



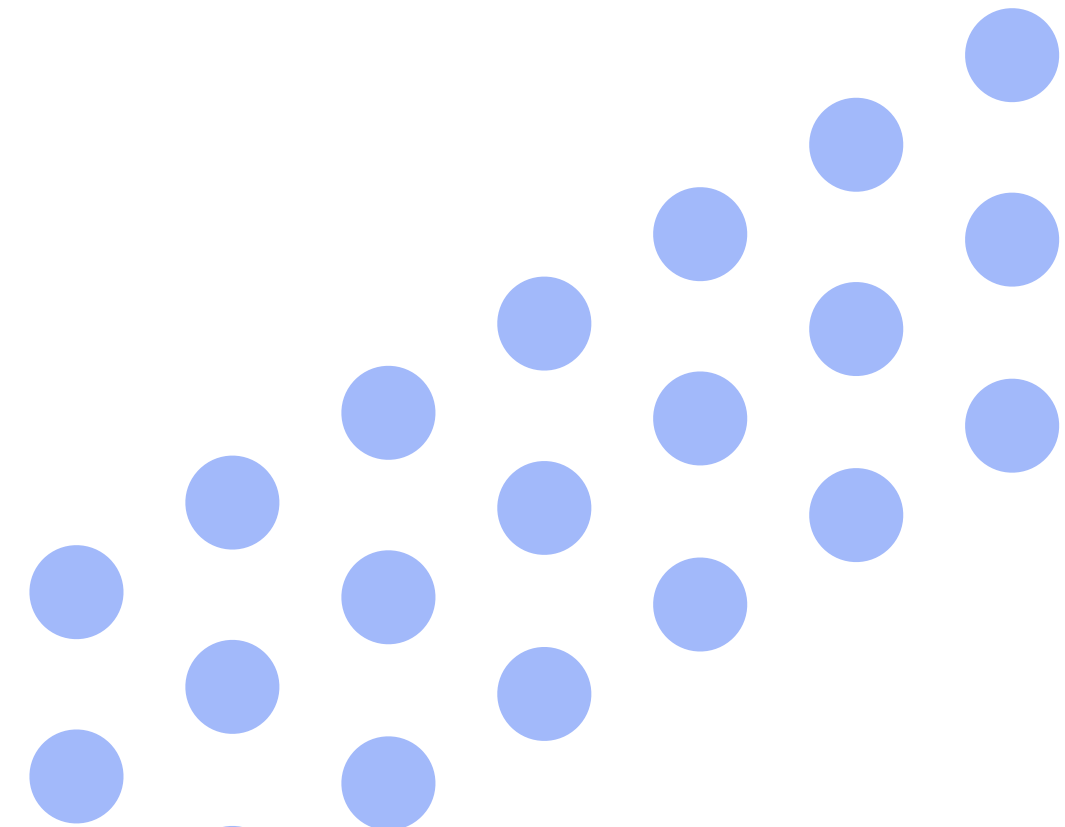
Academic & Student Perceptions on Student Choice in Assessment:

