



UCD Teaching & Learning
Teagasc agus Foghlaim

UCD Assessment for Inclusion Framework: Progress to Date

UCD Teaching & Learning

QQI/AHEAD Conference

17th April, 2024

Assessment for Inclusion, also termed *inclusive assessment*, aims to foster equitable assessment and feedback practices that give all students the opportunity to effectively demonstrate their learning and achieve success.

As Morris, Milton and Goldstone (2019) put it, '*inclusive assessment processes provide for all students whilst also meeting the needs of [a] specific group*' (p. 437)

It includes:



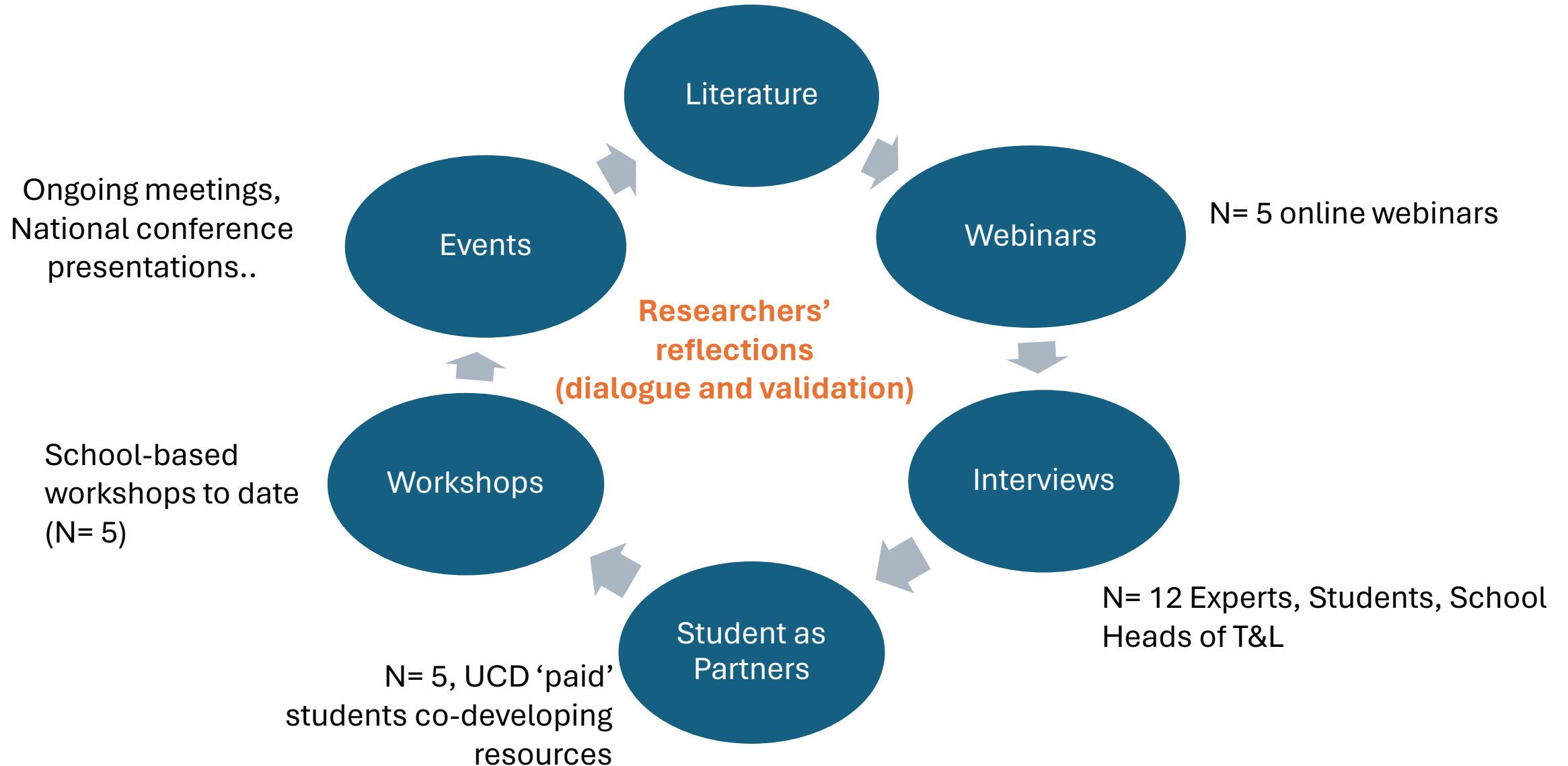
Outcomes of Assessment for Inclusion

To support 'equity', 'fairness' and 'justice' (outcomes) for all students in higher education:

- supporting all students to succeed (student success)
- developing students' sense of belonging (belonging)
- supporting social inclusion and social justice,
- developing staff and students professional and personal values,
- ensuring that standards are fair and maintained

Developing the Framework: Qualitative Action Research Methodology

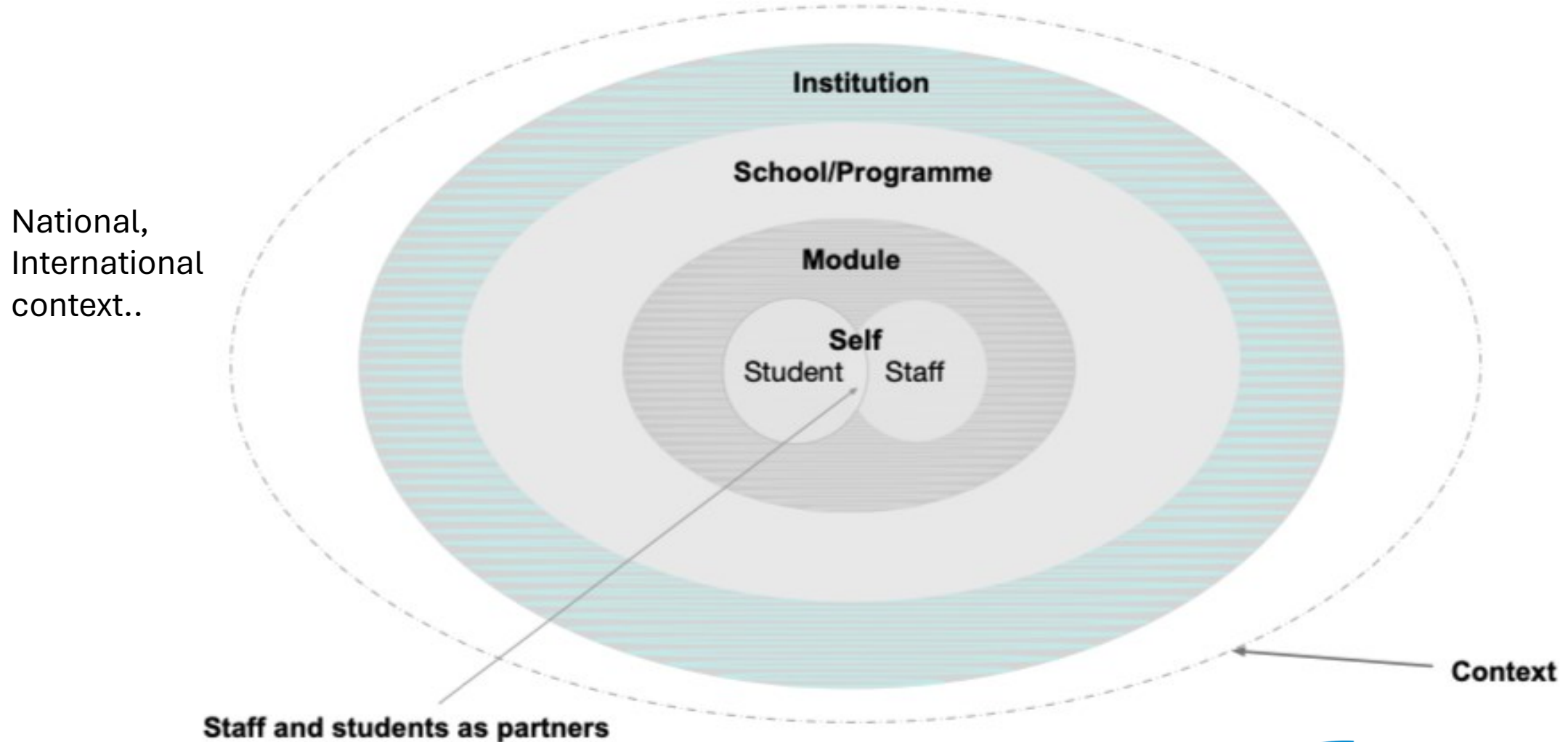
(Bradley, 2015; Mertler, 2019)



