Written portfolio replaced by video portfolio

Student with dyslexia

University of Plymouth. Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (PG Cert)

From: Waterfield, J and West, B. (2006) **Inclusive Assessment in Higher Education: A Resource for Change.** University of Plymouth

Description of alternative assessment

A dyslexic student who found it difficult to express and organise his ideas in writing was given the option to produce outcomes that relate to learning, teaching and assessment in Higher Education including: designing a video portfolio as an alternative to a written portfolio. The video portfolio represented 50% of the assessed component with the remaining 50% made up of project work. The video provided an effective option for cross-referencing the project work and demonstrating the 10 learning programmes, supporting students and continuing professional development.

An additional member of staff had to be employed to work with the student and in total 15-20 hours was spent supporting the student's assessment process, compared to the usual 3-4 hours. A further 18 hours was spent editing the video.

Resources required for the Video Portfolio

- An additional member of staff was employed to support the student.
- Video-suite time and specialist staff were employed to make the video.

Advantages of the Video Portfolio for staff

- The learning outcomes were easily transferable to the video format.

Advantages of the Video Portfolio for the student

- The student felt it was the most appropriate method for him to demonstrate the learning outcomes.

Issues arising for staff regarding the Video Portfolio

- Contact time with the student significantly increased.

- Marking the video took considerably longer compared to the written submissions.

- The oral aspect of the Video Portfolio required new criteria that needed to be made equitable with the existing criteria for the written submissions.

- The transferability of the method, to offer as assessment choice, is limited due to the high level of resources necessary to support and produce the video.

Reflection

This alternative assessment highlighted the need for a clear format and remit for the students. Using video for recording has value, but this assessment mode aimed to use the video to express the learning through a visual mode offering a creative focus for a student who learnt in a more visual rather than a linear or lexical way.

Using video in the former capacity is less resource hungry and could be more widely adopted, but it was felt that with a large group this alternative would always remain an alternative for the few. Staff and the students involved felt it was more likely to be offered to particular disabled students, who could really only record in this way rather than becoming an assessment mode offered to all students.

In considering this as a mode to be embedded into the course for other future disabled students, the lessons learned and the solutions found for both the students and the staff would need to be harnessed.