gamification.

D2.2.2

Session Title: Academic advising, collaborative working and enhancing independent learning

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Building belonging and raising student voices

Paper1 Title: Student Experiences of Academic Advising on a Large-Cohort Undergraduate Programme

Speakers: Dr Jessica Leather, Shubhi Kohli, Dr Amber Ruigrok, Dr Elizabeth Mcmanus-Day, Dr Leone Buckle, Dr Ruth Ingram, Dr Doron Cohen, Dr Rebecca Champion

Abstract: Background: BSc Psychology Academic Advisors follow the UoM Academic Advising Model which supports advisees to discuss, prioritise, implement and reflect on their personal development. This project aimed to raise student voices to understand how effective the Academic Advising system is in supporting students to belong on the Psychology BSc and what could be done to improve this support.

Methods: Following a co-produced consultation focus group, survey questions were generated by students and staff for an online student questionnaire. Two follow-up focus groups were co-facilitated by a student representative with Years 1 and 2 undergraduates to discuss the survey results and generate potential avenues for change. Follow-up interviews with final-year students were conducted separately by a staff member.

Results: Survey data revealed that most students felt supported by their advisor and felt comfortable discussing progress, future and wellbeing. Results suggest the academic advisor model is being implemented and most students found goal setting to be helpful. Focus group results demonstrated some student uncertainty about the role of the academic advisor leading to a reluctance to reach out for support about certain issues. Interviews with final year students revealed some issues with combining the roles of project supervisor and advisor in final year with advising being viewed as secondary; particularly since project supervision is undertaken in a group-based format.

Implications: These findings highlight the importance of reiterating the purpose of academic advising and clarifying how and when to contact advisors in order to increase accessibility and inclusion. In final year, students require access to an academic advisor who they can speak to about their personal development separately from discussing their dissertation project. These findings contribute knowledge about best practice in academic advising for undergraduate students.

Paper2 Title: DASS students in FSE - opportunities for enhancing inclusivity, accessibility and student success

Speakers: Jo Cartwright & Amal Al-Amin

Abstract: As part of a wider APP project, we hosted a series of focus groups with students to discuss their experiences. We held several focus groups with DASS registered students in FSE to work collaboratively with students in understanding their specific needs and experiences. Students shared with us insights into their experiences, their struggles and what support they believe would be most beneficial to them. Working collaboratively with our students to inform our strategy has been a priority.

Paper3 Title: Developing a Digital Advising Tool for Independent Language Learning

Speakers: Sandra Torres

Abstract:

1. The amount of time that students spend in class, whilst taking a LEAP language course, represents only a third of the studying and learning that is expected of them. This means that regular independent learning must take place for students to progress with their language studies. To offer equal access to resources and equal opportunities to

develop the desired autonomy, a digital advising tool for independent language learning was developed, taking into account students' contributions.

2. Students were involved through focus groups, in which they voiced their previous experience with independent learning, the difficulties they faced when engaging in it, and the strategies and resources used for language learning purposes. Students' input also informed the characteristics and features that a digital advising tool for independent language learning should have.

3. This project will benefit the increasing number of students taking LEAP beginners courses. In the last decade, due to the changing environment in secondary education, more HE language departments (including MLC) are offering beginners streams within degree programmes. Therefore, this research and toolkit will also be extremely transferable and helpful to these students and courses.

D2.2.3

Session Title: Digital competencies, blended learning and AI

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Paper1 Title: Enhancing Employability and Digital Competencies: Developing E-Portfolios in Social Sciences

Speakers: Tatjana Kecojevic

Abstract: This presentation explores the integration of e-portfolios in social sciences education to enhance student employability, digital literacy, and professional skills. Supported by the SoSS Scholarship Support Fund, this initiative is a collaborative effort with students, empowering them to document academic progress and showcase data skills using Git and GitHub. By embedding open-source digital tools, the project redefines teaching and assessment while fostering student agency and engagement.

E-portfolios offer a flexible, student-centered approach to learning, allowing students to build professional, evidence-based portfolios that reflect their skills and career readiness. Through co-creation of resources and hands-on workshops, students actively contribute to shaping their learning experience and developing practical digital competencies. The project encourages greater engagement, inclusivity, and a sense of ownership over their academic and professional growth.

