



OPTIMISING THE IMPACT OF ONLINE LEARNING:

Resources for Educators

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RESOURCE



**European Union Digital
Education Quality Standard
Framework and Companion
Evaluation Toolkit**

**How can this
Framework help
make my online
teaching more
effective**



Purpose of the Framework

The framework and toolkit are proposed as quality standards to guide the design, delivery and evaluation of effective digital education across the European Union and the wider international context. This theoretical framework, presents all the variables and sub variables you need to consider when designing and teaching effective online learning in one convenient location. The framework is an interactive tool that can be used not only to guide the design of effective eLearning experiences, but also to analyse your own teaching and see what areas you may need or want to improve. The framework and toolkit are to be used in a flexible and adaptive manner, and are applicable to education and training institutions, industries, and audiences regardless of where you are in the online learning adoption process.

Why use a Framework?

The Covid-19 pandemic positioned digital education in a new light. The need for educational institutions to develop strategies, standards and establish quality assurance across digital education became even more evident than before. With educational and training institutions under pressure to offer digital education options, determining an appropriate theoretical framework was a logical first step. A curriculum framework acts as a credible, quality standard and guide for designing, delivering and evaluating effective education programs resulting in a superior digital education experience. Frameworks identify, explain, predict, and demonstrate complex relationships between concepts, key and sub variables, and best practices of digital educational events.

What exactly is the Framework?



The interactive framework resulted from best practices found in existing frameworks and models in the literature from across the globe coupled with the experience of digital education researchers from 5 European Union countries participating in an ERASMUS+ project. The framework comprises definitions of the variables and sub-variables to facilitate context and understanding. Moreover, the visualisation of the framework presents the relationship among the different variables. This feature of the framework is believed to be a unique contribution to the world of digital education.

The framework is not intended to be a manual on how to design, deliver and evaluate online learning, but the variables and sub-variables must be considered when designing, delivering and evaluating effective digital education. The use of this adaptive framework and toolkit across different contexts and countries should translate towards enhanced quality assurance together with favourable increased harmonisation and transferability of digital education initiatives.

Demonstration (Open Framework)

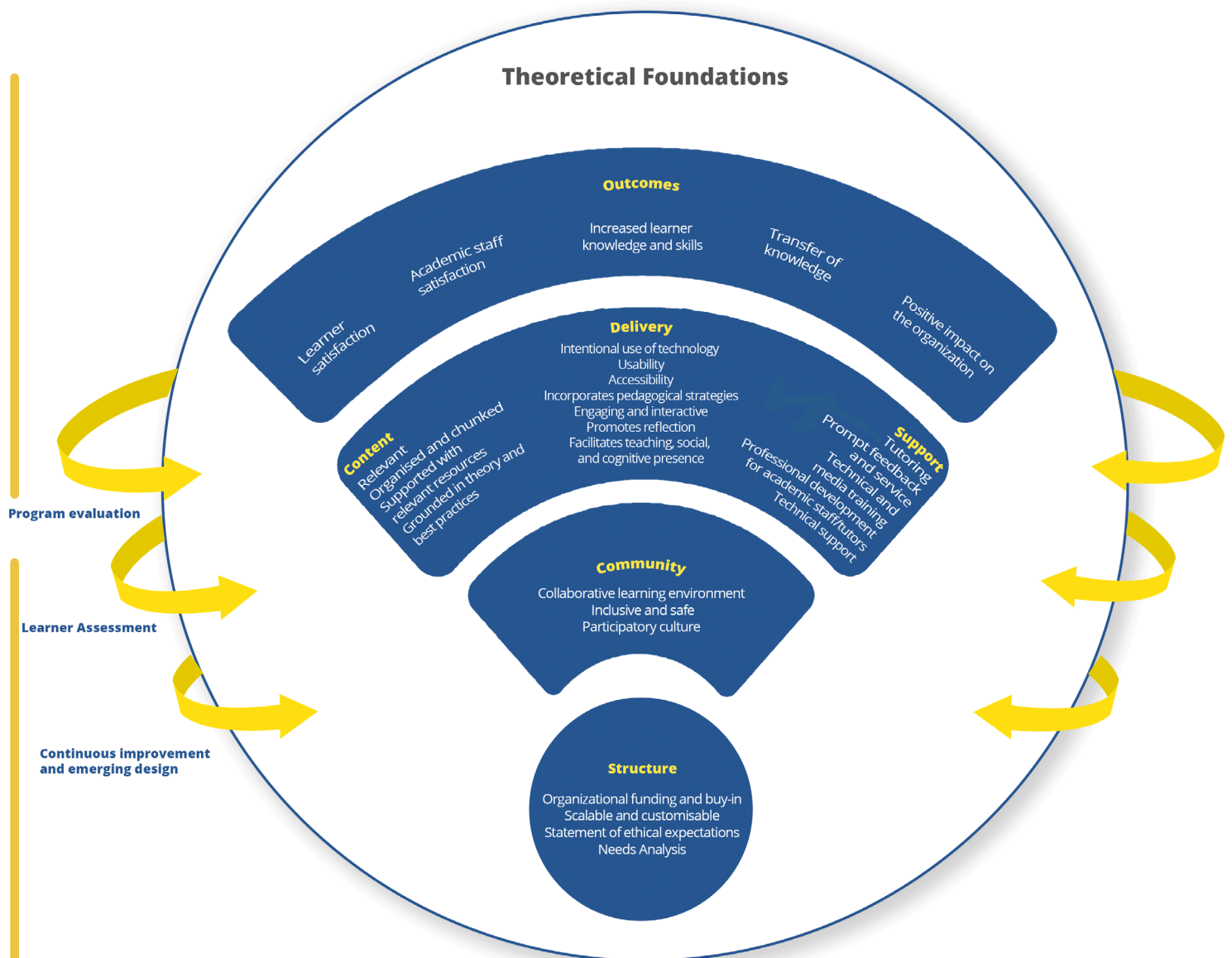
Based on an extensive literature review, it became clear that effective digital education requires thoughtful and skillful design of the following variables: content, delivery, support, community and structure. All variables and sub-variables in this framework are considered essential to effective digital education design, delivery and evaluation. It is recognized that these variables and sub-variables are not isolated entities - there is overlap and redundancy between and among them. It is also realized that the descriptions for many of these variables and sub-variables could go under various terms or titles. It is the 'concept' and the collective application of these variables and sub-variables that result in effective digital education practice. If you click on any variable or subvariable in the framework the definition will emerge. For example, click on the variable 'Content' and the definition will emerge. Similarly, click on the sub-variable 'Authentic', and the definition emerges.

The connectivity design was selected from several proposed options because it was considered novel as it diverted from the wi-fi logo. A positive point was that the connectivity design had not been seen in other frameworks which generally featured a triangle, puzzle or an onion-layered figure.

The framework is interactive.
 Start by clicking on the tutorial button in the top right hand corner of the framework. The tutorial explains what the framework is and how to use it in 6 languages. Listen to the tutorial in whatever language you prefer. Click on any word in the framework diagram, and the definition of the concept will emerge.
 Click on the Evaluation Toolkit button in the box to your right below and formative and summative surveys and sample interview questions you can use to assess your learning event will emerge.



European Union Digital Education
 Quality Standard Framework and
 Companion Evaluation Toolkit



European Union Digital Education Quality Standard Framework Variables and Sub Variables – Defined

Effective digital education requires the thoughtful and skilful design of the following variables: content, delivery, support, community and structure. Carefully implemented learner assessment and program evaluation are essential to the success of a digital education program. Commitment to continuous improvement through emerging design ensures that digital education continues to meet evolving learning needs and leverage of advancing technology.

Effective digital education leads to learner and educator satisfaction, increased learner knowledge and skills, the transfer of knowledge, and a positive impact on the organisation.

Theoretical Foundations

Constructivism acknowledges that one's learning is an active, ongoing process. Learning is subjective because individuals' cognitive processes differ. They perceive their environment and experiences differently and link their perspective to prior knowledge. As such, learning is unique, fluid and contextual.

Social constructivism takes learning to the collective level where people learn with and from others by interacting and collaborating in social contexts, or communities of practice or inquiry. Connectivism is a digital learning theory applicable to networked, online environments. When people connect to and participate in an online community, they interact dynamically with others using rich multimedia resources. This environment provides new ways for people to make connections between ideas and concepts, and the capacity to create knowledge by incorporating current information.

Outcomes

Outcomes resulting from effective digital education include increased learner and educator satisfaction, increased learner knowledge and skills, transfer of knowledge, and a positive impact on the organization.

Learner satisfaction

Digital education provides education and training solutions that correspond to learner and community interests and labour market needs. Learners appreciate the convenience, flexibility, and access to resources that enhanced digital educational opportunities provide. Digital education removes physical barriers and travel limitations, empowering learners who live in remote or rural areas to participate in higher education study units or take classes in subjects that are not offered in their locations.

Educator satisfaction

Educators benefit from the flexibility and convenience that digital education provides both themselves and their learners. Educators and training professionals who integrate digital technologies into their teaching gain satisfaction as a result of increasing the learning opportunities, satisfaction and success of learners in a digital world.

Increased learner knowledge and skills

Relevant, authentic content ensures that learners attain intended learning outcomes. Digital education that includes complementary core competencies to match work and study skills, and provides versatile study paths ultimately leads to securing and maintaining better employment.

Transfer of knowledge

Carefully planned learning activities such as scenarios, problem-solving case studies, simulations, reflection, discussions and collaborative group activities enable learners to seamlessly transfer new knowledge to real-world applications.

Positive impact on the organization

The European Union's adaptable and scalable teaching resources can lead to innovation and change within organizations. Organizations can leverage effective digital education to become competitive, relevant, and innovative and enable educators and trainers to attract learners, compete internationally and meet the needs of learners in the 21st century.

Content

The content of an effective digital education program provides all the information learners need to attain the required learning outcomes. Effective content is relevant, organised and chunked, supported by relevant resources, and grounded in theory and best practices.

Relevant

Each digital education session begins with a statement of three to five learning outcomes that are the objective of the session. Designers then select content to align with and lead to these learning outcomes. Relevant learning event content faithfully reflects problems and issues that arise in real-world situations. Learners engage in activities that present the same type of cognitive challenges they will encounter in an applied environment. This enables the acquisition of information, concepts, and skills that are meaningful, comprehensive and relevant to the present or future workplace.

Organised and chunked

Content is organized into succinct segments or 'chunks' that present a comprehensive overview of the information needed to attain the learning outcomes. Content progresses logically, builds on previous information, and provides learners with a sense of pacing and completion. It is presented objectively, through unbiased language, matching the learner's level of understanding. Content is organised into clear sections such as introduction, information presentation, exercises, interaction, conclusion and take-home messages. The estimated amount of time required to complete each section is noted, tracked and adjusted as needed.

Supported with relevant resources

Additional readings and resources support the content overview to ensure that topics are covered in appropriate breadth and depth. Academic articles, videos, and websites provide background information and alternative presentation options that address varying learning styles and needs. The resources encourage learners to reflect on their own thinking and learning processes. Additional resources can encourage social negotiation and critical thinking, which

can help generate insight and promote the elaboration of concepts and ideas.

Grounded in theory and best practices

Theory and empirical research provide the basis for effective digital education content. Educators refer to their personal and professional experience, pedagogical best practices and adult learning theory to create activities that facilitate the transfer of theory into practice. Educators also take advantage of learners' personal and professional experience, so they not only learn from the educator, but with and from each other.

Educators from accredited learning organizations share core competencies and partner with subject matter experts from private industry to design learning solutions that are closely aligned with the skills required in the workplace.

Delivery

Effective digital education is carefully designed using intentionally selected technology to ensure the usability and accessibility of the learning platform. Pedagogical strategies leverage technology to ensure that the learning experience is engaging and interactive, provides opportunities for learner reflection, and facilitates teacher, social, and cognitive presence.

Intentional use of technology

Selective and relevant use of technology supports teaching and learning and results in educational solutions that assist with meeting future competence needs and ensure smooth, flexible, and convenient digital study paths for learners.

Usability

An effective digital education platform is intuitive to navigate. Information is continually updated to ensure there are no dead ends or outdated links. Careful organisation minimises the number of steps or "clicks". Embedded objects such as shareware, images, audio, and video clips are easy to download. If external software is needed to view or use content, links and instructions are provided. Bandwidth should be considered when including large files (e.g., images, video, and animations). Careful use of colour, size and type of font, and background contributes to usability. European Union legislation is addressed and adhered to (legislation: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32016L2102..>).

Accessibility

An effective digital education platform is technologically robust, easy to navigate and freely available to all learners and educator. A flexible and customised design based on analyses of how different learners may potentially use the content incorporates a multitude of technological and pedagogical features that ensure the content is accessible to all learners and learning styles. It allows participation at any time and any place, including for those with limited access to the internet.

Content is often and ideally augmented by links and resources on the internet; therefore, delivery must be designed to ensure these external resources are accessible to all users.

Incorporates pedagogical strategies

Learning experiences are appropriately designed and facilitated by knowledgeable educators using evidence-based teaching practices. Educators incorporate a variety of instructional strategies and activities and apply a range of modes of learning to accommodate diverse learning styles, and to maximise and leverage the experience of each learner. Educators use pedagogic frameworks specific to digital education to guide the design, delivery and evaluation of their learning sessions. Educators or tutors are available within the learning environment to

enable the comprehension of information and encourage self-directed learning. They solicit feedback, engage learners in problem-solving experiences, and provide positive reinforcement.

Pedagogical considerations include providing learners with a clear roadmap of expectations and learning outcomes, with a focus on appropriate teaching and learning strategies and determining the type and amount of content and appropriate level of instructor support. Pedagogical strategies also guide the development of formative and summative assessment.

Engaging and interactive

Effective digital education promotes and facilitates interaction with the content, as well as among learners and with the educator. Engaging activities stimulate learners' interest and understanding and facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills into practice. Peer-helping activities enrich the learning experience for adult learners, enabling them to assume personal responsibility and connect past learning experience to the current one.

Promotes reflection

In effective digital education, tutors encourage learners to reflect upon concepts and ideas learned by responding to thought-provoking questions that stimulate discussion and critical thinking. Content and design are leveraged to promote independent reflection, as well as in response to other learners.

Facilitates teaching, social, and cognitive presence

Effective digital education implements strategies to encourage participation and engagement by enabling learners to experience teaching presence. Teaching presence includes the perception that the tutor is available, reading posts, responding quickly to questions, and providing timely, relevant, and constructive feedback.

Effective digital education is designed to promote a sense of social presence or community engagement among learners and with their educator. Having the opportunity to get to know and trust both the tutor and other learners, particularly at the beginning of a digital education study unit, enables learners to identify with the community and to communicate purposefully in a trusting environment.

Effective digital education encourages the learner to be cognitively present in the learning environment by incorporating activities specifically designed to challenge them to analyse, think critically and reflect. Educators ask thought-provoking questions and design problem-solving scenarios that require the learner to apply their new knowledge or skills to a work-related or practical solution.

Support

An effective digital education environment requires ongoing support from educators, prompt feedback on assignments, and responses to emails and questions within interactive forums. Learners are introduced to the digital education platform to ensure they can engage with it effectively. Educators and tutors are trained to deliver and evaluate the program. Continuous technical and media support is available for both learners and staff.

Tutoring

Success in the digital education environment is directly related to how present and engaged learners perceive their educator to be within the virtual classroom. Learning, engagement, and enjoyment of the experience is enhanced when learners feel a responsiveness equal or superior to face-to-face instruction. Educators communicate clear expectations and instructions, identify opportunities, challenges and agency, provide timely constructive feedback, announcements and updates, and create a learning community where learners feel

comfortable and supported. Educators address small problems before they become significant, thereby helping learners avoid stress, frustration and attrition.

Prompt feedback and service

Within a digital education environment, educators or tutors provide feedback on assignments and respond to email queries in a timely manner. To facilitate the ability of learners to access support from educators and peers promptly and conveniently, the learning environment also provides services such as interactive question and answer forums and online office hours. Class announcements, study unit notes, and assignments are readily available.

Technical and media training

Prior to the start of a digital education session, learners receive a thorough introduction to the learning environment, so they can comfortably access and participate in the digital education platform.

Professional development for educator/tutors

Educators/tutors are trained to design, deliver and evaluate effective digital education. The training provides the basic knowledge to facilitate a digital education learning session while enabling staff to experience what it is like to be a learner in the environment. Educators also have access to professional development through their organizations to keep up to date with digital education best practices. Training and professional development that is certified by an accreditation body can help ensure quality and stimulate participation, facilitate comprehension of information and encourage self-directed learning. They solicit feedback, engage learners in problem-solving experiences, and provide positive reinforcement.

Technical support

Administrative and technical support are freely available to both learners and educators to help them use and access the technical systems supporting the digital learning environment. Step-by-step instructional videos can be used to walk learners through downloading software or performing technical tasks. Face-to-face or video conferencing sessions can help learners who have challenges interacting with the technology.

Community

Effective and user-friendly digital education incorporates community-building strategies to establish a collaborative learning environment that is inclusive and safe. Educators encourage a culture of commitment to thoughtful reflection, open resources, experimentation, risk taking, assessment, and analysis.

Collaborative learning environment

The digital education environment enables learners to work together to explore a significant question or create a meaningful project. Learning events and programs enable knowledge to evolve through discussion, reflection, and collaboration. Learners have the opportunity to take the initiative and responsibility to listen, question, and think critically within the community of fellow learners. Learners are empowered by learning with, from and about one another. Educators model the sense of community by supporting and providing constructive feedback to learners and encourage learners to do the same.

Inclusive and safe

Effective digital education establishes a learning community where learners feel comfortable and have a sense of belonging. Success, engagement, satisfaction, and learning are dependent on the support and sense of identity that comes from developing relationships within the learning environment and being a valued member of a community. Ethical principles guide

educators as they work to establish an inclusive and safe learning environment. These principles include learner confidentiality, learner development, pedagogical competence, an appropriate and supportive approach to sensitive topics, respect for learners and colleagues, and valid, fair assessment. The educator also explains and enforces principles of internet etiquette. Options are provided to support varied learner needs and abilities.

Participatory culture

To encourage learners to actively and safely participate in the collaborative learning environment, a set of policies and expectations are established regarding etiquette and protocols for reflection and discourse within the community. This culture of participation can be facilitated by having learners create profiles that are available to other learners, so they get to know each other. A café-style forum where learners can socialise within the context of the learning environment can stimulate participation within the community.

Structure

Key structural components provide scaffolding on which effective digital education is built and can continue to deliver value to the host organization and to learners. Developing and maintaining effective digital education solutions that are scalable for varying and future needs of the organization and are customisable for different classes or learners requires organizational funding and buy-in. Clear statements of ethical and academic guidelines for assignments, postings, plagiarism, and participation can help ensure fair, consistent and high-quality standards within the learning environment.

Organizational funding and buy-in

The ability to create and deliver effective digital education depends on funding and buy-in from the organization planning to implement it. Developing a fully realized, robust, and scalable digital learning platform requires coordinating input from educators, instructional designers, software developers, videographers, and graphic designers. Delivery of successful digital education programs depends on ongoing, multi-faceted support including administrative assistance, training for educator, academic help for learners, as well as technology and media support for all participants.

Scalable and customisable

Effectively designed digital education can be scaled up or down according to class or staff requirements. It is easily adaptable for changing class or learner needs and can be delivered by several tutors for many resource offerings.

Statement of ethical expectations

A clear statement of ethical expectations ensures that tutors and learners are aware of their ethical responsibilities when participating in digital education. This includes policies regarding confidentiality, attendance, participation, and consequences for cheating and plagiarism. It also communicates the expectations around demonstrating respect for other learners and educators.

Learner Assessment

Assessment is integrated into the pedagogical strategies and meshes with the overall learning design. Assessment activities that encourage dialogue, collaborative activities, and problem-solving can be more effective than traditional tests. Clear guidelines about how learners should submit completed assignments, due dates, evaluation criteria, and modes for feedback prepares learners for the workload.

Program evaluation

Program evaluation is a systematic assessment of the learning event content and delivery based on feedback solicited from learners. Educators conduct brief formative assessments at regular intervals throughout delivery of the learning event. Formative assessments ask learners what is working and what is not working for them in the study unit. The anonymous feedback enables staff to understand the progress and needs of learners and address minor issues before they become significant. A summative evaluation administered at the end of each study unit assesses the overall study unit to address quality standards related to content, delivery, support structure, community and outcomes. Consistent program evaluation provides quality assurance safeguards and ensures that best practices and cutting-edge knowledge outcomes remain robust and equal or superior to traditional face- to-face learning.

Continuous improvement and emerging design

Educators and designers of effective digital education continually assess learning events and sessions and, when possible, implement changes to improve the quality of the learning event in situ or for the next iteration. Updating content and design on an ongoing basis ensures that digital education continues to address evolving learning requirements and technological advances.

