

Digital Poster Presentations as a Dynamic Assessment Approach: Insights from Student Feedback and Reflections on Skill Development

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Abstract

Online poster presentations have emerged as a dynamic assessment tool that diversifies evaluation in the digital age. This article contributes to existing scholarship by offering empirical evidence from an academic literacies course, demonstrating how online poster presentations can accommodate diverse learning styles and foster critical thinking, creativity, summarisation skills, and digital literacy. Through an analysis of student survey data, the study reveals that this mode of assessment encourages students to synthesise research in an impactful visual format while engaging in meaningful asynchronous peer interaction. The findings further indicate that this assessment form aligns with contemporary educational demands, preparing students for digital communication challenges in their future academic and professional endeavours by requiring them to navigate multimodal design, digital platforms, and audience-focused knowledge dissemination. The article concludes with recommendations for implementing online poster presentations, emphasising the need for clear guidelines, robust support systems, and opportunities for peer feedback. In doing so, it positions digital posters as a pedagogically valuable and future-oriented assessment method.

Introduction

Academic posters have long been used as a visual medium for presenting research findings and as an effective tool in illustrating and evaluating academic knowledge. They are generally regarded in a positive light by practitioners, trainees and students (Mahomed et al., 2021 among others). According to Hess et al. (2009), they are often a “highly condensed version of a research paper constructed primarily of visual displays of data with just enough supporting text to provide context, interpretation, and conclusions” (p. 356). The Academic Development Centre (ADC) (2023) at the University of Warwick points out that this medium requires students “to communicate complex thinking clearly and with concision, synthesising and integrating information, and can foster critical thinking”. The ADC also notes that academic posters “offer a strong alternative to text-heavy assessment methods.”

With the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, academic organisations around the world were forced to move their teaching online. Poster presentations were a part of this move. Various modifications were made; many universities, including Aberdeen, Bedfordshire and Birmingham, adopted online learning whereby students upload electronic posters (e-posters)

to the virtual learning environment (VLE) and present live to an audience, thus retaining the live interaction experienced in the classroom. The Academic Literacies Programme team at Richmond American University London (RAUL) took the opportunity to reshape the interaction by requiring an e-poster submission with an asynchronous written Q&A to accommodate students across different time zones and to boost student engagement. All this would be uploaded to the Discussion Board of the course on the University's VLE.

This article explores the efficacy of the online poster presentation with its asynchronous written interaction and its potential to accommodate diverse learning styles while fostering critical thinking, creativity, summarisation skills and digital literacy. The article contributes to the growing literature on digital assessment by providing empirical evidence from student feedback on an online poster presentation task within an academic literacies course. While previous studies have highlighted the potential of e-posters for engagement, interactivity, and skills development, few have examined how such tasks function specifically within academic literacies curricula or how students perceive their value in relation to future academic and professional communication demands. A key part of this study is the shift toward written, asynchronous interaction, a format with an important pedagogical contribution to digital assessment. By analysing student responses, this study demonstrates how online poster presentations with asynchronous interaction not only diversify assessment but also cultivate essential digital communication competencies increasingly required in higher education and the workplace. In particular, the research reveals how such a text-based, asynchronous format provides students with the necessary 'thinking space' to engage in more nuanced and equitable peer-to-peer scholarly interaction.

Literature Review

E-posters represent a significant shift away from conventional static posters. Rowe (2017a) presents a foundational perspective, noting the historical role of posters in academic discourse and highlighting the growing appeal of e-posters due to their capacity for multimedia integration and interactivity. Compared to traditional formats, e-posters enable richer content delivery through embedded videos, hyperlinks, and animations. Building on this conceptual framework, Premkumar et al. (2022) provide twelve practical tips for e-poster design, which emphasise visual balance, and technological adaptability. However, while both sources praise the potential of e-posters, Rowe's emphasis on foundational design principles contrasts with Premkumar et al.'s focus on implementation strategies, suggesting a need to bridge the gap between conceptual design theory and practical guidance and execution. In addition, Frost et al. (2023) present a compelling case for poster competitions hosted in academic libraries, noting increased student participation and institutional engagement.

A primary advantage of digital presentation is the expanded scope of information exchange between students. Church and Fazlanie (2022) stress the advantage of audience engagement in e-poster activities. This is unlike traditional poster sessions where communication is often limited to teacher-presenter exchanges for the purpose of assessment or occasional student interaction – in the case of personal interest – and is limited by physical proximity. Therefore, the communicative reach of digital presentations is much wider. Naseem et al. (2021) describe e-posters as an innovative method since it utilises a multitude of skills to enhance learning. Premkumar et al. (2022) highlight the interactive and flexible nature of e-posters after assessing the performance of medical students during Covid lockdown through virtual poster presentations. They found that this method of communication proved to be engaging and challenging and was regarded as positive by students.

A central theme in the literature is the pedagogical value of digital poster presentations. Donia et al. (2022), as well as Duckworth and Halliwell (2022), argue that online poster sessions can enhance student engagement, collaboration, and critical thinking. Donia et al. support their claims with quantitative data indicating increased student satisfaction when peer feedback mechanisms are incorporated, while Duckworth and Halliwell focus on higher-order cognitive skill development through asynchronous sessions. The authors share an optimism about e-posters but diverge in methodological approaches – Donia et al.'s empirical rigour contrasts

with Duckworth and Halliwell's more qualitative exploration. Furthermore, Mahomed et al. (2021) caution that without structured training in research and digital tools, the pedagogical potential of e-posters remains underutilised. This critique introduces a pragmatic counterpoint, emphasising the dependency of educational benefits on institutional support and student preparedness.

