# Inclusive assessment panel and discussion

## Inclusive education community of practice event

### 15 April 2019

MARY DRACUP: I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin Nations, the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we are gathered here. I'd like to extend my respect to elders past and present and thank the local people for allowing us to have this gathering here. I'd also like to extend my respect to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people present on any of our campuses in this meeting.

I'd also like to thank our esteemed colleagues for preparing these presentations today and for taking this time to speak with us about inclusive assessment. So this is an Inclusive education community of practice event, number two for the year. And you're all very welcome.

Just a housekeeping note, could you keep your microphones muted throughout? We will be taking questions via Slido. And if you've registered for the event, you'll have details on the slides which I sent to you on Friday, or your invitation follow-up on Saturday on how to take part in Slido. You go to slido.com and put in the event code #C286. And then you should be able to post questions and also responses to the questions that are asked.

So the format for the presentation will be each panellist will have eight minutes to speak and then two minutes for question posing and answering. And then at the end we'll have hopefully about 20 minutes of talking and sharing. This is really an important part of this event because it's a community of practice event. So please, don't hold back. If you've got an observation or perspective you'd like to share, a question you'd like to ask, whether it's in your campus groups or here, please do take this opportunity to talk.

We're also going to be taking some--we're actually proposing to use this opportunity to--I'll just get out of the presentation, let me just show you this--to gather some responses to the inclusive assessment guidelines that we're hoping to put together collaboratively across the University. So we've made a start in a discussion forum on the ICCB website. And you've also got a link to this from the slides which I sent. On the very first slide you'll be able to access this.

And in the general discussion area, I've put a posting there. And you are all very welcome to go in there and add anything you can think of to improve what we've got there already in terms of guidelines for inclusive assessment. We're hoping that this will be able to inform people on course panels when they're looking at revising assessment in a unit periodically, or when they're reviewing--that's what I mean to say, reviewing the unit periodically, or when they're designing new units.

So what we have there at the moment is just a collection of points from our inclusive education [assessment] principle. And it's really just a starting point. So you're very welcome to add to that. And that will be there—that discussion posting will be going on forever. So please, don't feel you have to do that here and now. You can think about it after a few days and post then.

OK, so that's all from me. I'd like to ask Merrin Mccracken now, my manager, the Manager of Access and Inclusion in the Diversity and Inclusion unit, to chair the panel and introduce the rest. Thank you.

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: Thank you, Mary. And I hope if there are any access or access issues out there, we'll do what we can to fix them during the time. So thank you.

I also would like to acknowledge the First Nations people across all our sites and wherever you may be listening to our presentation, today or in the future. We thank you for your care of the land and waters and pay respects to Elders past, present, and future. Thank you, Mary. It's back to our presentation. Great.

I'd like to introduce the panel first off. So we have our most important member, Tegan Whitten, who is a student and vice president of DUSA. And she'll be telling us I guess a bit from the student's perspective. And we'll start with her, which I think will be most important.

Linda Tivendale, senior lecturer in construction management in the School of Architecture and the Built Environment. And beside Linda, we have Friederika Kaider, who is a senior lecturer in course enhancement in the Arts-Ed pod. Dr Sharon Pittaway, senior lecturer in Business and Law, Learning Innovations. Susie Macfarlane, senior lecturer in the DLF Health Pod, and Dr Joanna Tai, a research fellow from CRADLE. So we won't introduce again as we go through, because Mary's got an eight-minute buzzer set on us. So that's our introduction.

The first—ah, yes, our welcome. Why Deakin needs inclusive assessment—and I hasten to add that we already have inclusive assessment in many ways. So what we're talking about here is the why, what and why, and then we'll hear some more about the how. So our first slide is that old perennial cartoon of an examiner sitting in front of a range of examinees—a dog, a seal, the goldfish in the bowl, the elephant, the penguin, the monkey, and the bird. And he's making the comment, for a fair selection, everybody has to take the same exam. Please climb that tree. So inclusive assessment means creating assessment activities that allow all students to show they can meet the necessary standards.

Diversity at Deakin. This slide tells us a little bit about that. It tells us that we have 22% of students from regional or remote locations, 13% from low socioeconomic status, 8% who choose to share that they have a disability, 2% from a non-English speaking background, and I think it's a bit closer to 1.5% of students who are Aboriginal or a Torres Strait Islander. The graphs, which are difficult to see, tell us that with the exception of regional students, these students don't do as well in terms of success and retention as those who are not from equity groups. And of course, this picture here doesn't tell us anything like everything about diversity at Deakin. It's not telling us about students and all their rich and complex lives, people who are needing to work a job or even to people who are dealing with family violence or domestic abuse, people who are balancing family and caring responsibilities. Inclusive ed. is for everybody, but it plays a particular role for people who are in diverse situations.

There are other reasons our higher ed standards explicitly discuss the need to—my piece of paper—need to approach the design of teaching and learning to accommodate student diversity, including the underrepresentation and/or disadvantage experienced by identified groups, and create equivalent opportunities for academic success, regardless of students’ background. I went looking around a bunch of things around inclusive assessment, and I found in the UK quality code indicators that they say—and I love these couple of descriptors—‘where individual modifications are required, they may prove beneficial if adopted by all students within the limits of practicality. In a similar way, consideration of a range of different means by which a particular learning outcome may be demonstrated may lead to overall enhancement of the assessment process.’ And ‘reflecting the methods of students with different protected characteristics in the design and approval of programmes reduces the likelihood of making one-off modifications to assessment in a reactive manner. Reliance on one reactive mode can place both students and staff under additional pressure and may lead to inequities.’

I'm going to finish up here. We've got information about the inclusive assessment principle that's part of the inclusive ed principles. But I think let's hear from the panel. And let's hear much more about the why and the how. And firstly, I'd like to introduce Tegan.

TEGAN WHITTEN: Hey, everyone. Thank you for having me today. My name's Tegan. I'm the Vice President of the Student Association, or DUSA. I'm currently studying health sciences with a major in psych and environmental health, but I transferred from four years in a biomedical science degree, where I kind of wandered around and didn't really know what I wanted to do with my life. It took me a long time to figure that out, though.

Today I want to talk about what access to inclusive assessment means from a student perspective by discussing diverse methods of assessment, diverse methods of feedback, and describing assessments by telling you a little bit about myself and by talking about where we go from here. First I want to talk about the obvious—diverse methods of assessment and how this makes assessment inclusive. At the most basic level, inclusive assessment from my perspective looks like diverse ways of assessing. For example, can we provide options for both a written report and a video answering the same questions and following the same rubrics, or similar rubrics? Can we make this an option for all students to choose from, not just students who request alternate methods of assessment?

On a more intermediate level, before we reach totally inclusive assessment for all, can we be more willing and ready to promote and provide alternative assessment and arrangements for students who ask, and even students who don't ask? For example, if a student requests an extension and then special consideration, how can the unit chair maybe flag the situation and say, how is this form of assessment not working for the student, and what can we do now and in the future to make sure that it is?

