

Written assignment replaced by video presentation with BSL and voiceover

Student with hearing impairment.

University of Plymouth. HND in Fine Art

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



Description of alternative assessment

The student in this case study had a significant hearing impairment. As a consequence of this he had great difficulty in writing the contextual studies assignment to the required standard, as he did not have an understanding of the English needed. The student's language of communication was BSL. There was a chance he would fail his HND because of his lack of English at the required level.

Rather than try to improve his English, in co-operation with the validating body it was felt better if he presented his assignment in BSL. This would be videoed, with an interpreter present and voiceover. The presentation would be marked to the same academic criteria as a written assignment and there would have to be the same level of academic debate. The only difference would be in the method of this being recorded.

Resources required for the video presentation

- Use of a BSL interpreter
- Use of a Communication Support Worker
- Recording equipment

Advantages of the video presentation for staff

- An oral translation of the student's assignment
- Following Equal Opportunity practice

Advantages of the video presentation for students

- Accessible and in the student's only language

Issues arising for staff regarding the video presentation

- Undertaking the recording
- The level of resources which would need to be planned for
- Difficulty in referring to the assignment whilst being marked
- Level and location of collaboration required

Reflection

The pilot acknowledged that resources needed to be planned and organised for such a new assessment method, but demonstrated a solution that could be considered to meet our legislative duties and remove barriers for a minority of students. As such alternatives become central to a departmental response to students, the unit resource will reduce. Staff with BSL skills within the institution would further reduce the assessment costs and create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for such students. Although this case study was an innovative alternative for a hearing impaired student, the video presentation of an assignment could also be used by other disabled students for whom a written assignment presents serious barriers.