*All variables and sub-variables in this framework are considered essential to effective digital education design, delivery and evaluation. It is recognized that these variables and sub-variables are not isolated entities—there is overlap and redundancy between and among them. It is also realized that the descriptions for many of these variables and sub- variables could go under various terms or titles.

Table 1: Digital Education Variables and Sub-Variables

Structure	Delivery	Content	Community	Support	Outcomes
Scalability - resource can be taught many times, the economy of scale justifies the time and effort needed to design.	Usability - information on the site is kept up-to-date, organized and easy to navigate with no dead ends or stale links.	Content is relevant and authentic. Content is grounded in theory and best practices.	A collaborative and healthy learning environment. The learning community is comfortable, inclusive, and safe.	Free convenient professional development is provided to faculty to support them in transitioning to teaching online.	Increased learner satisfaction regarding options and quality of teaching and learning.
Motivation - buy in from administration and faculty. Provide solutions to the barriers preventing some educators from embracing technology to enhance teaching.	Accessibility - A variety of learning activities incorporated to address various learning styles.	Content is professionally presented, organized and chunked in meaningful segments, which progress logically building on previous information.	Learners cooperate by interacting and supporting one another.	Prompt feedback - timely, thoughtful and relevant feedback provided on assignments, and in response to postings and emails.	Increase faculty satisfaction regarding teaching options and flexibility.
Ethical responsibilities - adhere to copyright compliance fair use, plagiarism and accessibility standards.	Evidence of Teacher, Cognitive and Social presence.	Content is supported with relevant resources and additional readings. Instructional materials and resources conveniently provided and accessible online.	Learners are empowered by learning with and from one another.	Facilitators available for tutoring and support.	Increased knowledge and skills. Opportunities to apply new knowledge in practical situations.
Institutional funding and support provided.	Pedagogical strategies chosen to support the achievement of outcomes and competencies.		Learners are challenged with responsibilities in the learning process.	Teachers are responsive to learner needs and concerns.	Increased use and effectiveness of technology in teaching.
Virtual platform selected considering both the accessibility and usability of the hardware and software.	Activities require learners to reflect and think critically.		Learners are engaged in the learning process.	Technical support is available and issues promptly addressed.	Increased institutional impact, perception of quality and delivery, and international competitiveness in the digital era.
Collaboratively designed blended and online study units and resources with partnering European Union/ropean Union universities.	Activities are engaging and interactive. Evidence-based teaching practices and research informed teaching practices.			Basic technical and media training for learners to increase digital comfort and fluency in accessing and using the virtual platform and creating digital products (e.g. videos).	

Evaluation

A variety of formative and summative assessment strategies are implemented to ensure fair and consistent learner assessment and attainment of the learning objectives.

Ongoing program evaluation/audit is conducted to facilitate continual resource/study unit improvement.

Companion Evaluation Tools



A companion evaluation toolkit consisting of a formative, quantitative survey, 'temperature check', a summative quantitative survey, and a follow-up qualitative interview protocol to assess programs using the framework. The instruments can be accessed by clicking on the word Toolkit in the right upper corner of the framework figure.



Temperature Check is the name given to a brief quantitative Likert scale online survey including two quantitative open-ended questions soliciting information on the European Union Digital Education Quality Standard Framework variables. The anonymous temperature check takes learners approximately 5 minutes to complete. The purpose of the temperature check is to obtain feedback early in the resource so that any minor concerns can be addressed before they become major issues.



The brief **summative qualitative Likert scale online survey** including quantitative open-ended questions also solicits information on the European Union Digital Education Quality Standard Framework variables. The anonymous summative survey requires learners approximately 10 minutes to complete. The purpose of the summative survey is to obtain feedback at the end of the resource so that any necessary changes and improvements can be made in the next iteration of the resource.



The **interview protocol** provides sample open-ended questions that could be used to solicit detailed follow-up data and triangulate information obtained from the temperature check and summative survey.



In Conclusion

The framework was designed by taking some of the best ideas and practices from all existing digital education frameworks and models in the literature combined with the teaching tips and lessons learned from experienced teachers in five countries who were early adopters and pioneers in eLearning. The framework is intended to assist you when designing, effective digital learning experiences. Refer to it to identify all the things you need to consider when designing your online events. You can also refer to the framework to identify strengths and shortcomings in your study units, courses, modules, or sessions and determine what you may want to keep and continue, drop or eliminate, or add and enhance.

Reference

MacDonald, C.J.; Backhaus, I.; Yeratziotis, A.; Vanezi, E.; Clendinning, D.; Seriola, L.; Häkkinen, S.; Cassar, M.; Mettouris, C.; Papadopoulos, G. (2021). *European Union digital education quality standard framework and companion evaluation toolkit*. *Open Learning: The Journal of Open and Distance Learning and eLearning*. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02680513.2021.1936476>

RESOURCE

2

Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Online Learning Events



General Resource Information and Communication

The resource Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Online Learning Events was created to provide **educators**¹, who have little or no experience with online teaching, with the support to transfer their learning events from a face-to-face to a blended or online format.

This resource was adapted from a nine module online course to provide educators with the basic knowledge and skills required to design, deliver and evaluate a session in any online learning event. It is expected that if you can design, deliver and evaluate one online session, you will be able to design, deliver and evaluate additional sessions in the future.

This nine module resource is organised into convenient themes:

- Introduction
- Content
- Delivery
- Support
- Structure
- Community
- Outcomes (Evaluation)

Educators following this resource will have the opportunity to apply their learning in practice by converting one of their face-to-face learning event sessions to an online format. Each of the online sessions has required readings **(Read It!)**, learning activities **(Apply It!)**, and online discussions **(Discuss It!)**.

The first module is suggested to be delivered as a two-hour online workshop to get acquainted with **learners**², ensure learners can navigate the VLE, communicate expectations, resource organisation, and offer support and answer questions. All other modules are held completely online to accommodate busy schedules, facilitate teaching and learning online while experiencing what it is like to be an online learner. This resource requires a weekly six-hour commitment from learners.

¹ The term used to include all educators at all institutions at any level or country. Educator is to be used interchangeably with facilitator, professor, academic staff member, lecturer, instructor, teacher, tutor, and trainer.

² Learner can be used interchangeably with learner, participant, and trainee.

Although, for practical reasons during this resource, the focus is on one session of your **learning event**³, many of the documents, policies and evaluation tools you create can be used in all sessions of your learning event (e.g. your email, discussion forum, and assignments' policies). Also, many of the documents used in this resource (Netiquette, - eVenture, etc.) are available for you to adopt or adapt for your own learning event. Finally, although in the Content, Delivery, Support, Structure, and Community sessions of this resource we tend to focus on one of your eLearning sessions, in the final module, and Outcomes, you will design an evaluation plan, assignments and evaluation tools for your entire learning event. Typically, we do not create assignments and learner evaluations for every session or module in a learning events so the evaluation plan you design in this resource will reflect that reality.

By the end of this resource you will have one of your learning events sessions designed for online delivery.

By the end of this nine week resource, learners will:

- Create 1-3 effective learning objectives for an online session
- Organise content for an effective online learning session
- Find and upload supportive resources to enhance the online content
- Create learning activities to effectively deliver online content and engage the learner
- Create a video and/or voice-over for a slide deck to enhance the online session delivery
- Design and effectively communicate online policies and expectations
- Set up a discussion forum to facilitate learning and reflection
- Design assignments to effectively evaluate learners in an online environment.

We suggest that for each learning event you have a resource Syllabus and a Roadmap to guide and support your learners so they understand expectations and timelines.

We hope you find this resource and resources helpful to designing, delivering and evaluating your online learning events.

³ Learning event is the term used to encompass resource, learning event, module, class, lecture or session.

MODULE 1

Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Online Learning Events

Creating an Effective Online Syllabus

This section is adapted from the chapter ***Creating an Effective Online Syllabus***, extracted from the book, ***Teaching Online - A Practical Guide*** by Susan Ko, Steve Rossen

Creating a Syllabus is the first step to designing effective online learning. The syllabus is an important part of any learning event, whether delivered online or face-to-face. Defining syllabus broadly, the traditional syllabus should include not only a schedule of topics, readings, activities, and assignments, but also such elements as goals, objectives, or expected outcomes for the resource, grading policies, procedures, and any other information necessary for learners to succeed.

The details of the learning event requirements, expected outcomes, schedule, grading, and procedures are staple elements of any syllabus, they are perhaps even more important for an online class. Learners may tend to feel somewhat disoriented without the familiar first-day speeches from the educator, and wonder if any of the same old rules apply in this new online territory.

It's typical for first-time online educators to include too little detail in their syllabi. One instructor we know changed nothing in his regular on-the-ground resource syllabus except to add the words "This resource is delivered completely online." Unfortunately, learners had a hard time even finding his syllabus, as he posted no welcome at the "entrance" to his online learning event, and then they were puzzled by his schedule, which still listed "class sessions" as once a week. Some learners reasonably thought this phrase referred to online, real-time chat. Others wondered if the phrase meant that their asynchronous communications should be posted only once a week, on the particular day named in the schedule. As a result of this lack of clarity, the first week's discussion forum was dominated entirely by questions about where, when, and how to do the assignments, and the main topics for that week were nearly forgotten in the confusion.

Even after the instructor's hurried explanations, learners continued to experience confusion about dates and times, procedures and grading. They could refer back to the first week's forum and search through the various discussion threads in which these questions had been raised, but they had no clear reference document to which they could turn. One learner even had a grade dispute with the educator that arose from an ambiguity in the syllabus. In the

syllabus, the educator had declared that all late assignments would be penalized at the rate of one-quarter grade point each day, but hadn't clearly specified that the due dates for assignments were based on the educator's time zone, not the learner's. Thus the learner claimed that, when he posted an assignment at 11:00 P.M., Pacific time, on the due date, he was unfairly penalized because the server on which the resource was housed, located (like the educators) on the East Coast of the United States, had recorded the time as 2:00 A.M. the following day. These examples, both serious and trivial, illustrate some of the problems that can ensue if online syllabi (and, naturally, subsequent directions) are not thorough and detailed.

Even in hybrid resources—those that are taught face-to-face with an online component—clear directions are essential to the success of the learning event. It's important, for instance, to explain to learners how the mixture of different venues will be integrated. Which resource activities will take place in the on-campus classroom, which in the online classroom, and what's the sequence of procedures learners should follow each week? Imagine that, before the live class meeting on Wednesday, you want your learners to read the online lecture and post a preliminary report, but you want them to wait until after the class meeting to take part in that week's online discussion. In many cases, they won't understand that sequence unless it's carefully explained to them.

There are three aspects of a well-designed online syllabus: the contract, the Roadmap, and the schedule.

The Contract

Increasingly, the syllabus has come to be the contract between learners and the educator, laying out the terms of the class interaction—the expected responsibilities and duties, the grading criteria, the musts and don'ts of behavior. Let's look at some features of the contract that are especially important for an online learning event.

Class Participation and Grading Criteria

What is meant by 'participation' in an online setting may not be obvious to learners. Participation should be clearly defined. For example, is it posting, that is, sending messages to the discussion forum? Or does participation just mean logging on and reading (an activity revealed to the learner only when resource management software has the capacity to track learners' movements online)? Perhaps participation includes taking part in an online group presentation or showing up for a real-time chat?

If you're going to count participation toward the final grade, you should specify exactly how that grade will be calculated. We recommend, in fact, that you always give a small grade for active participation in the class (justified with a rubric) clearly outlining expectations (such as, contributing to discussions and asking or answering questions). The plain fact is that, if learners aren't graded, the great majority won't actively participate. Besides judging the quality of learners'

contributions you may want to set a minimum level for quantity of participation. (We discuss discussion forums in more detail in Module 6).

Another consideration in asynchronous discussion is the degree of self-pacing allowed. Must learners follow a chronological order of topics in their participation, or can they go back and respond to previous weeks' topics? Can they do assignments at different times during the learning event? The answers really depend on the nature of your learning event. For example, if your resource has a set number of tasks, which can be completed at any time within the ten weeks of the session, then you may not be concerned about learners' skipping about or restarting conversations about previous weeks' topics.

If you're going to allow some measure of self-paced activity, then you must make this clear to learners in your syllabus. The danger in this sort of arrangement is that learners may get confused about the progress of the resource, and they may feel that they must continually look back at earlier weeks to see if some new discussion has been posted. However, there are resource management platforms and standalone forms of discussion software that alert learners entering the classroom to the fact that they have new, unread messages in a particular discussion forum. In this case, learners will easily discover that there are discussions going on in any of the various units of the learning event. If learners don't have this sort of alert, you should remind them via announcements or in your syllabus instructions to check the previous weeks' discussions.

Defining Participation and Grading Criteria: Examples from Online Syllabi

Here's an excerpt from the syllabus for Chris Moggia's Advanced Micro-computers class for UCLA Extension's teacher education program. Note that Moggia discusses both quality and quantity of participation and the application to grades:

I have created a grading policy which basically rewards two things: the **quality** and **timeliness** of your responses and assignments.

In terms of quality my expectations are simple. Responses should be well written (please spell-check!) and clearly address the issues being discussed. When responding to a question about gender equity in technology access, please don't talk about baseball, for example. Though it is the national pastime and one of my favorite subjects it is off topic and not relevant (especially when the Dodgers are in last place . . .). Also please submit assignments within the week assigned. I will accept discussion responses and written assignments up to FOUR DAYS after the week ends.

A note on attendance and class participation: Regular and active participation is an essential, unmistakably important aspect of this online resource. The expectation of the educator is that learners will log on a minimum of three times every seven days. It is critical that you read all of the lecture and assignment

materials as well as all of the public discussion materials. Your full participation on a weekly basis is not only a requirement, it is an essential aspect of the online resource process. All learners are expected to do the work assigned, notify the Nancy Shepherdson, who teaches Nonfiction Writing for UCLA Extension's online writing program, addresses these needs for definition equally well but in a manner appropriate for the different nature of her resource.

Since it is difficult to mandate writing improvement, your grade in this class will depend heavily on your participation. Seventy-five percent of your grade will be based on completing assignments and participating in discussion. That is, you could receive a B simply for turning in all of the assignments and participating regularly, as long as your contributions demonstrate that you tried your best. (Last-minute schlock will be recognized and penalized.) The other twenty-five percent of the grade will depend on the quality of your work and your participation. How well have you understood the elements of a particular nonfiction form, and how well have you executed them? Does your writing show publishable flair? Has your writing improved since you began the resource?

Managing Learner Expectations

The task of managing learner expectations is very important in the online classroom. Some learners enroll in an online resource expecting it to be much easier than a regular resource. Others imagine that the resource will be something like independent study. Still others think the educator/instructor should be available for twenty-four real-time hours a day. Your syllabus as well as your introductory comments can help manage such expectations, correct false impressions, and set the stage for the smooth unfolding of your resource.

It's also helpful if your institution has a general learner orientation (or at least a learner handbook) that explains how the online resource will work, how much learner-instructor interaction can be expected, and so forth. If your institution doesn't have such an orientation, you may need to supply some of this information in your own syllabus.

A continuing education instructor we know, who has a busy professional practice, complained after a few weeks of her online class that learners had "unrealistic expectations." When pressed to explain this remark, she commented that, if she didn't reply to each and every learners' comment in the discussion forum or if she didn't appear to be in the online classroom every day, she would receive plaintive email queries or even classroom postings inquiring about whether she had read a particular message. She further explained that she had expected learners to work on their own during the first part of each week and only then to post their thoughts in the discussion forum. Unfortunately, neither her syllabus nor her introductory comments ever mentioned these teacher expectations.

This case shows that managing learner expectations can also require an instructor to communicate his or her expectations of the learners. This type of problem can be handled by a simple statement in the syllabus to the effect that the instructor will look in frequently during the week but may not be in the classroom every day, or that learners should work on the week's assignments during the first part of the week (say, Monday through Wednesday) and then post their responses later in the week (Thursday through Sunday).

Other information of a "contractual" nature that you might want to incorporate in your syllabus includes the following:

- policy on late assignments
- due dates are calculated by your time zone or the learner's (or the server's, as that might actually be in a third time zone)
- Your availability for real-time chat appointments (which some call "virtual office hours")
- specifications for writing assignments (formal essay? informal journal? of how many total words?)
- institution's policy on plagiarism and cheating

The Map

In this new territory of the online classroom, learners will seize upon your syllabus as if it were a map. Learners will want to know how to proceed and where everything is located. So, one of the first things you must do, whether through the syllabus or in an introductory message, is to explain the geography of the resource. We like to supplement the Syllabus with a second resource we call a Roadmap (discussed in the following section).

In fact, if the syllabus isn't visible on the first level of the resource, but instead can be arrived at only by one or two clicks of the mouse, then this introductory set of directions must be given in an announcement area or even delivered prior to the learner event beginning, by email. For example, the following announcement sent to learners in an email and also posted in Announcements on the resource helps guide learners on where to go to start the online learning event.

Announcement:

Dear Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Online Learning Event participants,

We held our first (and only) synchronous online session for the 9 Module resource yesterday. We had 40 of the 40 registered learners in attendance (invited from the University of Malta's waiting list).

Resource participants represented ten Faculties and Departments at the University of Malta.

You should all have logged into the resource by now. Please post your tasks

each week by Saturday 12:00PM in order to give your colleagues an opportunity to respond before the end of each weeks session on Tuesday at 12:00PM. Please note that you are in one of three discussion groups A,B or C. In order to make the resource more time efficient and manageable for you, you are only required to read and respond to the participants within your group.

If you cannot devote the required (average of to or 6 hours per week) for this resource, please wait and take the learning event in a future iteration.

The resource has been accredited by the Quality Assurance Committee at the University of Malta with 2 ECTS. You will also receive a certificate of participation and an invitation to take the upcoming train-the-trainer resource in the fall – if you complete the resource.

If you have any questions regarding the resource please post them in the QandA forum as opposed to sending them in an email or message so others can benefit from the question and response.

Listen to the Introductory Video at the beginning of each Module, and then go to the RoadMap to see what you need to Read, Apply and Discuss each week. Please read the weekly learning outcomes, all related materials, instructions for weekly tasks and review the eDocs and eSamples before posting so that your first posting is of high quality saving everyone time.

Over the next week, I look forward to (1) reading your learner profiles posted in the participants section and (2) the description of your learning event and the title of the one session you will be designing online during the next 9 weeks of this resource (posted in the discussion for Module 1 - not with your profile).

We thank you for your time and dedication to teaching and your learners and look forward to learning with, from and about you over the next nine weeks!

What else does “explaining the geography” mean? If your resource consists of various web pages plus a discussion forum, you will need to let the learners know where to find the component parts of the resource and under what headings:

“Lectures will be on the page whose link says ‘Lectures,’ and these are arranged by weeks.” If the discussion forum is hosted on an outside site, learners need to be told that this link will take them off the university server, that they must use a password given to them, and so on. If you have created a discussion forum dedicated to casual communications and socializing for learners, let them know that the area you have imaginatively labeled “Café Luna” is intended to be the online equivalent of a learner lounge.

This is particularly important when using resource management software that has its own unique and not customizable category headings. Learners will need to know what you have stored behind each of these generic headings.

In a hybrid resource that combines face-to-face and online components, it's essential that you specify where to do each activity. For example, in Lonnie Yandell's Cognitive Psychology class for Belmont University, his syllabus gave clear instructions for combining face-to-face and online procedures. Here's an excerpt from the "Resource Requirements" section of his syllabus:

This resource will include a major computer Internet component. Assignments, lectures, practice tests, simulations, and discussion will be held online. Time spent in class will be on computer lab simulations, in-class discussion, group work, and textbook chapter tests.

And this excerpt from his assignment schedule explains the procedures:

The resource is divided into 24 modules. Each chapter has from 2 to 4 modules. Each module has a related textbook reading, online lecture, online discussion question, and online self-test.

You should read the textbook section first, then review the online lecture. The lectures will be summaries, elaborations of the textbook material, and links to related information on the Web. To get to a lecture, click on it in the schedule on this page.

After you have completed reviewing the lecture, you should then log into "TopClass" and post answers to the lecture discussion question. You can also read other learners' posts and respond to them if you like. You can receive extra credit for the discussion grade by making appropriate responses to others' posts. Discussion posts must be made by the date on the schedule to receive full credit.

You should also complete the short self-test. The self-tests are designed to help you make sure you understand the material.

Other procedural and geographical issues you might want to cover in the syllabus include these:

- The URL for your home page
- How e-mailed assignments are to be labeled in the subject line
- Which file formats you'll accept for attached documents (for instance, Microsoft Word, Rich Text Format, PowerPoint, Excel)

Any contact information for technical and administrative support

- The proper sequence for accomplishing weekly activities and assignments (for example, do the exercises before taking the quiz, post a message in discussion before e-mailing the assignment)

The Schedule

The learning event should be laid out by weeks for learners, because this is commonly the unit by which learners gauge their own participation and work. If your class starts on a Wednesday, then Tuesday will become the last day of your week unless you state otherwise.

