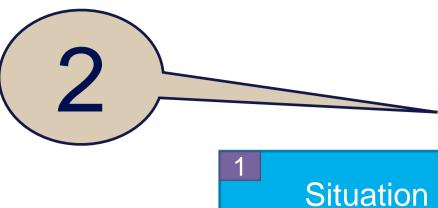
Delivering Fair Outcomes for Students Through Changes in Assessment Practice

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Theory of Change

There are persistent ethnicity degree awarding gaps for black and Asian students. The gap between Mixed students and white students has also increased. This presents an acute risk to students' equality of opportunity alongside risk of regulatory non-compliance (condition A1).

Aims

Venue / estates / digital

capacity for assessmen

Student Time: Peer

navigators, engagement

Staff Time: Course and

module leads, EDS learner

Rationale &

Assumptions

launch

Improve degree awarding rates for Black students to reduce gaps between them and white full-time, first-degree graduates. Enable students to engage with learning and assessment in good time and equip staff with and understanding of the barriers students face and the means to address those barriers through transforming assessment, communications and marking practices.

Embed applied modes of

employability activities

assessment enhanced by

Activities Outputs Inputs Process Buy-in from LTAQC Staff training: VTQ students' Higher proportion of students in 1 reviewed institutional assessment needs, Anti-racism (Power Procurement of 25K target modules achieve over 60% Improvement in average module CADMUS student licenses In each APP year: Level 4: Rollout of CADMUS digital grades for Black and Asian Anti-racism trainers 2 assessment launch sessions for assessment tool Approval from Quality students Levels 5 and 6: 90% first time submission rate for Assurance Verification 1 anti racism training session black and Asian students by end

Assessment policy review Production of accessible Existing assessment • 2 VTQ student needs' training principles of assessment frameworks, guidelines Production of consistent and clear and policies for review 45 modules complete assessment

assessment briefs Assessment workshops for staff 45 assessment briefs produced and students and launched Implementation of anti-racist 21 course level assessment

training pedagogies roadmaps produced Implementation of clearer marking 45+ dedicated assessment Creation of course level assessment roadmaps

accessible with CADMUS Increase in stage aggregate 90% student satisfaction for black grades for Black and Asian and Asian students who engage with CADMUS

90% first time pass rate for black

and Asian students who engage

of S2, 2025 (<10% non-

submission)

Outcomes

Reduction in overall ethnicity degree awarding gaps for black and Asian students

Impact

Institutional culture of inclusive

and accessible assessment

Staff confidence in creating

assessment feedback

accessible briefs, using whole

Students are more engaged,

are relevant, consistent and

grade scale and providing quality

finding assessments and feedback

Impact

Data from student feedback shows evidence of overassessment, assessment miscommunication and feedback that is not meeting students' expectations. Evidence also indicates that students Black and Asian students do not always engage with assessment in a timely way and assessment expectations may not be clear to them. Evidence also suggests students engage more with applied modes of assessment and that anti-racism staff training is considered effective in improving staff understanding of students from minority ethnic backgrounds, producing more authentic interactions.

Some stats on the reach of the project

1. Package of Assessment Design and Delivery

Focused on Assessment Design and Briefs, Communication of Assessment to Students, Dedicated Sessions to Support Students with Assessment, Formative Activity)

Birmingham City University was part of OfS Access

The APP Assessment workstream is designed to close

Closing the awarding gap between the BTEC/VTQ and

GCE entry qualifications students is also in scope.

The project is underpinned by a Theory of Change.

We are now implementing a new Access and

the awarding gap between Black/White and

and Participation Wave 1.

Participation Plan (APP).

Asian/White students.

- 45 modules have been targeted for assessment redesign in AY2024/2025, but only those delivered to students in S1 and All Year have been included in this analysis
- Data indicates implementation confirmed in all but one module for 2024/2025 (RAD5066)
- 28 modules were targeted in S1 (S1 and All Year modules) 2024/2025
- 1,735 students expected to be impacted

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• 1,619 of impacted students had one or more APP characteristics (96.0% of activity reach)