Findings



The Self at the Centre and Context is Key



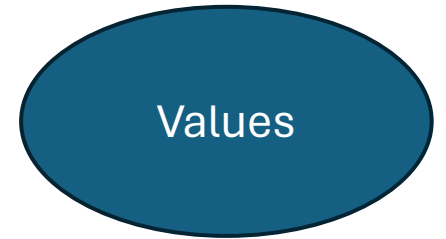
Develop an Awareness of the SELF

Some reflective questions include, for example

- What are your personal/professional educational values?
- Do you think assessment for inclusion is for all students or for certain groups? Why?
- Should assessment be equitable, which may mean they are not the same? Is that fair?
- What do think is meant by student success?

- Are assessments stressful for you, or your students?
- Do you feel anger, upset about some of the practices/policies in this area?
- How could you and your students best manage some of these emotions?

- What assessment or feedback approaches are preventing student success ?
- What is your understanding of the knowledge of terminology, skills and attitudes around inclusive assessment and feedback?



What are and why design principles?

- Principles are guiding statements situated in the middle ground between the more theoretical literature and the practice wisdom
- To guide practice and policy
(Kremmel & Harding, 2020; Xu and Brown (2016).
- To imagine what next or reflect on what could be missing?
- They should have a verb, be understandable,..



**What
principles
are in and
why?**



UCD Assessment for Inclusion Framework

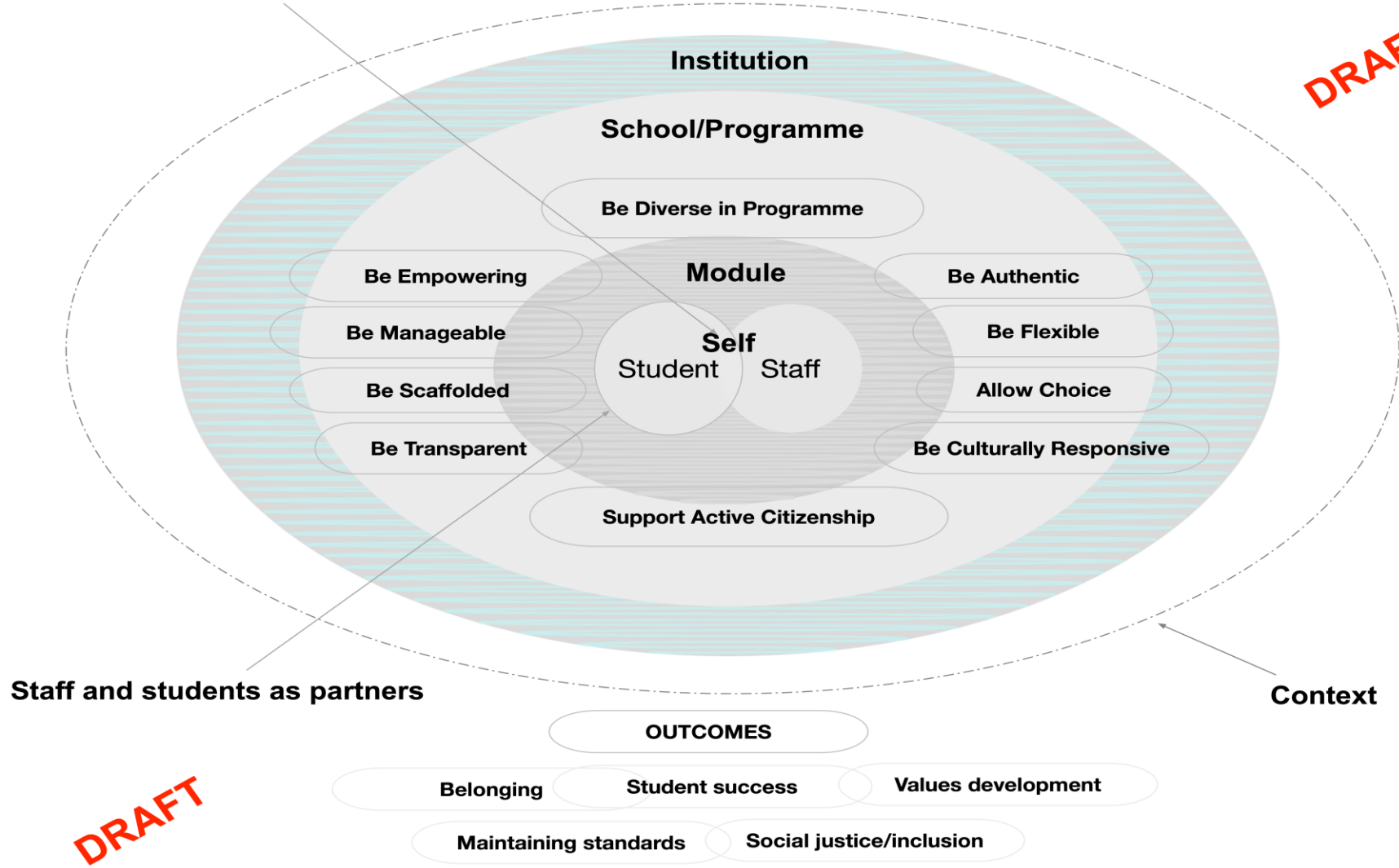
To support equity, fairness and justice (fair outcomes)
for all students



UCD Teaching & Learning
Teagasc agus Foghlaim

SELF is at the heart of inclusion.

DRAFT



Assessment & Feedback Design Principles

Assessment and feedback approaches should be:		Examples
1	Be empowering	giving voice to students, co-designing, judging their own work..
2	Be authentic	relevant, collaborative, personalised, linked with identity of learners..
3	Be diverse across a programme	different methods across stages/levels in a programme..
4	Be manageable	consider load, space, appropriate weighting, equitable effort..
5	Be flexible	flexible deadlines, different approaches..



Supporting students who find assessment (or feedback):

overwhelming (load); unfamiliar; disempowering; not relevant to their experiences; isolating; not suiting their free time....



Assessment & Feedback Design Principles

Assessment and feedback approaches should be:		Examples
6	Allow choice	in methods, feedback approaches, topics..
7	Be scaffolded	sequenced, continuous, and integrated to support learning..
8	Be transparent	articulate a clear purpose, accessible formats, clear documentation, clear criteria..
9	Be culturally responsive	responsive to students from different cultural backgrounds..
10	Support active citizenship	develop ideas and actions to support others in society..



Supporting students who find assessment (or feedback):


Not playing to their strengths; stressful; hard to organise; not suiting their needs; unsure of expectations; not supporting their community/background....



