Practical Recipes for Student Success –
Guidance for staff responding to the Black, Minority and Ethnic (BME) student attainment gap

Helen Hathaway; Student Experience Project Manager, University of Derby, Kedleston Road, Derby, DE22 1GB
email: h.hathaway@derby.ac.uk telephone: 01332 593676 twitter: @DerbyUniSAP

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Belonging and Connectedness: Enhancing Student Achievement.

“In the beginning of life, when we are infants, we need others to survive … at the end of life … you need others to survive. … But here’s the secret: in between we need others as well.” (Words spoken by Morrie near the end of his life, in Albom, 1997, p. 157 cited in Hasselkus, 2002, p.93).

Connectedness to others in society creates a sense of belonging for individuals, and research demonstrates that having a strong sense of belonging has a positive impact on a person’s health and well-being (Hasselkus, 2002). Students who develop a strong sense of belonging to their programme of study improve their academic engagement, their participation as active learners and increase academic self-efficacy. Belonging enables an individual to strive for personal growth and deepens their level of knowledge development.

How can HE staff create social connectedness / belonging for students? Competent and positive teachers are essential for student well-being, and Bower, et al (2015) identify that “teacher well-being has a positive effect on student achievement” (p.102). Therefore staff need to facilitate opportunities for Student to Student connection and also to nurture Staff-Student relationships.

Student to Student:

- Increase opportunities for group based interaction (e.g., workshops, group assignments) but change groups on occasions to ensure individuals get to know a wider number of students
- Face to face classroom meetings
- Encourage students to organise their own informal out of classroom interactions

Staff to Student Connection:

- All staff need to be engaged in improving engagement and belonging
- Provide high quality teaching and learning opportunities which facilitate staff student interaction
- Offer students contact time to ask questions, discuss their learning or demonstrate understanding
  - Formally in teaching sessions and meetings
  - Informally in breaks, (before and after sessions) or via emails
- Sharing practice experiences, putting learning into context
- Adviser – advisee (Personal Tutor – Personal Tutee). Offer regular one to one interactions for enhancing academic learning and skills (personal tutor meetings)
- Sharing of staff interests / experiences with students
- Connect with students through virtual communities, e.g. FB, Twitter, etc.
  (Lee, J. 2014; Jensen & Jetten 2015; Schaber et al 2015)

“People are generally much happier and more motivated when with friends, regardless of what they are doing” (Hasselkus, 2002, p. 78), and facilitating a sense of belonging for students improves not only their well-being but also their levels of academic achievement.

Joan Howarth & Angela Payne

References:


What is Digital Literacy?

There are many definitions of “Digital Literacy”. Most boil down to:

“The capabilities which fit someone for living, learning and working in a digital society”

What does digital literacy look like?

The skill one needs in order to be considered digitally literate is field specific. A person with a certain skill set might be digitally literate for a career in Law, but not for one in Animation.

The University of Bath invited its Faculty committees to consider what a digitally literate graduate would look like in their area[3]. You can see the hierarchies they created using the links below:

Faculty of Engineering and Design
Faculty of Science
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
School of Management

What can you do to promote the development of digital literacy with your students?

- Have a look at the digital literacy hierarchy from Bath that most closely matches your programme area. Do you agree that a graduate with all of those skills would be as prepared as possible for a career in your field?
- Audit current digital literacy delivery within your programme. Where and how are digital skills explicitly covered by the curriculum? The Jisc NUS Benchmarking tool – the student digital experience is a useful tool to help you do this.
- Do you have a forum for sharing digital practices you use with colleagues? Examples of practice can be seen on the Ideas Factory and the TEL me more community of practice provides you with a place to share these.
- Do you have a forum for students to share digital practices with peers and staff?

References

1. “Developing students’ digital literacy”, JISC; https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/developing-students-digital-literacy (image shared under CC BY-NC-ND 3.0)

Jacqui Dacosta, Chris Gascoyne & Laura Hollinshead
This brief assignment checklist is designed to be given to students to help them avoid some of the most common mistakes they make in their coursework.

