

# **Beyond Neurotypical Norms**

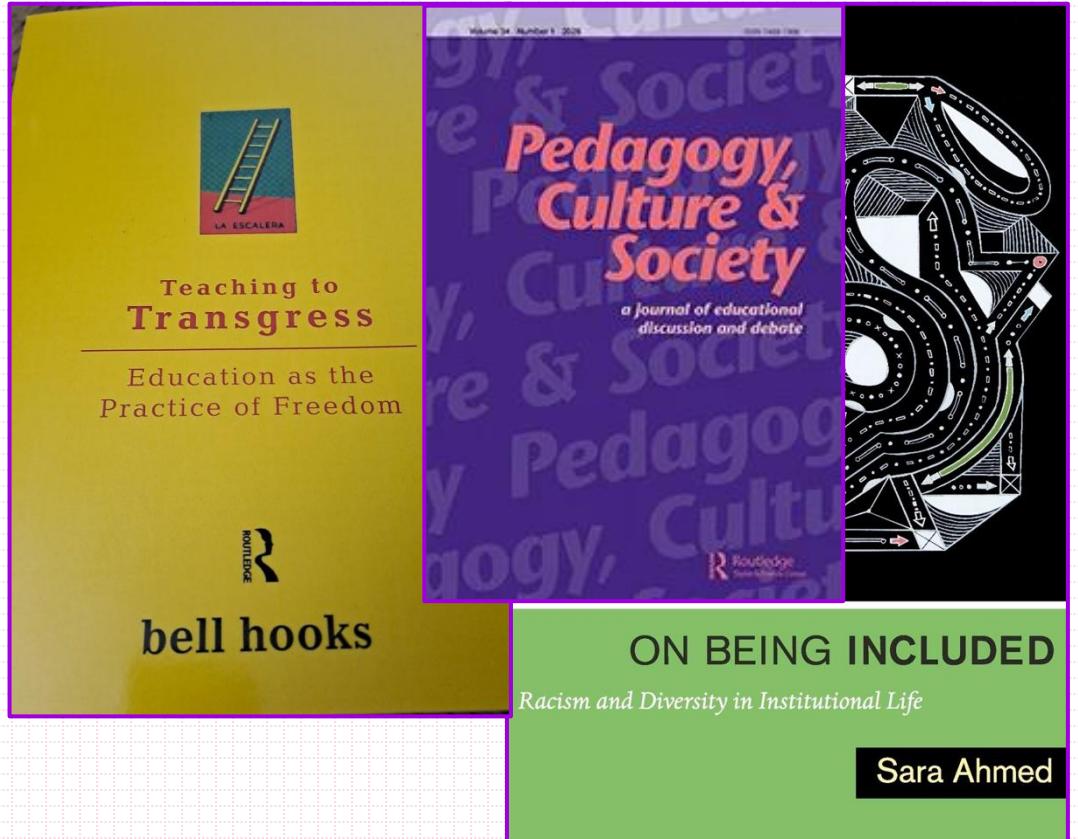
## **A Student-led Workshop Towards Intersectional Inclusion at LCC**

A Critical Participatory Action Research project documenting the first cycle of designing and refining a student-led only, care-centred dialogic space

# Rationale & Context: Purpose

CPAR Cycle 1: Plan (Diagnostic)

- Persistent power asymmetries in HE marginalise student voice
- Neurodivergent, queer, disabled, racially minorities students disproportionately affected
- Mixed staff-students spaces risk silencing in moments of institutional tensions



Ahmed (2012); hooks (1994); Taylor & Robinson (2009); Crenshaw (2013)

PgCert ARP Submission 25/26

Dr Antonella Nonnis BA User Experience Design (UXD) Lecturer Design School  
LCC

# Rationale & Context: Positionality

CPAR Cycle 1: Plan (Diagnostic)

