Implementation and Process Evaluation

Dr Helen Lawson, Research Programmes Manager

Outline of session

1. Introduction to Implementation and Process Evaluation

2. The dimensions and factors affecting implementation

3. Data collection methods

4. Assumptions and change mechanisms

5. Shaping new resources

- **STEP 1**

  Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4.

- **STEP 2**

  For the topping, beat 50g softened butter and 50g light soft brown sugar together until creamy. Spread over the base and a quarter of the way up the sides of a 20cm round cake tin. Arrange 7 pineapple rings on top (reserving the syrup for later), then place 7 glacé cherries in the centres of the rings.

- **STEP 3**

  Place 100g softened butter, 100g golden caster sugar, 100g self-raising flour, 1 tsp baking powder, 1 tsp vanilla extract and 2 eggs in a bowl along with 2 tbsp of the reserved pineapple syrup. Using an electric whisk, beat to a soft consistency.

- **STEP 4**

  Spoon into the tin on top of the pineapple and smooth it out so it's level. Bake for 35 mins. Leave to stand for 5 mins, then turn out onto a plate. Serve warm with a scoop of ice cream.
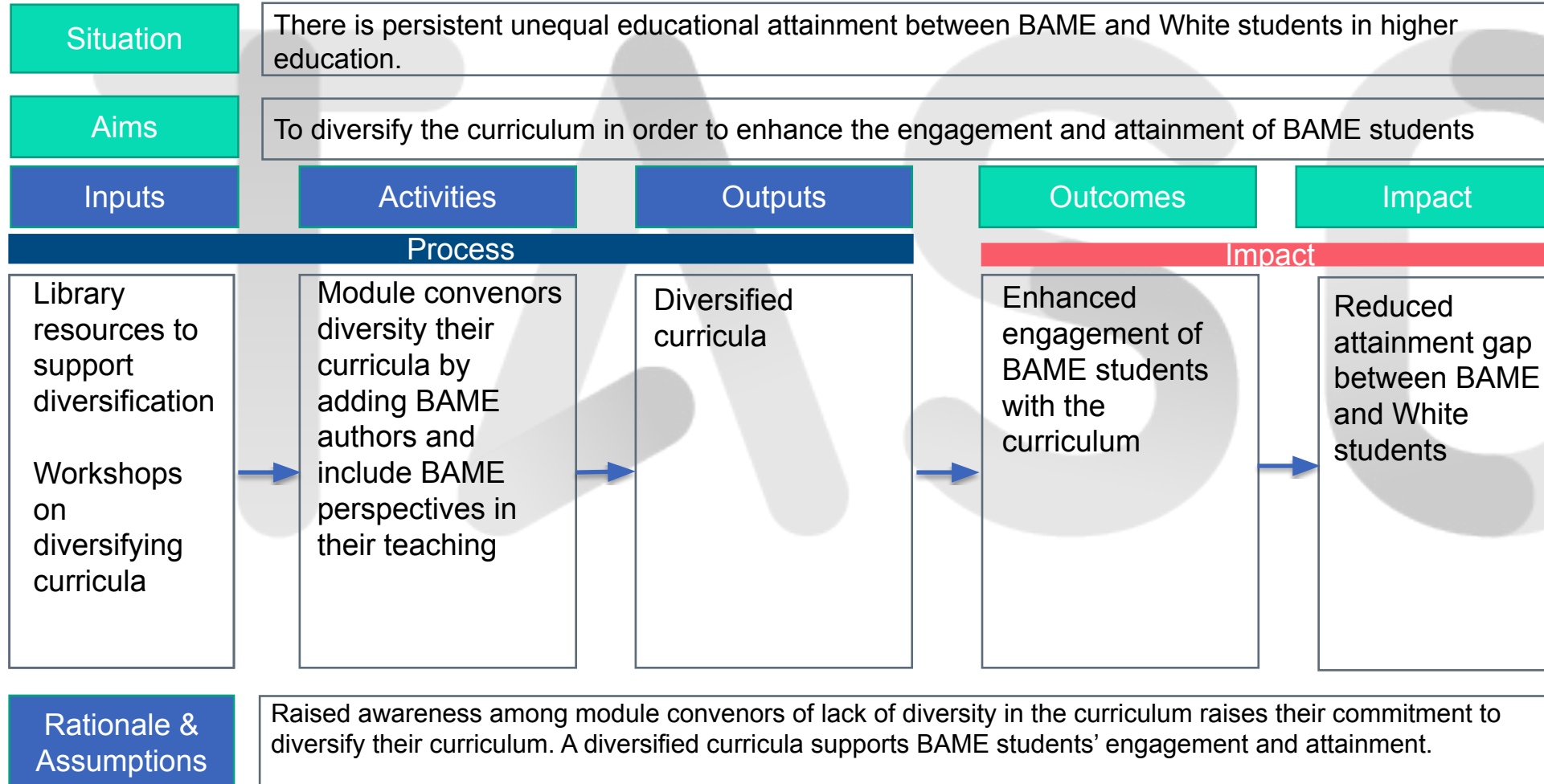
Implementation and Process Evaluation (IPE): What is it and why is it important?
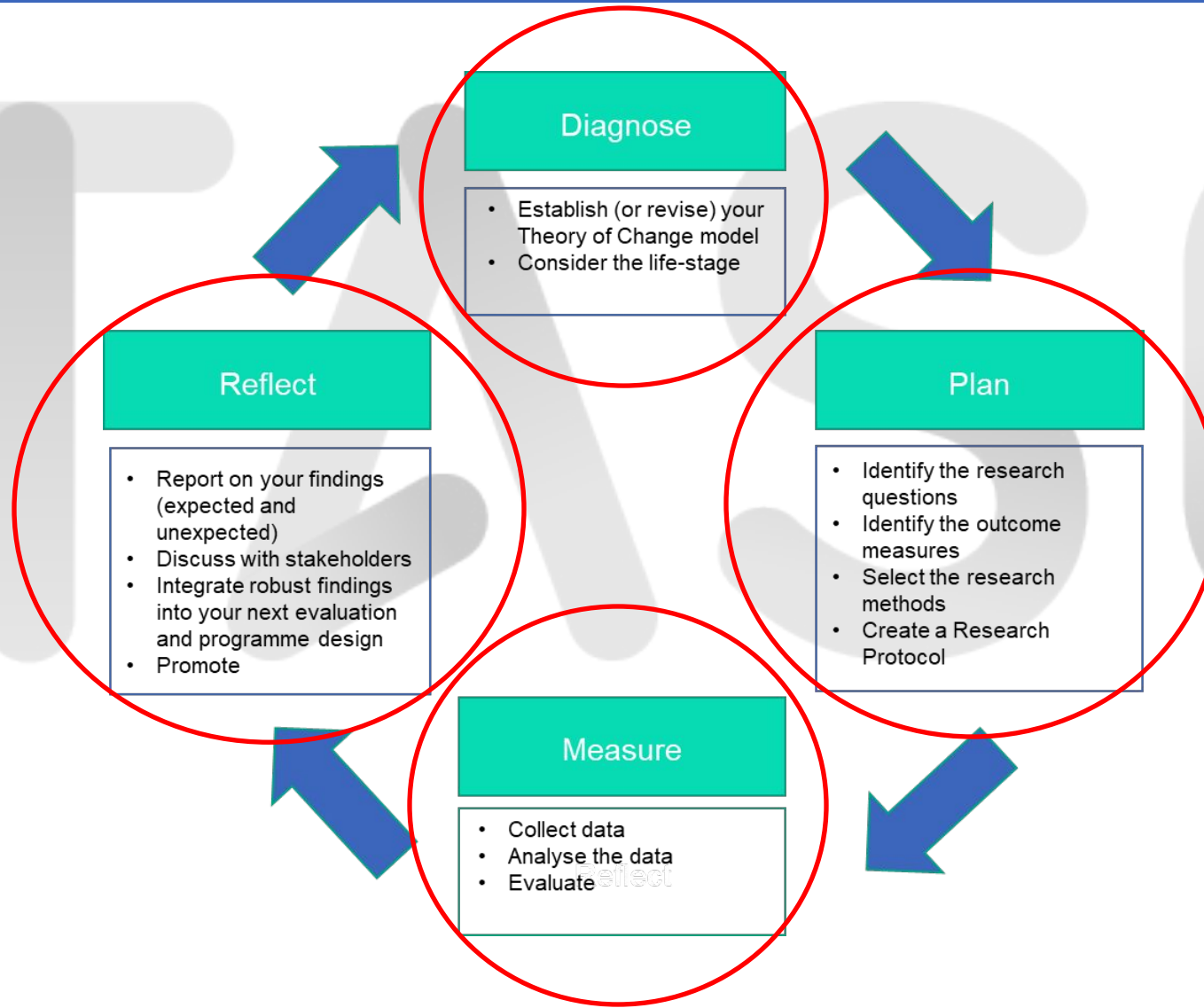
IPE refers to the generation and analysis of data to examine how an intervention is put into practice, how it works to achieve its intended outcomes, and the factors that influence these processes.