We recommend that you think in terms of subdivisions of two- or three-day spreads. For example, if you post your lecture on Monday, allow learners through Wednesday to read and comment on it, rather than asking them to do so by Tuesday. Learners can be told to log on every single day, but it is perhaps wiser to take advantage of the asynchronous flexibility of the online environment. Assume that some learners will log on and read on Monday night, some on Tuesday morning, and others at midnight. The Monday reader may return on Tuesday night to reread and post. The Tuesday reader may respond with comments at once. This scheduling flexibility is even more important for those who have learners in different time zones or in foreign countries.

It's also good to gauge your learners' access to computers and their probable work schedules. Learners are accessing the resource web site from a campus lab, their homes, offices, the dorms, or branch campus libraries. A Monday or Tuesday due date for assignments will allow working adults to make the most of their study time out of the office.

Using Specific Dates

Instead of simply listing the resource schedule for "Week One" and "Week Two," your schedule should include the specific dates for each unit, week, or topic area covered. This is particularly important for asynchronous resources in which learners may be logging on at diverse times and days during the week. It's quite common for learners to lose track of the weeks in the term when following an asynchronous online schedule.

If you do not want to include dates on the main syllabus web page because you want to reuse it for subsequent terms, then send learners an email version of the syllabus or post a downloadable document version with the relevant dates inserted. Some resource management software includes a calendar feature that you may use to reinforce the dates for each segment of the resource.

A Checklist for Your Online Syllabus

Here, in summary form, is a checklist for creating your online syllabus. You needn't include all of these items (some may be more appropriate for your class than others), nor do you have to include them all in one document called a "syllabus." You can distribute this information among several documents if desired. In this resource we supplement the Syllabus with a second resource we call a Roadmap (discussed in the following section).

- ✓ Resource title, authors' and instructor's names, registration number, and term information; syllabus web pages should bear creation or "last revised" dates if the term date isn't included at the top
- ✓ Resource instructor's contact information, plus contact information for technical support
- ✓ Resource description, perhaps the same as the description used for a resource catalog listing, but probably more detailed; should list any prerequisites or special technical requirements for the resource
- ✓ Resource objectives or expected outcomes; what learners can expect to learn by completion of the resource
- ✓ Required texts or materials: any books or other materials, such as software, not made available in the resource but required for the resource
- ✓ Explanation of grading criteria and components of total grade: a list of all quizzes, exams, graded assignments, and forms of class participation, with grade percentages or points; criteria for a passing grade; policies on late assignments
- ✓ Participation standard: minimum number of postings per week in discussion and any standards for quality of participation
- ✓ Explanation of resource geography and procedures: how the online classroom is organized; how learners should proceed each week for class activities; how to label assignments sent by email; where to post materials in the classroom; any special instructions
- ✓ Week-by-week schedule: topics, assignments, readings, quizzes, activities, and web resources for each week, with specific dates
- ✓ Any relevant institutional policies, procedures, or resources not mentioned above

Sometimes it's difficult to anticipate every issue that may arise during the class and to include that in your syllabus. There's obviously a balance between readable brevity and a syllabus so voluminous as to be intimidating. Whatever you don't include in your initial documents may still be introduced by means of announcement areas, weekly email sent to all learners, or postings in an appropriate forum. You will also want to use these means to reinforce important elements of your syllabus as the resource progresses.

Supplying Information More Than Once

It's easy to lose track of where and when something was said in threaded discussions or via email. When you give directions, it may not be possible for learners to simply link back to them at a later date. For that reason, you should provide important instructions in more than one location.

Important! In an online environment, redundancy is often more effective than elegant succinctness.

LEARN:How to turn your face-to-face class into an online resource

Roadmaps – A Solution to Easy Learner Navigation in Online Learning.

Roadmaps can be a game changer in online learning. The rationale for using Roadmaps, is that learners can easily understand what they are expected to do in each online session. At a glance, learners can see the title, date, learning outcomes of the online session, The Read Its, with convenience hyperlinks to what they are expected to read. The Apply Its, with clear expectations and links to the learning activities, resources, previous learners assignments or eSamples, videos, and rubrics, explaining how they will be evaluated. Discuss Its, with questions they are expected to discuss to reflect on the content and their learning.

Roadmaps facilitate learner confidence and engagement by helping them plan ahead. Learners can see weekly commitments for the entire learning event and when assignments and tasks are due.

How to Use the Roadmap

First, send the learners a link to the Roadmap, prior to the resources beginning. During the first session (either virtual or F2F), have the learners open the Roadmap on their computer and explore the Roadmap during your explanation. Answer any questions.

Benefits of Using Roadmaps

Designing a Roadmap takes a lot of time. But it usually only takes minor tweaking to reuse it. The benefits of Roadmaps are (1) learners can easily determine what they are expected to do during each session, (2) learners have an easier time navigating the resource, and (3) you will get a lot fewer questions.

I hope you will consider using Roadmaps in your online teaching. I am certain it will save both you and your learners time and frustration. To see a sample of an example of a Roadmap, click on the link below. Please feel free to adapt or adopt this RoadMap for your online teaching event.

<http://www.cs.ucy.ac.cy/projects/digit/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/RoadMap-Nov26-1.pdf>

Netiquette and Good Practices for Online Discussions

What is netiquette?

Netiquette is a set of conventions that can help ensure online communications are clear, respectful and courteous. Posts in the discussion boards will be viewed by your tutor/s and classmates. It is important that you ensure that your messages are respectful of everyone's views and opinions (even if you do not necessarily agree with them), polite, professional, and lawful at all times.

The following underlying guidelines are essential to follow to ensure effective discussions where all participants feel respected, motivated and safe participating.

Guidelines

Keep postings short. If you have a lot to say, consider posting it as an attachment and providing a summary in the body of the post.

Watch the use of capital letters, as they are equivalent to shouting. You can use bold or italics to add emphasis to text.

Remember that it is difficult in text messages to convey tone of voice, facial cues, making it more difficult for readers to grasp the emotional tone of your text. Avoid humour and sarcasm as these can be misinterpreted. You may find that emoticons enable you to express some of the more subtle nuances of conversations. You can find a list of common emoticons in this emoticons document.

Yes, spelling and grammar do matter! Take time to proofread your text before submitting it. Think through what you want to say and how you want to say it – be concise, logical, and clear. Follow the standard rules of English grammar and composition when writing. Avoid slang unless otherwise instructed. Spell out any abbreviations when first used in the message you are writing. If references are required, be sure to use the appropriate citation style.

When responding to a post in the discussion forum, create content for your message by summarising in your first sentence what point you're responding to. For example, "I'd like to expand on Sally T's point about portfolio assessment...." It is not necessary to repeat the entire message you are replying to. Edit out what isn't directly applicable to your reply.

Follow the discussion board guidelines provided by your tutor.

Participate and contribute to online discussions with meaningful posts. Share information and experiences that may help others. If another learner posts a message making a point with which you agree, don't post "I agree". It takes time to open a post and when learners do take the time and see "I agree", it can feel like a waste of time. Even if you agree, do not post, "I agree". Either do not respond or say more. Perhaps explain why you agree or bring more evidence to support your position. For example, "I agree because...". Equally, if you disagree, explain why.

Avoid dominating the online discussion or being a persistent 'lurker'. It is not necessary to respond to every post. Only post when you have something meaningful to say. Just like in face-to-face classes, learners who dominate conversations, respond to every post, say little when they post, and talk or upload postings that are extremely long tend to annoy their classmates.

Post only appropriate comments relating to the subject being discussed. Although off topic comments may sometimes provide background information on the topic, try not to stray too far from the subject at hand.

Before creating a new thread, check whether a similar discussion already exists. If so, you should reply to the existing thread rather than repeat what has already been said elsewhere. When you start a discussion thread, use a meaningful subject line that summarises concisely the content of your post. Do not use meaningless phrases like 'Hi' or 'Hey'.

Format your posts to make them easier to read. Use formatting, bullet points and headings to add clarity to your communication.

Respect the privacy of others when posting. Use pseudonyms as appropriate and include a statement as a preface to your writing that you have done this. Do not post private mail in the discussion board.

Remember to show respect for the opinions and ideas of others, even when you disagree. Show respect for cultural and religious differences when expressing your opinions. Offensive language, and bothering others online is not acceptable or tolerated.

Avoid posting advertisements or junk mail in discussion boards.

Do not expect instant replies to the messages in forums. Discussions in the forum are asynchronous and do not take place live. Participants will add to the discussions over a set period of time.

What's the purpose of this learning activity?

- develop a learning community and a safe place for learners to ask questions, take risks and learn
- become familiar with the University of Malta's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) learning tools such as the discussion group and chat.

The success of this professional development resource depends on your active participation and that of your colleagues. You will be dependent on your colleagues for support, information and resources. Capitalise on their experience. Act as consultants for one another providing constructive feedback and support to your colleagues' work and ideas, and graciously welcoming and accepting constructive feedback from them.

Activities

Step 1 - Build your own learner page

Creating a learning environment is a pre-requisite to effective online learning. We are asking that you participate in an initial icebreaker activity to introduce yourself to your colleagues so we can begin to build a learning community. It entails creating your own learner page. Don't panic-it really is very easy and should only take about 15 minutes.

We encourage you to develop your learner page by uploading a photo and telling us about yourself. Your learner page is your public face in the resource, and we would all love to see it! Remember to add only the information that you feel comfortable sharing. Here are a few ideas that may make your learner page more interesting to your colleagues. Share these ideas if you want or make up new ones:

- who you are
- faculty/department
- area of research
- a brief description of the learning event that you will be designing one online session for during this resource

Creating a learner page and reading your colleagues' learner pages is the first step to getting to know one another online and building a learning community. Some people feel that online learning isolates the learner. If you create a

learning community online learning can be quite a social place to learn. You can create a social hangout or pub discussion forum where learners can organise social events. Discussion forums are great places to discuss ideas and develop critical thinking. Question forums provide an opportunity for learners to ask questions 24/7. Learners in online classes have shared that as a result of reading each other's learner pages, they have gotten to know more about more classmates than they have in face-to-face classes. Developing learner pages is one way to create a social presence online, which is an important aspect in online learning.

Step 2 – Create your learner page

Follow these **instructions** to set up your learner page or profile on the VLE. Congratulations!! Your learner profile is complete!!

Step 3 – Read your colleagues' learner pages

Once you have created your own learner page go to the side menu bar and under Navigation click on 'Participants'. Click on the names of one of your classmates. This will open up their learner page. Read all of your colleague's learner pages in your group. Remember, in a learning community it is important to:

- provide support and guidance to one another
- share your ideas
- share your resources
- tell each other about your learning experiences.

It is extremely important that you get to know the people in your "virtual learning group". Communicate frequently with your group members. Your learning group and other classmates are there to support you on an ongoing basis. Throughout the resource you will work closely as virtual team members. You will be asked to collaborate online with each other and provide each other with constructive feedback. This is not always an easy task, as many of you know from current and previous work experiences. Effective teams take some time at the beginning of their work life to discuss issues and develop a written statement of purpose, goals related to that purpose, and common working norms. This may be something you wish to discuss with your team members. Decide how you will use the online discussion and chat tools to work together to complete resource activities and assignments.

Step 4 – Comment on one of your learning group member's learner pages

After reading all of your learning groups learner pages, send one of your colleagues a message welcoming them to your group and pointing out something you have in common.

References

Creating an Effective Online Syllabus, extracted from the book, *Teaching Online - A Practical Guide* by Susan Ko, Steve Rossen

Faculty Orientation Online Syllabus Checklist. **<http://online.valencia.cc.fl.us/Faculty/VOfacultysyllabuscheck.htm>**

Valencia Community College's guidelines for online resource syllabi; the site is maintained by the college's Internet Development Center.

TheOnlineResourceSyllabus. **<http://ollie.dcccd.edu/Faculty/InfoForFaculty/DistrictResources/secure/olsyll2.htm>**

A syllabus template offered by Dallas TeleCollege of the Dallas County Community College District for the district's distance learning "teleresources."

Syllabus. **<http://oit.idbsu.edu/fp/syllabus.htm>**

Skip Knox at Boise State University Computing Services offers guidelines on the basic elements of an online syllabus and tips on how to use an online syllabus for a face-to-face class.

<https://www.ijspe.com/vol-3-no-2-february-2021-6.pdf>

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Discussion Board Netiquette Retrieved October 3, 2014

Good online communication practice (n.d.) Retrieved October 3, 2014

Core rules of Netiquette Retrieved October 3, 2014

Appendix: A Sample Syllabus

The following is an excerpt from a syllabus used in a real resource taught by Susan Ko. It was made available to learners as a Rich Text Format document that could be easily downloaded and printed out. Key points of information contained within this syllabus were repeated during the resource in other areas of the classroom. For example, an introductory message gave a general overview of the resource and directed learners to the main geographical areas of the classroom. Frequent announcements reminded learners of upcoming deadlines or reemphasized the requirements for assignments. Any e-mailed questions about the syllabus were redirected to the shared classroom space, so that all learners could have the benefit of instructor responses.

Please note that web sites mentioned here are from a version of the resource taught in 1999 and may no longer be active.

NEW TRENDS AND PRACTICES IN ONLINE EDUCATION

F1675, May 25–June 22

Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Susan Ko

Class e-mail: Through internal e-mail, type in Susan Ko. Available for real-time chat by appointment through e-mail.

Resource Description and Goals

As one of the advanced enrichment electives in the UCLA Extension Online Teaching Program, this resource is designed for busy professional educators, administrators, distance learning coordinators, online instructors, and others who have already begun to involve themselves in the delivery, design, management, or teaching of online resources.

Although there are many ways that those of us involved in online education keep ourselves posted about recent developments—through word-of-mouth, conference, or listserv-derived information; web reports; and references—these seldom provide us with a coherent view of how we might apply these new developments to our own areas of interest. This resource will provide a brief but focused exploration of trends and possibilities. Due to the nature of the subject matter, both topics and readings will change each term this resource is offered.

In a short but intensive four-week period, we will focus on new developments in online technologies, teaching and learning approaches, online resource management, and miscellaneous issues related to online education, such as faculty training, property and copyright questions, accreditation, testing security, etc.

This resource will emphasize real-life examples rather than theories. Visits to

web sites, demonstrations, and guest speakers will offer concrete and varied perspectives. Participants will also benefit from sharing the experiences of others enrolled in the class in our seminar-like discussion forums.

Grading

100 points total:

- Participation, 40 points: reading, posting at least twice a week in class discussions. Note: Quality of contributions counts. You will not get extra points for simply posting beyond the number required. You can continue to contribute to previous weeks' discussions up until June 21 of the last week and still get credit.
- Journal 1 and 2 assignments. 30 points total. Journal assignment 1 is due on June 7 and assignment 2 is due on June 13 in my email box.
- Final assignment, 30 points, due June 21, in the classroom's final commentary area within the discussion forum. Participants may continue to read and comment on these final papers until June 25. Participation credit is given based on the quality of your comments on classmates' contributions.

The journal and final assignments are due by midnight PST of the date indicated; 1/2 point per day will be deducted for late assignments.

How to Send and Name Assignments

All assignments should bear the subject line as follows: First initial+last name+J1 or J2 or Fin (Example, SkoJ2). Also, if you are sending the first two assignments as attachments to email, your name and the assignment number must be included in the text of the document attached. The final commentary should be pasted into the discussion forum, not attached.

Procedures

Each week, follow the instructions contained in the syllabus for activities and readings, read the materials I've posted in the "Topics" presentation area, then discuss the issues raised there and in your readings and activities by replying to the discussion topics established in the discussion forum for that week. . . .

WEEK THREE: Messages and Media, June 8–June 14

Topics:

New uses of technologies; networks and applications, standards, and their impact; Steve Rossen, guest, to discuss integrating RealPresenter.

Week Three Readings:

1. Kenneth Klingenstein's "The Technical Realities of Virtual Learning: An Overview for the Non-Technologist" at <http://www.educause.edu/ir/>

library/html/cem9815.html. This article might be more technical than you might like, despite the title! However, it is worth reading for the perspective it gives us on issues that have an impact on the directions online education might take.

2. Read Steve Rossen's sample web page, "Web Resources," and then view his RealPresenter, both offered in the topics folder.
3. (Optional) Take part in one of the two real-time chats scheduled for this week on June 9 at 5:30 P.M. or June 12 at 9:30 A.M., U.S. Pacific Time. Each chat will be 45 minutes long, and transcripts will be logged in this week's presentation area for the benefit of those who cannot attend. The topic for each chat will be the promise of Internet2, and there will be 5–10 minutes reserved for open forum-style questions and comments about any aspect of the class.

Activities:

1. Internet2 Activities:
 - a. Read a very brief introduction to Internet2 by visiting the Internet2 site at **<http://www.internet2.edu/html/about-i2.html>**.
 - b. Visit the Internet2 applications page at **<http://apps.internet2.edu/sept98/applications.htm>**. Explore these pages on applications to get an idea of the range of activities that would be enabled by the greater power of the networks envisioned by Internet2.
 - c. Listen to the audio or read the transcript of an interview "What's New with Internet2?" with Ted Hanss, at **<http://seminars.cren.net/events/internet2.html>** as well as the update from April 1999, "Update on Internet2," with Doug Van Houweling, at **<http://seminars.cren.net/events/net2net.html>**.
 - d. Optional: If you already have the G2 RealPlayer, you might want to watch the excellent seminar presentation on Internet2 by Judith Boettcher, entitled "Why Does Higher Education Need Internet2?" It's available at <http://seminars.cren.net/internet2.html>.

Does Higher Education Need Internet2?" It's available at **<http://seminars.cren.net/internet2.html>**.

2. Visit the IMS standards site at <http://www.imsproject.org/> and read the links to Background (<http://www.imsproject.org/background.html>), Scenarios (<http://www.imsproject.org/scenarios.html>), and FAQs for Providers (<http://www.ims.org/faqProviders.html>).
3. Journal assignment 2: Due in my e-mail box by June 14. Please write 150–200 words on one of the following questions:
 - a. What are the most challenging technological developments or issues related to online education in your own professional life?
 - b. Please comment on your own interest in any technological issues referred to in this week's reading and activities and what impact this (these) might have on you or your institution's work in online education.

MODULE 2

Foundations of University Teaching and Learning

Session Learning Outcomes

This session will help you:

- explain the benefits of documenting learning outcomes.
- explain how taxonomies of learning can contribute to writing learning outcomes.
- write effective learning outcomes for a learning event.

Learning event Design: Situational Factors

- Specific context of the teaching/learning situation
- Nature of the subject
- Characteristics of the learners
- Expectations of external groups: employers, NCHFE
- Characteristics of the lecturer

Learning Outcomes

- Terminology - aims, goals, learning objectives, **learning outcomes (LOs)**, competence-based outcomes.
- **Definition:** A LO is a statement of...
 - what the learner is to learn;
 - what the learner will be able to do as a result of the learning process;
 - the end result of the learning process.

Beginning with the end in mind!

Where to start when designing LOs?

- When I dream about the best outcomes from my study-unit, what will learners have learned?
- If I think "out a year", what will learners in my learning event be able to do that they could not do as well before the learning event?

Why document LOs?

- To provide guidance for learners.
- To reinforce the learners' belief that there is a real point to what is being taught and assessed.
- To ensure alignment of the learning event activities, assessments and content.
- To communicate expectations about LOs to the learner, colleagues, UM administration, employers etc.

Where to start when designing LOs?

Programme of Study Learning Outcomes	Study-Unit 1	Study-Unit 2	Study-Unit 3	Study-Unit...
1.	✓			
2.		✓	✓	
3.	✓			
4.	✓		✓	
...				