## I locate myself as:

**White Italian woman**, lecturer with a PhD, researcher and educator working in

**HCI, accessibility, and inclusive design**

**First-generation academic** (first in my family to have an MA; only one with a PhD)

From a **working-class background**, raised on a council estate

Later-life recognition of likely **ADHD**

## My role in this research:

Both **institutional insider** (lecturer, PhD-holder)

And **relational outsider** to dominant academic norms

Acting as an **ally/facilitator**, not spokesperson, for student experience

Oswald, (2024); Gani, and Khan, (2024)

# Research Questions

CPAR Cycle 1: Plan (Reflective)

## Initial RQ

## Now Cycle 2 RQ

*How do marginalised students experience inclusion at LCC?*

## Refined Cycle 1 RQ

*How can formative feedback from students and staff inform the iterative design of a student-only workshop fostering inclusive, care centred dialogue?*

Braun et al. (2023); Mountz et al. (2015)

# What I did: Initial Cycle 1

Now Cycle 2

- Ethics and tutor consultation
- Poster + Info & Consent design (iterated)
- Online forms (MS Forms)
- Designed workshop event & activities
- Recruitment planning (poster, email, informal outreach)
- Funding attempted (EDI Small Grant)
- Vouchers & Refreshments
- Padlet + Mentimeter

CPAR Cycle 1: Plan + Early Action

**BEYOND NEUROTYPOICAL NORMS: Towards Intersectional Inclusion at & Consent Form**

**"Beyond Neurotypical Norms: A Student-Led SIG Towards Intersectional Inclusion for Neurodivergent, Queer, and Disabled Communities at LCC"**

**1 Icebreaker (Using Mentimeter, Padlet or fallback material)**

**Suggested Prompts from Mentimeter to upload on Padlet or Verbal Kick-off:**

- What does a "typical" learning journey look like for you at LCC?
- Can you sketch or describe a moment when you felt fully supported - or completely overlooked?
- How does technology help or hinder you in your creative or academic process?
- What would an inclusive learning environment look like to you?

**Using visuals, drawings, short notes - anything goes. Upload everything on Padlet**

**2 Discussion Themes with Guiding Questions**

**Theme 1: Navigating LCC - From BA to MA**

**Prompting Questions (using Mentimeter):**

- What do you wish you had known when you started at LCC?
- How do experiences differ between BA and MA levels - in terms of support, freedom, or pressure?
- What are some opportunities LCC offers that you've been able (or unable) to take up?
- What feels like a systemic challenge vs a personal one?

**Optional Activity/Prompt: Timeline or storyboard mapping. "Plot a high and a low point in your LCC journey." Upload everything on Padlet**

**Theme 2: Technology as Bridge or Barrier**

**Prompting Questions (using Mentimeter):**

- Which platforms (Canvas, Moodle, SEaTIS, etc.) do you actually use - and how?
- Do you find that these tools help you learn, or do they add more administrative tasks?
- How does AI show up in your learning? Does it feel like a friend, a threat, or something else?
- What's one digital change you'd make to support creative practice better?

**Optional Hook: Share an example from CHI 2025 on student interaction with AI for comparison. Upload everything on Padlet**

**Theme 3: Inclusion, Identity, and Institutional Practice**

**Prompting Questions (using Mentimeter):**

- In what ways does LCC feel inclusive or exclusive — in terms of neurodiversity, disability, or gender?
- Have policies or procedures (accommodations, extensions, class participation) helped or harmed you?
- What forms of support do you need that aren't currently available?
- How can governance, not just people, become more empathetic?

**Optional Activity: Ask attendees to create a "Policy Wishlist" – a fictional policy that would make them feel more supported or seen. Upload everything on Padlet.**

**For Workshop: "Policy Wishlist" Activity**

## Beyond Neurotypical Norms

Towards Intersectional Inclusion for Neurodivergent, Queer, Disabled and Marginalised Communities at LCC.