HAVE YOU READ THE MODULE HANDBOOK? IF NOT, DO IT NOW! In it you will find details on word counts for coursework; the assessment criteria your work is marked against, and the learning outcomes – the basis for the assessment strategy in each module.

Students often lose marks by forgetting some of the more straightforward elements of their assignments. We recommend that you “tick off” each of the points below as you prepare your work for submission. If you need any help, ask your tutor or visit http://www.derby.ac.uk/library/study-skills.

**TICK**

☐ Have you kept to the word count? You will lose marks if you do not. 10% under or over the word count is usually OK. *If you are not sure, check with your tutor.*

☐ Have you read and understood the assessment criteria?

☐ Have you **met** the learning outcomes? You will lose marks and your work may even be failed if you have not.

☐ Have you demonstrated that you can write critically? Show you have supported your arguments using academic literature; you have presented ideas and information which challenges thinking, and you have offered discussion points which extends your own or others’ viewpoints.

☐ Have you maintained an academic tone throughout your work? Have you tried to avoid using the same words over and over again?

☐ Have you checked that the referencing/bibliography in your assignment is in line with your course requirements?

☐ Have you proof-read your work and used spellcheck software to check your spelling and grammar? Have you made sure your font size, colour, style, line spacing and margins are appropriate to the work as specified by your tutor?

☐ Can you confirm that the work submitted is your own and not plagiarised?

*Helen Wilson*
Confidence is something most students really value, but how can you help your students improve their confidence?

Students find that they develop their confidence in a number of ways and it grows over time. The following tips are from students on how they have improved their confidence whilst studying at the University of Derby. Please share widely with your students.

Top Tips

1. **TAKE PART in the classroom** - students stated that their confidence improves with their attitude to contributing in discussions in class. *Increasing their ability to talk up in group situations.*

2. **READ study materials** - not surprisingly, reading the subject material provides students with more subject knowledge, thus increasing their confidence in both classroom discussions and *improves confidence in delivering presentations.*

3. **JOIN a society** - students have stated that joining a sports or other society has increased their level of confidence by taking them outside of their classroom friendship group, this *increases their friendship circle and improves their ability to mix with different people.*

4. **BE PREPARED for presentations** - talking in front of peers is always daunting, but on the positive side students have all improved their confidence by delivering presentations, especially through fully understanding the subject, being prepared and practicing before delivering the presentation. *Being prepared improves confidence in talking in front of your peers.*

5. **TAKE A CHANCE** - do something different, our students have said that by doing something outside of their comfort zone it has increased their confidence, firstly by acknowledging their fear and then overcoming it. *Being courageous improves confidence in something they were previously scared of.*

6. **TALK TO OTHERS** - communication both with staff and peers has helped students improve their confidence. The ability to communicate thoughts, ideas and concerns allows them to both grow and also share worries. *Take time out to talk to people.*

Benefits of Feeling More Confident

Our Students have said the benefits of being more confident, increases how happy they feel, and also helps them achieve more and they feel proud of their own personal growth.

*Charles Hancock*
Inclusive teaching and learning in higher education

Purposes: To inform HEI tutors about the character and creation of inclusive HEI learning environments.

Many modern conceptualisations of Inclusive Pedagogy centralise participation as the means and outcome of inclusion. Hence, inclusive teaching and learning is likely to adopt a participatory framework and tutors who are seeking to create an inclusive learning environment will strive to maximise participation and connectedness. Gibson (2012) researched the experience of university students with disabilities. Though adaptions to resources, lighting and delivery style were important in enabling their access, what really mattered were friendships, support networks, connectedness with other learners and connectedness with tutors. Literature arising from research in schools adds support to the centrality of participation in inclusive education (Jordan et al., 2009; Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Villa and Thousand, 2005). The social processes of life really matter to learners. Gibson (2012, p.366) notes that university learning is not simply a matter of growth in an individual’s understanding of subject knowledge. It also requires a developing awareness of self and an ability to learn from and with others.

