

Testing Testing – embedding professional accreditation to enhance employability within creative disciplines - Conference Presentation

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Testing Testing – embedding professional accreditation to enhance employability within creative disciplines

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How would you describe yourself?

ART - A master - Very good - Good - Don't know - Kind of OK

I.T. - Uber user - Very good - Good - Don't know - Kind of OK

MATHS - A wizard - Very good - Good - Don't know - Kind of OK



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The challenge

How to formally recognize the industry standard skills required by creative industries.



Initial research...

Potential employers voiced a need for graduates who could quickly demonstrate the required level of knowledge and proficiency.



Aims

Looking at:

- the use of embedded accreditation
- the use of formal tests ...in order to enhance student employability within creative disciplines.



Trust and confidence



Teaching & Learning strategy

To embed an industry recognized accreditation scheme using Adobe Certified Associate (ACA).

Constructive alignment (Biggs, 2003)



Key Tools and Technology

- Industry standard software (Adobe CC)
- A pool of part-time, practicing lecturers
- Moodle and support resources
- Adobe online exam portal (Certiport)



Put it to the test! A leap of faith...

Traditionally art & design students were most commonly assessed via presentation, portfolio and dissertation.



**Can students deliver what
it says on their C.V.?**

Can they do what it says on the tin?



Deep and Surface learning

(Marton and Saljo, 1976)

Qualitative questioning of students, including the *how* and *why*, as well as the *what?* demonstrate a deeper understanding.



Reflective learning

(Gibbs, 1988)

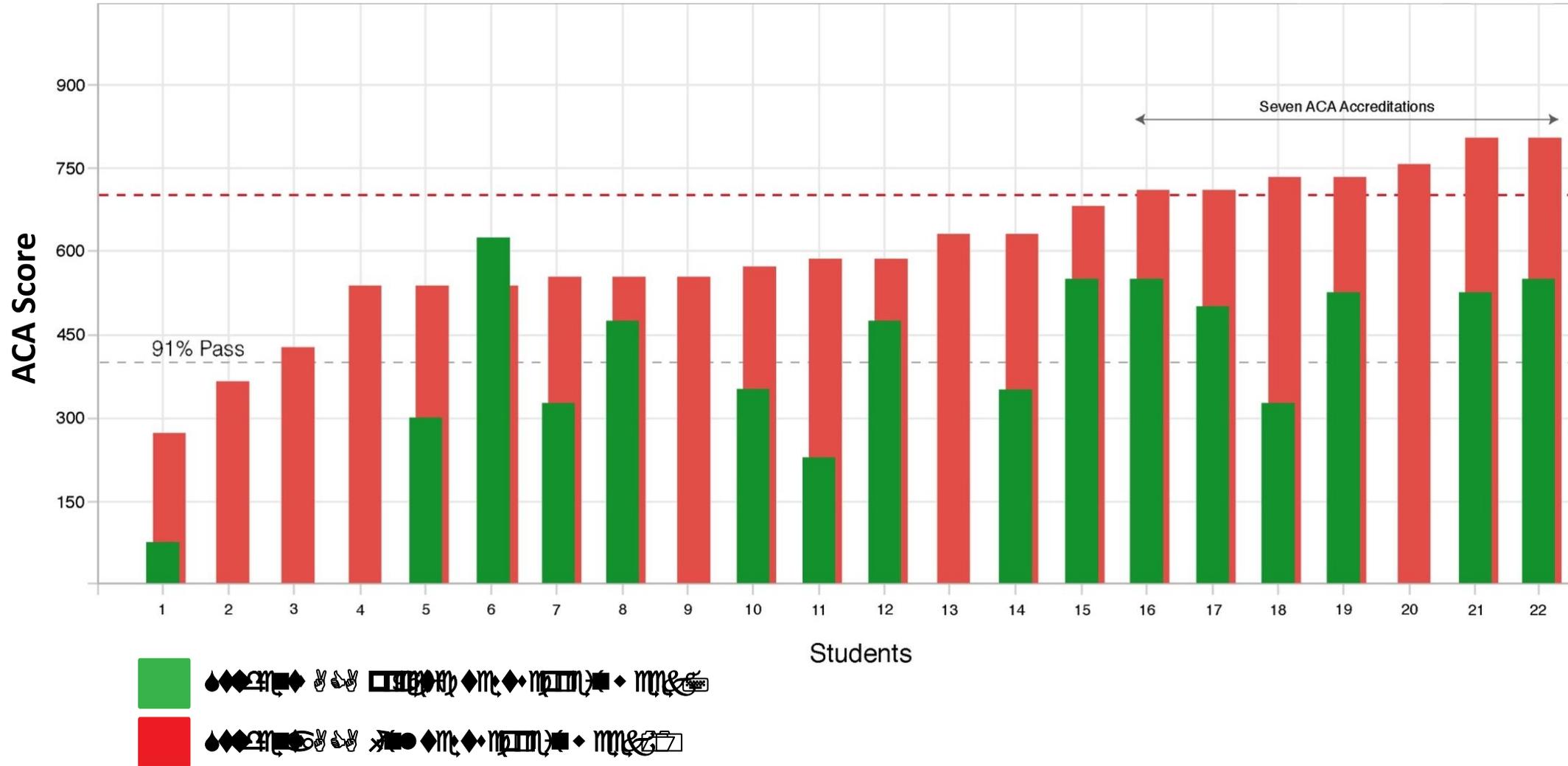
Mirror, Signal, Manouver...

