

# House Keeping

- Follow the slides on a second device/screen using the code at the top of your screen
- Heart if I make you laugh (Cats for KtD)
- Thumbs up if it is interesting
- Thumbs down if you can't hear me
- Questions in the chat please
- You will need somewhere to take notes



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**A**tttributes  
**A**spirations







**Creating and embedding personas into a digital curriculum to improve diversity and inclusion**







# Learning Outcomes

- The AA avatars, their creation and deployment
- How to develop your own avatars
- Ideas for deployment in other scenarios
- How these 'Avatars' can increase inclusion and diversity







Focus on  
Your Future



## What is AA?

- AA is a non-credit bearing short course
- Supports students to decide on, and plan for their professional future
- Specially designed for student in Postgraduate Medicine
- Working on versions for other faculties





# What does inclusion mean to you?

Take a second to think about that – and write it down.





“Widening participation in medicine in the UK can be seen as actively recruiting under-represented students into a system in which they are likely to face discrimination, harassment, and systematic educational disadvantage.”



“the intersections of race and gender only highlights the need to account for multiple grounds of identity when considering how the social world is constructed.”





“significant benefit is derived from the presence of people who identify as LGBTQ+ . Not by explicit teaching, but by the inherent challenge to homophobia their inclusion facilitates”







Imperial College Council





# Are we diverse?







Scientist



Careers consultant



Teacher/learning designer



Linguist/project manager



Project manager





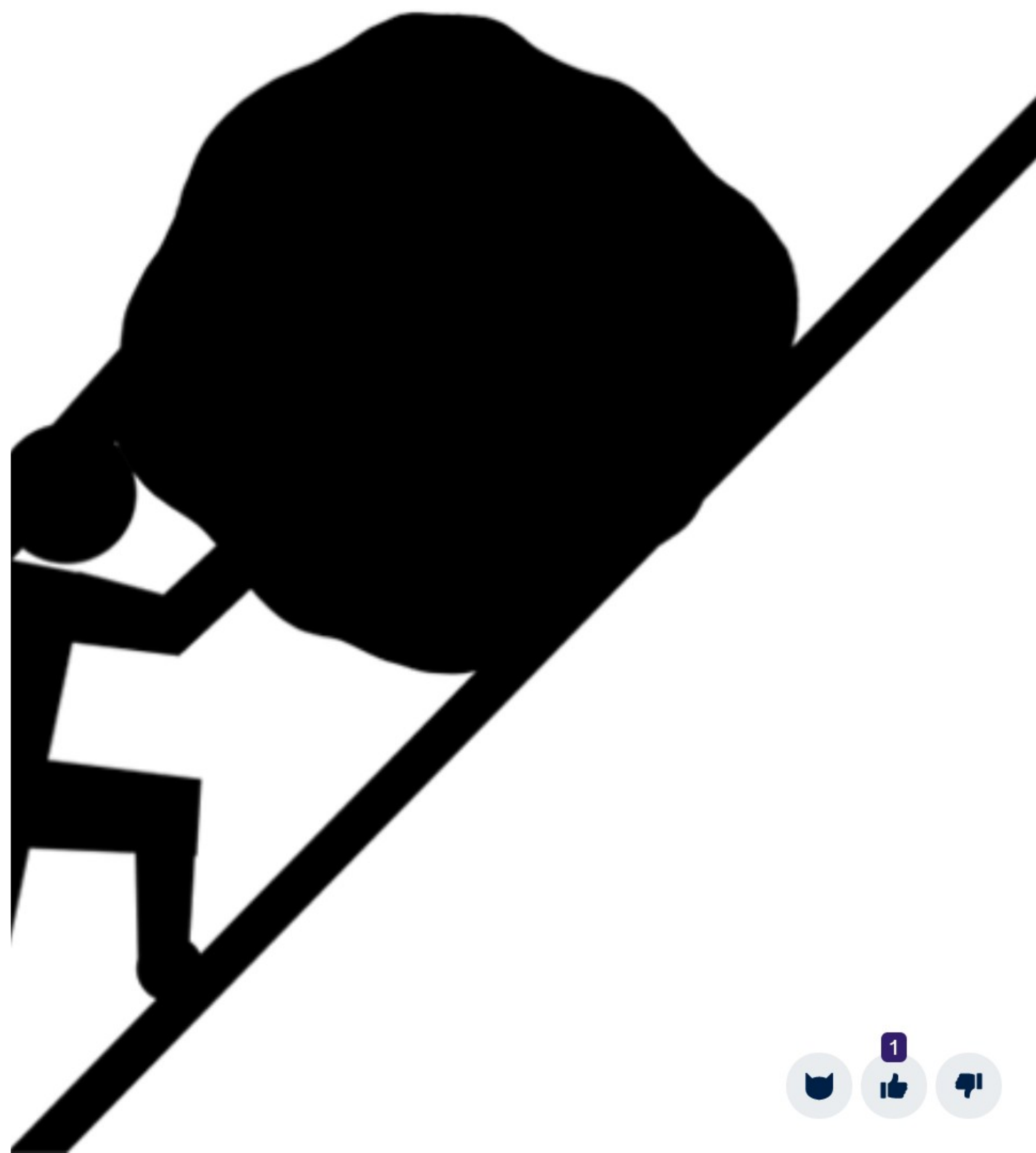
# AWKWARD!

