

## Fostering Students' Engagement with Historical Issues Surrounding the Field of Graphic Design

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**Abstract :** The aim of this study is to explore the potential of inclusive learning and assessment strategies to foster students' engagement with historical debates surrounding the field of graphic design. The goal is to respond to the diversity of L4 Graphic Design students, at Nottingham Trent University, in a way that instead of 'lowering standards' can benefit everyone. This research tests, measures, and evaluates the impact of a specific intervention, an assessment task, to develop students' critical visual analysis skills and stimulate a deeper engagement with the subject matter. Within the action research approach, this work has followed a case study research method to understand students' views and perceptions of a specific project. The primary methods of data collection have been: anonymous electronic questionnaire and a paper-based anonymous critical incident questionnaire. NTU College of Business Law and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee granted the Ethical approval for this research in November 2019. Other methods used to evaluate the impact of this assessment task have been Evasys's report and students' performance. In line with the constructivist paradigm, this study embraces an interpretative and contextualized analysis of the collected data within the triangulation analytical framework. The evaluation of both qualitative and quantitative data demonstrates that active learning strategies and the disruption of thinking patterns can foster greater students' engagement and can lead to meaningful learning.

**Keywords :** active learning, assessment for learning, graphic design, higher education, student engagement

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