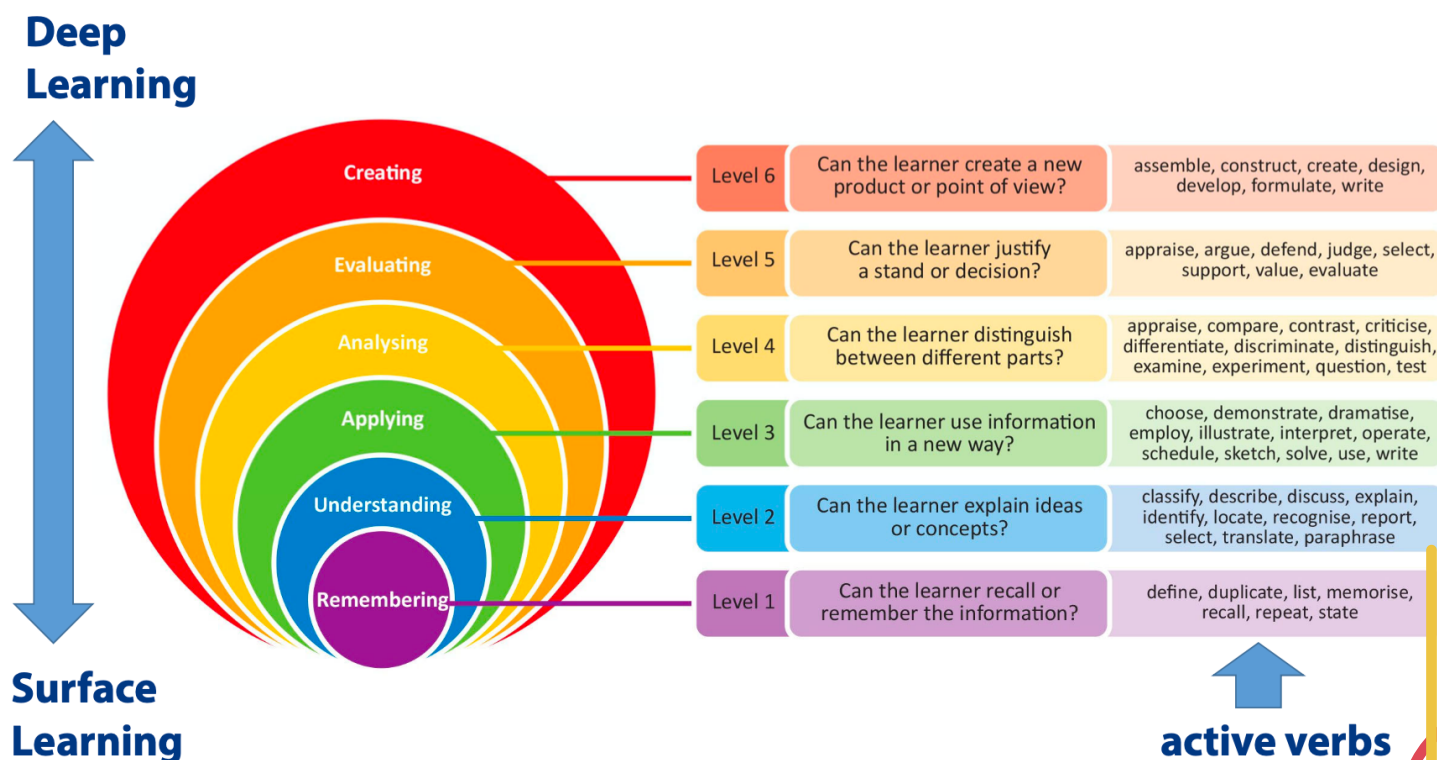
Programme of Study LOs

- Subject knowledge and understanding
- Key or transferable skills
- Attitudes and values

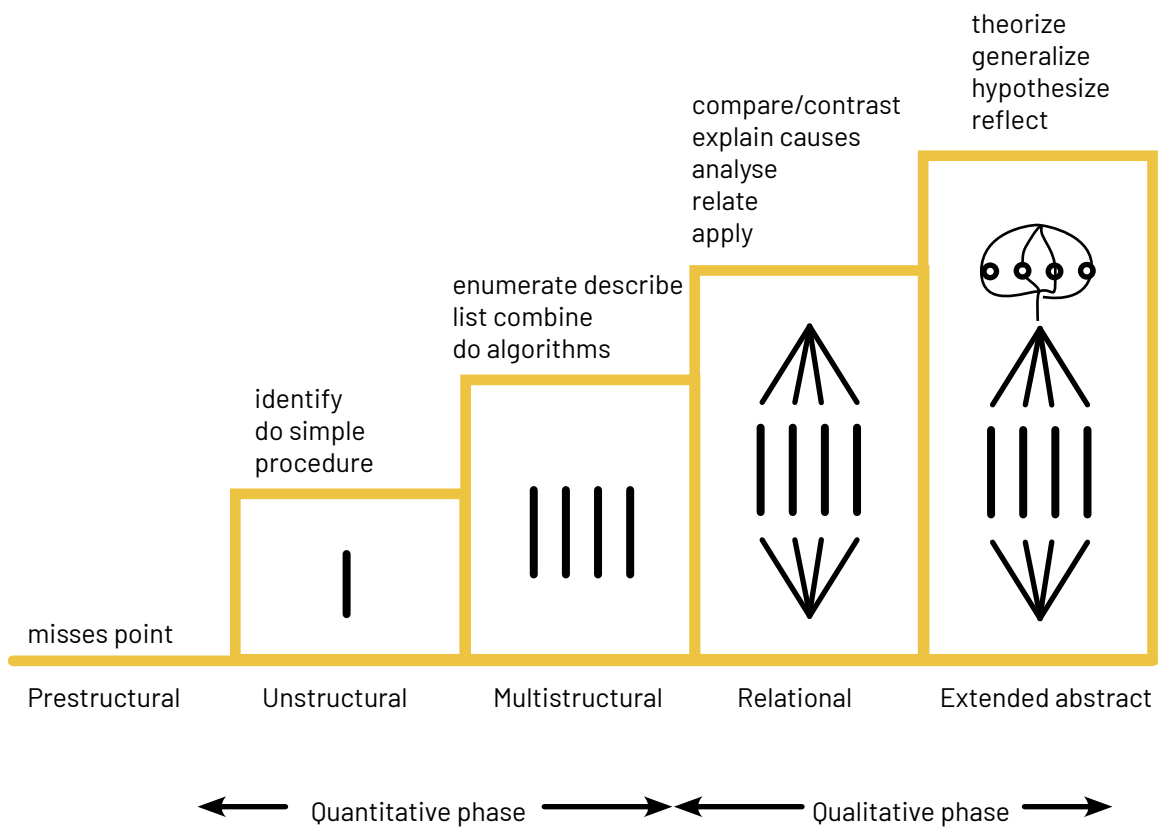
Types of LOs

Traditionally, LOs were organised as:

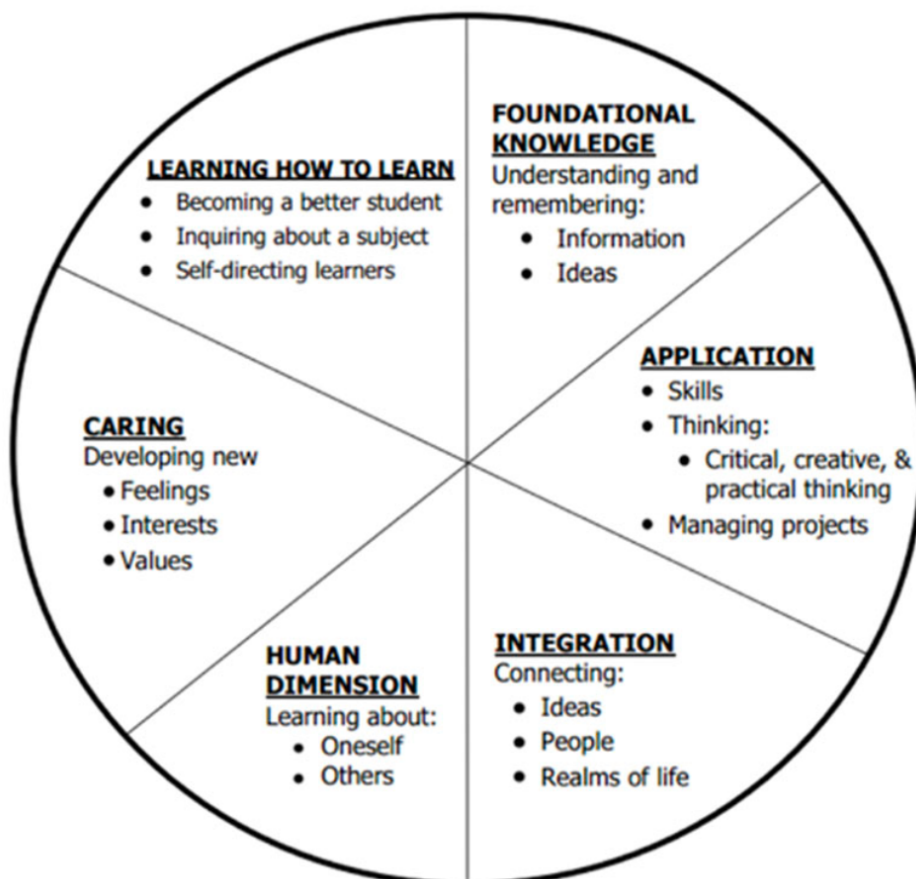
1. Knowledge / Understanding – COGNITIVE
2. Skills – PSYCHOMOTOR
3. Values / Attitudes – AFFECTIVE



Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes (SOLO) Taxonomy



Fink's Taxonomy of Significant learning



Learning Outcomes

- LO - a statement that describes the abilities, knowledge, and skills learners can expect to develop in our study- unit.
- Each learning event should have 4 to 6 LOs.
- The learning event LOs need to be aligned to the LOs of the programme of studies.

Good Learning Outcomes

Specific - accurately states what the successful learner is expected to achieve.

Measurable - open to assessment which accurately assesses whether or not the outcome has been achieved

Achievable - should be within the range of abilities of the learner

Relevant - should be relatable to the key aims of the study- unit.

Time-bound - must be achievable within the duration of the learning event.

Structure of Effective LOs

A set of LOs should start with a leading...

- On successful completion of this learning event, learners will be able to:
- In order to pass this learning event, learners must demonstrate the ability to:
- By the end of this session, learners should be able to:

Active Verb	indicating specifically what you want learners to know, consider or do.	...define
Focus or Object	indicating the process, product or outcome of the action e.g. 'theories', 'research plan' and 'principles of ethical research'.	what behaviours constitute unprofessional practice
Context or Condition or Qualifier	indicating any conditions that may apply such as '...using the appropriate referencing system', '...as identified in ..', and '...relevant to...'	in the solicitor-client professional
Active Verb	...review and critique	
Focus or Object	a performance art work	
Context or Condition or Qualifier	with reference to contemporary theory of artistic criticism.	

Examples of LOs

By the end of this session, learners should be able to:

- list the criteria to be taken into account when caring for a patient with tuberculosis.
- explain the social, economic and political effects of World War I on the post-war world.
- apply knowledge of infection control in the maintenance of patient care facilities.
- compare and contrast the different electronic business models.
- Evaluate marketing strategies for different electronic business models.

Structure of Effective LOs

...understand basic human development theory.

...appreciate music from other cultures.

- How do you observe someone “understanding” a theory or “appreciating” other cultures?
- How easy will it be to measure “understanding” or “appreciation”?

...understand basic human development theory.



...identify and describe the major theories of human development.



...appreciate music from other cultures.



...identify the characteristics of music from other cultures.

Avoid these verbs...

understand	know	be aware of	value
appreciate	be conscious of	see	get
comprehend	be familiar with	learn	apprehend
grasp	have knowledge of	perceive	accept

These verbs are often vague, have multiple interpretations, or are simply difficult to observe/measure.

Bloom's Taxonomy

Action Verbs

KNOWLEDGE	Learner recalls or recognizes information, ideas, and principles in the approximate form in which they were learned.	arrange define describe duplicate	identify label list match	memorize name order outline	recognize relate recall repeat	reproduce select state	The learner will define the 6 levels of Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain.
COMPREHENSION	Learner translates, comprehends, or interprets information based on prior learning.	explain summarize paraphrase describe illustrate classify	convert defend describe discuss distinguish	estimate explain express extend generalized give example(s)	identify indicate infer locate paraphrase predict	recognize rewrite review select summarize translate	The learner will explain the purpose of Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain.
APPLICATION	Learner selects, transfers, and uses data and principles to complete a problem or task with a minimum of direction.	use compute solve demonstrate apply construct	apply change choose compute demonstrate discover dramatize	employ illustrate interpret manipulate modify operate	practice predict prepare produce relate schedule	show sketch solve use write	The learner will write an instructional objective for each level of Bloom's taxonomy.
ANALYSIS	Learner distinguishes, classifies, and relates the assumptions, hypotheses, evidence, or structure of a statement or question	analyze categorize compare contrast separate apply	change discover choose compute demonstrate dramatize	employ illustrate interpret manipulate modify operate	practice predict prepare produce relate schedule	show sketch solve use write	The learner will compare and contrast the cognitive and affective domains.
SYNTHESIS	Learner originates, integrates, and combines ideas into a product, plan or proposal that is new to him or her.	create design hypothesize invent develop arrange assemble	categorize collect combine comply compose construct create	design develop devise explain formulate generate plan	prepare rearrange reconstruct relate reorganize revise	rewrite set up summarize synthesize tell write	The learner will design a classification scheme for writing educational objectives that combines the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.
EVALUATION	Learner appraises, assesses, or critiques on a basis of specific standards and criteria.	Judge Recommend Critique Justify Appraise Argue	Assess Attach Choose Compare Conclude Contrast	Defend Describe Discriminate Estimate Evaluate	Explain Judge Justify Interpret Relate	Predict Rate Select Summarize Support Value	The learner will judge the effectiveness of writing objectives using Bloom's taxonomy.

Writing measurable learning objectives

<https://teachonline.asu.edu/2012/07/writing-measurable-learning-objectives/>

Writing learning objectives

This material was excerpted and adapted from the following web site:

<http://www.utexas.edu/academic/dia/assessment/iar/learners/plan/objectives/>

What is a learning objective?

- A learning objective answers the question: What is it that your learners should be able to do at the end of the class session and resource that they could not do before?
- A learning objective makes clear the intended learning outcome rather than what form the instruction will take.
- Learning objectives focus on learner performance. Action verbs that are specific, such as list, describe, report, compare, demonstrate, and analyze, should state the behaviors learners will be expected to perform.

Well-written learning objectives can give learners precise statements of what is expected of them and provide guidelines for assessing learner progress. Our goal for learners is learning and if learners don't know what they should be able to do at the end of class then it will be difficult for them to reach that goal.

Clearly defined objectives form the foundation for selecting appropriate content, learning activities, and assessment measures. If objectives of the resource are not clearly understood by both instructor and learners, if your learning activities do not relate to the objectives and the content that you think is important, then your methods of assessment, which are supposed to indicate to both learner and instructor how effective the learning and teaching process has been, will be at best misleading, and, at worst, irrelevant or unfair.

Think about the lesson you will be teaching. What would you like for each learner to know and be able to do when he/she has completed the lesson?

Learning objectives

Specific statements describing what you and your learners intend to achieve as a result of learning that occurs both in class and outside of class. They can be categorized in the following way:

1. Cognitive objectives emphasize knowing, conceptualizing, comprehending,

applying, synthesizing, and evaluating. These objectives deal with learners' knowledge of the subject matter, and how learners demonstrate this knowledge.

2. Psychomotor objectives involve the physical skills and dexterity related to the instruction. Successful instruction involves teaching new skills or coordination of old ones (e.g., physical coordination involved in playing tennis or a musical instrument).

Attitudinal objectives

Specific statements about attitudes, values and emotions that learners will have as a result of taking part in class activities.

What learning objectives emphasize

1. Learning objectives emphasize observed activity

The only way you can determine whether or not a learner has learned something is to observe some kind of behavior that indicates learning has taken place. This behavior may range from correctly answering multiple-choice questions to requiring that the student actually demonstrates a skill.

EXAMPLE

Given a thesis statement in class, the learner will write 3 topic sentences for paragraph development of the given statement.

Instead of...

The learner will be able to write appropriate topic sentences for paragraph development of a thesis statement.

EXAMPLE

Given 4 theorems that he/she has never seen, the learner will formulate a proof for each theorem by drawing on elements from previous sources and will rate them together to form a pattern proof—with 80% accuracy.

Instead of...

The learner will understand the concept of the Derivative.

2. Learning objectives emphasize learner activity

Instructors sometimes state objectives in terms of their activities. However, learning objectives focus exclusively on learner behaviors, not on the behaviors of the instructor.

EXAMPLE

Given the necessary materials, the learner will glue a black and white photo clipping from a magazine onto a 6x9" paper. The learner will extend the black, white, and gray design of the photo to cover the area of the paper with a relevant

design—in class.

Instead of...

The learner will be able to demonstrate understanding of color theory.

EXAMPLE

The learner will listen to several letters read from the editorial page of a newspaper or magazine. He/she will participate in a discussion about the type of logic employed, the effectiveness of the evidence, and the validity of the argument.

Instead of...

The learner will understand the processes of inductive and deductive reasoning.

3. Learning objectives emphasize learner outcomes

Instructors often state objectives in terms of process or procedure while learning objectives refer to the end results of instruction. A good learning objective states what a learner will know or be able to do at the end of instruction.

EXAMPLE

Given a list of chemical compounds, the learner will select 1 that is found at each step in the process of respiration and 1 that is found at each step in the process of photosynthesis.

Instead of...

The learner will understand the fundamentals of respiration.

EXAMPLE

In class, the learner will assign to each of 10 given statements 1 of the following terms: business ethics, ethics and the law, professional standards in business, and conflicts of interest; 70% accuracy.

Instead of ...

The learner will examine the ethical conduct of American business.

Advantages of using learning objectives

The writing of learning objectives focuses attention away from content and onto the learners. This re-focusing often produces revisions in teaching methods.

- 1. Planning instruction:** Once you have developed learning objectives for a resource you can more rationally sequence instruction, allot time to topics, assemble materials, prepare outlines and booklists, etc. Learning objectives can also be used as a guide to teaching, as when you plan different instructional methods for presenting various types of content based on the desired learning outcomes (e.g., small-group editing of reports to give learners experience in evaluating content logic and correct usage).
- 2. Facilitating evaluation:** Learning objectives can facilitate various evaluation activities, evaluating learners, evaluating instruction, evaluating the curriculum. They can form the basis for grading or for determining levels of competence in a mastery learning system. They can also be used to

demonstrate effective teaching by matching learner learning, as measured by exams, etc., to the desired outcomes.

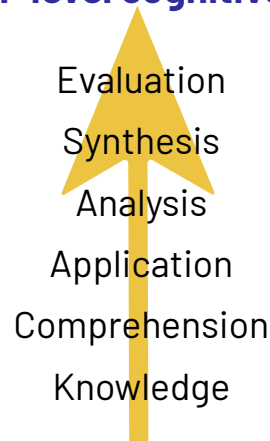
- 2. Aiding in communication with others:** There is a need to communicate learning objectives to others: between instructor and learner, with other instructors. For example, exchanging learning objectives within departments is the most specific way to communicate to one's colleagues what you really cover in your resource.
- 3. Improving instruction:** If you intend to improve instruction in a particular lesson or resource, you usually begin with the learning objectives for that lesson or resource.
- 4. Producing new insights:** The process of clarifying objectives may produce major changes in those who engage in the effort. For example, instructors who spend time developing learning objectives are said to acquire increased understanding about what is a feasible goal. When more general goals are explicitly identified, many specific sub-goals emerge. Since it may not be possible to reach all the sub-goals, a hierarchy or "trade-off system" of goals must be produced.

Writing learning objectives using Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's Taxonomy of the cognitive domain, or thinking skills, can be helpful in constructing resource learning objectives. Bloom and colleagues found that over 95% of exam questions required learners to activate low-level thinking skills such as recall (1956). In addition, research has shown that learners remember more content when they have learned a topic through higher thinking skills such as application or evaluation.

Bloom's Taxonomy is a hierarchy of six cognitive skills arranged from less to more complex.

Higher-level cognitive skills



Lower-level cognitive skills

Knowledge

Recognizes learners' ability to use rote memorization and recall certain facts.

Action verbs to help write objectives or exam questions for this domain:
cite, define, identify, label, list, match, name, recognize, reproduce, select, state.

EXAMPLE

Learning objectives	Exam questions
The learners will recall the four major food groups without error.	Name the four major food groups.
The learners will list at least three characteristics peculiar to the Cubist movement.	List three characteristics that are unique to the Cubist movement.
The learners will be able to define gram-positive bacteria.	Define gram-positive bacteria.

Comprehension

Involves learners' ability to read resource content, understand and interpret important information and put other's ideas into their own words.

Action verbs to help write objectives or exam questions for this domain:
classify, convert, describe, distinguish between, explain, extend, give examples, illustrate, interpret, paraphrase, summarize, translate.

EXAMPLE

Learning objectives	Exam questions
The learners will summarize the main events of a story in grammatically correct English.	Using grammatically correct English, please summarize the main events – in three or four sentences – from the news story given below.
The learners will describe in prose what is shown in graph form.	Given a graph of production trends in automobiles, describe what the graph represents in a memo to your boss.

From a “story-problem” description, learners will convert the story to a mathematical manipulation needed to solve the problem.

A researcher wonders whether attending a private high school leads to higher or lower performance on an exam of social skills. A random sample of 100 learners from a private school produces a mean score of 71.30 on the exam, and the national mean score for learners from public schools is 75.62 ($s_x = 29.0$). Convert the information in this word problem into a mathematical representation that will enable you to solve the problem.

Application

Learners take new concepts and apply them to another situation.

Action verbs to help write objectives or exam questions for this domain:
apply, arrange, compute, construct, demonstrate, discover, modify, operate, predict, prepare, produce, relate, show, solve, use.