Inclusive assessment also focuses on creating meaningful assessment, in my mind. And this is one of the most important things for students. Letting students choose something that they're interested in and creating meaningful experiences that relate to the real world. I took a toxicology unit back in my biomed degree where we had to write a toxicology-based report. But we got to pick from four very diverse areas of toxicology, each based on an individual elective topic containing a week's worth of material. Now, that unit chair recognised that students in the unit came from a diverse range of backgrounds and degrees and went out of their way to create extra content to make the assignment relevant to students' future careers and interests. This was one of the most enjoyable assignments I've done, and I had to stop myself from looking too far into the topic.

Surprisingly, or perhaps not surprisingly, this unit chair was also the only unit chair to ever offer me a supplementary assessment in my five years of university, despite my vast experience with special consideration for exams and assessment. I did get a HD for this unit, and I credit it to the unit chair assessing me in a way that allowed me to show my true potential. I didn’t *not* meet unit learning outcomes or inherent requirements of the course, but the unit chair recognised that I faced a unique but in reality not so unique set of challenges in accessing my education. And when we were able to address these in some ways—for example, replacing a sitting exam with a longer written piece I could do at home in short bursts so as to not aggravate my chronic pain and allow me to concentrate better—I could illustrate my knowledge and what the unit had taught me. This was one of the most rewarding and empowering academic experiences that I've had.

Diverse methods of feedback and describing the assessment are also a key part of inclusive assessment. I've seen this in units through opportunity for written or verbal feedback and instances where feedback is given and then you're given the chance to use this feedback to actually improve on the assessment for a better mark. This encourages students to take on board and use feedback and ensures and contributes in a meaningful way to the overall educational experience.

The way assessments are described is similarly important. For instance, we can have a rubric and outline assessment guidelines, but could we also have a video that talks you through the rubric and guidelines in case you're a student like me whose reading concentration is poor?

This leads me to tell you a little bit about me. And I don't want to make this presentation all about me, but I think I serve as a good example of a student who serves to benefit the most from inclusive assessment. I'm also a student story who I have the permission to share. But I can assure you that my situation is not an isolated one.

I'm a student who studies with multiple disabilities, most notably severe chronic pain, migraines, and severe mental illness. Practically what this means is I lack the ability to sit or stand for long periods, have issues with concentration, and find myself frequently hospitalised throughout the semester. In the four and a half years, I've applied for special consideration around 12 times, remission of debt four times, and special on special five times. I tell you this because I want to illustrate that I have experience with the process, not because I'm trying to make it sound dire. But yeah.

For the first year of my education I went without a learning access plan, and I really struggled. And at this point inclusive assessment would have really helped me. There are students across the University with disability illness, mental health conditions, et cetera, who don't identify with the University as having a disability and don't register with the Disability Resource Centre. And these students would benefit greatly from the introduction and improvement of inclusive assessment, as of course do all students.

The attitude of individual academics and unit chairs matters in this situation where students face barriers to assessment and education. There was one unit on cell biology I attempted three times. The first time I attempted it, I was totally isolated due to a flare [up] in my illness. I fell behind and withdrew prior to census. The second time I made a really good go at it, but I had a unit chair who didn't really acknowledge that students had barriers to access assessment in their life. I struggled with the assessment—the suggestion made by the unit chair when I struggled with the assessment, the first and insistent suggestion, was that I withdraw from the unit.

I often have this feeling that education, and particularly higher education, is not for me, that I don't fit the system, and that I'm too unwell to be here. 86% of university students experiencing severe mental illness will drop out of their studies. It would at times be so easy for me to be part of the 86%. Moments like that, when I'm not supported and told to withdraw despite trying my hardest, are moments when I feel like I don't belong the most.

Now, this isn't meant to be a sob story, nor am I having a go at the unit chair. Rather it's meant to contrast with the third and final time I took this unit. The third and final time I took this unit, I had the most supportive and understanding unit chair I could ask for. He arranged alternate times for me to do alternate class tests with extra time and rest breaks. He checked how I was going with things. It isn't massive, but it counts.

And, you know, we kind of ask, why do I talk about attitude? And I think because one of the biggest barriers to implementation inclusive assessment faces is that it sometimes gains the perception that it's kind of taking it easy on students. In a way, it creates more work for academic staff, and questions arise why students can't just do the task the way it is and the way we've always done it.

And I think the question is how we change that attitude, and how we show people the student side of the issue. And the reason I share my story is not because I want people to feel bad for me or anything like that. It's that I hope hearing a student's story convinces people that we need to have inclusive assessment. Because it's really about having inclusive assessment that will help people; (a) who fit into equity categories, but also beyond that. It's about all students having meaningful and quality…

[BELL RINGING]

Really? I thought I wasn't going to get to eight minutes. All right, I'll just do my conclusion. It's about all students having meaningful and quality equitable experiences. It's about students, allowing us to show their full potential, and I ultimately believe inclusive assessment can do this.

So where to from here? I think the future of inclusive assessment involves a partnership with students. After all, these are the people for which the assessment is ultimately being developed. And their groups are going to tell you if it's working for them. Students as Partners have massive potential. Making sure your Students as Partners programmes is diverse is important. Recognising barriers that exist in Students as Partners programmes—this includes financial barriers, so making sure students get reimbursed for their time. It doesn't have to be a wage, but a Coles voucher they can use for their groceries or money on their myki to get to where they're going.

It also includes physical distance and physical accessibility. So have a VMP set up. Also recognise some students—and this is a bit of self-promotion here because it includes students from DUSA—have experience in speaking to a wide range of students and hearing their stories. This makes them uniquely equipped to deliver a more well-rounded and diverse perspective.

The future for me is hopeful. I look forward to a university and tertiary education space where we include a diverse range of individuals through our assessment. I hope we can create a space where students and the University work together to make assessment more welcoming and university education a place where everyone feels like they can belong. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: Do we have time for questions, or are we going to move on and do questions at the end? I'm looking at Trina and Mary.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: Does anyone have any burning questions for Tegan? We don’t have any online so I suggest we continue.

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: That's fine. I think we're more likely to get our questions at the end. Yeah, thank you. That just fits the frame for us so well. Now I'd like to introduce Linda to come up, through a maze which is the—the panel.

LINDA TIVENDALE: So I'm from Construction Management. I'm the course director of the Construction Management programme, and we deliver both undergraduate and postgraduate courses, four-year undergrad, two-year postgrad, and we deliver across all three trimesters. So we have a lot of teaching to do.

And since I was asked to come and speak, I have expressed to Mary and everybody on the panel that I feel that I've been asked under false pretences. We have done a great deal of work on our assessments. We have not ever once mentioned the word inclusive.

And so do we have inclusive assessment? Listening to Tegan, we have parts of it that are inclusive. I like to think that what we have are assessments that do work for everyone. And those assessments that don't work for everyone, I also like to think that our unit chairs are fairly obliging in making adjustments.

So we have a group of students. We have international and domestic students. We have males and females. We have the school leavers and we have the mature age people. We have people who are combining a full-time job with full-time study. They're always particularly interesting.

