

Enhancing Assessment Review: A model for review and revolution

Jen McBride

Sally Hickson

Nicky High

jennifer.mcbride@manchester.ac.uk

sally.l.hickson@manchester.ac.uk

nicola.high@manchester.ac.uk



@jamcb.bsky.social



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/JAMcB/>

Rationale



Could a small team, from outside the school, review assessments and provide recommendations?

*“Enhancing Assessment Review”
(EAR)*



Context

- School of Biological Sciences (SBS)
UG programmes have a very modular structure, with considerable student choice

~2,000 students

400+ assessment points

15+ Programmes

A holistic review

Adaptable – according to local priorities

- Number, size, weighting
- Timeliness of assessments and feedback
- Constructive alignment
- Variety, authenticity; also optionality
- Inclusivity
- Student voice



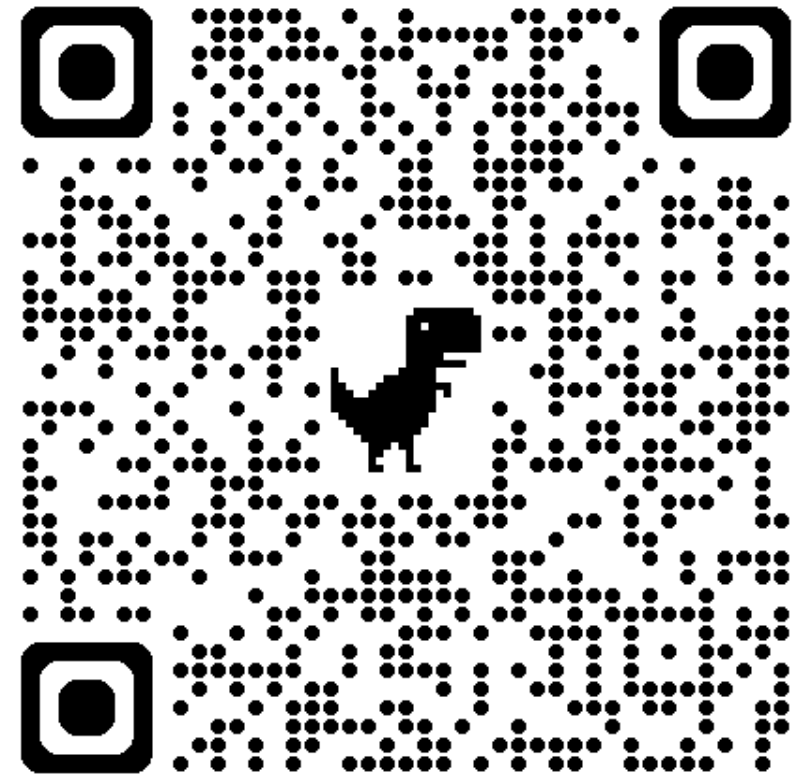
Process – Step 1 – Data Gathering

Assessments (e.g., assessment type, tasks, weighting, submission dates)

Intended learning outcomes

Student feedback (e.g. module evaluations, NSS)

Awarding gap data / assessment



Process – Step 2 – Consulting

We consulted...

Programme Directors

PS Teams

Student Reps

We recommended...



Process – Step 3 – Reviewing

- EAR team - reviewed all assessments
 - Included all data, recommendations from PDs, students' voices
 - Overview of assessments at the programme level, including timelines



Recommendations draft 1

- Presented **Recommendations Draft 1** to staff for discussion
- Student focus groups to consider key questions