Broadly speaking, if **Impact Evaluation (IE) helps us find out 'what' works**, then **IPE can tell us 'why' or 'how' something does or does not work, and for whom**.

The evaluation cycle (1)

Situation	There is persistent unequal educational attainment between BAME and White students in higher education.

Aims	To diversify the curriculum in order to enhance the engagement and attainment of BAME students

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Process			Impact	
Library resources to support diversification

Workshops on diversifying curricula | Module convenors diversity their curricula by adding BAME authors and include BAME perspectives in their teaching | Diversified curricula | Enhanced engagement of BAME students with the curriculum | Reduced attainment gap between BAME and White students |

Rationale & Assumptions	Raised awareness among module convenors of lack of diversity in the curriculum raises their commitment to diversify their curriculum. A diversified curricula supports BAME students' engagement and attainment.

The intervention description

Dimension	Description
Name	
Why do you think the intervention will work	Rationale, theory and/or goal of key elements of the intervention, without which the intervention will be ineffective. Include description of outcomes and causal assumptions
Who	Intervention recipients
Who	Intervention implementers; Who is involved in delivery.
What (materials)	Materials used in the intervention
What (processes)	Description of each of the activities and/or processes employed the intervention implementer/s carried out
How	Mode of delivery
Where	Location of intervention
When and how much	Duration and dosage; defining engagement
Adaptation	Changes made to the intervention design, both planned and unplanned

Activity

- Complete the intervention description

Dimensions affecting implementation

Fidelity — • Extent to which intervention delivered as intended

Dosage — • How much

Reach — • Scope of participant participation

Quality — • How well the intervention is delivered

Adaptation — • Nature and extent of changes made to the intervention

Responsiveness — • Degree to which participants engage with the intervention

Programme differentiation — • Extent that intervention activities can be differentiated from usual practice
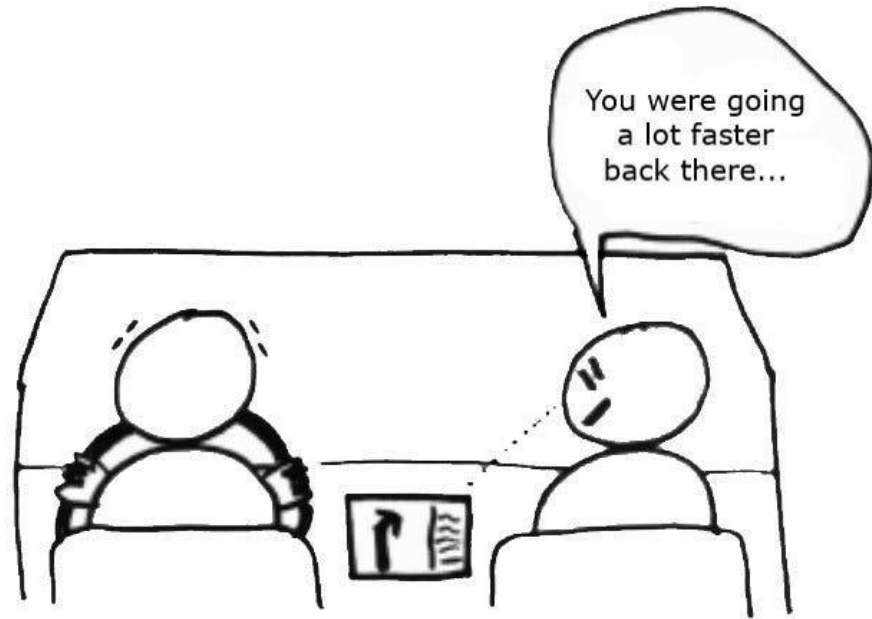
Factors affecting implementation