From an institutional perspective, digital assignments offer educators a cost-effective alternative to traditional assessments by reducing the need for printing, large display spaces and display utilities. Menke (2014) affirms that online poster sessions also eliminate "the difficulty of one instructor needing to visit a large number of posters in a short period of time" (p. 414).

However, digital poster sessions also present logistical challenges. Church and Fazlanie (2022) and Cavazos et al. (2024) offer guidance on virtual event planning. While Church and Fazlanie provide actionable tips on platform choice, scheduling, and session moderation, Cavazos et al. advocate for more adaptive and flexible teaching practices that account for participant needs. Both sets of recommendations are grounded in practitioner experience, but their scope differs – Church and Fazlanie focus on execution, while Cavazos et al. emphasise pedagogical alignment. Cullinane et al. (2022) provide a nuanced view, reporting both successes and limitations in transitioning to virtual formats. Their findings, based on feedback from users, highlight a tension between convenience and the lack of spontaneous interpersonal interaction. This comparative analysis reveals that while virtual sessions can democratise access and reduce costs, they may inadvertently reduce the richness of scholarly dialogue unless supplemented with interactive elements.

In summary, e-posters represent a fundamental shift in academic pedagogy, offering superior multimedia integration, cost-efficiency, and broader communicative reach than traditional formats. While the literature establishes the technical and engagement benefits of e-posters, a critical gap remains regarding the 'interaction deficit' inherent in virtual environments. This study addresses this gap by examining the efficacy of written Q&A as a primary interactive component, moving the discourse towards a deeper understanding of asynchronous digital presentations as a dynamic tool for assessment.

Context

The study took place at Richmond American University London, an institution structured on the American Liberal Arts model. In this educational system, students pursue a broad multidisciplinary curriculum, with a particular emphasis on critical thinking and communication skills, before specialising in their chosen subject. Its Academic Literacies Programme (ALP) sits within the School of Applied Liberal Arts and provides content-based instruction "designed to empower all students to research and write effectively throughout their undergraduate studies" (Neilson and King, 2023, p. 1).

The focal point of this study is the mandatory first-year academic literacies course (equivalent to a 'module' in UK Higher Education). This course, entitled 'Research and Writing', spans a full 15-week semester, comprising 13 weeks of instruction and a final assessment period. Students typically enrol in this course during either the Fall Semester (September to December) or the Spring Semester (January to May).

For this course, students are required to choose a research topic focused on a current controversy, investigate the issue and submit a Proposal, to be approved by the course instructor. They then produce a sample of an Annotated Bibliography, followed by a 1500-word Literature Review Research Paper (LRRP). In the Fall Semester of 2019, a Poster Presentation Task was added to allow students to visually synthesise and present to their peers the key findings outlined in their LRRP (see Figure 1).

Focussing on a current controversy, submit the following:	Research Proposal
	Annotated Bibliography
	Literature Review Research Paper
	Poster Presentation of research

Figure 1. Assignments for the Research and Writing course

In addition to offering a platform for students to share the results of their semester-long research, the Poster Presentation Task provides the opportunity for them to take part in a real-life academic practice that mirrors poster presentations at academic conferences (Rowe, 2017b). It also enables RAUL to diversify the form of summative assessment, as Burnell (2019) notes, by allowing students who may struggle with written research papers an alternative medium in which to excel.

The Poster Presentation Task, as set up in the traditional in-person format, was quite successful. Students designed their posters online, printed them in A1 format, and displayed them in one of the larger rooms for others to view. They explained their poster to students who passed by and responded to questions. They produced some creative, inspired work and enjoyed sharing their results with others. However, problems remained: discussion was limited to brief, superficial chats, and grading the discussions was problematic due to the format and time limitation.

In the 2021 Spring Semester, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the task moved online and was adapted for the University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), Blackboard. Students continued to design their posters online, as before, but then uploaded the digital version to the VLE. The interaction model was now re-designed to follow a structured, asynchronous format: students were required to submit brief written questions after viewing three or more posters submitted by their peers. Instructors added two further questions, and students were required to respond to all the questions they received regarding their own posters on the VLE.

A significant shift in this assessment was that the quality of the written response became a formal component of the grade for the Poster Presentation Task. This transformed the Q&A from a brief, casual exchange into documented evidence of student competence. This transition also accommodated students across different time zones due to their global dispersion.

To ensure student preparedness, the task is scaffolded over several weeks. The purpose of including the Poster Presentation Task as part of the assessment criteria is explained to make it clear to students how posters are a recognised form of academic communication and a widely practiced technique to disseminate knowledge at conferences and symposia. Examples of good and weak academic posters are shared on the VLE. Students are also shown a video that explains the steps of how to format an academic poster, and a template is provided with the University logo and example student name and contact details, as well as suggestions for the location of the list of references. The guidelines are explained as culturally specific, as the poster is to be read from a Western viewpoint: progressively left to right and top to bottom. Students are then asked to submit their drafts to the VLE. This gives them the opportunity to view and comment on each other's work and receive feedback from the instructor.

Figure 2 shows the process of the Poster Presentation Task. Each stage is subject to a specific deadline. The instructor adds the same two questions for all students in order to ensure some consistency (e.g., "Why did you select these particular sources?" "What difficulties did you encounter when formulating the poster and how did you overcome them?"). Effective student responses require subject knowledge, critical thinking, and reflection.

