

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

- 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

CPAR Cycle 1: Plan (Diagnostic)



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

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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 NEUROTYPICAL NORMS: Towards Intersectional Inclusion at LCC & Consent Form

Participants Information Sheet

"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?
- Where 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, SEATs, 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

I can ask:

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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, storyboarding 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 neurodiversity, 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

This project is Funded by EDI Small Grant.
Part of PgCert Academic Practice in Art, Design and Communication at UAL

Scan to Join

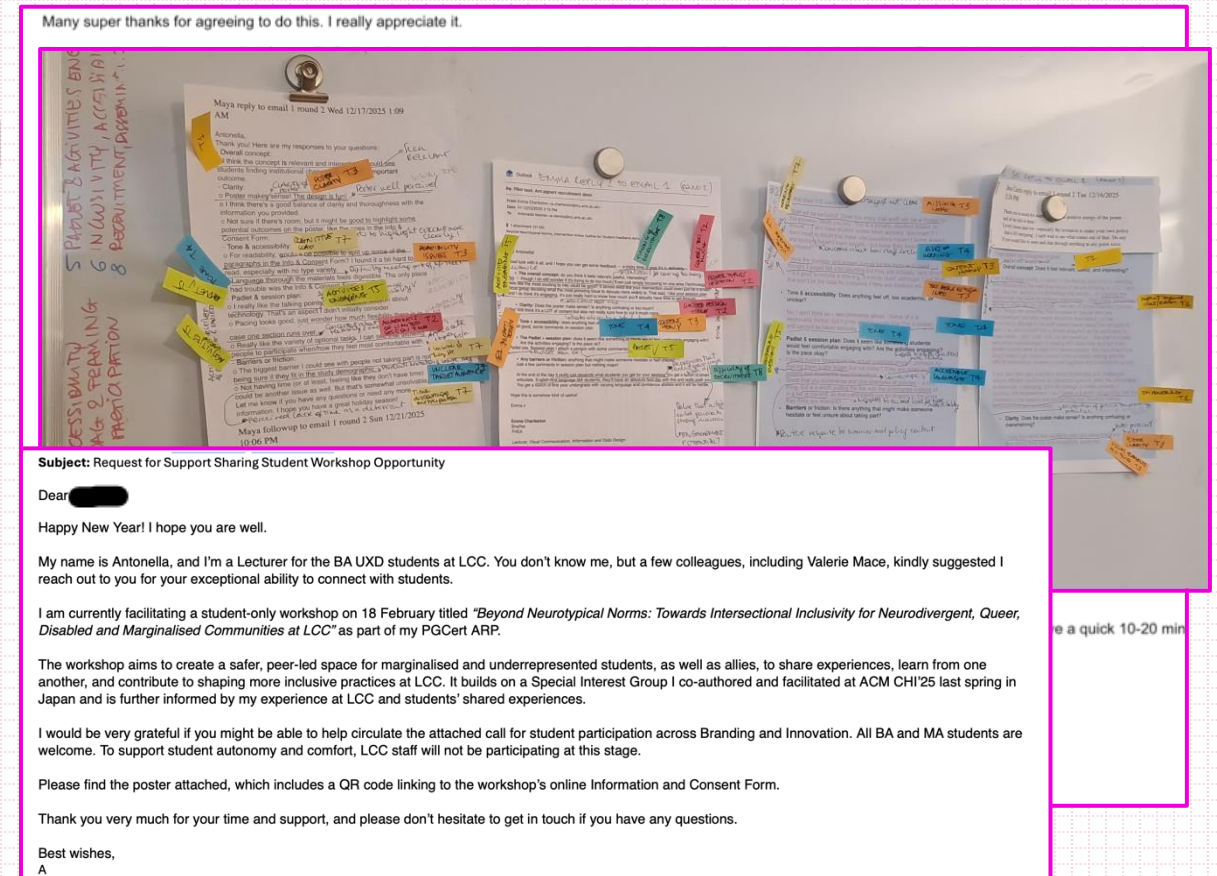
Friedman & Hendry (2019); Wæraas (2022); Ahmed (2012)