Interim findings from Universities in Manchester, York & London

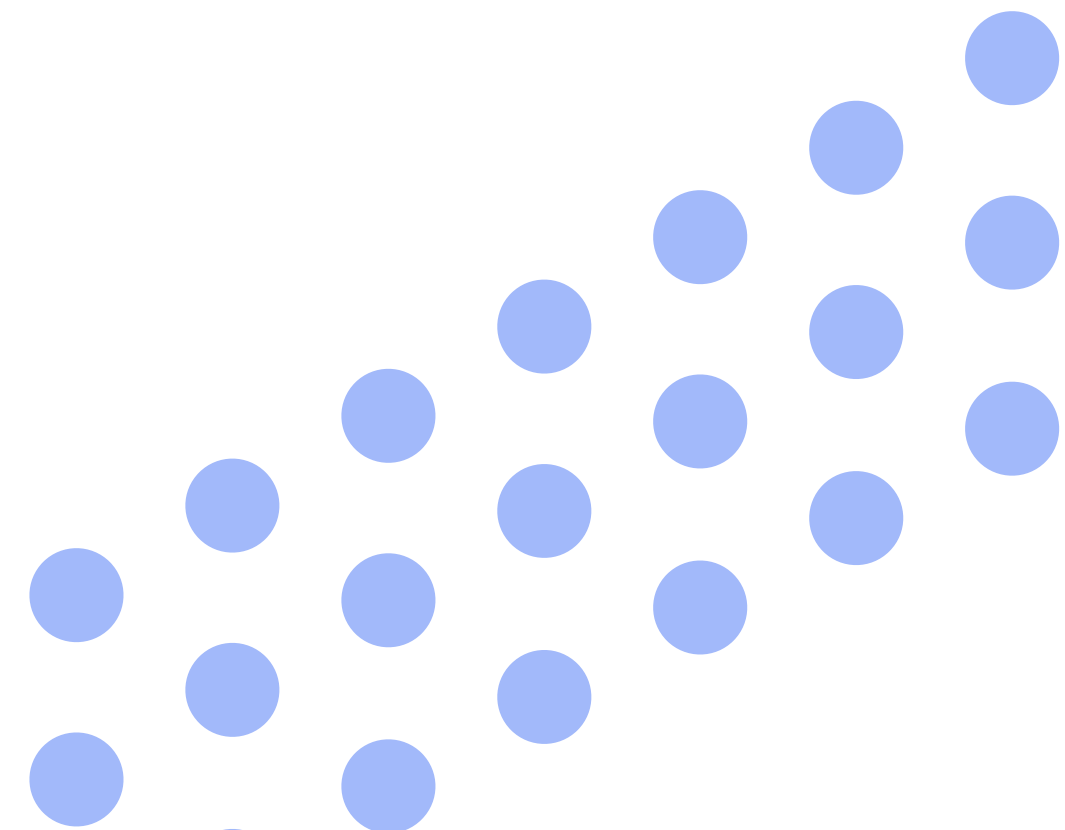


Overview

- Overview of the project
- Why is the project needed?
- What have we learnt from the literature?
- Research questions
- Interim results – what is interesting, so far?



