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QAA SCOTLAND

16th Annual Academic Development Symposium | Wednesday 30th April 2025

Future-Ready Education: Enhancing Student Employability and Institutional Reputation

POSTERS

INTRODUCTION

This poster e-booklet showcases pedagogical research and teaching practice from across the University. The posters align with the Symposium's theme **Future-Ready Education: Enhancing Student Employability and Institutional Reputation**, and illustrate ways in which we are addressing the theme. There will be two awards this year.

The Digital Accessibility Award will be selected by a judging panel consisting of last year's winner of the award and eLearning Support Assistants working within the Centre for Academic Development, who have received extensive training in digital accessibility to deliver the Course Accessibility Service.

The Popular Vote Award will be voted for by the Symposium delegates on the day. While judging the posters for the Popular Vote Award, you are encouraged to use the following criteria:

- Creativity, visual appeal and flair of the poster
- Legibility and clarity of the information presented
- Balance of text and diagrammatic information
- Succinctness of the information presented
- Innovative teaching and learning or research content

VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

Voting is open only to Symposium delegates (whether attending in person, online, or a mix of both). Using the guidelines above, please cast your **ONE** vote by scanning the QR code below or by following this link: **https://forms.office.com/e/rC5L1Lzggv**

Voting **opens at 8:30** and **closes at 14:10 on WEDNESDAY 30 APRIL**. Professor Jo-Anne Murray, Vice-Principal (Education) and Miles Rothoerl, VP for Education, Students' Union will present the Digital Accessibility Award and the Popular Vote Award at 15:40-16:00.

YOUR VOTE WILL BE ANONYMOUS.

POSTERS

POSTER 01

Involvement from the Start: including patient and public involvement in postgraduate teaching

Dr Emma Berry, Dr Magdalena Rzewuska Diaz, Peter Flockhart, Mike Melvin and Dr Zoe Skea
School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition

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Why patient and public involvement (PPI) ?

Involving patients, public and other groups impacted by research into the research design is increasingly expected from research funders. Many jobs also require consulting or engaging with communities and client groups. This requires key transferable skills in active listening and communicating with people from a range of backgrounds.

Where's the gap?

- Within our own department (Aberdeen Centre for Evaluation), we expect all studies to have PPI included – examples of this may include PPI Partner co-applicants, involvement in the data collection or data analysis.
- Despite an increasing expectation of undertaking PPI in research, to our knowledge there had been little inclusion of PPI on postgraduate teaching curriculum.
- This seems like a gap in teaching key research and transferable skills which embeds the importance of involvement from the start.

Idea: We piloted the inclusion of PPI information, and the involvement of PPI partners in our fully **online** autumn 2024 Qualitative Health Research module (PU5039).

Approach

- Incorporated PPI information across the 4 Units of teaching using a range of formats.
- Live session co-led with Mike and Peter on interview question development
- Optional activity with feedback from the teaching team, Mike and Peter
- End of Unit self-assessment quiz with PPI questions to allow student's to gauge their understanding

PPI Partner experience

It was a fantastic experience being allowed to work in harmony with the postgraduate students from an early onset of their career - Peter

Reflections and learning on the process

The course has 2 assessments, neither prompt for PPI in submissions. In assessment 1, 1/20 submissions added PPI. In assessment 2, 2/19 students included PPI elements.

PPI payment important and processes needs to be considered ahead

In the self-assessment end of Unit tests, there were 3 questions on PPI. The average score on PPI questions was 84% (Unit 1 = 100%, Unit 2= 65%, Unit 3= 87%)

Key message:
We think including PPI in teaching is an important opportunity for students to learn key skills for research and other careers.

SCAN ME FOR MORE INFO

Contact email: emma.berry1@abdn.ac.uk

POSTER 02

INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

From Surviving To Thriving

How can neurodivergent students be supported to thrive within Higher Education, specifically in a 9-month Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme, half of which is spent on placement?

The Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) Primary teaching team support students to find and implement strategies for navigating their experiences on and off campus as they become teachers.

References and notes scan here

Authentic Assessment

Assessment in the PGDE P programme is focused on developing key skills for a career in teaching. Authentic assessment is crucial for ensuring that every part of this short and intensive degree programme is beneficial to the students' learning. Our intention is that our assessments offer sustainable and transferable learning, relevant to a career in education (Boud & Soler, 2016).

Collaborative Curriculum Building

Involving students in collaborative curriculum building around neurodivergence has made the curriculum more relevant and current, and has increased engagement (Wells, 2022). For example, during the lecture input on ADHD all students are invited to contribute their own knowledge or experience, providing students with a sense of belonging as part of the learning community (Fernández-Batanero, Montenegro-Rueda et al., 2022).

Resilience on and off Campus

Creating resilient individuals is an aim of both the university's MySkills Framework and the GTCS SPR (GTCS, 2021). Tutors support students to navigate challenging periods (Morina, 2016) both on campus and on placement, creating a "resilient and enabled [teaching] profession" (GTCS, 2021. p. 3).

Student A

Displaying intrinsic motivation (Schultz, Young et al., 2022) this student enquired into their own neurodivergence whilst on school experience. Their Professional Enquiry, focused on understanding how they could better organise themselves in the classroom to be able to provide the best learning experience for the children. The personalisation and choice element of our assessment meant that this student's enquiry had direct relevance to their future career (Bain, 2023).

Student B

This student spoke openly about their own experiences, both as a child and as an adult learner. They prompted a critique of lecture materials in the moment, and afterwards. Subsequent input continually seeks to surface the diverse lived experiences of students to directly challenge the hegemony of education and associated pedagogical assumptions.

Student C

On placement, this student faced planning and organisation, challenges which impacted teaching and professional working relationships (Nolan, Gleeson et al., 2014). Key to supporting the student was the tutor's knowledge of neurodivergence. Using an individualised approach where staff listen to students, and students are meaningful participants in their learning (Barrera Ciurana and Moliner García, 2023) a way forward was found. With tangible resilience generated; the student successfully graduated, and the staff member further dedicated to developing a more neurodivergent educational landscape in Scotland.

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Assertions

- We must support equal access for each student on an individual basis – one size does not fit all.
- Inclusive practice recognises and celebrates cognitive, emotional, and social diversity to the benefit of all learners.
- Any student's perceived barriers to learning are real for that individual; it is our professional duty to mitigate those perceived challenges to deliver career aspirations and academic achievement.

Authors: Alyson Young (alyson.young@abdn.ac.uk) & Dr Cathy Francis (catherine.francis1@abdn.ac.uk), School of Education

POSTER 03

Breaking the silence: Exploring help-seeking behaviours among professionals in training

Dr Louisa Lawrie, Dr Anita Laidlaw, Dr Kathrine Gibson Smith, Ellie Ferguson, Professor Amudha Poobalan

BACKGROUND

- **Medical students** often avoid seeking help for mental and physical health challenges (Sheldon et al., 2024).
- **Higher vulnerability** to anxiety, depression, burnout, and suicidal ideation compared to the general population (Aljuwaiser et al., 2023).
- **Key barriers**: fear of stigma, discrimination, and being seen as "unfit to practice" (Shahaf-Oren, Madan & Henderson, 2021).
- **Limited research** on whether similar patterns exist in other healthcare and professional disciplines.

STUDY AIM

- The research aims to identify how professional identity, academic experiences, and disciplinary cultures shape attitudes towards help-seeking.

METHODS & ANALYSIS

- Using **semi-structured interviews** with approximately **20** purposively sampled participants across study stages at the University of Aberdeen (**see Table 1**).
- Analysis will be guided by the **Theoretical Domains Framework (TDF; Atkins et al., 2017– see Figure 1).**

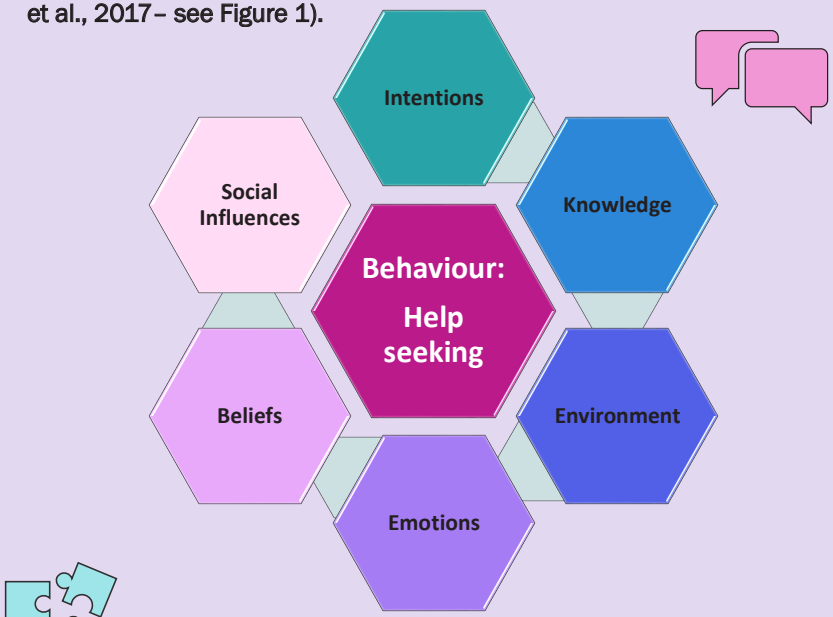

Figure 1: Key domains within the TDF that could impact help-seeking: Social Influences, Intentions, Knowledge, Beliefs, Emotions and Environment.

POTENTIAL IMPACT

- **By examining help-seeking behaviours in students from diverse fields, this study seeks to uncover whether these challenges are discipline-specific or influenced by broader cultural and professional factors.**
- **The TDF will be used to develop key strategies to promote help-seeking (Figure 2).**

Table 1: Target programmes
Education
Health Psychology
Medicine
Law
Dentistry
Physician Associate

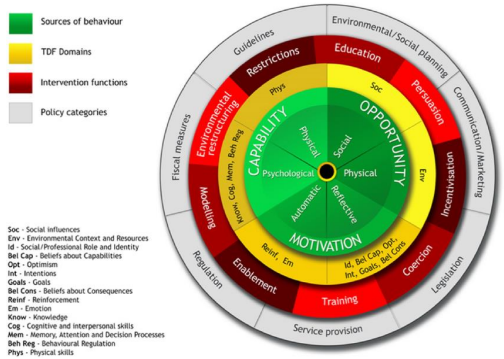

Figure 2: The Capability, Opportunity & Motivation-Behaviour (COM-B) Framework for intervention development.

References

Aljuwaiser, S., Brazzelli, M., Arain, I., & Poobalan, A. (2023). Common mental health problems in medical students and junior doctors–an overview of systematic reviews. *Journal of Mental Health*, 1-37.

Atkins, L., Francis, J., Islam, R., O'Connor, D., Patey, A., Ivers, N., ... & Michie, S. (2017). A guide to using the Theoretical Domains Framework of behaviour change to investigate implementation problems. *Implementation science*, *12*, 1-18.

Shahaf-Oren, B., Madan, I., & Henderson, C. (2021). "A lot of medical students, their biggest fear is failing at being seen to be a functional human": disclosure and help-seeking decisions by medical students with health problems. *BMC medical education*, *21*, 1-10.

Sheldon, E., Ezaydi, N., Desoysa, L., Young, J., Simmonds-Buckley, M., Hind, P. D., & Burton, P. C. (2024). Barriers to help-seeking, accessing and providing mental health support for medical students: a mixed methods study using the candidacy framework. *BMC Health Services Research*, *24*(1), 738.

Acknowledgments

This project is being funded by the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Programme (LTEP) provided by the Centre of Academic Development at the University of Aberdeen.

Dr Louisa Lawrie: louisa.lawrie1@abdn.ac.uk

Scan the QR code to access Louisa's staff page!

POSTER 04

Integrating English for Academic Purposes: Supporting Students' Learning Journeys

Sarah Dobbie
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Language Centre, School of LLMVC

What do students need to be able to do to succeed on the course?

What challenges are students having in achieving this?

What aspects of EAP are most important to overcoming these challenges?

MSc Medical Physics and MSc Medical Imaging: Programme and Student Needs

Initially, Language Centre and Medical Physics and Imaging colleagues met to discuss student and programme needs.

- Largely international cohorts from diverse nationalities, with some home students and CERF C2 users of English
- Throughout their studies, students need to use sources, synthesise information, communicate complex ideas from sources in their own words, and to use citations
- Students can struggle with losing focus on meaning, over relying on summary, copy/pasting information, and not providing citations
- 20% of the final programme assessment is a poster presentation, but students didn't have opportunity for formative practice

Integrating EAP into Core Biomedical Physics Skills BP5025

To support these needs, EAP has been integrated into a 30-credit core skills module on the MSc programmes. Content focuses on producing a summative 1000-word report (25%), which is then transformed into a formative poster. Bespoke teaching materials were created to set examples and tasks within the context of medical imaging and physics. Activities use communicative approaches to build confidence in using English in new situations.

