



Regent
College
London

Learning and Teaching Conference 2026

Enhancing Practice, Evidencing
Impact, Developing Communities

Friday 10 April 2026



08:45–09:30

Registration

09:40–10:05

Session 1

- Welcome to the Conference – Enhancing Practice, Evidencing Impact, Developing Communities
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10:05–11:05

Session 2

- PASS: A targeted transition programme to support student success
 - Supporting student wellbeing and disability: What teaching staff need to feel confident and prepared
 - Evaluating employability in the curriculum: Using a Theory of Change to inform teaching, learning and assessment
-

11:20–12:00

Session 3A

- Assessment and feedback as inclusive practices: Supporting diverse learners in higher education
- From anxiety to agency: Developing assessment literate students
- Dissertation supervision and successful student outcomes: The role of authentic formative assessment
- Rethinking inclusive assessment for non-traditional students: A case study of RCL

Session 3B

- From consumer to collaborator: Practical approaches to student co-creation in higher education
 - Strategies to enhance student engagement
 - Why or why not: Understanding student AI use at RCL
 - Making learning preferences visible: A reflective digital tool to support belonging and inclusive study strategies
-

Session 4A

- Conversational AI for marketing and sales in fashion
- A critical examination of pedagogical approaches to teaching research methods to postgraduate business students in the UK

12:10–12:50

Session 4B

- From compliance to capability: Developing QA literacy in higher education through the Distributed D-LENS Framework
- Recentring internal quality assurance on the student learning experience: The PLEX-QA approach

12:50–13:40

Lunch

Session 5 – University of Greater Manchester

13:40–14:40

- Keynote: The psychology of feedback
- Stories that stick: Building a culture of shared professional learning

Session 6A

- Authentic assessment design: Integrating AI for professional practice
- Canvas analytics to evaluate student engagement, progression and achievement: Case analysis using a Health Science postgraduate module
- Perspectives on commitment in the “Prepare” phase of the PCC framework: A study of postgraduate campus students in business

14:45–15:45

Session 6B

- Belonging before skills: Integrating personal development into academic skills provision for mature and non-traditional students
- Impact of culturally inclusive practices on psychological safety of culturally diverse students
- Behavioural drivers of belonging, integrity and learning in teaching practice

Session 7

16:00–17:00

- Speaking from lived experience: Reflection and personal testimony as an inclusive pedagogy practice
- Evaluating a storytelling teaching intervention to enhance engagement and achievement for widening participation students
- Supporting inclusive, impactful teaching: How Advance HE enhances practice across the sector

17:00–17:25

Plenary session

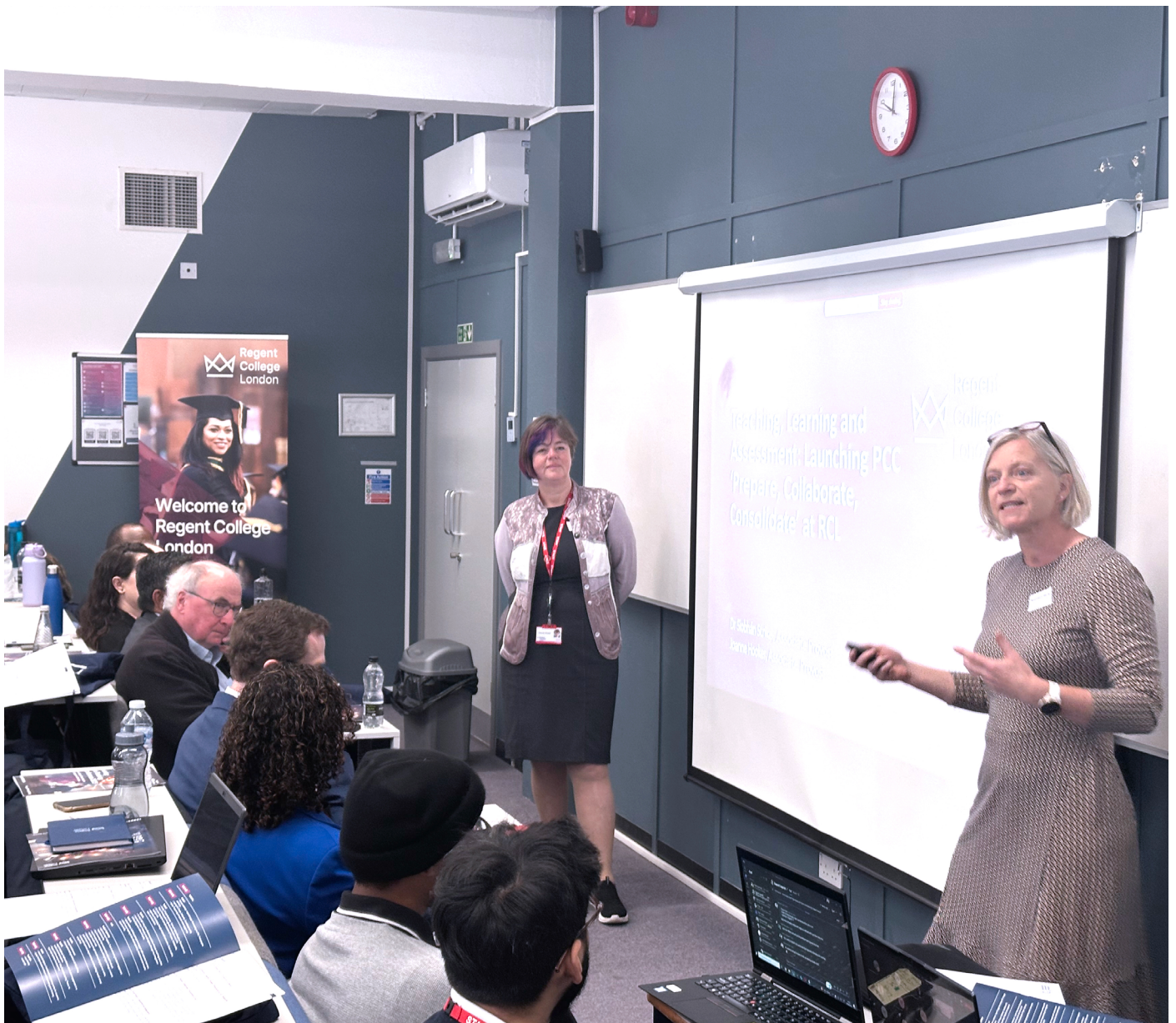
- The big 5-0: What we learned from the first 50 observations
- Closing remarks