We have students who do have LAP plans. We have students who come and talk to us about issues they may be facing but who do not have LAP plans. We have a broad range of students. We have students who are living in Geelong. We are based at the Waterfront. We have other students who are all over the state, and obviously the cloud students all around the world. We have students who have industry experience, and we have students who don't have industry experience. So we have probably what everybody else has in terms of what their student cohort looks like.

When I first started at Deakin, our student satisfaction was poor, very poor. And the main complaint was and still is—it will always be, I think—assessment. You know, students rarely complain about the lecture was boring or whatever else it might be. It's pretty well, assessment is it.

And so we put a lot of effort. We use the—I'm not sure if everyone remembers the course enhancement process, but we actually use the course enhancement process to revisit all of our assessments. And so we set it up so that people couldn't sort of fiddle with it, I suppose, is the really blunt way to put it. We set it up so that people didn't—two things—so that people didn't own a unit and therefore they didn't own the assessment, right? So we tried to have it so that when students came in, they had a really good idea of what they would get throughout the whole of their degree, be that undergraduate or postgraduate.

So we set up a template. We made sure it was clear. We made sure that we use and we still use simple language. You know, you must do this or you—you know, the tasks are A, B, C. They're not lengthy. They're just direct. Construction management is where we don't sit around and discuss the theory of construction management quite so much. We're teaching to students who are going out there to work in a specific environment. So we do a lot of work related assessments where they will be mimicking what is required in the workplace.

We have a lot of good links to industry, and so we get real projects and real documents that we use. We use the same assessment every year, but we rotate the projects or we rotate the essay title or that sort of thing. So again, people aren't inclined to just fiddle a little bit because we have a sort of rolling thing to do.

And we have a range of options. Well, they're not options, actually. Within each unit, there will be, say, an essay, a presentation, some sort of graphical thing, depending upon what it is, some sort of document. A lot of them are documents. You have to do an estimate or something like that.

So some of them, there's really only one way to do it. If you're going to do an estimate, you do an estimate. But there are other things where if somebody can't do a presentation for whatever reason, then we will have a conversation with that student and we will make it a narrated PowerPoint, or they will do a presentation to one person rather than the whole group, or whatever it might be. So they don't get a choice within one assignment to do this, that, or the other, but across the range of the unit, they get a chance to, I suppose, shine in the path that they have best skills at, and everybody gets that opportunity.

So I think what we're aiming for is ‘Have the students met the ULOs?’ Ultimately, we will make adjustments to students as they go. We do a lot of group work, and that's whether the students are on the cloud or not. But again, I like to think that we're receptive to whatever issues our students might be facing. And it might be just a short-term—you know, my life's gone all pear shaped. Everything's gone wrong, and for this period of time, I'm just really struggling—versus the people who have long-term ongoing conditions that we get to know over the course of the four years or however long they're with us.

So as I said, we haven't ever sat around and talked about inclusive assessments. But I think at the moment, you know, we still get complaints about assessments. But they're far less. Our students are basically happy, both undergrad and postgrad. And we can always improve. Some of them are much better than others. But on the whole we're fairly happy with how we do it.

There was one more point there. Not everybody does this, but we do have podcasts at the beginning of a unit where we might just talk about the assessment. So we'll use Kaltura or one of those, and we'll just do a short video just purely and simply on the assessment so that the students can go back and listen to that as they get through to check. So it's taking the actual assessment brief. And just—you can never write everything. And if you write everything in an assessment, it becomes so confusing and complicated that makes it worse, or we find that. And so we have a fairly short one, and then we just do a podcast. And the student can go back, so can we, so we can go back and say, this is exactly what I said, because it's sitting there on the cloud for the whole of the trimester. And so that's how we do our assessments. Good.

[APPLAUSE]

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: So we do have a question for you, Linda, if you want to stay where the microphone is. We have a question from someone online asking if you have student input into your assessments.

LINDA TIVENDALE: No.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: Would you like to elaborate?

LINDA TIVENDALE: I suppose when we first put them together, we were using the feedback from students as in what they didn't like about the assessments to put them together. I mentioned estimating before, where we're moving into a lot more using industry software for estimating. And that is indirectly, but we probably would have done it, but perhaps not so quickly, because students said, why are we doing this manually, because I already work in the industry, and we use blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. But no, we don't have sort of student input.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: You have some informal processes perhaps.

LINDA TIVENDALE: Yes, you could say that.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: Are there any questions in the room for Linda? I did have one question myself, which was having heard Tegan's story and you said you didn't really have a process, you weren't quite sure around whether you really do have inclusive assessment, but hopefully your unit coordinators are doing something. Have you got any processes in place to help them with that? Or is there anything you're thinking about now—having heard that story—that you might put in place?

LINDA TIVENDALE: I was thinking about the fact that—I do think that most of us are very receptive. I would hate to think that any of us were saying, well, you should just withdraw. I just would not see that as a good approach for anybody who's delivering construction management. And I know that we put a lot of effort into students who need it.

But I think what I was thinking of when Tegan was talking was that we probably don't put that same sort of effort into the feedback. We probably could fiddle around the edges with feedback. I know that some of us attempted recording the feedback, and we all gave up. That was just too difficult for us. So whether or not we should have another go at that—but having said that, we're also all very receptive that if a student comes along or contacts us and wants additional feedback, we'll give them additional feedback. So yeah, you know, I mean, we're not perfect, but I'd like to think we do a really good job.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: Thank you very much.

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: Just a quick reminder before Friederika starts that if anyone hasn't got their mic muted out there in the cloud, please double check that for us. Friederika.

FRIEDERIKA KAIDER: Thank you very much. As you can imagine in the Faculty of Arts and Education, we have a lot of diversity in the range of assessments that we offer. And, you know, they certainly differ from School to School and also from course to course. But within courses, we also have a lot of diversity.

And that's what really prompted a request made to us in DLF to establish some sort of guideline for academics on marking and designing these different types of assessments. So we've got, you know, videos and film and graphics and animation and performances and demonstrations. And academics came to us and said, well, you know, how do we equate a performance, for instance, with a 1000-word essay? So that was the challenge.

So we did some research. We looked at, well, what's the practice within the Faculty, because we've got all this range. We've got a lot of examples of different types of assessments, how they're designed and how they're weighted in terms of marks. We also looked at practices in other faculties at Deakin. We looked at what was available to us through other university websites—very difficult to access any information there—and we did a literature search. And there was very little information about it. You know, occasionally a poster was referenced or a video or maybe an audio, but you know nothing extensive at all.

And we also of course, looked at our own assessment policy and what texts are required. In looking at our assessment policy, we got a bit excited when we saw 'the comparability of assessments'. And we thought, oh good, we've got something here. Well, no. That really referred to moderation and comparability among markers, among assessors. And I'm using the word 'comparability' and 'equivalency' and maybe even 'equity' a little bit interchangeably here.

And it wasn't easy. You know, we couldn't just produce a formula saying, a poster will be worth this much, or a video will be worth this much, because it really depended, what was the learning outcome intended to be met by this assessment? What was the assessment output? I mean, was the video being assessed for the creative input in it, or the technical expertise, or both? So a lot of it was sort of, 'it depends'.