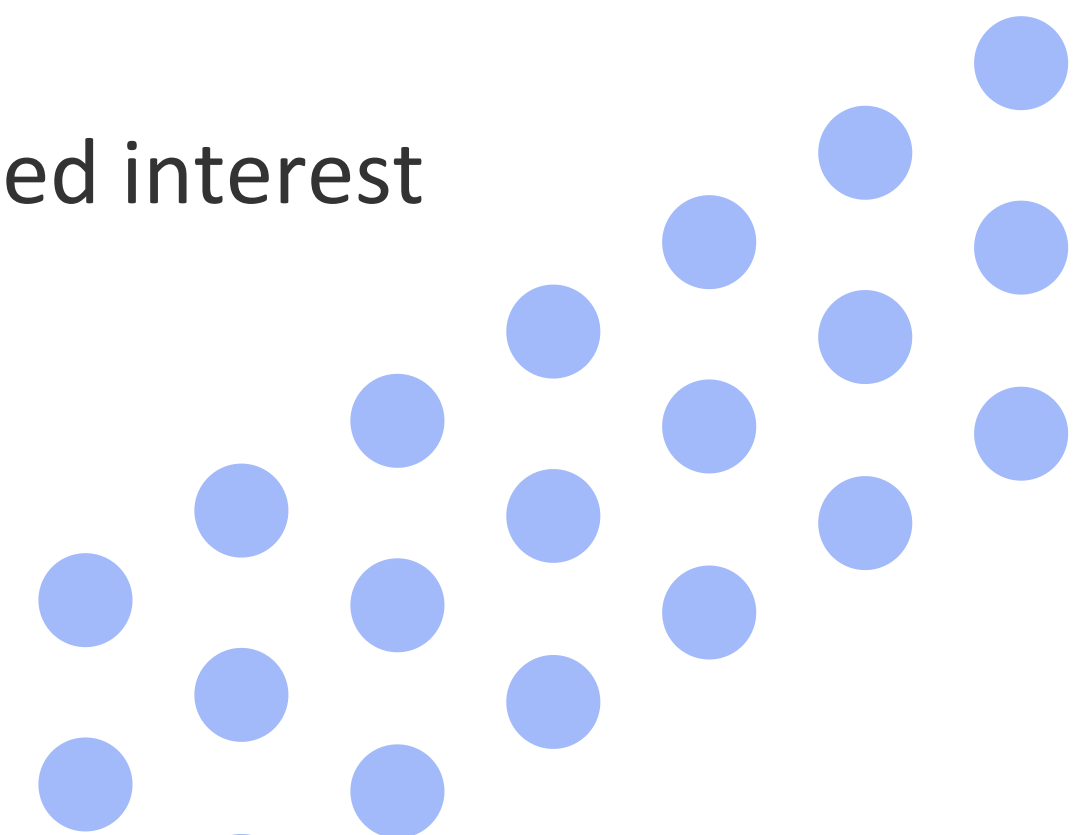
Project overview



Why is the project needed?

Untapped potential?

- *"providing students with some variety in assessment encourages **student motivation** and also allows them to showcase **different** skills, exhibit **varied** understandings, and demonstrate a range of learning outcomes"* (Sambell, McDowell, and Montgomery 2012)
- *"trying harder with more of the same may not always help inclusion"* (Tai, et al 2022)
- Received little attention with the associated literature – despite increased interest (Rideout, 2018)
- Difficult to get a holistic picture of practice across the sector



What have we learned from the literature?

Context

- Limited literature to draw from
- Difficult to generalise
- Australian, South African, US and UK studies

Themes

- Potential benefits for students and staff
- Institutional considerations
- Potential drawbacks/barriers
- Types of optionality



Research questions

1. What are academic* & student opinions on the feasibility, practicality, & utility of assessment optionality?

- Academic* survey on perceptions and opinions on choice in assessment,
- Student survey on perceptions and opinions on choice in assessment.

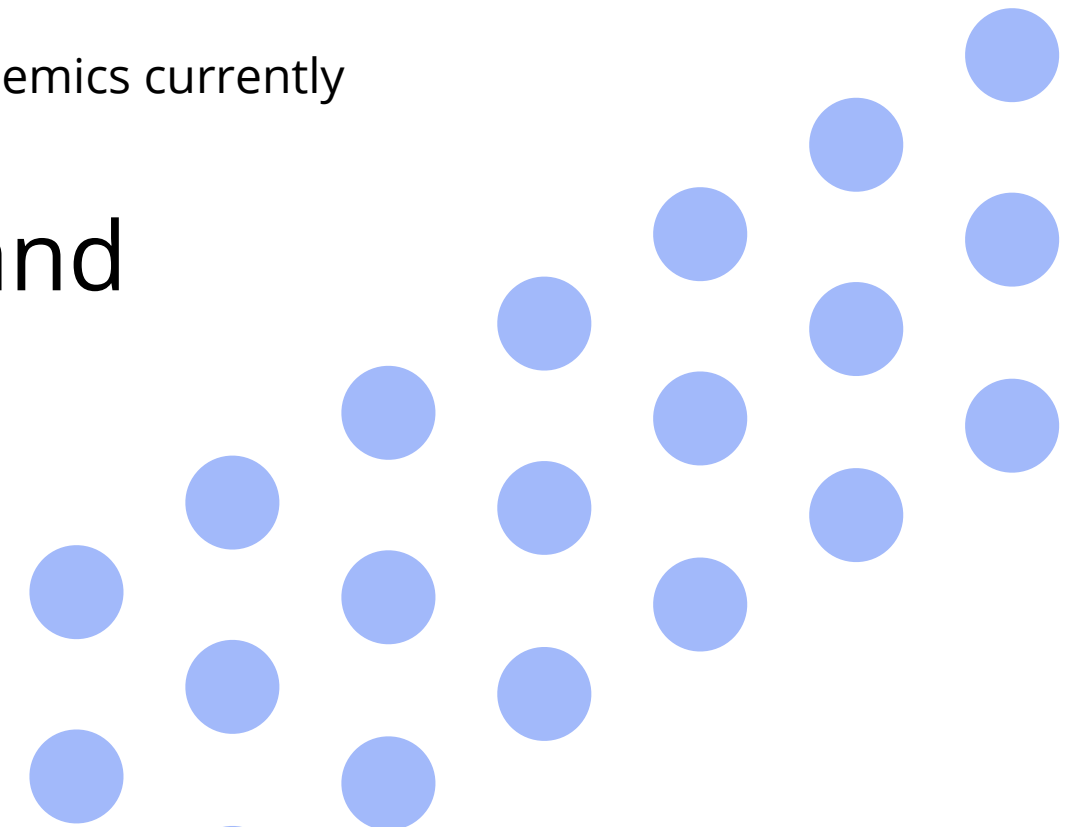
2. What is current practice and opinion on the use of Assessment Optionality across the four institutions?