Week	EAP Focus
One	Analysing questions
Two	Reading skills
Three	Using sources
Four	Cohesion
Five	Critical thinking
Summative EAP assessment	
Eight	Audience and purpose
Nine	Presentation skills
Ten	Poster conference

Focus on summative assessment (25%): 1000-word report

Focus on support for future assessment needs: poster conference

Feedback from Students:

1. Developing skills and capabilities for learning

'Every aspect of the course was important for me, as it provided the core knowledge needed to excel in the program'

'The presentation allowed us to share ideas with people form different backgrounds while working as a team. It also helped us develop public speaking skills targeted at various audiences'

Suggestion: *'The poster presentation not worth credit meant the many classmates did not care about this.'* - clearer rationale needed for formative assessment

2. Supporting transitions and navigating pathways

'I was unaware of the referencing styles used in the UK. The course gave me a clear idea on the referencing styles and basic literacy skills'

'Writing report – it was new for me and had fun while learning it too'

'The analysis of two presentation and their styles was useful to understand how to present'

Suggestion: *'Increasing the number of mini written assignments and evaluate them directly in person with the staff'* – desire for more formative work and feedback

POSTER 05

Building Skills for Inclusive Healthcare Women's Health in a Global Setting

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Dr Alyaa Mostafa, Clinical lecturer
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Advancing Women's Health Education

This postgraduate course addresses gaps in women's health education, supporting UN SDGs. Aligned with the university's 2040 Strategy, it promotes global outreach, inclusivity, and accessibility. By integrating an interdisciplinary curriculum and decolonization in healthcare, it influences students, faculty, and paves the way for a Women's Health Master's program.

Evaluating Success and Impact

1. Launched in 2020, with enrolment growing from 22 to 126 students by 2021, across 16+ countries.
2. Integrated into five Master's programs, CPD courses, and On-demand learning.
3. Hybrid format introduced in 2023, with 25 in-person and 85 online students.
4. Adapted for 30 Qatari MPH students in 2025.
5. External examiners praised global relevance

Innovative Learning

- Developed with input from clinicians & researchers.
- Utilizes videos, discussion boards, and quizzes.
- Adapted for students in Qatar campus.

Enhancing Global Awareness & Student Empowerment

Increased understanding of global women's health issues and critical thinking

Supported academic growth and career development, fostering student engagement

Encouraged lively discussions, with external praise for its interactive design.

Global Health Challenges

1. Understanding global healthcare inequalities.
2. Addressing gender-based health disparities.
3. Exploring reproductive and maternal health challenges.
4. Examining the impact of sociocultural and economic factors.
5. Enhancing knowledge of LGBTQ+ health concerns.

POSTER 06

ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION: EMPOWERING DIVERSE LEARNER JOURNEYS FOR EMPLOYABILITY AND INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE

ABSTRACT

- Entrepreneurship is recognized as an exceptional and vital skill in the modern world.
- Supports diverse learner journeys.
- Aligns with QAA Scotland's Enhancement 2025 theme.
- Equips students with adaptable skills for lifelong learning.
- Provides personalized support to encourage innovation and problem-solving.
- Enhances employability by preparing students for real-world challenges.

CONCLUSION

- Universities play a crucial role in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset through future-ready education
- Enriches institutional reputation by embedding entrepreneurship in education.

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4 x QAA Scotland Enhancement 2025 Catagories

01 SUPPORTING TRANSITIONS AND NAVIGATING PATHWAYS

- Internships,
- Start-up incubators.
- Pitch Competitions & Investor Panels
- Pitch Competitions & Investor Panels

02 STRENGTHENING ENGAGEMENT, COMMUNITY, AND BELONGING

- Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration
- Student-Led Entrepreneurial Communities
- University-Community Partnerships
- Alumni & Industry Mentorship Networks
- Inclusive Incubators & Accelerators

03 DEVELOPING SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES FOR LEARNING

- Creativity & Innovation
- Critical Thinking & Decision-Making
- Problem-Solving & Adaptability
- Collaboration & Leadership
- Communication & Persuasion

04 DELIVERING TAILORED, TARGETED, AND PERSONALIZED SUPPORT

- One-on-One Founder Matching Programs
- Stage-Based Mentorship Tracks
- Industry-Specific Mentoring
- Alumni Mentor Networks
- Cross-Cultural Mentorship

POSTER 07

Reflections on designing and delivering educational escape rooms

Susan Caie[1], Catriona J. Cunningham[2], Silvia Mazzotta[3], Derek A. Scott[2], Gordon Stewart[4], Lorna Stewart[4]

[1] Language Centre, University of Aberdeen; [2] School of Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition, University of Aberdeen

[3] School of Pharmacy, Applied Sciences and Public Health, Robert Gordon University; [4] School of Education, University of Aberdeen

Background

Since their introduction in Japan in 2007, escape rooms have become hugely popular around the world. As well as being fun and engaging, albeit stressful at times, escape rooms give players the opportunity to develop useful skills such as problem solving, teamwork and critical thinking. It is therefore not surprising that educators have recognised their potential. We are a multidisciplinary group of educators from two institutions with a shared interest in educational escape rooms. We meet regularly to discuss contextualised practice and encourage each other to learn from our diverse experiences.

Reflections

Using a series of guiding questions, we each independently reflected on our experiences before and after delivering our educational escape rooms (Figure 1). The questions included:

- "Who are your learners?"
- "What are you hoping to achieve with your escape rooms?"
- "Is there anything you thought worked particularly well?"

Following our reflections, we identified common themes.

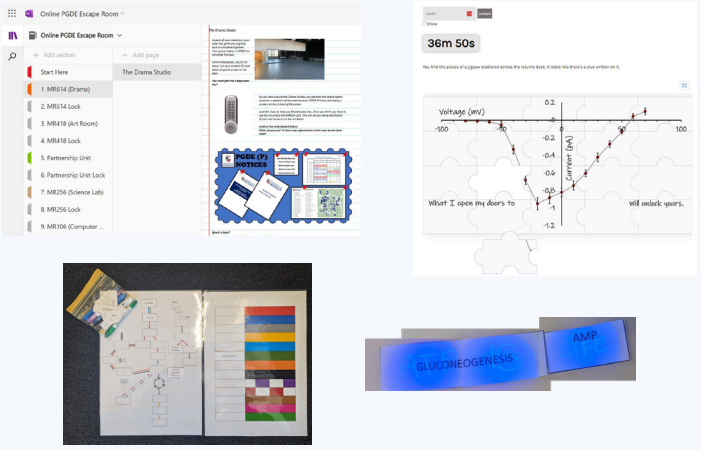

Figure 1: Examples of our escape rooms. We mainly ran digital escape rooms using easy to use applications such as OneNote.

Themes

Our learners are diverse. We teach both UG and PGT students across a range of programmes, with classes ranging from 15-100. Despite these differences, we found several common themes in our reflections. We were interested in implementing escape rooms into our teaching as they are engaging, help build communities and provide students with an opportunity to develop skills such as problem solving (Figure 2).

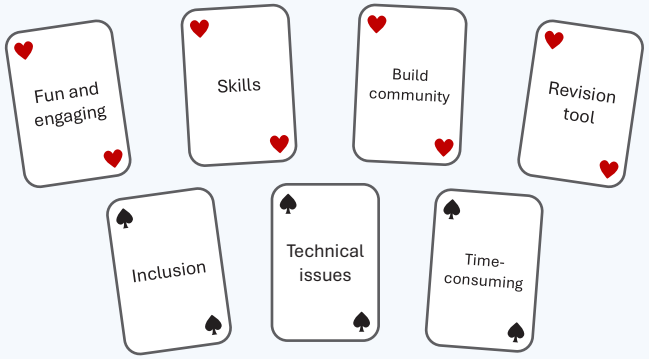

Figure 2: Summary of our themes.

One concern we shared was over technical issues such as students not being able to access the link. In our reflections before running our sessions, we also raised the issues of inclusivity and students perceiving the escape rooms as too playful or not appropriate for the higher education setting. While we agreed escape rooms are a useful revision tool, we feel that they would not be suitable as a summative assessment. Several of us used surveys to gather anonymous feedback. However, this approach to evaluation is limited as it principally assesses enjoyment rather than effectiveness.

Top tips

- Escape rooms do not have to be elaborate to be engaging – OneNote works well
- Developing the puzzles is the most time-consuming but fun part
- Have a backup, such as a paper version, in case of technical issues
- Include a debrief

POSTER 08

What is the place for shy and introverted people* in higher education? - a beginner's guide

based on our review

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Laura Cadot

❶ what does this mean?
- terminology is important

❷ because maybe this is new to us

*and staff!

❸ ASSUMPTIONS -students:
- can be assertive
- can do group work, debate
- can do presentations
- will ask for help
- respond to praise

but the 'default' model of teaching, might be unfair or wrong!

SHY
= feeling; situational

INTROVERTS can be SHY

INTROVERTED
= preference

avoid social interactions, which lowers:
- embarrassment
- anxiety
- judgment
- humiliation
- engagement

...but increases isolation

choose solitude, increasing:
- 'quiet'
- autonomy
- energy recharge
- self-sufficiency
- internalised

❹ so, let's create teaching environments that work for all

❺ 'personalities':
- understand them
- support them
- value them!

= be creative

*and staff!

❻ Introverted and shy students (~30—50%[1] !) should not be ignored

[1] Condon & Ruth-Sahd (2013) Responding to introverted and shy students: Best practice guidelines for educators and advisors

POSTER 09

Exploring the Relationship Between Professional Identity and Technology in Higher Education Staff and Students: A Scoping Review

Emily Cleland[1], Kirsty Kiezebrink[2] and Patricia Norwood[3], School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition

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1. Introduction

Professional identity—shaped by shared values, beliefs, and skills within a profession—has been linked to increased self-confidence, greater resilience to stress, career success, positive attitude, increased job satisfaction and sense of achievement (Fitzgerald, 2020). In higher education, the development and evolution of professional identity of both staff and students can be influenced by emerging technologies, including Generative AI, and may empower or undermine staff depending on how these tools reshape roles, responsibilities, and perceptions of value.

2. Aims

- To investigate the intersection of professional identity, its development, and the rapidly evolving role of digital educational technology in higher education.
- To identify key research gaps to inform the direction of future research.

3. Methods

Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, EBSCO British Educational Index, International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS) (ProQuest), OECD ilibrary, CINAHL and PsycINFO (Ovid) databases were searched using professional identity, higher education and digital technology related terms for literature published from 2000-present. Articles that related to online platforms solely for delivery, without integrating online technology into the programme design, were excluded.

4. Preliminary Results

1185 references imported for screening → 142 duplicates removed

1043 articles title/abstract screened → 848 articles irrelevant; 20 articles full text not available (requested)

175 full text articles assessed for eligibility → 127 articles excluded

48 articles included

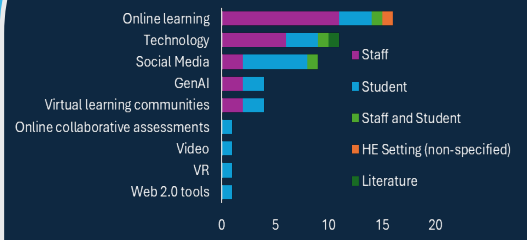
All texts were screened by 2 reviewers (EC and either KK or PN) at both title/abstract and full text stages of screening.

Number of included articles by year of publication

Included Articles by ISCED-F Discipline (n): Multidisciplinary (18), Education (12), Health & Welfare (6), Arts & Humanities (5), Natural Sciences, Mathematics & Statistics (2), Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction (2), not specified (3).

5. Results (continued)

Type of technology explored (by population)

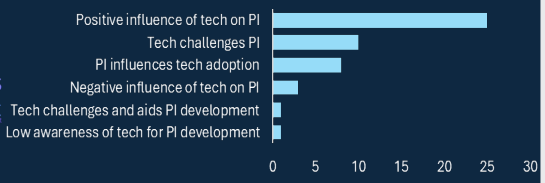


Direction of influence explored

- 35 articles explored the influence of technology on professional identity.
- 12 articles explored the influence of professional identity on technology.
- One study explored a bi-directional relationship between professional identity and technology.

How did the literature define professional identity?

Reported outcomes



- Fewer than half (44%) of included articles provided a clear definition of professional identity.
- Where defined, it was commonly described as dynamic, evolving over time, and shaped by the shared attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviours of a professional community.

6. Preliminary Conclusions and Research Gaps

- While the term 'professional identity' was widely used across the literature, its definition, and the reciprocal relationship between professional identity and technology, was often ambiguous or insufficiently explored.
- Exploration of the intersections of technology and professional identity with other identities (e.g. race, gender) and underrepresented groups, such as individuals with neurodivergence and those with varied learning preferences, were largely absent from the literature.
- Limited research has examined how professional identity shapes technology use, particularly how perceived threats to identity affect technology adoption. Research should explore how educators negotiate their identity in the context of technology adoption and the implications for professional development and institutional change.

