

RE-IMAGINING ATTAINMENT FOR ALL 2



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Re-imagining Attainment For All 2 (RAFA 2) is a student-led initiative focusing upon the process of academic assessment in higher education with the aim of critically analysing and addressing the attainment gap between black/African/Caribbean/black British, and white students. Additionally, RAFA 2 will explore the attainment gap between Muslim women students and white students in general.

A joint research endeavour between the University of Roehampton, Carshalton College and Queen Mary University of London (QMUL), the project will look to draw together evidence and conclusions across the institutions, but also focus upon the exploration of local issues and recommendations.

RAFA 2 is grounded within existing research as a follow on enquiry from two previous studies by the University of Roehampton; 'Re-imagining Attainment For All 1' and 'Journeys to Success'. Developing the theoretical and practical outcomes discovered through each of these studies, RAFA 2 will look to establish further best practice, extend the knowledge base and develop practical solutions to in part overcome, and reduce the attainment gap.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Specifically RAFA 2 aims to:

- Examine the existing methods through which the institutions involved aim to address the attainment gap and highlight best practice;
- Conceptualise and develop methods to support staff in enhancing learning and teaching practices to address attainment;
- Produce guidance and practical recommendations for academic staff to enhance the use of assessment to more effectively assess attainment.

METHODOLOGY

RAFA 2 seeks initially to scale up the established methodologies employed during RAFA 1 and Journeys to Success, a process in itself guided by academic principles outlined in the MSI Scaling Up Toolkit (MSI 2012). The driver behind this approach is to transfer a successful local intervention into new environment.

Each institution has a similar percentage of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students, as of 2016; 52% of undergraduates at Roehampton identify as BAME; at QMUL 57% and at Carshalton 42%. Furthermore, existing partnerships and geographical locations of the institutions were also considered.

CHALLENGES AND WIDER BENEFITS

At present the following challenges have been identified, but have been considered in the planning process and continue to be rationalised by the respective institutions on an on-going basis:

- Ensuring a shared understanding and buy-in of the objectives of the project;
- The recruitment and engagement of students;
- The sensitivity of the topic i.e. the ethnic attainment gap;
- Maintaining staff engagement;
- Collection and analysis of data;
- Overcoming initiative fatigue.

It is anticipated that the wider benefits of the project can be summarised into three categories:

- Institutionalised support mechanisms to expand opportunities for BAME students and Muslim women;
- Capacity building of staff in other HEIs for providing enhanced assessment practices for all students;
- The development of resources for inclusive and effective assessment practices based on collaborative evidence.

DISSEMINATION AND EVALUATION

The main dissemination activities will include:

- Conference presentations;
- Internal and external workshops;
- Project website;
- OER resources;
- Social media presence;
- Journal articles.

Success criteria throughout the evaluation process will be generally based around:

- A reduced attainment gap;
- Alterations in participants' knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours;
- Improvements in attainment by the target group and a reduction of the attainment gap.

TIMELINE

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| April 2017 Initial Project Management Meeting | November 2017 Action planning based on NSS, retention, attainment and module evaluation data | April 2018 Attendance at academic conferences to present findings |
| July 2017 Student Project Managers and Consultants recruited | December 2017 Identify areas for curriculum and assessment enhancement | Recommendations on curriculum and assessment enhancement |
| Project launch | January 2018 Continuing professional development events | June 2018 Student films launched |
| August 2017 Initial staff attitudes research | February 2018 Initial report on staff and student research produced | October 2018 Academic research and journal papers launch |
| September 2017 First continuing professional development event Initial student research undertaken | March 2018 Preparation for academic research and journal | December 2018 Final project evaluation and celebration |



Contact information

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