



Speaking the Studio

Action Research Project

Mihali Intziegianni - Photography Specialist Technician

Who am I

Mihali Intziegiani

Photographer/ Artist

Cat father of two

London College of Fashion

Specialist Technician + Visiting Practitioner

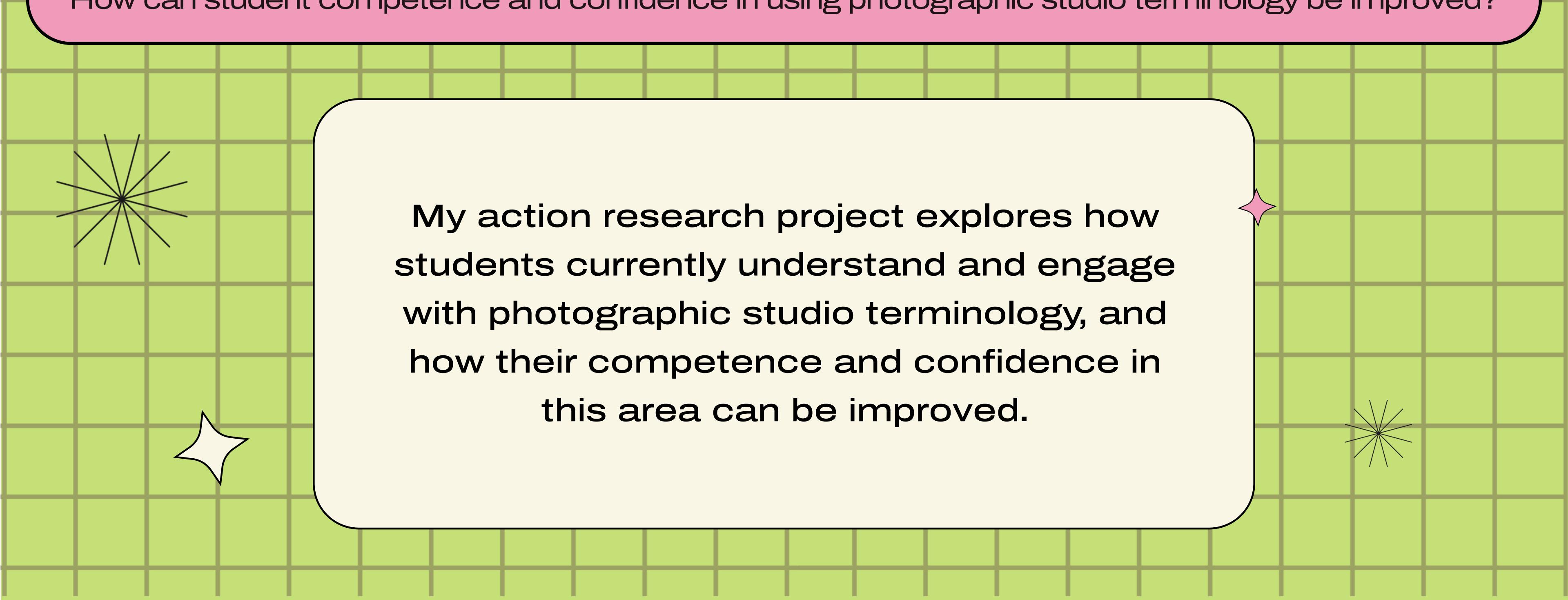




Speaking the Studio:

Exploring Gaps in Student Understanding of Photographic Studio Language

How can student competence and confidence in using photographic studio terminology be improved?



A light green background with a grid pattern of darker green lines. There are three decorative starburst shapes: one in the top left corner, one in the bottom left corner, and one in the middle right side of the slide.

My action research project explores how students currently understand and engage with photographic studio terminology, and how their competence and confidence in this area can be improved.

Context...