Beyond the conference, this initiative has broader implications for higher education policy and practice. By embedding employability-focused digital skills, it supports lifelong learning and contributes to the digital transformation of social sciences education. It also aligns with UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by ensuring inclusive, equitable, and skills-based learning opportunities.

This session will showcase best practices, discuss challenges, and inspire educators to adopt innovative approaches to teaching and assessment, equipping students with essential digital competencies for future careers.

Paper2 Title: Getting the Blend Right in Blended Learning: Lessons Learned from a Postgraduate Taught Programme

Speakers: Grazyna Grace Lipowska-Bhalla

Abstract: This study reflects on innovative blended delivery model implemented within a postgraduate taught programme and shares key lessons learned from its evaluation.

Unlike typical approaches that blend learning within individual units, this model integrates fully online units alongside conventional on campus units.

To evaluate its effectiveness and alignment with student needs, structured interviews and questionnaires with both closed and open-ended questions were conducted. Findings reveal valuable insights into the benefits and challenges of this model, particularly regarding educational outcomes, student experience, and in the context of the newly

implemented SEaTS system. Based on ongoing feedback, refinements were introduced during the model's second year, and their impact on learning experience will be discussed.

This submission aligns with the conference theme of "Redefining Learning and Teaching in HE" by challenging traditional delivery methods and embracing flexible learning frameworks suited to evolving student needs. It also highlights the importance of inclusivity, accessibility, and lifelong learning.

Beyond this programme, this flexible model has the potential to influence wider educational practices, supporting continuous learning for those requiring flexible options due to personal or socioeconomic circumstances. This project contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goal of Quality Education by promoting equitable and adaptable learning opportunities.

Paper3 Title: Exploring Generative AI in Initial Teacher Education: A Pre-Research Study on Pre-Service Teachers' use and perceptions of Generative AI tools during their first Primary PGCE teaching practice.

Speakers: Karen Kilkenny, David James, Natalie Jayson, Liz Birchinall, Andrew Rhodes

Abstract: This presentation shares findings from a pre-research study on Generative AI within UoM Primary PGCE programme. The study gathered initial data to shape a research roadmap on AI's role in teacher education, exploring pre-service teachers' engagement with AI during their first teaching practicum and their perceptions of AI's potential and limitations in classroom practice.

At the start of their PGCE, 150 pre-service teachers were introduced to TeachMateAI and ChatGPT for lesson planning and classroom support. Feedback was collected through interviews, discussions, and focus groups, ensuring student voice. Discussions covered curriculum applications, frequency of use, and AI's impact, alongside reflections on advantages, challenges, and ethical considerations in AI-driven teaching.

Findings highlight the importance of professional judgment in evaluating AI-generated content. Pre-service teachers developed critical engagement skills, refining prompt engineering techniques and exploring AI's role in adaptive teaching and inclusive practice, particularly in lesson pitch and accessibility.

AI use is a highly relevant topic both globally and nationally. Whilst this submission talks specifically to this PGCE example, the growing use of AI contributes to broader educational discourse and resonates across all education sectors. This session aims to elicit meaningful discussion, perspectives and reflection. Overall findings may reshape our PGCE teaching and learning and use of AI.

D2.2.4

Session Type: Lightning Talks – Sustainable development, inclusive and reflective practice

Themes: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Paper1 Title: Show and do: Gorilla, Psychology, and online experiments

Speakers: Karen Lander

Abstract: The advent of digital tools has revolutionised the online collection of experimental data in psychology, particularly through platforms like Gorilla Experiment Builder. This lightning talk explores the teaching of Gorilla and other similar online data collection tools, and how this learning is reshaping and redefining the pedagogy of experimental psychology. By providing an intuitive, non-coding interface, online experiment builder platforms enable students to design and implement experiments without the need for extensive programming knowledge. This democratisation of teaching allows for a more inclusive, accessible and equitable approach to learning about experimental design.

This lightning talk presents a case study, highlighting the challenges of teaching Gorilla and benefits of engaging students in experimental design and data collection. Students are directly impacted; they are able to create their own work and put theory into practice. In this collaborative work, students report being able to make the leap between 'learning about science' to 'doing the science'.

Digital tools like Gorilla help redefine learning and teaching in HE, as well as facilitate efficient and effective data collection. Our findings demonstrate the benefits of teaching students about online data collection platforms - for

promoting autonomy, collaboration and equality and building transferable skills which benefit students' professional development in university and workplace environments.