Generative AI tools were used to enhance tone, grammar, and clarity, and to support idea generation during the development of this poster. All content was critically reviewed and edited by the authors.

POSTER 10

GO **BEYOND BOUNDARIES**

Assistive Technology (AT) service design and procurement evaluation 2024 25

Steven Sangster AT Team Lead (Acting) / Digital and Information Services / s.sangster@abdn.ac.uk

Introducing the problem

- AT team support students with a disability (SWD). AT Team Lead manages design, purchase and rollout AT Software across campus and online.
- Problem identified for students who require AT support but choose not to disclose a disability.
- AT team plan to deliver support to diverse groups of learners (HEA, 2023).
- Crawley and Marsh (2022) measured uptake of AT by mainstream students in an English institution yet current lack of empirical evidence from qualitative studies in this field.

Purpose statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to describe the needs of a diverse group of students who choose not to or are unable to disclose a disability and targeting AT support to these groups.

Questions

Q 1 What are the popular accessibility apps students available for students for academic engagement?

Q 2 How do students describe their experience of using available institutional AT software for academic engagement?

Methodology

6 semi structured interviews conducted. This group of diverse learners chose to engage with AT
Secondary data gathered from Jisc Insights Survey 2022 23

Number of participants	Gender	Method of course delivery	Programme	Disability declared
6	Female (4)	Part time (4)	PGT (3)	No (4)
	Male (2)	Full time (2)	UG (2) PGR (1)	Yes (2)

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Results

- Motivations for participants were beyond disability which implies a gap exists in supporting diverse learners
- Figure 1 word cloud reveal popular apps
- Learners desire training and support in the use of institutional AT
- Design of AT should consider the voices of students, made available on campus and personal devices
- AT necessary for academic tasks particularly writing (Figure 2)

Figure 1. Word cloud most popular responses in largest fonts

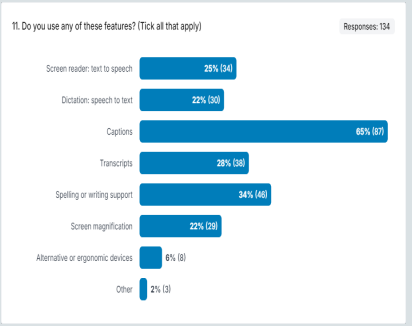


Figure 2. JISC digital insights survey Q11 displaying popular accessibility features

Conclusions

- AT staff require training to keep up to date with latest developments in accessibility apps
- Findings indicate AT staff well placed to deliver training to diverse learners
- Term AT may be synonymous with disability even in the mainstream context
- AT design and procurement should consider flexibility in how students engage with institutional AT, ability to install apps on their own devices, ensure fitness for purpose to support a variety of academic tasks

References and acknowledgements

1. CRAWLEY, S., NIND, R. and MARSH, N., (2022). https://shura.shu.ac.uk/31113/
2. JISC DATA ANALYTICS, (2023). Student digital experience insights survey 2022/23.
3. *Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education 2023.* (2023).
4. Jisc provides survey instruments for qualitative data and supports in its use.
5. Murat Oztok (Supervisor), the School of Education and Directorate of Information Services at UOA for their support
6. This slide checked for accessibility with Jaws Screen Reader software .

EST. → 1495

POSTER 11

NEUROINCLUSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A LITERATURE REVIEW

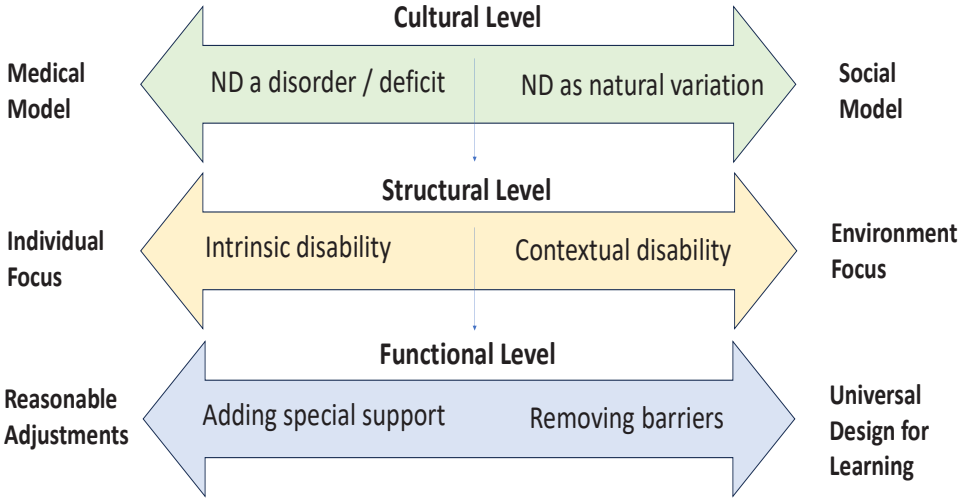
Barbora Novotna, Lucy Drysdale, Madge Jackson

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Aim: Scoping literature review of neuroinclusion approaches, practice, and experiences in Higher Education.

Method
- Keyword search (Google Scholar)
- 26 articles included (7 interview studies, 7 surveys, 12 other. Mainly UK and US; mainly student perspective)

Conceptual and theoretical perspectives of neurodiversity (ND) can drive neuroinclusion approaches. We synthesise these as follows:



Medical model: Neurodivergence a disorder, focus on deficits and impairments within the individual.

Individual approach: Disability is intrinsic to the neurodivergent individual.'Fix' their deficits.

Reasonable adjustments (RAs): Individual accommodations based on needs / diagnostic label.

Social model: Neurodiversity as natural variation in brain and behaviour. Focus also on strengths.

Environment approach: Disabilities created by an environment bulit by and for neurotypical people.

Universal design for learning (UDL): Curriculum design benefits widest range of people.

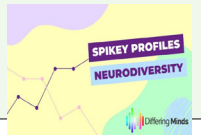
Evidence of positive impact?

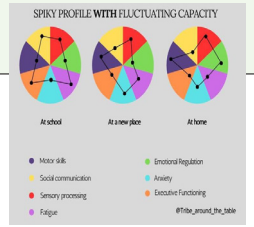
Reasonable adjustments

✓
- Can (in theory) be tailored to individual needs ('spiky' profiles).
- Students perceive as safety net.
- Feeling of being valued and cared for.

✗
- Too generic when based on broad diagnostic label.
- May perpetuate Medical model: 'othering'; onus on individual; high self-advocacy effort.
- Context-specific fluctuations.
- Inconsistent implementation; lack of knowledge among staff.

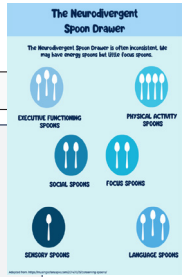
Beck et al (2021)





Universal Design for Learning

- Argued to lack theoretical underpinning and practical operationalization (Boysen, 2021).
- Student experience of learning process improved.
- But still to be determined whether effects transfer to improved academic attainment and reduced attrition. Hamilton & Petty (2023)



Other key considerations

- **Stigma:**
  - Can discourage disclosure and support seeking.
  - Is exacerbated by medical model culture and associated deficit-based language.
- **Mental Wellbeing:**
  - Poorer among neurodivergent students; burnout.
  - Resources strain and drain.
  - Higher drop out rates in HE among neurodivergent students.

Recommendations

CULTURE
Reduce stigma, challenge misconceptions, increase understanding.

STRUCTURE
Consider how individuals interact with and are affected by the learning environments. Context matters.

FUNCTION
Weave neuroinclusion into every step. Regularly monitor effectiveness of neuroinclusion practice/policy.

Barbora Novotna, Psychology undergraduate student EDI intern
Dr Madge Jackson, School of Psychology
Lucy Drysdale, Information Assistant - Sir Duncan Rice Library
Contact Dr Madge Jackson for any enquiries, m.jackson@abdn.ac.uk

POSTER 12

Using Homer's Iliad to teach medical sciences

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Introduction

- The Iliad, an ancient Greek epic poem attributed to Homer, offers a unique and engaging approach to teaching physiology.
- The text contains surprisingly accurate and detailed physiological descriptions, particularly in its depictions of battle wounds and injuries.
- We have used the text as a platform to help students understand how the same information can be interpreted differently by different scientists, how to systematically review and code text, how the environment may affect physiology, and how different cultures may have their own texts that provide insight into how fundamental medical sciences developed globally.

Example Project – Anatomy & physiology depicted in battle injuries in the Iliad

- Student reads the book and indexes all the injuries described in the text using a reading grid.
- Student evaluates descriptions when they record medical knowledge and classifies them accordingly.
- Scientific anomalies reported and student assesses how the epic genre distorts data.
- Student discusses the text's accuracy describing physiology and anatomy in the Heroic Period.

- For example:
  - Battlefield wounds were selected through a reading of The Iliad.
  - The injury needs: to happen during the Trojan War and have a description longer than a line. Minor injuries were excluded.
  - The wound is coded in a table with the following:

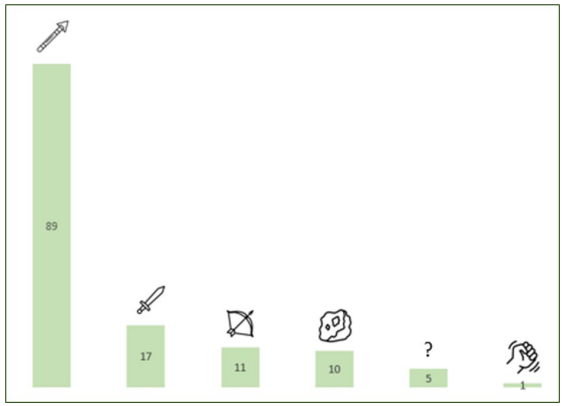
Who is affected by the wound?

Where on the body was the wound?

What caused the wound?

Is it a fatal injury?

« *The bronze spear hit Echepolus' forehead and pierced right through the bone. Darkness engulfed his eyes and he crashed, like a tower, in the thick of the action.* » *(Homer, The Iliad 4.460-461)*



Frequency of injuries caused by different methods

These are examples of student work generated whilst coding battle injuries mentioned in the Iliad.
They were attempting to determine how accurate the anatomy and physiology was in the text.

Why is this useful?

- Using historic texts can be a way of engaging medical science students with their discipline – these Honours projects are always popular when offered.
- Our evidence suggests that students say it 'forces' them to get better at reading 'properly'.
- Students can use skills they would employ to interpret and analyse scientific publications e.g. coding data and systematic reviewing to understand the text better.
- Students can analyse data from these texts and use their data to answer questions.
- We have students currently studying the Odyssey and the Aeneid for their Honours projects – we gave them the option to study any text that might be interesting to them or relevant to their own culture.
- Current students are exploring depictions of women's health, infectious disease and pharmacology in their projects.

POSTER 13

Developing industrial physiology activities to support authentic assessment and employability

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Introduction

- The Physiological Society have indicated that physiology students must have more experience of industrial careers and related skills, especially those outside of the pharmaceutical/healthcare sectors.
- We report our experience and student feedback in running practical experiences with an industrial focus.

Examples of practical activities:

Student Feedback

- Students report that such practicals are useful for those who do not plan to follow a healthcare career but also that it helps highlight the many career options they have.
- Some of these practicals allowed us to pivot to online learning during the pandemic e.g. when we couldn't run respiratory practicals, we developed the soapmaking practical to teach skin physiology, why it was relevant to COVID-19, and that employers were looking for science graduates in the household/consumer goods industry.
- Students report that assessments are more representative of tasks/skills/competencies that they might be called upon to demonstrate during future employment.

Why This Matters

- The Physiological Society's recent report indicated that, whilst physiology graduates are primarily employed in healthcare, a huge number are also employed in other occupations.
- Industrial partners for physiology projects have tended to be related to pharma and med tech, but there is growing interest in recruiting graduates for agri-food, biosecurity, climate change and big data roles.
- We need to adapt our curricula to meet the needs of these employers.

Conclusions

- Our learners have diverse needs in relation to training for future careers.
- Whilst many want to work in healthcare, pharma, lab or NHS careers, not all do – we need to cater for these students in relation to practical skills training.
- Students can act as partners in the design, development and delivery of such practical activities.
- By providing a wider range of practical experiences with explicit signposting to relevance to careers, we can help students prepare for future employment better and increase the economic benefit they and our academic discipline bring to society.

