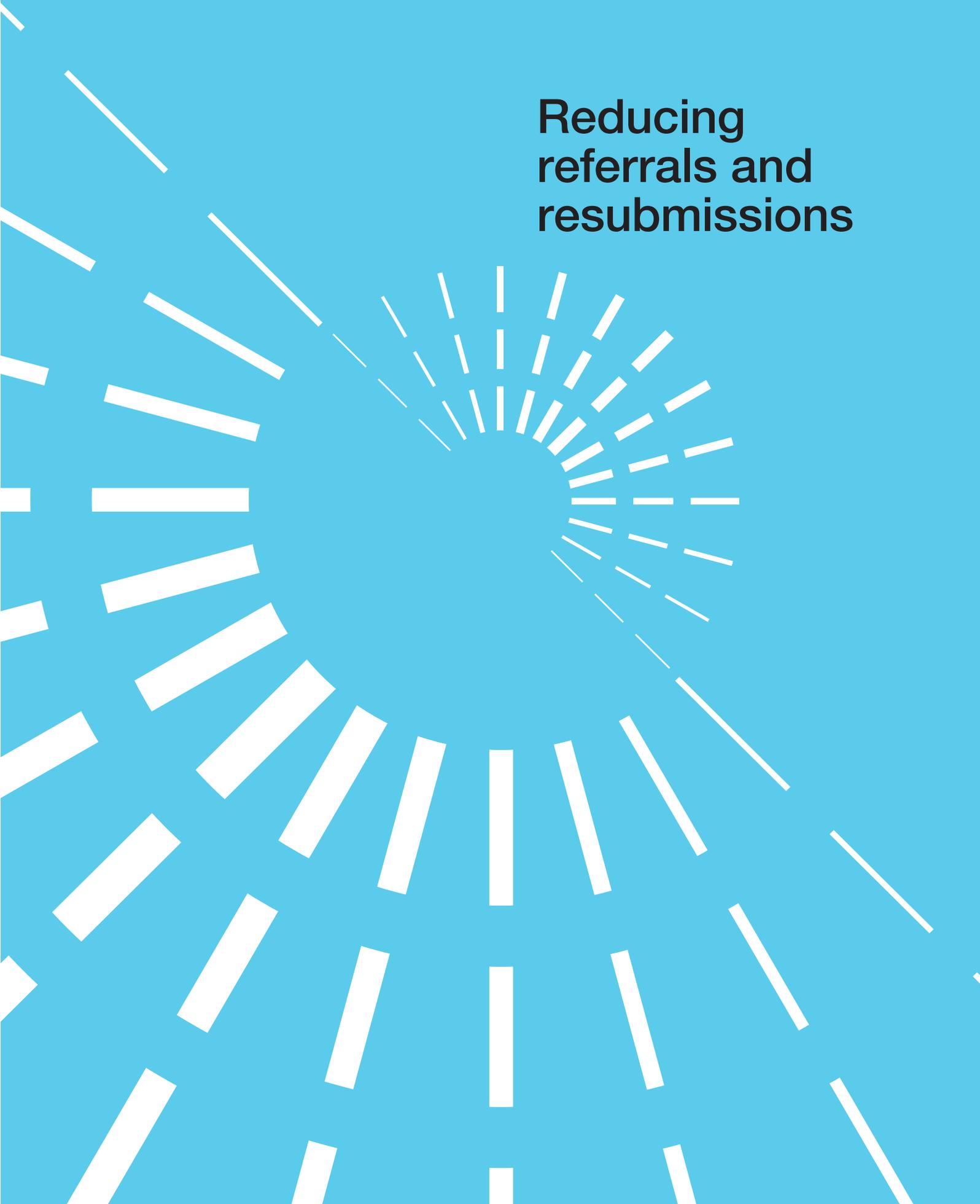# ual:

Reducing referrals and resubmissions

Reducing referrals and resubmissions: using Make the Grade

Why use this tool?

Make the Grade is an intervention which aims to increase attainment and reduce the likelihood of referrals and resubmissions from students. It directly addresses common reasons for students losing marks on unit assignments; forgetting straightforward elements of their assignments and not understanding the marking criteria.

How should it be used?

This is a tool that can be woven into all units, but you may wish to initially trial it on a unit where you are concerned about attainment or referral rates. For the first time, you may wish to implement this intervention collaboratively with your College AEM Lead.

" It helped me to see the biggest difference was made to my understanding of teaching. We had very positive reactions from students, that actually genuinely filtered down into attainment figures.
Course tutor

" It helped me to see the brief/unit handbook from a student perspective as well as questioning the brief. Is it clear enough?
Course tutor

This tool has been developed by Terry Finnigan, drawing on the work of the University of Derby PReSS pack

Step 1: Unpack the assignment

Meet with the core unit team before the unit begins to unpack the assignment and learning outcomes. This could be during a team meeting, a quick lunchtime catch-up, or even an away day. If unit tutors are unable to attend, you could gather feedback over email. As a team, reflect on the following questions:

a What do you think are the two most difficult aspects of this assignment for students?

b What tends to bring their grades down?

c What do you find yourself having to say repeatedly in your discussions with students about this assignment?

d What are the two/three most frequent points you find yourself making when giving feedback?

e What aspects of this assignment do you find that students tend to overlook/omit when doing this assignment?

f How can a student excel in this assignment?

g Can you say in a very straightforward way, what will make the finished work an A?

