**PgCert Academic Practice in Art, Design and Communication**

**Action Research Project Ethical Enquiry Form**

**Participant name:**  Joanne McVey

**Cohort:** Friday, group 4

**Tutor name:** Lindsay Jordan

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| 1. **What is your research question?**   ***How can English Language Development tutors facilitate Chinese FE/HE students become comfortable within a learner centred holistic approach to task based learning?***  In my experience with students over the course of several years, many students find adapting to study in the UK a challenge, this includes aspects of adapting to the UK ‘holistic’ approach taken when learning in Art and Design. In many ways this is due to cultural differences within the teaching and learning approach. However, this is also dependent on where students were schooled. Many students are coming from high school in their home country and as such are familiar with a the Confucius heuristic method to teaching where students are taught from a teacher-centred approach within the parameters of the ‘question and answer’, however within this is a purpose to listen consider and reflect on what is being taught whilst also keeping an open mind within an inquiring approach. This is in contrast to learning within the western Socratic method where students are guided to discover and explore through albeit a similar reflective analytical approach there is a directive within constructed tasks to achieve the end result satisfactorily. In addition to this is the ‘holistic’ approach to study within art and design, where guidance through a project brief asks for research that is student led rather than a prescribed set of steps to follow reaching and end result for assessment. This has led me to consider how to help students used to a lifetime of learning in this way to find a path through a different teaching and learning landscape that means there is understanding and a certain amount of adaptation to the differences, so that students can feel comfortable with aspects of study within an art and design UK university.  The question also formed around the idea of using my artefact from the Inclusive Practice unit. The Artefact is 1) a radio piece by journalist Ben Chu “Chinese on Campus” (Radio 4, 2022, 11:00) and the 2) the accompanying text ‘*Why are Chinese Students so keen on the UK?*’ (Chu, 2022).  This artefact could be used as a useful intervention to help create a sense that teachers/lecturers have an awareness of the Chinese student experience and how best to encourage confidence within as a student completes coursework and assessment. |
| 1. **Who will be providing you with information to help you answer your question, and how will you approach and/or select them?**   I will request participation from a group of students. I have decided to request participation from an MA group I currently support as my perception is that this group may be more receptive and potentially as mature learners willing to process and respond to my intervention in its current form.  Originally I intended for the intervention to be with undergraduate or pre-undergraduate students. However, as I have developed a rapport with the MA group more than others this would hopefully prove fruitful and may help me to reduce assumptions I may already have about learners, face culture and other issues I am aware of within the cohort of Chinese students. Students the whole group will work as participants to respond to semi-structured questions. Depending on responses I will then ask 2/3 individual students for more detailed responses via structured interviews to consider as case studies to add to my data collection. |
| 1. **What will you be asking participants to do?**   I intend to:   * I will ask for consent to participation in the intervention activity from one group of @15/20 MA students. * I will record responses via a set of semi-structured questions with responses added to Padlet as ethnographic data. * I will then ask 2/3 students to participate in individual interviews with structured questions to record as case studies as part of data collection. |
| 1. **How will you get informed consent from these participants?**   I will provide a consent form that considers the sensitivity between myself as the teacher/lecturer and my students. I will provide information for students that will clearly guide them as regards the research question and the intention of the research conducted. I will provide information so that students are aware of how the research will be recorded and used within the study. I will also provide an opt out, ensuring that students should not feel obliged to participate with data collection. This may affect collection of data vis a vis a Padlet, however I will make it clear that the opt out will mean that anything recorded within the session can be removed and not used for evaluative purposes. I will inform students where the research will be available after completion and that they can still request to opt out at this stage with the intention that the information given to participants will reassure concerns regarding data availability university wide after completion of the study (BERA, 2018)  As many of my students are monolingual I will provide the consent form in other languages (at this stage in Chinese) and provide information that the study will also be available in the participants language once complete. The intention is to ensure an inclusive and safe environment for students to participate within the research. |
| 1. **What potential risks to the interests of participants do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks?** *A participant’s interests include their physical and psychological wellbeing; their commercial interests; and their rights of privacy and reputation.*   The potential for risks could be that students feel exposed as the intention of the intervention through a video and text discussing Chinese students on campus directly looks at the lived experience of one particular group. This may mean some students are uncomfortable with the topic area and so the result could be a mix of emotions which could have an adverse effect on the teaching and learning experience. In particular when considering Confucian cultural heritage students and the cultural habit of ‘face’. ‘Mian’ or mianzi’ in Chinese. This is where a students’ cultural norm is to maintain a reputation and a social standing without losing prestige. This can mean for example, not to speak out in groups for fear of ‘losing face’ within the group or a fear of making a mistake and so feel embarrassed or ashamed at letting oneself down.  