POSTER 14

Developing Virtual Reality Based Dissection Exercises to Aid Students in Human Cadaveric Dissection

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Introduction

- Dissection using cadavers forms a cornerstone of current anatomy teaching
- The use of cadavers has declined, increasing the student to cadaver ratio, which is thought to negatively impact teaching quality [1]
- Obstacles to cadaveric teaching have led to a shift towards virtual methods, which is being increasingly incorporated as an adjunct to traditional methods
- Anatomage Inc[2] has developed the Anatomage table, depicting multiple life-sized digital cadavers using data from human cadavers.
- Anatomage has shown potential to improve students understanding of anatomical relationships, providing a more engaging way to visualise body structures[3,4].
- **Whilst current literature explores the benefits of virtual dissection as a tool to aid teaching and improve memory and understanding of anatomical structures, the benefits of this as an activity prior to real dissection is yet to be studied**

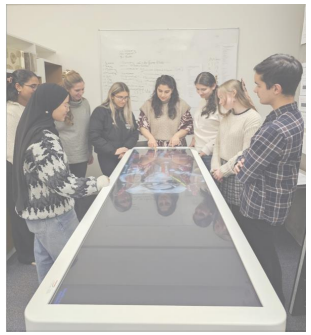

Figure 1. The Anatomage table in action. *Photo courtesy of the University of Aberdeen Anatomy department.*

Aims and Hypothesis

- **Aim:** To explore the role of the Anatomage table as a virtual dissection tool to enhance cadaveric dissection.
- **Hypothesis:** By using Anatomage, students will be able to gain confidence and familiarity with the multiple stages of dissection and be more familiar with the spatial relations of anatomical structures, prior to completing dissection on a cadaver.

Methodology

24 Biomedical Science students completing a dissection course were selected for this study. Students were tasked with dissecting one of four joints - ankle, knee, elbow or wrist

12 short exercises, or 'presets', were created using the table, based on important anatomical and dissection considerations for each joint

A **survey** was created based on the validated questionnaire[5], which consisted of a mixture of **Likert 5-point scale and free text responses.**

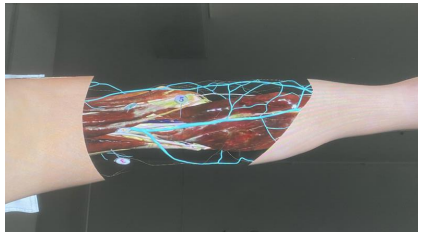

Figure 3. Anatomage preset of the knee joint . *Photo courtesy of the University of Aberdeen Anatomy department.*

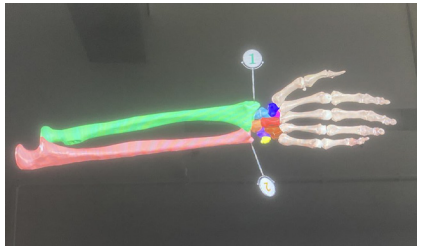

Figure 3. Anatomage preset of the wrist joint . *Photo courtesy of the University of Aberdeen Anatomy department.*

Results

Survey:
Out of 24 students who used the Anatomage table, **11 (46%) students filled out our survey.** None of them had any prior experience with dissection or using the Anatomage table.

- **91%** agreed that **the Anatomage table improved their understanding of the spatial organisation of structures** encountered during real cadaveric dissection
- **46%** agreed that Anatomage **improved their confidence when undertaking the practical dissection** process on cadavers
- **82%** felt **more confident using the virtual dissection** table compared to real dissection as they were able to undo mistakes
- **91%** believed Anatomage is a **worthwhile tool in preparation for cadaveric dissection**, with 72% voting strongly agree

"The interactive nature and 3D imaging of the Anatomage table allowed me to better understand the spatial organisations of the structures, helping to better mentally visualise the area viewed."

"I thought it was incredibly helpful both in remembering the anatomy, and visualizing the actual 3D properties of the structures. A very helpful tool that I believe should be integrated into the course".

Anecdotal observations of students using Anatomage:

- The initial verbal feedback was largely positive, with most students appearing excited and enthusiastic to learn using this resource
- Engagement was mixed and often depended on group size and dynamics
- Most groups managed to navigate through the table without tutor guidance - instructions were thought to be clear
- Anatomage encouraged students to reflect on their own dissections. We observed students share the structures from the table they had found in their own dissections, what they were finding challenging to find etc.

Discussion

Study limitations:

- The sample size was limited to just 24 students, with less than half (11) filling in our survey
- Group sizes influenced students time and experience with the table, with one group consisting of 7 students.
- The area of dissection explored was limited to 4 joints: the knee, ankle, elbow and wrist
- There were no objective measures used to support the benefit the Anatomage table has for cadaveric disection
- Staff co-ordination and time-tabling issues meant it was difficult to integrate this as a session in itself, within a full-time course, which led to time limitations for table use.

Wider implications:
Benefits of Anatomage use prior to cadaveric dissection:

- Decreased student reliance on staff during dissection
- Reduced risk of unintentional and possibly irreversible damage to cadaveric structures
- This ultimately might produce higher quality dissections on real cadavers.

Suggestions for future study:

Trial Anatomage in further dissection courses with a greater variety of students and anatomical locations

Evaluate the influence of the Anatomage table on the quality of cadaveric dissection

Evaluate the role of Anatomage in clinical settings such as surgical procedure planning, or for trainees to practice surgical procedures.

Conclusion

✓ The Anatomage table is an effective adjunct to traditional cadaveric dissection, if used prior to the process ot dissection.
✓The Anatomage table improves students' familiarity and understanding of the spatial organisation of anatomical regions.
✓The Anatomage table helps improve student confidence prior to undertaking real cadaveric dissection.

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POSTER 15

Transforming the Experience of Students (and Staff) Through Assessment at Aberdeen

How does TESTA work?

1) CAD Student Assistants gather course data on Intended Learning Outcomes, assessment & feedback across a degree programme

2) Staff meet with CAD for a Programmatic Review of assessment & feedback practices (2 hours)

3) Students complete a questionnaire on their experiences of assessment & feedback across a programme

4) CAD & Programme Lead collaborate on the final report and recommendations

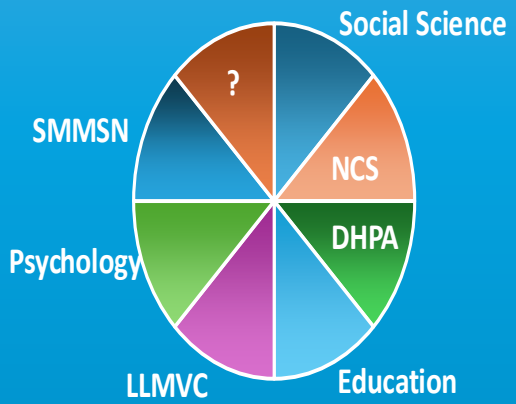
What are the benefits for your Programme?

- Facilitating (CAD) discussion dedicated to reviewing Intended Learning Outcomes, Assessment & Feedback practices
- Reducing staff /student workload by e.g., streamlining assessments, designing inclusive & accessible assessments & feedback practices
- Assisting with preparations for e.g., re-accreditation, curriculum review & Internal Teaching Review

Dr Chloe Alexander & Dr Mary Pryor (Centre for Academic Development)

For more information on participating in TESTA, please contact cad@abdn.ac.uk

Schools involved in TESTA so far...



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Career Readiness: Using data to inform and deliver tailored employability enhancing support for students throughout their learner journey

Tracey Innes, Regina Jaschke, Ellen Minshull and Kate Robertson

Data on students' career confidence, support needs, previous engagement and plans to engage in employability enhancing activities is collected annually during online registration. We use these insights to develop careers provision across the University to meet the diverse needs of our student body and signpost to relevant resources and opportunities through targeted regular communications. This is increasing student engagement and should boost employability.

Career readiness insights 2024-25 (2023-24)

- Levels of career confidence vary widely between Schools and years of study, however, **overall career confidence is lower in 4th-/5th-year than in 1st-year UG students** with 39% reporting high career confidence compared to 47%.
- The most selected employability activity for the next 12 months is **part-time work** with **58.3%** (57.8%) rising to **76.1% for first-year** UG students.
- 49.9% of all UG and 36.0% of all PGT students said they would like to undertake a placement or internship.
- **11.9%** (15.5%) of **International students** said they were interested in **running their own business**, compared to **5.8%** (6.0%) of **Home/RUK students.**

Share your reflections by completing this MS Form or email us:
careers@abdn.ac.uk

Career readiness communications in numbers *(24-25 so far)*

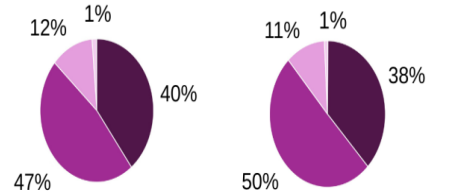
- **26** emails sent
- **98,306** total opens
- average open rate of **58%**

What students want to engage in during the next 12 months

12,393 responses (24-25)

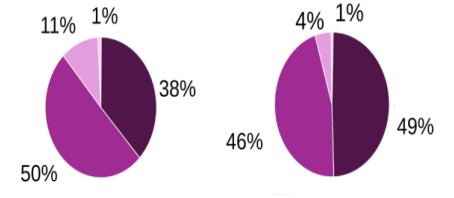
Find out more and access dashboards on our website.

Career confidence statements



I can describe and share my skills, experiences and achievements effectively

I am able to identify suitable opportunities for work experience, graduate jobs and/or further study.



I can plan the development of my skills, experiences and career next steps.

I understand how my skills and values relate to my professional development and career growth.

HIGH CONFIDENCE
MEDIUM CONFIDENCE
LOW CONFIDENCE
NO CONFIDENCE

University of Aberdeen | Careers and Employability Service

POSTER 17

MyAberdeen: Piloting an Institutional Course Template

Megan Buchanan, Centre for Academic Development, megan.buchanan@abdn.ac.uk

1. Overview of Pilot

The institutional course template was piloted in AY 2024-25 in all DHPA, SBS and Law courses. It was also used in new LLMVC courses, Level 1 Psychology courses, all Counselling skills courses and some courses in Education.

The template was designed using good practice across Schools and reflecting innovations in the course design tools in MyAberdeen, and provides following benefits:

- Consistent course structure across disciplines.
- Accessible structure and presentation of course content.
- Ensure students only receive notifications from assessments they are undertaking.
- Staff have more time to spend on learning materials as there is a pre-built structure for standard information available across all courses.

Please use the QR to view the template:

2. Outcomes of Pilot

Towards the end of Term 1, the eLearning Team sent out a feedback survey to staff and students. Student survey had 200 respondents from DHPA, Law, SBS, some LLMVC, Education and Psychology courses. Students provided the following feedback:

- 92% agreed or strongly agreed that the layout of the Course Guide was clear.
- 89% agreed or strongly agreed the content was useful.
- 92% agreed or strongly agreed that the layout was clear of Course Assessment folder was clear.

Staff survey, which had 18 respondents, provided the following feedback:

- 61% agreed or strongly agreed default information provided in Course Essentials was sufficient.
- 61% agreed or strongly agreed default information provided in Academic Integrity and Use of GenAI tools was sufficient.
- 50% agreed or strongly agreed default information provided in Assessment information and grading criteria was sufficient.

3. Student interaction with institutional template

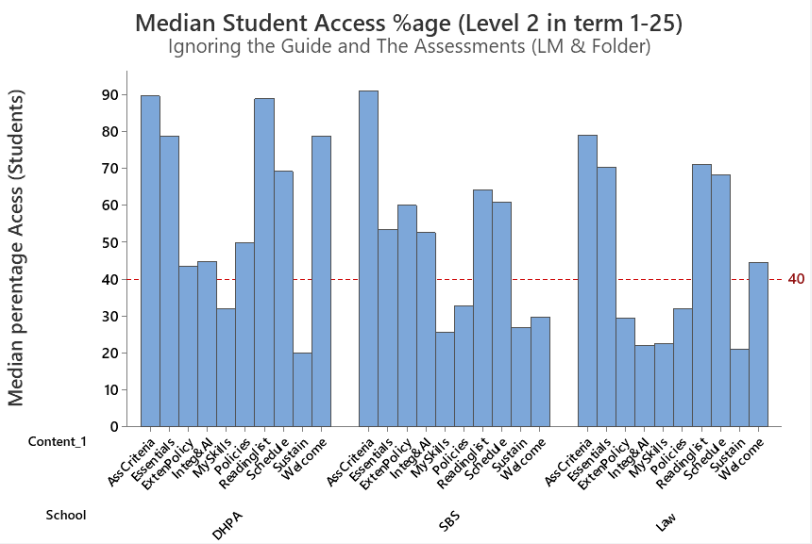


Figure 1: Median student access levels of template items and Welcome videos from Term 1 level 2 courses in DHPA, SBS and Law.