- Follow up interviews with academics and students in institutions (ones confirmed from surveys with more to say).
- Interviews with other stakeholders: external examiners, regulators, accreditors, administrators, employers and international academics currently using choice in assessment as BAU.

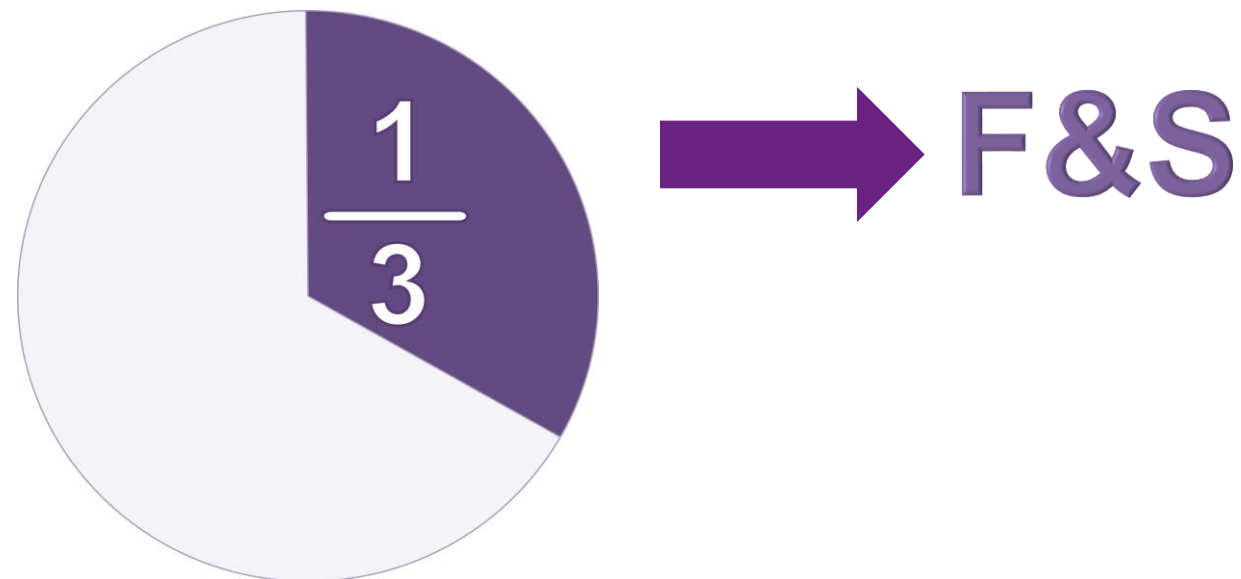
3. How can we better empower and enable colleagues to design and utilise effective and appropriate options in assessment?

- Application of guidance and checking on progress within institutions through focus groups.

* Inclusive of lecturers, senior leaders, quality assurance, administration and professional services.