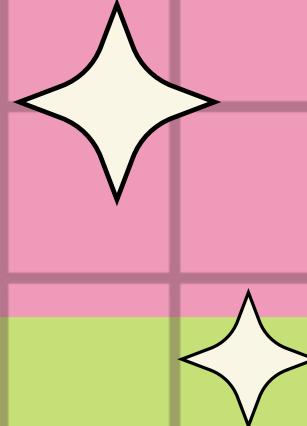
- Teaching for 4 years now!
- I teach students across a variety of Fashion Media and Communication courses.
- Deliver a **wide range** of technical workshops.
- IP Unit Intervention: I developed an **Inclusive Toolkit for Photography Workshops** focusing on student accessibility and engagement.

Context...

Things I quickly discovered

- Technical workshops rely heavily on specialist terminology
- Students enter with **mixed** cultural, linguistic and technical backgrounds
- Language identified as an **invisible barrier** to learning
- **Assumed knowledge** can limit participation, engagement and confidence

INTERACTIVE GLOSSARY APP



RESET

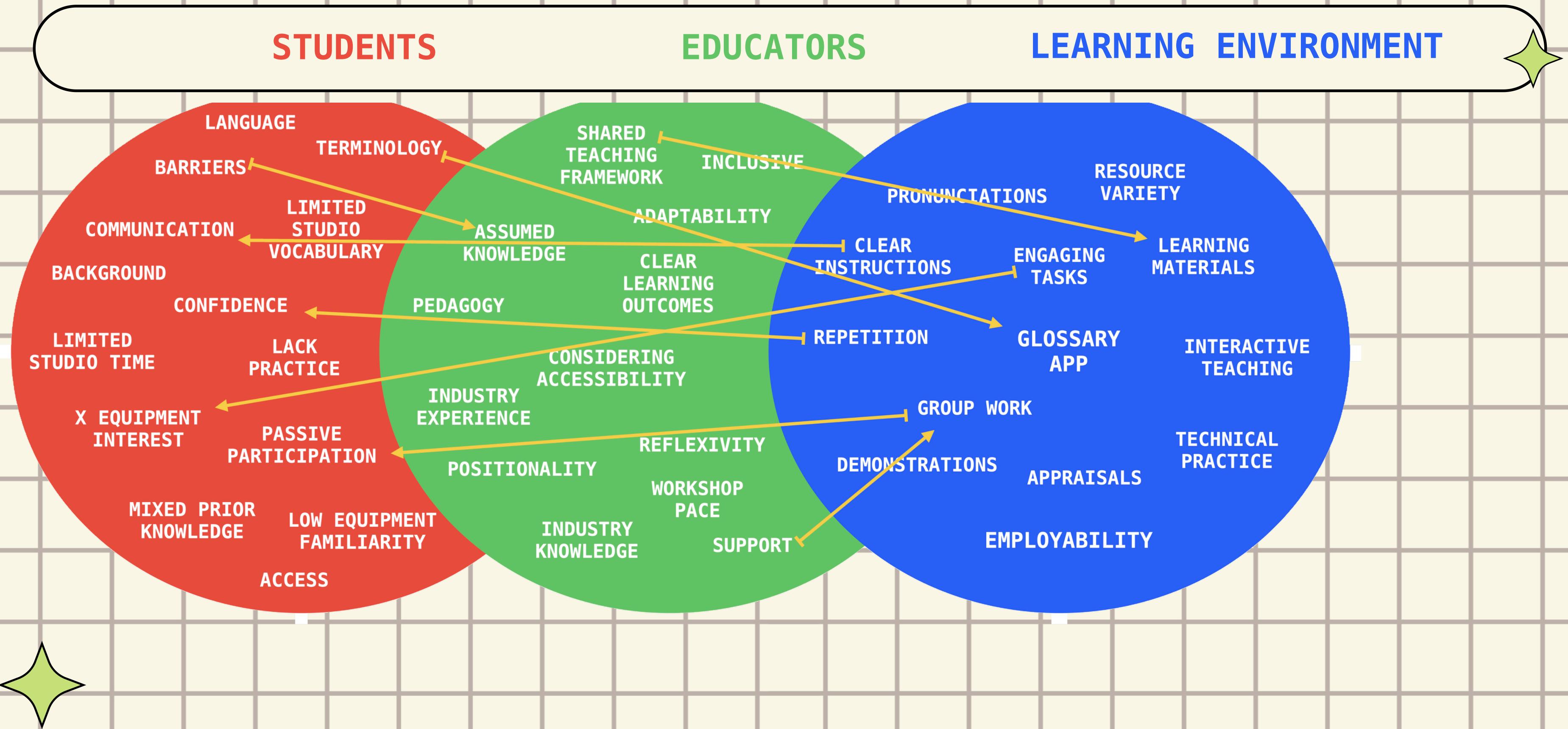
WHAT DON'T I KNOW?

