Trying to make equality, diversity, and inclusion accessible

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EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE (EDISR) PILOT

Project Team;

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Aim:

➢ to raise the profile of EDI at a programme level and facilitate hearing the student voice on related issues.

Objectives:

a) Establish Student and Staff Steering Group

b) Train and establish 3 student reps on 3 programmes (1 in each school - GSBS, SHLS, SCEBE)

c) Establish an EDI Community of Practice for students

d) Evaluate the project through the lens of a Restorative Pedagogy

Pedagogical Influences

GCU Strategy for Learning:

- Delivering equality of participation and excellence in teaching and student experience

Relational Pedagogies:

- Position meaningful relationships as fundamental to effective learning

Restorative Pedagogy

- Informal and formal processes designed to encourage personal responsibility for their own learning, share ideas and opinions, collectively negotiate expectations for behaviour

Pedagogies of Mattering

- Who and what matters most – a care perspective, human

- Gravett et al. (2021) state pedagogies of mattering, enable us to notice and consider the impact of a broader range of actors upon learning and teaching and time, into objects, bodies, and spaces that constitute the material mattering of learning

Research Design and Values

Transformative Emancipatory Paradigm (TEP) or Worldview

"Transformative worldviews are focused on the need for social justice and the pursuit of human rights. They place central importance on specific communities at the margins of society, such as women, racial/ethnic groups, people with disabilities, and those economically disadvantaged […] researchers should respectfully collaborate and interact to conduct research […] the transformative researcher works for the social world to be changed for the better so that individuals will feel less marginalised."

(Cresswell and Plano Clark, 2018 p. 37)

TEP Research Characteristics

Mertens (2009, p.48) states that the defining characteristics of TEP are …

- Research that places central importance on the lives and experiences of communities that are pushed to society's margins e.g. women, ethnic minorities etc.

- Analyses asymmetric power relationships.

- Links results of social inquiry to action.

The Evolution of EDISR

In 2019, the Equality and Diversity Sub-Committee to the Programme Board was established

Diversity in age, year group, hidden disabilities, mental health issues, sexuality, caring responsibilities, gender, and more…

ALL had passion for social justice and plenty to say on the matter!

Their Achievements

- Code of Conduct

- Terms of Reference

- Attended Training

- Guidance on Presenting Upsetting or Triggering Teaching Content

- Wrote Blogs, newsletter content etc.

- Contributed to a Programme Review

Fast Forward Two Years...

EDISR

- Cross University Steering Group

  - Lots of enthusiasm

- Recruitment attempts at the beginning of term

  - Accessible recruitment process

  - Training organised

  - Plans for regular support and supervision

  - Plans for a Community of Practice so no one was rejected

- **ONE APPLICANT**

 - Sometimes the absence of a voice tells you a lot!

ALLiEs

- Had a re-think!

  - Re-branded – ALLiEs (All in for Equalities)