4. What did students say?

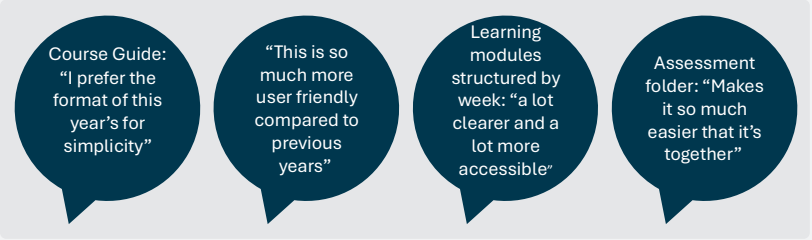


Figure 2: Student feedback from focus groups in February 2025.

5. What's next?

The use of an institutional course template has been approved for use in all courses in AY 2025-26. The template for AY 2025-26 will be updated and improved, based on feedback and comments received during the pilot, before it is finalised in May 2025. The template will be reviewed and updated in consultation with School Directors of Education and the Education Deans on an annual basis.

POSTER 18

Developing skills and capabilities for learning in the PGDE Primary and Secondary programmes through a systematic review of assessment and feedback practices

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PGDE Programmes

The PGDE Primary and Secondary programmes offer graduate students the opportunity to become a registered teacher in Scotland in just 36 weeks.

Both programmes comprise 18 weeks of university-led learning and 18 weeks of placement, and are accredited by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS).

Academic assessments allow students to explore their understanding of national policy, legislation, theory and research in education, in relation to placement context and professional practice.

What is TESTA?

Transforming the Experience of Students through Assessment (TESTA) is a method of programmatic review of assessment and feedback practices. The programmes undertook this process in 2023-24, working in collaboration with CAD.

It follows five key steps:

1. **Course data gathering by TESTA student assistants:** Gathering assessment and feedback practices data from student-facing course areas in MyAberdeen across a degree programme.
2. **Staff programmatic review (using data from stage 1):** Conducting an in-person teaching team review of assessment and feedback practices across a degree programme.
3. **Student Assessment Questionnaire & focus groups:** Collecting data on student experiences of assessment and feedback practices across a degree programme.
4. **Collaborative CAD & School staff report:** Analysing and evaluating staff and student responses to reflect on assessment and feedback practices, leading to key recommendations.
5. **Action plan:** Meeting as a degree programme team to agree any assessment and feedback enhancements, with a view to eventual impact evaluation.

Authentic Assessment

Good Practice

Assessment activities are deeply connected to school placement experiences and professional development; they:

- Provide a continuum of learning between university and school placement experience.
- Allow students to demonstrate elements of GTCS Standard for Provisional Registration.
- Correspond to university academic protocol, standards and student expectations
- Are sustainably designed to promote critically reflective, enquiring, relational practitioners.
- Are designed to support early career teacher professional enquiry and act as a springboard to future academic research.

Next Steps

- TESTA recommendation: "Staff to continue to maintain close connections between student placement experience and the associated assessments. Maintaining these links ensures the authenticity of assessment." (PGDE Primary report).
- Share our learning of the 'worth' of authentic assessment with the wider university.

Student Experience

Good Practice

- Assessment lecture inputs, working in collaboration with the Library team.
- Assessment guidance documentation with clear timelines.
- Inclusion arrangements and assessment design; for example, dyslexia friendly information and varied modes of assessment.
- Extensions granted in line with university policy, with consideration of students' individual circumstances.
- Focus in workshops on academic writing skills and critical engagement with literature.
- Signposting to wider university supports (e.g. Student Learning Service).
- Optional literacy support input (PGDE S).
- Dedicated assessment coordinator to answer queries consistently and fairly.
- Early intervention strategies to support academic writing – e.g. Academic Writing Evaluation.

Next Steps

- Continue to engage with student feedback on assessment experiences.
- TESTA recommendation: "Staff to continue embedding the Academic Writing Evaluation as an early engagement and diagnostic exercise, which facilitates appropriate signposting of support" (PGDE Secondary report).
- TESTA recommendation: "Staff to continue to review timing of assessments in relation to placements, seeking to achieve a balance for staff and student workloads" (PGDE Primary report).

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Feedback

Good Practice

- Feed Forward – the assessments are planned and undertaken in such a way that feedback from one will inform the next.
- Asset-focused feedback using language of the Common Grading Scale
- Meetings and/or email conversation (as requested) for those seeking further feedback, especially for failed assessments – students report these to be high quality.
- Consistent approaches to feedback quality and structure as markers work together, plus moderation as an ongoing process.
- Close relationships between students and tutors provides opportunities to discuss feedback and progress with a trusted person.
- Dialogic Feedback – Secondary team are trialling recorded feedback as an option for students with inclusion adjustments. Primary team would like to pilot in the moment dialogic feedback in final presentations.

Next Steps

- TESTA recommendation: "Recognising how students value dialogic feedback in addition to written feedback, staff to continue to offer variation in feedback format where appropriate, especially for students with inclusion adjustments." (PGDE Primary report)
- Continue to work on ensuring consistency across markers.
- Continue to collect and reflect on student feedback regarding feedback.

Standardisation and Moderation

Good Practice

- Explaining standardisation and moderation processes to students
- Standardisation: example scripts discussed at markers' meetings prior to marking, to establish shared expectations.
- Previous student, tutor and EE feedback considered at standardisation meetings. Slides and/or recordings from meetings disseminated afterwards.
- Marking teams: markers work in pairs or small groups, and second mark for each other as part of moderation, to ensure parity of grading and quality of feedback.
- Assessment lead samples scripts and provides further layer of moderation.
- Standardisation and moderation processes shared with and reviewed by EEs.

Next Steps

- TESTA recommendation: "Staff to continue good practice in standardisation of marking and moderation with ongoing support for new tutors" (PGDE Secondary report).
- Continual review against University marking and moderation procedures.
- Sharing of good practice through University QA/QE processes e.g. QAC, CAD, Academic Symposium.

This poster outlines the identified good practice in both programmes across four key themes, including next steps for developing skills and capabilities for learning.

Creating a Positive Learning Journey for Neurodivergent Students

Karen Mitchell (Student Learning Service)
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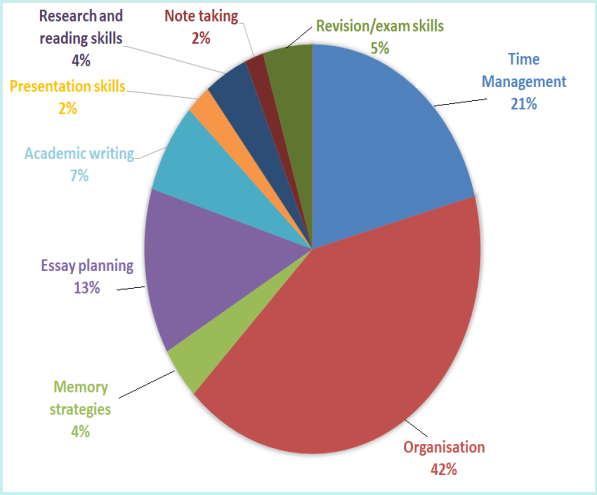
Who refers the students?

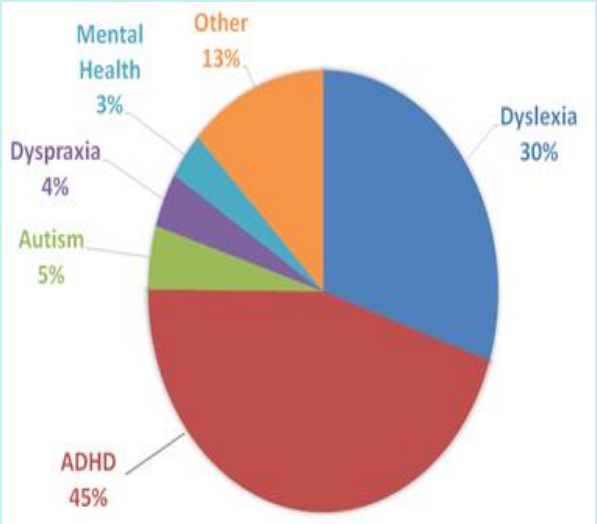
- Student Advice and Support
- Other professional services, e.g. Counselling
- Academic Staff
- Self-referral through the SLS website

Attending an appointment?

- Discuss current strengths and strategies
- Reflect on previous work
- Investigate individual challenges
- Explore suitable study strategies, tools and assistive technology available
- Consider additional support available at the University, if appropriate

Why Do Students Visit SLS?





How can we help?

- 1:1 meetings, online and in-person
- Targeted course and group sessions
- Cross referrals to Assistive Technology, Student Support, Counselling, Library, Specialist Mentors
- Online materials in ACHIEVE(+)

Commonly recommended strategies?

- Time management strategies
- Organisation and task management systems, e.g. prioritisation matrix, online app, e.g. Trello
- Screenreader
- Dictation software
- Mindmapping software
- Spelling and Grammar checkers, e.g. Grammarly, Global Autocorrect

Adapting teaching strategies for Gen Z to boost engagement and employability

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SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

Gen Z
Who are they?

- Born between 1997 and 2012
- First generation who did not see the world without internet

Literature review on learning experience for Gen Z

Generation Z students find direct involvement in their educational activities highly motivating. ... flexibility and ability to obtain Generation Z's interest is required of university lecturers,
Černíková & Šnýdrová, 2020

To attract the interest of Generation Z is to interconnect more techniques and approaches. Gone are the days when it was enough to prepare a presentation and present the content of a lecture.
Murad, Surameery & Shakor, 2023

Lecturers are thus faced with the challenge of how to enrich their teaching so that their audience listens and accepts them as experts.
Szymkowiak et al., 2021

Teaching Gen Z

Gen Z characteristics ⇨ Gen Z expectations

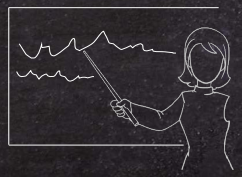
Gen Z characteristics	Gen Z expectations
Fragmented attention	Small portions
Internet and social media is a part of daily lives	Visually attractive
	Interesting and stimulating tasks

What Gen Z brings to the teaching

- Challenges and creativity
- Problems

Always remember that entertainment is not the same as learning. Strive for a balance between engaging, creative content and intellectually stimulating material.

Gone are the days when it was enough to prepare a presentation and present the content of a lecture.



Ways to present the information

Change during the lecture the ways information presented technically:
- *PowerPoint slides; handouts; visualiser*

The graphic design:
- *visually attractive slides with pictures and animations.*

Use several ways to present (the same) information:
- *Text; chart; flow-chart; table*

Interactivity

- *Quizzes*
- *Tests*
- *Educational activities*
- *Discussions*

Interesting, stimulating tasks (assignments)

Meaningful jobs
- *clear explanation of the aims*
- *connection with real-life problem*

POSTER 21

Assessing the performance of Gateway2Medicine (G2M) students by ethnicity

P. Marini, H. Yilmaz, S. Miller
Institute of Education in Healthcare and Medical Sciences

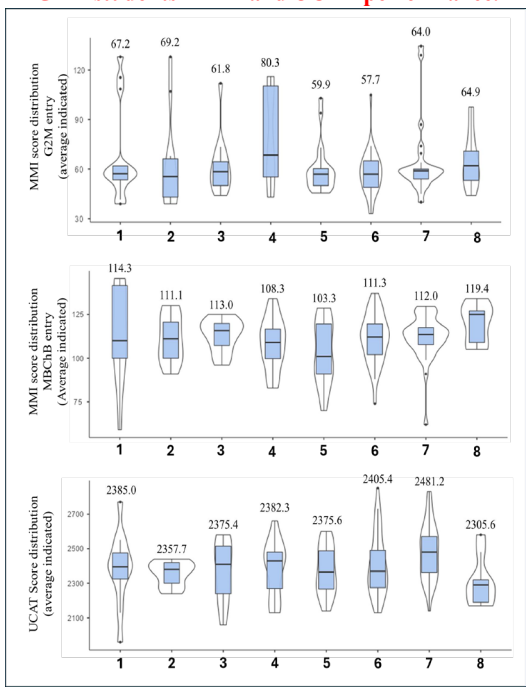
We have assessed the performance of Gateway 2 Medicine (G2M) students during their studies in the programme and their progression to the MBChB degree. Data have been split by ethnic groups to explore the existence of any disparities between groups and whether tailored support interventions may be needed during either the G2M programme or their MBChB studies.

Ethnic distribution of G2M Students (2017 – 2025)

Ethnicity	Arab	Asian Other (11) Chinese (3)	Asian Asian British – Indian	Asian Asian British - Pakistani	Black Black British - African	White (39) White - Other (11)	White British (30) White Scottish (17)	Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi (6) Mixed - White/Asian (1), White/Black African (3)
N	22	14	15	21	26	50	47	10
%	10.7	6.8	7.3	10.2	12.7	24.4	22.9	4.9
Pass rate (%)	78	100	94	91	96	100	94	100
Fail rate (%)	22	-	6	9	4	-	6	-

The most represented ethnic group is white/White British, followed by Arabs and Asian/Asian British Pakistan. The Arab group shows the lowest progression rate among all ethnic groups attending the programme.