Principles

- Ranked differently , students emphasised importance of ‘transparency’
- They are interconnected and dynamic
- Can be stage/level and context related
- Some have more immediate and some longer design implications

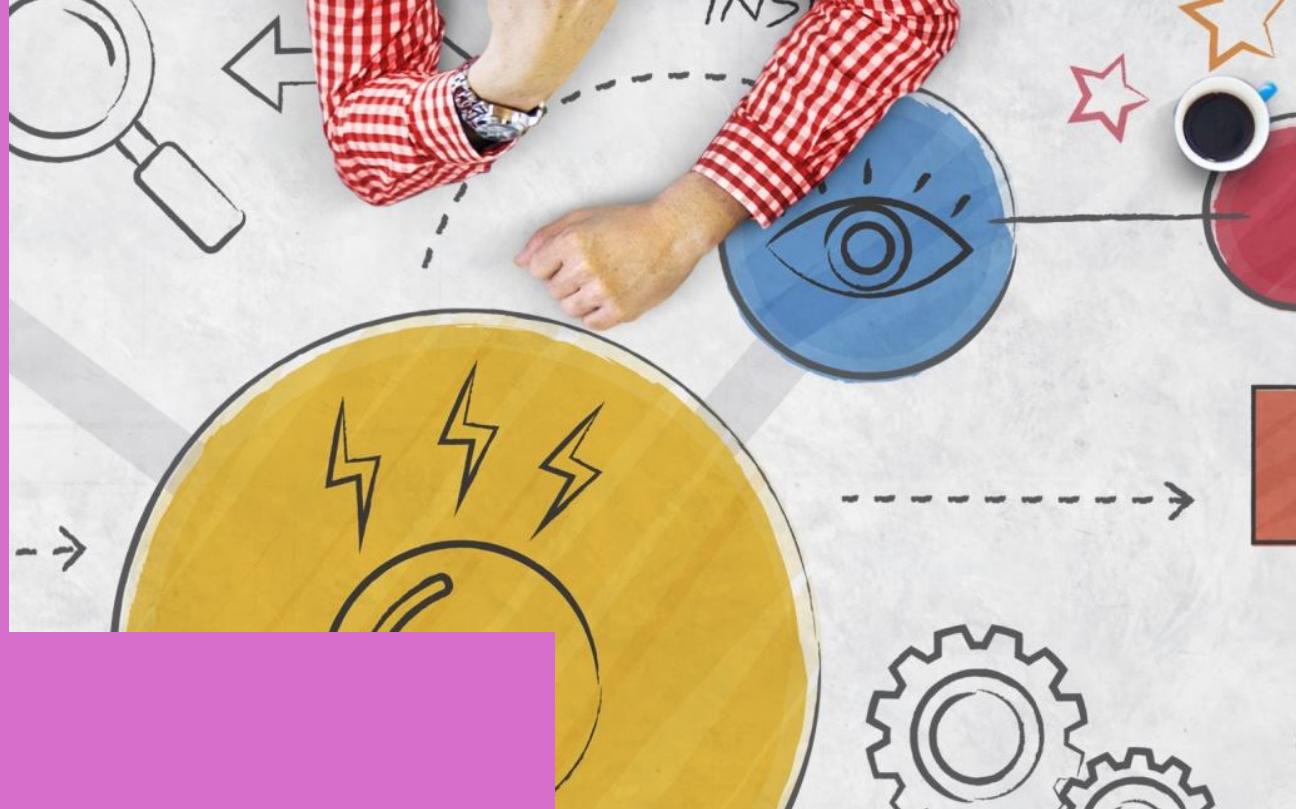


A photograph of a dirt path in a forest. The path starts from the left, goes straight for a short distance, and then splits into two paths that lead into the woods. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The trees are tall and thin, with dense green foliage. The ground is covered in a mix of dirt and green grass/weeds.