- Workshops with Tourism and Events Management Students

  - Brilliant

  - Led to event plans for Tri B

- Research assistant unable to continue

  - Too late to recruit alternative

  - Capacity too limited to continue with event

- Allowed me to conduct some more student workshops
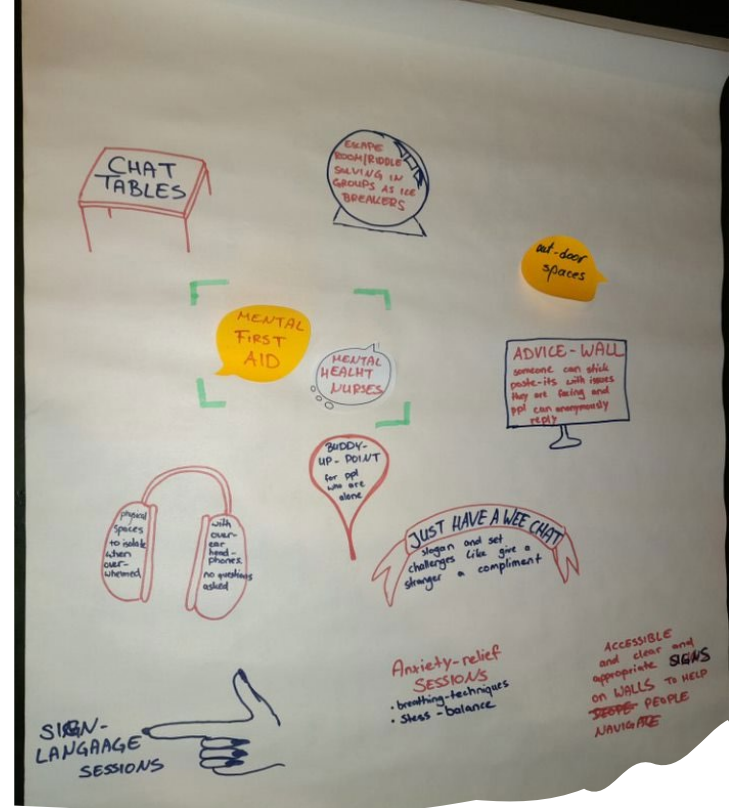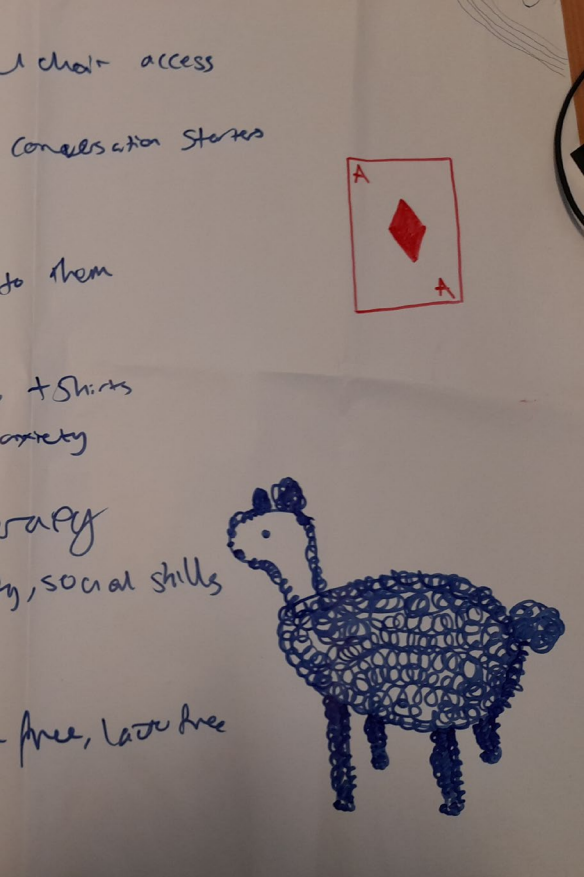
Student Ideas

- Sensory Sensitivity
  - Quiet Spaces
  - Headphones
- Social Anxiety
  - Buddies
  - Traffic Light System
  - Conversation Starters
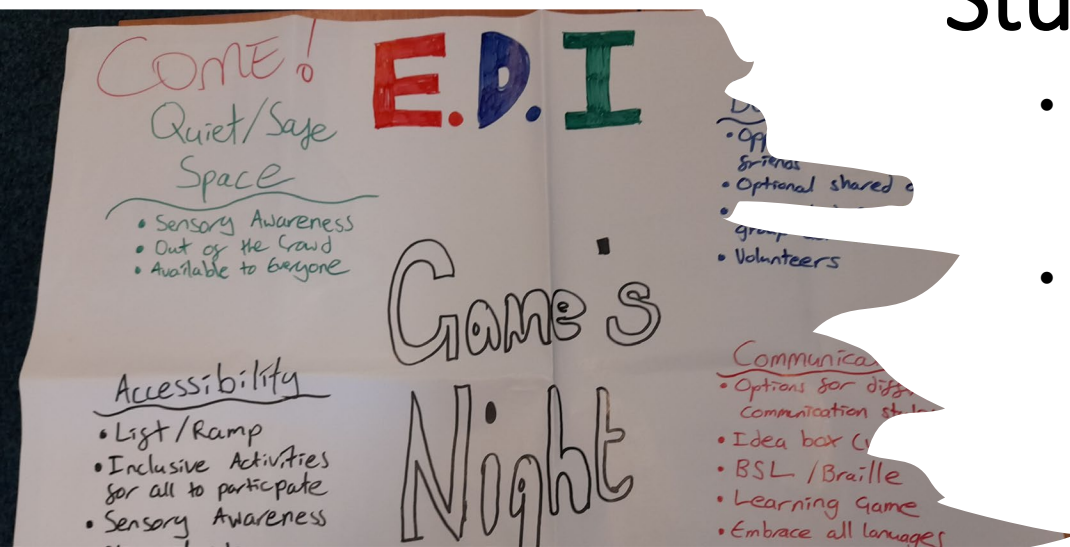
What's Next?

- Developing 'Recommendations for Accessible Events' resource

- ALLiEs Community of Practice will be developed

Student feedback has changed my thinking on what that will look like;

- 'Big Event' will be avoided

- Focus on sustainability with a 'slow burn' approach

- Low pressure, nurturing, series of 'activities' to promote
    - Relationship building
    - Skill development
    - Communication

- Resist the need/temptation to show 'big numbers' and 'big changes'

- Put the pedagogies of mattering firmly into practice

Thank you