► Session 1

Time: 09:40–10:05

Welcome to the Conference – Enhancing Practice, Evidencing Impact, Developing Communities

Joanne Hooker, Associate Provost



▶ Session 2

Time: 10:05–11:05

Moderator: Joanne Hooker, Associate Provost

PASS: A targeted transition programme to support student success

Vanessa Lima, Head of Academic Skills

Tatiana Romeiro, Lecturer, ASK@Regent

This session presents a reflective evaluation of PASS (Preparation for Academic Success in your Studies), a new transition programme designed to support students' academic readiness at Regent College London. Developed as part of the Access and Participation Plan (APP) and aligned with the Office for Students (OfS) B2 and B3 conditions, PASS has been designed as a data-informed, preventative intervention to support student transition, continuation and completion (OfS, 2022).

Currently in its pilot phase, PASS combines early diagnostics, personalised Learning Development Plans (LDPs) and a structured programme of synchronous and asynchronous activities designed to strengthen academic, digital and English skills at key entry points in the College. The programme is informed by research highlighting the importance of early, targeted transition support in promoting student engagement and success, particularly for students from non-traditional backgrounds (Thomas, 2012). A Theory of Change model underpins the programme's design, implementation and evaluation, providing a coherent framework for monitoring engagement and evidencing educational gain over time.

The session will outline the project's rationale and development process, and reflect on key challenges and preliminary findings from the September 2025 pilot, drawing on diagnostic data, early participation and engagement patterns, student feedback, and qualitative insights from a student focus group conducted prior to the conference to support a more holistic evaluation of the programme's impact.

The presentation will translate these reflections into practical insights for participants. Attendees will gain an understanding of how early diagnostics and personalised learning plans can promote student agency by helping learners identify and address gaps in academic readiness, contributing to a more inclusive approach to widening participation and improving student retention and success (Advance HE, 2019). The session will also demonstrate how shared diagnostic data can support Personal Academic Tutors to engage in more targeted, developmental conversations with students, offering transferable principles for designing early, preventative transition interventions.

Supporting student wellbeing and disability: What teaching staff need to feel confident and prepared

Emma Buhtina, Head of Student Support

Dr Elizabeth Kaplunov, Senior Lecturer, School of Health and Sports Science

Student wellbeing and disability needs have become increasingly prominent across higher education, with academic staff often positioned as the first point of contact for students experiencing distress or requiring adjustments. Despite institutional expectations, little is known about how prepared academics feel to fulfil these responsibilities, particularly within private higher education providers. Early evidence highlights uncertainty around role boundaries, limited training and emotional strain (Kinman, 2014), suggesting a misalignment between policy assumptions and everyday academic practice. Understanding staff knowledge and confidence is therefore essential to developing inclusive, supportive learning environments (Thomas, 2012).

This six-month mixed methods study examines how academic staff understand and navigate their responsibilities in wellbeing and disability support. A co-designed survey will assess staff knowledge, preparedness and perceptions of institutional processes, complemented by qualitative insights exploring role clarity, safeguarding awareness and collaboration with support teams. Emerging evidence indicates variability in staff confidence, inconsistent application of reasonable adjustments and challenges interpreting disclosures, particularly in contexts with limited resources (Wisker, 2012).

Findings will inform evidence-based approaches to staff development, including targeted CPD, clearer communication, and enhanced collaboration between academic and support teams. The study aims to guide sustainable policies and practices that strengthen staff readiness and promote inclusive, high-quality education. Future research should extend this work across diverse institutional contexts to deepen sector-wide understanding.

Evaluating employability in the curriculum: Using a Theory of Change to inform teaching, learning and assessment

Dr Tricia Tikasingh, Associate Provost

Dr Eric Ebolo Elong, Lecturer, School of Health and Sports Science

Amory Adato, Employer Engagement Officer, Graduate Outcomes Team

Higher education providers are required to develop and deliver courses that enable graduates to progress into graduate-level roles in the workplace. Progression data forms a key part of the Office for Students (OfS) B3 condition of registration for providers and is an important indicator for successful student outcomes. Curriculum development requires courses to demonstrate integration of employability and more recently there is focus on entrepreneurship. This is also a core strand of new Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Subject Benchmark statements. Other benchmarks which set the standards include the Gatsby Benchmarks, QAA Inclusive Employability Toolkit and Advance HE Employability Framework.

RCL's Education Strategy (2025-2028) reaffirms a commitment to developing professional skills, confidence and opportunities for career progression and social mobility through its higher education offer. The Employability Advisory Board (EAB) maintains strategic oversight of initiatives related to employability and graduate outcomes for students, informing curriculum enhancements in keeping with sector needs, fostering industry partnerships and supporting initiatives that prepare graduates for successful careers. It ensures alignment with the OfS conditions of registration (B1-B5), particularly with regard to progression and relevant degree outcomes. This ensures curricula provide students with real-world learning opportunities, authentic assessment and in-demand transferable skills.

This presentation will highlight two best-practice examples of the targeted work of the RCL School-level EABs. A Theory of Change (TOC) aims to support the evaluation of School-level employability interventions across a range of activities and services, in addition to evidencing curriculum development requirements that meet the needs of the rapidly changing workplace, such as the growing adoption of artificial intelligence.