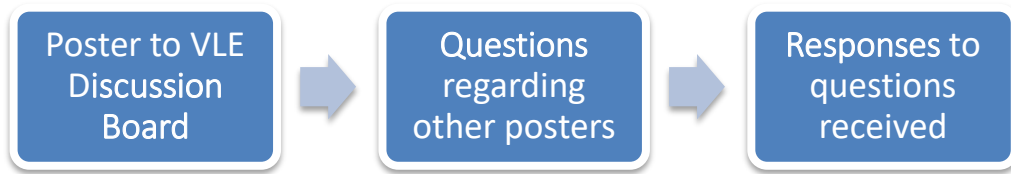


Figure 2. Process of the Poster Presentation Task

The student work is then assessed using the grading criteria shown in Figure 3. Unusually, 'Research and Content' is not weighted more than other criteria, as this has already been graded in their literature review research paper. 'Visual Design' and 'Quality of Response' are weighted equally with 'Research and Content' and 'Academic Style', ensuring that the assessment evaluates the student's ability to present summarised content in a visually appealing way as well as their capacity to engage critically on the digital platform.

Research and Content: key findings from a range of sources in response to clearly-defined research question	25	
Visuals: design, layout; representation of information; clarity	25	
Academic style and articulation: appropriate, self-explanatory text; acknowledgement of sources	25	
Quality of response to questions regarding Poster	25	
Overall Grade		F

Figure 3. Grading criteria

Examples of the work carried out by the students can be found in the Appendix, which includes two sample posters and an example of Q&A interaction in response to the second sample.

Method

From March 2022 to April 2023, for three consecutive semesters, all students carrying out the Poster Presentation Task in their first year 'Research and Writing' course ($n = 170$) were invited to complete a short survey at the end of their course about their experience of the task. Forty-four students responded, and 42 granted permission for their responses to be used in this study, resulting in an overall participation rate of 25%.

The survey was designed specifically for the course and focused on a single assessment: the Poster Presentation Task of their completed research project. Students were invited to reflect on their experience of the task and to provide feedback on the skills they had developed and the perceived effectiveness of the task.

The survey included both closed and open-ended questions. Closed questions, comprising Likert scales and multiple-choice formats, addressed aspects such as e-poster construction, the process of asking and responding to questions in the online format, the task aims, and students' overall evaluation of the task. Open-ended questions allowed students to elaborate on their experiences and offer qualitative feedback.

Closed questions with Yes/No/Maybe multiple choice included:

- Did viewing your classmates' draft posters help you to improve your own poster?
- Did asking your classmates questions about their posters improve your critical thinking skills?
- Did answering questions make you think more deeply about your own research?

Closed questions with multiple choice included:

- Of the whole process ... what did you find most challenging?
- ... what did you find most enjoyable?

Closed questions utilising Likert scales included:

- How many of your classmates' posters did you view?
- Of how many classmates did you ask questions about their posters?
- How many of your classmates ... asked questions about your poster?
- How stimulating did you find the discussion about your own research/others' research?
- Did the Presentation Task:
 - enable you to summarise the results of your research in a way clearly accessible to others?
 - stimulate discussion around your research topic?
 - enable you to excel in a different kind of graded task?
 - provide an interesting change of task type at the end of the course?

Open-ended questions included:

- What did you find particularly satisfying when creating the poster?
- What difficulties did you encounter when creating the poster?
- How did you overcome them?
- Was the online Poster Presentation a valuable learning experience? Why (not)?
- What could be done to improve this task?

The survey was created using Microsoft Forms and distributed to students via a QR code or a hyperlink posted to their course VLE page. The link was timed to appear in the final week of the course, and students were invited to complete the survey after participating in the Q&A session. Responses were submitted online, and the researchers subsequently accessed and analysed the data.

Ethics

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the RAUL Research Committee on 22 February 2022, as the data was neither personal nor sensitive in nature. A subsequent minor amendment, requesting a 12-month extension to allow for additional data collection, was approved by the Research Committee on 21 June 2022.

Results

The following section reports on students' responses to the questions in the survey.

Among the 42 participants who responded to the survey questions, 26 had no previous experience of the poster presentation process. The respondents came from various programmes/majors, including Psychology, Business Management, Accounting and Finance, History of Art, Communications, and Film Studies.

The most popular programme used to create the poster was PowerPoint (50%), with Canva as the second popular choice (36%). Only a few (14%) presented their work using other presentation programmes such as Google Slides.

Students were asked to select one from five options for two questions: 'Of the whole process of completing the online Poster Presentation Task, what did you find most challenging?' and '..., what did you find most enjoyable? Figures 4 and 5 show students' responses to the two questions.

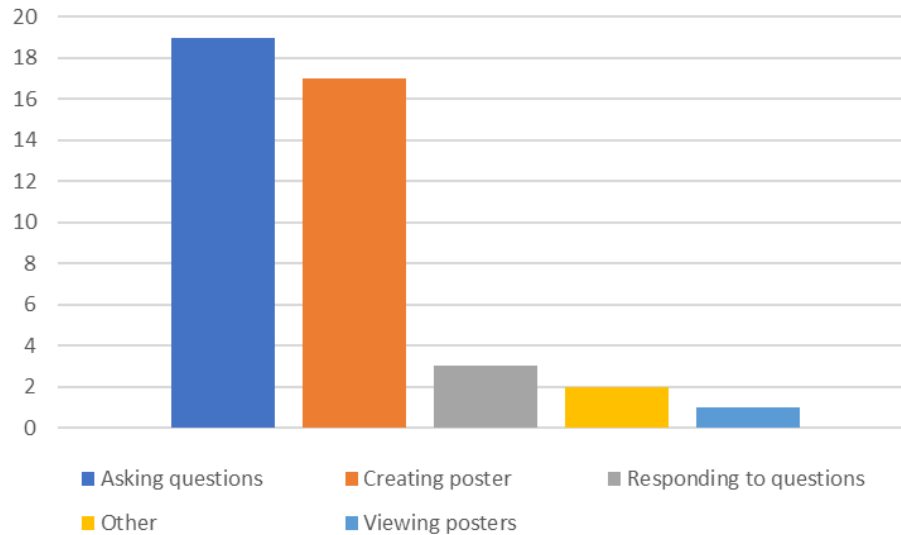


Figure 4: What did you find most challenging?