### Call for Participation

You are invited to take part in a student-only Workshop - a safer, peer-led space centering marginalised students and allies including neurodivergent, neurotypical, disabled, queer, black, brown, and other underrepresented communities committed to fostering and shaping inclusion at LCC.

Together we'll co-create knowledge, share lived experiences, challenge institutional injustice and explore barriers and enablers to inclusion at LCC. All BA and MA students welcome. We aim to create a safe, respectful environment where students voice matters.

**18 February 2026**  
**LCC Room T805**  
**Time: 14:30-16:15 (breaks included)**  
**£5 canteen or Typo cafe voucher for participants**

### What to expect

Workshop session featuring:

- Open discussion & creative participatory methods like: drawing, mapping, storyboard and note taking
- All workshop outcome will be anonymised
- Bring what makes you feel comfortable to participate
- Coffee, tea, and biscuits provided

### Potential Topics of Discussion:

- Challenges and opportunities experienced at LCC
- The role of technology in academia
- Policies impacting neurodiverse, gender inclusion, and disability justice

For more information or to discuss access needs, please scan the QR code or contact the investigator Dr Antonella Nonnis [a.nonnis@lcc.arts.ac.uk](mailto:a.nonnis@lcc.arts.ac.uk)

This project is funded by EDI Small Grant.