This presentation highlights the impact of this work related to pedagogically grounded curriculum conversations, greater alignment between professional services and academic teams and the shift towards evidence-informed authentic assessment and work-related learning within programmes, ultimately providing students with a meaningful and transformative experiential learning experience.

► Session 3A - Lightning Talks

Time: 11:20–12:00

Moderator: Louise Norris-Hunt, Executive Dean (Teaching and Learning)

Assessment and feedback as inclusive practices: Supporting diverse learners in higher education

Genevieve Okwara, Lecturer, School of Health and Sports Science

Increasing diversity of the higher education student population has intensified the need for inclusive teaching, learning and assessment practices. Students enter higher education with varied educational backgrounds, learning needs, cultural identities and levels of academic confidence. Within this context, assessment and feedback play a critical role in shaping students' sense of belonging, motivation and academic success (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). However, traditional assessment models can unintentionally disadvantage students from underrepresented or non-traditional backgrounds (Bovill & Woolmer, 2019). This talk explores how assessment and feedback can be designed and implemented as inclusive practices that actively support equity, engagement and learner development.

Drawing on inclusive pedagogy (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles (CAST, 2018), the talk examines practice-informed approaches to assessment design and feedback delivery within higher education settings. Using reflective evaluation, student engagement data and teaching practice examples, the study explores inclusive strategies such as flexible assessment formats, transparent marking criteria, scaffolded formative assessment and strengths-based feedback. Findings demonstrate that when assessment is clearly structured, accessible and developmental, students show improved assessment literacy, greater confidence in their academic abilities and stronger engagement with feedback. Inclusive feedback approaches were also found to enhance students' understanding of expectations and support self-regulated learning across diverse learner groups.

Finally, this paper suggests that inclusive assessment and feedback should be embedded as core elements of curriculum design rather than treated as additional support mechanisms. Practical recommendations are offered for educators and institutions, including the adoption of flexible assessment pathways, the use of dialogic feedback and the integration of formative opportunities throughout programmes. Future research should explore longitudinal impacts of inclusive assessment on retention, progression and attainment, particularly among students from widening participation backgrounds. Overall, the paper highlights assessment and feedback as powerful mechanisms for advancing inclusion, equity and student success in higher education.

From anxiety to agency: Developing assessment-literate students

Thomas Feng, Faculty Manager

Assessment literacy refers to students' ability to interpret assessment documents and use tasks, criteria and feedback to produce work that meets expectations (Smith et al., 2013). For non-traditional students, developing these skills can be challenging due to the unfamiliarity with assessment terminology and uncertainty about assessment criteria and standards in higher education. They may struggle to decode assessment briefs, apply criteria accurately in self and peer assessment activities, and make meaningful use of feedback, leading to increased stress during assessments and poor performance (Beaumont, 2019).

For these reasons, one of the major responsibilities of lecturers teaching non-traditional students is to facilitate the development of assessment literacy. These skills can boost students' confidence and reduce assessment-related anxiety (Price et al., 2011). At the same time, by cultivating their own understanding of assessment literacy and the obstacles

that students face, teaching staff can design effective assessment tasks, uphold teaching and assessment standards, and support academic integrity (University of Reading, n.d.).

This lightning talk addresses the challenge of supporting students' understanding of assessment, which is particularly important given that summative feedback is only available after submission. It will share practical strategies for helping students decode assessment briefs and teacher feedback in the context of Regent College London, alongside everyday self and peer assessment activities that build assessment literacy across the curriculum, as well as strategies to scaffold students for engaging in these activities.

Dissertation supervision and successful student outcomes: The role of authentic formative assessment

Dr Vishu Sadanand, Lecturer, School of Business

Dr Palto Datta, Programme Leader, School of Business

Dissertation supervision and formative assessment practices are essential to student success and positive learning outcomes. Drawing on a sample of postgraduate international students in a dissertation module at Regent College London, this study finds that learner engagement during supervision plays a significant role in achieving positive outcomes. Accurate feedback, particularly on the construction of theoretical and conceptual frameworks, research methodology, and data collection and analysis, provided early in the supervision process enhances the quality of dissertation submissions. Core intellectual attributes such as critical thinking and data analysis are also shown to be important in meeting grade descriptors.

The dissertation stage represents a critical phase in the postgraduate journey, and at this point personal attributes such as self-discipline and time management are key to sustained, focused engagement. This is particularly true for international students, for whom the dissertation often marks the culminating stage of their postgraduate pathway. Findings from this study provide practical recommendations for dissertation supervisors, emphasising authentic formative assessment practices as a way to support student learning, development and success.

Rethinking inclusive assessment for non-traditional students: A case study of RCL

Dr Eric Elong Ebolo, Lecturer, School of Health and Sports Science

Assessments are sometimes labelled as "testing culture" (Gipps, 1994), "measuring learning rather than promoting learning itself" (Price et al, 2012), and as measurement that distracts from supporting student development (Elkington, 2019). This raises questions about the effectiveness of assessment: what it is for, what we are assessing and what we should be assessing. In light of these queries, it is critical that we revisit assessment inclusivity. Tai et al. (2023) define an inclusive assessment as one that "recognises diversity in student learning and endeavours to ensure that no student is discriminated against by virtue of features other than their ability to meet appropriate standards." Therefore, establishing the right principles underpinning inclusive assessment has the potential to significantly impact the student experience and ultimately student outcomes (OfS Condition B3).

This talk interrogates the core principles of inclusivity in assessment by focusing on the experiences of non-traditional students at Regent College London, contributing to the ongoing debates around making assessments credible and authentic. It evaluates the features of inclusive assessment, including a variety of assessment methods, choices and topics. It highlights the flexibility of assessment formats, levelling up, catering for individual experiences and interests, ensuring clear, fair and transparent marking criteria and the management of cognitive load. By evaluating these core principles, this study aims to clarify issues linked to academic integrity (especially the impact of AI), improving assessment literacy and culturally responsive assessment for non-conventional students of RCL.