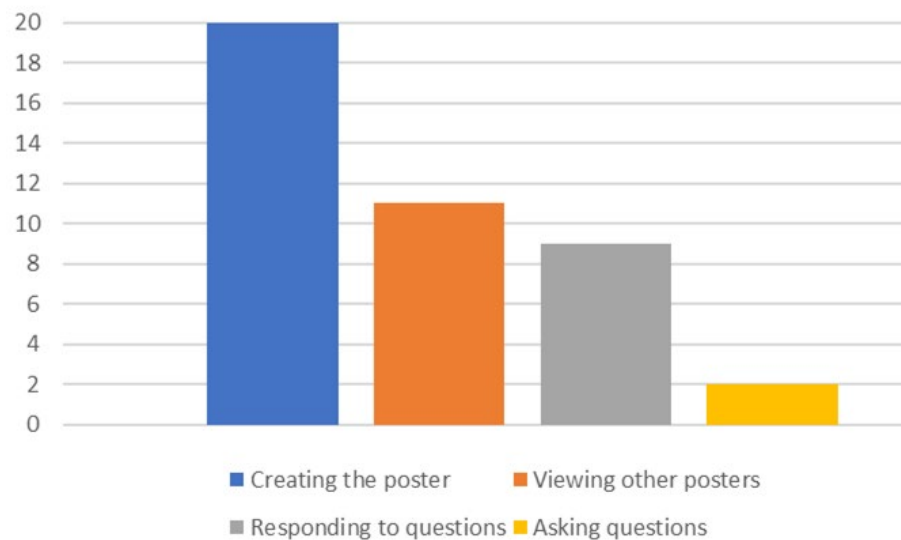


Figure 5: What did you find most enjoyable?

As can be seen from the above figures, the most challenging element of the task was 'Asking questions' (selected by 45% of respondents), followed by 'Creating the poster' (40%). Interestingly, nearly half (48%) of the students found that 'Creating the poster' was the most enjoyable part of the task, while 26% thought that viewing others' posters was more fun.

The following three figures are based on the data extracted from open-ended questions. Figure 6 shows categories of the factors for satisfaction, Figure 7 shows those for difficulties in creating the poster, and Figure 8 shows the actions they took to overcome the difficulties.

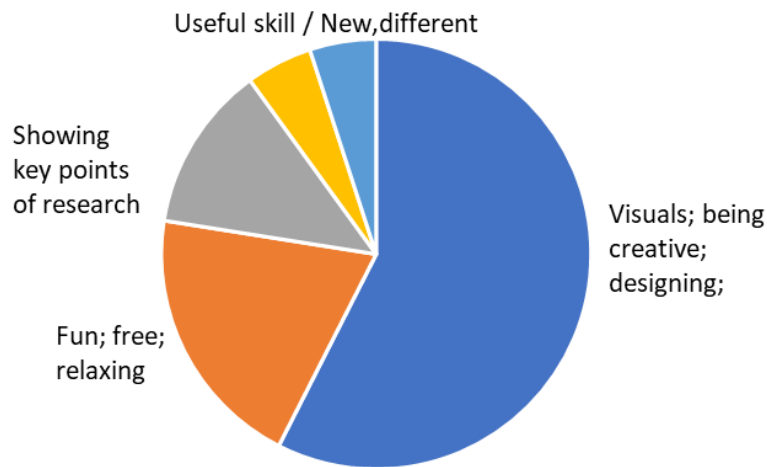


Figure 6. What did you find particularly satisfying when creating the poster?

There were various responses to the question regarding which aspect of the process students found particularly satisfying. Only one student failed to respond to this question and one other said there was nothing they found particularly satisfying. The remaining participants were all positive. Their responses can be mostly categorised into task type and academic skills. The vast majority found that this type of task required creativity in the form of visual representation and design (56%), practised new, different skills (10%) and was fun and relaxing (20%). A few (12%) referred to their satisfaction in improving their academic skills, such as selecting important and relevant information, synthesising information and showing key findings of research.

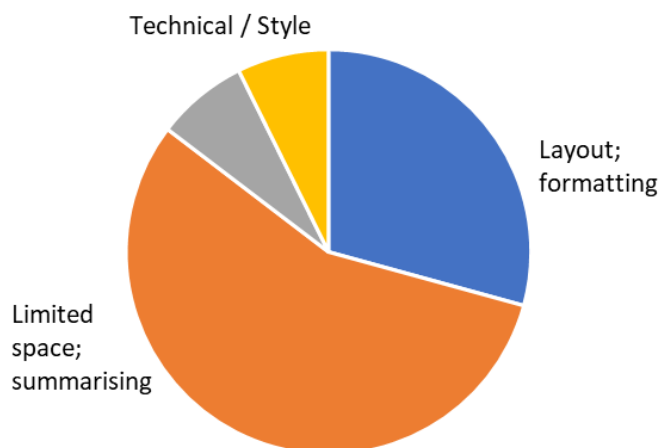


Figure 7. What difficulties did you encounter when creating the poster?

Forty-one students provided answers to the question regarding difficulties creating the poster. For most respondents (56%), limited space and the need to summarise information were the most difficult. Somewhat challenging were the poster's layout and format (29%). The least challenging were style (7%) and technical issues (7%).