Biggs’ (2007) model of effective university teaching promotes a learner centred approach where tutors seek to understand the life worlds and conceptual worlds of their students so as to construct social and subject based connections with them. Gibson promotes dialogic teaching and learning as a vehicle for achieving this. McNama and Conteh (2008) distinguish a dialogic approach from the notion of ‘interactive teaching’ in that it recognises the subjectivities and voices of all participants in the co-construction of knowledge.

The activity below was designed to be social, participatory and dialogic.

- In a session with postgraduate student teachers, a range of conceptual models of pupil difference were introduced (e.g. the normative or ‘bell curve’ model) along with models of classroom differentiation. In pairs and small groups, the student teachers evaluated the extent to which these models might promote or hinder inclusive practice.
- Using the whiteboard, the tutor captured the thoughts and questions arising from this task. These included ‘limiting potential’, ‘glass ceiling’, ‘low expectations’, ‘pupil disempowerment’, ‘convenience’, ‘segregation’, ‘stigmatisation’, ‘policy’ and ‘politics’.
- Once these were displayed, students were asked to create an image that communicated a connection between these concepts and their own theoretical and practical stance.
- The poster on the right is an example. The student teacher who created it conceptualised his class as a jigsaw puzzle. Each pupil was unique (different shaped pieces), individuals might share similarities (same pattern) but all belong together in the same space. In terms of his practice, he saw it as his role to plan learning experiences that would enable this jigsaw to come together in a meaningful way. He noted that the jigsaw might look different at different times for different subjects. He resolved that assessment processes were going to be essential in resisting segregation and stigmatisation.
- Through the posters (and the students explanations of them), the tutor gained an insight into the practical, conceptual and philosophical positions of the learners in the room, using these as a basis for making connections to the wider theories and literature in the field.

See Further Reading for references and another example of a dialogic activity.

Debs Robinson
**What is information literacy?**

“Information literacy is knowing when and why you need information, where to find it, and how to evaluate, use and communicate it in an ethical manner.” ¹

Information literacy is a key skill for graduates in all subject areas. It equips students for continued learning and professional development once in employment.

Learning Enhancement have provided a framework for embedding the development of information literacy into the curriculum based on SCONUL’s Seven Pillars of Information Literacy Core Model:

1. Identify a personal need for information
2. Assess current knowledge and identify potential sources of information
3. Construct strategies for locating information and data
4. Locate and access the required information and data
5. Review the research process and compare/evaluate information and data
6. Organise information professionally and ethically
7. Present, disseminate, apply and synthesise the knowledge gained

**What can you do to develop information literacy with your students?**

In order to develop information literacy effectively some students will need structured coaching, with a focus on each of the above strands and the opportunity to receive feedback on their work in each of these.

Here are some activities outlined by Learning Enhancement. Where do opportunities exist to build these activities into your module/programme?

| 1. Identify need for information | Students develop visual representations (e.g. a mind map or flowchart) of what is required |
| 2. Identify potential sources of information | Students are presented with different resources and determine which contain relevant information to address a research question |
| 3. Locate information | Students identify terminology, keywords and synonyms to describe a topic and how to use these to search for information |
| 4. Access the required information | Students given the opportunity to use library catalogues and multi-disciplinary databases to retrieve references and full-text information. Students review a bibliography and are able to retrieve source material for themselves |
| 5. Review the research process | Students identify criteria which make information suitable for academic use relating to a research question |
| 6. Organise information | Students produce an annotated bibliography, in the module/programme referencing style, evaluating the information and justifying selections |
| 7. Present, disseminate, apply and synthesise knowledge | Students compile a research product that incorporates newly acquired information |

Other activities to support students:

- Meet with a subject librarian to map information management skills across your course
- Liaise with the Study Skills department to review resources which already exist for use by programme teams
- Look in Course Resources to see generic materials created by the Library and Study Skills.