Paper2 Title: Teaching Spanish for Sustainable Development: From Concept to Classroom Practice

Speakers: Susana Lorenzo-Zamorano

Abstract: This session examines how Spanish language teaching can empower students by fostering awareness of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and supporting the Council of Europe's emphasis on democratic citizenship and human rights education. By integrating sustainability and social justice themes into language instruction, we can enhance linguistic skills while developing students' critical awareness of environmental and social issues.

Drawing from an ongoing funded SR initiative, the session will showcase practical strategies for embedding sustainability-driven pedagogies into language curricula. A concrete activity will illustrate how language education can be redefined by integrating critical approaches to culture that encourage active student participation, collaboration, interdisciplinary learning and reflection, positioning learners as 'social agents' who apply their language skills to real-world issues.

Beyond the classroom, this discussion has broader implications for language education policy and practice. It highlights the potential of teaching languages to drive global change and promote diversity, equity and inclusion, thus aligning with sector-wide priorities. By connecting language acquisition with sustainability education, this session aims to inspire curriculum innovation and strengthen the role of language learning in addressing pressing social and environmental concerns.

Paper3 Title: Introducing environmental sustainability into postgraduate clinical laboratory projects

Speakers: Helen Jopling, Philip Macdonald

Abstract: Clinical scientists are crucial to the NHS workforce providing diagnostics services, including laboratory testing of blood samples. The NHS Scientist Training Programme (STP) is a competitive, three-year workplace-based training programme requiring completion of a part-time MSc. The MSc for Blood Scientist trainees is delivered nationally by the Manchester Academy for Healthcare Scientist Education through a block release model. Clinical laboratories are high energy, water and consumables users, processing thousands of blood samples daily. Reduction in clinical laboratory consumption is essential to the NHS net zero strategy. We recognised the key role of the research project component of the MSc programme in introducing the concept of environmental sustainability to our clinical scientist trainees. We developed a pilot workshop in conjunction with green champions from the Association of Laboratory Medicine to introduce key concepts to the students. Students were engaged and interested in the sustainability agenda and recognised how small changes to their work could have a significant positive impact. Students were asked to consider the issues raised whilst addressing their research project to see if this would influence how they carried out their research. One student decided to focus their research on reducing the laboratory carbon footprint. Supervisors were overwhelmingly positive about the training the students received and how they brought this into the research setting. We plan to use this pilot to prepare students completing the NHS scientist training programme for work within diagnostics laboratories as a positive move towards the net zero pledge of the NHS.

Paper4 Title: Recognising teaching excellence in healthcare: Supporting medical and healthcare professionals to achieve Advance HE fellowships

Speakers: Jessica Grundy, Dianne Burns, Helen White, Deborah O'Connor, Christine Furber

Abstract: Practice-based medical and healthcare professionals are expected to teach and support undergraduate and postgraduate learners in their respective disciplines however, support and opportunities for practice-based educators to develop their teaching and learning practice are varied.

To support practice-based educators, we developed a pipeline programme to support and recognise teaching excellence in healthcare, and to move towards parity in recognising the excellence of educators in different spaces. The evaluation of GMLEAP showed several positive effects on the teaching practice of those who engaged with the programme including increased reflection and use of pedagogy and formation of a community of practice (D. Burns, J. Grundy et al, 2024).

As clinicians working in healthcare and teaching and learning enhancement in HE simultaneously, our unique experiences have enabled us to work across different spaces and to bridge the gap in recognition for traditional and practice-based educators (redefining learning and teaching in HE). Further, this pilot (funded by HEE) was a key enabling initiative of the Greater Manchester Health and Care Learning Environment Strategy (2021-24), the driving force of which is to enhance the learning experiences of the future NHS workforce, and ultimately enhance patient care (points 1 and 3).

D2.2.5

Session Title: Can Higher Education truly be decolonised?

Speakers: Sohini Biswas & Becca Annoh

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Inclusive education

Abstract: Higher Education has been a hub for forward thinking and innovation for years if not centuries, this hub has historically excluded racialised groups. Now, efforts are being made to decolonise Higher Education but has the damage already been done? Can a structure built on colonialism fully recover from its histories?

The Students' Union is working towards a solution to this momentous issue. We have worked alongside students to collect data into preferred Decolonial practices and have hired a Student to be our part time strategy assistant. Our aim is to continuously co-create long lasting and impactful multi pronged solutions to inclusive teaching. To do this effectively, we need those at the forefront of teaching and learning to partner with us.