We definitely wanted to also have a look at what the requirements were in terms of performance criteria and standards. So, you know, digging down a level from the assessment design and the learning outcomes. But then what were the real marking criteria here? And very importantly, and I think Tegan spoke to this to some degree, was the student effort and workload. We sometimes overlook how much we ask of the students. It might be a three-minute video, but it could take them weeks and weeks and weeks to put together.

And so an important consideration—and I know we've got a speaker later on talking to this—was whether the digital technology was going to be used as a means or an ends, or maybe even a combination. Now, I'm not going to go through all of these.

So then we used as our basis 'What's a 1000-word essay worth?'. We tried to break down what some of the component parts of that were to consider in how you might weight things. And you know, this is a guide only. It is not a formula. It is just an estimate of what you might look at if you're an academic.

So you can see the range. We tried to look at individual and teamwork options. And just some of the newer formats—you know, webinars, using various sorts of platforms for technology, not an easy situation. And in the case of the School for Communication and Creative Arts, you know, there were some specific sort of types of assessments that really only pertained to that sort of discipline, or those disciplines within it. And we couldn't even sort of give much of a guidance there because it all depended on what the assessment's outcome was and, you know, what criteria were going to be demonstrated. That's it.

[APPLAUSE]

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: Such an amazing piece of work. We were so delighted to hear about it. Have we got any questions?

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: Does anyone in the room have a question for Fred?

AUDIENCE: Have you had any feedback from academics or students about the process?

FRIEDERIKA KAIDER: I haven't. So it hasn't sort of filtered through to me. I think that's a good question and something to be chased up. And at the moment, this is really only in one School. So it hasn't even been adopted by the Faculty or formalised in any way. It's just the practice within one School.

And I think it's actually a document that is a basis, and I think there could be a bit more rigour and further input going into developing something for the whole University. But I think that would involve a number of other people.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: So we don't have any more questions online, but Mary has a question.

MARY DRACUP: Thank you, Friederika. I'm so pleased that you've made a starting point for us with this. It's a really great place, and I think that the other faculties would be—or can I put the question: Are there people in other faculties who can see that this would be something that they would like to adopt in some way, or adapt for their own purposes? Would you have any sort of, any reservations or any things that you'd particularly like to achieve with this kind of a comparability guideline?

KEVIN MURPHETT: Great to be able to have a look at it. Thanks. It's Kevin Murphett from the School of Health and Social Development. I think it's a great piece of research, and I think even in draft form it would be really worth sharing with other schools and faculties to have their thoughts go into it as well, yeah.

FRIEDERIKA KAIDER: Thanks, Kevin. Yes, I think that would be the way to move forward. And I just wanted to say, you know, a bit mea culpa like Linda, you know, our intention—the agenda wasn't inclusivity. It was really approaching it from another direction. But you can see how applicable it is to inclusivity. And even in terms of guiding academics saying, oh, well, you know, here are some options. Academics don't always think of a whole range of options that might be possible for students. So it could even put some ideas into their minds of alternatives that they could offer students.

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: Sharon?

SHARON PITTAWAY: Hi, there. I came to the task from quite a different perspective. I took a more literal interpretation of what we were asked to do, which was to suggest some assessment strategies that may be useful in an inclusion environment. And so I'm not going to be talking global principles or ideas. I'm going to be giving you quite a specific example of one task that could be seen or argued to be an inclusive task, and on the other hand could not be seen to be an inclusive task.

I think it's kind of problematic in a way, if I can be a little bit perhaps controversial, to say a 1000-word essay is our standard for where we are, because some students will spend weeks and weeks and weeks in putting a 1000-word essay together and may create a video in half an hour or a bit longer. So I guess it depends on skills and capabilities of our students. And so where we start with the work you're doing, Friederika, is really interesting, I think; and what we think is relatively unproblematic or normal, I suppose, or standard in terms of these types of assessments that we might put forward.

I currently work in the Faculty of Business and Law. But I must mention I don't teach in the Faculty of Business and Law. I come from a teacher education background. And so this may or may not work in the Faculty of Business and Law. It would be interesting.

But for me, assessment tasks, any assessment task we design, needs to be designed, and we need to be thinking about what it is we're doing and why we're doing it rather than saying we're going to ask students to regurgitate what we've told them. And so in speaking to quite a number of my colleagues in the Faculty, I hear the word 'test' a lot. “I'm going to test students' knowledge.”

And so it might be that students have been told—because for some people that's the way the best way to teach, you tell students what you want them to learn or to know—and then you ask them about their knowledge. And you test them on it. And so moving away from an idea that testing is the default way of determining a student's achievement of learning outcomes can be quite a challenge in a faculty such as Business and Law.

So for me, the idea of designing assessment tasks is really important. And some principles that I use in the design of assessment tasks is assessment tasks can be cumulative, and so we can build on what we do across the course of the semester. So this really speaks to unit design as well.

Scaffolding—and so I think the skills that we ask students to demonstrate through the assessment and the knowledge we ask them to demonstrate can be scaffolded across the course of the semester, trimester, and opportunities for providing formative feedback to students but also to staff. And so if we design an assessment task where there are opportunities for formative assessment, as academics, we can get an idea of what students don't know or can't do, and we can provide extra resources perhaps to help scaffold their achievement of a particular skill or learning outcome.

And the other idea I have, I guess, about assessments—not my idea, but I draw from it—is the idea of assessment for learning. So not only designing assessment tasks *of* learning, but designing assessment *for* learning. So this slide is very busy, and it's just an example of an online poster task that has that element of building on from one thing to another, of happening across a trimester, of being scaffolded and supported with resources in skill and knowledge development. Where we take the pressure off having one final submission—so students are less likely to ask for extensions, and that takes a huge amount of time in a big faculty like Business, where course numbers are very, very high.

And so students can put together—this is an online poster using a tool such as Glog—well, Glogster, but there are others. And so students start kind of gently into this. So the week two—and this was designed for online students, what you call your cloud students, sorry.

So a week two might be an online discussion post summarising a key issue raised so far. So these are just broad examples. It doesn't have to be like this. But some gentle way into posting some kind of response to a question or an idea or a concept or an issue.

Week three may be an online discussion post including a hyperlink to a relevant online resource. And so students are going out to find something. They do an online discussion post. They link to a resource that may be useful for other students. And there are a whole range of online resources that then they might choose from.

Week four might be a two-minute audio recording. And so because I come from—my background is in teacher education, and the big thing in education is about students not only being consumers of information and of knowledge but of producing knowledge, using somewhere, something that they can use other tools, online tools, audio or video, whatever, for producing items of knowledge or interest is important.

Week six may be an online discussion post identifying challenges so far and how the student has overcome them. So what have you found challenging? So that speaks to GLO 6 in terms of self-management and gets students to think about how they're managing their own development of their skills and what they might do to overcome those things.

And all along the way here there are opportunities for formative feedback, not just from staff but from other students as well. Post an image or a diagram that illustrates an idea or concept, two-minute video recording, and a final submission of an online poster comprising text, links to online resources, images, audio, and video recording. So that's just one idea about how we might move away from a reliance on only written submissions that have a final submission point where there is no opportunity for review or development or formative feedback along the way.