*Jacqui Dacosta & Chris Gascoyne*
This Recipe Card provides a successful approach which significantly reduces the BME attainment gap at almost no additional cost to the academics running a module. It also significantly raises the average attainment levels of the whole cohort, including the White UK students. Typical achievement levels are for an average mark in excess of 70%. Iterative assessment raises the marks for most students by **between 5% and 15%**. This has been confirmed through the use of Learning Analytics to evaluate module results from the past three years which have used this technique. It is founded on the principal of the academic as a “Learning to Learn” expert, see [http://tinyurl.com/qabms35](http://tinyurl.com/qabms35) to view a video of a workshop on the subject. A critical aspect of the approach is the understanding that the tutor’s role is not to transfer knowledge to the students but to help them to learn how to research a problem and to obtain good evidence and then effectively critically evaluate the information in the context of the set problem. This turns the academic into a mentor of the developmental process.

**Iterative Assessment**

The essence of the approach is to use scheduled module contact time (lectures, seminars and workshops) for both formative and summative assessment of the submitted work. The assessment task is typically in the form of a business report which must be written using a specified MS Word Template (representative of the subject area academic journal requirements) in order to address employability aspects relating to effective and accurate communication using the relevant industry standards.

The assignment specification will identify **two dates** for submission of the report, typically four weeks apart. The first submission point will require the submission of the “**Final Draft**” version of the report to Turnitin. The second date will be the submission date for the final version of the report. In most cases the Final Draft is the version that students would normally have submitted for summative marking. The assignment marking rubric is attached to both submission points. Schedules are published for the students to visit the tutor, with about 8 - 10 minutes allocated for each student, mainly during the scheduled class times, possibly extending over a period of two weeks for larger cohorts. On occasion a small amount of additional non-scheduled time may be required.

**Formative Assessment of the “Final Draft”**

As each student attends their scheduled slot, the rubric is used and the Turnitin annotation and comment features are used to provide comprehensive feedback on the current status of the report and the improvements that can be made to both the presentation standards and the academic content. Each student leaves the formative feedback session with a clear understanding of their provisional mark and what needs to be done to improve the report. They then have the opportunity to incorporate the improvements before the final submission. This process is an approximation to the mentoring and supervision processes that our students can expect from good employers.

**Summative Assessment of the Assignment**

A similar schedule is issued for the final summative marking of the work, which again is completed during scheduled contact time, or during the exam period. A similar marking process is used, with the difference being that much less formative comment is now needed. The students depart knowing their final mark (subject to moderation).

**Benefits**

The students benefit by getting the necessary formative feedback whilst it is still relevant and can be acted upon and get instant access to their grades. There is no waiting for two to three weeks. They also get much better grades. Staff benefit by more effective use of their time.

*Richard Self*
**What is plagiarism?**

“...passing off someone else’s work, either intentionally or unintentionally, as your own, for your own benefit.”\(^1\)

Any source other than your own. This could be books or journals, lectures or presentations, TV or radio programmes or any work by another author.

Ignorance is no excuse! - It’s worth spending time familiarising yourself with the concept of plagiarism and how to write and reference properly.

You will have to use other people’s work in your essays and assessments. This is a normal part of academic writing. The key is knowing how to do it correctly.

**Plagiarism can take three forms:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Copying</strong></th>
<th><strong>Paraphrasing</strong></th>
<th><strong>Collusion</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you copy a passage from another source, you must put it in quotation marks (“”) and provide a reference, acknowledging the author/s.</td>
<td>Even if you don’t copy another source word for word, using the same words and phrases from another source means you need to provide a reference (but not quotation marks).</td>
<td>Unless an assessment is clearly defined as “group work”, sharing research, ideas and writing with your peers is collusion – a form of plagiarism.</td>
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</table>

**What can happen?**

- Plagiarism is an “academic offence”. The University has a duty to the academic community to prevent Plagiarism, and it will be taken seriously. It has to apply the rules fairly to all students so **even if it is the first time you have committed the offence, you will face consequences.** It can lead to being **failed for the assignment**, the module, the semester and even expulsion from the course and removal of any credits you have already earned. This **does** happen to students every year.

“**My tutors can’t have read and remembered every book and journal - how will the University find out?**”

- The university uses “Turnitin”. This is a database used by universities across the world. It automatically compares what you have submitted to a database of published resources and works out how much of your assignment could be from other sources.
- **Some of your writing will always be the same as other author’s work.** Quotes and paraphrases of existing work is essential in good critical discussion, but, your marking tutor will be automatically alerted if your report contains too much text which is recognised by the system and will look for whether or not you have referenced this correctly.