D2.2.6

Session Title: Communicating in a Global Context

Speakers: Ruth Fordham and Rachel Heasley

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Inclusive education

Abstract: How can we achieve effective communication between International and Home students to enable successful group assessments?

A common narrative in HE currently, both within and outside universities, is that International students are viewed within a deficit framework, that their language isn't strong enough to communicate successfully. Our experience of teaching 2000+ International students annually at the University Centre for Academic English has led us to believe that the challenge with communication is not simply a language deficit on the International students' side. It is also a lack of awareness or understanding from Home students of how to choose appropriate language to communicate with learners whose first language is different from their own.

We're keen to understand all perspectives and would like to explore this 'wicked problem' with students, academics and professional services colleagues.

With a specific focus on communicating in order to succeed in group assessments, assuming the competency of all students is high, but the linguistics backgrounds differ:

- what is challenging or frustrating?
- what are the positives?
- what practical solutions and strategies are there for everyone to successfully navigate a group assessment?

Impact:

We hope recommendations coming out of this session can be shared with students and colleagues enabling successful international learning environments, and longer term preparing all Manchester graduates for the global world of work.

D2.3.1

Session Title: Feedback and experiential learning for inclusion

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Inclusive education

Paper1 Title: Breaking Barriers: Reflections on an Inclusive Clinical Lecturer Internship in Speech & Language Therapy - One Year On

Speakers: Hawraa Abid, Jack Delaney, Alex Sturrock, Stephanie Greenwood-Davies

Abstract: In 2024, the Speech and Language Therapy Department piloted a three-month Clinical Lecturer Internship to increase access to academic pathways for underrepresented students. Funded by the FBMH Access & Success widening participation budget, this initiative provided paid placements for two second-year students, allowing them to explore lecturing through hands-on experience.

As interns, we engaged in teaching and learning activities, including exam design, gathering student feedback, assisting in admissions events, and delivering a lecture to first-year students. We will share insights on how the internship fostered inclusivity, strengthened the student voice, and increased awareness of academic career pathways.

From a student perspective, we will discuss how the internship helped overcome barriers to academic opportunities and led to further engagement in higher education initiatives, such as pursuing Associate Fellowships of the Higher Education Academy. Lecturers will outline the initial vision, how student input shaped the programme, and its future direction.

This initiative is an example of inclusive academic recruitment and mentorship. By embedding student voices in course development, it contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals of Quality Education and Reduced Inequalities. Our reflections offer inspiration for institutions looking to diversify higher education and create equitable opportunities for future educators in healthcare.

Paper2 Title: A student-staff project: Developing student feedback literacy and autonomy through student voice and site wide resource creation

Speakers: Karen Beswick, Nghi Lam, Tanya Chandi

Abstract: This two-year student-staff fellowship project focused primarily on student academic and emotional response to feedback, to consider ways of developing their assessment feedback literacy. Student focus groups, led by students, gave insightful feedback into how we can support them better, particularly through clear signposting and considering their emotional response. In the staff workshops that followed, we considered our current marking practices and feedback styles and identified ways to connect the student to the support available.

The aim of this project was to change the relationship of typical assessment feedback from cognitivist terms where markers give information about strengths and weaknesses of student work and how it can be improved (Hattie and Timperley, 2007), to a process-orientated social constructivist view of feedback where feedback processes involve students as active generators of their own understandings (Boud and Molloy, 2013a) hence challenging the status quo and current methods.

Resources were created that will be embedded into the University's Virtual Learning Environment for site-wide use. Its intention was to consider how we can empower students to be in control of their own development following feedback by increasing student autonomy in accessing the wide range of support available that they may be unaware of, whilst lessening marker workload (Henderson et al, 2019). As a site-wide resource, this could impact on our marking policies as a whole.

Paper3 Title: Groupwork as a vehicle to promote inclusion in educational spaces.

Speakers: Dr Pat Cartney and Dr Dharman Jeyasingham

Abstract:

Purpose

To discuss and evaluate a series of experiential workshops introduced into an MA Social Work programme, focusing on understanding how groups and power operate in an educational context.

To outline the rationale for the workshops and explore how the teaching promotes students' understanding of issues around power, diversity, inclusion and exclusion in macro and micro contexts.