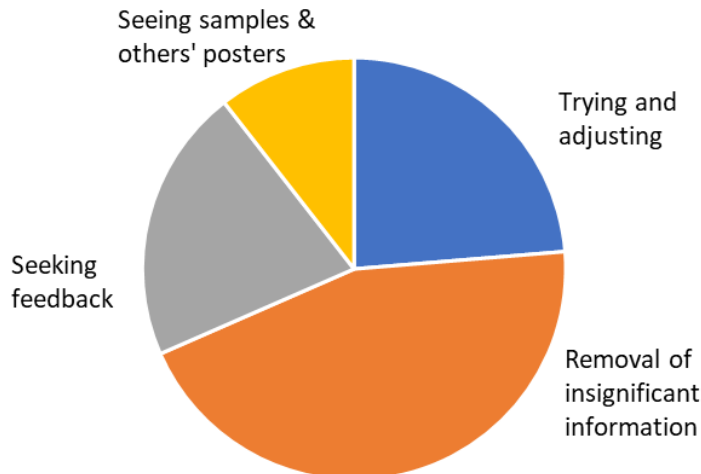


Figure 8. How did you overcome the difficulties?

Thirty-nine students provided their techniques for overcoming the difficulties while creating the poster. As shown in Figure 8, techniques for overcoming the difficulties include removal of insignificant information (44%), trying and adjusting (25%), seeking feedback (21%) and viewing samples and others' posters (10%).

Though only a small number of respondents reported that viewing samples and others' posters was an effective means of overcoming difficulties (10%), when asked 'Did viewing your classmates' draft help you?', 25 (61%) selected 'Yes' and 12 (29%) selected 'Maybe', indicating that the vast majority of the respondents found this to be helpful

When asked to rate the degree of stimulation in discussing their own research and others' research, the majority of the respondents rated their experience positively. The data shows that 76% found discussing their own research stimulating or very stimulating and that 61% found discussing others' research stimulating or very stimulating.

Students were also asked whether they found asking questions helped them improve their critical thinking skills and whether answering questions made them reflect more deeply on their own research. Twenty-seven (64%) provided a definite 'Yes' and 10 (24%) selected 'Maybe' to the first question, and 31 (74%) responded with a 'Yes' and seven (17%) with a 'Maybe' to the second.

When prompted to rate the presentation task on the following four areas as shown in Figure 9, respondents provided very positive answers, as can be seen from the total percentages of responses with 'Definitely' and 'Yes' shown in Figure 9 below.

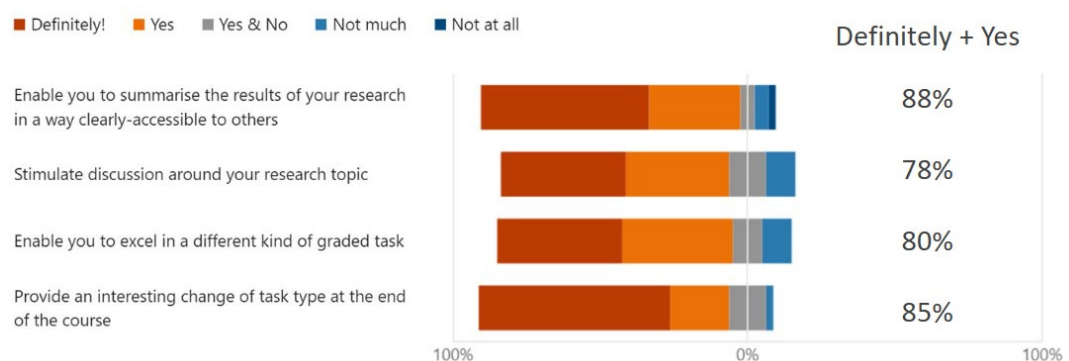


Figure 9. Did the presentation task...?

This finding was corroborated by another question asking students whether they found the poster presentation task a 'valuable learning experience.' To this question, 29 out of 42 (69%) selected 'Yes', nine (21%) selected 'Maybe' and only four (10%) responded with a 'No'.

When prompted to supply the reasons for their choice, various answers were provided. Those who did not find the task valuable commented that "I found it difficult as I don't have any experience with graphic design", "I could've just written an abstract", "Anyone can make a poster. I just wasted my valuable time", and "It might have been better to actually present it than make a poster."

Those who did enjoy the task provided helpful comments, categorised into the following four aspects supported by quotes from the students:

Skills development

- "It helps us to summarise main points."
- "It tested my digital skills, research skills and critical thinking."
- "It was an opportunity to practice summarising and being concise, as well as visual communication."
- "Meeting a deadline. Keeping it simple and short. Also understanding impact of visuals."

Creativity

- "It allowed me to use my creative skills and evoke critical thinking."
- "It allowed me to explore my creative side."
- "The freedom to be creative."

Preparation for the future

- "Information posters are things you come across in later life in jobs. Essential to learn how to formulate such posters."
- "This could be good practice for future employment situations where presentations are needed."
- "Straight to the point is an asset which will help with future writing whether it is for a poster or a paper."
- "It almost modelled a business presentation and I think it will be useful in the future."

Fun and enjoyable

- "A more interesting way to learn."
- "Very challenging but rewarding."
- "It was a good way of finalising everything we learned."
- "It was fun doing something completely different from all the writing we have been doing."

When asked what could be done to improve the task, 10 students responded "Nothing," "I don't think there is much to improve," or similar. Some thoughtful suggestions were put forward, including the following:

- "Maybe giving more guidance on effective design."
- "Introduce the task slightly earlier in the course."
- "Maybe work in pairs because two heads could be better than one."
- "Ensuring that everyone gets at least three questions to answer."
- "Viewing all posters in class."

Discussion

Academic benefits

Students widely perceived the assignment as useful and enjoyable, primarily because it offered a refreshing alternative to traditional assessment formats. Many appreciated the opportunity to be evaluated through a different, “fun” medium, which allowed them to showcase their strengths in a more engaging and creative way. The digital poster format was praised for its visual appeal and effectiveness in presenting research findings clearly and accessibly. A significant majority strongly agreed that this task provided a welcome change from conventional written assignments and encouraged meaningful discussion around their topics. As a summative assessment, the assignment proved effective, echoing Parkinson et al.’s (2023) assertion that digital poster tasks are both valid and dynamic tools for evaluating student learning.

Academically, the task was seen as enabling, supporting the development of higher-order cognitive skills such as critical thinking – an outcome also reported by Duckworth and Halliwell (2022) in their study of final-year students at The Open University. Furthermore, the findings reinforce Naseem et al.’s (2021) conclusion that digital presentations enhance communication skills. These outcomes also align with Premkumar et al. (2022), who advocate for e-posters as interactive, multimedia-rich tools well-suited to online and blended learning environments.

In addition to these academic gains, the task required students to engage with multimodal communication, an increasingly central expectation in both higher education and professional contexts. Students had to make design decisions, consider audience accessibility, and use digital technologies to convey complex information succinctly. These practices mirror contemporary communication environments in which visual literacy, platform navigation, and concise digital messaging are essential. The survey responses suggest that students recognised this relevance, with several explicitly noting that the task resembled workplace communication formats such as business presentations and informational briefings.

Finally, having students ask and respond to questions, themselves, places them in a more powerful position, taking the assessor’s role. This enables them to critically evaluate each other’s work while deepening their own learning. The process therefore incorporates collaborative assessment practice, as advocated by Fleckney et al. (2025), among others.

Creativity in digital communication

Student responses to the question about which aspects of the process they found particularly satisfying revealed a generally positive experience. Most students appreciated the creative nature of the task, particularly the visual design and representation involved in creating the digital poster.

The requirement to design a visually coherent and digitally accessible poster also positioned students within real-world communication practices. The process of selecting layouts, balancing text and visuals, and anticipating audience needs reflects the multimodal communication skills increasingly demanded across industries. As such, the task functioned not only as an academic exercise but also a form of professional preparation, enabling students to practise the kinds of digital communication they will encounter beyond university.

Engagement in interaction

Students enjoyed designing the posters, viewing and commenting on peers’ work asynchronously, and engaging in informal online discussions through peer feedback and Q&A. This aligns with Cullinane et al. (2022), who reported enhanced engagement as a key outcome of similar poster-based activities. Consistent with Donia et al. (2022), students valued the opportunity for peer interaction. These findings also support Holt et al. (2020), who argued that digital poster presentations are effective alternatives to in-person formats, integrating multiple academic skills and fostering collaboration and networking. Interestingly, the least enjoyable part of the process was asking questions, enjoyed by only 5% of participants. Nonetheless, most students appreciated the opportunity for online interaction, which provided a more relaxed social environment compared to traditional classroom settings.

The benefits of peer-to-peer and tutor-to-student interaction are illustrated by the examples supplied in the Appendix. Sample 1 shows how an initial draft poster can be vastly improved by viewing others' posters and receiving feedback from peers and the tutor. Sample 2, a finished poster with subsequent Q&A, demonstrates the benefit of asynchronous written interaction in encouraging in-depth reflection and critical thinking, particularly on the part of the student researcher.

While prior work highlights an 'interaction deficit' in virtual settings (e.g., Cullinane et al., 2022), our findings suggest that asynchronous written Q&A reframes the nature of interpersonal engagement. Even though students lose the immediacy of real-time conversation, the slower, written format gives them space to think before responding, something that is often missing in fast-paced live sessions. This shift is a useful pedagogical strategy: it lowers the pressure to speak spontaneously, makes participation easier for a wider range of students, and supports more thoughtful, in-depth exchange.

Difficulties and challenges

The difficulties encountered during this assignment can be categorised into two areas: academic and functional. Academic challenges primarily involved asking questions, selecting relevant information, summarising content effectively, and adhering to word limits. Unsurprisingly, most of these difficulties were developmental in nature, similar to those faced in cognitive development and traditional written assignments. Students are used to being asked questions, but learning to ask effective questions is a skill that often needs to be further developed. For most respondents, the most difficult aspect of creating the digital poster was managing the limited space and summarising information, challenges that were more significant than concerns about layout and formatting.

Functional challenges, on the other hand, centred around time constraints and the technical knowledge required, such as understanding sizing and measurement. In terms of design, similar to other studies on virtual poster presentations (Naseem et al. 2021; Parkinson et al. 2023), students reported difficulties with the visual layout of the posters, formatting, creating text boxes, and choosing appropriate colours.

It is interesting to note that responding to questions was not perceived as particularly difficult by most students, which may reflect their academic integrity and ownership of the posters they created. The actual creation of the digital poster was rated as more difficult. This suggests that while students were confident about the content, turning that knowledge into a clear, well-designed digital poster required a lot of effort. Consequently, future assignments of this nature may require more targeted scaffolding to help students bridge the gap between understanding the ideas and presenting them effectively in a digital format.

Conclusion

On examining the qualitative and quantitative results of this study, the experiment appears to have worked well. Following the return to face-to-face teaching after Covid-19 lockdown, the Academic Literacies team at RAUL continued with this mode of assessment due to the benefits the task brings.

This study demonstrates that online poster presentations offer a valuable, future-oriented form of assessment within academic literacies courses. As well as developing critical thinking and summarising skills and fostering creativity and engagement, the interactive nature of this task accommodates individual learning styles and provides students with an opportunity for peer assessment and reflection. The online Poster Presentation Task aligns with a new vision of teaching and learning that emphasises flexibility without undermining quality. Pedagogically, it can enhance digital literacy and offers a chance for students to be creative and artistic, as it supports multi-modal learning and different learning styles. Digital literacy is also useful for future employment. In addition, the task offers financial and ecological benefits: it saves time, printing costs, space and paper. As an activity, digital poster presentations with asynchronous interaction are a practical and valuable alternative to in-person settings.

What makes this assessment tool distinctive is that it treats asynchronous written interaction as a key part of the evaluation. Unlike live poster sessions, which often reward quick thinking and confident speaking, this approach focuses on sustained, text-based conversation. As a result, the Q&A becomes a lasting piece of academic work rather than a transient moment. It makes students' thinking visible and shows how they take in feedback, build evidence-based answers, and communicate effectively over time – skills that are increasingly important in today's digitally mediated workplaces. For instructors, this format also creates a permanent, searchable record of student engagement which facilitates fair and evidence-based grading.

Digital poster presentations can be applied across various educational contexts. Tertiary and higher education institutions can utilise digital poster presentations in task-based or project-based applications. Practitioners can also choose to use the task as a formative or summative assessment to diversify learner output, adding a third, visual, genre to oral and written production. Because of the micro skills embedded in the process (identification of key information, clear structuring, appropriate citation and style), digital poster presentations complement written assignment tasks. In designing a syllabus, instructors might choose to place the Poster Presentation Task after the research paper as summary of students' work or beforehand, to act as an outline of intent. Finally, decision-makers who support independent learning and learner agency may be interested in including digital poster presentations in their curricular assessment policies, since the task can be easily adopted by both content- and language-focused disciplines.

When incorporating the online Poster Presentation Task into a course, it is important to supply very clear guidelines for students to follow as well as an incentivising explanation of the rationale and purpose of the task. Robust support systems are key, with students having recourse to tutor feedback and guidance. There also need to be opportunities for ongoing peer assessment and reflection, which help guide and inspire the students and lead up to a thoughtful, well-informed Q&A – a key part of the task.

Future research may focus on an ethical and effective use of AI in poster formulation as well as developing the potential for multimedia interaction within a digital poster. Whichever format one chooses to deploy, via this assessment diversification, educators can create a more inclusive, engaging, and effective learning environment that prepares students for the multifaceted challenges of the academic and professional world.

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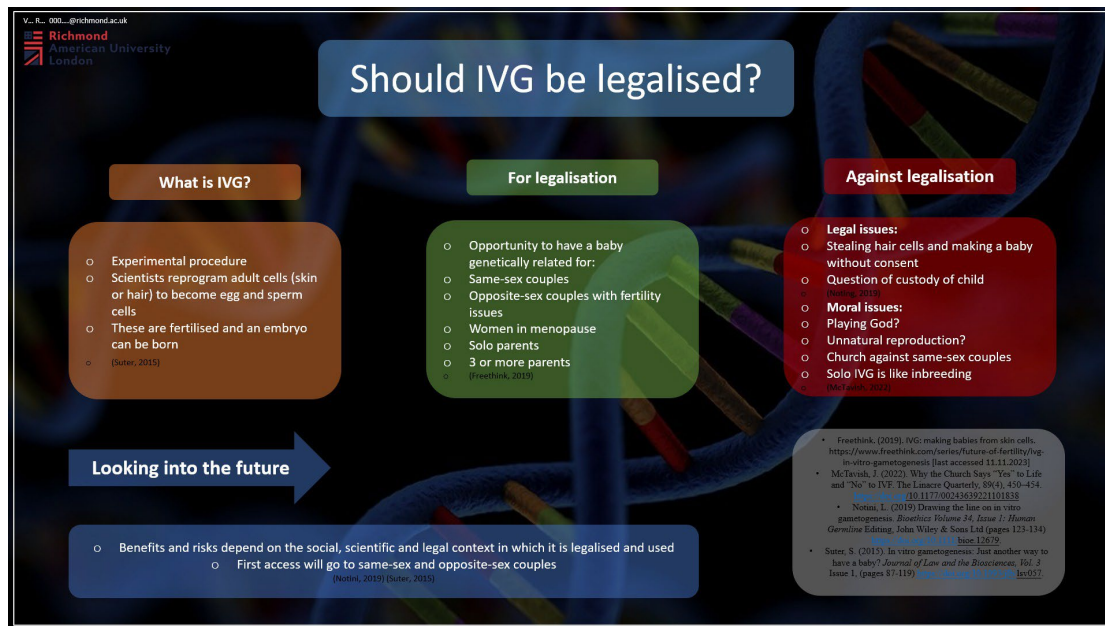
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Appendix

Sample 1a: Draft poster (created by student author VR)



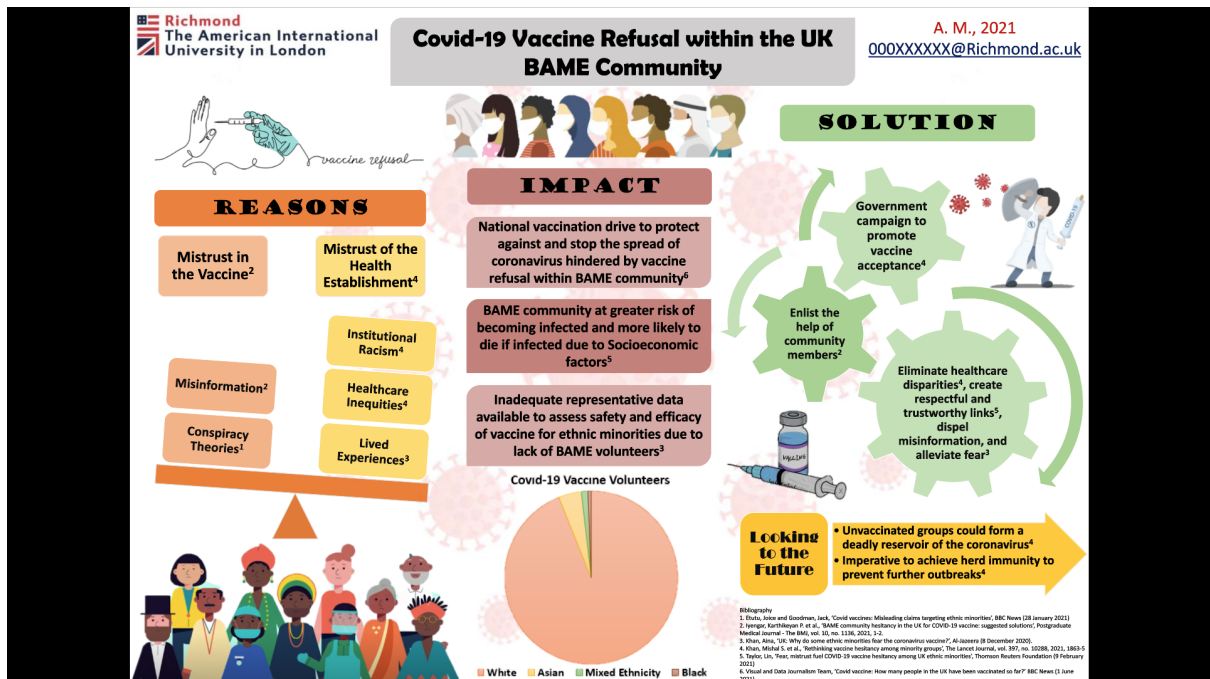
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Sample 1b: Final version after feedback and revision (created and revised by student author VR)



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Sample 2a: Final version (created by student author AM)



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Sample 2b: Q&A between student author (AM), two peers (Student A & Student B), and the tutor

Used with permission

Student A	Good poster AM, you really explained it well! 1. Do you have an estimate on how big the BAME community is right now? 2. With actions taken, have there been any improvements the last 6 months (or so) with vaccine refusal?
AM response	Thank you for your comment and your questions. :) 1. My research did not reveal the exact size of the BAME community population, it concentrated on relative difference which compares the quantities of the various ethnic backgrounds whilst taking into account their relative sizes. However, according to the 2011 consensus around 8.1 million people in the UK identified themselves as Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic. 2. The vaccination data does show that vaccination take-up among BAME community has increased since the beginning of the vaccination drive and this was a direct result of government and community campaigns that dispelled misinformation and alleviated fears. However, refusal rates are still comparatively higher than acceptance rates thus signifying that current campaigns are not enough and more tailored solutions are required.

Student B	Hi AM Great job on the poster. So my questions are 1. Is the BAME community still not planning to get the vaccine? 2. Is yes, how would that affect their lives- will they get fired from their jobs for example? 3. If they continue to refuse to get the vaccine, does that mean that the government would force them - will people from the BAME community go to jail if they refuse?
AM response	Thank you for your comments and questions. :) 1. Some members of the BAME community refused the vaccine, not the whole community in its entirety. The most current data on vaccination in the UK shows that although vaccine take-up in minority communities is higher than at the outset of the vaccine rollout, it is still significantly less in comparison to the white population. Only 68% of Black, 77% of mixed ethnicity, and 85% of South Asian population over the age of 50 have been vaccinated in comparison to 94% of white population. Therefore, vaccine refusal within the BAME community is still an ongoing controversy. 2. As the Covid-19 vaccine is not legally enforced in the UK, individuals should not be facing repercussions such as loss of employment for vaccine refusal. However, vaccine refusal can have far greater consequences than loss of employment. Experts have speculated that due to socioeconomic factors the BAME community is at greater risk of becoming infected and are more likely to die if infected, therefore in refusing the vaccine, not only are individuals endangering their own lives, they are also endangering the lives of others around them as they will not have the antibodies needed to fight the virus, that the vaccine provides, and thus facilitate its spread. 3. As mentioned in my previous answer, vaccination take-up in the UK is voluntary at the moment, it is not a legal requirement. UK citizens have the right to refuse any vaccines and cannot be penalised for doing so. Although not a certainty, it is highly unlikely that this law will change in the future.

Tutor	1. Why did you select these particular sources? 2. What difficulties did you encounter when formulating the Poster, and how did you overcome them?
AM response	1. The sources I reviewed for my paper were selected first because of their direct relevance to my research topic and second for the credibility of the publication. I chose articles with titles that directly addressed my research questions, and after a cursory read of the article I felt the content was relevant and useful. Subsequently, I looked at the publication and opted for reputed and quality media publications, such as BBC News, and prestigious medical journals, such as The BMJ. Trustworthy sources written by experienced

	journalists and medical experts were chosen to ensure reliability of the facts and data. 2. Creating the poster was rather more enjoyable than I had assumed it would be as I had all the information but needed to think creatively about how to present the key ideas in an artistic and appealing format. This involved a lot of experimentation and playing around with PowerPoint software during which I learned many new tricks. The pictures I used had backgrounds that were irrelevant or conflicted with the colour scheme of my poster so I researched and found out how to remove the background and adjust the colour of the picture to match. I was also greatly assisted by my peers and instructor who provided perceptive feedback on my draft with suggestions on how to make improvements, such as changing the colour of my text to make it more prominent and easier to read and changing the layout and colour of my text boxes to make the poster appear less busy and easier to follow. Additionally, I struggled find a way to reference my work in line with the Chicago in text referencing style as PowerPoint does not accommodate footnotes, but was once again aided by my instructor who suggested using superscript in lieu of footnote.
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