**Why do people commit plagiarism?**

- **They are unaware of the rules** - The rules about plagiarism differ from country to country. You must familiarise yourself with the UK definition of plagiarism.
- **They feel under too much pressure** - University can be stressful and there can be pressure to complete reports in a short timescale. It is never worth plagiarising other work in order to meet a deadline. The consequences of plagiarism can be much worse than the consequences of asking for support or requesting an extended deadline. To look at the support available, go to [www.derby.ac.uk/assessmentguide](http://www.derby.ac.uk/assessmentguide)

**How to avoid plagiarism**

- We cannot present a comprehensive guide to writing and referencing on this one page! Visit PLATO for an interactive guide to plagiarism ([https://plato.derby.ac.uk/start/](https://plato.derby.ac.uk/start/)).
- Study Skills can also give help and advice when writing assignments ([www.derby.ac.uk/library/study-skills](http://www.derby.ac.uk/library/study-skills)).

Don’t go through your degree being scared/confused about plagiarism. Take time to familiarise yourself with how to avoid plagiarism and how to reference other authors correctly. Once you know how, you can write confidently and positively.


*Chris Gascoyne*
Imagine you are a placement provider:

Draw/describe/mind-map the placement student you **would want** to see arrive:

Draw/describe/mind-map a placement student you **would not want** to see arrive:

Have you considered:

- Appearance
- Attitudes and behaviours
- Learning skills

Now compare your drawings with other groups. Is there agreement on good and bad characteristics?

**Successful placement students usually ...**

- ...Ask when they are unsure - It can feel awkward to ask questions, but it’s better than struggling on **without key information**, and will save everyone time in the long run.
- ...Stay organised – keeping a diary or portfolio folder can help you to stay on top of placement and university work.
- ...**Reflect on their strengths as well as their mistakes.**
- ...Stay positive - no one is expecting you to be perfect straight away. Learn from your mistakes and move on, rather than dwelling on them.
- ...**Maintain a work life balance** – social activities, nutrition and exercise are important for your physical and mental health.
- ...Get in to good sleep habits – life on placement will be different to life as a student.
- ...Stay in touch with someone outside of their placement who they can blow off steam with.

**Reflection**

*How will you use this activity to inform your behaviours while on placement?*

*Julie De Witt & Chris Gascoyne*
Imagine this...

...You are a team manager for a large local employer. You have recently employed a University of Derby graduate, who started work last week. You attend a meeting with the company’s Chief Executive, the marketing department and the new employee. The meeting consists of a 30 minute presentation by the marketing department, followed by 30 minutes of questions and discussion.

1. Draw or brainstorm the following scenarios – show what the employee would look like/behave like

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You are really impressed by the new employee’s conduct...</th>
<th>You are embarrassed by the new employee. You are displeased with their conduct...</th>
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</table>

What should you expect of your tutors?

2. Spend 5 minutes compiling a list of expectations you would have of your tutors behaviours and actions in the classroom.

What should your tutors expect of you?

3. Having reflected on the previous activity, spend 5 minutes compiling your own list of “What should my tutor expect of me in the classroom?”
4. Now get together with another person/group and see what they came up with.
5. Now get together as a class. Are there common themes/differences? As a group, what would you include in your “classroom rules?”

Points for reflection

- What consequences would your tutor face if they did not meet expectations?
- What consequences would you expect if you frequently operated outside of these rules in the workplace?
- What consequences would you expect if you frequently operated outside of these rules while at university?
- Your career begins during your time at university. If you can get into good habits now, they will persist once you on are in the workplace. What behavioural habits do you want to get into?
- Whether right or wrong, making a good impression on employers will always count for a lot. What first impression do you think an employer would have of you if they followed you around university for a day?
- What does it mean to be “a professional”?
- Why do employers place such a high value on professionalism in their employees?