► Session 3B - Lightning Talks

Time: 11:20–12:00

Moderator: Dr Greg Bremner, Senior Lecturer, School of Business

From consumer to collaborator: Practical approaches to student co-creation in higher education

Dr Koel Chatterjee, English Tutor

Higher education (HE) policy increasingly frames students as consumers while simultaneously expecting them to demonstrate independence, critical thinking and professional judgement. This tension has been widely noted in marketised HE systems, particularly in the UK following the introduction of higher tuition fees and accountability mechanisms such as the Teaching Excellence Framework (Brown, 2015; Bunce, Baird & Jones, 2017). This lightning talk explores how small, practical shifts in everyday teaching practice can reposition students as collaborators and co-creators of knowledge rather than passive recipients. It draws on scholarship that conceptualises students as partners in learning and teaching (Cook-Sather, Bovill & Felten, 2014; Healey, Flint & Harrington, 2014).

Rather than advocating large-scale curriculum redesign, the talk presents adaptable, low-risk strategies embedded within existing modules. Drawing on examples from Business Studies, Law and Healthcare education, it demonstrates how co-creation can be integrated at key points in the teaching and learning cycle (Bovill, 2020). These include students contributing workplace-based case material and designing seminar questions in Business; drafting and refining legal problem questions to make assessment construction explicit in Law; and producing reflective learning resources based on placement experiences in Healthcare. Such approaches align with pedagogical models that position students as active participants in disciplinary knowledge production and professional practice (Neary & Winn, 2009).

The talk also engages directly with common concerns raised by educators, including power imbalances between staff and students, the maintenance of academic standards and the practical pressures of workload. It argues that clearly defined boundaries, transparent decision-making and scaffolded participation are essential to ensuring that co-creation remains rigorous, equitable and manageable within institutional constraints (Cook-Sather et al., 2014; Bovill, 2020).

By foregrounding discipline-specific, immediately implementable examples, this talk demonstrates how reframing students as collaborators can deepen engagement, enhance metacognitive awareness and support professional identity formation within the structural realities of contemporary higher education. In doing so, it contributes to ongoing discussions about student partnership and the development of inclusive, participatory pedagogies within UK higher education (Healey et al., 2014; Advance HE, 2023).

Strategies to enhance student engagement

Apophia Othieno, English Tutor

Engaging learners has long been a topic of debate across the education sector: how to sustain it, what approaches to use and demonstrating evidence for it. This talk aims to: a) encourage reflection on prior teaching experience; b) analyse the strategies we tend to gravitate towards; and c) share insights into trying something new.

My interest in this area comes from working with lower-level learners in further education, and from observing how their experience of learning develops when they transition into higher education, specifically within the area of English for Academic Purposes (EAP). This has deepened my understanding of a trauma-informed pedagogy (TiP) (Palanac, 2020),

constructed around building relationships, creating a safe space to learn and promoting learner agency. This talk will explore professional practice, a few constraints and positive outcomes and that can be encountered when trialling a new approach such as TiP.

Why or why not: Understanding student AI use at RCL

Alice Duncan, English Tutor

Xiangyu Zeng, English Tutor

Artificial intelligence (AI) is an umbrella term often used to describe a suite of digital tools. These AI tools are increasingly embedded in everyday software, which have developed quickly in recent years and suddenly become freely available to both students and lecturers. These tools can have widespread application, but come with little instruction on how to use them productively or ethically. Despite the best attempts of those in higher education to keep up with the evolving technological and ethical questions being raised, policies are often inconsistent and difficult to communicate (Moore & Lookadoo, 2024; Hatami, 2025). Instead, lecturers often discourage AI use. However, surveys show that students at all levels are submitting work which is partially, or even entirely AI generated (HEPI & Kortext, 2025). The repetitive nature of this problem strongly suggests it is ineffective to simply discourage AI use.

Research in Widening Participation suggests that many students fitting the Regent College London (RCL) student profile do not have a scholar-first identity (Advance HE, 2022). Rather, their competing priorities of paid work and childcare drive them to use AI as a form of survivorship. An alternative approach is required to engage effectively with these students, who need time and support to build a student identity. We propose engaging with a pedagogy of accessibility, criticality and visibility (Giminez & Thomas, 2015). This approach seeks to explain and contextualise for students the mechanisms that power Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT and Copilot, and to demonstrate productive and ethical uses of AI for students to engage with.

Making learning preferences visible: A reflective digital tool to support belonging and inclusive study strategies

Dr Somdip Dey, Lecturer, School of Engineering and Computing

This talk introduces a lightweight web-based (privacy-preserving) tool designed to help students reflect on their learning preferences using the Honey & Mumford questionnaire in a way that is inclusive, accessible and non-deterministic. The tool provides instant scoring, a visual “cross” representation, short profile descriptions, downloadable results and an optional generative AI-supported reflection prompt to help students turn their results into practical study strategies. Attendees can explore the tool at this URL: https://somdipdey.github.io/Learning_Styles/.

The talk is explicitly framed against the common misconception that educators should adapt teaching to fixed “learning styles”. Instead, the tool is used to help learners articulate how they currently tend to approach learning, to recognise that preferences are mixed and developable, and to identify strategies that may strengthen their study practices. In this sense, the tool supports belonging by normalising difference, reducing deficit framing and giving students a language for discussing learning preferences in induction, personal tutoring and study skills settings.