Some principles
are on similar
journeys, such
'flexible,
empowering,
choice'

Some of our ongoing considerations, for you to also consider:

- Would they make sense to you, your students?
- Are we missing any?
- Is fairness the underlying concept/driver?
- Is 'belonging' a principle or an outcome ?
- What are the key outcomes for Assessment for Inclusion?
- Is it accessible language for staff and students? i.e. 'assessment for inclusion'
- How to work with complexity yet communicate it simply?
- Where does grading fit best?



Implementation ideas

Module

Module

Module

Module

Module

Module

Be diverse across a programme

Support active citizenship

Be authentic

Be culturally responsive

Be manageable

Be authentic

Be scaffolded

Allow choice

Be empowering

Be flexible

Be transparent.

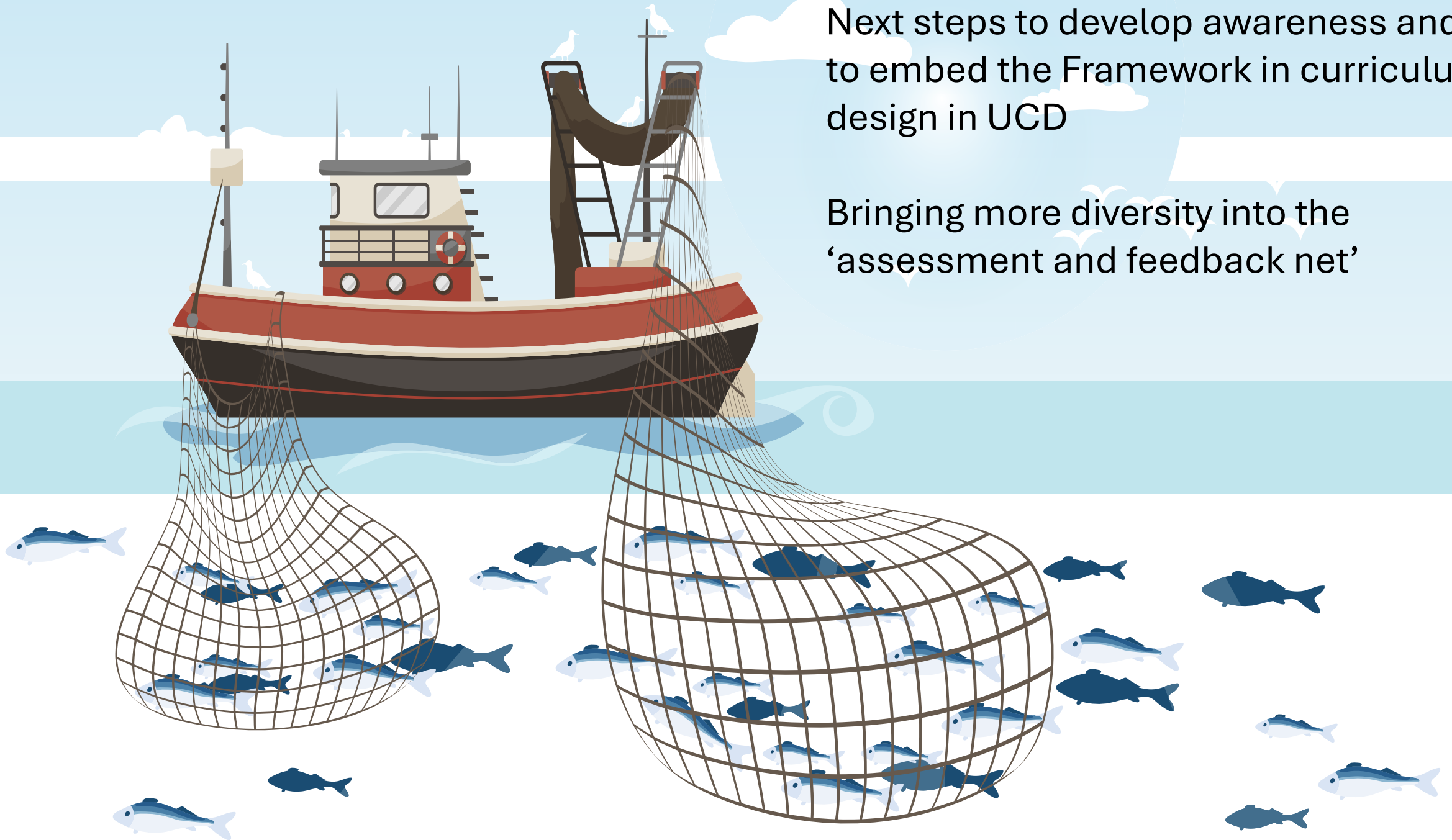
Reflecting on
key learning
challenges in
your module