What is interesting, so far? Staff Survey (n=702)

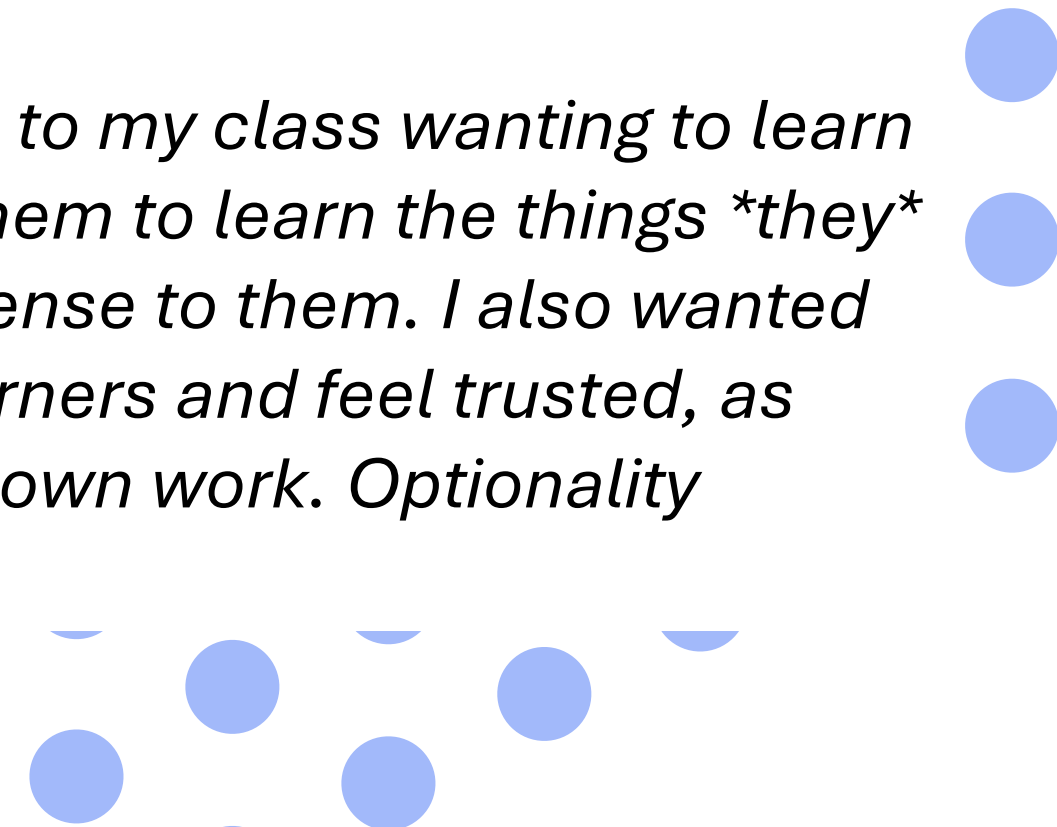


“A nightmare in terms of workload management”

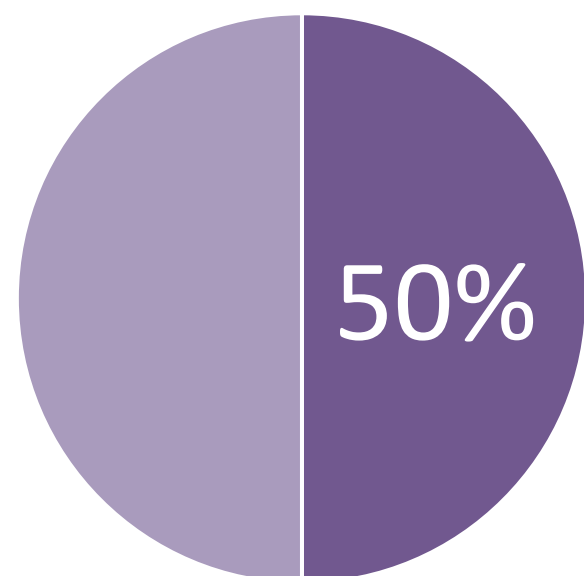
Most
↑
Least

- Negotiated task (22% of 32% total)
- Submission format (19% of 32%)
- Pre-selected list of assessment tasks (17% of 32%)
- Zero weighting (4% of 32%)
- Programmatic choices (4% of 32%)
- Assessment criteria (3% of 32%)