The talk will demonstrate how the tool can be used as a structured icebreaker and reflective activity that encourages respectful sharing of learning approaches while supporting confidence and psychological safety. It will also demonstrate how the optional AI-supported prompt helps students translate reflective outputs into actionable plans without treating results as fixed labels. Attendees will leave with a practical model for embedding the tool into student-facing contexts, alongside guidance for using it responsibly: as a reflective aid rather than a basis for matching teaching to a presumed style. The session will be relevant to colleagues interested in inclusive pedagogies, student confidence and low-barrier digital tools that support belonging through reflection and self-awareness.

► Session 4A

Time: 12:10–12:50

Moderator: Dr Eva Karayianni, Senior Lecturer, School of Business

Conversational AI for marketing and sales in fashion

Dr Lasta Dangol, Programme Leader, School of Business

Dr Shobha Harebasur, Programme Leader, School of Business

Conversational AI technologies spanning chatbots, virtual assistants and voice interfaces are transforming marketing and sales in the global fashion and luxury retail sectors. This talk investigates how these systems are reshaping customer experience and engagement through enhanced personalisation and seamless omnichannel integration. Grounded in Personalisation Theory (Arora et al., 2008) and Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004), analysis shows how data-driven AI interactions co-create value with consumers by delivering individually tailored advice and bespoke retail experiences. Guided by Omnichannel Retailing Theory (Verhoef et al., 2015), the talk illustrates how integrating conversational agents across online and physical touchpoints creates a unified and consistent customer journey.

Case studies of Louis Vuitton's virtual advisor and H&M's chatbot demonstrate tangible outcomes in practice, including improved conversion rates, increased customer lifetime value and the success of hybrid AI-human service models that blend automated efficiency with human empathy. The strategic benefits of conversational AI such as enriched customer engagement, sales optimisation and global scalability are weighed against challenges including ethical concerns around data privacy, the need for cultural sensitivity and operational integration issues.

Emerging trends like generative AI, AI-powered virtual stylists and digital try-on tools are also explored as innovations to further revolutionise fashion retail. Adopting an augmented intelligence perspective, the talk concludes that human-AI collaboration will be pivotal in shaping future omnichannel marketing strategies. Ultimately, it positions conversational AI as a strategic instrument for fashion retailers, capable of delivering personalised service at scale and driving competitive advantage when deployed in a human-centric and ethically responsible manner that preserves the human element of customer service.

A critical examination of pedagogical approaches to teaching research methods to postgraduate business students in the UK

Dr Palto Datta, Programme Leader, School of Business

Barota Chakraborty, Lecturer, School of Business

Dr Dinesh Poudyal, Lecturer, School of Business

Dr Vishu Sadanand, Lecturer, School of Business

Research methods is an important subject of postgraduate business and management programmes as it provides conceptual and methodological foundations for dissertation projects (Wagner et al., 2011). To write a successful dissertation project, it is vital to understand the core principles of research methods. Indeed, despite the centrality of the subject, research methods are viewed by many students as abstract, technically demanding and disconnected from management practice (Ervits, 2025). These challenges are further compounded by diverse academic, professional and cultural backgrounds of students (Mislav & Anania, 2025). This necessitates a critical examination of how the subject is

taught and how different pedagogical approaches can enhance students' learning experiences, active engagement and research capability.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the pedagogical approaches to teaching research methods to postgraduate business students with a focus on the relationship between the approaches, students' learning experiences, active engagement and the development of research competence.

This paper is based on an inductive approach set within an interpretivist philosophy. Using a qualitative design, the study will be conducted with postgraduate business programmes within Regent College London. Multiple instruments will be used to collect data, including semi-structured interviews with ten academic staff, three focus group discussions with postgraduate business students, and two class observations aimed at capturing students self-directed learning behaviours, cognitive engagement and peer collaborative interaction. Thematic analysis will identify key patterns in pedagogical practices and learners' perceptions.

The study is expected to identify key pedagogical approaches to teaching research methods to postgraduate students and to examine how these approaches align with students' learning needs and expectations. It is expected that interactive, student-centred and practice-oriented pedagogies will be perceived as more effective in enhancing engagement and research confidence than purely didactic teaching approaches.

Findings will inform curriculum design, instructional approaches and pedagogical practices and provide practical guidance for educators aiming to enhance student engagement, reduce research related anxiety and strengthen research capacity within diverse postgraduate cohorts.

► Session 4B

Time: 12:10–12:50

Moderator: Dr Kunle Adewole, Programme Leader, School of Business

From compliance to capability: Developing QA literacy in higher education through the Distributed D-LENS Framework

Dr Md Mizanur Rahman, Lecturer, School of Engineering and Computing

Internal quality assurance (QA) within higher education has long been associated with formal procedures, documentation and committee oversight. Although such mechanisms are intended to protect academic standards and promote consistency, they are frequently experienced by staff as externally imposed or compliance-driven (Harvey & Williams, 2010). In recent years, institutions have sought to reposition QA within enhancement-led agendas; nevertheless, uneven engagement with quality processes persists, often resulting in variable practice and limited developmental impact (Aldhobaib, 2024; EUA, 2020). This paper contends that these difficulties stem less from deficiencies in process design and more from differences in how QA is understood, interpreted and enacted across the institution. To address this gap, the paper advances the concept of QA literacy as a form of academic capability.

QA literacy is conceptualised as the ability to make informed judgements about quality by understanding the purposes of internal QA, interpreting evidence and standards in context, and applying these insights to teaching, assessment and curriculum decision-making. From this perspective, QA becomes not merely a technical function but a situated professional practice requiring interpretation, confidence and shared understanding (Newton, 2010).

Building on this conceptualisation, the paper introduces the Distributed D-LENS Framework as a developmental model for cultivating QA literacy within higher education. The framework describes five interrelated stages – Discover, Learn, Enact, Nurture and Shape – through which individuals and groups may engage with QA over time. Importantly, D-LENS does not align these stages with hierarchical position or formal authority. Instead, it emphasises the distribution of QA literacy across academic, professional and student roles, recognising that quality enhancement emerges through collective sense-making rather than specialist ownership.