To encourage participants to make links throughout with their own educational and practice contexts to explore the transferability of the learning.

Content

The presentation will explore the 'how', 'what' and 'why' of the experiential learning presented. Students initially explore the operation of power at a theoretical level, drawing upon sociological and psychological understandings of identity and intersectionality – considering how groups can marginalise/ exclude some people whilst over-privileging the voice of others. Students then reflect on how issues of discrimination and exclusion play out in groups they are members of, in educational settings. Students are encouraged to become more aware of the power mechanisms operating within group settings—including their own use of power—and facilitated to promote more inclusive educational spaces.

Wider reach

Identification of a pedagogic model of learning and teaching that can be adapted and transferred across different educational programmes within and beyond UoM.

Links with broader debates in the sector about how best to support inclusive education and address issues of student marginalisation.

A related paper is being presented at a social work education conference; also presenting at UoM would allow a broader interdisciplinary perspective to inform future work.

Paper4 Title: Increasing dialogue without workload: how interactive coversheets were used on a large scale pre-session course to foster dialogic feedback processes

Speakers: Craig Davis

Abstract: One particular criticism of feedback in HE is that it is often monologic, with the student assuming a role of passive recipient. This potentially limits engagement, understanding, response, and the general utility of feedback received. In attempt to improve feedback practice, it has been suggested that it is not the quantity but the quality and the nature of feedback that needs to change; in particular, a shift from a monologic to a dialogic feedback process. A shift that also repositions the student as an active agent and driver of feedback.

One method for embedding dialogue is through the use of interactive coversheets. These are coversheets with an interactive element, often in the form of a checklist or a series of guided, reflective questions that aim to elicit some form of evaluative judgement or comment from the student on the work being submitted. These are then attached to the assessment (or classroom) tasks with the aim to foster dialogic feedback processes through eliciting inner, peer, and tutor feedback.

In the proposed session I will share how interactive coversheets were used to foster dialogue for written tasks on a large scale pre-session course at the University of Manchester. I will discuss the stages involved in making this a meaningful process as well as feedback and suggestions for future use and the potential for introducing such an approach at programme level.

This approach aims to promote inclusive assessment through empowering students and building confidence in student agency and voice, which aligns with the key themes of the ITL conference.

D2.3.2

Session Title: Social networks and digital tools

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Paper1 Title: A critical analysis of authentic assessment in Higher Education, focussing on one form of authentic video assessment (shortlist.me) that the careers service has facilitated the use of within curriculum.

Speakers: Emma Brewin-Caddy and Sophie Coller

Abstract: This presentation reports on our study on the use of shortlist.me as an authentic video assessment tool within the University of Manchester's curriculum. By embedding real-world recruitment experiences into assessments, this initiative supports students in developing crucial digital and employability skills. Impact on students: There is a positive impact on students in relation to the development of key employability skills, digital competencies and confidence in navigating recruitment processes aligning with the Careers Service's work to enhance student preparedness for the evolving job market. The submission aligns with the conference theme of redefining learning & teaching in HE, as it critically evaluates one alternative to traditional assessment methods which integrates employer-aligned, technology-driven approaches. It speaks to inclusive education, considering if digital-first assessments can be designed to support diverse student needs, in relation to equity of access across the student body. Beyond the University of Manchester, this has broader implications for institution-wide employability provision and digital tools for assessment. It raises questions about scaling authentic assessment in large institutions, ensuring inclusivity in digital assessment design, and fostering graduate attributes relevant to the future workforce. This work encompasses sustainable development goals including SD4, Quality Education; gaining practical skills alongside academic knowledge.

Paper2 Title: Using Nearpod to Enhance Student Engagement and Formative Assessment in Postgraduate Teaching

Speakers: Helen Jopling, Philip Macdonald

Abstract: Nearpod is an interactive online platform that enables educators to create engaging, real-time and self-paced learning experiences. Over the past decade, we have incorporated Nearpod into postgraduate teaching to facilitate active learning, encourage anonymous participation, and enhance student interaction during both in-person and online sessions. It has been particularly valuable in team-based learning, where students engage collaboratively while receiving immediate feedback.