Preparation and the foundations of the intervention

Implementer experience and characteristics

Internal context of intervention implementation

External context of implementation

Activity

- **Fidelity** - may be assessed by rating the proportion of sessions covered; whether implementers delivered activity content as planned; whether implementers followed any specified approaches to delivery
- **Dosage** – may be assessed by rating the number of intervention activities delivered
- **Reach** – the number of students who participate in an intervention
- **Quality** – quality of delivery may be assessed through participant feedback
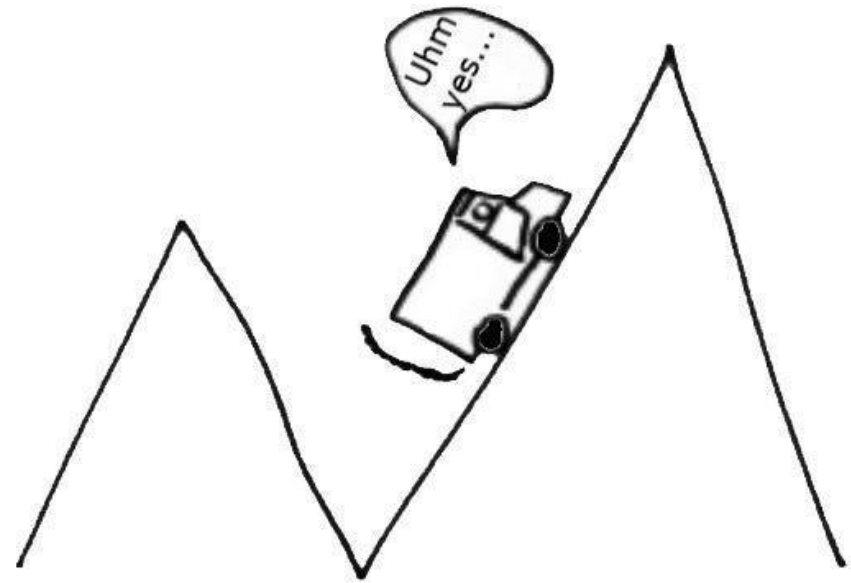
Assessing implementation dimensions (2)

- **Participant responsiveness**

I think it makes such a difference when they're enthusiastic, so it was really nice when the people that were holding the webinars were passionate about what they were teaching. (Post-16 student)

An important factor is definitely how the lecturers came across, like when they come across that they're interested in their job, or they present the course to you in way that makes you want to hear them. (Post-16 student)

I feel like it seemed intimidating before, but after the summer school experience, it feels much more simple than it used to. (Pre-16 student)

Questions?

Prescriptive v. Non-prescriptive interventions

- A prescriptive intervention is one that demands that implementation closely follows a specified model, and might include, for example, guidelines and training on exactly how implementers should deliver the intervention.

- A non-prescriptive intervention does not follow a tightly specified model and there is much more flexibility on how the intervention is implemented

HEP	How	Dosage	Data source
A	Online 5 weeks x 2 hour sessions with multiple sessions taking place each week for students to choose from	60%	Register of attendees. Pre- In- and Post event surveys
B	Blended 4 consecutive days. 2-3 hours of contact time each day, alongside independent activities	50% of live sessions and recorded in HEAT. Students that submit a piece of work for the time capsule will have engaged at a higher level than those that have not.	Zoom registers and user reports from Thinkific
C	Online Participants will take part in five synchronous group sessions, accompanied by asynchronous individual follow-up tasks intended to encourage reflection on the activities participated in.	Attendance at 3 out of the five sessions	Structural observation (e.g. attendance numbers) Engagement with in-session tools such as Google Jamboards and in-session polling tools Participant engagement with personal reflection materials Integrated participant focus groups

Adaptation

RAMESESPROJECT.ORG

Context

Activity

We're going to revisit how the dimensions and factors will be assessed.

- Is there any flexibility in how the intervention is implemented.
- What elements are important to intervention success and therefore you want to test.
- What contextual factors might influence implementation and outcomes?
- How can you assess these factors?

Qualitative data collection methods

Qualitative methods in IPE can help:

- Establish stakeholder views of the intervention
- Record the implementation of the intervention
- Highlight contextual factors that influence implementation
- Validate or modify the intervention theory by shedding light on the change process (for example perceptions of how and why the intervention improves outcomes)

Data collection methods

Qualitative:
- Focus group
- Semi-structured interview
- Observation
- Document analysis
- Diary or participant records
- Stories, pictures, images
- Probable and preferable futures mapping

Quantitative:
- Structured observation
- Self-report survey

Activity

- What research questions will be addressed in the qualitative strand of the study?
- Assuming a mixed-methods design, which research questions overlap with the quantitative strand?
- Who, or what, are your sources of data?