RESEARCH + REFOCUS

Rationale

- Studio terminology directly affects **confidence, communication, and participation** in photographic learning environments.
- **MA Fashion Photography** students were the focus due to their extensive studio use, diverse backgrounds, and the expectation of professional-level technical language.
- Improving shared technical language could support **teaching consistency and confident, independent studio practice** for students.

My RGB mind-map



Research Methods

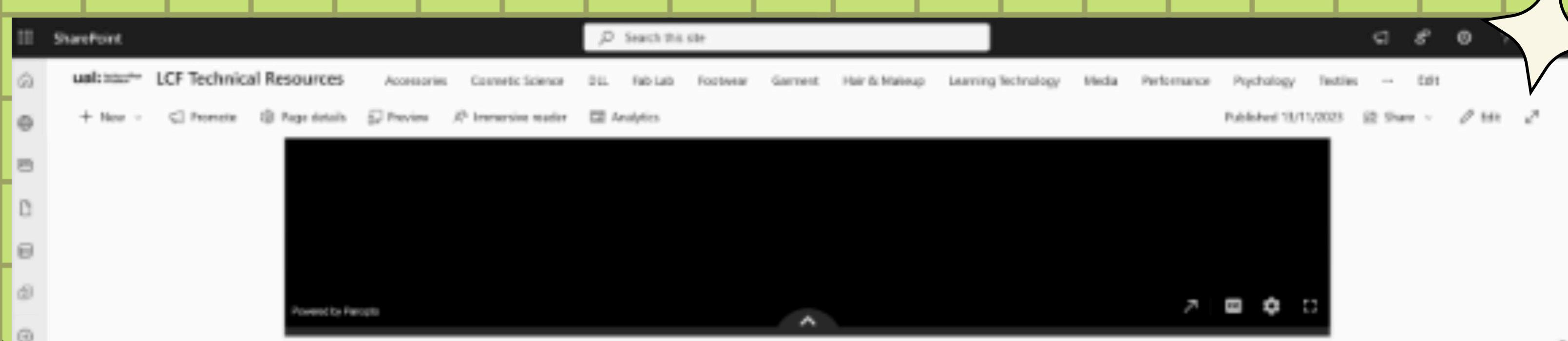
DATA FROM RESOURCES

DATA FROM BOOKINGS

QUESTIONNAIRES

COLLABORATION

Resources



SharePoint

Search this site

LCF Technical Resources

Accessories Cosmetic Science D&L Fab Lab Footwear Garment Hair & Makeup Learning Technology Media Performance Psychology Textiles