EXAMPLE

Learning objectives	Exam questions
The learners will multiply fractions in class with 90 percent accuracy.	Solve for the ten following fraction multiplication problems. Please make sure to show all your work.
The learners will apply previously learned information about socialism to reach an answer.	According to our definition of socialism, which of the following nations would be considered to be socialist?
The learners will demonstrate the principle of reinforcement to classroom interactions.	In a teaching simulation with your peers role-playing 6th grade learners, demonstrate the principle of reinforcement in classroom interactions and prepare a 1/2 page description of what happened during the simulation that validated the principle.

Analysis

Learners have the ability to take new information and break it down into parts to differentiate between them.

Action verbs to help write objectives or exam questions for this domain: analyze, associate, determine, diagram, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, estimate, infer, order, outline, point out, separate, subdivide.

EXAMPLE

Learning objectives	Exam questions
The learners will read a presidential debate and point out the passages that attack a political opponent personally rather than the opponent's political programs.	From the short presidential debate transcribed below: Differentiate the passages that attacked a political opponent personally, and those that attacked an opponent's political programs.
The learners will point out the positive and negative points presented in an argument for the abolition of guns.	From the argument given below, analyze the positive and negative points presented concerning the abolition of guns and write a brief (2-3 page) narrative of your analysis.
Learners will discriminate among a list of possible steps to determine which one(s) would lead to increased reliability for a test.	Determine which of the following steps would most likely lead to an increase in the reliability estimate for a test: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increasing the number of persons tested from 500 to 1,000.• Selecting items so that half were very difficult and half very easy• Increasing the length of the test with more of the same kinds of items• Increasing the homogeneity of the group of subjects tested.

Synthesis

Learners are able to take various pieces of information and form a whole creating a pattern where one did not previously exist.

Action verbs to help write objectives or exam questions for this domain: combine, compile, compose, construct, create, design, develop, devise, formulate, integrate, modify, organize, plan, propose, rearrange, reorganize, revise, rewrite, tell, write.

EXAMPLE

Learning objectives	Exam questions
The learners will write a different but plausible ending to a short story.	Develop one plausible ending for all three short stories below.
After studying the current economic policies of the United States, learner groups will design their own goals for fiscal and monetary policies.	Working in your groups and considering the current economic policies of the US that we have been studying, develop your goals for employment, price levels, and rate of real economic growth for the next three years. Write these goals on the newsprint and be ready to discuss why your goals are feasible.
The learners will design a series of chemical operations to separate quantitatively the elements in a solution.	In the lab, you will be given a solution to analyze to see what elements make up the solution. Then design a series of chemical operations to separate quantitatively the elements in the solution.

Evaluation

Involves learners' ability to look at someone else's ideas or principles and see the worth of the work and the value of the conclusions.

Action verbs to help write objectives or exam questions for this domain:
appraise, assess, compare, conclude, contrast, criticize, discriminate, evaluate, judge, justify, support, weigh.

EXAMPLE

Learning objectives	Exam questions
The learners will use the principles of socialism to evaluate the US economic system.	Using the basic principles of socialism discussed in this resource, evaluate the US economic system by providing key arguments to support your judgment.

Given any research study, evaluate the appropriateness of the conclusions reached based on the data presented.

For years, misinformation about negative effects of aspartame has proliferated on the internet. The committee evaluated peer-reviewed research from the scientific literature on this topic and concluded: "Aspartame consumption is not associated with adverse effects in the general population". – Given the data we've looked at on this topic, evaluate how appropriate this conclusion is and defend your answer.

The learners will compare two pieces of sculpture, giving reasons for their positive evaluation of one over the other.

Two pieces of sculpture from different eras and artists are displayed. Study these two pieces, use the compare-contrast method to determine which piece you prefer and write a 2-3 page report that describes your thinking process as you studied these pieces. Utilize the skills you have learned as we have studied various pieces of sculpture over the past two weeks.

What is the Difference between Aims and Outcomes?

Aims of learning events or programmes are broad general statements of teaching intention and should

- indicate what the tutor intends to cover in a block of learning in terms of general content and direction
- be written in terms of teaching intention rather than learner learning

e.g. "To familiarise learners with modes of satiric writing in eighteenth century literature."

Learning Outcomes should

- be brief, clear and specific
- indicate what the learner is expected to achieve and how s/he is expected to demonstrate that achievement
- be written from the learner's point of view
- be written in a manner whereby learning can be assessed through the use of an appropriate assessment method
- be derived closely from and consistent with the aims

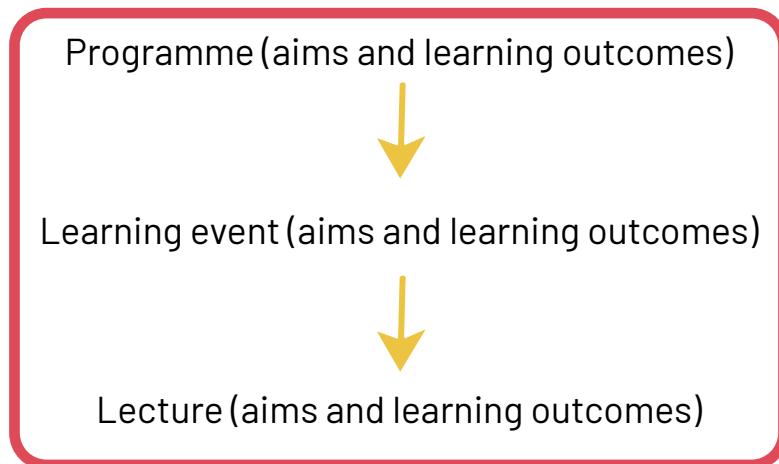
e.g. "By the end of this learning event, learners will be able to provide a written analysis of the relationship between the language of satire and literary form by close examination of a selected number of eighteenth century texts."

Therefore...

Aims are more concerned with teaching and the management of learning

Outcomes are more concerned with the learning that is actually to be achieved by the learner

Relationship between aims and learning outcomes of programmes, learning events and lectures



- There is confusion in the literature as to whether learning objectives belong to the teacher-centred approach or to the learner-centred approach
- 'Objectives' complicate the situation, since they may be written in terms of teaching intention or expected learning outcomes, i.e., some refer to teaching and some to learning
- Learning outcomes are more precise, easier to compose and far clearer than objectives
- For these reasons, it is recommended that resource information is provided solely in terms of learning outcomes

Purpose of Learning Outcomes

1. Programme and Learning event Design

- Help ensure consistency of delivery across learning events and programmes
- Clarify areas of overlap between learning events and programmes
- Highlight the relationship between teaching, learning and assessment
- Help the development of assessment criteria and more effective, varied assessment
- Help determine precisely the key purposes of a resource and how the components of the syllabus fit together

2. Quality Assurance

- Increase transparency and comparability of standards between and within qualifications

- Possess greater credibility and utility
- Act as points of reference for establishing and assessing standards

3. Learners

- Specify exactly what the learner will be able to achieve
- Afford clear information to help learners with their choice of learning events and programmes
- Afford clear information to employers and higher education institutions on achievements/characteristics associated with particular qualifications

4. Mobility

- Contribute to the mobility of learners by facilitating the recognition of their qualifications
- Improve the transparency of qualifications
- Simplify credit transfer
- Provide a common format that helps promote lifelong learning and can assist in creating multiple routes through and between educational systems

Constructing Learning Outcomes (LO)

An LO should ideally contain three parts that deal respectively with:

1. **BEHAVIOUR:** an action verb to describe what participants will be able to do as a consequence of a learning activity
2. **CONDITION:** an environment or situation in which the learner will perform the behaviour or the tools/information they will be given when they demonstrate their learning
3. **CRITERIA:** describing the limits or range of an acceptable response, i.e. addressing the question of how well the learner has to perform for one to be able to say that the LO has been achieved?

Behaviour

This part of the Learning Outcome requires a **verb** as it refers to an **observable** change in behaviour as a result of learning. The use of action verbs is important as they clarify what the learner will **do** to **demonstrate** understanding. For example:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------|
| • list | • report |
| • describe | • compare |
| • demonstrate | • analyze |
| • calculate | • explain |

The following verbs **should be avoided** since they are not observable and are **therefore difficult to measure**:

- | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| • appreciate | • become acquainted with |
|--------------|--------------------------|

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| • cover | • gain knowledge of |
| • realise | • understand |
| • be aware of | • comprehend |
| • familiarize | • know |
| • study | • learn |

Condition

How will the behaviour be performed?

- What is given?
- What is not given?
- What are the variables?
- What tools are provided?
- In what situation/environment must the behaviour be performed?

Criteria

Effective learning outcomes indicate the nature (in context or in terms of standard) of the performance required as evidence that the learning was achieved. This component is the main link to assessment and level descriptors. For example:

- How often?
- How well?
- How many?
- How much?
- How will we know the outcome has been achieved?

Learning Outcome: Example 1

"Given a set of data the learner will be able to compute the standard deviation."

Condition - Given a set of data

Behaviour - the learner will be able to compute the standard deviation

Criterion (implied) - the number computed will be correct.

Learning Outcome: Example 2

"Learners will be expected to list at least 3 characteristics that are present in most sustainable residential housing and apply these characteristics to an existing residential project."

Condition - given an existing residential project

Behaviour - list and apply the characteristics

Criterion - 3 characteristics

Learning Outcome: Example 3

"Given a learning outcome, the learner will be able to develop an appropriate multiple-choice question to measure learner achievement of the outcome."

Condition - given a learning outcome

Behaviour - develop a multiple-choice question

Criterion - an appropriate multiple-choice question

Learning Outcome: Example 4

"Within the context of a class situation, learners will be able to demonstrate and evaluate the use of appropriate examples of positive reinforcement for the purpose of the improvement of behaviour."

Condition - within the context of a class situation

Behaviour - demonstrate and evaluate

Criterion - appropriate examples

Learning Outcome: Example 5

"At the end of this learning event, learners will be expected to be able to analyse and interpret a text in detail, using different approaches from literary, rhetorical and/or linguistic theories."

Condition - a text is provided for analysis and interpretation

Behaviour - analyse and interpret

Criterion - detailed analysis/interpretation using different approaches

Learning Outcome: Example 6

"On completion of this learning event, learners will be expected to produce an in-depth project, working in specific media, demonstrating competency in advanced artistic production."

Condition - in-depth/specific media

Behaviour - produce/demonstrate

Criterion - competency in advanced artistic production

Learning Outcome: Example 7

"Learners will be expected to describe and critically appraise, by means of an in-depth essay, the ways in which clinical information and decision making are shared in a clinical setting."

Condition - clinical setting

Behaviour - describe/appraise

Criterion – critical appraisal/in-depth essay

Learning Outcome: Example 8

“Given a case study, learners will be able to analyse key managerial issues in a particular industry or company and propose appropriate managerial solutions to the situation.”

Condition – given a case study

Behaviour – analyse/propose

Criterion – appropriate managerial solutions

Improving your Learning Outcomes (1)

Low quality LO: “Learners will be familiar with the sites of injection for local anaesthesia during childbirth.”

Comments:

- Too general, more appropriate as an aim
- What will the learner have to do to show they have achieved this outcome? (links to assessment)
- No observable/measurable change in behaviour
- No reference is made to criteria or conditions

The LO can be improved as follows:

Behaviour

Condition

Criteria (implied, must be correct)

“By the end of this learning event, learners will be able to **demonstrate** on **projected specimens and models** the **sites** of injection for local anaesthesia during childbirth.”

Improving your Learning Outcomes (2)

Low quality LO: “By the end of this programme, learners will demonstrate the ability to think critically about research in psychology.”

The LO can be improved as follows:

Behaviour

Condition

Criteria (implied, must be correct)

“Learners will demonstrate critical thinking skills by **evaluating** the strengths and weaknesses of **current research literature and/or their own research** using **psychological research methodology**”.

Improving your Learning Outcomes (3)

Low quality LO: “On completion of this unit, learners will be familiar with the application of molecular graphics to drug design.”

The LO can be improved as follows:

Behaviour

Condition

Criteria (implied, must be correct)

"On completion of this unit, learners should be able to **apply** the principles underpinning the use of molecular graphics in the design of drugs to **illustrate general and specific cases** through a **computer-based presentation**."

Improving your Learning Outcomes (4)

Low quality LO: "Learners will demonstrate an understanding of the impact of policy proposals on social welfare."

The LO can be improved as follows:

Behaviour

Condition

Criteria (implied, must be correct)

"**Given a case study**, learners will use an analytic frame to **make adequate predictions** of the impact of policy proposals on social welfare."

Improving your Learning Outcomes (5)

Low quality LO: "Learners will gain knowledge of professional practice in the lawyer-client relationship."

The LO can be improved as follows:

Behaviour

Condition

Criteria (implied, must be correct)

"On **presentation of case studies**, learners will be expected to **identify instances of unprofessional practice** in the lawyer-client relationship"

Improving your Learning Outcomes (6)

Low quality LO: "Learners will be introduced to elementary concepts and questions in the philosophy of science."

The LO can be improved as follows:

Behaviour

Condition

Criteria (implied, must be correct)

"By the end of this learning event, learners will be able to **describe, in an essay, foundation** concepts and questions in the philosophy of science."

Improving your Learning Outcomes (7a)

Low quality LO: "Learners will develop their capacity to compute, analyse, interpret and report basic descriptive and inferential statistics."

The main issues with this LO are:

- It is very broad
- Different knowledge units are involved which could be better dealt with as distinct, separate outcomes
- How are learners expected to demonstrate development?

Improving your Learning Outcomes (7b)

The learning outcome can be improved as follows:

"At the end of this learning event, learners will be able to:

1. **Compute** basic descriptive statistics and inferential **statistics** during **practical sessions and a final exam**
2. **Analyse** basic descriptive and inferential **statistics** computations during **practical sessions and a final exam**
3. **Interpret** basic descriptive and inferential **statistics** during **practical sessions and a final exam**
4. **Prepare** a **concise paper reporting** on and **explaining** the results of **statistical** exercises conducted during practical sessions."

Learning Domains

Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of educational outcomes differentiates between 3 domains of learning:

- COGNITIVE (education tends to emphasize the skills in this domain)
What the learner knows
- PSYCHOMOTOR
What the learner is able to do/perform
- AFFECTIVE
Beliefs, values and attitudes

The Cognitive Domain

Bloom specified six levels of Cognitive Learning as follows (from lowest order processes to the highest):

1. Knowledge: observation and recall of information; knowledge of major ideas; mastery of subject matter e.g. compiling a list
2. Comprehension: demonstrate understanding of terms, concepts and principles; translate knowledge into new contexts; interpret facts, compare and contrast; order, group and infer causes e.g. explaining things in your own words
3. Application: apply concepts and principles to solve problems e.g. making calculations

4. Analysis: break things down into their elements, formulate theoretical explanations; organisation of parts; recognition of patterns e.g. interpreting results
5. Synthesis: create something; use old ideas to create new ones; generalise from given facts; relate knowledge from several areas e.g. designing a research instrument
6. Evaluation: make value judgements, make choices using standards of appraisal and reasoned argument; recognize subjectivity; compare and discriminate between ideas e.g. criticising a piece of research

The Psychomotor Domain

Simpson (1972) specified SEVEN levels in the psychomotor domain as follows (from lowest order processes to highest):

1. Perception: using sense organs to obtain cues about a motor activity e.g. repeat oral/written instructions for performing an experiment
2. Set: demonstrating readiness to take a particular action e.g. explain the series of steps involved in a process
3. Guided response: early stage of learning a performance skill including imitation and trial-and-error e.g. following stepwise instructions
4. Mechanism: later stage of learning a performance skill when it can be performed with proficiency e.g. follow the same procedure smoothly and confidently
5. Complex overt response: skilful performance of a complex movement pattern e.g. performing a routine procedure quickly and accurately
6. Adaptation: skills that are so well-developed that the individual can modify them to fit the situation e.g. alter a routine procedure to deal with an unfamiliar problem
7. Origination: creating new movement patterns based on highly developed skills e.g. developing a new procedure to deal with new situations

The Affective Domain

Bloom specified five levels in the affective domain as follows (from lowest order processes to the highest):

1. Receiving: attending to a stimulus e.g. listening to instructions
2. Responding: reacting to a stimulus e.g. participating in a discussion
3. Valuing: attaching value to an object, phenomenon, behaviour or principle e.g. demonstrate by means of action or expression an appreciation of good teamwork
4. Organisation: organising different values into the beginning of an internally consistent value system e.g. adopt a systematic approach to problem solving
5. Characterising: internalising a value system and behaving accordingly in a pervasive, consistent and predictable manner e.g. display self reliance, work independently and diligently, act ethically

Verbs associated with the Cognitive Domain

Knowledge	list, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label collect, examine, tabulate, quote, name, outline, recognise, state
Comprehension	summarise, describe, interpret, contrast, predict, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, extend
Application	apply, demonstrate, calculate, complete, illustrate, show, solve, examine, modify, relate, change, classify, compute
Analysis	analyse, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, infer, arrange, divide, compare, contrast, select, distinguish
Synthesis	combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan, create, design, compose, formulate, prepare, compile
Evaluation	assess, decide, rank, grade, test, measure, recommend, convince, select, judge, explain, support, conclude, compare, appraise, evaluate, justify, interpret, critique

Verbs associated with the Psychomotor Domain

Perception	choose, describe, detect, differentiate, distinguish, identify, isolate, relate, select
Set	begin, display, explain, move, proceed, react, show, state, volunteer
Guided Response	copy, trace, follow, react, reproduce, respond
Mechanism	assemble, calibrate, construct, dismantle, display, manipulate, measure, mend, mix, organise, sketch
Complex Overt Response	same as Mechanism but includes adverbs such as quicker, more accurate, automatic etc.
Adaptation	adapt, alter, rearrange, reorganise, revise, vary, change
Origination	arrange, build, combine, compose, construct, create, design, initiate, make, originate

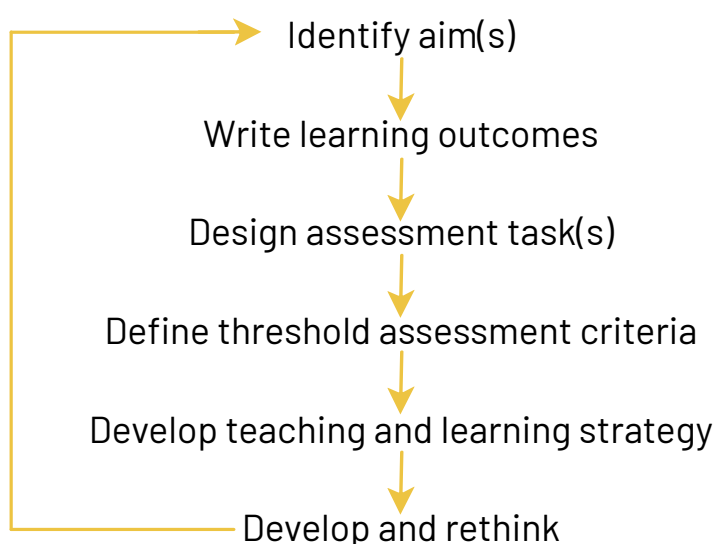
Verbs associated with the Affective Domain

Receiving	ask, choose, describe, follow, give, hold, identify, locate, name, point to, select, sit, erect, reply, use
Responding	answer, assist, aid, comply, conform, discuss, greet, help, label, perform, practise, present, read, recite, report, select, tell, write
Valuing	complete, demonstrate, differentiate, explain, follow, form, initiate, invite, join, justify, propose, read, report, select, share, study, work
Organisation	adhere, alter, arrange, combine, compare, complete, defend, explain, formulate, identify, integrate, modify, order, organise, prepare, relate, synthesise
Characterising	act, discriminate, display, influence, listen, modify, perform, practise, propose, qualify, question, revise, serve, solve, verify

Steps to Writing Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the aims of the learning event/programme
2. Classify the outcome (cognitive, etc.)
3. Identify the level of learning required of the learner
4. Choose a specific action verb for each outcome
5. Decide how you will measure the achievement of the outcome
6. State success criteria

The Outcomes Process



Characteristics of Good Learning Outcomes

The following acronym helps to check that an LO has the required characteristics: **SMART**

- S**pecific: accurately states what the successful learner is expected to achieve
- M**easurable: open to assessment which accurately assesses whether or not the outcome has been achieved
- A**chievable: should be within the range of abilities of the learner
- R**elevant: should be relatable to the key aims of the programme
- T**ime scaled: must be achievable within the duration of the learning event/ programme

Checklist for the writing of LOs

Learning Outcomes should be:

- written in terms of observable and measurable behavioural outcomes
- succinct and concise
- aligned with the instructional activities and assessments
- realistic, taking into account prior knowledge, available time and learning opportunities
- clear and written in language that is understandable to learners
- kept to a manageable (small) number

When writing learning outcomes:

- use only one action verb per learning outcome and target one specific aspect of expected performance
- include action verbs
- avoid vague verbs such as know and understand
- write in terms of what the learner will do, not what the instructor will do
- for LO's of learning events, check that they fit within the overall programme aims
- specify appropriate conditions for performance

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Checklist for Writing Learning Outcomes

The following checklist may be of help to double check that you have written the learning outcomes according to the standard guidelines.

