



Assessments: letting students choose

Dr Nicole Brown, Head of Research Ethics and Integrity at IOE, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society, explains how students choose their assessment type in her module.

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For my module Disability, Chronic Illness and Neurodivergence in Contemporary Society I have developed an assessment approach that allows students to choose whether to be assessed by writing or presentation. Throughout spring term students learn about what it feels like to be disabled, chronically ill and/or neurodivergent in contemporary society by applying different disciplinary lenses. For example, we look at medical and legal definitions; we critique disability studies approaches, and we consider representation of disability.

For the assessment, students are asked to choose a concept taught in the module. They create a representation of that concept and then critique their artefact in a critical commentary. The submission is either a recorded presentation or an essay. And the representation can take any form. I have seen biscuits baked, blankets knitted or crocheted, video-diaries kept, and poetry being written. The creativity of students is amazing.

The choice brings significant advantages:

- students do not feel under pressure to perform in ways they are not comfortable with,
- students can navigate the assessment period on their own terms, and
- students feel empowered to take responsibility for, contribute to and indeed shape their own educational experiences.

If you would like to find out more, please, do get in touch nicola.brown@ucl.ac.uk