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What I did: Cycle 1 Refined

CPAR Cycle 1: RePlan + Early Action

- 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



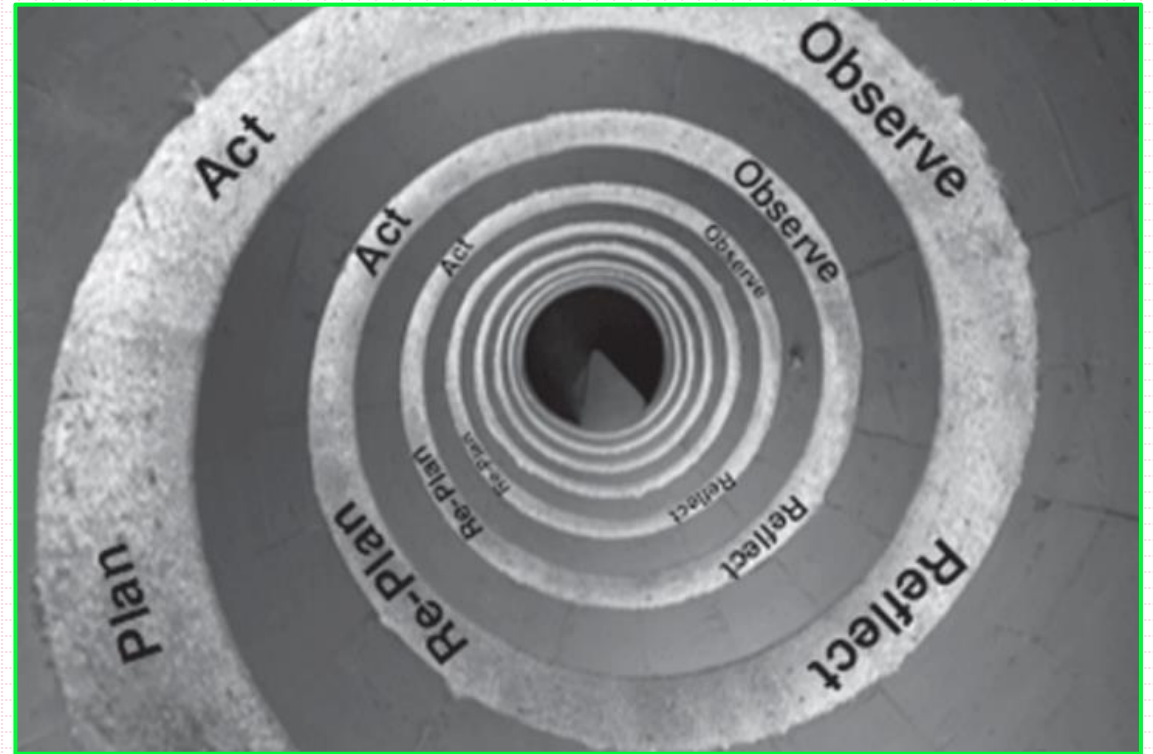
Friedman & Hendry (2019); Wæraas (2022); Ahmed (2012)

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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)


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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

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

"really like the
variety of tasks"
Maya

"Padlet yes"
"engaging"
Emma

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

Language

Belonging

"they've got
deadlines"
Valeire

"not sure if
they fit"
Maya

"staff will be
excluded"
Jess

"feeling like
they don't have
time" Maya

T8 Recruitment & sustainability

Multichannel recruit

Time sensitivity

Recruitment complexity

"depends what
students you
get" Emma

"tricky time of
year" Emma

"no magic
way" Valerie

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What Does it all Mean?

CPAR Cycle 1: Reflection

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

Key tensions

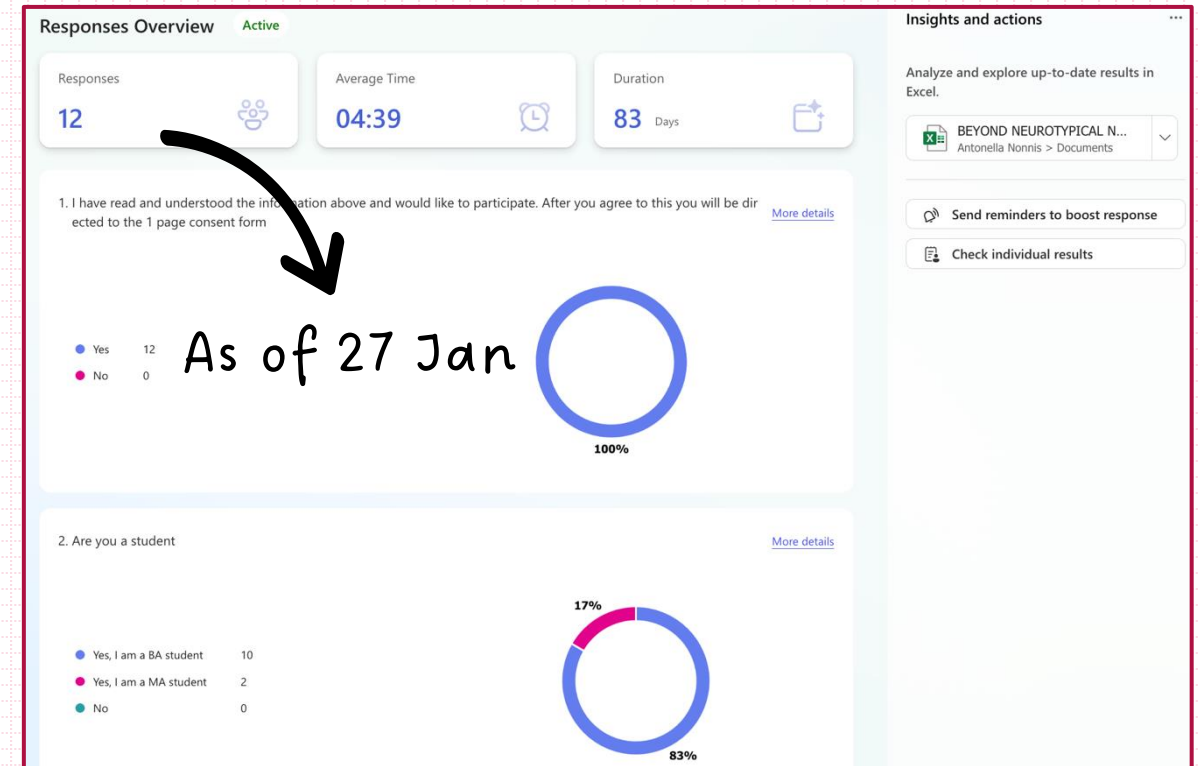
- Feasibility != care
- Institutional pragmatism != lived experience
- Invitation != protection

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);

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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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Comic on structure and reliance resources across career stages divergent academics: or's personal experience.

SCHOOL

Underground + PG-T

Structure

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

ent:

high school hallway, with a banner that "shool". Girl with dark black hair and neurodiversity pin says, in her speech we so much structure I resent it! I wish I e time... my whole day is scheduled and is to countless body doubles with whom ly 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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