Part of PgCert Academic Practice in Art, Design and Communication at UAL

**Scan to Join**

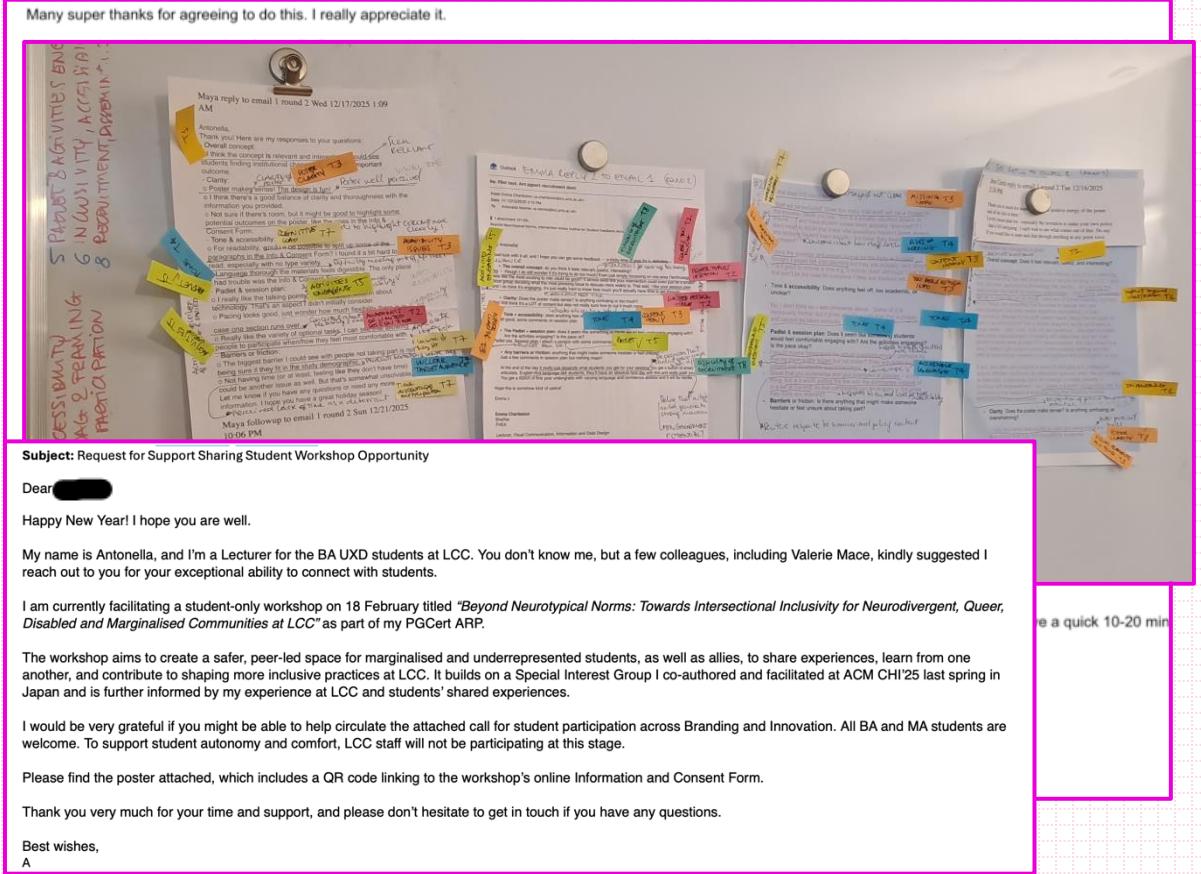


Friedman & Hendry (2019); Wæraas (2022); Ahmed (2012)

# What I did: Cycle 1 Refined

- Funding secured (EDI Small Grant)
- Shared resources with colleagues and BA UXD students, asked for feedback
- Analysed feedback
- Reflected on implications of findings
- Booked Room at LCC
- Implemented feedback received
- Informal outreach Design, Screen Media Schools staff+BA UXD students

## CPAR Cycle 1: RePlan + Early Action

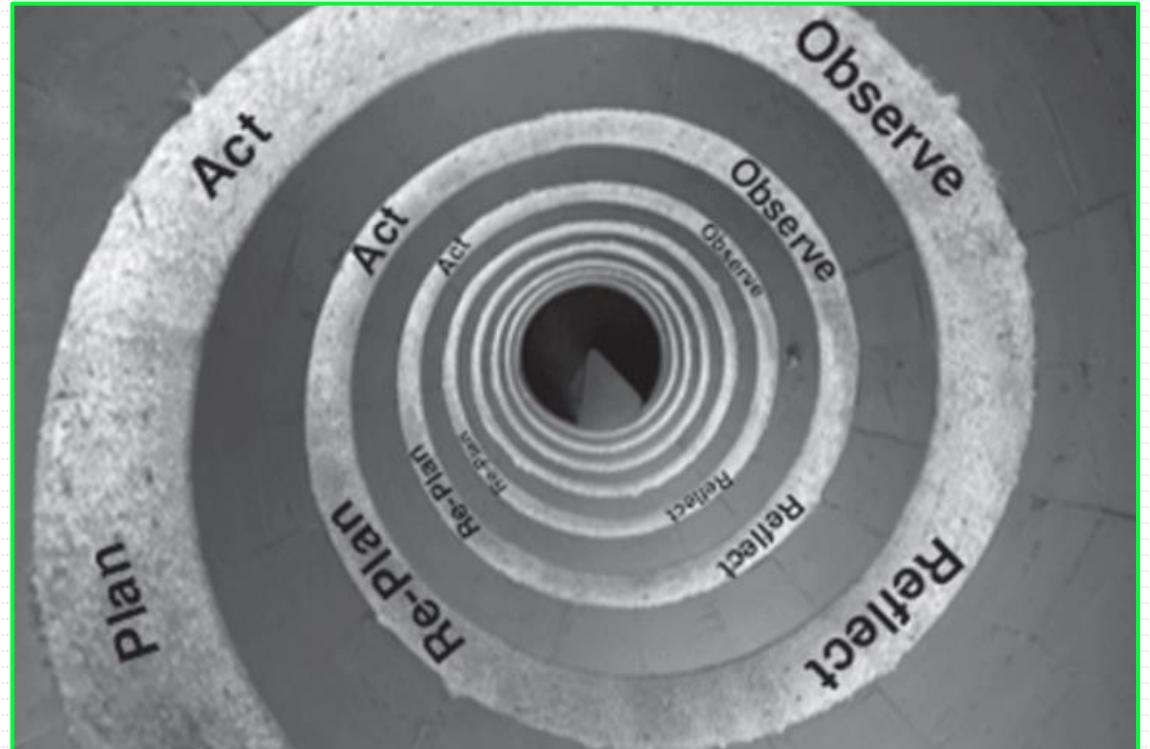


Friedman & Hendry (2019); Wæraas (2022); Ahmed (2012)