- ✓ Have I focussed on outcomes not processes, i.e. have I focussed on what the learners are able to demonstrate rather than on what I have done in my teaching?
- ✓ Have I begun each outcome with an active verb?
- ✓ Have I used only one active verb per learning outcome?
- ✓ Have I avoided terms like know, understand, learn, be familiar with, be exposed to, be acquainted with, and be aware of?
- ✓ Are my outcomes observable and measurable?
- ✓ Are my outcomes capable of being assessed?
- ✓ Have I included learning outcomes across the range of levels of Bloom's Taxonomy?
- ✓ Do all the outcomes fit within the aims and content of the module?
- ✓ Is it realistic to achieve the learning outcomes within the time and resources available?

MODULE 3

Designing Content for Effective Online Learning

By the end of this session learners will:

- Outline the essential content required for learners to attain the learning outcomes in your online session
- Present this content in a succinct and organised slide presentation or word doc.

Content

Now that you have identified 1-3 learning outcomes your learners will attain by the end of your online session, you need to decide what content learners must know in order to attain these learning outcomes.

You have heard the rumours – “designing effective eLearning takes time.” Preparing your content for an online session will likely take you a minimum of four hours to complete this week. Take heart! If you put in the time and do this right, future iteration of your session will take a fraction of the time and likely less time than preparing for your face-to-face sessions.

The content for an online Session is the ‘what’ learners need to know to attain the learning outcomes (this is what we are doing in this week’s session). Scenarios, activities, case studies and discussions are activities or the ‘how’ the learners transfer the content (information) into practice (this is what we will do next week). A common error is to ask learners to do activities without presenting the prerequisite content (information) learners need to understand in order to successfully complete the activity or discussion.

We often wrestle with how much content is enough and how much is too much? Do we list the causes of depression, or do we also present brief definitions of the causes with short examples? The answer is “it depends,” on the subject matter, the level of the learner (first year versus graduate learner), the learning style

of the learner, the learner's previous knowledge and experience, the content you have already covered in previous sessions, and in how many ways you are going to cover the topic in your online session. Is the content presentation the only way the content is being communicated or are you adding voice over that adds more detail, or supplementing the content with a video or reading? I have discovered that the more structure I provide learners, the more risk learners are prepared to take because they understand exactly what is expected and feel more confident when doing assignments.

A common mistake in eLearning is when resource designers upload entire articles or lecture notes for learners to read and expect this to replace a face-to-face lecture. In effective eLearning, the learning event designer must chunk content into meaningful segments (this is what we are doing this week) and then augment the content with appropriate learning activities, photos, videos, and quizzes in order to keep the learner engaged (this portion we will do next week). It is expected that there will be articles, books and readings to complement and extend the learning session as prerequisite, background and supplementary reading. However, like face-to-face learning, the reading is like 'homework' and in addition to the session.

Another common mistake made in eLearning is when video recordings of lectures are uploaded on the VLE and expecting this delivery method to replace effective face-to-face or online learning. A recorded face to face class does not translate into effective online learning. Recording your face-to-face lecture and using a short video segment (3-5 minutes) once or twice in an online session can be an effective way to explain or demonstrate a concept and engage the online learner.

Content chunking

Content chunking is the strategy of breaking up content into shorter, bite-size pieces that are more manageable and easier to remember. This is a great technique for designing successful online learning sessions.

To effectively organize content for online delivery, it is essential to present the content in an engaging manner. Phrase the content in a positive conversational way in order to engage learners. Using first and second person language ("I" and "you" communication), is often perceived as positive and engaging by online learners. For example, language such as the following:

- Consider chunking your text in short segments so it is readable and comprehensible.
- Welcome to Session 1 "Introduction to Research".
- Take heart, the first time you try this could be very time consuming.
- Congratulations, you have now completed Session 1.
- Submit your assignments on time to avoid late penalization.

Engage the learner

The best way to make learning active is to make learning engaging. The content must be relevant. Present the content in a succinct organised manner. Explain the main points in a logical progression so each content chunk builds throughout the session and each session builds throughout the learning event. Content should be organised in a way that takes learners from one concept to the next in a logical way so that it builds on previously learned knowledge. The content should flow smoothly in simple language.

Motivate learners by supporting the content with examples, support documents and engaging activities (next week). Sometimes less is more. Too many bells and whistles can be distracting. The most effective way to deliver content is often not the most complicated way to deliver content.

Use headings to organise the content. If you're having trouble organising your chunks of content, bullets and numbered lists are easy ways to present your information clearly. A well-designed eLearning session is professional looking.

Tips for this week's task:

It is easy to become overwhelmed with the possibilities available to present content to learners in an online session. To manage this process we have broken this process down into manageable segments.

1. This week (Module 3) you are just succinctly presenting the basic content information learners need to know to attain the learning outcomes for your online session (created last week in Module 2) in a word doc or slide deck.
2. Conduct a Google search on the topic – there could be slide decks and e-docs 'out there' you can repurpose, adapt or adopt. The learners should be able to read through your slide deck or word doc resource in approximately 15-30 minutes and understand the basics of the learning outcomes.
3. 'Case study', 'scenario', 'video', 'readings', or 'discussions' are activities that we will develop in future week to help learners engage with and learn the content. This week you are just outlining the content required to attain the learning outcomes into succinct, organized, meaningful chunks presented in a slide deck or word doc.
4. Use the e-Samples of previous learners' content to give you an idea of what is expected in organizing your content.

Once you have drafted your content ask yourself:

- Did I present enough content related to each of the learning outcomes the learners are expected to attain?
- Did I present enough depth and breadth that learners will attain the learning outcomes, be able to transfer the knowledge to effectively complete the learning activities and assignments (that you will add next week?)

- Did I include information unrelated to my learning outcomes that would be better suited in another session?
- Did I present a brief overview of the content or go into too much detail so the presentation is long and boring?
- Would a link for further reading on a point introduced be good practice, instead of giving too much content detail?
- Did I add too many clicks, bells and whistles that may distract and not add value?
- Do I have extra photos and title pages that take time but do not add value?
- If I have complex diagrams or tables do I explain them in text or will I add a voice over next week to explain - or both?

STOP! This is all you are expected to do this week!

Just so you can see the big picture – To ensure the resource is manageable within the proposed time commitments and that no one becomes overwhelmed – please leave the tasks below for future sessions when we will do all of the following in step-by-step logical, doable progression. Make the outline of your content more interactive by developing activities to engage the learner in learning the content. In future sessions we will:

- Add voice overs to make your slide deck or word doc more interactive.
- Refer learners to video links that add supplementary information to the content you are chunking this week.
- Use video clips (1-5 minutes) of your classroom lecture or YouTube etc. to highlight a point or present an example for something presented in your content document. Research informs us that it depends on the professions and the individual's learning style how much video we can get away with in online learning. Doctors especially have told us that they do not want to watch a video if they can read it faster. But they want "the option" to click on the link and watch the video.
- Provide supplementary background readings (homework) so learners can get a deeper and more detailed understanding of the content you presented in your slide deck or word doc.
- Provide links to websites, resources and documents to provide supplementary information.
- Provide activities, scenario, games etc., so learners can apply the content knowledge in practice (knowledge transfer).
- Pose questions in a discussion forum to facilitate learners to reflect on their knowledge.
- Learn with and from others by sharing knowledge, experiences and perspectives in a discussion.

In conclusion, you are the subject matter expert on your topic. Reflect on the suggestions and use your expertise and experience to figure out what will work best for you and your learners. In future session, we will have you add evaluations to your online session so you can receive anonymous feedback from your learners. Like face to face learning, we often need to revisit our online teaching and make changes after the first iteration. Nothing is written in stone.

Take heart, designing effective eLearning is a ton of work. I know it is time consuming - we feel your pain - but once you put in the blood, sweat and tears... life gets better! Your teaching improves, you have more convenience and flexibility in your own life, and your learners will enjoy a bit more flexibility and convenience and be happier.

NOTE: Some of the content in this section has been adopted or adapted from the online sites listed at the end of this document.

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Guidelines for writing effective learning outcomes

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Switching to blended learning: How I turned my classes into a blended learning experience

4 tips for content chunking in elearning experience

5 strategies for designing brain-friendly elearning resources

The essentials of elearning resource design

10 things to remember when designing online resources

4 tips for content chunking in eLearning experience

<https://elearningindustry.com/4-tips-for-content-chunking-in-e-learning>

eSample - Designing content for effective online learning

eSample - Formulating Answerable Clinical Questions - Josef Trapani

FORMULATING ANSWERABLE CLINICAL QUESTIONS

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Study Unit Learning Outcomes

By the end of this study unit, you will be able to:

- ✓ Identify the components of evidence-based practice
- ✓ Discuss the strengths and limitations of evidence-based practice
- ✓ Formulate clinical questions using the PICO framework
- ✓ Perform a systematic search for evidence addressing a clinical question
- ✓ Critically appraise research studies
- ✓ Synthesise research findings to answer a clinical query.

Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- ✓ Recognise the importance of converting clinical queries to well-formulated questions
- ✓ Define the components of the PICO framework
- ✓ Apply the PICO framework to clinical queries
- ✓ Convert clinical queries to clear clinical questions using the PICO framework.

Session Outline

(RECAP – situating the formulation of clinical questions in the context of the Evidence-Based Practice process)

Importance of converting clinical queries to well-formulated questions

Introducing the PICO framework

Defining the components of the PICO framework

Applying the PICO framework to clinical queries

Converting clinical queries to clear PICO questions.

MODULE 4

Delivery I

Delivering Effective Online Learning

By the end of this session learners will be able to:

- Design learning activities to effectively deliver online content that engages learners and enhances understanding and knowledge transfer
- Find and upload open resource materials to enhance the learner learning experience
- Find and upload free educational videos to engage and support learning and understanding of the content in your online session.

Tips for this week - The Big Picture

- Last week (Module 3) you chunked the content for your online session into organised, relevant, meaningful, succinct segments that progress logically and build on previous knowledge.
- This week (Module 4) you will select existing free resources and videos and create an activity to enrich your content and engage the learner. Stop here!

It is possible to enhance online learning by creating your own videos to introduce a topic and voice overs to explain and enhance content (you will see these two ideas in the table of possible activities included below). In order to keep this resource manageable within the time commitment proposed and prevent learners from becoming overwhelmed, next week in Module 5, we will download software and learn how to create an introductory video for your online session and add voice overs to further explain your content. Finally, you will also note in the table below that online discussions can enrich and enhance learning the content in an online session. We will develop discussion forums in a future sessions. Please do not worry about or create videos, voice overs or discussion in this week's session (Module 4).

You have now identified 2-3 learning outcomes for your online session. You have chunked content into organised, relevant, meaningful, succinct segments that progress logically and build on previous knowledge.

In this session we will enhance the learning experience for your learners by providing engaging learning materials and resources that support your content and facilitate learning and understanding.

In online learning, designing and creating learning resources takes

an enormous amount of time. The good news is that once a resource is designed, it can be reused in future sessions. The first time you design and teach an online session it is an enormous amount of work. The second time you teach an online session the amount of time it takes to prepare is exponentially less. Moreover, you do not always need to create original teaching and learning materials. There are numerous educational sites available that offer free open-source materials that you can adopt or adapt to facilitate learners in attaining the session's learning outcomes.

When designing online activities, it is essential to motivate learners and keep them engaged while learning. In the face-to-face classroom, learners often interact with one another as an ordinary part of the learning experience. They chat before and after class, they participate in group discussions and lab experiments, and they build relationships through study groups and other resource-related interactions.

In the online classroom, however, the loss of learner-to-learner proximity means that instructors must explicitly include design elements that foster meaningful learner interactions. This can include formal activities that capitalise on the "anytime, anywhere" nature of online learning in order to create learner-to-learner engagement, as well as informal activities that rely on sound pedagogy to cultivate the feeling of community among learners. Often learners who take online classes have other face-to-face classes on campus. It is not 'cheating' if the learners in your online class meet up face-to-face. Encourage them to do so if they are in the same vicinity. However, if this is not possible due to proximity, work or social reasons, meet ups online such as on Skype or FaceTime, in discussion groups and hangouts can also be very social and rewarding.

When designing learning activities, sometimes less is more. Too many bells and whistles can be distracting and seem like a 'make work' project. The most effective way to deliver content is often not the most complicated way to deliver content.

Implementing active learning strategies into your online session where learners are required to interact with the content, each other and you is an effective way to ensure they are engaged.

Active learning

The concept of active learning encompasses a wide variety of learning activities in which learners engage with the resource content, each other and the instructor. The focus of active learning is to foster these engagements. When learners sit and passively watch or listen to lectures, whether in person face-to-face or on video, they are not actively engaging with the content. If learners are actively involved in working with the content, they will learn more, be more satisfied, and be more successful in your resource. Chickering and

Gamson(2002)note that learners “must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves” (p. 4).

A “rich learning experience” is an activity that aligns with both the session learning outcomes and the assessment strategies being used and provides opportunities for learners to learn new concepts and skills or to practice with concepts and skills they have recently learned. Start with the end in mind. Consider the learning outcomes you developed for your online session, and the content you organised in order for learners to attain them. Now plan learning activities to facilitate engaging the learner with the content and supporting them in understanding the content and internalising and transferring the knowledge. Providing “hands-on” activities for learners, either individually or in small groups, is an important way to both increase motivation and support learning. Situations where learners actively participate and work with the content are more effective in encouraging learners to think reflectively and push their understanding of the concepts than situations where learners receive information passively. Well-designed learning activities (whether in a face-to-face or in an online session) promote active learning.

Finding and using open source resources

Before you start developing learning resources and activities for your session, dedicate time to search for content that is already available and can be used in your session. There are a lot of learning resources available on the Internet in public repositories, file sharing sites, institutional repositories etc. Many of these resources are released under licenses that allow their re-use and modification without charge for educational purposes. These resources are often referred to as *Open Educational Resources* (OER).

There is no one standard definition of Open Educational Resources. However, the following broad definition of OERs from OER Commons seems to be generally accepted by the community:

Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching and learning materials that are freely available online for everyone to use, whether you are an instructor, learner or self-learner. Examples of OER include: full resources, resource modules, syllabi, lectures, homework assignments, quizzes, lab and classroom activities, pedagogical materials, games, simulations, and many more resources contained in digital media collections from around the world.

You do not need to reinvent the wheel! When designing your online session type the topic of your session into Google search engine. For example, if the topic of your session is “Miscarriage”, you may type something like, “Free online learning resources for teaching medical learners about Miscarriage” into the Google search engine. We have also provided tables below with several ideas

for effective learning activities and links to websites with free resources.

Audio and video are tremendously useful resources for effective eLearning. You can attain many relevant free educational videos online to support your content. There are also numerous other sites with educational videos that can be used to enhance your learner online learning experience. Go to YouTube or any other educational video site that provides open access free videos. Go to the search engine and type in the topic you would like to find a short educational video to support your learner's learning. View the videos that emerge and see if any of these would be appropriate to engage your learners and support them learning the content. If you find a useful video to support the learning in your session, copy the link into the resources session of your RoadMap for your learners to access. Asking learners a probing question about the content of the video in a discussion forum will motivate learner to watch the video and enhance learning by requiring them to reflect upon its content.

In addition to free videos, there are numerous sites with free resources such as slide decks, articles, learning objects, resources, sessions, modules, podcasts, etc. Review the tables below and visit some of the sites. Try to find a resource or activity you can adopt or adapt to enhance the learning in your session. Good luck!

Samples of activities to engage online learner

Activity	Description	Goals and Objectives	Background Information and eSamples
Online Scavenger hunt	Internet scavenger hunts serve as a great way to hone learner Web searching ability and problem solving. They can be an evaluative activity where learners have to find information of a specific type or value. They can also serve as an icebreaker activity. The lesson involves providing learners with a goal and then having them search the Internet to fulfil that goal.	During and after performing the Scavenger Hunt activity, learners will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have fun and get to know one another • develop web searching abilities • evaluate web content. 	Education World (1999), Scavenger hunts: Searching for treasure on the Internet
Subject matter expert event	Invite a subject matter expert from another department, university or country to host a QandA event.	Inviting a guest speaker or subject matter expert to speak, run a discussion forum or a QandA session can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase learner's level of knowledge on a particular topic • promote critical thinking • provide variety in content delivery to engage the learner. 	Choose an article that you want your learners to read on a particular topic. Invite the author of this article to host a QandA session where the learners can ask questions and the host provides responses.
Video	Create a short video, or find one on YouTube to upload onto your session.	Short videos can be an interactive way to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduce, explain, or elaborate a session, concept or idea to help engage the learner • demonstrate a skill. 	Using video in online classes
Drag-and-drop	Drag-and-drop interactions have the power to make even the most dull eLearning resource fun and entertaining, without sacrificing its effectiveness.	Drag-and-drop activities can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motivate the learner • review content or help learners remember • assess what was learned. 	Drag—and-drop

Activity	Description	Goals and Objectives	Background Information and eSamples
Quizzes	You can begin a session with a pre- test or quiz, or use one as a learning or assessment tool.	Quizzes in online learning can be used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motivate the learner • review content or help learners remember • assess what was learned. 	Three benefits of quizzes
PowerPoint presentation with voice over	Create PowerPoint presentations or a single slide for an effective way to organize content. Use an audio voice over to explain or describe the slide(s) to enhance the visual presentation.	PowerPoint presentations with voice over can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organize content into succinct segments • involve both visual and audio senses to enhance learning • demonstrate a concept or skill while also explaining it • engage the learning. 	Guidelines for Presentations with Voice Overs eSample of a PowerPoint with voice over: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to record voice over PowerPoint • Saving a narrated PowerPoint presentation as a video file • How to add Narration to tour PowerPoint presentation
Online discussion	Discussion boards, or threaded discussions, are one of the most commonly used tools in online teaching. Discussion forums provide the ability for asynchronous discussion to occur over a period of time. The ability to learn asynchronously is one of the primary benefits of online learning. Learners are able to reflect upon their ideas before sharing them with the class, leading to more reflective responses and in-depth learning.	Benefits of online discussions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • builds class community by promoting discussion on the topics of the study- unit • allows time for in-depth reflection • learners have more time to reflect, research and compose their thoughts before participating in the discussion • facilitates learning by allowing learners to view and to respond to the work of others • develops thinking and writing skills. 	Online discussions

Sample websites with free educational videos

Name of Site	Description of Educational Site
YouTube	YouTube is a video sharing service where users can watch, like, share, comment and upload their own videos. The video service can be accessed on PCs, laptops, tablets and via mobile phones.
Alison	Alison has over 1000 high quality resources available across 9 distinct categories, all absolutely free to complete. All resources are self-paced and have been designed by subject matter experts, to give you an interactive and enriched learning experience.
Amazon Education	Amazon Education focuses on making education available accessibly through Amazon's digital products, enabling anyone to learn anything, anywhere. The team sells digital learning products, including eTextbooks, online resources and resourceware to higher education learners, professional learners and hobbyists.
Brightstorm	Our mission at Brightstorm is to be the best place to learn in the world. We believe that great learning starts with great teaching. So, we find the best teachers, film them teaching, and build learning solutions around those great teachervideos. Our membership targets the high-school age curriculum and includes video coverage in Math, Science, English and AP subjects plus ACT prep. We combine time-saving HD videos with tools like textbook video locator for a comprehensive learning experience. Great teaching forms the core of these videos, tools and comprehensive programs. Brightstorm is helping learners save time so they can enjoy other things... like life.
CosmoLearning	Collecting the top educational videos on the web, generously offered by hundreds of universities, educators, and professionals, we share their passion for teaching by providing a platform for world-class education free of charge. CosmoLearning project offers a platform dedicated to all these individuals to post their materials for free. Always crediting the original educators and institutions, we encourage users to show their gratitude and donate directly to the original creators. We strive to make CosmoLearning the best place for educators to display their contributions to education, helping them to reach millions of learners from around the world.
Coursera	Coursera provides universal access to the world's best education, partnering with top universities and organizations to offer resources online.
EdX	Founded by Harvard University and MIT in 2012, edX is the open-source platform that powers edX resources and is freely available. With Open edX, educators and technologists can build learning tools and contribute new features to the platform, creating innovative solutions to benefit learners everywhere.

Institutional repositories

- Open Educational Resources at the Open University - A repository of educational resources produced by the Open University at UK.
- MIT Open Resourceware - A repository of all resourceware published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- OpenStax - A repository of educational materials such as resources, books and reports by Rice University and philanthropic institutions. Formerly Open Stax was referred to as Connexions.

Public repositories

- OER Commons - A repository of free educational resources created under CC licenses by teachers from around the world.
- MERLOT - Multimedia Education Resource for Learning and Online Teaching is an international consortium of over 20 institutions (and systems) of higher education, industry partners, professional organizations and individuals devoted to identifying, peer reviewing, organising and making available existing online resources in a range of academic disciplines for use by University staff and learners.
- Academic Earth - A repository of free university online resources and videos.
- Open Education Consortium - A repository of free university online resources, open text books and reports.