A key strength of Nearpod is its seamless integration of formative assessment, allowing students to monitor their own understanding against intended learning outcomes. We have embedded Nearpod into pre-session activities, enabling students to engage with material before in-class discussions, fostering a flipped learning approach. The platform also supports a range of assessment types, from multiple-choice questions to open-ended responses, providing valuable insights into student understanding. Tutors receive detailed reports on student responses, supporting the identification of those who may require additional guidance. This data has informed teaching strategies, including allocating students to diverse ability groups for team-based learning and adapting lesson content to address common misconceptions.

Students have reported that Nearpod fosters equal participation and accountability, ensuring that all individuals contribute. The ability to respond anonymously has created a 'low risk' environment where students feel more comfortable engaging with content. Additionally, the interactive nature of Nearpod, through polls, quizzes, and collaborative boards, has helped sustain student engagement and motivation. By promoting interactivity, self-assessment, and targeted support, Nearpod has contributed to a more dynamic and inclusive learning environment that enhances both student engagement and academic progression.

Paper3 Title: The use of social networks to improve student engagement and implement a research-led curriculum

Speakers: Sofia Izquierdo Sanchez (University of Manchester) and William Tayler (Lancaster University)

Abstract: Integrating research and teaching in higher education is a challenging yet important issue. Whilst evidence suggests that research quality in economics often correlates negatively with student satisfaction, incorporating research into the curriculum generally enhances student motivation and grades. We implemented an Instagram account as a supplementary resource across 4 courses in 2 universities. The account aimed to (1) introduce research-led teaching activities, (2) boost engagement, and (3) connect teaching to students' real lives. Our findings reveal a positive link between student interaction with the account and improved percentile ranks, higher final grades, and successful course completion. This effect was notably stronger among students with specific learning difficulties.

D2.3.3

Session Title: Team based learning

Session Type: Standard papers

Theme: Redefining learning and teaching in HE

Paper1 Title: Enhancing Inclusion and Engagement through Flexible Team-Based Learning

Speakers: Claire Burns, Lisa Donlan, Maryam Al-jeddal

Abstract: Adapting Team-Based Learning (TBL) for Flexible, Inclusive, and Engaging Education.

In response to changing student learning patterns and the need for inclusive education, this presentation explores a collaborative approach to Team-Based Learning (TBL) in bioscience education. Developed using student feedback, our model combines online pre-learning with structured, interactive, in-person activities to maximise accessibility, inclusivity, and engagement.

Aligned with the conference theme of inclusive education, this approach addresses challenges posed by reduced campus attendance while enhancing student engagement, teamwork, and critical thinking skills. The integration of flexible digital tools ensures that students from varied backgrounds—regardless of prior knowledge or learning preferences—can actively participate and succeed.

Beyond this conference, our model has implications for sector-wide teaching strategies, offering insights into scalable, inclusive learning designs that can inform institutional policies on hybrid education. Furthermore, it aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4: Quality Education) by promoting equitable access to engaging and effective learning experiences. This session will inspire innovative pedagogical approaches, facilitating a more inclusive future for higher education.

Paper2 Title: Ensuring Student Success in Medical TBL: The Power of Performance Analytics

Speakers: Michael Smith, Elizabeth Sheader, Lisa Donlan

Abstract: Medical education at the University of Manchester has undergone a transformative change in curriculum delivery, transitioning from a Problem-Based-Learning framework to an innovative Team-Based-Learning (TBL) approach. This transition has been widely embraced by students, with 74% rating TBL sessions as “excellent”, a response that aligns with studies showing TBL promotes active engagement and deeper learning (Michaelsen et al., 2008, Haidet et al., 2012). A key factor in this success was integration of the digital education platform LAMS, which supports structured design and provides real-time performance tracking.

Each semester, the curriculum is divided into themed medical learning weeks – for example, a week focused on “Breast Cancer.” Each week begins with an interactive session that sets the stage for a blended learning experience combining lectures, anatomy dissection, practicals, and consultation skills sessions. The week concludes with a Manchester-style TBL session featuring individual readiness assurance tests, team readiness assurance tests,

application exercises, and expert panel discussions. Data collected during the first four weeks offers early insights into student engagement and comprehension.

Our findings indicate that student success can be predicted as early as week four. This detection allows for targeted interventions, including study skills workshops and advisory meetings, resulting in a 20% improvement in final TBL performance and a 72% reduction in failure rates amongst struggling students, supporting the role of early intervention in enhancing student success (Cox et al., 2018). These results highlight the value of performance analytics in enhancing educational outcomes, an approach resonating with sector-wide efforts to reduce attainment gaps.