Chris Gascoyne
There are a lot of different skills that you can develop to make yourself a more effective learner:

Based on your experience of which areas you handle well or need to improve, pick out four or five areas that you want to develop:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study skill</th>
<th>PDP?</th>
<th>Study skill</th>
<th>PDP?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Doing a project</td>
<td></td>
<td>10. Writing essays and dissertations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Finding, using and analysing information and evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td>11. Writing reports</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Handling time pressure</td>
<td></td>
<td>12. Dealing with other people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Making notes</td>
<td></td>
<td>13. Discussions; face to face and online</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. PDP</td>
<td></td>
<td>14. Working in a group or a team</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Plagiarism and referencing</td>
<td></td>
<td>15. Action planning: identifying actions; making recommendations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Presenting your work; making it look good</td>
<td></td>
<td>16. Succeeding with exams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Reflecting on your learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>17. Giving a presentation, viva or being observed</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Solving problems and making decisions</td>
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*The study skills department can support you in developing all these skills:*

https://ulib.derby.ac.uk/backed_up_php/lib_guide_tutorials.html

*Chris Gascoyne & Kevin Merry*
**University of Derby**

**Top Tips for Academic Writing**

- **Time management** is an important part of writing. Have a plan for how you are going to fit everything in.

- The middle part (the **discussion**) of your paper should be where you put most of your effort. Don’t spend too much time on an introduction and a conclusion.

- Analyse the exact words of the brief – what exactly is it asking you to do?
  - “**Analyse**” – report on research in this topic, how does it fit in with research as a whole?
  - “**Compare**” – find differences and similarities
  - “**Evaluate**” – apply your judgement and opinion
  - “**Argue**” – will give you one side to take (still present both sides of the argument though)

- Once you know what your argument will be, check that it fits the **assignment brief**.
  (There is no point writing about elephants if your tutor wants an essay on thermonuclear physics!)

- **There are 3 key areas in building a paper:**
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. <strong>Literature</strong></th>
<th>2. <strong>Critical Analysis</strong></th>
<th>3. <strong>Structure</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you gathered all of the literature your essay will be based on?</td>
<td>Critical analysis starts the minute you pick up a text. Be thinking:</td>
<td>What are the different sections of your argument going to be?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  | Have you made a note of the author, name, year and where it was published? | • What is the viewpoint of the author?  
  |                                | • Have they submitted enough evidence to make their argument valid?  
  |                                | • Have they left any unanswered questions? | Try to split the information you have gathered into topics and themes.  
  |                                | Does your argument flow continuously? |

**Referencing**

- Have you put every reference you have used in your text?  
  *Remember – you need to do this for every reference – papers, books, websites, TV programmes, etc.*

- Have you listed all of these at the end of your text under “references”?

- Have you cited them in the right style? (Check your **module handbook** and **Cite Them Right**)

**Formatting**

- Have you checked the formatting guidance in your **module handbook**?

- Presentation is an important part of an essay. Remember – most essays need to be double spaced.

**Proof Reading**

- Once you have completely finished writing, proof read your work. It is even better if you can get someone who has not read it yet to do this.

*Remember – the Study Skills Team are there to help you*

[http://www.derby.ac.uk/library/study-skills](http://www.derby.ac.uk/library/study-skills)

*Chris Gascoyne & Kevin Merry*
What constitutes “good feedback” is open to debate and may be influenced by discipline specific factors, however, the below provides a generic overview of considerations for those delivering feedback to students in Higher Education settings.

A good feedback strategy should engender the following attributes:

- Choice of feedback method (i.e. written, audio, verbal etc.)
- Both formative and summative assessment activities with associated feedback or similar depth and personalisation
- Convenience for both tutors and students
- An associated dissemination strategy
- Balance
- Clear, comprehensible and individualised advice
- Provision to accommodate and include learners with disabilities
- Relevance, realism and authenticity
- Cultural egalitarianism
- Advice for accessing “expert” support where appropriate
- Feedforward
- Opportunities for follow-up discussion

Chris Wakeman
Unconscious bias applies to how we perceive each other from our own cultural perspective. First and foremost it must be acknowledged that we are all biased. Our bias is towards what we perceive to be similar (to our own appearance, beliefs and culture) and away from what we perceive to be different. Unconscious bias is instinctive and feels like the best we can do to survive, but in a global society we may need to bring our bias to consciousness so we can build better relationships. By becoming aware of what biases we have we can begin to understand our triggers, and thus may learn to exercise more choice about some of our behaviours.