File sharing sites

- YouTube EDU - YouTube features short lessons from top teachers around the world, full resources from the world's leading universities, professional development material from fellow educators and inspiring videos from global thought leaders.
- iTunesU - Apple features free downloadable material (audio and video) provided by many universities and accessed through the 'iTunes U' section of the iTunes store. To access this site you will need to have iTunes software installed on your computer which is available for Macintosh and Windows.
- Flickr - This is a photo sharing website that contains thousands of photos uploaded by people from all over the world. Some of those photos are free under the creative commons licenses.

Free digital textbooks

- Bookboon.com
- OpenStax College
- Project Gutenberg
- Saylor.org Academy

Massive Open Online Resourceware (MOOC)

- Coursera
- edX
- Futurelearn
- Open Yale Resources

References

- Best Practices in Online Teaching
- Workload and Time Management (pt 1)
- Workload and Time Management (pt 2)

To learn more about how to delivery effective online learning, it will be well worth your time to read the following very practical resources we have made available to you below.

References

Learning activities and active learning

10 ways to engage learners in an online class

8 ways to incorporate social learning activities into your online training resource

Gathering, making and structuring content (audio and video)

Chickering, W. and Gamson, Z.F. (2002) Development and Adaptations of the Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education

NOTE: some of the content in this eDoc was adopted or adapted from the sites listed above.

Learning activities and active learning

10 Ways to Engage Learners in an Online Resource

By Mingsheng Dai, PhD

The success of an online resource depends greatly on how actively engaged learners are with the instructor, with their classmates, with the content, with technology, and with resource management tools. Interactivity in any teaching and learning context involves learners responding to information, seeking instructors' feedback, reflecting on the feedback, and acting to appropriately tailor personal learning experience.

In many cases, effects of interaction in an online environment can be richer than in face-to-face situations, since learners can critically evaluate their understanding of the content by sharing their knowledge and experiences in discussion questions and postings.

Engaging activities for online resources are designed to be relevant to the content, associated with resource objectives and outcomes, require active involvement from learners, increase retention, and be fun and rewarding. Simply clicking a link, or uploading a file, is just the first step toward other experiences of interactive learning.

Here are some of my methods and examples in creating engaging activities for online resources.

1. Syllabus quiz

To reinforce policies, deadlines, expectations, projects, etc., specified in the syllabus, I have created a syllabus quiz to test learners' understanding of resource outcomes, to stress their responsibilities, and to communicate my expectations. It has to be completed within the first week of the resource and learners need a 100 percent score.

2. Interview report

Most online learners are working adults with very busy and demanding schedules. They tend to work at their own pace and in isolation. To reduce loneliness and to increase their awareness of the learning community, I use the discussion board not only for them to introduce each other as a get-to-know-you activity in the first week, but also to have them interview each other on the topics and report back to the discussion board. This offers a vivid description of what each learner has learned from his or her interview partner. Learners find this activity helpful because it gives them another opportunity to interact with each another.

3. Feedback survey

When the resource is one-third of the way into the semester, learners are required to complete an anonymous feedback survey, which asks them about how the class is running; the depth, length, and challenges of assignments; preferences in communication with the instructor; and the time they spend weekly in reading, completing assignments, and responding to discussion questions. This survey provides me with very important information about their levels of satisfaction and their expectations. It also serves as a self-check to me as an instructor. After hearing learners' voices, I will summarize the results, share them with the learners, and make improvements.

4. Group projects

Can group projects be done successfully online? Yes, but success requires planning, time commitment, monitoring, and supporting. I usually spend two or three times more time during the group project period to check on the progress of each group. In order to have a quality experience in this activity, I need to have strong leadership in each group. Before setting up groups, I ask for volunteer group leaders who will guide the group, brainstorm ideas and topics for the group project, set up group chat sessions, communicate to group members

on the process of the project, and finally combine individual presentations into one to represent the group. Once I have group leaders, I assign group members. Each group member has a specific role, and each has to submit a draft of the project to me to be graded. I constantly check with group leaders and provide them with my assistance and support. To motivate participation in a group project, I design it in such a way that half of the grade of the group project comes from peer evaluation. Each member has to anonymously evaluate the contribution and participation of each team member. I then tally the result. I find this method to be fair because every member gets a chance to evaluate his or her team members candidly. By working collaboratively in cyberspace, isolated learners regard themselves as components of a cohesive group.

5. Elluminate Live or Wimba Live Classroom

I use Elluminate Live and Wimba Live Classroom, where learners and I can “talk” via microphone or headset and “see” one another via webcam. I create a name puzzle with their first names and have them find their names on the Whiteboard/eBoard. I ask them to import their pictures onto Whiteboard/eBoard and have them tell stories so we can “see” and “visit” each other across the nation and around the world. I also use desktop application sharing to demonstrate step-by-step instructions in understanding a particular assignment, tutoring them and troubleshooting their problems in completing the assignment.

6. Peer review/critiques

After developing their own websites as one of the assignments, learners are asked to post their URLs in the discussion board. To encourage sharing and learning, I have learners critique each other’s websites with the guidelines provided. They get a chance to visit classmates’ websites, share their ideas and thoughts with the class, praise and encourage their class- mates’ good work, learn from each other, and, as a result, make improvements on their own websites.

7. Sharing research findings

Many times we have learners search the Web for individual writing assignments. What about pairing them so they get another chance to interact with one another? Through communication, they find the same research topic of interest, read articles together, respond to each other’s findings and reflections, and learn from each other’s perspectives. What a great way to get them involved in the subject matter!

8. Games

I also create games using StudyMate (www.respondus.com/products/studymate.shtml) for them to learn contents and concepts, such as flash cards, crossword puzzles, fill-in-the-blank, pick a letter, true and false, multiple choice, fact cards, etc. It is fun, interactive, and non- threatening, and it reinforces the comprehension of the content.

9. Learner presentations

In almost every face-to-face class, learners are expected to make presentations. Can it be done online? Yes, sure! How? There are a couple of ways to do it, including using a discussion board for learners to post their presentations and/or presenting in Live Classroom chat sessions. With the technology we have now, such as Wimba Live Classroom, Elluminate Live, Adobe Connect, etc., learners can “talk” via microphone or headset and can make a live presentation. Learners are able to ask questions and comment on their peers’ presentations, and presenters are able to respond to questions as if they were in a traditional classroom.

10. Guest speakers

Another way to engage learners in an online resource is to bring in guest speakers via discussion board and live chat sessions.

There are many ways we can engage learners in their learning journey. We just have to be creative and have an open mind. Another important aspect we have to remember is that not everyone learns the same way as we design. We have to be flexible and make adjustments along the way.

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Open Educational Resources

Introduction

Before you start developing learning resources and activities for your learning event, dedicate time to search for content that is already available and can be used for your learning event. There is a lot of learning resources available on the Internet in public repositories, file sharing sites, institutional repositories etc. Many of these resources are released under licences that allow their re-use and modification without charge for educational purposes. These resources are often referred to as Open Educational Resources.

There is no one, standard definition of Open Educational Resources. However, the following broad definition of OERs from OER Commons seems to be generally accepted by the community:

Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching and learning materials that are freely available online for everyone to use, whether you are an instructor, learner or self-learner. Examples of OER include: full resources, resource modules, syllabi, lectures, homework assignments, quizzes, lab and classroom activities, pedagogical materials, games, simulations, and many more resources contained in digital media collections from around the world.

Institutional repositories

- Open Educational Resources at the Open University – A repository of educational resources produced by the Open University at UK.
- MIT Open Resourceware – A repository of all resourceware published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- OpenStax – A repository of educational materials such as resources, books and reports by Rice University and philanthropic institutions. Formerly OpenStax was referred to as Connexions.
- Open Learning Initiative – A repository of resources developed at Carnegie Mellon and Stanford. The design of these resources is based on current research in human learning and they serve as laboratories for ongoing research.

Public repositories

- OER Commons – A repository of free educational resources created under CC licenses by teachers from around the world.
- Jorum – A repository of free open educational resources shared and created under CC licenses by those who teach in or create content for the further and higher education communities in the UK.
- MERLOT – Multimedia Education Resource for Learning and Online Teaching is an international consortium of over 20 institutions (and systems) of higher education, industry partners, professional organizations and individuals devoted to identifying, peer reviewing, organizing and making available existing online resources in a range of academic disciplines for use by University staff and learners.
- Academic Earth – A repository of free university online resources and videos.
- Open Education Consortium – A repository of free university online resources, open textbooks and reports.

File sharing sites

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- iTunesU – Apple features free downloadable material (audio and video) provided by many universities and accessed through the 'iTunes U' section of the iTunes store. To access this site you will need to have iTunes software installed on your computer which is available for Macintosh and Windows.
- Flickr – This is a photo sharing website that contains thousands of photos uploaded by people from all over the world. Some of those photos are free under the creative commons licenses.

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- Bookboon.com
- Boundless
- OpenStax College
- Open Textbook Library
- Project Gutenberg
- Saylor.org Academy

Massive Open Online Resourceware (MOOC)

- Coursera
- EdX
- Futurelearn
- Open Yale Resources

MODULE 5

Delivery II

Creating Audio and Video to Facilitate Effective Online Learning

By the end of this session learners will be able to:

- Write an announcement introducing your session to your learners
- Create and upload a video to introduce your online session
- Add audio narration to your content slide deck or an aspect of your eDoc to engage your learners and enhance understanding.

You have now identified 2-3 learning objectives for your online session. You have chunked content into organised, relevant, meaningful, succinct segments that progress logically and build on previous knowledge. You have also uploaded supportive readings, resources, videos, and created a learning activity to enhance and extend learning.

In this session you will be creating and uploading a video to introduce your online session to your learners and adding voice over to all or some aspect of your content slide deck or eDoc to further engage learners and enhance learning.

Audio and video

Audio and video are tremendously useful resources for effective eLearning. As mentioned in our previous module, you do not always need to reinvent the wheel. You can attain many relevant videos online to support your content. Go to YouTube and type the topic you would like to find a video on in the search bar. View the videos that emerge and see if any of these would be appropriate to engage your learners and support them learning the content. If you find a useful YouTube video to support the learning in your session, copy the link in the resources session of your RoadMap for your learners to access.

While it may be tempting to simply record yourself lecturing for an hour and post the videos for your online class, research shows that this is not an effective strategy. One of the most important things to remember when making a video is to “keep it short”! The average YouTube video is around 4 minutes, and analytics

to “keep it short”! The average YouTube video is around 4 minutes, and analytics show that viewing still drops off significantly around halfway through on these short segments. Even TED Talks tend to stay under 15 minutes.

Creating a video takes time. You need to write the script, practice, record and upload the video. Allowing learners to see and get to know you will enhance social presence and is an effective way to engage learners. And, once you create the video, you can use it over and over and often year after year saving you time in the future.

Short videos can be a nice touch to open a session, explain a concept, or demonstrate a skill. When creating a video or audio recording to engage learners and enhance understanding and knowledge transfer, go through the following steps:

- View some of the eSamples of session introductions and voice-over-presentations from learners from previous iterations of the Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Online Learning events resource to help you with this task.
- Write a script for an audio to support your introduction, content slides or eDoc or a concept within your online session.
- Use Panopto Capture to record a voice-over or video for your content slide deck or eDoc to make your content more interactive and engaging.

The essentials of eLearning resource design

Guidelines for Online Presentations with Voice-overs

Introduction

Many academics are already putting their slide presentations on the VLE. This gives learners the opportunity to review the lecture materials on their own after attending class.

For fully online learning events, these slide presentations may not provide a quality learning experience for learners. Typically, these slides consist of brief points of the lecture. These presentations are often useless without the lecturer’s explanation. Academics are therefore encouraged to make use of narrated presentations.

A narrated lecture is a useful complement to the usual reading materials, and provides a good basis for subsequent class discussions via the forum or synchronous software. Narrated presentations simultaneously provide both audio and visual content and is therefore more effective.

What follows is a set of guidelines that will help you create quality narrated presentations.

Guidelines

1. Consider the use of narrated presentations for the following:

- To introduce the learning resources and activities that learners need to work through.
- To introduce and explain a particular topic, subject or concept.
- To supplement a particular topic or subject.
- To summarise the main ideas discussed in the forum.

2. A good quality narrated presentation should keep your learners interested and focussed. As a recorded voice can put anyone to sleep pretty quickly, it is necessary to break long presentations into small chunks 10 to 15 minutes to avoid your learners from becoming distracted.

3. Preparing your slides:

- Use white or light-coloured background and black or dark-coloured text. Black text on white background is still the best combination for a professional image. If you must use other colours for text and background, make sure there is high contrast between your background and text colours and not just different shades of the same colour.
- Ensure that the aspect ratio for which the presentation will be displayed is set to widescreen 16:9. The default slide size in MS PowerPoint 2013/2016/2019 is widescreen 16:9. Presentations created with earlier versions of MS PowerPoint were squarer 4:3.

To change the slide size from standard (4:3) to widescreen (16:9):

- a. Click Design tab in MS PowerPoint 2013/2016/2019
- b. Click Slide Size button.
- c. Click Widescreen (16:9)

- The main title slide should contain the name of the topic that is being presented. Avoid dates, learning event codes and names so that you can re-use the presentation the following year or in another learning event.
- Proofread everything, including visuals such as graphs, charts, or tables.
- Font size must be large enough to be easily read. Size 28 to 34 font is recommended. No slide should contain text with a font size below 24.

- Avoid using too many sizes of fonts; this can be distracting to the learner.
- Overuse of text is a common mistake. Too much text makes the slide unreadable. Stick to a few key words to guide your presentation. Large blocks of text should only be used when quoting and should convey the entire message. Follow the “6 x 6” rule – Avoid more than six lines/bullets of text, or six words per line/bullet.
- Consider making your point with graphics instead of text. If your learners are reading the slides they are not paying attention to what they hear.
- Use quality graphics. Be careful about stretching or scaling graphics within the slide as this often causes the images to look blurry or disproportionate when viewing the presentation. The SmartArt feature, images of processes, or pictures can be used to convey concepts and ideas in a more interesting way than text alone.
- Slides should retain a professional look and feel. You don’t want to distract your learners with excessive animation. Sounds and transition effects can be annoying. Use sparingly if not at all.

4. Consider the use of a script for your narrated presentation. A script is a written document containing everything you want to say in your presentation. When writing your script, organize the content of your narration by each slide. It is advised to keep the narration for any given slide to less than 1 minute. While longer narrations are certainly acceptable, there is some increased risk of losing the interest of the audience if narrations go on too long.

If you do not have the time to prepare a script, it is recommended that you prepare some notes to highlight key talking points to keep you on track during the presentation. This also lessens the chance that you will have awkward pauses during the presentation or too many “ahs” or “ums” as you are speaking.

5. You do not need to go to a studio to record a narrated presentation. Choose a recording space that is quiet where you will not have interruptions, distractions, or background noise. Remember to switch off your mobile phone and lift the handset of the fixed phone (or set to silent).

6. For a good quality recording, you should use an external microphone or a headset with a microphone. Using the built-in microphone in your laptop will capture background noises.

Keep a constant distance between the microphone and yourself while recording. Changing that distance will degrade the overall audio recording. Position headset microphones at the side of your mouth, not directly in front. This will prevent unwanted sounds like “breaths”.

7. Close any programs which will not be used for the purpose of the recording. In particular, close those applications that have visual/auditory alerts (e.g.,

email/IM client or other system notifications).

8. During the recording try and finish your sentence before you move to the next slide. If you are speaking when you change slides, a portion of the audio is clipped out. Pause before and after each slide transition when recording the narration.

9. Talk at a natural, moderate rate of speech. Project your voice. Speak clearly and distinctly. Repeat critical information.

Pause briefly to give learners time to digest the information on each new slide. Don't read slide text word-for-word. The learners can read it far faster than you can talk.

If using a script, try not to sound as though you are reading word for word from paper. If you are not using a script use a sheet of key talking points.

Be personable yet professional. Don't be afraid to personalize the lecture with short words of advice, a personal experience or scenario.

Be enthusiastic. Learners are following your resource because you are an expert in the field. Don't shy away from sharing relevant professional experiences. Your enthusiasm for the subject matter will be contagious.

Be personable yet professional. Don't be afraid to personalize the lecture with short words of advice, a personal experience or scenario.

Be enthusiastic. Learners are following your resource because you are an expert in the field. Don't shy away from sharing relevant professional experiences. Your enthusiasm for the subject matter will be contagious.

10. Start the presentation by welcoming the learners to the presentation. Briefly state the topic you will be discussing. Briefly summarize the highlights of the presentation. If this is a continuation of another presentation, let the learners know that it is the second, third, etc. part of the topic presentation.

11. It is a good practice to end your presentation with a concise summary of the key concepts and the main ideas of your presentation. End your talk with a summary statement or question you have prepared:

- What do you want learners to do?
- What do you want learners to remember?
- If there are additional presentations direct learners to the next one.
- If you would like learners to read, answer a discussion question, work a practice problem, instruct them to do so at the end of the presentation.

12. After recording the presentation, play back the recording in its entirety to

make sure that you are happy with the result. If you notice that there are any obvious quality issues or errors, you should record the presentation again. The learners will be grateful for the time you have spent to provide them with a quality learning experience!

Additional Information

Click on the links below to learn more.

MODULE 6

Support

Supporting Learners in an Online Environment

By the end of this topic learners will be able to:

- Incorporate strategies to support learners in an online session
- Write prompts that stimulate engaging, substantive, and compelling discussions
- List strategies to effectively manage an online discussion.

You have now identified learning outcomes, chunked your content, uploaded readings, introduced your session with a video, designed engaging learning activities and support mechanisms, creating and uploading a video to introduce your online session to your learners and added voice over to all or some aspect of your content slide deck or word doc to further engage learners and enhance learning. In this module we will be incorporating strategies, including discussion prompts that stimulate discussion and learning and considering strategies to effectively manage time when teaching online.

What do we mean by 'Support' in eLearning?

Effective eLearning involves supporting the learner so they have an enjoyable learning experience while attaining the learning outcomes for the session. Learners must feel a 'responsiveness' in their online experience equal or superior to face-to-face instruction. Resource delivery utilises the full power of the Internet as a delivery tool, augmenting resource content through convenient links to online resources. The online experience provides flexible access to customised content that allows participation anytime and anyplace there is an Internet connection. Support also stipulates that the learner will be privy to many convenient quality services such as: online question and answer forums, online resource notes, eSamples of successful assignments, online office hours, extensive and fast feedback, direct access to educator via email, and VLE Class Announcements.

Effective eLearning also requires supporting the learners while they engage and interact with the content, other learners and the instructor. It is essential to provide administrative and technical support. All requests for support and help should be met in a timely manner including prompt feedback on assignments, fast responses to requests and questions, and timely assistance for technical issues. Being perceived as present, accessible and actively involved in your online session will promote learner participation and success. While online classes provide learners with more flexibility and new ways to collaborate, success in the online environment is directly related to how present and engaged the tutor is in the virtual classroom. Being present in your online class is not only about good practice but about supporting learner learning and engagement. The tutor must initiate interaction. Simply posting recorded lectures or textual materials online, along with exams or quizzes, is not effective eLearning. There are many ways to show your presence in an online session.

Discussion prompts

An important aspect of fostering substantive discussion is to make sure discussion prompts are actually discussion prompts. For example, if you post, "List three reasons why 'X' happened. Justify your answers from the text." this is asking for proof that the learner read the material rather than a prompt to stimulate reflection and discussion on the content of the reading. If you just want to know your learners read the material, try a reading quiz in the Quizzes tool. If you want learners to discuss why 'X' happened, phrase the prompt in a way that opens the door for discussion, such as "Based on the text, what do you think is the most logical reason that 'X' happened? Explain your reasoning. Reply to at least two other classmates who suggested different reasons and explain whether or not you think that both reasons could have influenced 'X'. Make sure to reply appropriately to anyone who replies substantively to any of your posts." Instructions like these provide a rationale for replying to one another and provide a reasonable avenue for interaction. It also provides you with easier opportunities to participate by highlighting the complexities of pointing to one single antecedent to an event or movement.

It is not necessary to reply to every post every learner makes in your discussion forum. Excessive tutor posting can pre-emptively close down conversations. The question becomes "how much is too much and how much is not enough?" The answer to that question can vary based on the resource content, the level of the learners, and the interest of the tutor. You need to ensure that your learners are aware that you are reading their post even when you do not respond to each one. This may mean responding by saying "as Maria, Victor and Mary suggested..." Making sure to spread your comments over the resource of the week is also important to encourage learners to actively and consistently participate over time. The most important aspect of the discussion group tutor is that your discussion prompt is clear and engaging, you demonstrate presence throughout the discussion and that you summarise the key findings in the module at the end.