# Research Methods

- Critical Participatory Action Research (Cycle 1 and 2)
- Formative qualitative content analysis
- Data:
  - 1 staff transcript
  - 3 written feedback responses
- Analytic approach:
  - Reflexive Thematic Analysis-lite
  - Values-aware coding

CPAR Cycle 1: Action + Observation



Action Research Spiral taken from Kemmis, McTaggart & Nixon p.19, 2014.

Braun et al. (2023); Wæraas (2022); Ahmed et al. (2024)

# Research Methods

CPAR Cycle 1: Action + Observation

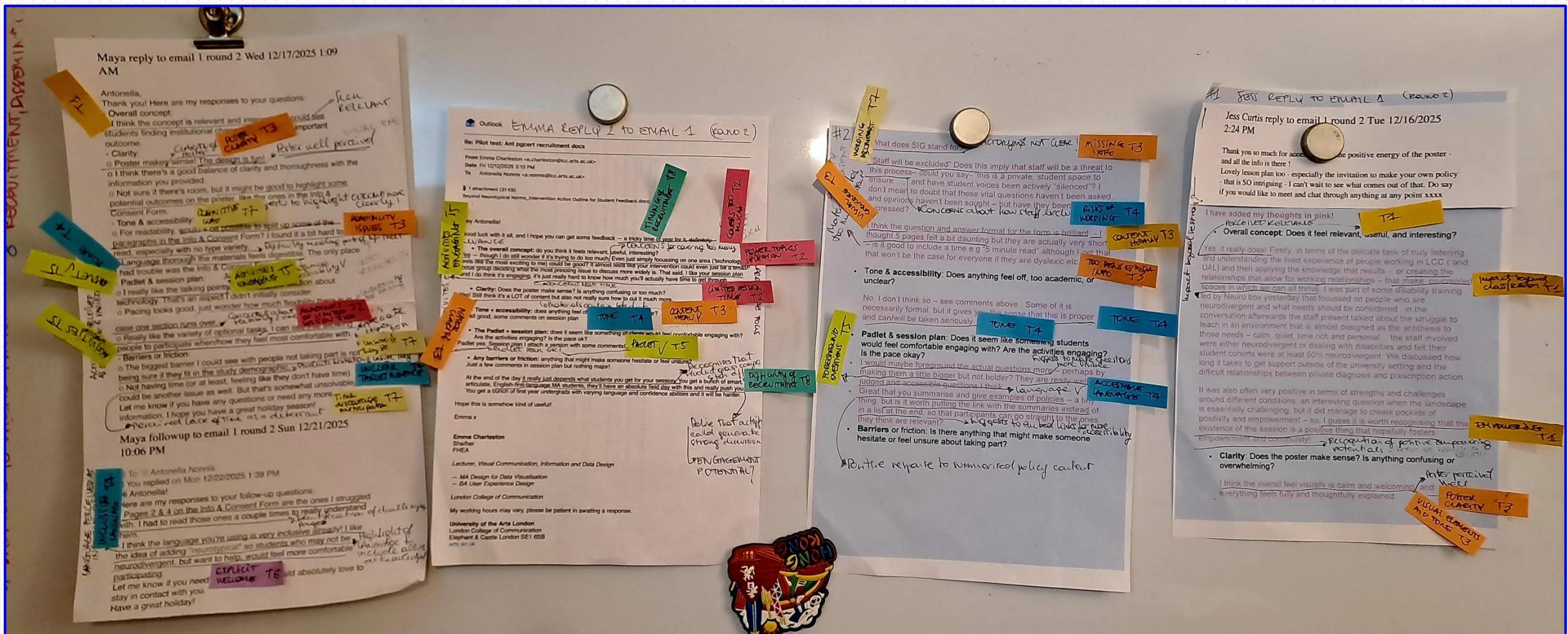
## Questions asked

### Categories guiding initial codes generation

I'm sending everything with this email ( [poster](#), [info sheet + consent](#), [Padlet link](#), and the [plan for the session](#)). If you're up for it, I'd appreciate any thoughts you have, big or small. The workshop is designed as an **open discussion** around