Things to consider helping you managing unconscious bias:

- An “image audit’, considering images used around the university and in marketing materials and how inclusive they are.
- Accept that it is natural to have a bias but try to work out how it impacts on students and staff.
- Remind yourself of the need to be fair and objective at key times.
- First and foremost see people as people rather than following stereotypes.
- If you discover that you view a particular group with discomfort, make a conscious effort to learn more about that group.
- Make a conscious effort to learn more about the individuals that you have little interaction with. Recognise that interaction with one person does not predict or explain his or her group norms.
- Don’t be afraid to go to someone and apologise if you feel like they have been treated unfairly, excluded because of who they are, or not recognised for what they contribute. Make the situation right, and then evaluate the system that led to the decision and explore ways you can improve the process for the future.
- Organise events, such as black history month or get involved in the events that take place around the university, engaging with the students and acknowledging their culture.
- Consider the content of the curriculum to embed a diversified balanced view.

For information on free staff training on unconscious bias provided by the University, contact the Equality and Diversity Team in HR.

Joy Lewis & Billie Riley
Purpose:
To support students to raise their coursework and module grades by deconstructing assignments using group work.

How:
Ensure that all students fully understand the assignment, facilitated by small and then whole group discussions.

In the session where you introduce the assignment, allow 20 minutes or so for the students to explore the assessment criteria/assignment brief in order to provide the “big picture” of the module.

Steps:

1. Display and outline the assessment/assignment criteria demonstrating how it relates to the learning outcomes and assessment strategy as given in the module handbook.

2. Ask the students, in twos or threes, to highlight/explain/explore key terminology and check their understanding.

3. Then ask groups to join together to explore common themes and identify resources to help with the assignment. *This will need to be managed according to how many students there are in the classroom.*

4. Each group then shares up to three ideas, questions or issues regarding the assignment/assessment **with the whole class.**

5. You can then clarify any matters raised and identify further resources to help students with the assignment, according to the feedback.

*You can draw on this information/feedback from your students about the assignments when you are developing new modules of drawing up minor mods.*

Jean Mutton & Helen Wilson
This paper identifies common reasons why students fail, withdraw or do not achieve to their full potential. These are pitfalls for you to watch out for, drawn from real life experiences, as identified by staff and students.

- They do not know you or who to go to when in trouble or may be reluctant to come forward and ask for help.
- They do not attend lectures and tutorials or do attend but do not engage.
- They may be easily distracted.
- They do not understanding what is meant by plagiarism – and the consequences.
- They do not know about module learning outcomes and how these relate to the assessments.
- They do not read the assessment criteria.
- They do not understand the importance of reading the module and/or programme handbook.
- They do not keep to deadlines.
- They do not know how to reference work properly.
- They fail to maintain a positive attitude or have good motivation.
- They do not proof read their work.

They are bamboozled by jargon – here are some key terms you could share

**Stage:** This also means what year of university are you in, for example ‘1st year’ or ‘Final year’

**Degree Classification:** 1st degree, 2.1 degree, 2.2 degree and an ordinary degree

**Learning Outcome:** What you are assessed against in a module

**ALF:** Access to Learning Fund is for students who are having financial difficulty

**Careers Service:** Located at the bottom floor of the library which helps in study skills

**SEA:** Student Employment Agency helps students get part time work

**Skill Builder:** Help your employability by helping you put a CV together

**Blackboard/UDO:** Your course resources and basic university communication

**Credits:** There are 360 credits for a 1st degree, a typical module has 20 credits and there are 120 credits per year.

What causes students most anxiety about handing in assignments?

- Past failures
- Time management
- Scheduling of assessments across modules and other assignment clashes
- Lecturers cancelling lectures and tutorials
- Having due dates pushed forward
- Can they reflect the right **academic tone** in their writing?
- The killer question – “Am I good enough?”

*Jean Mutton*