Recommendations draft 2

Process – Step 4 – Support & Implementation



Recommendations were sent to unit coordinators



One-to-one appointments offered to discuss

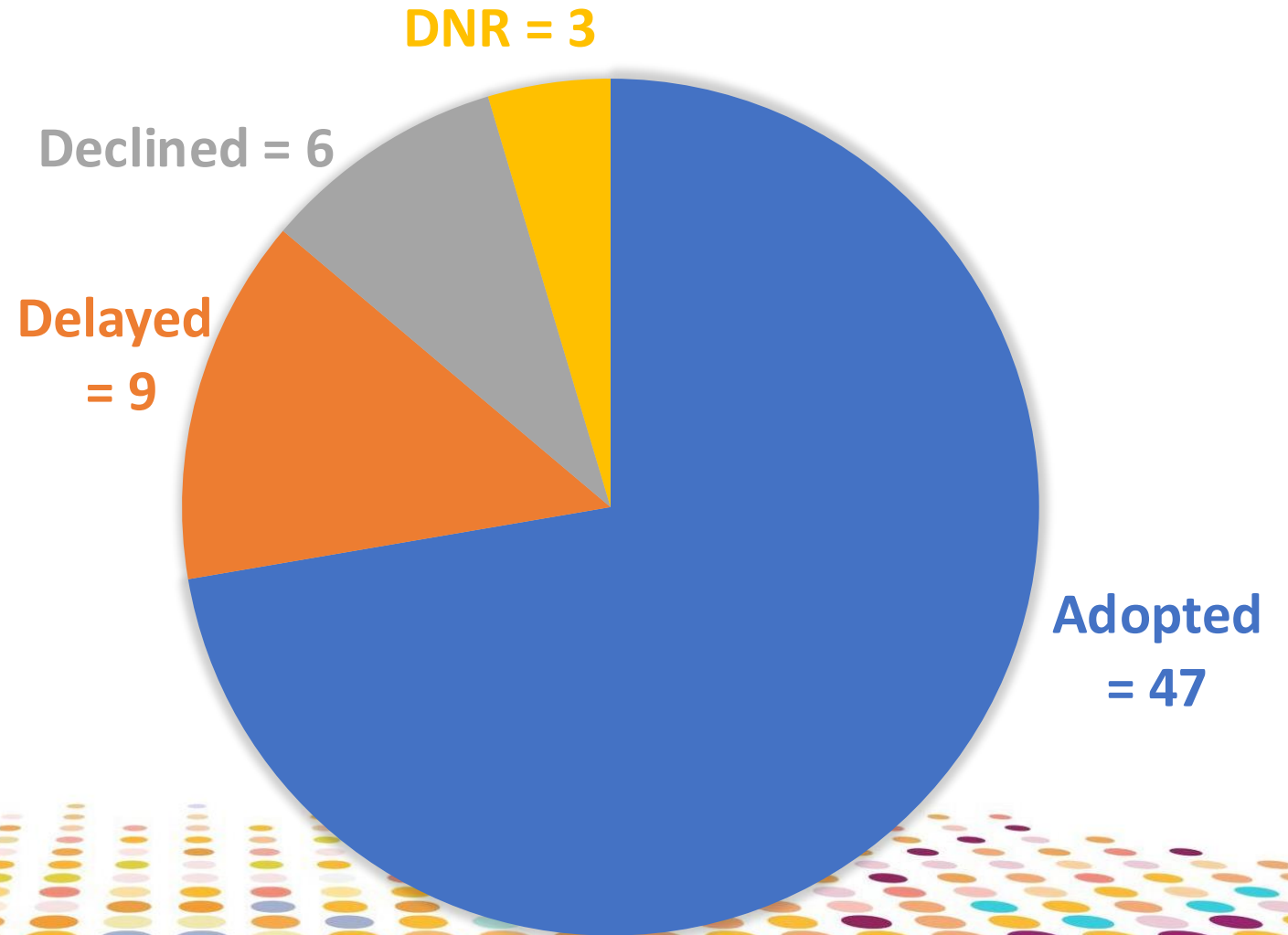


Unit specifications updated – approved through usual QA processes



Outcomes and Impact - overall

- We recommended changes for 65/69 modules reviewed



Outcomes and Impact – reduced assessment

Adjusted weighting

Reduced length

Reduced scope

Removed 101 summative assessment points

Recommended alternatives

Reduced word count by an estimated 2 million+ words, and reduced marking time for staff by ~506 hours (~68 days)

Outcomes and Impact – continued...



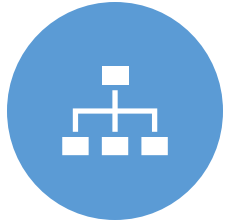
Increased variety of assessment; some optionality



Better constructive alignment and reduced duplication



Increased use of GenAI in assessment by design



Identified and shared creative & authentic assessments as examples of good practice