That was not a comfortable question to answer was it?

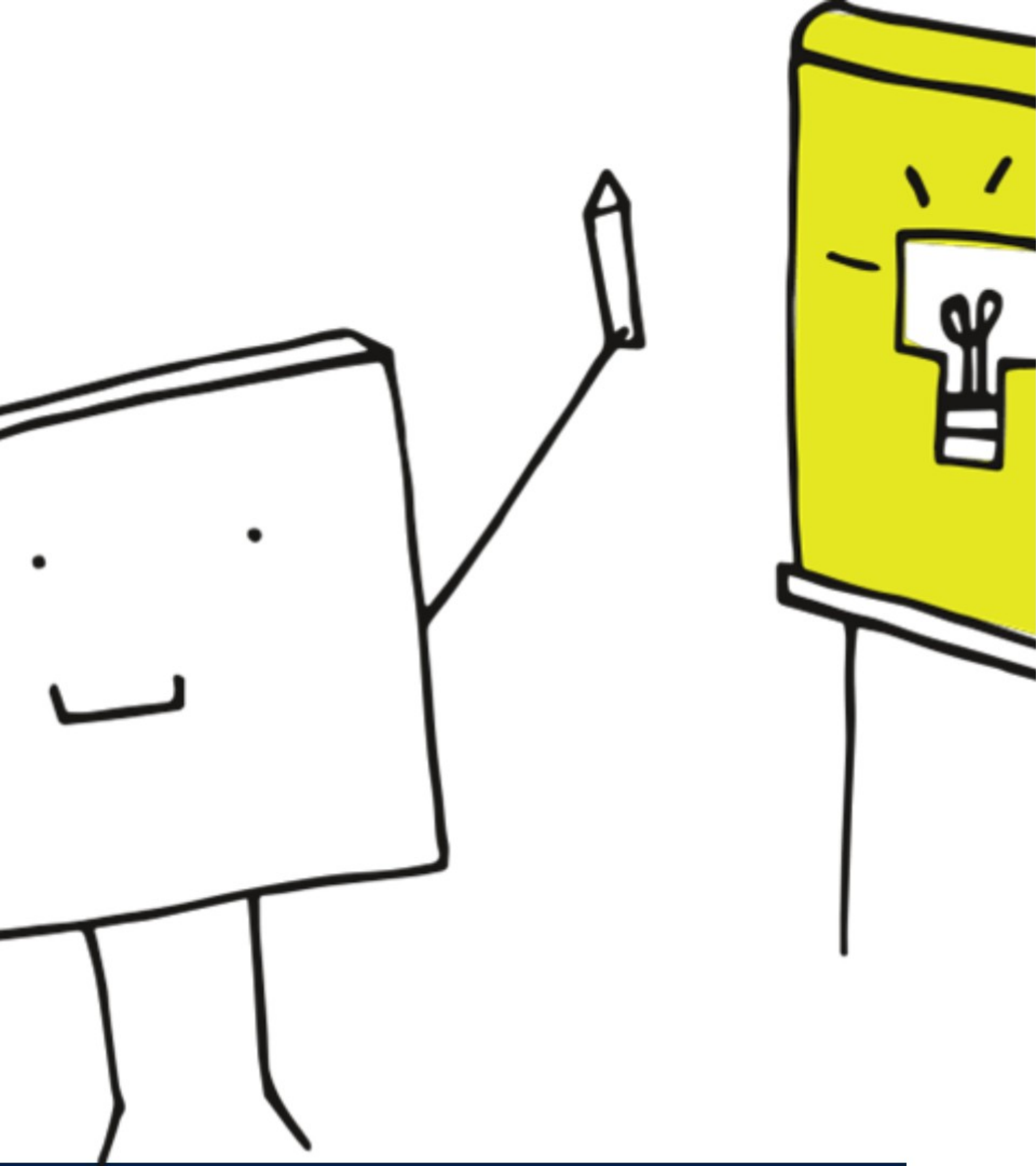


# We can't change any of this

- Most of us have limited ability to affect change at a high level
- But we can check our privilege







**We can change the  
content we deliver**



# What is a persona?

- Typical in UX design
- Based on existing users and how they interact
- Context specific







## Student diversity at Imperial

- Total student body – 40% female : 60% male
- Postgraduate medicine – 64% female : 36% male
- Nationality
- Total student body – 34% UK : 16% Chinese
- Postgraduate medicine – 50% UK : 12% Chinese (87 countries represented)



# Is this enough data to make decisions?



0  
yes

11  
no



# What diversity should be included?

Other genders!

All 9 protected characteristics

Socio-economic

First v Second language

Class, first generation HE attendees,  
race, differing genders and binaries

Disabilities

Special educational needs e.  
Disability

Neurodivergence

Diverse races and nationalities

# What diversity should be included?

First generation 3rd level

Ethnicity and ethnicity that they  
relate to

Level of digital competences(?)





## Your Avatar

- How old are they?
- What course are they studying? (PG, UG, FT, PT)
- Where are they? Online, face-to-face, blended, on campus, commuting, workplace based etc
- Family situation - just left home, first in family, caring responsibilities, international