And so the task is completed over the trimester, can have submission points built in, so week four you might submit in a formal sense what you've done so far, or you might submit weeks two and three for instance. It also helps students develop their skills through the supported scaffolded approach. And as I mentioned before, it builds their capacity for self-management. And the notion of formative assessment to students I think helps develop their skill set, so the skills they're developing, the tool set, the resources they're drawing from, and their mindset about—they don't have this big task that's due in week 11 or whatever. There's little steps along the way that they can take to complete this assessment task. So that's it for me.

[APPLAUSE]

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: Have we got some questions, Trina?

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: Thank you, Sharon. That was a really nice example of how we might move away from high-stakes assessment. I might have a question this time. How come it is high-stakes assessment, and what are we doing to tackle that? And do you have any thoughts around the faculty context of what we're doing in that area?

SHARON PITTAWAY: Can you just ask the first part of that question? There's a word I missed.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: High-stakes assessment. How common is high-stakes assessment in your Faculty?

SHARON PITTAWAY: Very.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: And is anything being done to combat that?

SHARON PITTAWAY: Yes. So it's very common. Yes, thank you, Robyn. So yes, it's very common.

So assignment-exam in many, many units—often one assignment and then an exam. And the assignment might be a quiz or a test—not a multiple choice test anymore, but a quiz or a test. And so it's really two high-stakes assessment tasks where the notion of testing knowledge is really at the forefront. And so moving away from that will be very challenging, I imagine, for many people. So staff will need to be supported. If this is the way the Faculty decides they want to go, the staff will need to be supported in thinking through not just an attitudinal change—I think that's really important to the notion of testing--but also their skills in developing tasks that might fit some principles of inclusion.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: Does anyone else have a question for Sharon?

AUDIENCE: I do. Two questions, actually. Firstly, is all the weighting for this assessment on the final product? Or do you assess at various points along the way?

SHARON PITTAWAY: My suggestion would be to assess along the way. Andrew Cain in SEBE has a portfolio task that students submit on a very regular basis. They get feedback on it. And it's only assessed at the end. And so the formative feedback helps to guide students in what they know and can do and further develop then across the rest of the submission points for this. So I think I don't have a definitive answer of what should be. I think there are arguments probably for and against.

AUDIENCE: And student feedback? Has this actually been--

SHARON PITTAWAY: I used to do it. Not in the Faculty of Business and Law, but this is an assessment task. And students really appreciated the fact that it was quite a big task, but they had time to develop those skills across the course of the trimester. And they found that because they were building up, they didn't have this big time pressure at the end where they were doing really intensive work. For those students who like—I don't know if students actually like it, but for those who have a tendency to wait until the night before, it's not a task that can be done the night before. So those students who are used to doing assessment tasks that way often don't like it because they want to just spend—I just want to do it the day before. They might have been thinking about it, whatever the task is. But it's depending on the type of student.

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: Thank you, Sharon.

SHARON PITTAWAY: There's a question.

AUDIENCE: I have just a question about your role in the—I just had a question about your role in the Faculty of Business and Law, because you said that you came from a teacher training background. So are you working on design of assessment for the Faculty rather than teaching students?

SHARON PITTAWAY: So that's part of my role. So my role is really about helping academics develop their teaching and assessment practice.

AUDIENCE: And is that something that's happening across the faculties, because that sounds like such a good idea.

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: We actually need to move on to the next speaker. So we might park that one and then come back at the end.

SHARON PITTAWAY: I'd like to answer that.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: And I thought at the end it might also be really nice to get Tegan's thoughts on the impact of high-stakes assessment like that for yourself or other students. So we might get you to think about that one, and we'll come back to it.

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: And here's Susie. Switch the slides. Does anyone want to stand up and have a stretch while I get this…

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: Tegan, if it doesn't put you on the spot too much, did you want to comment on the student perspective of high-stakes assessment? You might need to turn that mic on. I think if you push up.

TEGAN WHITTEN: Yeah. So I think in a way it does depend on the student. I think some students really like it because they get to just do it in one hit, and it's done. I think in another way, though, if you fail it, it makes a really big impact obviously on the grade. If it's worth, like, 40% or 50%, it means a lot as far as passing the unit.

I think also having more opportunities to display your knowledge in different formats is better because it just allows people to show their knowledge in different ways—like, having one test or one assignment to show everything that you've learned in a unit. Unless it's like a portfolio that brings together multiple things or something like that, I think it can be quite kind of restrictive and doesn't really illustrate everything that you've learned in a unit. I think exams are worth too much too, but that's just my opinion.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: So you might learn a little bit more if you have to do a few things rather than just one single thing at the end. That's an excellent answer. And now we'll go over to Susie.

SUSIE MACFARLANE: Hi, everyone. Thank you very much for inviting me to participate, Mary and Merrin. It's a pleasure to be here. I've been at Deakin since 2006, and I was a Disability Liaison Officer in one of our schools in the Faculty of Health when we kind of needed one to help staff encourage staff engage a little bit more in some of these conversations. So it's really terrific to see the trajectory that Deakin's on and that we can have these kind of events now.

A bit louder? My heart rate's about 150 at the moment. I don't know why I'm quite nervous, being with esteemed colleagues who know all this and care a lot about it.

So it just—for me the question is who we invite into our processes. And I think with the students as partners, trajectory at Deakin, it's terrific to see that. And it's changed the room a lot having you here, Tegan, and your story. And thank you for that. And even just the silence that I had while I was trying to load up PowerPoint made space for someone else to speak, which is great.

And so one of the things that I did to try to engage people, the audience, in this is set up a little survey that some of you participated in before we started today. So thank you for that. So I've incorporated some suggestions from people into this conversation. One of the questions was what does inclusive assessment mean to you?

So one person said, 'assessment practices that give every participant the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of a topic in a way that is inclusive and considerate of individual circumstances.' And I think we've taken in others who've been talking about that point to that.

'It means thinking about what's being assessed and designing assessments with difference in mind.' So we're moving on from the industrial model of education to recognising that people are different. It's a very powerful thing to change, I think, that perspective.

And then the notion of flexibility comes to light. 'It also means being flexible with students when they need adjustments.' Now, while I say this, I've got in mind the fact that academics, I think, are the second lowest quality of life profession in Australia, apart from carers, in some research. And many of my colleagues and people you know will be experiencing challenges in keeping up with workload and managing their work-life balance.

And the demands are getting greater. Teaching is becoming more complex. The standards are higher. That's why there's pods—well, I guess, many on the panel are supporting teaching at the faculty level, because it's a team sport now, and it needs a lot of specialists involved. So it's a very complex context that we're in.

So we have to be very aware, I think, when we're making these claims like you've got to be more flexible. The people are already working six and a half days a week, and they're already struggling to learn all the different ways of thinking and working and teaching in the 21st century demands. So it's a balancing act.

This quote says, 'Not every student follows the same learning journey. And therefore assessment must be designed with flexibility and empathy to allow students to grow their capabilities over a reasonable period of time.' And that's a really powerful idea that stops with thinking about putting a student in a box. And we see this language a lot. 'That's an excellent student or a bad student', 'they're an HD student', 'this is a good thing or a bad thing', rather than understanding that people learn over time.