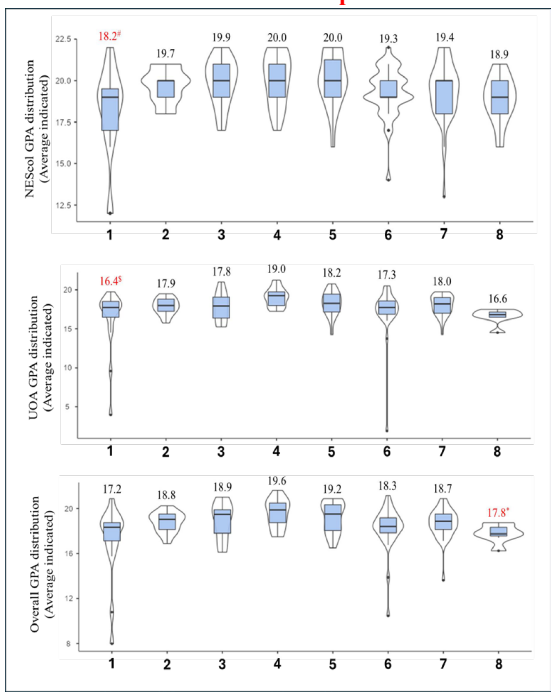
G2M students' MMI and UCAT performance.



1. Arab
2. Asian Other / Chinese
3. Asian / Asian British – Indian
4. Asian / Asian British - Pakistani
5. Black/Black British - African
6. White, White - Other
7. White British, White Scottish
8. Asian British - Bangladeshi
   Mixed - White/Asian White/Black African

No significant difference in G2M students' performance at MMI and UCAT was observed based on ethnicity.
The Arab group has shown the lowest, significant academic performance (NEScol and UoA). Interestingly, the Asian British-Bangladeshi group, shows a significant lower overall GPA performance but not the lowest. To note, although the Arab group shows the lowest GPA overall, the statistic is not significant due to sample size and scattered results.

G2M students' academic performance.



*p<0.01 vs Asian/Asian British - Pakistani. Nonparametric Games-Howell Post-Hoc test
#p<0.05 vs Asian/Asian British – Pakistani/Black/Black British –African. ANOVA Tukey –Kramer post hoc test
$p<0.05 vs Asian/Asian British – Pakistani. ANOVA Tukey-Kramer post hoc test

Conclusions

The students attending the G2M are from widening access backgrounds and represent a very heterogenous ethnic population. This is the first study where the existence of any disparities within ethnic groups has been evaluated.

We found that Arab ethnicity, which represents 10.7 % of the student's population, is the less performing group, with the lowest pass rate and academic performance.

On the contrary, the Asian/Asian British-Pakistani and Black/Black British – African are the better performing groups.

The factors that may affect the ability of students of Arab ethnicity to perform at the same level as other ethnic groups are multiple.

Further investigations are required to identify whether intersectionality, socio-economical background, gaps in secondary education have an impact on performance and therefore to implement support and to introduce tailored interventions.

1495 UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN Corresponding author: p.marini@abdn.ac.uk

POSTER 22

The G2M programme at the University of Aberdeen: evaluating co-curriculum activities and support provided to students.

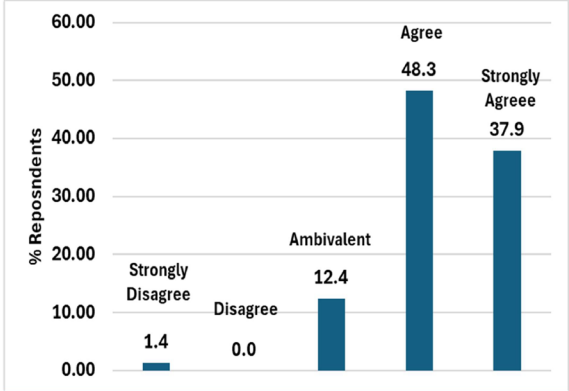
P. Marini, S. Miller, H. Yilmaz, R. Patey, C. Lumsden, A. Jack

Institute of Education in Healthcare and Medical Sciences

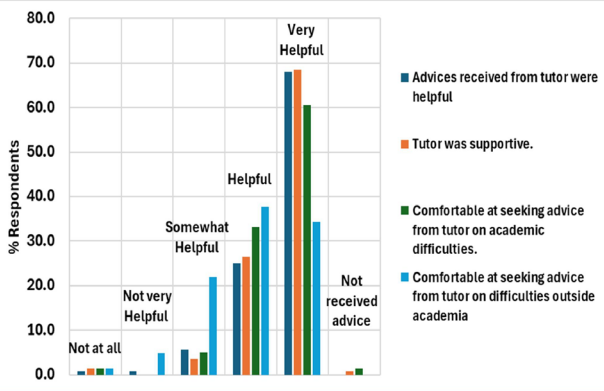
The Gateway to Medicine (G2M) programme at the University of Aberdeen was established in 2017. It offers a unique and supportive pathway for aspiring medical students from widening access backgrounds in Scotland. Each year, at the end of semester one, G2M students are surveyed to receive their feedback on co-curricula activities and support provided. In this study we have analysed and evaluated the results to measure students' satisfaction and to identify specific intervention where required.

Support provided to students

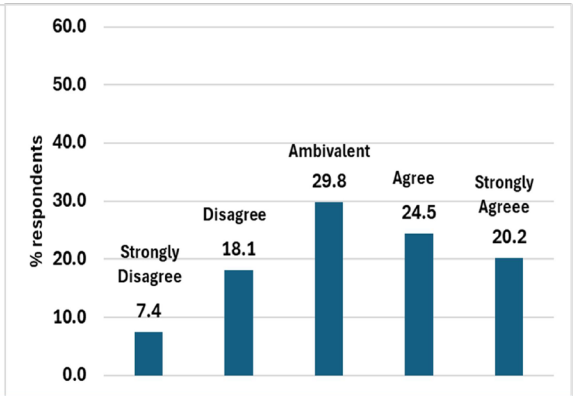
The programme created a collegiate/supportive environment



Me and the G2M Tutor

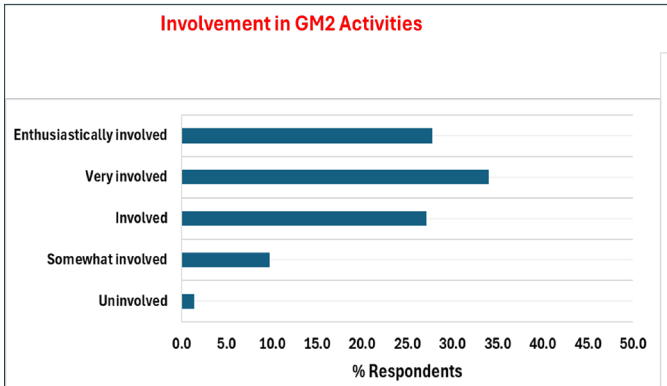


The G2M Buddy was supportive?

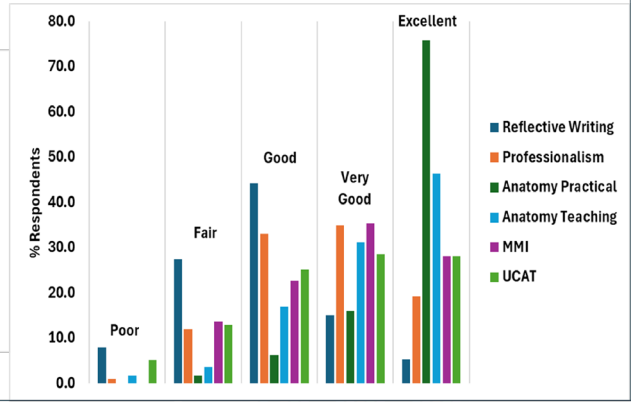


Feedback on co-curricula activities

Involvement in GM2 Activities



Rating to GM2 Programme Workshops



MMI: multiple mini-interviews. UCAT: University Clinical Aptitude Test.

G2M students : 205
Respondents to survey: 148 (72.2%)

- **87.2%** of students agreed the programme creates a very supportive environment.
- **88.4 %** of student fond the tutor helpful/very helpful.
- **45.7%** of students found the G2M buddy scheme supportive (adjustments are required).

The co-curricula workshops offered on essential skills and knowledge required to progress to the MBChB degree are positively received (**60.7%** of students found them Very good/Excellent), with **61.8%** of students enthusiastically/very involved in these activities.

Corresponding author: p.marini@abdn.ac.uk

MyAberdeen: Open and Accessible Learning to All

Introduction

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) reported that in the academic year 2022-23, 441,600 students had a health condition or specific learning difference that could impact their learning journey (Jack 2024). Different provisions can be put in place to support learners but at the core, learning content needs to be accessible by design. This poster will explain some key accessibility concepts with links to resources and further accessibility considerations.

PDF Files

PDFs were originally intended to preserve the layout all content within a document, ensuring the file appears the same on every device but their use can also introduce barriers to accessibility. When creating PDF files, it is important that headings are tagged so screen readers read out the information correctly. This can be time consuming, so it can be more efficient for staff to simply to share the Word/PowerPoint document with students. PDFs with scans of text need to be run through Optical Character Recognition software to become accessible. A more efficient option for staff and user-friendly option for students would be to link to an eBook from the reading list.

Captioning

All videos produced at the University of Aberdeen have automated captions by default for every person accessing them. Having captions on all University videos is incredibly important so that so anyone who cannot hear the video, may still access the content. Central support for captioning in high priority courses may be available via the eLearning team.

PowerPoint Files

Presentations should be uploaded as a .pptx file instead of a PDF file. This allows students flexibility to tailor the file to best suit their needs. It is good practice to ensure information is not conveyed solely through colour, headings and slide layouts are used, and slides do not have too much content. Staff can check the accessibility of their presentations using the built-in Microsoft Accessibility Checker. This tool highlights accessibility issues and will inform staff on how to correct these step-by-step.

Heading Styles

Heading styles are an essential way to improve the readability of any document you create, whether it's for staff or students. Without heading styles, a person using a screen reader would have to read the whole document to get to the part they needed – even if it was at the bottom of the document. Using heading styles, can also improve navigation of a long document for everyone via the Outline panel. They also make formatting and preparing a complex document much more efficient for the author.

Automated and Manual Checks

To assist staff in making their content as accessible as possible, the University provides Anthology Ally on MyAberdeen. This automated tool will flag up inaccessible content in your course area, list what issues are present, and provides tips on how these can be fixed. Most issues are easy to fix, such as applying a heading style. The eLearning Team offer the Course Accessibility Service for courses on MyAberdeen which provides additional manual checks. In addition, the University provides a wealth of guides and videos on Toolkit to help staff improve accessibility. To find out more, please email eLearning@abdn.ac.uk

References

- Jack, P. (2024) *Fifth of UK students report disability, true total likely higher*, *Times Higher Education (THE)*. Available at:timeshighereducation.com (Accessed: 19 March 2025).
- Morton, R. (2016) *Colour contrast - why does it matter?*, *Accessibility in government*. Available at:accessibility.blog.gov.uk (Accessed: 19 March 2025).

For more information on Digital Accessibility

Julie McCutcheon, Kirsten Koss & Rhian Wood
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POSTER 24

Reflections on the use of short notes as a revision aid for in-person assessments

Jenny Gregory, Michael Scholz, Alison Jenkinson.
IEHMS, University of Aberdeen

Background and Aims

- Returning to in-person assessments has presented challenges for students. Anxiety and a lack of effective revision techniques are key amongst those reported.
- Studies have shown "cheat-sheets" can be effective for both, so we trialled this in two courses and reflected on results and student feedback

Methods

- A single side of A4 was allowed for in person assessments for two courses (Table 1)

Table 1. Overview of the rules for the "cheat-sheet" for each course

Course	Sheet rules	Assessment
2nd year UG (SR2002)	1 side A4 paper or card no other restrictions	Multiple Choice
3rd year UG (SM3003 / SR3024)	1 side A4 within template (Figure 1) - Handwritten - short notes or bullet points - Diagrams allowed	Multiple choice and short answer

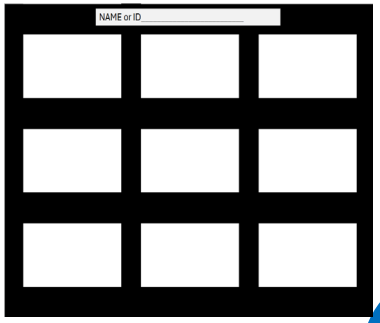


Figure 1. Template for 3rd year notes sheet. Provided on paper and as a PDF

Student Feedback

I liked that we could bring a piece of A4 paper in with us to exams ... although very rarely did what I write end up being in the exam

Conclusion

- Direct comparison of grades not suitable due to changes in assessment content and delivery
- Initial staff reflections showed that whilst very low marks were less likely with a cheat-sheet, perhaps from a reduced chance of "blanking", a wide spread of grades remained.
- Student feedback was also positive indicating they had found it useful for revision and reassuring during the assessment.