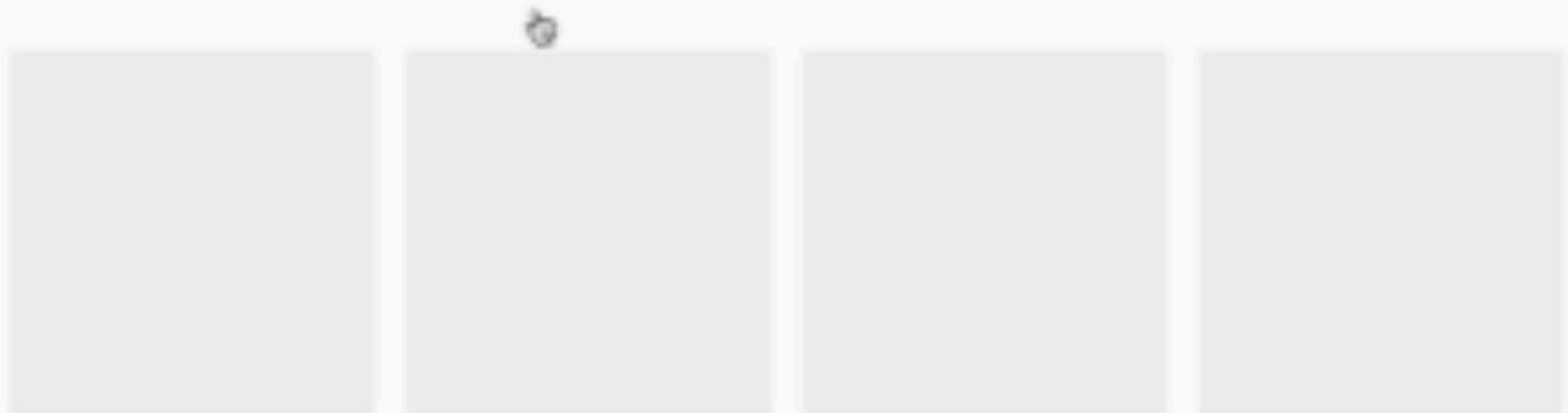
+ New Promote Page details Preview Immersive reader Analytics

Published 10/11/2023 Share Edit

Powered by Percept

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Butterfly Lighting References



Resources

- LCFTech pages active since **2019**.
- Most photography related pages published by **2021**.
- Extremely low engagement!
- Almost all resources have similar if less