2. Cadmus online assessment submission

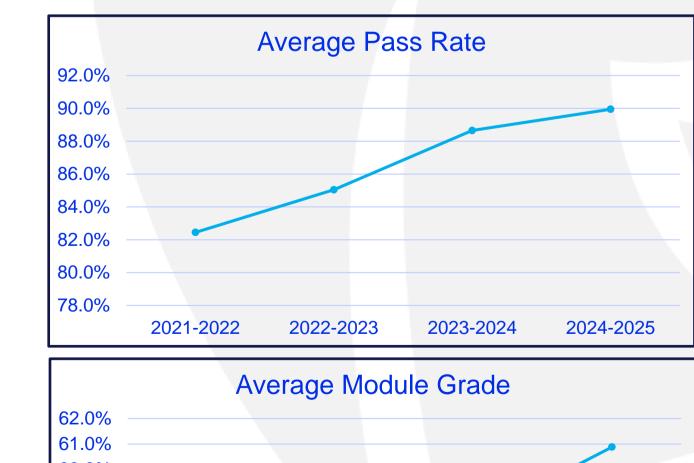
- Module leads for 43 Level 4 modules with a coursework element were invited to adopt CADMUS
- Modules were targeted using a new measure variation from weighted average. Those with high proportions of students achieving below their weighted average in 2023/2024 were shortlisted for CADMUS rollout in 2024/2025
- 22 implemented CADMUS in Semester 1 2024/2025
- 21 declined (for a variety of reasons, including suitability of assessment elements) to use CADMUS, forming a self-selected control group for impact evaluation
- 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 module performance will be compared as part of the impact evaluation
- 2,511 students were reached via 3,331 'encounters' with CADMUS 1,711 students in APP priority groups (67.1% of CADMUS reach)

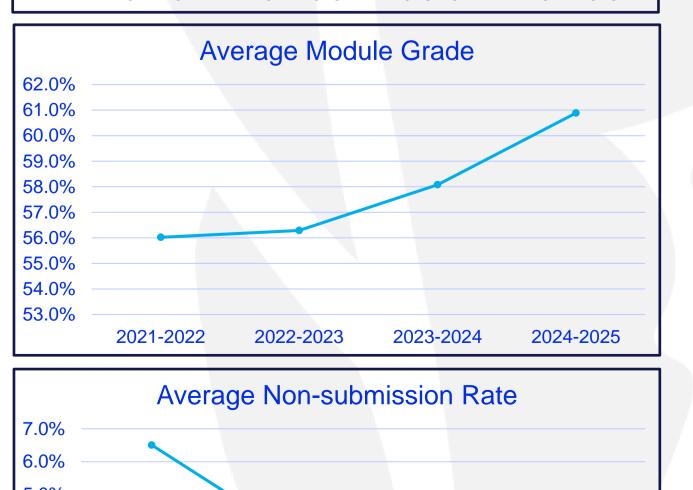
Previous work for context

Our authentic assessment redesign was the focus of a TASO funded ethnicity degree awarding gap project, producing a core and enhanced Theory of Change and Evaluation Plan (available on the TASO website) with expert evaluators from Staffordshire University and Advance HE.

This poster builds on that work and includes recommendations for future activity.

Early results: Package of Assessment Design and Delivery





2021-2022 2022-2023 2023-2024 2024-2025

74.4% **Enhanced Understanding**

The APP Assessment Workstream pilot delivered two major interventions:

1. The implementation of a Package of Assessment Design and Delivery to modules at levels 5 and 6 of study. 45 modules have been targeted for assessment redesign in 2024/2025, impacting over 1,700 students. Activities included assessment redesign, boosting student confidence through added support, empowering staff to understand the needs of students entering HE with different qualifications, and facilitating the use of the full range of available marks.

2. The rollout of the Cadmus online assessment submission environment to modules at level 4 of study. 22 modules implemented Cadmus in 2024/2025, impacting over 2,500 students. Engendering early engagement with assessment and automatic reminders to students are amongst the highlights.

Evaluation of outcomes was rigorously built into both interventions, allowing a good understanding of the impact of activity.

Early results: Cadmus



83.9% First-Time Submission Rate First-Time submission rate across all completed ssessments in 2024/2025.

74.4% of student respondents said they had a better

understanding of the process for completing this type

First-Time Pass Rate was 90.9% for undergraduate students and 68% for post-graduate students.

Submission Rate Increase when working in Cadmus (90.3%) vs

+22.6%

when working externally and submitting in Cadmus (67.6%)

79.1%

90.9%

First-Time Pass Rate

Ease of Use 79.1% of student respondents agreed it was easy to understand how to complete the assessment.

What we think worked!

Working with all faculties and observing practice in different areas.

Uncovering issues in assessment practice that are illustrative of current BCU status.

- Training in person of colleagues in Package of Assessment Design and Delivery.
- Training for Cadmus, with requests for in person training in HELS.
- The creation of templates and guidance for colleagues to use.
- Working with the EDS team to support Assessment Briefs reviews and Observation of **Dedicated Assessment Sessions.**
- Working with the PPD team on evaluation.

Challenges?

This workstream has uncovered significant poor assessment practice in all subject areas. Basic understanding of assessment design and supporting students in their assessment journey is lacking in many areas.

- In the context of the overall intervention strategy aims (e.g. to improve the awarding rate for Black and Asian students), how and when are the activities going to be evaluated?
- Semester 1 impact evaluation for both sub streams to commence once boards complete. Module performance and awarding gaps evaluated directly from SITS data. Awaiting full evaluation.
- Cadmus Qualitative evidence has already been collected via the platform, initially indicating overall positive student experience.