By engaging in a cycle of activities students move forward by looking back and reviewing their own performance.

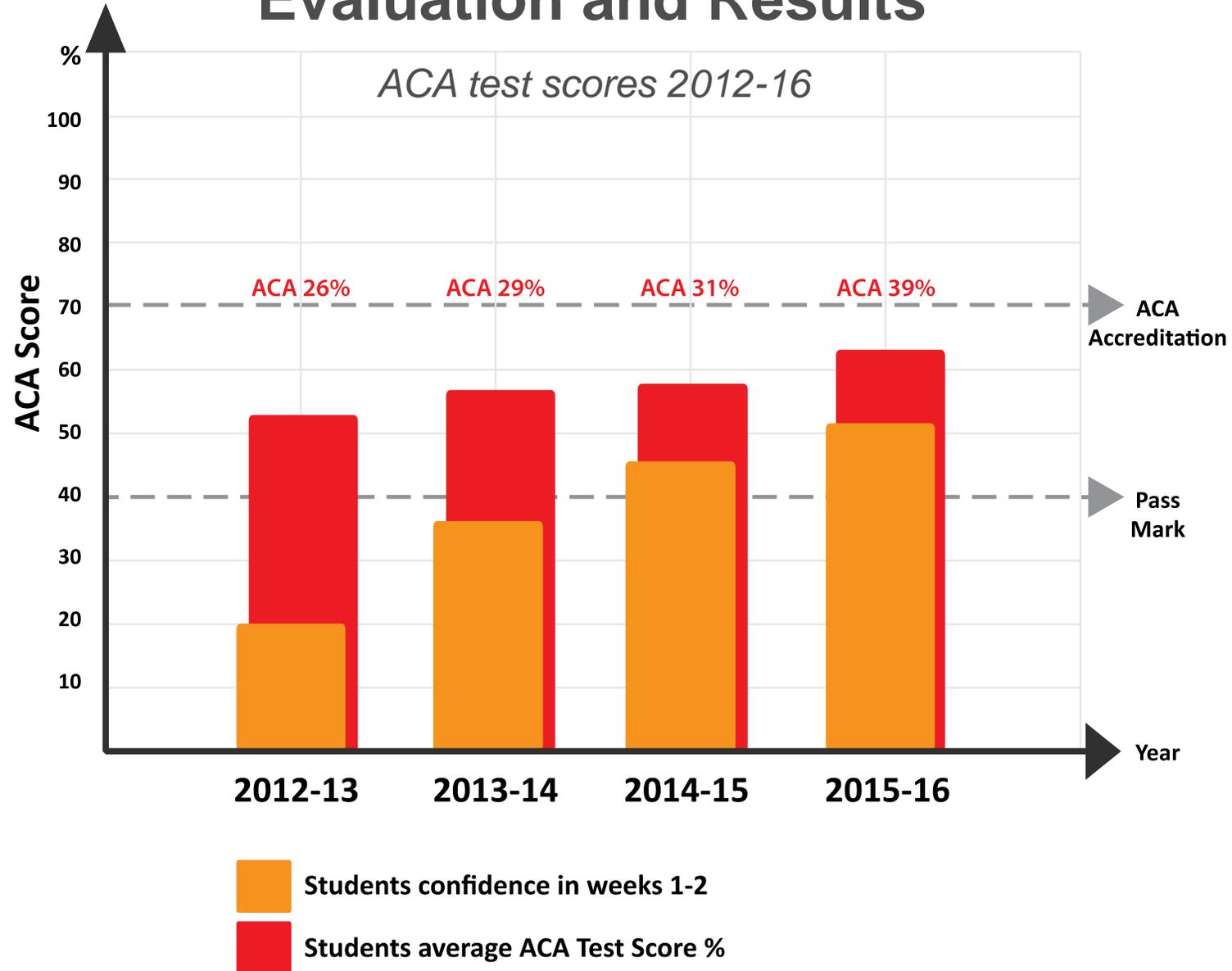


Evaluation and Results

ACA test scores for Photoshop 2013-14 example



Evaluation and Results



A snapshot of surveys and student satisfaction

- 94% positive feedback overall
- 96% overall in 2014
(DLHE survey 2014)



Feedback from students

- Improved confidence and trust in the assessment tests
- Interviews revealed students gained a wider understanding of creative industry standards
- Boosted confidence in their ability to demonstrate key competencies to potential employers



“This will help me get through my degree – I’ve just got a part-time studio job after telling them about my Adobe certificate.”
(1st year Photography student 2014).

Student comments

“I had 2 tests to complete and 2 rounds of interviews to get the job, but I had already done Adobe tests so handled it quite well I think.”
(Graphic Design graduate 2015).



Review

Students showed strong results and an improved confidence in presenting themselves professionally to secure their chosen career pathway.



The challenge now

- To realise the full potential of industry accredited benchmarking within creative disciplines.
- Continue research and understanding around how this form of assessment is perceived.
- Continue research and understanding of Pedagogy for employability – *share and inspire!*



Thank you