Total

Views

40

10

8

6

2

0

Last 90 days

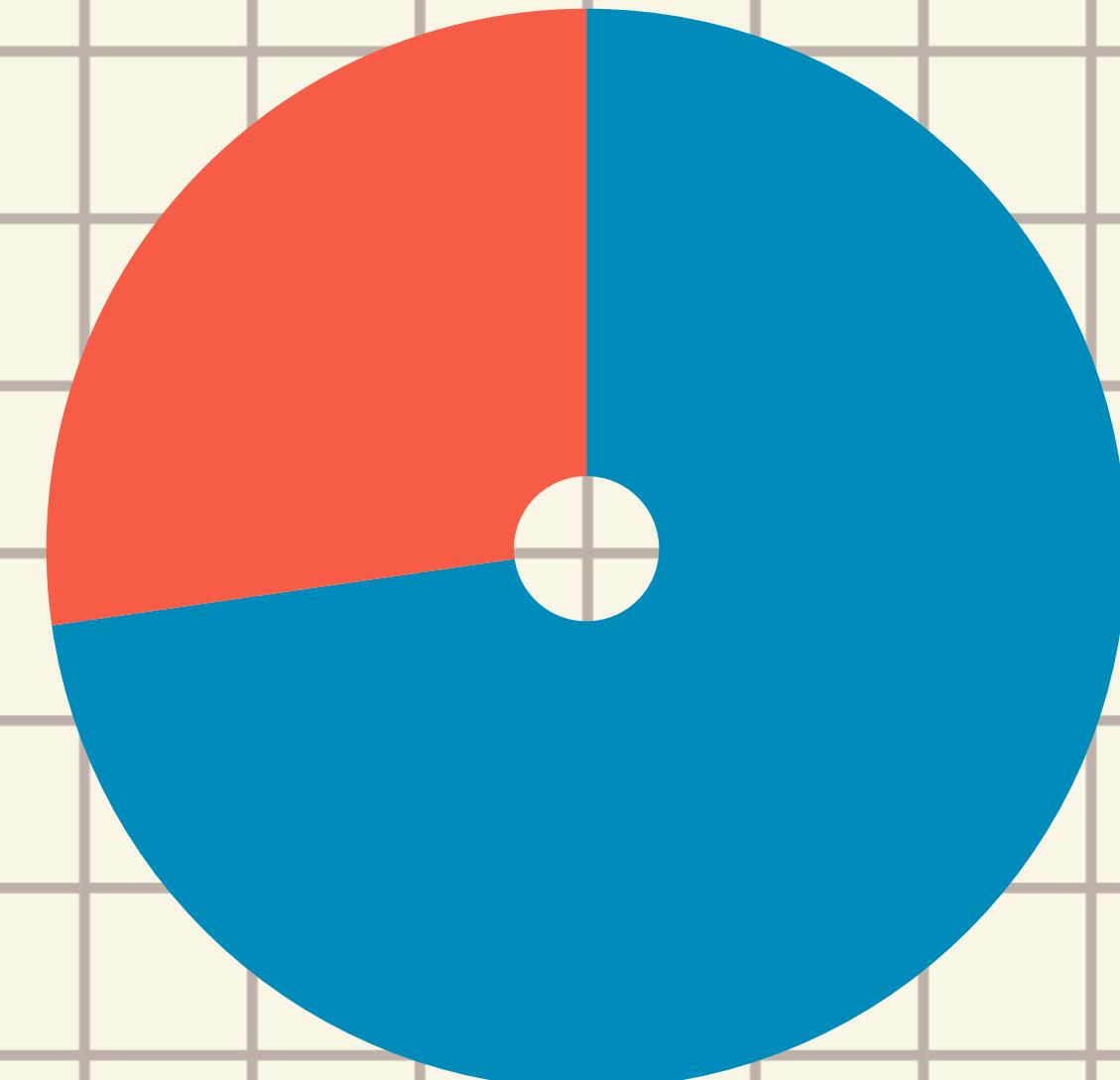
603 All time

11/10/25 11/24/25 12/8/25 12/22/25 1/5/26 1/19/26

Introduction to Photography Lighting Technical Resource Page Views

Bookings

- A 1/4 of students have **not used** the studios so far.
- Bookings on ORB have been **slow**, especially for MA students.
- Equipment bookings have been **steady** throughout.
- Studios and studio related equipment bookings have been **consistent**.



■ **completed (24)**
■ **not completed (9)**

Building the questionnaires

- Choosing my research audience
- Respond to what I was already seeing in the workshops
- Open to suggestions and solutions
- Focus on access, not deficits (learning and support, rather than testing knowledge)
- Ethical considerations
- Encourage Reflection

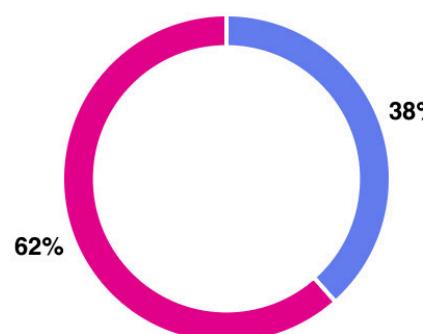


Quantitative + Qualitative questions

- Confidence scales for studio equipment and terminology
- Image-based questions
- Multiple-choice questions
- Open-ended questions

