Inclusive Course Design **- BA Filmmaking**

"We wanted to make sure that the course, in terms of the teaching, in terms of the material, but particularly in terms of the assessment, reflected the breadth of students you might get".

Area of Focus	Building a new course which embeds inclusive practice for all Success for All groups.
Context	BA Filmmaking is a new course, developed in 2016/17 and run for the first year in 2018/19.
Approach	In consultation with an educational developer, the course team embedded inclusive curricular and pedagogical practices from the outset in order to minimise barriers to success.
Interventions	The course has been designed to be inclusive in terms of content, delivery and assessment.

1. Inclusivity in learning outcomes
    Incorporating diversity within the course content was grounded in an understanding of the industry into which students would be graduating – there is an expectation in industry that students will be fluent in debates around diversity and inclusivity, so embedding this within the course makes sense for a lot of reasons. Students are encouraged to unpack ideas around gender and race in their filmmaking, to challenge assumptions and think creatively. There are two explicit knowledge-based learning outcomes for the course that capture this:

    - Examine how the aesthetic and formal qualities of film media create meaning in different cultural forms and apply appropriately to your work.
    - Consider the impact of disability, class, ethnicity, gender, religion, nationality, sexuality, and other social experiences and subjectivities on both access to the media and modes of representation in film and demonstrate consideration of this in your work.

2. Inclusive delivery
    To help ground the group work, students are taken on a residential trip to Derbyshire to make films. This helps students to bond, experiencing pressure but building a community of support in that environment which sustains them through the academic year. As a course team member explained:

    "We wanted to do it early – part of that earliness was about bonding under pressure. So it's quite expensive, quite resource-intensive, but it's deliberately to replicate some of the pressures they may have… We recognised it would be a way for groups of individuals to form a group that would sustain beyond that week."

3. Inclusivity in assessment
    The assessment has been designed to offer a mixed range of options to accommodate students' differing strengths. The course leader explains:

    "We don't have lots of writing, we don't have lots of filmmaking, we don't have lots of talking, we have a mixture".

Inclusive assessment also incorporates peer support, supportive group work, and adoption of roles within a production team as part of group assignments. An example of this type of assessment can be seen with the Script to Screen module whereby students have five weeks to work in a group and assign roles to produce a short 3-5 minutes film during a residential trip in Derbyshire. The students are told the focus of this assignment brief is to work productively in a team through researching and preparing in their individual roles in order to imaginatively deliver a scripted idea.

Initial Outcomes

The course took its first cohort in 2018/19. Feedback has been very positive with plans to enhance the peer mentoring scheme next year already well received by students. There are no signs of students from particular backgrounds struggling with aspects of the course. The course design received a commendation from the Development and Approval Group (DAG) panel for their approach to inclusivity.

Challenges and next steps

Embedding inclusivity from the outset has helped to ensure that key principles are integrated smoothly into the content and delivery of the course, for both students and academic colleagues. By making inclusivity part of the learning outcomes for the course, students are expected to engage actively with issues around diversity:

"It's not just me, it's a conversation that's happening beyond this room. And it's all about the design of the course, so it's just that 'it's got to be integral' thing".

The course team are planning to develop peer mentoring on the course for the next academic year, drawing on the expertise of second year students to assist and advise incoming first years with project work.

The course has already proved popular and there may be challenges associated with increasing cohort sizes, particularly where under-represented groups are targeted through outreach activities. In particular, the course team wants to ensure that students who may not have the cultural capital to transition to higher education do not "get lost" in a large cohort.

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