Assumptions underpinning your intervention

HOW WILL ACTIVITIES LEAD TO OUTCOMES

INPUTS **ACTIVITIES** **OUTPUTS** **OUTCOMES** **IMPACT**
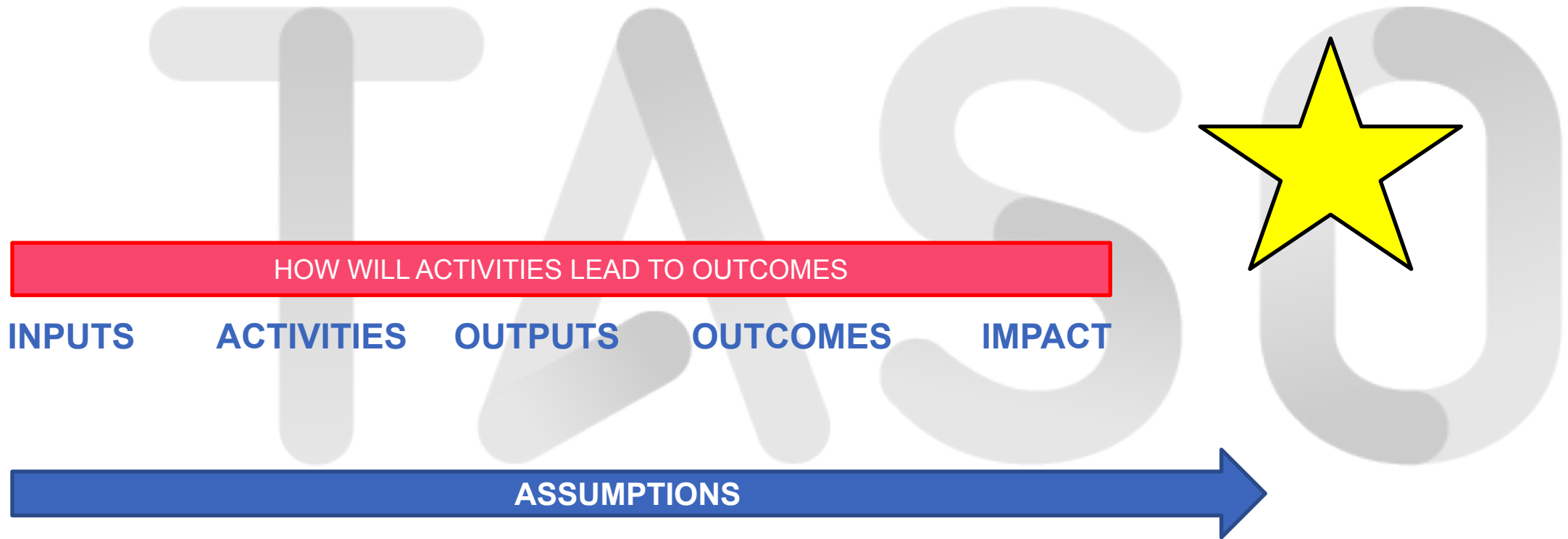
ASSUMPTIONS →

Assumptions and Change mechanisms

Assumptions are the beliefs and expectations that underpin a Theory of Change – how a programme will work and what outcomes it will achieve.

The **change mechanisms** are the underlying strategies and process designed to bring about change in a programmes desired outcomes.

ASSUMPTIONS

- Students engage
- Students better understand a particular subject
- They use this knowledge to inform HE study

CHANGE MECHANISM

- Way in which the subject taster is delivered

Subject taster

Does your Theory of Change hold true?

- Think about the links between the activities and outcomes and try to identity one (or more!) causal mechanism and one assumption that underpin the connections.

- Having identified an assumption and causal mechanism, think about how you might evidence whether or not your theory was sound.

Examples

- Online summer schools 2020/21

ASSUMPTIONS

- students will apply to take part in a summer school
- attendance and engagement is sustained

Our overall outreach activity recruitment is about a third of pre-covid times (mirroring the RCT project). We also liaised with teachers/advisers and decided to hold our summer schools outside of term time so I think digital fatigue and needing a summer break reduced applications. (WP Practitioner)

CHANGE MECHANISM

- Opportunity to interact with peers
- Opportunity to talk to and engage with Student Ambassadors

Example of IPE findings illuminating IE results

The impact of curriculum reform on the ethnicity degree awarding gap

- Results from the impact evaluation showed that the interventions did not have the intended impact on the ethnicity degree awarding gap.
- There were a number of key findings from the IPE that helped to explain why this was the case:
  - The assumptions underpinning the interventions did not hold true.
  - The change mechanisms did not always operate as planned.

- *I feel like when you read an article that's written by somebody who's the same ethnic group as you, you seem to get motivated, you get excited you know? You want to read it.* (Female international student)

- Recommendation:
  - Effectively implementing interventions were staff are the key community of practice requires greater investment in training and support.

Questions?

Shaping new resources

Join at
slido.com

#1116 524

I am confident I know how to conduct an Implementation and Process Evaluation

- Strongly agree

- Agree

- Neither agree nor disagree

- Disagree

- Strongly disagree

If you have any questions, or would like any further information on IPE, please get in touch with me at Helen.Lawson@taso.org.uk