And there's evidence that students who come from low-SES backgrounds who may struggle early on in their studies actually do better by final year than students who were high achievers from the very beginning, because they've learned some academic skills and some resilience and a whole lot of other things. So we can't put people in a box at one period of time.

So this quote talks about expectations, which is really interesting. 'Ensuring both high expectations and the ability for students to meet those expectations, regardless of their background.' There's also research in this literature around setting high expectations both for low-performing students and high-performing students results in better outcomes. But as long as there is sufficient support, as this quote suggests.

So how do our current assessment processes—how inclusive are they in assessment and feedback? What role do students play? What role do teachers play? And is any of that—where are we up to in thinking about who does what, and what processes we need to put around that to ensure it works? We can't just throw students the whole box and dice and say, right, you assess your work, without or give feedback without sufficient support.

But I think it's really interesting to say, well, who sets the standards and how is that done? To what extent do students understand what the standard, the expected standard might be? Who does the evaluation? Who provides feedback?

Does the student get the chance to respond to feedback? And I'm currently a student and experiencing this. When there's a misunderstanding about what I've done in the presentation or something, and then I don't get the chance to reciprocate, doesn't feel inclusive. Do students use the feedback, as we've talked about, and do we know if a student's work has improved?

So what aspects of our assessment and feedback processes can students productively participate in? So I've kind of framed this in three stages: understanding the expected standard; evaluating work and providing feedback; and responding to and using feedback.

So I’m taking a kind of broader view, because I work in the Faculty, we're kind of responsible for assuring the quality of teaching and assessment across the whole Faculty. So we have to keep in mind the big picture when someone comes to us through the whole of the student journey across the unit and across the course.

So it's not a deep dive, but a picture. So for example, with students' engagement with standards, David Nichol has a framework where he says, well—at the bottom of the spectrum is teachers modelling work where students start to get an understanding of standards through teachers modelling it. Now, Jac Broadbent does this with her first-year students in Psychology and Health, where students get the chance, the first time we're thinking about an assignment, to look at the example she’s created herself and evaluate it.

And so it's not a high—she doesn't do a perfect job to give them the opportunity to do some criticism. So it's really low-stakes risk for the students because they're not evaluating their own work or that of a peer. They're just looking at example. And there's a bit of humour involved.

The teacher can explain the rubric, unpack it. The teacher can show high or high-quality work. Teacher uses the rubric to evaluate an example, so actually modelling that process of using a rubric and using it to start to unpack the qualities of the work. Notice we haven't said anything about marks yet, which just completely destroys any useful thinking about assessment most of the time—I know that’s a provocative thing to say but...

Students use the rubric to evaluate an example. Students use a rubric to evaluate their own or others' work. And now we're getting into processes that require a lot of thought about how they're implemented. And one of our participants in the survey proposed this exact idea that if students had a participatory approach to designing the rubric, then perhaps they would understand what is expected of them. And we've done that in a postgraduate course where we've got students to, across a week first of all, evaluate the rubric and criticise it, and then give us feedback towards the end of the week about the changes they would like to see. It was a really powerful approach. And then others have actually gone the full box and dice, where students critique or contribute to the rubric or create a response.

So the second phase of evaluating work and providing feedback—so here we have an example of a student's—an assessment we designed where the student evaluated their own work as they submitted it.

[BELL RINGING]

They had to justify the level that they’d chosen and identify the areas for improvement, and describe specific actions they were going to take to improve the work. So this is really getting the student to think through the whole cycle.

And the last stage is responding to and using feedback. So one person in the survey said they make formative assessment part of the requirement, part of the assessment, requiring students to document and reflect on the feedback they received. And I think for this, we need to take a course-wide approach, because if we expect students to do this at the end of the unit with no connection to other units or other skills they're developing, it won't happen.

And my last question for us to think about is not just the assessment phases but which parts of our students are included and excluded when we are thinking about their assessment feedback. For example, stress, the emotional response, their sense of belonging that Tegan brought up. And one of the theories I used to think about this is self-determination theory, which is mastery, autonomy, and purpose, where we give students choice or agency. We make sure they have a sense of belonging or connectedness, that people know them and care about them, and that we build their confidence and self-efficacy, so that they can do tasks, they can succeed in the tasks that we set them, and start to develop a sense of their growing capacity.

And I think Jo's going to talk a lot more about the challenges, so I won't go into these. But it's not easy. To do all these sort of things requires a lot of thought. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: Thank you, Susie. And I just love posing those questions for us, but also heaps of information there that can help us with some of the solutions as well. I'll just mention, those slides are on the SlideShare for those who are interested. Trina?

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: So we might keep running. I think there's just been a question come up, but we might hold that to the end because we're running over time.

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: So it's over to Jo. Thank you.

JOANNA TAI: So if I stand here, this microphone works, right? Cool. I will just hide behind the lectern. Where are we? Right.

So a few people have alluded to what I'm going to talk about, which is concerning because I'm--well, hopefully I cover those things. And thank you very much to Mary for inviting me along. I think the brief for the panel was also mentioned previously around, you know, what are you doing in terms of inclusive assessment? And I sort of went, well, I'm not doing anything. My role is as a researcher. I'm at the Centre for Research in Assessment in Digital Learning. So I guess I can do the assessment and digital learning part from a research perspective.

So what I'm going to be talking about in the next couple of minutes is actually drawn from a chapter of a book that hopefully will come out later this year led by Margaret Bearman, who is in the room, also from CRADLE, around reimagining assessment in a digital world. And so I have just a few points to sort of get you thinking a little bit harder about this.

And when we think about digital assessment, usually we think that it will be wonderful—that technology will help us do things better, will help us do things in a way that is more inclusive, that serves a greater population—that means that we can look forward to the future. However, there are potentially issues. And if we don't think about them explicitly, we may forget about them. So that's my main premise.

And the first problem is that we assume that everyone can use technology. And this is both for educators as well as our students. So I came to Deakin from another university, and the online portal looks a little bit different. I studied my Graduate Certificate in Higher Education, Learning, and Teaching here. And I had to relearn how to use a whole new learning management system, which was different from the ones I had previously used.

And then if I think back to when I was a student coming into a university for the first time, there are all these bits and pieces that we kind of have this assumption that, ah, you'll be able to find it online. You'll know how to navigate those menus. And recently, oh, you're digital natives. You actually know how to use a computer. We don't need to tell you about that kind of stuff.

And all of these are huge assumptions about individuals and their previous experiences and what they have previously done with technology. So if we're implementing assessment that involves technology, we probably do need to consider very carefully what kinds of things we need to do to make sure that all students have the appropriate grounding to be able to complete and demonstrate their knowledge through a particular assessment task. So if we’re asking people to make videos, we've got to make sure that everyone knows how to use a video editing programme, or maybe not make sure, but make sure the resources are there so that people can access them and know that they are there.