POSTER 25

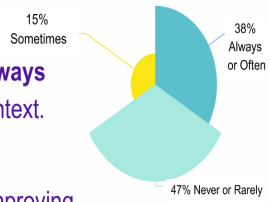
Developing resources and tools to support students' use of AI technologies in their career learning and development

Tracey Innes, Kate Robertson and Julia Leng

Our LTEP funded project explores students' use of AI in relation to their career learning and development, building understanding of the benefits and challenges students face in its use and considering impact on their career readiness and confidence. Results shown here are an early snapshot of this ongoing project.

Student survey + Employer survey = Toolkit of resources to support students and graduates to use AI effectively in their career learning

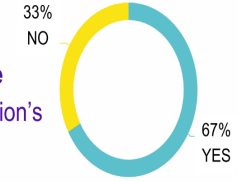
Student insights



- **38%** of student respondents **always** or **often** use AI in a careers context. 15% sometimes use it.
- Most use it for reviewing and improving their **CV** (44%) or **cover letters** (37%).
- 47% are **concerned about the accuracy or usefulness** of the information/results received via AI.
- **Positives of AI**: Easy, convenient, saves time!
- **Negatives:** Soulless, generic, out-dated!
- Respondents to date are mostly **full-time undergraduate** students (47%) or full-time taught postgraduate students (17%) from **Aberdeen Campus** (96%).
- Respondents represent **all academic schools**. 62% are **female** and 45% were born **later than 2001**.

"[AI is] a useful tool but no replacement for careers advisors."

Employer insights



- **67%** of employer respondents **use AI technologies** in their organisation's recruitment and selection process.
- Most use it for **creating job adverts** a automating admin processes.
- **None** use it for candidate selection.
- Main reason for using it: **saves time.**
- **ALL** say they can **generally tell** if a candidate **uses AI** in their application.
- **83%** do NOT **provide guidance to candidates** on their use of AI during the application and selection process.
- Respondents represent a range of organisations from micro to large.

"Candidate overuse of AI has meant our applications have doubled with the quality of applications decreasing significantly."

Early toolkit resource recommendations, top three requested by students:

- **Online guide** to using AI tools in careers.
- Webpage listing **relevant AI** career tools.
- Short, self-study interactive **'mini courses'.**

Topics to consider:

- Proofreading applications.
- Conducting labour market research.
- Creating CVs and cover letters.
- Understanding skills and motivations.

Find out more about the project on our website (use the QR code) or email us: **careers@abdn.ac.uk**

AFG COLLEGE with the University of Aberdeen

1495 UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN | CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE

POSTER 26

Navigating your way into a microbiology career: embedding skills into assessment

Donna M. MacCallum
School of Medicine, Medical Sciences & Nutrition; d.m.maccallum@abdn.ac.uk

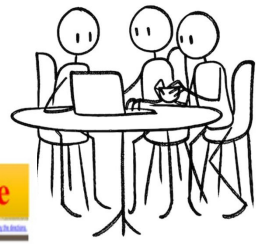
Issue

Could altering MSc Microbiology degree course assessments enhance student skills for future careers?

What did we do?

1. Reviewed microbiology courses and intended learning outcomes (ILOs) for knowledge and skills[1]
2. Reviewed current assessments – did essays and reports teach and assess what we wanted them to?
3. Identified appropriate authentic assessments[2] relating to microbiology or STEM careers[3] (grant application[4], team working[5], group-created review article, giving and receiving feedback[6] on contribution to assessment)
4. Updated course ILOs and assessments (submitted course change forms to Quality Assurance Committee[7])
5. Altered course teaching sessions to include sessions relating to new assessments

Team-created personalised assessment in assigned groups



Review Article

Buddycheck: peer evaluation/feedback tool

Responses[8]

"most challenging and rewarding... helped to learn writing an article in practice"

"realised how important it is to focus on my collaborative skills"

"group article... strongest element in course... helped refine my interpersonal skills, especially in providing constructive criticism"

"We learned to give constructive feedback & work together without any problems"

"group project... exposure to real life group work"

"receiving feedback from peers helped me gain different insights and perspectives on my work, enabling me to identify areas of improvement & enhance the quality of my contributions"

"Teamwork helped in building healthy conversations, self-confidence"

"grant application... will be very useful in coming years"

Sources: [1]UoA Catalogue of Courses http://www.abdn.ac.uk/registry/courses/postgraduate; [2] Sokhanvar et al (2021) Studies in Educ Eval 70: 101030; [3] Jang (2016) J Sci Educ Technol 25:284–301; [4]Tan & Lim (2023) Front Educ 8:1048947 ; [5]Joyner & Parks (2023) J Microbiol Biol Educ 24:e00218-22; [6]Goldsmith et al (2024) CBE—Life Sciences Educ 23:2; [7]UoA Course & Programme Approval www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/teaching/academic-quality-handbook/course-and-programme-approval; [8]UoA Anonymous student feedback via Course Feedback and Reflection Forms (2022-2025)

POSTER 27

MyAberdeen: Online Course Review Service

Content | Calendar | Announcements | Discussions | Gradebook | Messages | Analytics | Groups

The Problem

The needs of students who have online components to the studies can vary to those who study entirely online, meaning 1-to-1 replication of course areas when offering courses online isn't always suitable. Where course areas may have constituted part of a blended or in-person course, this is not necessarily sufficient where learners will take part in self-directed learning without clear, immediate access to their tutors and peers. Online courses that scaffold self-efficacy in learner's "satisfaction suggests that as online learners feel confident about themselves that they can engage in interactions with the online instructor and peers for various purposes and attain their desired outcomes, they experience higher perceived learning and satisfaction." (Yalçın, 2025)

Factors to consider when designing a course for online learners can include accessibility, whether content is up to date and appropriate, fostering a sense of community, learner and tutor presence, interactivity and learner motivation. Furthermore, online learners may be less familiar with Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) due to time away from education.

Additionally, the need to review course content for use in online courses can create additional workload burdens for academic staff.

The Service

The Online Course Review service offered by eLearning and the Online Learning teams can help identify and address areas in courses being prepared for online delivery. This can free up academic staff resource, potentially boost student retention and satisfaction. There are three strands to the course review:

When a review is requested or offered, it is initially assigned to an eLearning advisor. The assigned eLearning advisor will review the course against exemplary course guideline criteria and make note of any observations made during this review. The eLearning advisor will look at factors like the course design, opportunities for learner engagement and interaction, autonomy and reflection and community and motivation amongst others.

The course will also be reviewed by an eLearning support assistant who will produce a report on the accessibility of the course based on its Ally score. This will highlight where course materials may have issues that need addressed to ensure the course remains accessible to all students.

Where there are previous versions of the course, analysis is run using Blackboard Illuminate to gauge which parts of the course students engaged with. This can help highlight areas where students may have stopped engaging in previous iterations of the course, or areas that suggest a lot of engaged, student activity.

These three strands inform a report drawing together the findings of the review and recommendations for amendments to the course that can help make it more suitable for online delivery. A meeting with a member of the online learning team and the eLearning advisor who led the review is then offered. At this meeting, the findings of the report can be discussed and the course co-ordinator can provide any feedback, comments or requests for clarification. Further support can also be discussed if necessary.

Conclusion

The Online Course Review Service provides a way to identify areas where courses can be adapted to meet student needs and expectations while relieving pressure on academic staff.

As Gregory and Lodge note, "The development and implementation of [eLearning] technologies on academic workload can be quite variable and is appreciably affected by the technological capacity of individual academics." However, ensuring the quality of online courses is vital for student satisfaction and retention. Student satisfaction and engagement can be aided by designing and scaffolding course areas that encourage student autonomy, interaction (both peer-to-peer and with tutors) and a clear path towards their goals.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References

Yalçın, Y., Dennen, V.P. An investigation of the factors that influence online learners' satisfaction with the learning experience. Educ Inf Technol 29, 3807–3836 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-023-11984-2 (Accessed 5/3/2025)

Gregory, M. S. J., & Lodge, J. M. (2015). Academic workload: the silent barrier to the implementation of technology-enhanced learning strategies in higher education. Distance Education, 36(2), 210–230. https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2015.1055056 (Accessed 5/3/2025)

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POSTER 28

CO-TEACHING WITH AI

INTRODUCTION

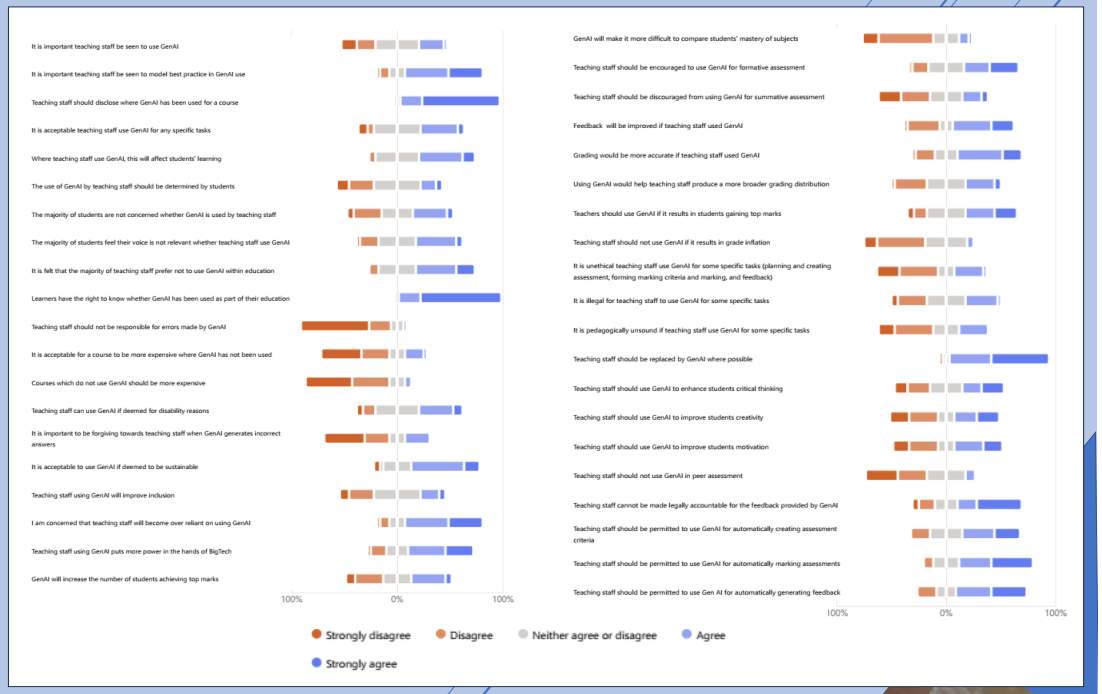
Beliefs and attitudes towards Generative AI (GenAI) and Large Language Models (LLMs): a student voice approach

This survey obtains students' beliefs and attitudes towards the use of GenAI and LLMs such as ChatGPT, Genie and Copilot by teaching staff (tutors, lecturers, teaching fellows, demonstrators and teachers). Whilst research has been carried out targeting academic misconduct by students and the general use of GenAI, this survey aims to focus on the views students possess towards teaching staff using such tools for course development, teaching, assessment, feedback, support, and administration purposes. The survey aims to establish to what extent students perceive their education will be impacted (in terms of learning experience, standards, quality, quantity, achievement, effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction) when teaching staff use GenAI. The purpose of the survey is to reveal some of the key issues and challenges, and future considerations when teaching staff use GenAI in education.

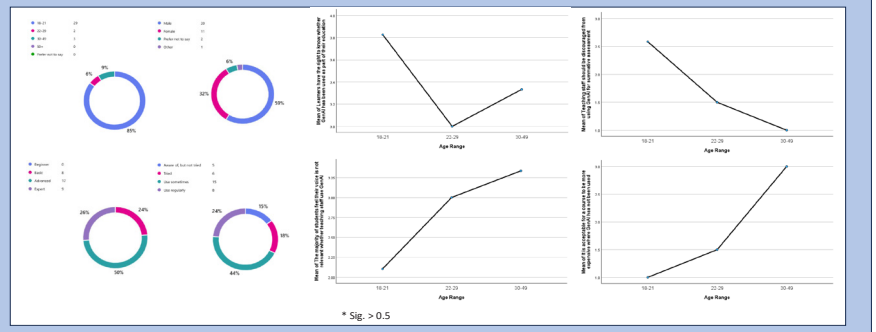
METHODOLOGY

Study was based on a descriptive research survey. It used an online survey method to collect demographics and beliefs and attitude using a 5-point Likert scale.

