

✦ WELCOME TO THE RE:PLAY NEWSLETTER ✦

RE:PLAY is a three-year ESRC-funded project exploring how playful approaches to teaching and learning can transform UK higher education.

Traditional methods like lectures and exams aren't meeting the needs of today's diverse student population, but research suggests play can enhance learning, boost motivation, reduce fear of failure, improve belonging, and spark creativity—but we need robust evidence to show what works and why. RE:PLAY will provide that evidence.

✦ OUR FOUR THEMES ✦

1 State of Play

Surveying staff and students at six partner universities and interviewing university and industry leaders to understand current usage and perceptions of playful learning.

2 Play in Action

Investigating 32 case studies across the UK to explore real-world experiences, benefits, and barriers of playful learning for students and staff.

3 Design to Play

Co-creating a playful learning design framework with learning designers at six institutions, then testing it through the redesign of 24 modules.

4 Evidencing Play

Gathering data from redesigned modules to measure the impact of playful learning on student outcomes including motivation, creativity, and sense of belonging.



Below, we share the latest developments from each theme.

Northumbria University NEWCASTLE

RE:PLAY NEWSLETTER

UKRI Economic and Social Research Council

1 STATE OF PLAY

✦ SURVEYS IN MOTION

We've launched student and staff surveys across our six partner universities to discover how playful learning is currently being used and what people really think about it.

✦ GOING NATIONAL

Plans are under way to expand our survey across the UK, capturing an even wider picture of playful learning in higher education.



The data is starting to roll in, and we're excited to see what the current state of play reveals!

2 PLAY IN ACTION

✦ CASE STUDIES IN DEVELOPMENT

We're gearing up to launch our call for RE:PLAY Innovation Fellows who are already using playful learning at universities across the UK. From January, we'll begin collecting 32 real-world case studies to explore the benefits, barriers, and lived experiences of students and staff.

✦ BUILDING RESOURCES FOR ALL

These case studies will be made available on our website as a practical resource for educators across STEM, Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences & Business, and Health-related – helping you discover the types of playful learning that might work in your context.





Northumbria University NEWCASTLE

RE:PLAY NEWSLETTER

UKRI Economic and Social Research Council

3 DESIGN TO PLAY

✦ 2-DAY DESIGN WORKSHOP

- Our first project retreat brought together academics and learning designers from our six partner institutions.
- Key Achievements:
  - Co-designed the framework our Fellows will use for module redesigns
  - Created "Islands of Play" with promotional posters for 8 playful learning approaches
  - Mapped the Fellow journey from their perspective

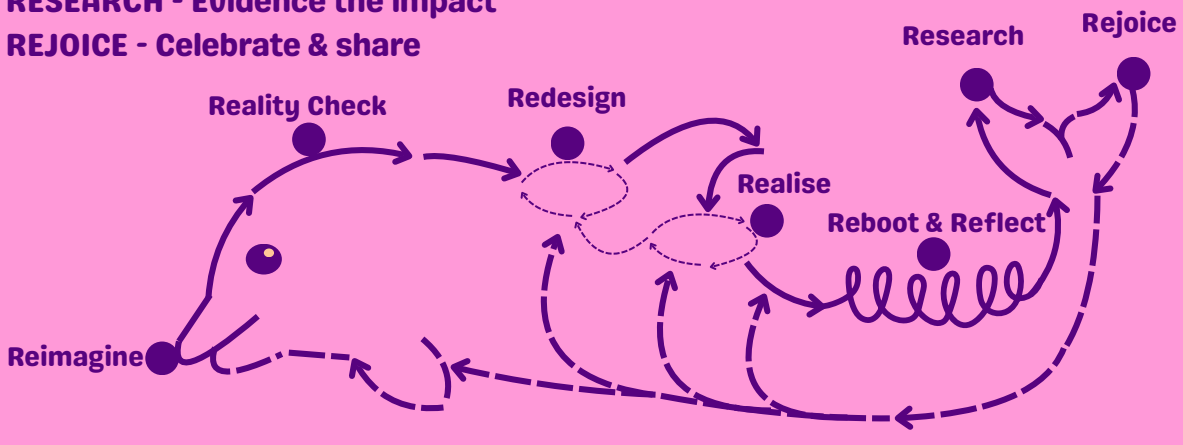


✦ THE RE:PLAY FRAMEWORK IS HERE

We're proud to unveil the RE:PLAY Framework - a 7-stage journey for integrating playful learning into module design.

✦ FOLLOW THE DOLPHIN THROUGH THE 7 R'S OF REPLAY

💡 REIMAGINE - What's possible?
💭 REALITY CHECK - What's feasible?
👷 REDESIGN - Which play approaches fit?
🛠️ REALISE - Build the tools
🔄 REBOOT & REFLECT - Run and refine
🔍 RESEARCH - Evidence the impact
🎉 REJOICE - Celebrate & share



Northumbria University NEWCASTLE

RE:PLAY NEWSLETTER

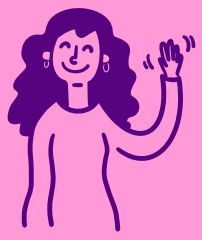
UKRI Economic and Social Research Council

4 EVIDENCING PLAY

✦ THIS IS WHERE THE FUN BEGINS!

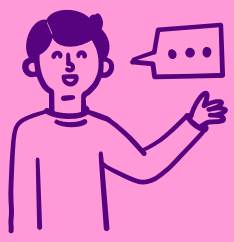
We're thrilled to welcome our 32 RE:PLAY Fellows from across six partner institutions! Over the next year, these trailblasers will collaborate with learning designers to reimagine their modules using the RE:PLAY framework.

✦ WHAT'S HAPPENED SO FAR:



Meet the Fellows

We've interviewed 32 Fellows about their modules before redesign, capturing their hopes, challenges, and creative ideas.



Student Voices

Initial surveys are out! We're gathering pre-redesign insights from students so we can track the transformation and measure real impact.



Design Diaries

Our learning designers are documenting their journey through the RE:PLAY framework with monthly diary entries, reflecting on each stage with the Fellows.

✦ WE'RE NOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Follow us for regular updates, resources and playful inspiration:

@re--play.bsky.social

https://research.northumbria.ac.uk/replay/

Re:Play: Researching the Effectiveness of Playful Learning in Higher Education

University of Greater Manchester · Teesside University · UHI University of the Highlands and Islands Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd agus nan Eilean · The University of Edinburgh · City St George's University of London · Northumbria University Newcastle · Coventry University · ual: university of the arts london · Durham University · a.r.u. Anglia Ruskin University · University of Sussex