

Ethical Action Plan (500-750 words)*

This document is a chance for you to **begin shaping your project** while thinking through its ethical considerations, implications, and responsibilities. We know this might feel early in your action research journey, but this short plan is here to help pin down your ideas and work-in-progress.

Use whatever writing format that suits you - lists, bullet points, statements or paragraphs - and follow the suggested links stated alongside some of the questions for guidance.

A good starting point is the [BERA Guidelines for Educational Research, fifth edition \(2024\)](#) alongside the [‘Ethics Files and Resources’](#) on Moodle.

When you’re ready, email your draft to your allocated tutor **48 hours in advance of your first group tutorial** in the week commencing **6 October 2025**, so it can help guide the focus of discussions and support your project development.

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Tutor: Rachel Marsden

Date: 06/10/2025

1. **What is the working title of your project?** Also write a few sentences about the focus of your project.

Prefer Not To Say: an exploration of agency, privacy and care in positionality practices.

As teaching staff that facilitates processes of positionally and development of a student’s practice, we are often asking students to locate their practice often based on proximity to narratives, to interrogate their work with their own positionality. A necessary exercise, it is often not facilitated in a way that allows students to participate without exposing themselves in the classroom. The utility of the intervention is to promote inclusive learning by validating lived experience as an important site of academic inquiry, particularly for those navigating intersecting identities and systems. It addresses the choice of exposure (whenever possible) when discussing one’s own positionality, and takes into consideration the emotional labour implied. It also reframes how DEI data is being collected and analysed.

2. What sources will you read or reference? Share 5 to 10.

Ahmed, S. (2012) *On being included: Racism and diversity in Institutional Life*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Cedillo, C.V. and Bratta, P. (2019) 'Relating our experiences: The practice of positionality stories in student-centered pedagogy', *College Composition & Communication*, 71(2), pp. 215–240. doi:10.58680/ccc201930421.

Holman Jones, S.L. and Harris, A.M. (2019) *Queering autoethnography*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Cavarero, A. (2014) *Relating narratives: Storytelling and Selfhood*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.

Butler, J. (2025) *Giving an account of oneself*. New York: Fordham University Press.

University of the Arts London (2025) *Equality, diversity and inclusion: Annual report, Vol. 2 (July 2025)*. London: University of the Arts London. Available at: https://www.arts.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0022/480901/PS24559-EDI-annual-report-2024-20250731.pdf [Accessed 21 October 2025].

University of the Arts London (2025) *Application form information*. Available at: <https://jobs.arts.ac.uk/application-form-information/>

3. What action(s) are you planning to take, and are they realistic in the time you have (Sept-Dec)?

PLAN

October:

- In depth development of the workshop
- Outline of methods/methodology of research
- Outline of data collection strategy

November:

- Setting up session with course team - *aimed for beginning of November*
- Comms to share students beforehand

ACT & OBSERVE

- Delivery of workshop

REFLECT

- Post-workshop data collection on students' experience
- Data visualisation + analysis
- Optional session in which the data is presented to students - *aimed for end of November*
- Optional session in which the data is presented to staff - *aimed for end of November*

December:

Reflection on overall process and students and staff's feedback and testimonies.

Workshop and data collection methods:

PART 1

Creative Autoethnography: Students will be translating their own personal narrative into an infographic based on the emotional trajectory resulted. They will be given prompts, such as:

1. Snapshot opener: A single charged scene that hooks readers
2. Roots: Family, place, origin myths
3. First big choice: Conflict & decision
4. Crash or turning-point: Adversity and growth
5. Now: Present identity, values, routines
6. Forward glance: Hopes, unfinished business

Then, they will score the events between 0—6 based on the emotional negativity or positiveness. This will result in an infographic that they can share with the rest of the class.

PART 2

Collaborative Autoethnography: Students will collectively reflect on their own experiential knowledge and the context of institutionalised education. They will look at the information they would be requested to fill in into a UAL DEI monitoring form and compare that with the life story they wrote in the previous step. They will delate from the infographic the parts that the DEI monitoring form doesn't cover.

Document Analysis: We will review the DEI monitoring form with a critical angle: do they see them represented in that information? Do they feel seen as they see themselves? What would they like to share, that is missing?