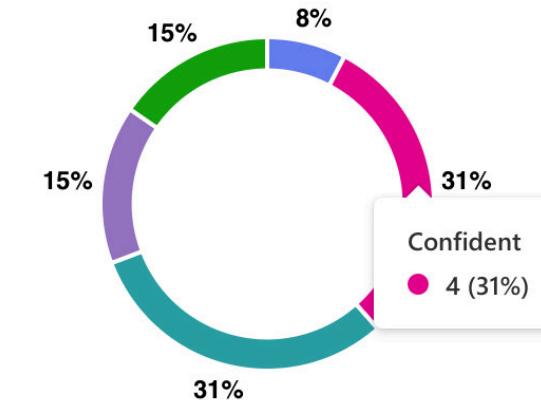
Student Questionnaire findings

3. Is English your first language?



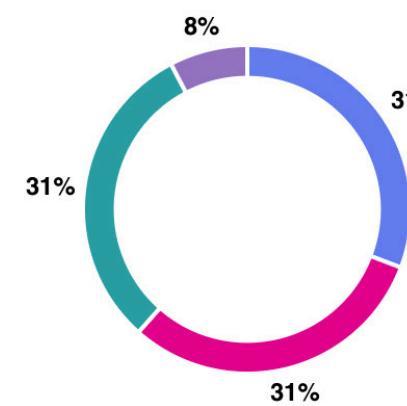
[More details](#)

8. How confident do you feel using or recognising studio terminology?



[More details](#)

5. Describe your previous experience with photography or studio work before joining the course:

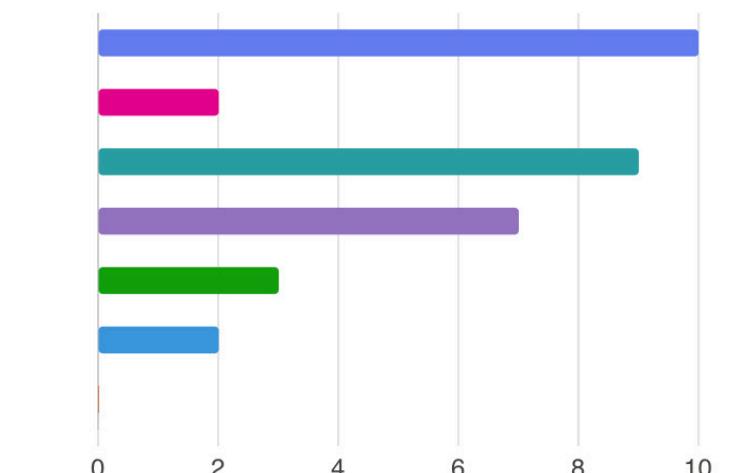


[More details](#)

15. What do you find the most challenging about learning studio terminology? (tick all that apply)

[More details](#)

- Remembering unfamiliar words 10
- English not being my first language 2
- Too many new terms introduced at once 9
- Not enough time to practice 7
- I feel nervous asking questions 3
- Terminology differs from what I learned previously 2
- Other 0

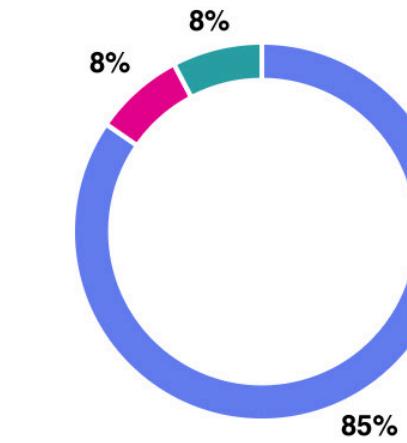


Student Questionnaire findings

18. Would a centralised glossary help you feel more confident in the studio?

[More details](#)

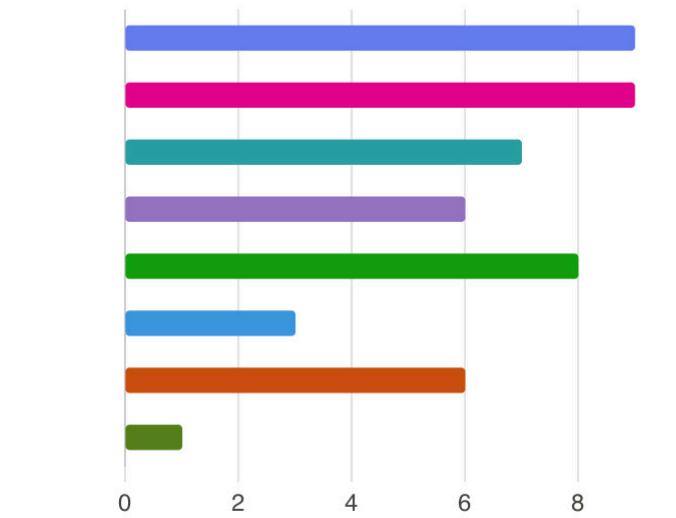
- Yes 11
- Maybe 1
- Not sure 1
- Probably not 0
- No 0