three main topics, to encourage participation, share lived experiences, and guide conversation through **open, accessible (but still critical) prompts and activities**. These include visuals, drawings, short notes, journey maps, scenarios, and storyboarding (see session plan). I'd especially love your thoughts on:

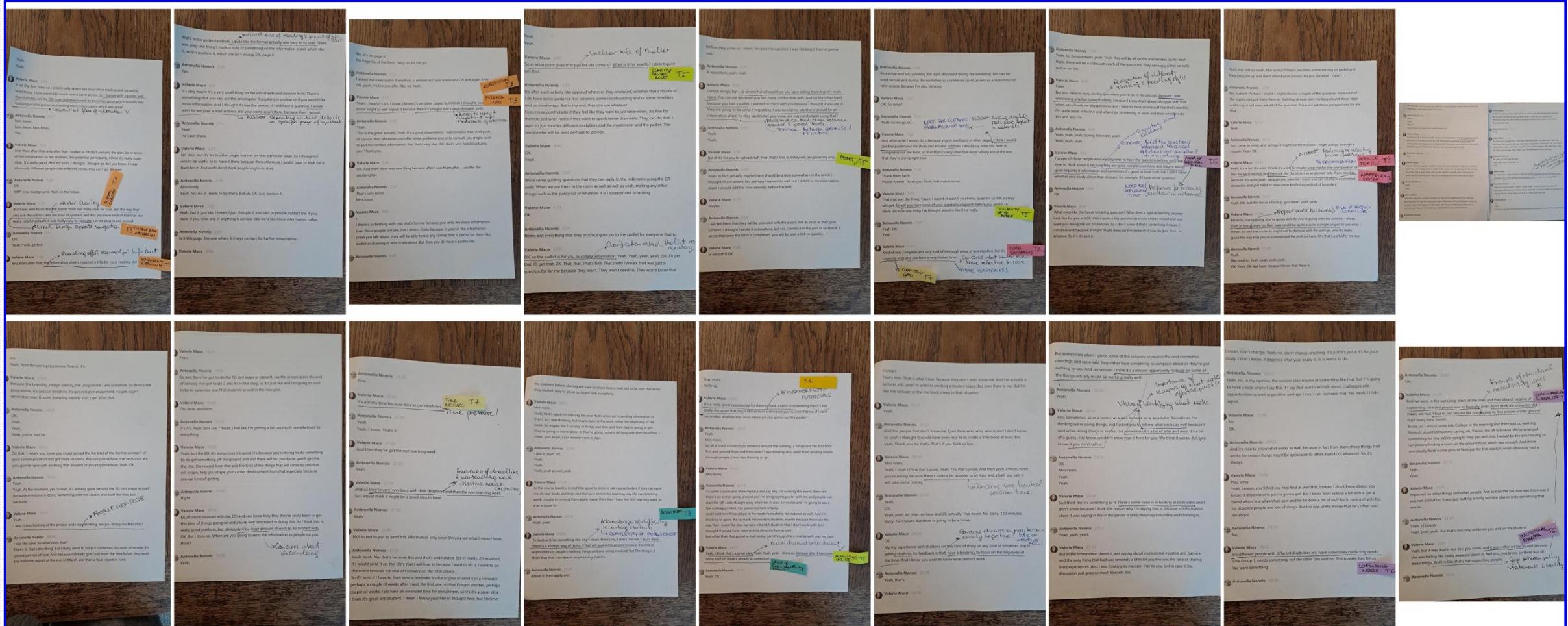
- **Overall concept:** Does it feel relevant, useful, and interesting?
- **Clarity:** Does the poster make sense? Is anything confusing or overwhelming?
- **Tone & accessibility:** Does anything feel off, too academic, or unclear?
- **Padlet & session plan:** Does it seem like something students would feel comfortable engaging with? Are the activities engaging? Is the pace okay?
- **Barriers or friction:** Is there anything that might make someone hesitate or feel unsure about taking part?