Giving emphasis
to different
aspects at
different times,
contexts,
modules, etc

Principle	Assessment : Example resources	Feedback (<i>for</i> and <i>as</i> Learning): Example Resources
Be empowering	Students in the co-creation of the essay titles and marking criteria (Deeley & Bovill, 2017)	Students requesting specific feedback
Be authentic	Debates in Law, ‘ Interactive Orals ’ (Griffith University)	Individualised, personalized feedback
Be diverse across a programme	Mapping diversity across a programme (UCD T&L, 2024a) UCD Programme Assessment & Feedback Strategies Framework (UCD T&L, 2023)	Moving from structured assessment criteria (analytical criteria) to criteria that assesses more complex tasks (holistic criteria)
Be manageable	Use of assessment equivalences in design (UCD T&L, 2024c)	Targeted, action specific feedback
Be flexible	Flexible deadlines/grading schemes.. (STLHE 2024)	Choice of audio or written feedback
Allow choice	Video or written essay (O’Neill, 2022)	
Be scaffolded	Nested assessments (University of Melbourne, 2024)	Develop students’ skills of peer review (UCD T&L, 2024b)
Be transparent	Analytic rubrics (UCD T&L, 2024d)	In class-dialogue around criteria (McArthur and Huxham 2013)
Be culturally responsive	Make assessment sufficiently open for students to research and draw on examples from their own context. (U of Brighton, 2024)	Clear language used in feedback
Support active citizenship	Problem solving real-life issue in assignment	Involvement of patients, carers and other parties in the feedback process (McArthur, 2016)

Next steps to develop awareness and to embed the Framework in curriculum design in UCD

Bringing more diversity into the 'assessment and feedback net'



References

Bain, K. (2023) "Inclusive assessment in higher education: what does the literature tells us on how to define and design inclusive assessments?", *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education*, (27). doi: 10.47408/jldhe.vi27.1014.

Bradbury, H. (Ed.). (2015). *The handbook of action research* (3rd ed.). Sage.

[Chory, R. M. "Enhancing Student Perceptions of Fairness: The Relationship between Instructor Credibility and Classroom Justice", *Communication Education*, 2007 vol 56:1, pp89-105, DOI: 10.1080/03634520600994300](#)

Deeley, S. J. and Bovill, C. (2017) Staff student partnership in assessment: enhancing assessment literacy through democratic practices. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 42(3), pp. 463-477. (doi:10.1080/02602938.2015.1126551)

Evans, C. (2022). *The EAT Framework. Enhancing Assessment feedback practices in higher education*. Cardiff, University of Cardiff.

Henning, G.W., Baker, G.R., Jankowski, N.A Lundquist, A.E., Montenegro, E. (Eds) (2022) *Reframing Assessment to Center Equity : Theories, Models, and Practices*, edited by Henning, et al., Taylor & Francis Group, 2022. *ProQuest Ebook Central*, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucd/detail.action?docID=6956739>.

Hockings, C. 2010. [Inclusive Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: A Synthesis of Research](#). EvidenceNet, *Higher Education Academy*.

Kneale, P. and Collings, J. (2015) Developing and embedding inclusive assessment: issues and opportunities. In Miller, W., Collings, J., & Kneale, P. (eds.) *Inclusive Assessment*. Plymouth: Pedagogic Research Institute and Observatory (PedRIO).