16. What forms of support would help you learn studio terminology more effectively? (tick all that apply)

[More details](#)

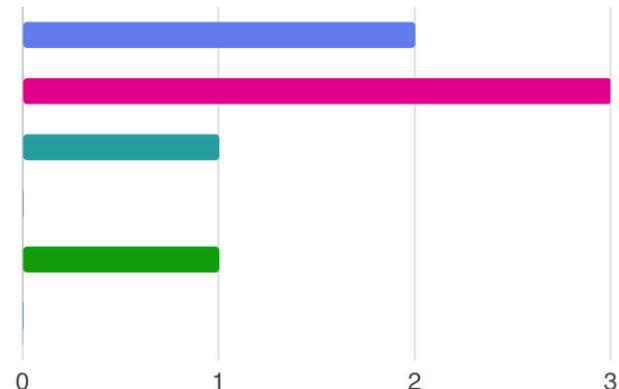
- Demonsntrations by technicians 9
- Visual guides with images 9
- Printed sheets or reference cards 7
- Short video explanations 6
- A glossary (digital or printed) 8
- Peer learning 3
- Independent practice time 6
- Other 1



Technician Questionnaire findings

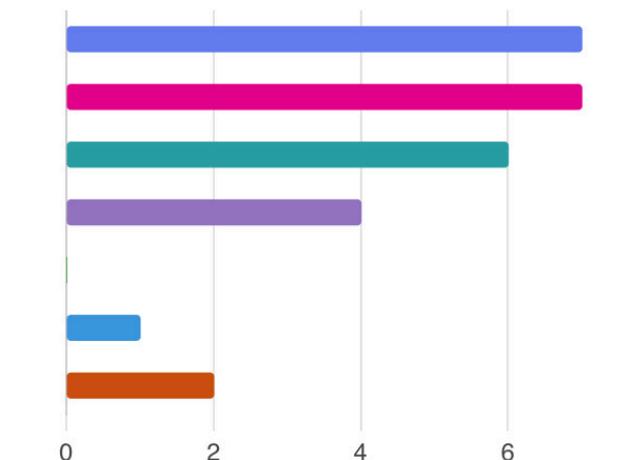
2. What is your role?

- Specialist Technician 2
- Support Technician 3
- Technical Coordinator 1
- Associate Lecturer 0
- Visiting Practitioner 1
- Other 0

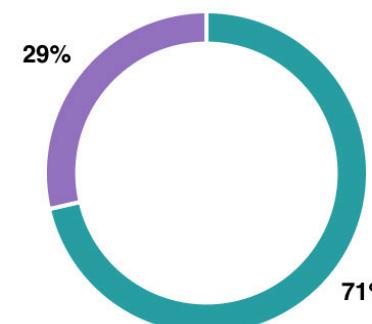
[More details](#)

6. What patterns or challenges do you notice among students learning studio equipment? (tick all that apply)

- Variation in prior knowledge 7
- Lack of hands-on experience 7
- Confidence barriers 6
- English language barriers 4
- Difficulty remembering names 0
- Students rely more on peers than staff 1
- Other 2