- 4. Who will be involved, and in what way?** (e.g. colleagues, students, local community...). Note, if any of your participants will be under the age years of 18yrs, please seek further advice from your tutor.

The proposed intervention is part of a lecture and workshop I will be holding at the MA Applied Imagination (Creative Enterprise Programme), where I'm Associate lecturer. Students will be approaching the last unit of the course. This will be introduced by a lecture on positionality and data analysis. The session will be of 3 hours. Students will be given the option to observe, rather than participate, when we will start the intervention on the second part of the session. The student group is of 25 students and the session will be during regular class hours.

- 5. What are the health & safety concerns, and how will you prepare for them?**

- <https://canvas.arts.ac.uk/sites/explore/SitePage/42587/health-and-safety-hub>
- <https://canvas.arts.ac.uk/sites/explore/SitePage/45761/health-and-safety-policies-and-standards>

Students will be asked to look back and look forward in their journey. This is still opening up reflections on what could be negative feelings or potentially traumatic memories. I will remind students that this needs to be an event that fostered positive growth in them. I will also share an outline of the session beforehand, including an outline of the tasks they will be asked to work on and the subjects covered. I will let them know participation to the intervention is not mandatory, to discuss any concern with me, that their participation can be of observer if they prefer. I will signpost the [Counselling and Health Advice](#) contact form, and add to comms 'I know that some of you might be experiencing things that are making it difficult to participate to certain conversations. If this is you, please do reach out to me or consider contacting [Student Services](#) for some professional help and advice. We can support you to address your challenges.'

6. How will you manage and protect any physical and / or digital data you collect, including the data of people involved?

- <https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-fifth-edition-2024-online#consent>
- <https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-fifth-edition-2024-online#privacy-data-storage>

I will develop consent forms in which I will be asking consent in storing and sharing those visuals, and in what context those visuals will be stored. Besides standard content aspects of informed consent (right to withdraw, transparency of process, clarity on purposes of research, implications of their participation, etc);

Other aspect to take into consideration:

Bera: 21. Researchers using auto/biographical approaches and autoethnography need to consider how their work implicates other people, and what the consequences may be for individuals who, although not directly involved in a study, may be identifiable through their relationship with the researcher or other participants; consent may need to be sought from these individuals in some cases.

All digital data collected during this research will be stored in UAL-approved cloud storage (OneDrive), access will be restricted to myself and, if applicable, my supervisors. Any personal or sensitive information will be anonymised at the point of collection. Data will not be shared via unencrypted channels. Upon completion of the research, all digital data, including duplicates and temporary files, will be permanently deleted from OneDrive.

7. How will you take ethics into account in your project for participants and / or yourself?

- <https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-fifth-edition-2024-online#responsibilities-participants>
- <https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-fifth-edition-2024-online#responsibilities-sponsors>
- <https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-fifth-edition-2024-online#responsibilities-wellbeing>
- See [Emotionally Demanding Research](#) PDF on Moodle

Students will be asked to look back and look forward in their journey. This is still opening up reflections on what could be negative feelings or potentially traumatic memories. I will remind students that this needs to be an event that fostered positive growth in them. I will also share an outline of the session beforehand, including an outline of the tasks they will be asked to work on and the subjects covered. I need to share, clarify and transparently discuss my own positionality with students.

As shared in my [IPU Report](#), there are further challenges I need to expand and address:

- This intervention is heavily reliant on a visual process and output. I should be aware of students with visual impairment beforehand, but not all students with a visual impairment are diagnosed.
- I'm asking students to rate events from 0 to 6, which is presenting a challenge for students who have dyscalculia.
- This isn't an occasion for pitting students against the institution they're in, as it ultimately is holding space for this conversation and interrogation to happen.

I will also acknowledge my positionality with transparency, sharing with students how my own lived experience informs the design and facilitation of the activity. This disclosure will be framed carefully to model ethical reflexivity without centring my perspective. I will ensure that I am emotionally prepared to hold space for potentially sensitive disclosures, and that I maintain professional boundaries while remaining empathetic.

* The form itself is around 300 words, so with your additions the total length will come to a maximum of about 1,050 words.