

**Title:** “Diversifying Assessment - Preparing the Next Generation for their Future - Hearing the Student Voice via an Eduvlog”

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**Context: Introducing yourself and your teaching, including a photograph**

I currently lecture in the Department of Hospitality Studies in DkIT. I deliver modules across the BA (Hons.) International Tourism Management, BA (Hons.) in Marketing and International Tourism Management and BA in Event Management programmes. The range of modules include from 1<sup>st</sup> year to 4<sup>th</sup> year – Research Methods, Tourism Operations, Event Production Management, Event Operations 2 and Tourism Issues and Challenges. I am Programme Director for both Tourism Degrees. I have a strong interest in Teaching, Learning and Assessment.



**Issue: What issue did you want to Address**

I achieved the Universal Design in Teaching and Learning (UDL) Digital Badge from the National Forum for Teaching and Learning. Subsequently, I wanted to redesign some elements of my teaching and learning practice based on my newfound knowledge of the UDL principles. Higher education is increasingly supporting more diverse cohorts of students. Each student is unique. They are unique not only from their own personal knowledge, skills and competencies but they also come from a diversity of social and cultural environments. However, when it comes to assessment although there is a range of

assessment used, we are still very reliant on the essays, examinations, reports and oral presentations.

### **Intervention: What did you do, and why?**

From the outset, a core goal of this assessment was to be as inclusive as possible. The assessment was designed as 'rethink'. Multiple Means by Action and Expression was one of the 'core' 3 UDL principles. I decided the best way to begin embedding the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in my practice, was to start small. Allowing for the '*plus-one*' approach was the choice of strategy to make a change. Embedding UDL in my teaching, learning and assessment is an evolving and iterative process so by making small incremental changes, I can increase the inclusiveness of one module assessment. I choose an Eduvlog as a diversified type of assessment, one which is not solely focused on essays and examinations or oral presentations, that can help to ensure that learning and assessment is more inclusive and engaging for students, this is a method to specifically replace a classroom based oral presentation.

Inclusive assessment techniques are closely mapped to course objectives, and allow students to use combinations of reflecting, speaking, and other activities to demonstrate mastery of knowledge (Lombardi, et al. 2011).

The goal was not to find an assessment method that was to replace the standard essay, report or oral presentation, but to find a means of student expression of equal merit that allowed them to demonstrate their knowledge in a manner, and more appropriate to their skill set. In 2019, the European Commission highlighted the "*need to develop new forms of assessment through which learners have an active role, become aware of their learning processes and needs, and develop a sense of responsibility for their learning*" (Kapsalis et al., 2019, pp.11). Diversification in the type of assessment was also used which are authentic and help students to develop the pertinent transversal graduate skills and knowledge they need outside college and for further study.

*"Educational vlogging or Eduvlog is a type of video blogging in which the vlogger focuses on educational content"* according to ([www.vloggerlife.com](http://www.vloggerlife.com) para2). I was interested in

introducing a method of assessment that would incorporate visual materials and encourage creativity.

Programme: Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) in International Tourism Management Y3 Students –  
Class Size = 10 pax.

Module: Tourism Issues and Challenges [TOUR H8009] – 10 credits.

**CW1 and CW3 Assessment:** Oral Presentation on Individual Reflective Assessment on Guest-Speaker Series and Student-Led Session @ 20% ea.

**Visiting Guest Series:** The series includes lectures and workshops from a range of industry professionals across the local and national tourism industry. The series also gives the opportunity to our students to work with practitioners who will share their knowledge and experience of the tourism industry. Such engagement with industry is an important part of the ethos of our programmes in the Department. Coupled with work placement and industry-based projects these events help prepare them in their future careers; these events are an important part of the learning for their undergraduate tourism programme.

**Student Led Presentations:** The student-led-taught sessions take place over a series of weeks for the entire semester, each incorporating a concept relating to tourism issues and challenges. Students choose from: Community Conscious Travel, Human Trafficking in Tourism, Climate Change, Sustainable and Inclusive Tourism Growth, Regenerative Tourism, Staff Shortages in Tourism, Women Empowerment in Tourism and Tourism at Home and Away. Learning was developed through a series of student-led-taught sessions, each lasting approximately 45 minutes. These sessions must not be in the form of lecture, but students should use delivery strategies that engage class peers with the content.

**Eduvlog Assessment Criteria:** Assignment CA1 and CA3 – Individual Eduvlog. Weighting = 40%. Duration for each Eduvlog = 6 minutes (8 minutes' maximum) reflecting on six topics/themes in total.

**Gibbs' Reflective Cycle** is a popular model for reflection, acting as a structured method to enable individuals to think systematically about the experiences they had during a specific situation. The cycle consists of six stages which must be completed in order for the reflection to have a defined purpose. The first stage is to **describe** the experience (Student Led Presentations and Guest Series). This is followed by **reflecting** on the feelings felt during the experience, **identifying** what **knowledge** was gained from it, **analysing** any decisions made in relation to it and considering how this could have been done differently. The final stage of the cycle is **to come up with a plan** for how to approach similar experiences in future.



**Final Year Students BA (Hons.) in International Tourism Management**

Permission received to publish image via Feedback Survey 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024.



### **Evaluation: How well did it work, and why?**

To reflect on the effectiveness of the Eduvlog assessment, I collected feedback from the student group – obtaining 60% response rate.

Respondents *strongly agreed* that ‘Various assessments may not suit all students and we need to explore how the different approaches can be more inclusive for various student cohorts’.

Furthermore, ‘what did you like most about this type of assessment?’ responses included specific words: *‘fun, different, interesting, enjoyment, scary, liked trying, great way to assess, English is not my first language, it was great, new creativity’*.

And, ‘what did you least like about this type of assessment?’ responses included specific words: *‘editing, difficult, I am awkward, took some time’*.

Finally, ‘out of 10 stars – rate the Eduvlog as an assessment’ responses: *‘two 9 stars, one 8 stars, one 7 and one 6 stars’*.

The intervention endorses my commitment to exploring, and implementing different types of assessment to remove barriers, and accept that students are diverse. Using the UDL principles and implementing a *‘plus-one’* is meaningful, and the future is exciting.

## **Recommendations and Advice for Others**

### **Scalability and Transferability**

Students should be given clear comprehensive instructions on all aspects of the operation and completion of the Eduvlog assessment.

The students I worked with have been capable at putting together the Eduvlogs and planning sessions, but this may be seen as novel activity and assessment and so I have faced a lot of questions and needed to provide a lot of support. I think it is important to consider how much support you can realistically provide, both in terms of time and technical expertise.

Existing assessment criteria/rubrics may need to be adapted to align with the Eduvlog assessment. It is important that these revisions are shared with the students.

So far, I have opted not to make the Eduvlogs a publicly available resource (e.g. on YouTube) as I feel this would add an extra level of stress for the students. By explaining their thought process on camera, students are forced to articulate their ideas clearly and concisely.

Eduvlogs can assess module learning outcomes as effectively as Oral Presentations; to make an Eduvlog, you don't need high-profile tools, you can start with just a mobile phone, and a Vlogging Kit.

**Inclusivity:** The use of Eduvlogs presents a potential challenge for people with hearing disabilities and I have recommended students to include subtitles in their Eduvlogs, or provide a transcript.

**Share practice:** Share with colleagues your experience of engaging with UDL principles, with your own and students experience of an 'inclusive, alternative assessment'.

And finally, give students choice: for those who favour an oral face-to-face presentation, written piece of work, ensuring assessment is inclusive, that enables rather than hinders students learning/assessment.

### **References:**

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