Paper3 Title: Enhancing Practical Learning in Postgraduate Education: Integrating Digital Tools and Team-Based Learning in Medical Microbiology

Speakers: Hannah Serrage, Stavros Panagiotou, Jenny Herbert, Moustafa Alissa Alkhalaf

Abstract: Postgraduate educators face the challenge of delivering content to a diverse cohort, often with language barriers or limited prior knowledge. This is particularly challenging in practical classes, which typically follow traditional step-by-step protocols that leave little room for learners to critically assess content and question the broader context in which techniques are applied in research and diagnostic environments.

Recently, easy-to-use digital tools have emerged, encouraging self-paced, active learning through incorporation of team-based learning (TBL) exercises, polls and interactive learning content.

In the Medical Microbiology MSc programme at UoM, we integrated digital technologies into a 3-week intensive practical curriculum. We developed interactive learning guides (Articulate Rise 360), polls to consolidate knowledge (Mentimeter) and team-based learning activities to critically apply knowledge (LAMS).

We gathered data through analytics from learning platforms (LAMS and Mentimeter) and conducted an anonymous optional survey (Qualtrics) to a cohort of 42 students to gauge opinion on the integration of these learning technologies. Of the 36 responses, 92% reported that interactive content enhanced their learning, and 97% felt TBL activities positively impacted their learning experience. Overall, the student response was overwhelmingly positive, indicating these tools could be applied to enhance learning in diverse higher education environments.

D2.3.4

Session Type: Lightning Talks – Peer learning to build belonging and SU initiatives raising student voices

Themes: Building belonging and raising student voices

Paper1 Title: Toolkit for Disabled PGRs

Speakers: Beck Heslop

Abstract: This talk showcases a digital resource for disabled PGRs and researchers that was developed by a disabled postgraduate student during their four-month internship with the Researcher Development team. It responds to needs expressed in last year's PGR Survey and the content was developed in collaboration with disabled postgraduate student networks. Postgraduate students often get left out of conversations around teaching and learning, while disability often gets left out of conversations around diversity. Directly addressing the conference themes of inclusion and redefining learning and teaching, this lightening talk encourages attendees to take a more complete view of who students are at the university and how we can support their learning beyond the classroom.

It is expected that the resource will be shared with other universities and cross-institutional groups such as the National Association of Disabled Staff Networks. As such, it can stand as a resource for others beyond Manchester and inspire more creative ways of supporting the development of disabled PGRs. At the same time as providing role models, advice, and community for disabled students, the resource and this talk aims to raise awareness of systemic ableism experienced by disabled postgraduate students and researchers across the higher education sector. Responding to barriers experienced by disabled students pursuing research careers, the toolkit also speaks to the sustainable development goal of reduced inequalities.

Paper2 Title: EducateMCR and Student Voice: Using data to uncover a story of student needs

Speakers: Anna Melenikioto

Abstract: EducateMCR is a Students' Union research project aiming to raise student voices and understand their academic experiences. With the survey in its second iteration this year, we present longitudinal data on all aspects of the academic experience, including teaching and learning, assessment and feedback and service provisions, which will feed into the 2027 TEF submission. Using this data, we explore the story of a student from registration to graduation, identifying wins and hurdles. How do we build belonging through academic communities? How do we ensure teaching is inclusive and personalised to students? How do we ensure students receive the provisions they require to excel in their studies? Where do we go from here? The recommendations of the report, which were co-created with students, aim to address these questions.

Paper3 Title: Co-creation and Unlocking Potential: The Impact of creating Team-Based Learning exercises by Undergraduate Optometry groups. A Case Study

Speakers: Catherine Collin

Abstract: Team based learning is a well-established pedagogical strategy designed to foster collaboration, teamwork and reinforce peer understanding through facilitated application exercises. This approach was introduced into the new optometry programme for the 24/25 academic year. During the second semester, first year groups were given the novel task of revisiting previous lecture topics to create deliverable TBL sessions, complete with facilitation notes and debrief plans, aimed at consolidating learning for the entire cohort.

In this lightening talk I will share some surprising findings and themes from the student voice which were overwhelmingly positive. Students demonstrated deep engagement with the task, appreciated the independent teamwork and developed novel approaches to revision and study skills. They benefited significantly from idea sharing and brainstorming, which enhanced their learning experience.