The paper demonstrates how the Distributed D-LENS Framework supports staff development and institutional strategy by informing induction, professional learning and proportionate quality assurance. By reframing quality as a shared academic capability, it strengthens standards through confidence and enhancement-oriented approaches in higher education.

Recentring internal quality assurance on the student learning experience: The PLEX-QA approach

Syed Muhammad Raza, Lecturer, School of Engineering and Computing

Dr Md Mizanur Rahman, Lecturer, School of Engineering and Computing

Shan Ali, Lecturer, School of Business

Internal quality assurance (QA) in higher education increasingly serves multiple, sometimes competing, institutional purposes. QA is frequently expected to improve learning and teaching, ensure fairness in assessment, support student achievement and contribute to institutional reputation (Stensaker and Matear, 2024; Harvey and Green, 1993).

The simultaneous prioritisation of these areas has contributed to expansive, evidence-heavy QA systems in which purpose and impact are difficult to interpret (Harvey and Williams, 2024). This paper argues that such multi-goal framing obscures what internal QA can most plausibly and productively achieve.

The paper proposes PLEX-QA (Primary Learning Experience–Centred Quality Assurance) as an alternative approach that recentres internal QA on a single organising focus: the quality of the student learning experience. Rather than positioning grades, achievement, progression or reputational indicators as direct products of QA activity, PLEX-QA conceptualises these outcomes as evaluative signals through which improvements to the learning experience may be examined and tested. From this perspective, internal QA does not aim to generate particular outcomes, but to strengthen educational conditions such as clarity of expectations, coherence of assessment design, quality of feedback and consistency of academic judgement.

PLEX-QA reframes internal QA as a system which first identifies particular aspects of the learning experience and returns to that experience as the primary site of evaluation. This is in contrast to traditional quality assurance models emphasising retrospective verification, procedural compliance and accumulation of evidence. By clearly separating primary objectives from secondary indicators, the proposed approach provides a more rigorous and conceptually integrated basis for quality practice.

The paper concludes with implications of PLEX-QA for students and institutions. For students, an experience-centred QA orientation involves transparency, fairness and trust in academic processes that are tightly linked with engagement and belonging. For institutions, PLEX-QA creates a framework for simplifying the systems of QA, reducing the burden of procedures, and connecting quality work more closely with priorities for enhancement, while preserving robust approaches to standards and accountability.

► Session 5 – University of Greater Manchester

Time: 13:40–14:40

Moderator: Joanne Hooker, Associate Provost

Keynote: The psychology of feedback

Professor Patrick McGhee, Assistant Vice Chancellor, University of Greater Manchester

This keynote considers the ways in which feedback operates as an emotional and relational transaction which can impact not only on confidence and motivation, but on identity, beliefs and social networks. This interactive session invites participants to think about how these elements play out in their own contexts as both educators and learners.

Stories that stick: Building a culture of shared professional learning

Amy Dyer, Professional Development (Teaching & Learning) Practitioner and CPD Coordinator
Dr Sarah Telfer, TIRAE Associate Teaching Professor
University of Greater Manchester

Behind every effective teaching strategy lies a story, a moment of reflection, adaptation or innovation grounded in professional learning. This research-informed session invites colleagues to explore how sharing continuing professional development (CPD) experiences can strengthen teaching practice, enhance professional identity and contribute to a positive institutional culture. Drawing on evidence around reflective practice, communities of practice and the scholarship of teaching and learning, we will consider how making our pedagogical thinking visible benefits both individuals and organisations. Participants will reflect on their own CPD journeys and examine how articulating these experiences can foster peer learning, collaboration and collective growth. The session will also introduce the University of Greater Manchester's Centre for Higher Education Research and Practice (CHERP) platform as a collaborative space for sharing best practice, insights and lived experiences of teaching. Colleagues will leave with practical strategies for capturing and sharing teaching and learning stories, alongside clear opportunities to contribute to and engage with a wider professional learning community.

▶ Session 6A

Time: 14:45–15:45

Moderator: Dr Greg Bremner, Senior Lecturer, School of Business

Authentic assessment design: Integrating AI for professional practice

Thuraya El KozeH, Programme Leader, Regent European University

The rapid diffusion of AI-powered tools transforms both professional practice and individual development, with profound implications for educational design. As AI capabilities expand, educators face urgent questions about how to prepare students for AI-integrated workplaces while developing critical evaluation skills. As institutions establish AI policies and usage guidelines, educators need pedagogical frameworks for teaching with AI and designing assessments that integrate AI use while maintaining academic rigour (Bearman et al., 2024).

The presentation will provide an example of complete assessment architecture that addresses key pedagogical tensions, using progressive scaffolding to prevent over-reliance on AI tools, while building genuine competency. It will introduce a progressive assessment design implemented with online MBA students on a Marketing Fundamentals module, where AI is used both as a professional tool and as an object of critical inquiry. The assignment simulates a complete branding process for a realistic fictional company, requiring students to work progressively through four interconnected tasks: AI-generated logo design and brand identity (Week 4); definition of a customer persona (Week 6); an online adaptive assessment about sustainability in brand positioning and company values (Week 8); and the preparation of a final report that integrates the results from an exploratory concept testing survey (Week 12). Throughout the assessment, students use AI to prepare high-quality outputs while reflecting on the use of the tools in relation to marketing theories and promotional frameworks, critically evaluating effectiveness, limitations and ethical implications at every stage.

Several elements contribute to reinforce the authentic dimension of this assessment, intended as one that “replicates the tasks and performance standards typically found in the world of work” (Villarroel et al., 2018): realistic business scenarios; practical tasks integrating AI skills with marketing theory; and time constraints requiring sensible management and decision-making. The consistent requirement for critical commentaries prompts students to reflect on their use of the tool, stimulating metacognition alongside deeper analytical thinking.