Consider which concepts are repeatedly mentioned.

Step 2: Build a checklist

Create a checklist that students can tick off before they submit their work (refer to the indicative example opposite). This should be based on the teaching teams' responses to the above questions, in addition to unpacking the learning outcomes and assignment brief. It is useful to re-read your unit handbook at this point. There is no one way to create the checklist; it is important that it works for you and your students.

Step 3: Run a Make the Grade workshop

Run a student workshop (c. 1 hour), at least 3 weeks prior to the submission deadline so students can assess how far they've come and how much they still need to do. Find an existing timetabled slot, ideally ahead of a key tutorial point. All teaching staff for the unit would ideally be present within the session. It is worthwhile:

a Reviewing the project brief.

b Checking understanding of the assessment by unpacking the checklist and use of exemplars.

c Facilitating anonymous student questions e.g. via post-it notes or Mentimeter.com, and addressing any misconceptions in the room.

Post the checklist on Moodle. You may also find it useful to provide the checklist to the marking team, to assist with assessment parity. This leads to greater parity of marking.

Example:
Student submission checklist
(create your own)

HAVE YOU READ THE UNIT HANDBOOK? IF NOT, DO IT NOW! In it you will find details of what you are expected to submit, the assessment criteria your work is marked against, and the learning outcomes. Students often lose marks by forgetting some of the more straightforward elements of their assignments. We recommend that you "tick off" each of the points below as you prepare your work for submission.

Have you completed all the assessment requirements?

- [ ] a portfolio of supportive materials
- [ ] a 2D and 3D body of work

Have you completed within the portfolio of supportive materials?

- [ ] continued research and analysis?
- [ ] final designs: a minimum of 2 characters based on your concept and design development proposal?
- [ ] technical process development and testing?
- [ ] reflective statement (500 words)?

Have you completed, within the 2D and 3D body of work?

- [ ] realisation in performance context: 90 second video and/or series of a minimum of 6 x photographs?
- [ ] presented one of your two characters in a 3 hour period?

Research and analysis

- [ ] Have you made connections with prior research undertaken within the previous unit 'Concept and Design Development'?
- [ ] Have you considered design ideas in depth and questioned them?
- [ ] Is there a clear personal hypothesis?
- [ ] Have you documented your understanding of innovation?
- [ ] Have you identified your performance narrative?

The final designs

- [ ] Have you designed and realised a minimum of 2 characters?
- [ ] Have you moved on designs from the previous unit?
- [ ] Have you supported changes to designs with technical /conceptual justification?
- [ ] Have you shown evidence of testing and experimentation developing the design?
- [ ] Have you created colour technical detailed drawings of exact hair and make-up application?
- [ ] Have you shown a 360 view of your design?
- [ ] Have you considered the audience within your design?
- [ ] Have you considered the performer in your design?
- [ ] Are your designs anatomically correct and have the right proportions?

The technical process

- [ ] Have you shown evidence of the development of technical processes?
- [ ] Have you included examples of experimentation and testing?
- [ ] Have you shown evidence of complying with industry practice?
- [ ] Have you included proof of your application tests?

The reflective statement (500 words)

- [ ] Have you reflected on the overall process of the project?
- [ ] Have you identified your strengths and challenges through the project?
- [ ] Have you considered how you may do some of this differently next time?

Overall

- [ ] Is it clear how your work links to design research, design development ideas and the technical process?
- [ ] Is there coherency and consistency throughout the work?
- [ ] Is there evidence of experimentation and risk taking at each stage of the process?
- [ ] Does it show an organised and methodical approach and make sense?

Notes

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List of resources:

- University of Derby (n.d.) *Practical Recipes for Student Success* (PReSS). Available at: **https://uodpress.wordpress.com**

- Neville, C. (2009). *How to improve your assignment results*. Berkshire: OUP.

- Steventon, G., Cureton, D. and Clouder, C. (2016) A*ttainment in Higher Education; Issues, Controversies and Debates*. Oxon: Routledge.

- Stevenson, J. (2012) *Black and Minority Ethnic Student Retention and Attainment*. Available at: **https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/ bme_summit_final_report.pdf**

- *Inclusive Attainment Case Study: Make the Grade,* available at: **https://www.arts. ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0023/19391/ Incl_Attainment_Case_study_make_the_ grade_PDF_410KB.pdf**

Academic Enhancement Model Toolbox

Reducing referrals and resubmissions is one of a series of worksheets brought together by the Academic Enhancement Model (AEM) team, part of the UAL Teaching and Learning Exchange. The current series includes:

• Creating inclusive briefs
• De-biasing strategies
• Eliminating inequality in formative assessment
• Internationalising the curriculum
• Reducing referrals and resubmissions
• Rethinking industry engagement

To request digital versions of the worksheets email **AEMsupport@arts.ac.uk**

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