*“Students are all different and come to my class wanting to learn and develop different skills. I want them to learn the things *they* want to and in the way that makes sense to them. I also wanted them to develop as autonomous learners and feel trusted, as well as taking responsibility for their own work. Optionality helped with all these things.”*



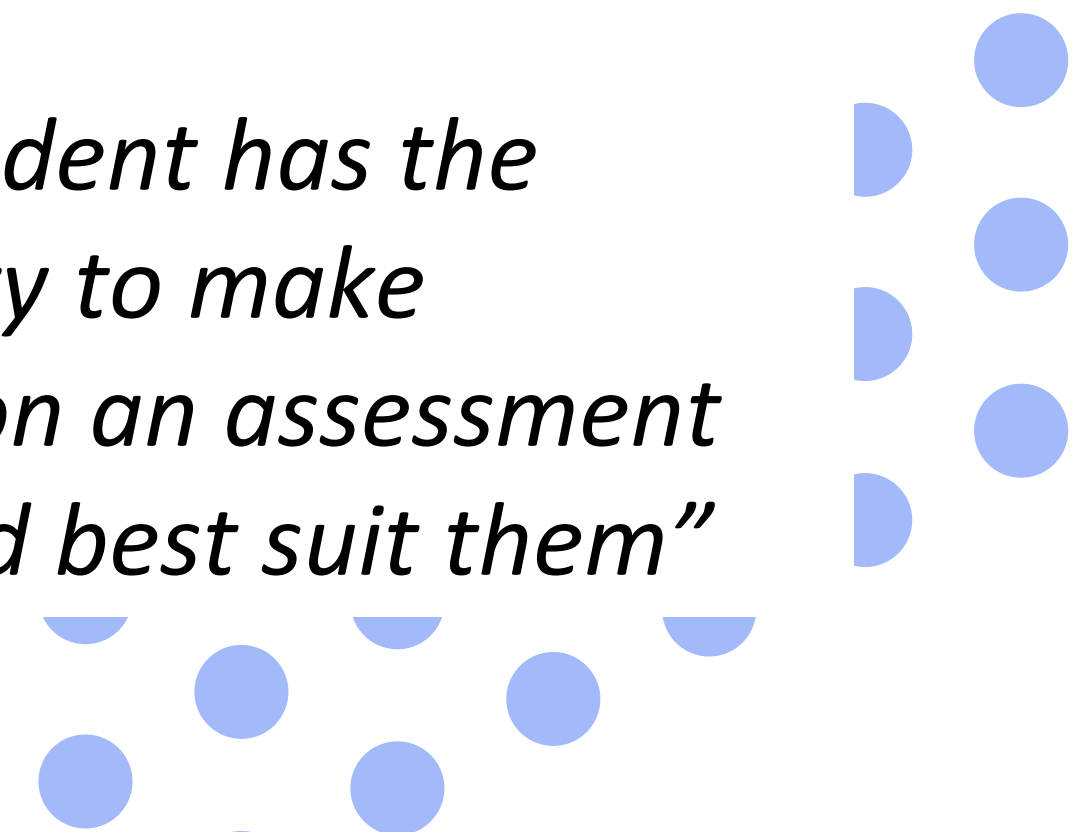
What is interesting, so far? Student survey (n=522)



“I feel that this approach will degrade the quality of degrees awarded, and will greatly increase potential for academic malpractice.”



