Title: Making inclusive assessment a reality: an online resource to support staff in implementing assessment change

Presenter: Lyndsey Seddon
York St John University

Abstract:

The paper will explore and debate the issue of inclusive assessment for disabled students, presenting an online resource which practically supports academic members of staff to embed inclusive assessment methodologies within curriculum design.

SEDA Values

Indicate which SEDA Values may be relevant to your proposal:

An understanding of how people learn		Scholarship, professionalism and ethical practice	
Working and developing learning communities		Working effectively with diversity and promoting inclusivity	Yes
Continuing reflection on professional practice	Yes	Developing people and processes	Yes

Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Understand more fully the changing values underlying the inclusive assessment debate, specifically in relation to disabled students, but also as it applies to students more widely.

- Articulate ways to develop inclusive assessment practice within their own field of work, and how the assessment challenge reflects both personal and institutional values.

Session Outline

This session addresses the conference theme of 'Changing Values in Higher Education' in relation to curriculum design and delivery. It focuses on the SEDA value of 'working effectively with diversity and promoting inclusivity', and will be of interest to educational developers who wish to embed this value specifically in the area of assessment design.

This session was inspired by an online project from York St John University, which promoted inclusive assessment for students with disabilities. It is hoped, however, that the discussion will embrace the idea of inclusivity more broadly, stimulating candid reflection and practical suggestions as to how we can now take the debate forward.

To begin the session, the online resource from YSJU will be demonstrated. This will provide a window on the inclusive assessment debate, highlighting key drivers for change, showcasing innovative practice within the field and exploring a possible model to guide and measure progress (Waterfield and West, 2006).

The impact of this resource will be described, before delegates are invited to share their thoughts on, and experiences of, the move towards more inclusive assessment practices in a facilitated discussion. In particular, the discussion will explore why, despite embodying widely-accepted social, ethical and educational values, inclusive assessment methodologies continue to be resisted within the sector. It is hoped that participants will come away with ideas on how to constructively address this resistance.

Session Activities

30 minute presentation:

- Introduction to the context at York St John University.

- Demonstration of an online resource funded by the SEDA small grant, including:
  - o Audio-visual overview of the issue.
  - o Samples of case studies collected during the project.
  - o Examples of links to key research and innovative practice in the area.
  - o Audio-visual clips of staff and student responses to the project.

- Review of the project's impact at York St John University.

15 minute discussion:

Key questions:

- What are your current thoughts and experience in relation to inclusive assessment?

- What do you feel are the key drivers for, and barriers to, embedding assessment change in curriculum design?

- Do you think your HEI would benefit from a similar approach to the SEDA-funded project at York St John University?

- What needs to happen now for this debate to move forwards?

References

Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) (2010) **Managing Reasonable Adjustments in Higher Education**. Available from:
http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/managing-reasonable-adjustments-in-higher-education
[Accessed 15 November 2012]

Herrington, M. and Simpson, D. (2002). **Making Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Students in Higher Education.** Nottingham: University of Nottingham.

Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) (2009a) **Evaluation of support and Provision for Disabled Students in Higher Education.** Leeds: HEFCE

Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) (2009b) **Outcomes of HEFCE review of its policy as it relates to disabled students.** Bristol: HEFCE.

May, H. and Bridger, K. (2010) **Developing and Embedding Inclusive Policy and Practice.** Available from:
<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/inclusion/DevelopingEmbeddingInclusive_SummaryandReport> [Accessed 15 November 2012]

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) (2010) **Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education. Section 3: Disabled Students.** Available from:
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Code-of-practice-Section-3.aspx> [Accessed on 15 November 2012]

Waterfield, J. and West, B. (2006) **Inclusive Assessment in Higher Education: a resource for change.** University of Plymouth

Waterfield, J. and West B. (2010) **Inclusive Assessment: diversity and inclusion, the assessment challenge.** University of Bradford