Canvas analytics to evaluate student engagement, progression and achievement: Case analysis using a Health Science postgraduate module

Dr Gayani Gamage, Senior Lecturer, School of Health and Sports Science

Canvas is a Learning Management System (LMS) used by higher education institutions to deliver module content and assessment to students (Marachi and Quill, 2020; Oudat and Othman, 2024). When online learning became more common following the Covid-19 pandemic, higher education has welcomed LMS-based asynchronous learning as a tool to support student engagement through formative activities. Students also benefitted as they had the opportunity to learn material at their own pace in their own space.

Data that is available within course analytics in Canvas (Bergdahl et al., 2024) was identified as an effective resource that can guide teachers to monitor and identify student engagement and progress towards achieving learning outcomes. The analysis of data throughout the learning cycle of a module can be used to enhance content quality, identify

effectiveness of activities and overall engagement with the Canvas module (Santos et al., 2023).

This study utilised a quantitative research design to analyse Canvas analytics for a postgraduate module in the health sciences with a cohort of 25 students. Their final grades, engagement with content pages and weekly activities were extracted and analysed to provide an overview student engagement and progress.

Findings indicate highest number of page views were on Assessment Submission, Assessment Brief and Assessment Guidance sections, and quizzes had higher levels of engagement compared to other activities. There was also a relationship between total page views with student grades indicating effectiveness of engagement.

In conclusion, course analytics on Canvas are a useful tool to monitor student engagement and provide early interventions for students who demonstrate lower levels of engagement with the module content in Canvas. In future research, cohort-level comparisons with longitudinal data will further strengthen the analysis and help improve student engagement as well as content quality revisions.

Perspectives on commitment in the “Prepare” phase of the PCC framework: A study of postgraduate campus students in business

Dr Charika Manori Fernando Waduge, Lecturer, School of Business

Regent College London's Prepare–Collaborate–Consolidate (PCC) Framework states that structured participation before class is critical for effective collaboration and better learning outcomes during class sessions. Indeed, pre-class preparation is a core part of active learning and constructive alignment in higher education. It helps to boost student confidence, engagement and academic achievement (Biggs, 1996; Biggs & Tang, 2011; Prince, 2004). Despite its importance, students' preparation habits are often inconsistent, and the “Prepare” stage is often underdeveloped in their routines (Bovill, 2020). This study examines how postgraduate campus students in RCL's School of Business and Enterprise view the instructional and contextual factors that influence their commitment during the “Prepare” phase of the PCC Framework.

This study uses a quantitative research design, including a structured questionnaire given to postgraduate campus students. The survey measures students' self-reported commitment, their views on instructional clarity, the quality and usefulness of preparatory resources, lecturer support and challenges they face when preparing. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation analysis and multiple regression help identify the most important factors affecting commitment. The current phase of the study focuses solely on students' perspectives to identify the factors that help or hinder their engagement.

Expected findings suggest that instructional clarity, constructive alignment, relevant materials and lecturer support will help students commit to the course. Perceived barriers will make preparation harder. This study contributes to the literature on improving teaching and learning in postgraduate education. It also supports quality assurance in higher education. The results may help institutions meet the Office for Students (OfS) Condition B2 requirements. They show how structured and connected learning design can increase student engagement, help progression and boost academic achievement. Future research could use institutional datasets, including attendance records, Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) analytics, and academic performance results. Using these alongside perceptual data will strengthen the validity and practical value of the findings.

► Session 6B

Time: 14:45–15:45

Moderator: Dr Amberlee Green, Lecturer, School of Health and Sports Science

Belonging before skills: Integrating personal development into academic skills provision for mature and non-traditional students

Ruheena Thasin, Lecturer, School of Business

This practice-based paper explores the pedagogic value of integrating personal development into academic skills provision for mature and non-traditional students in post-Covid-19 higher education. Academic skills education is often framed as a set of technical competencies centred on assessment literacy and academic conventions, while personal development is often delivered separately through optional enrichment activities. This structural separation risks overlooking the relational and identity-based dimensions of learning, which are particularly significant for adult learners.

Drawing on practitioner-led curriculum design in a weekly, non-assessed seminar for Level 3 and Level 4 mature students at a UK higher education provider, this paper reflects on an alternative approach that embedded personal development themes, including goal setting, emotional intelligence, time management and entrepreneurial mindset, within early-stage academic support. Observations from teaching practice indicated sustained participation, peer dialogue and reflective engagement, particularly among students balancing study with employment and caring responsibilities.

While many institutions offer both academic skills modules and personal development enrichment, this paper argues that greater pedagogic value may be realised when these elements are intentionally integrated rather than positioned as parallel activities. Informed by perspectives on belonging and adult learning, the discussion considers how centring lived experience and psychological safety can enhance readiness for academic engagement without diluting academic rigour.

The paper concludes by offering transferable insights for curriculum enhancement, suggesting practical ways institutions might embed personal development principles within academic skills frameworks to strengthen inclusive practice, student engagement and community-building across diverse learner cohorts.

Impact of culturally inclusive practices on psychological safety of culturally diverse students

Dr Inga Olari, Programme Leader, School of Law

As the impact of globalisation on the higher education sector has grown, so have the culturally diverse student populations in many educational institutions across the world (De Leersnyder et al., 2022). While universities endorse inclusion through diversity policies and culturally inclusive practices, the experience of culturally diverse students' psychological safety can vary (Woods et al., 2024). Psychological safety, defined as the perception that one can express ideas, concerns or identity without fear of negative consequences, has been associated with academic engagement, collaboration and overall wellbeing (Niță, 2023; Huerta et al., 2024). However, there has been little empirical research to consider the impact of psychological safety on specific culturally inclusive practices among culturally diverse students (De Leersnyder et al., 2022).