Kremmel, B., & Harding, L. (2020). Towards a comprehensive, empirical model of language assessment literacy across stakeholder groups: Developing the language assessment literacy survey. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 17(1), 100-120, doi: 10.1080/15434303.2019.1674855

Ling, T .Y. , L. Yuen, B. Loo, W. Ling; C. Prinsloo, and M. Gan (2020) "Students' Conceptions of Bell Curve Grading Fairness in Relation to Goal Orientation and Motivation," *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 14: 1, 7, pp1-9. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.20429/ijstl.2020.140107>

McArthur, J. (2016). Assessment for social justice: The role of assessment in achieving social justice. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 41(7), 967-981. doi:10.1080/02602938.2015.1053429

McArthur, J. (2021). [Creating synergies between assessment for social justice and assessment for inclusion.](#) CRADLE Symposium, 13th October 2021.

Mertler, C. A. (Ed.). (2019). *The wiley handbook of action research in education*. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated

Morris, C., Milton, E., & Goldstone. R. (2019) Case study: suggesting choice: inclusive assessment processes, *Higher Education Pedagogies*, 4:1, 435-447, DOI: [10.1080/23752696.2019.1669479](https://doi.org/10.1080/23752696.2019.1669479)

National Forum, 2019 [Understanding and Enabling Student Success in Irish Higher Education](#), Dublin: National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning.

O'Neill, G. (2017) *It's not fair! Students and staff views on the equity of the procedures and outcomes of students' choice of assessment methods*. *Irish Educational Studies*, 36 (2). pp. 221-236.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03323315.2017.1324805>

O'Neill, G., McEvoy E. & Maguire, T. (2020). Developing a national understanding of assessment and feedback in Irish higher education, *Irish Educational Studies*, 39(4), 495-510. doi:10.1080/03323315.2020.1730220

Shukla, A., & Arora. V. (2023) A holistic approach to student empowerment and assessment of its impact on educational outcomes through psychological ownership, *Studies in Higher Education*, 48:8, 1315-1332, DOI: [10.1080/03075079.2023.2197005](https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2023.2197005)

Tai, J., Ajjawi, R., Bearman, M., Boud, D., Dawson, P., & Jorre de St Jorre, T. (2023) Assessment for inclusion: rethinking contemporary strategies in assessment design, *Higher Education Research & Development*, 42:2, 483-497, DOI: [10.1080/07294360.2022.2057451](https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2022.2057451)

[Vander Schee B. A & T.D. Birrittella. \(2021\) "Hybrid and Online Peer Group Grading: Adding Assessment Efficiency While Maintaining Perceived Fairness", *Marketing Education Review*, 2021. vol 31:4, pp275-283, DOI: 10.1080/10528008.2021.1887746](#)

UCD T&L (2024a) [*Programme Mapping and Alignment*](#), Dublin, UCD T&L

UCD T&L (2024b) [*How to give constructive and actionable peer feedback*](#), Dublin: UCD T&L

UCD T&L (2024c) [*Assessment Workload and Equivalence Guide*](#), Dublin: UCD T&L

[UCD T&L, \(2024d\) *DESIGNING GRADING & FEEDBACK RUBRICS*](#), Dublin: UCD T&L

Wanner, T., Palmer E., & Palmer. D (2021): Flexible assessment and student empowerment: advantages and disadvantages – research from an Australian university, *Teaching in Higher Education*, DOI: 10.1080/13562517.2021.1989578

Winstone, N. E., & Nash, R. A. (2016). *The Developing Engagement with Feedback Toolkit (DEFT)*. York, UK: Higher Education Academy. <http://tinyurl.com/hea-deft>

Xu, Y., & Brown, G. T. L. (2016). Teacher assessment literacy in practice: A reconceptualization. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 58, 149–162. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2016.05.010.