

Embedding equality and diversity in the curriculum: an art and design practitioner's guide

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ual: university
of the arts
london

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- students take an active role in improving the support materials, and shaping improvements from which they themselves benefit.

5.4 Seeing is believing

Organisation: London College of Fashion (LCF).

Type of activity: Visually impaired students - Seeing is believing.

Contact: Claudette Davis-Bonnick, c.davis-bonnick@fashion.arts.ac.uk

Seeing is believing (SiB) was an empirical research study undertaken in 2011 to investigate to what extent it is possible to support visually impaired (registered blind) students in pattern making and garment construction on a fashion design course. This came about after meeting someone who was born blind who asked me what I could teach them about my job. Approximately six months later, I was teaching a student with visual impairment on a foundation degree fashion course and realised there was a gap in mainstream university teaching creative studies. To date, I have not uncovered any universities that have courses that specifically cater for people with visual impairment.

I collaborated with the Thomas Pocklington Trust and ran a five-day workshop with six participants with visual impairment from the Trust and four LCF fashion alumni. The participants, who had no previous pattern making and construction experience, were set tasks to design, make patterns and produce a waistcoat. The workshop aimed to:

- discover what visually impaired students could achieve in the field of pattern cutting and garment construction;
- establish what support visually impaired students would need;
- assess the participants' autonomy and independence in the fashion studio;
- gain an understanding of how technology could impact teaching and learning for visually impaired students and how learning takes place;
- learn what the impact is on visually impaired students and sighted students sharing the same workspace.

There were many discoveries that can benefit all types of learners, making it a beneficial and sustainable exercise when including students with visual impairment on the creative courses. By implementing health and safety measures, e.g. zoning specific spaces for work activities, the environment appeared very calm and more user-friendly. Transferring this experiment to my usual studio situation resulted in a more tranquil, stress-free and productive environment.

I learnt to use new multi-sensorial teaching techniques, which has also supported my regular students to engage with their practical exercises. For example, deciphering the quality and character of fabric by listening to its sound, feeling how it moves between your hands and smelling the aroma after warming the fabric in your hands.

Assistive technology used by the participants such as the 'CCTV' (a magnification monitor) could help all learners to investigate fibres and fabrics and to carry out close work through magnification. A 'penfriend' is used for recording and dictation and could assist dyslexic students. These and other findings could have a direct effect on how we assess work in the future. Computers and mobile phones are significantly used by the participants and can become learning tools. I was able to share these findings at the 2014 teaching and learning day at UAL.

The impact of SiB:

- in 2013, I was awarded teacher of the year for my study with SiB;
- in 2013, I joined the MA course in Fashion and the Environment and obtained funding for further research to investigate how the use of digital 3D technology might support students with visual impairments to develop pattern making;
- I gained an understanding of how multi-sensory teaching can benefit all students;

- in 2014, SiB gained an online presence when the Associate Dean of learning and teaching (Alison James) featured a chapter on it in her online book ([James and Brookfield 2014](#)).

5.5 Creative Research into Sound Arts Practice

Organisation: University of the Arts London – Creative Research into Sound Arts Practice (CRiSAP)

Type of activity: Feminism, gender and issues of representation – gender and sound arts.

Contact: CRiSAP, London College of Communication, Elephant & Castle, London, SE1 6SB,

<http://www.crisap.org/>

CRiSAP is a research centre of the University of the Arts London dedicated to the exploration of the rich complexities of sound as an artistic practice. Our main aim is to extend the development of the emerging disciplinary field of sound arts and to encourage the broadening and deepening of the discursive context in which sound arts is practised.

CRiSAP's current activities are focused in a number of areas including:

- engaging broadly with relationships between sound and environment;
- researching and disseminating artists' practices with the spoken word;
- multi-disciplinary and cross-cultural approaches to listening as a practice, a philosophy and a methodology;
- undertaking, developing, supervising and mentoring practice-based research in sound arts;
- investigating the potential of archival materials to animate contemporary sound art debate;
- developing new creative software.

Feminism, gender and issues of representation in sound arts practice is a relatively new research field for CRiSAP. In 2010, we acquired the Her Noise Archive which is now in the UAL Archives and Special Collections at LCC.

The key outcomes and impact of this focus on feminism, gender and issues of representation in sound arts practice includes:

- co-curation of 'Feminisms and the Sonic,' three days of events at Tate Modern in collaboration with Electra, and organisation of Sound:Gender:Feminism:Activism, a postgraduate symposium at LCC in 2012;
- in 2013, a collaboration with Electra, NyMusikk and Museet for Samtidskunst (Museum of Contemporary Art), Oslo on the Vocal Folds symposium which led to a student exchange with the Art Academy, Oslo based around the Her Noise Archive;
- since 2010, MA students have been making work in response to the Her Noise Archive and it is currently being used in BA Sound Arts teaching. We are redeveloping new research and have presented a panel at FTM12 Feminist Theory and Music Conference, Hamilton College, New York;
- we are currently funded by Creativeworks London to develop curricula for short courses in collaboration with Electra;
- since 2012, parts of the Her Noise Archive have been exhibited in Karlsruhe, Oslo and New York. The online Her Noise Archive containing information and proceedings of these events can be accessed at <http://hernoise.org>.

5.6 Use of English and modes of thinking

Organisation: London Metropolitan University

Activities: English as a second language – barriers to learning in art and design education: use of English and modes of thinking.

Contact: Bess Frimodig, info@bessfrimodig.com

The focus of this activity is the use of British English by teachers in art and design in higher education and