Alongside this is also my role as the teacher v the role of the student meaning there are already defined roles for us as actors within the research. In that the role I have as the educator and students as learner. Once again this also connects to the concept within Confucian teaching, whereby the teacher is to be listened to with the student considering information given by the teacher as ‘expert’ and then to consider this information in order to ask a question of the teacher. However, my line of enquiry is to ask questions where students can be honest and open about their lived experience and not feel the weight of the intervention used.  The risk is that students may feel a sense of my expectations which further exposes ‘emotion, identity, roles and responsibilities’ of ‘Ethics work’ (Banks, 2016:3). In this situation being careful with how I see myself within the ‘work’ is important. In particular as defined by Banks (2016:4) to consider the following:    “*3. Emotion work – being caring, compassionate and empathic; managing*  *emotions; building trust; responding to emotions of others.”*    Another risk is that some students may decide they do not wish to participate further for interviews once the intervention is complete. If this is the case I will highlight the opt out. However, the risk here could mean if many within the group do not wish to participate I will then adapt data collected, encouraging participation by explaining further my intentions. I could also ask students structured questions as opposed to semi-structured in an attempt to offer less of a barrier to participation.  Mental health is also a risk as some students may have strong emotions such as feeling home sick or are struggling at this stage of their learning. In this instance continuing to offer an opt out as well as guidance on how to seek support from university departments will be offered.  As many of my students are monolingual I will provide the opportunity for responses to be in first language as this may be easier for students to express how they respond to questions. |
| 1. **What potential risks to yourself as the practitioner do you foresee and what steps will you take to minimise those risks?**   The main risk is that I will make assumptions based on years of teaching Chinese students. The issue being that of ‘essentialising’ the ‘Chinese learner’ fitting those students into a stereotype with ‘these identities have been created in order to consider how adequately they serve the situation that those of us in Western higher education institutions currently ﬁnd ourselves in, namely the multicultural nature of undergraduate and postgraduate courses’ (Clarke & Gieve, 2008: 54). As such attempting to remove what could be argued as an ‘unconscious bias’ based on my white privilege as an English language teacher will be a challenge and is also part of the reason for conducting this intervention. Meaning I am aware up to a point of this and so action research to question my biases. Over time I would argue that perhaps my awareness of students is perhaps not always ‘unconscious’ rather that they I am aware of them and so the inner question of how best to facilitate students pushing these biases aside could be a progressive move for me professionally and through this research raise awareness of this as an unspoken truth for many teaching.  Another potential risk to myself as a practitioner is that I may also be affected by students reactions in terms of how study at a UK university is viewed. In that case I will minimise the risk by reporting any wider concerns to my line managers as well as reflecting on this within my evaluation. Whilst conducting the research it will also be necessary to consider the following as set out by Banks (2016:4)  *“4. Identity work – working on one’s ethical self; creating an identity as an ethically*  *good professional; negotiating professional identity; maintaining professional*  *integrity.”*  Checking in on my role as teacher to ensure that whilst engaged in conversations and interactions with students I maintain a professional identity will be paramount due to the potential sensitivity within participants (students) identity. |
| 1. **Does your project involve children or vulnerable adults e.g. a person with a learning disability?**   No, however I regard my students as potentially vulnerable given the context of the intervention as it is solely looking at how Chinese students as a cohort feel about studying in the UK. This potential to raise a variety of emotions means I would therefore argue could make students feel vulnerable. |
| 1. **How will you store the information you gather from participants?**   I will not use sensitive information such as full names, or student ID. I will ask students if they prefer to remain anonymous.  I will retain data that has been given consent to be used and or reused and or available publicly through the university that is relevant from enquiry and is included in the completed study. I will keep data in a secure password protected digital space. Padlet will be password protected as will any other records. I will delete all data that has not been given consent, destroying what is recorded or held within my own records, digitally or otherwise. (BERA, 2018) |
| 1. **References:**   Banks, S (2016) Ethics and Social Welfare, *Everyday ethics in professional life: social work as ethics work* 10 (1), pp. 35-52. DOI:10.1080/17496535.2015.1126623  British Educational Research Association [BERA] (2018)  *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*, fourth edition, London. <https://www.bera.ac.uk/researchers-resources/publications/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018> (Accessed: 12th October 2023)  Clark, R. & Gieve, S.N. (2006) ‘*On the Discursive Construction*  *of ‘The Chinese Learner’*, Language, Culture and Curriculum, 19:1, 54-73, DOI: 10.1080/07908310608668754  *Chinese on Campus* (2022) BBC Radio 4, 16Th February, 11:00 am Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0014gbk>  (Accessed: 22nd May 2023)  Chu, B (2022) *Why are Chinese Students so keen on the UK?* Available at: <https://www.benchu.co.uk/post/chinesestudentsukunieversities>  (Accessed: 22nd May 2023) |
| **I confirm my responsibility to deliver the project in accordance with the Code of Practice on Research Ethics of the University of the Arts London (the University). In signing this form I am also confirming that:**   1. **The form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.** 2. **I understand and accept that the ethical propriety of this project may be monitored by the relevant College Research body and/or the University’s Research Ethics Sub-Committee.** |
| Signed: ­­­Joanne McVey Date: 12th October 2023 |
| **I support this project and have** **reviewed it with the participant:**  Signed: ­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |