

Plus One – Offering Varied Participation Opportunities for Inclusivity

Title

Offering Varied Participation Opportunities for Inclusivity

Brief description

This Plus One addresses the different degrees of confidence or anxiety, learning preferences and personality traits in the student cohort around class participation.

Varying the methods of providing for participation marking allows students to participate in different ways than speaking aloud in class which many students find difficult. Non-traditional ways of participating might include commenting on content or answering questions as a written or visual response either electronically or on paper. Students can work together on this in a group or individually, with the latter allowing for imbalances that might occur due to group dynamics.

Participation in class can also be encouraged by creating a good atmosphere in the class before presentation exercises have to be done. This creates a more comfortable environment for all students. In turn, presenting to the lecturer alone can also be offered if students are anxious about speaking up in front of the class.

Self-assessment forms are also useful, especially if completed in class at the final lecture of the semester and being mindful of gender and cultural differences here.



Mapping to UDL Principles



Engagement

- Provides students with alternative modes of participation
- Group approaches to participation can foster collaboration
- Creating a good atmosphere in class helps to build a sense of community within the learning setting.



Representation

- Allowing for a variety of ways to participate in class means that all students develop their discipline specific language which is fundamental to their learning.



Action and Expression

- Offering multiple options enables students to manage their participation in a manner that optimises their learning
- Participation can be developed gradually across a module and programme from low risk to greater involvement allowing for gradually building capacity and performance.

Three ways this Plus One helps students

Students can

1. gradually become more comfortable contributing in class
2. focus on their learning and enjoy reduced stress as participation grading is not based on one criterion – speaking aloud in class
3. be encouraged to participate in a manner that suits them, individually and in small groups, allowing them to play to their strengths.

Key considerations for enactment

Risk

Low

Time

Moderate at outset because of the integration of variety regarding participation but becomes lower over time.

Technology

Standard tools.

Other

It is important that the options chosen will support students to engage in class. You could start by adding one low risk option first time round and building on that. You may find that some of your options remain relevant for long periods while others may need to be reviewed depending on the content and on the group.

Further information

See [CAST UDL Guidelines](#) and [Maynooth University Plus One resources](#).

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