This study examines the relationship between culturally inclusive practices and psychological safety in higher education institutions. Employing a quantitative survey design, culturally diverse students from several institutions were included in this study. Correlation and regression analyses were performed with the help of SPSS software to establish the strength and significance of the relationship. Findings suggest that culturally inclusive practices such as inclusive pedagogy, culturally responsive curriculum and faculty cultural competence are especially predictive of psychological safety (De Leersnyder et al., 2022; Woods et al., 2024). The study is relevant to educational research as it highlights how institutional inclusivity practices relate to student psychological actions, and provides recommendations for policy and practice.

Behavioural drivers of belonging, integrity and learning in teaching practice

Dr Iris-Panagiota Efthymiou, Lecturer, School of Business

Behavioural science can help us understand how students form habits, respond to feedback and build trust, which makes it a practical tool for inclusive pedagogies, assessment for learning and data-informed teaching (O'Hara, 2023; Dewsbury, 2019). This talk explores how the use of friction reduction, clear social cues and fast feedback loops to create belonging, strengthen academic integrity and improve learning outcomes. When low-stakes formative tasks and predictable routines are integrated, the cognitive load decreases and participation increases (Ismail et al., 2022). Making expectations visible through norms and rubrics reduces ambiguity and supports ethical behaviour while short, specific feedforward and monitoring of student feedback use creates a continuous evidence stream that guides teaching adjustments (Hill and West, 2020). The same behavioural principles support communities of practice by shifting the focus from individual teaching preferences to shared, testable methods. This talk presents a concise model that can be applied across modules to raise engagement, improve feedback use and produce measurable improvements in confidence, integrity and performance.

► Session 7

Time: 16:00–17:00

Moderator: Joanne Hooker, Associate Provost

Speaking from lived experience: Reflection and personal testimony as an inclusive pedagogy practice

Dr John D Attridge, Lecturer, Academic Skills in School of Business

The remit of inclusive pedagogies in higher education settings is varied, but in recent years they are most often designed to address skills, ability and confidence gaps for different groups of marginalised and/or disadvantaged students. Such pedagogies include increasing the use of accessible materials and resources in the classroom (Dogucu et al., 2023; Papadopoulos et al., 2025); decolonising and diversifying reading lists and associated content (Bailyn, 2020; Gupta and Liu, 2024); implementing the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) across curricula (Sanger, 2020; Posey, 2021); retooling assessment strategies to increase flexibility and submission support (Boud et al., 2022; Graham and Willis, 2025); and creating a culture of belonging on campus and within and across higher education environments (Hashmi et al., 2024; Abram, 2025).

In this paper, I consider opportunities for students to reflect on personal experiences and speak from lived experience in the classroom as an additional inclusive pedagogy that might be added to this list. Reflection is already embedded across multiple academic skills modules at Regent College London as a means of evaluating strengths and weaknesses and formulating future study or professional development goals, but prioritising time and space for learners to share their experiences (academic or otherwise) is sometimes lacking. Additionally, the value of granting students the opportunity to speak from lived experience in other institutions is already well-documented (Fletcher, 2021; Lobban et al., 2023; Sartor, 2023).

This presentation consequently shares insights into how current RCL students have responded to protected space for personal reflection and the opportunity to provide personal testimony in relation to weekly topics in academic skills seminars. I consider the extent to which students valued this time, made active use of it and whether they consider the outcomes of such reflections and discussions in alignment with the goals of other inclusive pedagogical practices.

Evaluating a storytelling teaching intervention to enhance engagement and achievement for widening participation students

Dr Alicja McGarrigle, Senior Lecturer, School of Health and Sports Science

Dr Michal Lytovka, Lecturer, School of Health and Sports Science

Elisabet Fiz Borg, Lecturer, School of Health and Sports Science

Student engagement and achievement remain central concerns within widening participation (WP) higher education, where disparities in confidence, inclusion and academic self-efficacy can affect progression and retention. While storytelling is increasingly recognised as a powerful pedagogical approach, much of the higher education literature remains descriptive rather than empirically evaluative. This study addresses that gap by examining whether a structured storytelling intervention, grounded in narrative cognition (Bruner, 1990) and social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), can measurably enhance engagement, achievement and academic self-efficacy among WP students.

The intervention conceptualises storytelling not merely as content delivery, but as a socially mediated pedagogical tool. Narrative framing of module concepts, peer story-sharing and guided reflection are embedded across a 3-6 session teaching block, with explicit lecturer scaffolding to support dialogic interaction within students' Zones of Proximal Development. A convergent mixed-methods design is then employed, combining pre- and post-intervention questionnaires (measuring engagement, belonging and self-efficacy) with lecturer reflective logs. Quantitative data are analysed using paired comparisons with effect sizes reported, while qualitative responses are examined through reflexive thematic analysis and integrated via a joint display matrix.

Preliminary findings suggest positive changes in student-reported engagement, sense of belonging and achievement. Qualitative data in the form of lecturer feedback may help to confirm whether storytelling supports confidence, achievement and meaning-making among students. Practical implications for WP curriculum design and inclusive teaching practice will be discussed.

Supporting inclusive, impactful teaching: How Advance HE enhances practice across the sector

Karen Taylor, Head of Membership and Development, Advance HE

This session will give a concise overview of how Advance HE's latest member benefits, professional recognition routes and practical resources support inclusive teaching, effective assessment and feedback, data-informed enhancement and stronger communities of practice.

► Plenary session

Time: 17:00–17:25

The big 5-0: What we learned from the first 50 observations

Louise Norris-Hunt, Executive Dean (Teaching and Learning)

This session provides an update on our renewed teaching observation process, including what has changed, how it is working so far and the themes emerging from recent observations. The update will highlight recent quotes from classrooms and share some things to avoid.

The session will also outline what we hope to see developing across teaching practice in the months ahead and introduce the next six months of workshops, highlighting how they will support staff through practical skill-building and reflection.

Closing remarks

Joanne Hooker, Associate Provost





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