The second problem is that technology may not be inherently inclusive. It seems like a no-brainer, but it still bears repeating, because every website that we go to may not be able to be read by a screen reader. We might PDF our documents, but the PDF comes out as the image version and not the text version. So that poses problems for copying and pasting. What if you wanted to change a font to make it more readable for people perhaps with dyslexia? There are so many examples of where we think, ah, it's on the computer. It can be transformed into different things. Everyone will be able to use it in some way, and that's possibly not true.

The final thing that may be a problem is what happens with digital assessments? If we're thinking about people uploading things to YouTube, putting them online, and we're asking students to make blogs—and this is perhaps not so much the accessibility but more about people living in the world and what happens once you finish your degree. You move on, and that blog is still there and represents your views from maybe 10 years ago, and someone can search for it online.

How does that work in terms of ensuring people—what am I trying to say? There's potentially concern about stuff hanging around for a long time which may not represent future views, which may be problematic. And if we've got these things that are hanging around, then other people will use them, and other people may benefit from them in ways that were not originally intended, which might also be problematic.

So ways forward. We did try and think of some solutions, and I kind of mentioned them already. So firstly, making sure that there is training and upskilling available for the technology that we do use. And this might be in terms of having links really available so people don't have to own up and say, oh look, I don't actually know how to use that programme, because that's kind of confronting and maybe scary for people and scary for educators as well, if everyone assumes that we know how to do things.

Community engagement. And Tegan's mentioned this. There have been questions from the audience about, what are we doing? Are we involving people from all those different communities, have a say in how technology and assessment come together, and to know what is and isn't inclusive?

And finally, from an institutional perspective, we've got to work on these policy and guidelines. And I guess that was one of Mary's first things from today, around what are our inclusive assessment guidelines going to be, and how can we make sure that they are informed by people from all different parts of the university community? So maybe people within the University, but maybe people who end up interacting with people who come from the University. So in the case of health care, maybe thinking about extending things beyond just the students but also to service users.

And so to sum up, or not sum up, I thought I'd just leave you all with some prompts for discussion. So what are you all already doing that could be thought about or rethought about in terms of inclusive assessment? How can we support individuals and teams to work with the system? So Susie's comments around making sure that we are supportive.

And then how can practice be informed but not constrained by guidelines, principles, and policies? We wouldn't want something to say that we can only do inclusive assessment in one way. And then finally, a blue sky question: is inclusive assessment just the new, improved version of assessment, and is this something that we should just be doing? So that's all from me.

[APPLAUSE]

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: So does anyone have any questions for Jo before we let her get back to the safety of her seat and open up questions to all of the panellists? Anyone in the room have a question for Jo? I was going to throw you one of the questions which came up earlier, and quite a few of the speakers have sort of inferred it a little bit, or raised it or acknowledged it, and it was asked here around, how do we do scaffolded assessment, continuous assessment, which is better for students? How do we then manage staff workload?

JOANNA TAI: Yeah. That's a really tricky question. And I actually had a related thought earlier. And one of the things I wrote down on my notepad before was multiplicity, and I put a big box around it, because we can't just have one single way to do things. I think the solution, if there is a solution, lies in allowing that flexibility in a multiplicity of ways.

And particularly that thought around, OK, we want to have lovely scaffolded tasks where students can do things formatively along the way, get feedback, and then submit something final, or alternatively have those earlier bits count. That increases workload. But it also might exclude some students. So people with significant illnesses, where suddenly you can't get out of bed for two weeks—that's going to be a problem if you're meant to be doing a task in that two weeks.

So it may be that we need to provide options where you get that scaffolding along the way. Or there's another option where you can catch up at the end and only have to submit the final task. It's probably not the most amazing assessment design, but having options might mean that more people are supported. And that means the workload increases a bit for the students who take up those options but not for everyone, for those students who don't want to take up that option because it doesn't suit them.

And shout-out to Matt Dunn, also in the room. Our early feedback project kind of did that a little bit in terms of giving students the option to get formative feedback on their assignment earlier on, but they didn't have to take it up. So Matt had a bit of an increased workload, but it was manageable, I hope. And so l were able to provide some students with the support that they wanted without killing it for everyone.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: So an interesting proposition of potentially two assessment pathways for students, and they get to decide. And they don't have to necessarily create a case for why they need to take it a pathway, but they have that option. So we might even get Tegan's perspective on that if we have time, when we throw to other questions. But we might let you off the hook, Jo?

So we had a question for Susie specifically. How do you help your students to reflect beyond just going beyond being descriptive on their work in the formative process? Did you catch that? Or do you want that again?

SUSIE MACFARLANE: Beyond being descriptive?

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: So I think it's around how do you help your students reflect in a meaningful way in your assessment process?

SUSIE MACFARLANE: I'm not sure. I think the assessment task needs to be designed to be meaningful. I think Tegan raised that. And what's meaningful for students is what counts for them and what's the value they see. And it may vary depending on where the student is. But for first-year students, I think they're trying to adjust to higher ed and grapple with developing academic skills, and the idea of becoming a student.

And the idea of being a graduate and getting a job isn't very strong generally for them. So meaningful for them might be, I can do the assessment task and pass this unit. So in that situation, the main issue we see, I think, with the drug of addiction of choice in higher education, marks, is that people would stop thinking about what they're learning and what capabilities they have. And when I say people, I mean all of us—students, staff, everyone—what capabilities are being developed, and worry about numbers.

So the most meaningful thing we've done is to ask students to reflect on their achievement of the assessment criteria in the rubric or wherver it stands, it might sit within a list of accreditation capabilities, to the competency framework. But letting students later on, closer to graduation, connecting what they do with where they're going to be is a really powerful thing too. I think many people here and others do that, linking the assessment task to authentic tasks to make it a real problem that the world needs solving, not what I call breaking up rocks in the prison yard, which is getting all students to do the same thing that has no impact on the world, and helping them understand how they're going to use this capability. So we spend a lot of time interviewing in the pod to help making resources and connecting with people outside the students' context to draw the relevance of their work to the job that they're gonna be doing.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: Thank you, Susie. And we've also had asked that your slides be shared after the session, and I'm sure we'll be sharing all of the slides after the session.

SUSIE MACFARLANE: They're on SlideShare.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: So we had another question which was, how can we get students to assist in redesigning a rubric if they don't have prior experience? So I might throw that to someone who hasn't—or someone other than Jo and Susie. I thought, Sharon, you might have thoughts on that, given you were talking about scaffolding.

SHARON PITTAWAY: I think it's a really good question, because sometimes I think it's almost as if we're asking students to do the work of the educator. And I wonder what experience and knowledge they draw from in doing that work. That's not to say they shouldn't, I just wonder about it.

So again, in the reality of an 11-week trimester model, when many academics are saying, 'I need to make sure I cover this, this, this, this, this, this, and this', for accreditation purposes or whatever it might be, it's really difficult and challenging I think for many academics to think about how they might step away from content delivery to thinking more explicitly about: 'when am I going to put in opportunities for skill development, for learning about assessment, for having conversations about feedback, about our expectations, about students' expectations, about the task, about making it clearer?'