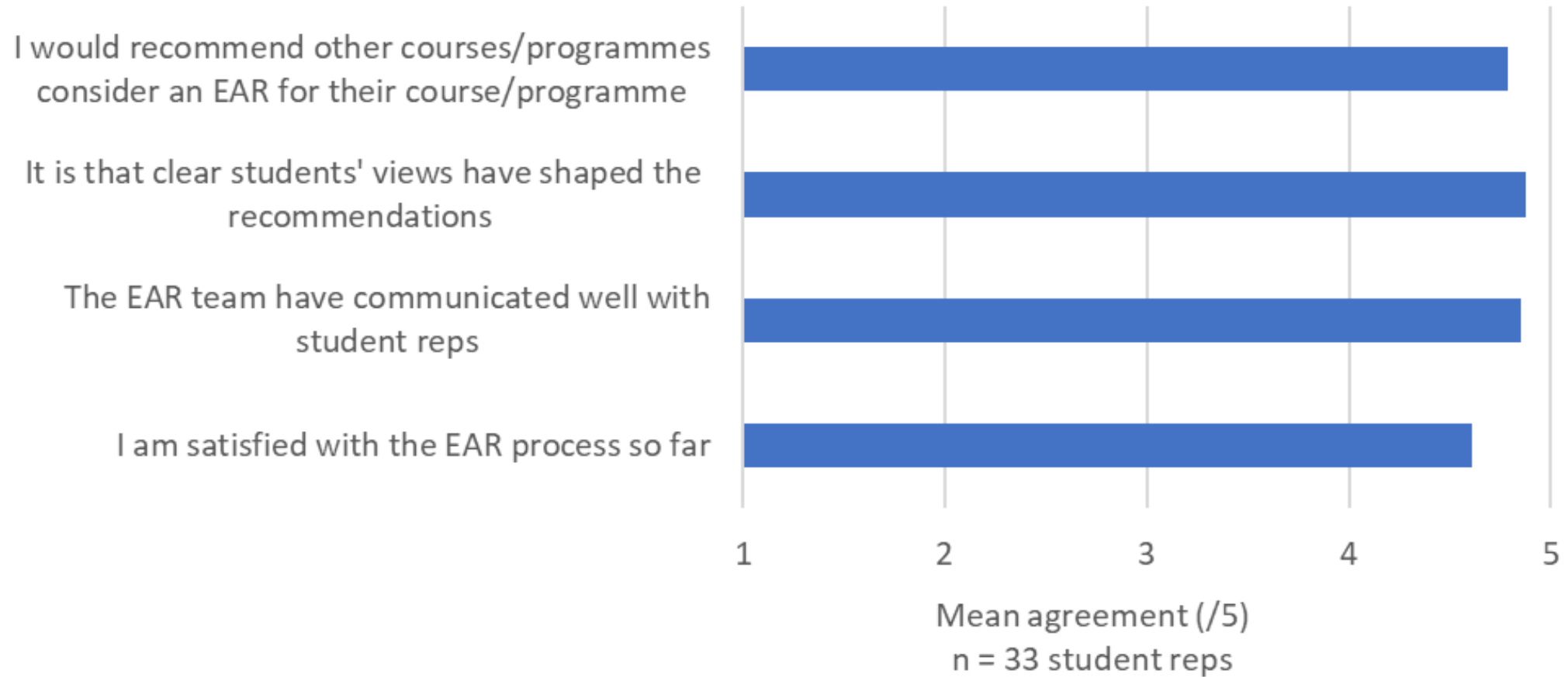
Improved balance of summative with formative



Reduced assessment bunching



Student Voice & Partnership



Student Voice

"The assessment style is extremely well-designed, ensuring both the breadth and depth of students' knowledge is assessed without unnecessary overlap in content. The museum assignment was due at a great time in the semester for time management and I actually really enjoyed completing it."

[unit survey student comment]

"I think the review has been fantastic. A clear indication that the university is keen to listen to us and improve our [...] experience! Thank you!"

[student rep]

"It's been OUTSTANDING. I'm so pleased with it. I'm a Y2 rep and responses from the Uni are generally "no" [...] but with EAR the answer was "yes", and it was wholesale change across the board. And quick enough that I will benefit from it."

[student rep]



Staff voice

“Having an ‘external’ team manage the process, data analysis and formulate the recommendations was crucial, as was the one-to-one support offered to unit coordinators making changes to their unit assessments[...]

School Deputy Director of Education

“I’m in favour of all suggestions [...] an assessment review is long overdue and will benefit both students & staff”

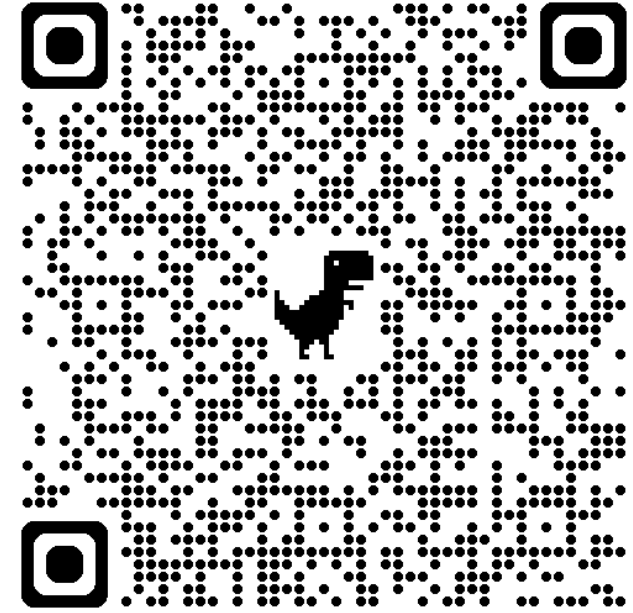
Zoology PD

“Great. The project seems like a no-brainer for adoption to me! [...] The programme team have been working in silos for too long [...] Overwhelming positivity via the evaluation forms and separate emails to me this morning from the BNurs team for having a programme-wide review of the assessments. Do let me know how we can move this forwards”

BNurs staff and PD



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