# Persona development

This is where we started from:  
Who are they – age, background, etc

Goals

Frustrations

Motivations

Expectations

Preferences

<b>BIO:</b> <b>Name:</b> Alan <b>Age:</b> 22/23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Alan "thinks" he wants to study for a PhD.</li><li>He particularly enjoys his subject matter and is academically inclined.</li><li>Beyond studying for a PhD, Alan has no concrete ideas of other options that may be available to him.</li><li>Alan moved directly from UG study to a MRes at the University of Essex but was unsatisfied with course so has transferred to IC.</li><li>Alan is both excited and anxious about joining IC.</li><li>Some days Alan is fully confident in his decision making about his future path but on other days, much less so.</li><li>There is a potential risk of difficulties with research requirements becoming overbearing and anxiety inducing.</li></ul>																			
<b>GOALS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To achieve a PhD – but no goals beyond that.</li></ul>	<b>FRUSTRATIONS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>That he has "wasted time" studying an MRes at University of Essex</li><li>Funding challenges</li><li>Lack of time</li></ul>																		
<b>MOTIVATIONS:</b> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th></th><th>LOW</th><th>HIGH</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Incentive</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>Fear</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr><tr><td>Growth</td><td>X</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Confidence</td><td>X</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Social</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr></tbody></table>			LOW	HIGH	Incentive		X	Fear		X	Growth	X		Confidence	X		Social		X
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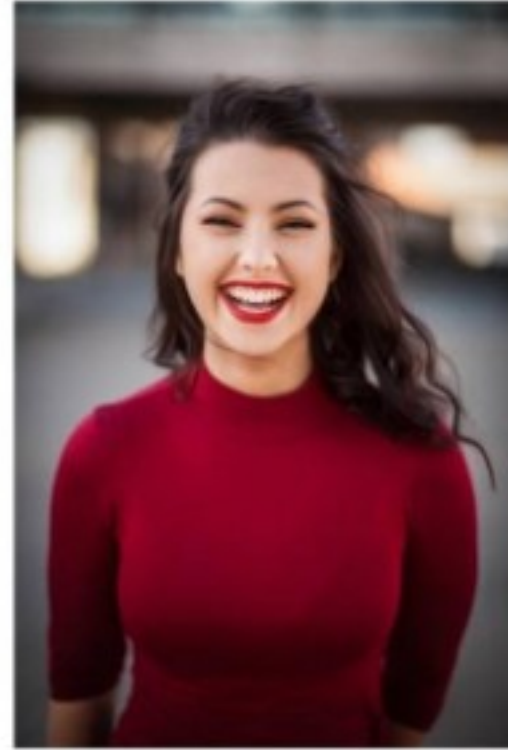






## Your Avatar

- What does your student want to achieve?
- What frustrates them?
- What motivates them?
- What are their expectations?



# Then there were 4

Well three actually – Alan, Rumi and Chris  
Then we decided to use them as part of the course and they  
became the AA Avatars!







Now there are 8



52% of students said studying helped  
with their sense of confidence and  
identity.

*– Katie Lister - Open University*






# Your turn

Share the persona you've created with your group. Discuss ideas for expanding them, including what their motivations are, their concerns and any other challenges they may face.

5 minutes







Name: Chris Deaks  
Age: 26  
Course: MSc Immunology

**Bio**

After graduation, Chris joined a Graduate Scheme in a large organisation but realised the organisation did not align with his values and has decided to return to study.

He is reasonably effective at decision making but thinks he is better than he actually is.

Chris is anxious about returning to education.

**Goals**

- To secure employment or a better position, potentially on a different, still unknown, career path

**Frustrations**

- Concern re. loss of salary
- Lack of time especially with additional commitments

**Motivations**

	Low	High
Knowing exactly what sort of job he'd like to do (confidence)	-----x-----	
Concern about what comes after university studies (fear)	-----x-----	
Seeking opportunities to develop and learn (growth)	-----x-----	

# Back Story

- Careers content made it easy - you can write a history into a CV
- The avatars narrate our content
- They provide 'exemplars'
- They ask our students questions



# What's in a name?

Chris, Chris, Charlie, Rumi, Fola, Lydia, Jarod, Theo, Alan, Adrian



# How can they be utilised?

e-learning packages

During induction, for instance.

As part of the orientation to Imperial as an option

Wellbeing-to ensure that students can identify common issues

Address anxieties, imposter syndrome and feelings of isolation - feel included.



# What did you enjoy most about creating an avatar?



Putting self in others shoes

A feeling that it could be used in a positive way

Walking in student shoes

Addressing known issues.

Recall of the time being a student.

# What did you find most challenging?



Overwhelmed by choice!  
Where to start

Imagine sth not applicable to  
me.

Challenging pre-conceived  
assumptions/feeling like I was  
using lazy stereotypes

How to create an avatar for  
someone who had nothing be  
positive experiences and  
attitudes and if it would be  
seen as the ideal or someone  
you could not identify with



# Conclusions

- These are just ideas
- Every course – like every student is different so you will need to adapt
- You can use them just for planning, they don't need to be embedded
- Let me know how you get on and tell me about your personas



**And if you get to the point we have with  
wanting to go out drinking with these  
imaginary people... seek help.**

