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Ethical Action Plan

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1. **What is the working title of your project?** Also write a few sentences about the focus of your project.

How can ethically led debates, grounded in lived experience and case study reflection, support architecture students in developing more conscious awareness about inclusive approaches to design?

This project explores how structured, ethically led debates can deepen students' understanding of inclusive design by encouraging them to reflect on multiple perspectives and their own positionality. The research focuses on first-year BA Architecture students, investigating whether combining debate, self-reflection on lived experience, peer listening, and case study analysis can nurture empathy and critical awareness, key foundations for people-centred design practice.

Two focus groups will be held with the same group of students. The first will introduce inclusive design through discussion of lived experiences and case studies. The second will build on these insights through structured debates, where students adopt different roles or perspectives to explore ethical dilemmas and design decisions. Following the focus groups, short semi-structured interviews will be conducted to explore what students perceived they learned through participation, particularly regarding empathy, reflexivity, and inclusivity in design thinking.

2. **What sources will you read or reference?** Share 5 to 10.

Arao, B. and Clemens, K. (2021) 'From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces: A New Way to Frame Dialogue Around Diversity and Social Justice.' In: Landreman, L. (ed.) *The Art of Effective Facilitation: Reflections from Social Justice Educators.* 2nd ed. Sterling, VA: Stylus, pp. 135–150.

Bamber, J. and Jones, S. (2015) 'Enabling Inclusive Learning.' In: Fry, H., Ketteridge, S. and Marshall, S. (eds.) *A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.* 4th ed. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 139–152.

Barbour, R. (2018) *Doing Focus Groups.* 2nd ed. London: SAGE.

Boys, J. (2014) *Doing Disability Differently: An Alternative Handbook on Architecture, Dis/ability and Designing for Everyday Life.* London: Routledge.

Hooks, b. (1994) *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom.* New York: Routledge.

Imrie, R. and Hall, P. (2001) *Inclusive Design: Designing and Developing Accessible Environments.* London: Spon Press.

Laing, C. (2021) *DeafSpace at LCF.* [Lecture/Case study]. London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London.

Rosenberg, M. B. (2005) *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life.* 2nd ed. Encinitas, CA: PuddleDancer Press.

Wilson, J. (2021) *A Contemplative Pedagogy: Reflection and Presence in Learning.* Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Additional institutional resources: UAL Health & Safety Hub and Policies; BERA sections on consent, privacy, and researcher wellbeing.

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3. **What action(s) are you planning to take, and are they realistic in the time you have (Sept-Dec)?**

Focus Group Session 1: Foundations of Inclusive Design (60 mins)
Student-led discussion on inclusive and accessible design. Students will complete short individual reflections using guided prompts to consider physical spaces that have shaped them positively or negatively, with an optional anonymous "right-to-pass" for sharing. As a group, they will explore inclusive design case studies and discuss prompt questions such as *"How does this example relate to the role of an architect?".*

Focus Group Session 2: Let's Debate (60 mins)
Building on insights from Session 1, students will engage in a structured debate. Each student will adopt a character and argue from a specific viewpoint in response to a design-related question. After a short break, characters will be rotated and a new question introduced. The same question may be asked at the start and end to measure any change in perspective.

Semi-Structured Interviews: Reflections (20 mins each)
Individual interviews will explore what students feel they have learned, developed, and wish to continue exploring about inclusive design. All participants will be asked the same core questions, with optional follow-up prompts.

Data Collection (Ongoing)
Field notes will be made after each session. Audio recording will be used for note-taking purposes only, with prior consent from participants.

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4. **Who will be involved, and in what way?** (e.g. colleagues, students, local community…). Note, if any of your participants will be under the age years of 18yrs, please seek further advice from your tutor.

Participants: Up to 6 first-year BA Architecture students.

Researcher/facilitator: Me (design tutor).

Safeguarding/observer support: All advance materials, as well as each focus group and interview, will include a clear statement outlining the ethical protocol and safeguarding measures in place to protect participants.

5. **What are the health & safety concerns, and how will you prepare for them?**

    o https://canvas.arts.ac.uk/sites/explore/SitePage/42587/health-and-safety-hub
    o https://canvas.arts.ac.uk/sites/explore/SitePage/45761/health-and-safety-policies-and-standards

Potential risks: Emotional discomfort when recalling lived experiences; inadvertent disclosure of sensitive information; perceived pressure to participate due to tutor–student power dynamics; accessibility needs within activities.

Mitigations:

- Begin each session with a clear participation statement: voluntary, right to pass, and right to withdraw at any time without consequence.
- Use *Brave Spaces* agreements (respect, confidentiality, owning intentions/impacts).
- Avoid soliciting traumatic detail; prompts framed around comfort levels and agency.
- Content notes given in advance; signposting to UAL wellbeing/counselling and escalation pathways.
- Provide quiet break-out option; end with a grounding/debrief exercise and written signposting.
- Accessibility: offer alternative formats (written/drawn/voice-note) and flexible pacing; invite confidential adjustments in advance.
  (Aligned with UAL Health & Safety Hub and Policies.)

6. **How will you manage and protect any physical and / or digital data you collect, including the data of people involved?**

    o https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-fifth-edition-2024-online#consent
    o https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-fifth-edition-2024-online#privacy-data-storage

Data minimisation: No video recordings. Data limited to: (a) my field notes (non-attributable), (b) optional anonymous exit tickets and reflective notes, (c) non-identifiable aggregates of design-criteria sheets, and (d) audio recordings if participants give consent.

Consent: Written information sheet + consent form before Workshop 1; separate opt-in for use of anonymised quotations. Emphasise voluntariness, no impact on grading/feedback, and the right to withdraw data up to a specified cut-off date.

Confidentiality & anonymity: Use pseudonyms or non-attributable descriptors; remove personal identifiers promptly. Group norms re-stated each session.

Storage & retention: Store digital files on encrypted institutional storage (e.g., UAL OneDrive); restrict access to researcher only. Retain for maximum 12 months post-unit for assessment/AR dissemination, then securely delete. Paper artefacts (if any) stored locked and then shredded on deletion date. (In line with BERA guidance on consent, privacy, and data storage.)

7. **How will you take ethics into account in your project for participants and / or yourself?**

- https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-fifth-edition-2024-online#responsibilities-participants
- https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-fifth-edition-2024-online#responsibilities-sponsors
- https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-fifth-edition-2024-online#responsibilities-wellbeing
- See Emotionally Demanding Research PDF on Moodle

Ethical considerations (participants & self):

Power and positionality: Acknowledge dual role as tutor-researcher; use opt-in recruitment, reminders that participation/non-participation does not affect teaching, and anonymous data collection to reduce coercion.

Wellbeing: Apply a trauma-informed stance; avoid probing sensitive details; provide support routes; monitor my own capacity and seek debrief/peer supervision after sessions.

Equity & inclusion: Ensure activities are accessible (language, sensory load, timing) and offer alternative modes of engagement.

Scope boundaries: This AR focuses on facilitation and reflection within teaching; students will not be asked to co-create public-facing resources in this cycle. Researcher will develop the facilitation protocol drawing on literature, reflective notes, and anonymised themes.

Dissemination: Findings reported at cohort presentation and on the PgCert blog in a way that protects anonymity; any illustrative quotes checked for identifiability.