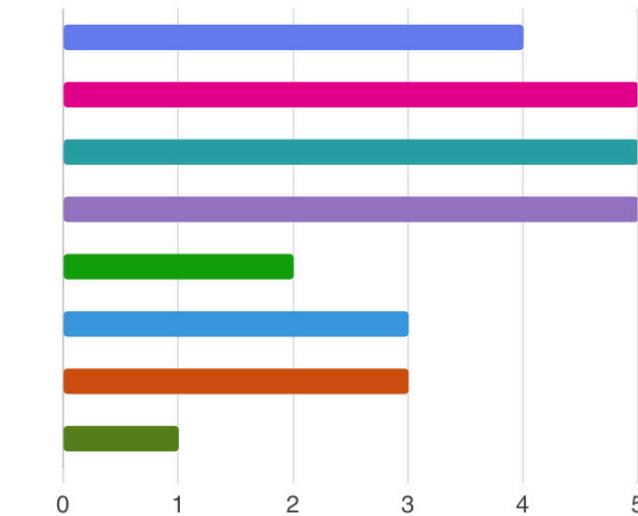
[More details](#)

4. In your experience, how familiar do students tend to be with studio terminology at the start of their studies?

[More details](#)

14. What types of resources do you think would best support students' understanding of studio terminology? (maximum 4)

- Visual guides or posters 4
- In-class repetition 5
- A centralised glossary (digital or printed) 5
- More hands-on demonstrations 5
- Short video demonstrations 2
- Equipment labels 3
- Peer learning systems (e.g. pair work, group tasks) 3
- Other 1

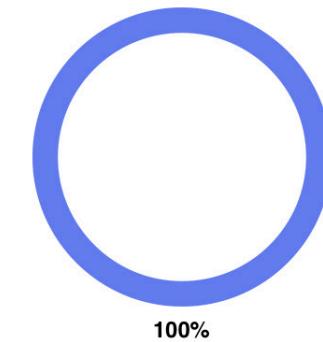
[More details](#)

Technician Questionnaire findings

15. Do you think students would benefit from a shared glossary?

- Yes 7
- Maybe 0
- Not sure 0
- Probably not 0
- No 0

[More details](#)



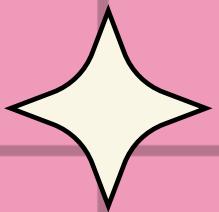
17. Any final thoughts on how students could be better supported?

7 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Perhaps the terminology used on ORB could be better matched to the terminology used outside LCF
2	anonymous	introduction at the beginning of the course to teach them the absolute basics so they get off to the right foot - make it clear to students that they shouldn't be embarrassed to not know and they are welcome to ask if they need clarification
3	anonymous	demystifying technical language and encouraging students to use knowledge learnt in class to solidify.
4	anonymous	encourage students to apply the glossary throughout when they work on either group task or project
5	anonymous	Hands-on practice would help a lot. For example, workshops where students can recreate lighting setups or reference images would build both confidence and technical understanding. More chances to handle the equipment early on would also make the terminology and concepts feel much more intuitive. Overall, giving students more guided, practical time with the tools they'll use in their projects would really strengthen their skills.
6	anonymous	No
7	anonymous	I think they should be encouraged to shoot as much as possible. I think the more they use the equipment; the more it will come as second nature to them. They will also see the practical application of the equipment in context, which I think helps make that item less abstract in their mind. I think using the equipment in a hands on way, is the best way.

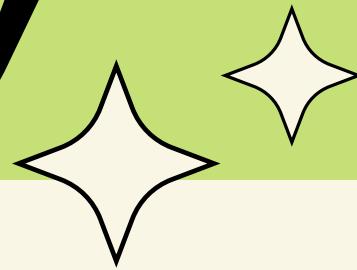
Participants: 7/30

what now?



- Action Research shared with the department.
- Ongoing departmental investigation into studio accessibility across the college.
- Further refinement of Async resources.
- Introduction of a 'keywords' section across all Async resource pages.
- Implementation of interactive glossary activities within workshops.
- Embedding Supervised Studio sessions.
- Evaluation of impact through student feedback and observation.

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