# Findings: Raw Data Theme Extraction



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CPAR Cycle 1: Observation



# Findings: 8 Themes

CPAR Cycle 1: Observation

## T1 Relevance & Value

Strong affirmation of purpose (staff + student)

“relevant and interesting”  
Maya

“useful for the university”  
Valerie

## T2 Scope & Feasibility (staff (mainly))

Concerns about density, pacing, manageability

“very limited time”  
Valerie

“trying to do too much”  
Emma

“wonder how much flexibility there is”  
Maya

## T3 Clarity (student + staff)

Uncertainty about eligibility  
Readability

“poster itself was really clear” Valerie

“hard to read”  
Maya

“5 pages felt a bit daunting”  
Jess

## T4 Belonging & tone (student + staff)

Emotional a11y

“can be taken seriously”  
Jess

“feels digestible”  
Maya

“language... inclusive...”  
Maya

“if they fit the... demographic”  
Maya

Macfarlane, Bolden & Watermeyer (2024); Burke (2013); Harris(2022)

# Findings: 8 Themes

CPAR Cycle 1: Observation

## T5 Participation Design

Padlet and multimodal activities valued (staff + student)

"I think it's a great idea" Valerie

"really like the talking points" Maya

"Padlet yes"  
"engaging"  
Emma

"really like the variety of tasks"  
Maya

## T6 Inclusivity & lived experiences

Policy practice gap

Systemic accessibility

Belonging and allies

"different people .. conflicting needs" Valerie

"neurotypical" would help" Maya

## T7 Barriers to participation

Time

"they've got deadlines" Valeire

Language

"not sure if they fit" Maya

Belonging

"staff will be excluded" Jess

"feeling like they don't have time" Maya

## T8 Recruitment & sustainability

Multichannel recruit

"depends what students you get" Emma

"tricky time of year" Emma

Time sensitivity

"no magic way" Valerie

Recruitment complexity

# What Does it all Mean?

CPAR Cycle 1: Reflection

The intervention as a *site of values work*  
Wæraas (2022)