So I'm not giving an answer, because I think it's a really difficult thing for academics to come to terms with. But improving everybody's assessment literacy I think is important. So for me, I think it's important that we do step back from content delivery, only content delivery, and think about those other things that become part of being a student and an explicit educator in terms of going beyond just telling students what we think they need to know.

So I think it's really important that we do that. But we need to know—as academics, we need to know, because if we're struggling to put together rubrics, then we're really in not a terribly good place to help students put together rubrics. So I think everybody needs to be more skilled at that. And I think that's really tough.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: Does anyone else on the panel have thoughts on that question? Merrin, you looked like you were about to perhaps jump in?

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: So Tegan would like to.

TEGAN WHITTEN: I think it depends on the level of the year. So I think first year—so first year—so for instance, if you're doing a lab report, there's no use developing a rubric with students because a lab report is a lab report, and that's going to have a set of guidelines.

I think as you get into second and third year, I think you can develop—like, I think students are more aware of what rubrics entail and have developed those skills around assessment better. I think they can develop what's required in a bigger project. If there was a bigger project for a unit that was more heavily weighted or was an ongoing kind of project, I think students could develop a rubric around that and kind of have a portfolio or something, or a big project or something like that, could have input into what they want that project to look like and what they want to be assessed on in that. Or if there was a group project or something, I think designing a rubric for a group project would be really good.

So I think it depends on the context. And I think for the context where it doesn't apply, just making sure or consulting with students to make sure that the rubric that you do have is really clear and easy to follow. And yeah, you go through the rubric with students to make sure that it's a good rubric basically.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: So basically, if there is maybe some simple task or some tasks that students are more familiar with, they might have input into rubrics, and then also get a greater understanding themselves of how to read a rubric and use a rubric? Fantastic. And Mary, I think you had a question for Merrin, who has gotten away with no questions yet.

MARY DRACUP: OK, Merrin, this is either for you or for Steve. Steve's our Disability Services Coordinator. What would be the top few things that you find that students have difficulty with that make assessments *not* inclusive?

MERRIN MCCRACKEN: Thanks, Mary. Good question. I might call on Steve as well. I think that there isn't one answer and the answer is as diverse as the diversity of the students who register with us. I think one of the emerging areas or biggest areas that we're really struggling with is working on: how do we support students with fluctuating conditions and understanding the nature of that through an 11-week period? And so those discussions around multiple pathways and how we consider the range of alternatives and adjustments are big.

We've got the opportunity at the moment. We have around, well nearly 3000 students who were registered with the Disability Resource Centre last year. And we started with a new database which may have given some people many headaches, and us as well. But what it allows us to do is drill down into the sort of data around adjustments and students and what are the most common and what are the higher impact adjustments, and so on.

So we're actually just about to start a very small research project alongside Jo, where we're going to sort of interrogate some of that data and then look beyond that to what is that information telling us? But I think that will really help us. We know that most students who register with us are likely to need extensions. And so, you know, there's an adjustment on an access plan that everyone will have seen that is around not needing to provide additional documentation when applying for extensions. That's one of the things that's the most common. And we've certainly got a number of students who are registered with us with only that adjustment. And so that challenges us around, you know, maybe there's ways we can do those sorts of things more inclusively. Exams, of course, is another area where additional times and rest breaks, looking at the sorts of things that are set up around the exams, is very common as well. Steve, would you add anything to that?

STEVE MORGAN: Sounds good. Perhaps just in our experience sometimes, we only hear about things when they go badly for a student. And that can be varied in all forms of assessment. The scaffold approach to some of those assessments, given as an example before, can be really great for other students. But for a student with a fluctuating condition, that can look really appealing at the start of the trimester and may work for that student in many of the trimesters. But with such a condensed academic year, if there is a fluctuation in the student's health at some time during the trimester, that can put a lot of pressure on one student and then the academic to think creatively about how they're going to provide some flexibility for that student, if there is, I guess, a chunk of time out of the trimester where they're unable to be involved in those assessments. So everything that can work really well but there can be some issues as well. So that two-pronged approach, despite requiring some serious thought and potentially some extra work, is probably a good inclusive practice.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: Right. So I've got one last question for Fred, and then I thought we might close by asking Tegan if she has anything that she wants to finish with, because I think it's good practice to ask a student—to let them share their views at the beginning, at the end, if they want to. No pressure, Tegan. I'm just giving you some warning if you do want to say something wise.

Fred, with your—you were talking about equivalency across different assessment types. And that's really challenging when you have different, well, required learning outcomes, processes. You might be measuring a very different part of Bloom's taxonomy, for example. So whereas the equivalency is quite difficult across the whole university—and I'm not entirely convinced that that is necessary—have you thought about how you might look at within a unit of study or within a single assessment task with the same learning outcome, how you might apply your framework to give unit coordinators some guidelines around how they might actually have equivalency within a unit for students who need a change or a difference?

FRIEDERIKA KAIDER: No. We, I haven't specifically looked at it, but I think that's a great suggestion, particularly in terms of providing multiple pathways, and, you know, now that we've put it in a different sort of context and looking at it in terms of inclusivity. So I think that's something that's really, really worth looking at, and we will do. Thanks.

TRINA JORRE DE ST JORRE: Thank you, Fred. Tegan, did you want to say anything about any of the things that are being raised from a student perspective?

TEGAN WHITTEN: Yeah. I think that overall today's session has been really positive. I think something that we don't consider enough is the workload on staff, and I think that was something really powerful that came out today.

I think there is—I think there needs to be a fundamental shift in the sector towards—and I think it is happening. And I think we're seeing it now. There is a shift towards more meaningful assessment and realising that academics need more time to create meaningful assessment, and hopefully with time, universities will realise that academics need more time. But we can only hope.

So hopefully they'll realise that academics need more time to create that assessment and to support students in a way that is inclusive and making sure assessment is inclusive. And in the meantime, I think everyone's doing a really good job at making sure that assessment is as inclusive as it can be. I think that hopefully we're working towards really inclusive practice and making sure that university is something that's accessible for everyone and that anyone can kind of come in and work towards what they want to do. And I think that's a really powerful thing. And I think that's why I got into the student union and why I do what I do, because I think there shouldn't be barriers to doing what you want to do in your life. And if you want to do higher education, if you want to do uni, there shouldn't be things stopping you. And I think inclusive education is a really important part of that.

Yeah, I think it's been really exciting being here today, because I think it's been really hopeful and yet filled me with a lot of excitement and that kind of thing. So thank you, everyone.

[APPLAUSE]

MARY DRACUP: Thank you, panellists, a great deal, for your effort in putting these presentations and for your lovely delivery and your response to the questions. I think it's been a really valuable panel. And I'm just so glad that we thought to put it together.

The discussion can continue online. As I said before, we have this discussion forum set up in the ICCB site. So please do contribute to that, even if you don't want to add to the principle in terms of the guidelines. We've raised lots of issues today, and it'd be really good to just keep the conversation going, because there is a lot of work happening on the assessment—

[COMPUTER NOISES]

Sorry! On the assessment policy at the moment, and so it's just it's good to share that. Thank you very much, everyone. And thank you all for your contributions here and across the other campuses.

[APPLAUSE]