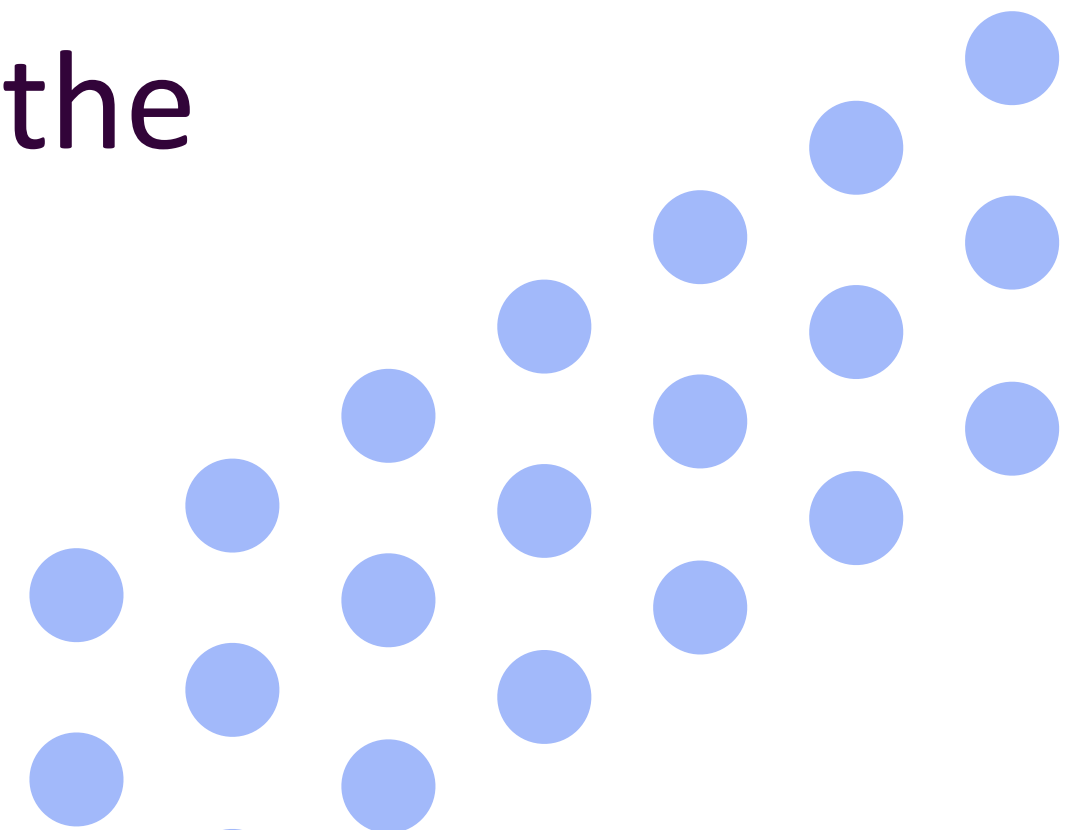
“that a student has the opportunity to make decisions on an assessment that should best suit them”



Engage with us!

Any examples of options in assessment that you think we should be aware of? Email us at flexiblelearning@manchester.ac.uk

QAA event in November presenting results from the study – register to attend for free!



Supporting references

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Members of the project

Project lead : Miriam Firth (UoM)

Project administrators : Lindsay Dunn & Sam Ward (UoM)

Project managers: Lara Melville, Fran Edwards & Hannah Brown (UoM)

QAA liaison : Ann Cotterill

UoM (Gabrielle Finn)	York (Jill Webb)	Imperial (Martyn Kingsbury)	UCL (Jesper Hansen)
Miriam Firth	Tracey Lightfoot	Monika Pazio	Leo Havemann
Sian Yeowell	Jan Ball-Smith		Karen Shackelford-Cesare
Andrew Horn	Paul Tiffin		Marieke Guy
Judy Williams	Jess Penn		
Chris Godden	Caroline Chaffer		
Peter Green	Tom Cantrell		
Sally Hickson	Duncan Jackson		
Tabita- Gabriela	Patrick Galimore		
Juravle (Student Partner)	Claire Hughes		

Project Assessment in HE consultant : Simon Walker