The assignment also provided valuable insights for academics into students' preferred format of application exercises which will inform the future design of TBL sessions. These findings transcend disciplines and have the potential to enhance best practice and the student experience across the sector.

The upcoming steps include implementing some of these sessions for the current group, led by the student creators with staff support, and organizing them as PASS sessions for future cohorts. This approach aims to foster not only co-creation but also inter-year collaboration for a richer learning experience.

Paper4 Title: Revamping Academic Representation: How Collaboration Revitalised Student Leadership

Speakers: Krystyna Drewenska, Fatema Khartbotli

Abstract: In this lightning talk, we'll share the story of how staff members at the Students' Union, University and later our School Rep came together to gradually overhaul a School's Student Voice Meetings. Through years of collaboration, we identified key pain points, co-created solutions, and transformed the way academic representatives work with staff. From clearer roles and improved training to better communication channels, this project is a testament to the power of collaboration in driving meaningful change. Join us to discover how working together, we built a structure that benefits staff and students.

Paper5 Title: Using peer review to enhance student writing and encourage professionalism

Speakers: Elizabeth Toon

Abstract: This lightning talk will describe and assess how I and my colleagues use peer review in postgraduate teaching, and the advantages and disadvantages of doing so. As well as encouraging student cohort connection and mutual respect, the peer review component introduces professional skills and new ways of thinking about writing, rather than simply using written work as a means of assessment. We have built this into one of the first assessments used in two of our PGT programmes, and ask the students to draft a short essay, exchange the draft with an assigned small group from class, and then provide each other with feedback in an in-class meeting. Afterwards, the students have time to integrate the feedback and then turn in their revised essay for credit. We also model peer review before the process begins, and talk about why it is important to learn to share writing and give and receive feedback

from others, as this will be common and expected practice whether they continue on to an academic or professional career. Drawing on informal feedback from 5 years of doing this, I will outline the good pedagogical and practical outcomes for students and faculty, as well as some of the downsides (mostly practical) to be considered before implementing this approach.

D2.3.5

Session Title: How can digital capability be effectively embedded within the curriculum?

Speakers: Francesca Demontis, Emilie Greathead, Alice Godliman, Emma Bramwell, Digital Capability Student Reps, Caroline Bowsher and Jane Mooney

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Inclusive education

Abstract: Digital equity, defined by the United Nations as ‘equitable, meaningful, and safe access to use, lead, and design of digital technologies, services, and associated opportunities for everyone, everywhere,’ has digital capability at its core. This session will pose the challenge of how our students can be supported to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to truly leverage digital capability, not just for their studies but the digital world we live in?

You will hear how digital capabilities are being embedded within the curriculum from across the university, including: within the Faculty of Science and Engineering; Manchester Access Programme (MAP); University College for Interdisciplinary Learning and within the template and standards for Canvas, the new Central Learning Environment.

The Jisc Discovery Tool informs MAP’s approach to promoting digital equity within widening participation activities. The tool enables local Year 12 participants to self-assess and develop their digital skills in preparation for HE and beyond.

In addition to the focus on inclusive education, aligned to Goal 4 of the UN SDGs, we will raise student voices with the Digital Capability Student Reps invited to cofacilitate and represent their experiences. Outcomes will include the collation of approaches generated through discussion and the planning of next steps to redefine learning and teaching in HE.

D2.3.6

Session Title: How can students become empowered partners when evaluating the impact of teaching and learning?

Speakers: Fran Hooley and Jiya Grover

Session Type: Wicked Problem Set

Themes: Building belonging and raising student voices

Abstract: This Institute of Teaching and Learning project aims to shape the future of teaching and learning by standardizing evaluation across the University by developing a robust evaluation framework rooted in the Theory of Change. Underpinning the approach are principles of transparency, creativity and participation, with students as evaluating partners central to its ethos.

Involving students in the evaluation process occurs in various forms and points during the student journey. For example, it can include student surveys, course-level feedback, co-creation of learning materials and project delivery. However, it is unclear how much value all of this activity means for staff and students, and whether it contributes to positive change across the University. This project aims to involve both staff and students in establishing a consistent evaluation framework to ensure students are true partners when evaluating practice.

The impact of this project extends beyond the conference as it aims to contribute to sector-wide improvements. The project aims to integrate transformational evaluation into organizational processes and policies and thus have a long-term impact on teaching quality and student success.