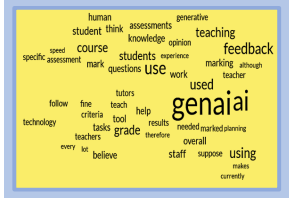
The survey was completed by 34 out of 80 students registered on CS2506 Human Computer Interaction course. Demographics collected included: age range, gender, computer literacy, GenAI use.



RESULTS – DEMOGRAPHICS AND ONE-WAY ANOVA*



* Sig. > 0.5



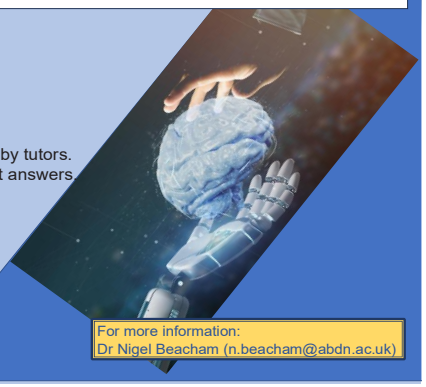
CONCLUSIONS

Findings from the survey showed that:

- Students have mixed views when it comes to being forgiving towards tutors when GenAI generate incorrect answers.
- Students feel it is not acceptable for a course to be more expensive when GenAI has not been used.
- The majority of students feel tutors should be discouraged from using GenAI for assessments.
- When tutors do use GenAI student felt it is important they are seen to model best practice.
- Majority of students feel their voice is not relevant whether tutors use GenAI.
- Students feel GenAI should not be used for marking or generating feedback.
- Majority of students feel tutors prefer not to use GenAI within education.
- Student views about feedback improving if tutors use GenAI polarised.
- Student feel tutors should not use GenAI if it results in grade inflation.
- Students feel tutors should be responsible for errors made by GenAI.
- Where tutors use GenAI, student feel it will affect student learning.
- Students feel tutors will become over reliant on using GenAI.
- Tutors should disclose if GenAi used in course and for what.
- Students do not expect tutors to be seen to use GenAI.
- Students feels tutors should not be replaced by GenAI.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Greater effort needs to be made to give students a voice in the use of GenAI by tutors.
- Tutors must manage student expectations to mitigate against GenAI incorrect answers.
- Tutors need greater aware of the risks of becoming over reliant on GenAI.
- Tutors must be open and tranparent with students when using GenAI.
- Tutors must not use GenAI for grading summative assessment or feedback.
- Tutors should encourage students to use of GenAI appropriately.
- Tutors need training in GenAI use to demonstrate best practice.
- More attention should be given to the time needed for marking.
- Management should be mindful using GenAI to reduce costs.
- Tutors must monitor their assessments for grade inflation.
- GenAI should not be used to replace tutors.



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POSTER 29

Virtual Café: enhancing online PGT student experience & inclusion

J Kyle[1], C Franco[1,], L Craig[1], S Farrar[1], L Tavendale[1], M Oztok[2]*

[1] Institute of Applied Health Sciences, SMMSN, UoA

[2] School of Education, UoA

Online postgraduate students have highlighted a need to improve the quality of their interactions and enhance their **sense of community**. This project develops and evaluates an online student hub (virtual café) to support a geographically and culturally diverse postgraduate learning community who typically study in the evenings and weekends whilst juggling work and family commitments.

Our key question is **"Can a virtual café bring together and build our students' sense of place and community voice within the University of Aberdeen?"**. This directly addresses University of Aberdeen's education principle 2 (community building) and contributes to our current strategy to widen online learning across the University.

This ongoing project is funded by the **University of Aberdeen's Learning & Teaching Enhancement Programme (LTEP)**. While developing our virtual café pilot scheme within the IAHS, we continue to learn better ways to engage with students and develop a sense of community. As we identify further development needs, we move towards **strengthened and enhanced learning for online students**.

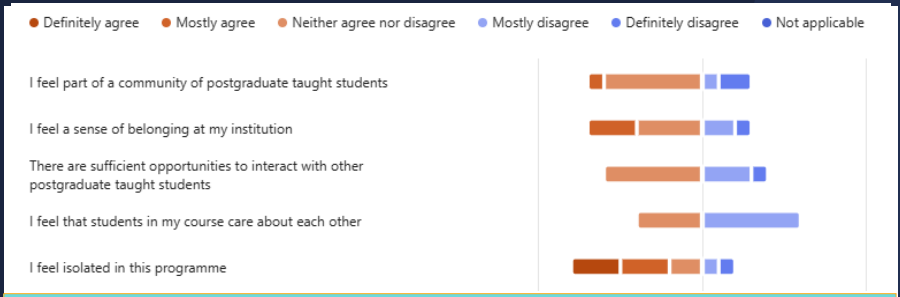

Figure 1: sample results for a statement-based question included in our survey.

IAHS PGT ONLINE CAFE

Student population

- **IAHS-SMMSN online programmes:** Public Health, Health Data Science, Health Economics for Health Professionals, Applied Health Sciences, and Research Methods for Health.
- **School of Education online programmes:** Primary Education, Clinical Education, Health and Wellbeing Education, Early Years, Inclusive Practice, and Autism & Learning.

IAHS PGT Online Café

- A **pilot virtual café** for academic year 2024-25 has been launched for **IAHS PGT online students**, with the inaugural event held in early October 2024.
- We have been hosting 2 social cafés per term. Initially, the café topic is led by programme leads, then we open the space for informal discussion among students.

Data collection

- We have developed an **online student experience survey**, comprising 13 questions including both MCQ and open questions adapted from *Leman, 2023*. Data collection is ongoing in SMMSN and SE. 10 students have engaged so far.
- Focus groups and interviews are scheduled for mid-May, including SE and SMMSN online PGT students.

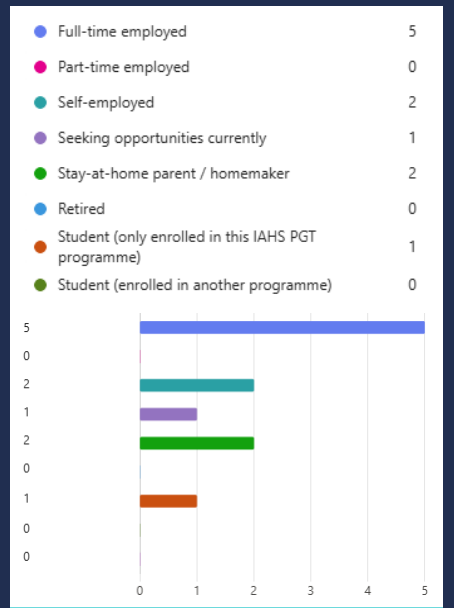

Figure 2: sample results for IAHS PGT online students' demographics question in our survey.

Preliminary findings

- Many online students feel **isolated** and disconnected from their peers
- They are **interested in connecting** with people from different backgrounds in informal online settings
- **Timing** is a challenge (work, different time zones, family commitments, etc)

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References

1. J Leman (2023), *Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey 2023: findings for the sector*, London: Advance HE.

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Postgraduate Education Research Group | Biostatistics and Health Data Science | IAHS, SMMSN

POSTER 30

How do medical students use genAI as a tool for learning?

Falconer R, Ahmad M, Emanuwa D, O'Malley A, Runciman H and May Morgan H

Background

Generative Artificial Intelligence (genAI) technologies are increasingly used within both education and healthcare[1]. Digital literacy, which enables safe and effective use of AI is likely to be a skill required for tomorrow's doctors[2].

However, it is **not known how current medical students have adopted genAI as a tool for learning.**

Methods

- **Multi-institute** study
- 26-question electronic survey sent to **all medical students in Scotland**
- Voluntary participation
- Survey live from 19/02-19/03/25
- 1 x email remainder halfway

Results

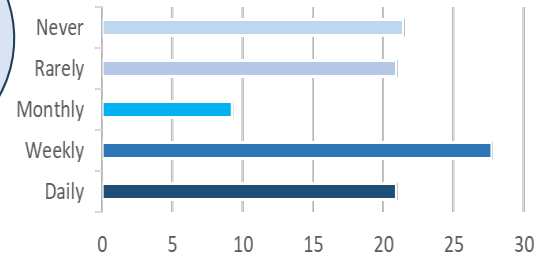
202 responses (n≈5000)

University of Aberdeen (81)	39.3%
University of Edinburgh (55)	26.7%
University of Glasgow (37)	18.0%
University of Dundee (26)	12.6%
University of St Andrews (7)	3.4%

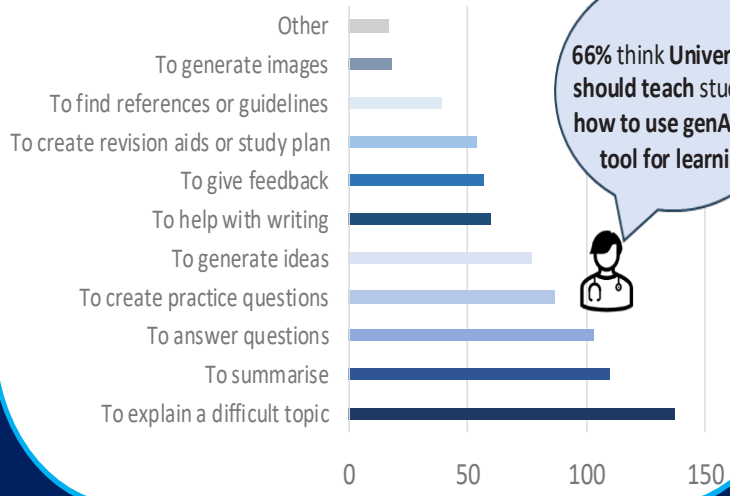
90% use ChatGPT

73% think **genAI will be important** in their **future career** as a **doctor**

How often medical students use genAI in their studies



How medical students use genAI in their studies



66% think **Universities should teach** students **how to use genAI as a tool for learning**

Discussion

Many medical students have adopted genAI as a tool for learning. However, most respondents felt they had **limited understanding** of **how genAI creates outputs** and **had no formal training** on how use these tools. Students also have **concerns** about the impact on **academic integrity** and the **potential integration in healthcare systems.**

Conclusion

Universities must **develop and integrate educational modules** within MBChB curricula **to teach medical students'** how **to use and critically appraise genAI technologies**, both within their undergraduate degree and in their future professional careers.

References:

1. Hale J et al (2024) Generative AI in Undergraduate Medical Education: A Rapid Review. *J Med Ed Curr Dev*, 11.
2. Moulaei K et al (2024) Generative artificial intelligence in healthcare: a scoping review on benefits, challenges and applications. *Int J Med Inform* (188): 105474

POSTER 31

Generative AI workshops to enhance skills and confidence in academic practice

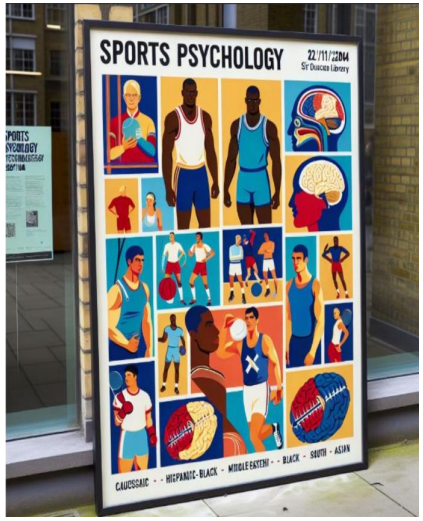
Alison Jenkinson, Michael Scholz, Arimantas Lionikas, Derek Scott, Catriona Cunningham, Jenny Gregory
IEHMS, University of Aberdeen

Background and Approach

- Generative AI (GenAI) presents opportunities and challenges for students and staff
- Alternatives to essays may offer more scope for learning
- Interactive workshops were delivered to undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) students. Attendees created output (Figures) and reported and reflected on their results.
- Pre and post workshop questionnaires collected feedback

Results and conclusion

- Students reported (UG, PG): Improved understanding of GenAI in general (84%, 100%) in academic practice (77%, 100%), academic integrity (71%, 100%), and environmental impact (90%, 100%).
- Confidence levels pre and post workshop : Most improved (58%, 60%), of which 13% and 20% were NOT confident pre-workshop, many were similar (42%, 20%) and one student was less confident.
- Students reflected critically and noted advantages (writing code for the first time) and limitations (content inaccuracy and bias)
- Underlying algorithm's attempts to correct bias sometimes showed through (bottom of poster reads Caucasian, Hispanic Black, Middle Eastern, Black, South Asian, though none of these words were entered into the prompt)
- Students presented using Microsoft Teams from their seats. This was unexpectedly effective in creating an engaging, relaxed atmosphere compared to "stand at the front" presentations



Figures: Sample output from the UG "Sports Psychology event" workshop: stained glass window, posters, merchandise, infographic and online quiz.