## Key tensions

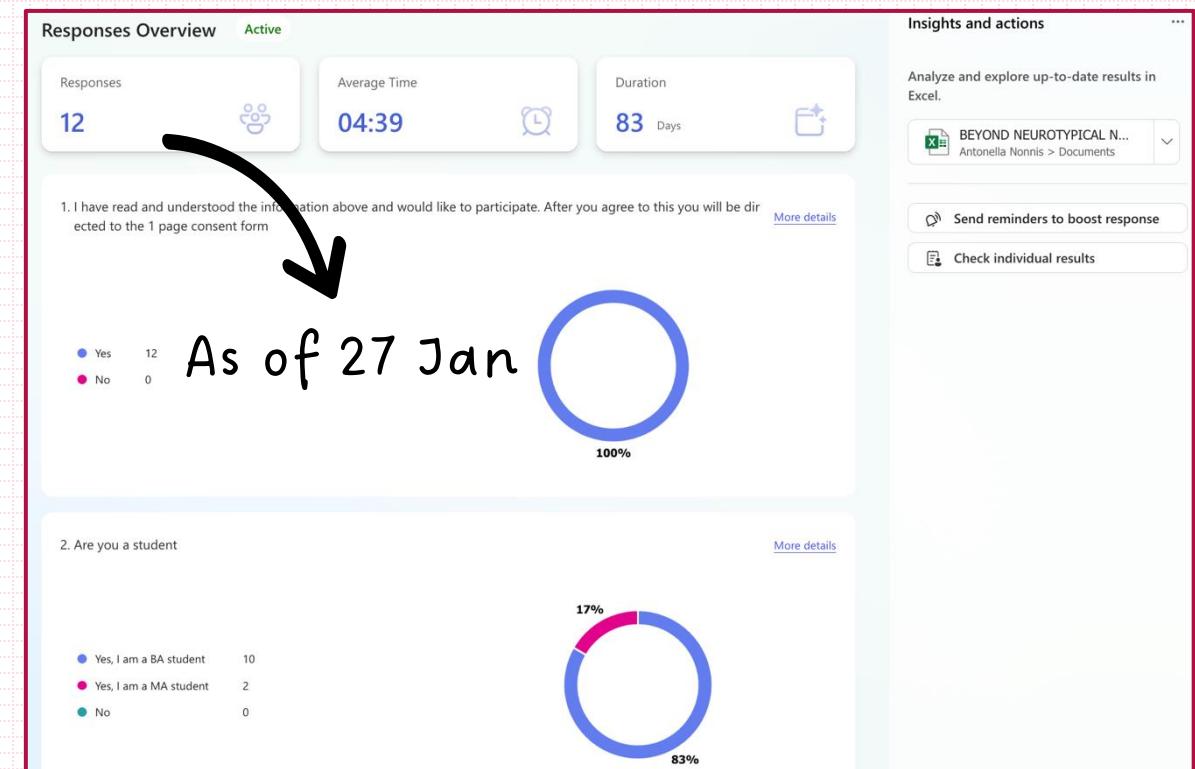
- Feasibility  $\neq$  care
- Institutional pragmatism  $\neq$  lived experience
- Invitation  $\neq$  protection

Ahmed (2012); Boler, (1999); Burke (2013); Lynch (2010); hooks (1994); Taylor & Robinson (2009).

# What Changed: Implemented Cycle1 Refinements

CPAR Cycle 2: RePlan + Early Action

- Info sheet & Consent form redesigned (spacing, repetition, clarity, structure)
- Explicit inclusion language on poster, info & consent (“not participate at this point”, “neurotypical”)
- Workshop reframed as Cycle 2
- Sent revised Call for participation
- Some students registered

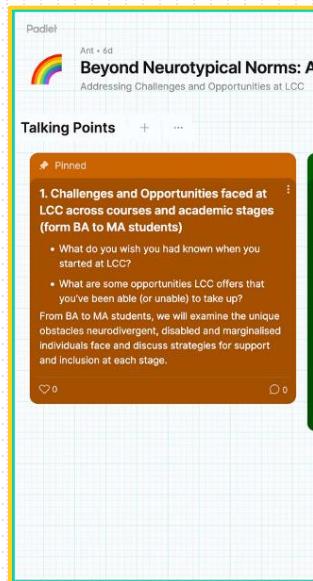


Redman-MacLaren et al. (2014); McTaggart et al. (2016);

# What Next: Cycle 2

- Workshop delivery: Feb 18, 2026
- Data:
  - Padlet, Mentimeter
  - Visual Artefacts
  - Optional audio (with consent)
- Outputs
  - Zine/visual map, digital repository
  - Sharing with EDI

Kara (2015); Wolgemuth et al. (2024)



## CPAR Cycle 2: Planning and Action

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**Scan to Join**

Comic on structure and reliance resources across career stages for neurodivergent academics: a personal experience.

Structure

the push and pull of structure, urgency, sentences which many of us hate but need.

ext:

high school hallway, with a banner that says 'structure'. Girl with dark black hair and neurodiversity pin says, in her speech 'we've got so much structure I resent it! I wish I had time... my whole day is scheduled and I have to countless body doubles with whom I communicate mostly on non-digital resources'

# Closing note

*“To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential...”* - hooks, 1994, p. 13

# Thank you!

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