The discussion prompt should include:

- Learning outcome/s of the discussion i.e. the purpose of the discussion
- Prerequisites of the discussion (e.g. any tasks that learners should complete before participating in the discussion)

- Questions or activities that will be tackled through the online discussion
- Expectations regarding the number and quality of postings required from learner
- Information about your role and participation in the discussion
- Time-frames for completing the different phases of the online discussion
- A rubric which will be used to assess the learners' contributions.

Finding the right balance

One concern in online discussions is the idea of finding the right balance between being overly prescriptive when presenting information and providing enough detail so learners understand expectations and feel comfortable and confident to expand and grow. If there is a 'right answer' to this question I don't know it. It depends on such things as - the maturity of your learners, the learners' previous experience with the topic and online learning, the content, the quality of your writing, language and cultural concerns.

I find I need to give explicit directions in online learning, often in more than one place and in more than one way in order to ensure learners feel comfortable and confident. If learners get confused, they tend to get frustrated. The more direction I provide (stating the same message several times, several ways, providing eSamples and a lot of feedback when and if needed), the more confident learners tend to become about understanding expectations. The more learners understand expectations, the more they tend to trust. Although I agree that explicit directions, expectations and feedback can at times feel prescriptive, ironically my experience in online learning has been that the clearer the explanations, directions and feedback, the more learners feel confident about what is expected, trust you, and the more risk they are willing to take - thinking outside the box, and often producing superior work. Some people may feel that eSamples inhibit creativity. I only ever post the best examples. I find it is much easier to cut detail and information in a second iteration of a session, than it is to respond to frustrated confused learners in a first iteration. My experience is that providing detailed information regarding expectations and policies, providing quality examples works best in online learning. However, you need to do what works best for you and your learners. Sometimes this can take some experimentation to get it to exactly where you feel it is right.

Benefits for posting last

Discussion forums can serve the purpose of being a public learning platform where we learned with and from each other. Some educators struggle with figuring out how to assess online participation due to the fact that there can be a perceived advantage to holding out and posting last. It can be considered an advantage to sit and wait for others to post due to the fact that learners can learn from others and enhance their work. I definitely appreciate the brave souls who take the plunge and post first to start the learning process. It is interesting that it does seem that the more posts made in a resource - with sharing, adopting and adapting - often the quality does improve. If learners are being evaluated for participation in the discussion forum, I can see the point that this could be perceived as an unfair advantage. Should later posts which have benefitted from tutor comments and having adopted/adapted peers' work be graded higher than those posted first? In the past I have never found this to be an

issue. What I encourage learners to do is review their peers' posts and point out that they agree with so and so and why, or disagree and add a different perspective. As long as posts are thoughtful, constructive and reflective - I wouldn't penalise a learner for repeating something already said (especially when they acknowledge that it has already been said). Evaluating online posts is not totally objective and is one reason I often only have 5% and never more than 10% value for the discussion forum grade. I have found that assigning even a small grade with the discussion forum really improves learner participation and the quality of the discussion. I have also found that assigning too high a value to participation results in assessment that is fairly subjective and learner grades that tend to be higher than they would be otherwise.

Managing the discussion

I caution you that managing and assessing the discussion forum can take a lot of your time. Consider managing the first couple of discussion forums in your learning event yourself (to demonstrate expectations). Then consider assigning triad groups of learners to manage one discussion forum each as part of their participation mark. I don't have the learners assess participation in the discussion forum- just monitor the discussion and post the synthesis at the end. I use a rubric to assess learner participation in the forum at the end of the learning event.

The first few weeks in any online study unit, I often jumped in quickly to point out shortcomings in discussion forums so that other participants do not repeat mistakes. This saves everyone time and frustration. I also thank the learner who made the first post for taking the initiative and getting the process started. I feel this kind of feedback is necessary to ensure everyone is set up to succeed in the design of an effective online session. Once the study unit is up and running for a few weeks and learners are familiar with discussion forums' expectations I back off and let the learners lead the discussions. I only step in if there is an issue or to summarise the discussion.

In the first few weeks of the study unit monitoring discussion forums does take a lot of time. But take heart, discussion forums typically do not need to take that much of your time. Once running, it will be easy for you to stand back and only comment when the conversation needs direction, stimulation, or clarification. If you assign learning triads to monitor the sessions, your time will be significantly reduced. Also, save your posts from one year to the next. A post that takes you an hour to write the first time you teach the session, may have quotations, answers to questions, or portions including standard information that can be repurposed for another iteration of the study unit.

Principles associated with successful (online) discussion:

- appropriate technology (for example, software that allows for threaded discussions)
- clear guidelines on learner online behaviour, such as written codes of conduct for participating in discussions, and ensuring that they are enforced
- learner orientation and preparation, including technology orientation and explaining the purpose of discussion
- clear goals for the discussions that are understood by the learners, such as: 'to explore gender and class issues in selected novels' or 'to compare and evaluate alternative methods of coding'

- choice of appropriate topics, that complement and expand issues in the study materials, and are relevant to answering assessment questions
- setting an appropriate 'tone' or requirements for discussion (for example, respectful disagreement, evidence-based arguments)
- defining learner roles and expectations clearly, such as 'you should log in at least once a week to each discussion topic and make at least one substantive contribution to each topic each week'
- monitoring the participation of individual learners, and responding accordingly by providing the appropriate scaffolding or support, such as comments that help learners develop their thinking around the topics, referring them back to study materials if necessary, or explaining issues when learners seem to be confused or misinformed
- regular, ongoing instructor 'presence', such as monitoring the discussions to prevent them getting off topic or too personal, and providing encouragement for those who are making real contributions to the discussion, heading off those who are trying to hog or dominate the discussions, and tracking those who are not participating and helping them to participate ensuring strong articulation between discussion topics and assessment.

How can you support your learner while teaching online?

The following table includes several examples of how to support learners in your online sessions:

Initiated interactions

Design daily or weekly assignments and projects that promote collaboration among learners.

- Model resource netiquette at the beginning of the semester with tutor-guided introductions.
- Pose questions in the discussion forums that encourage various types of interaction and critical thinking skills among all resource participants.
- Monitor content activity to ensure that learners participate fully and discussions remain on topic.
- Provide prompt feedback, including both summative and actionable formative feedback.
- Have a café or pub discussion forum for learners that want to discuss social events or information not directly related to the learning event or session outcomes. This forum is optional for learner participation and will prevent learners annoying other learners by making posts that are perceived by some learners as irrelevant and a waste of time.
- Make the discussion groups small - if you have a large class create small discussion groups within the larger class. One of the biggest complaints voiced by learners in our research regarding eLearning was the amount of time it takes to read and respond to online posts. We learned early on to divide the class into smaller more manageable discussion groups. For example, if you have a class of 30 learners, divide the class into two groups (Group A and Group B) with 15, or three groups (Group A, Group B and Group C) with 10 learners assigned to each group. Post the same question in each of the groups. Note that this strategy doesn't save the tutor time but it does make the workload more manageable for learners who often find online study units more time consuming than their F2F study units. Learners are

Initiated interactions

only responsible to read and respond in their own group's posts. Learners have access to and are welcome to read the responses in the other groups but most learners will not.

- Summarise the discussion board findings at the end of each discussion.
- After you have modelled how to monitor a discussion group for a few weeks (post engaging questions, motivate learners to post and respond to others' postings, stimulate participation and critical thinking and summarise the conversation highlighting the main findings), have learner triad groups take on the responsibility of monitoring a discussion group. Each learning triad can be responsible for one week's discussion forum. During that week they will be expected to post a relevant probing question, keep the conversation going, logging on more frequently than usual and posting more often, and summarising the conversation. Learners in the triad group can share the responsibility any way they like, such as, taking turns monitoring the discussion forum for two days each during their week.
- Include means for all types of interaction in the resource design. For example, learners can access the eDocs from a file entitled eDocs and also by clicking on hyperlinks.
- Ask learners for feedback about the resource on a regular basis and revise the learning event as needed.

Being “Present” in your online resource

Community of Inquiry

Introduction

In recent years, innovative approaches to teaching and learning at university were informed by the constructivist learning theory. This theory is essentially about learners making sense of their experiences and constructing knowledge. However, individual knowledge construction is enhanced when learners discuss and debate a diversity of perspectives.

An educational experience has a dual purpose. The first is to construct meaning (reconstruction of experience) from a personal perspective. The second is to refine and confirm this understanding collaboratively with a community of learners. (Garrison, 2011, p.10)

Garrison and Vaughan (2008) believe that the ideal educational transaction (experience) is a collaborative constructivist process that has inquiry at its core. They claim that university education experiences are best conceived as communities of inquiry.

An educational community of inquiry is a group of individuals who collaboratively engage in purposeful critical discourse and reflection to construct personal meaning and confirm mutual understanding. (Garrison, 2011, p.15)

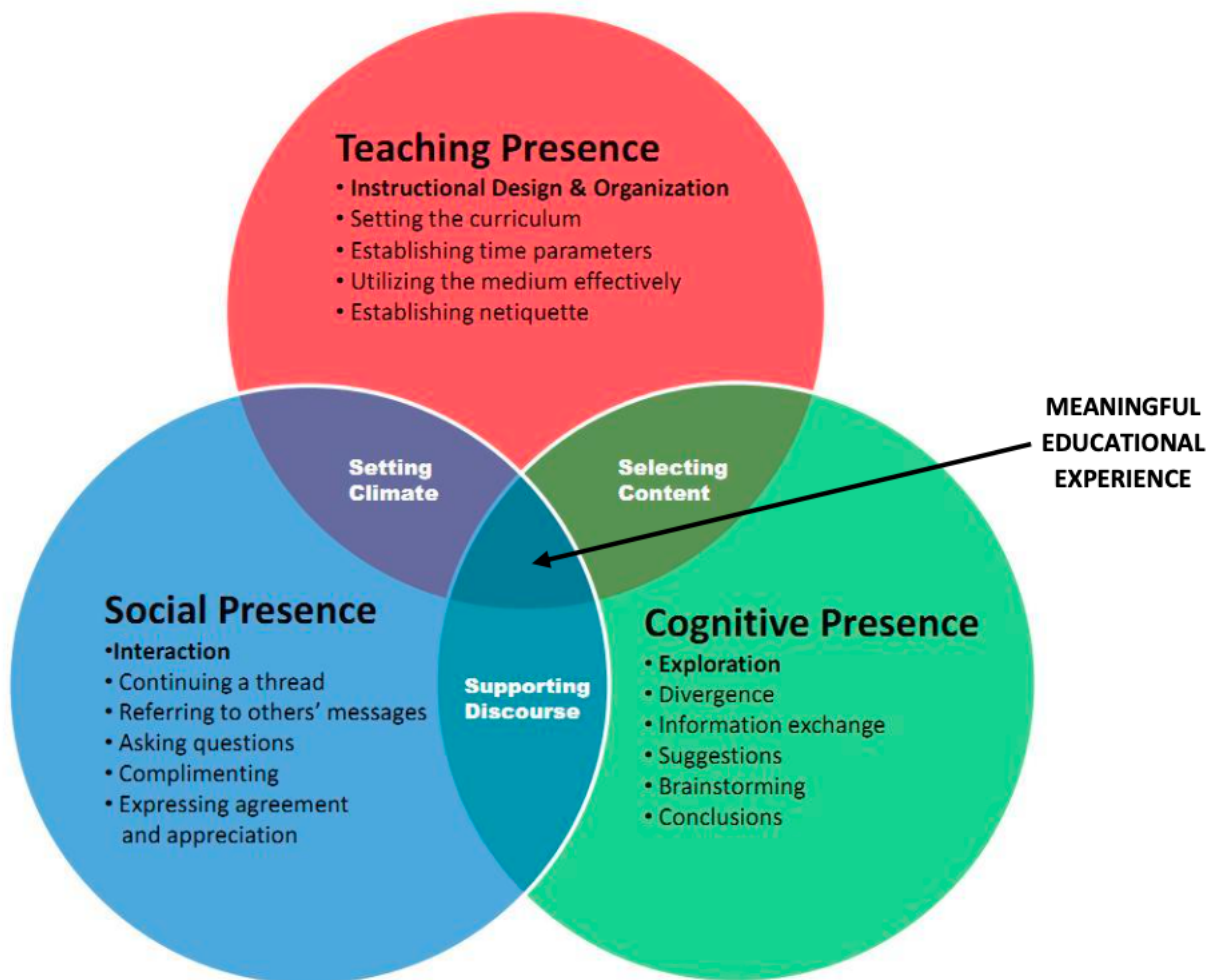
Engagement in a community of inquiry is the intersection of public and private worlds. An educational experience has both an interactive (social) and a reflective (private) element. To inquire is to be awakened, informed, and engaged to explore the controversies of a discipline rather than simply adopt the obvious and accepted truths. Worthwhile educational experiences fully engage learners to question ideas – even accepted truths – and hone the critical and creative thinking abilities of learners. (Garrison and Vaughan, 2008, p.16)

This is the principle behind the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework which represents the process of creating a deep and meaningful (collaborative constructivist) learning experience through the development of three interdependent elements – social, cognitive and teaching presence.

Research evidence suggests that communities of inquiry can be supported in an e-learning context. The Col framework proposed by Garrison et al (2000) is a widely accepted theoretical model of online learning. This framework helps us think about the elements that should be considered when designing and teaching online resources.

The Col framework views meaningful online learning as occurring at the intersection of three supporting presences: social, cognitive presence and teaching presence.

Community of Inquiry Framework



Source http://people.sunyulster.edu/instructional_design/coi.jpg

Social Presence

Social presence is the ability of participants to identify with a group or resource of study, communicate purposefully in a trusting environment, and develop personal and affective relationships progressively by way of projecting their individual personalities (Garrison, 2009).

Social presence occurs when learners project their personal characteristics in the online learning environment, thereby presenting themselves as 'real people'. Social presence is a crucial element of successful collaborative online learning environments which may not be easy to achieve. Rourke, Anderson, Garrison and Archer (2001) identified 12 indicators of social presence that fall in one of these categories:

CATEGORY	INDICATOR	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Interpersonal communication	Affective expression	Conventional and unconventional expressions of emotion, including repetitious punctuation, conspicuous capitalization, emoticons.	"I just can't stand it when....!!!" "Anybody out there!"
	Self-disclosure	Presents biographies, details of personal life outside class, or express vulnerability.	"Where I work, this is what we do..."
	Use of humour	Teasing, cajoling, irony, understatements, sarcasm.	"The banana crop at tal-Qroqq is looking good this year ;-)"
Open communication	Continuing a thread	Using reply feature of software, rather than starting a new thread.	Software dependent, e.g. "Subject: Re" or "Branch from"
	Quoting from others' messages	Using software features to quote others' entire messages, or cutting and pasting selections of others' messages.	Software dependent, e.g. "Maria writes:" or text prefaced by less-than symbol
	Referring explicitly to others' messages	Direct references to contents of others' posts.	"In your message, you talked about the distinction between surface and deep learning..."
	Asking questions	Learners ask questions of other learners or the moderator.	"Anyone else had experienced this problem with Moodle?"
	Complementing, expressing appreciation	Complementing others or contents of others' messages.	"I really like your interpretation of the reading."
	Expressing agreement	Expressing agreement with others or content of others' messages.	"I was thinking the same thing. You really hit the nail on the head."
	Vocatives	Addressing or referring to participants by name.	"I think John made a good point." "John would do you think?"
Cohesive communication	Addresses or refers to the group using inclusive pronouns	Addresses the group as we, us, our, group.	"Our textbook refers to...", "I think we veered off track..."
	Phatics, salutations	Communication that serves a purely social function: greetings, closures.	"Hi all," "That's it for now," "We're having the most beautiful weather here"

Adapted from Garrison 2011, p.38

Practical implications

How do we establish a social presence in an e-learning environment to support a community of inquiry and critically reflective discourse?

- We need to find the optimal level of social presence. Too little social presence may not sustain the community. Too much social presence may inhibit disagreement and encourage surface comments. The primary goal is to sustain the group for a

quality learning experience.

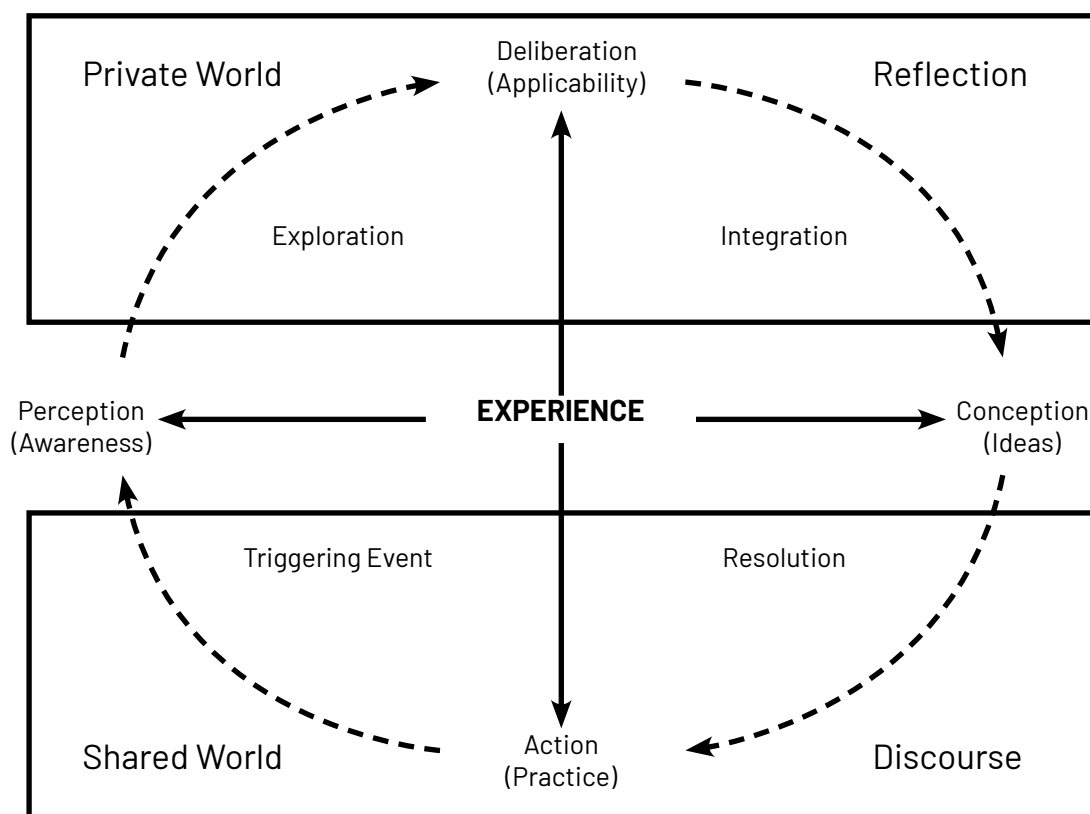
- The example that we set is another important factor to establish social presence. Modelling of appropriate messages and responses can be crucial in making learners feel welcome and in giving them a sense of belonging. These messages should set the tone and draw reluctant participants into the discussion. For this reason we must be particularly sensitive and responsive at the start of an e-learning experience. Ice-breaking activities should include both personal introductions and discussion of resource expectations.

Cognitive Presence

Cognitive presence is

the extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and disresource in a critical community of inquiry. (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 2001, p.11)

Cognitive presence is basic to the inquiry process. Inquiry includes the integration of reflective and interactive processes. Garrison and Vaughan (2008) define cognitive presence by the practical inquiry model.



Practical Inquiry Model

Perception-Conception Dimension – At one extreme is the divergent process of perception and analysis of facts or events. At the other extreme is the convergent process of insight and understanding associated with ideas and concepts.

Deliberation-Action Dimension – This represents the recursive nature of inquiry as representing both constructive and collaborative activities.

Phase	Descriptor	Indicator
Triggering Event	Evocative (inductive)	Recognize problem Puzzlement
Exploration	Inquisitive (divergent)	Divergence Information exchange Suggestions Brainstorming Intuitive leaps
Integration	Tentative (convergent)	Convergence Synthesis Solutions
Resolution	Committed (deductive)	Apply Test Defend

Practical Inquiry Descriptors and Indicators (Garrison 2011, p.52)

The Practical Inquiry model includes also four events:

- Initiation or triggering event whereby an issue or problem is identified and defined. This needs to be a well-thought-out activity to ensure full engagement and buy-in from the learners. Preferably this will be a dilemma or problem that learners could relate to from their experience or previous studies.
- Exploration of the problem and the gathering and refinement of relevant information. This means first to understand the nature of the problem and then to search for relevant information and possible explanations. This may be done through group activities and brainstorming and/or through more private activities such as literature searches. Here learners will experience iteration between the reflective and shared worlds as ideas are explored collaboratively and individuals try to make sense of what may seem to be complex and confusing. This is the essence of a true community of inquiry. The educational challenge is to monitor and regulate this phase of divergent thinking in such a way that it begins to be more focused in preparation for the next phase.
- Integration event where participants begin to reconcile and make sense of the information. Solutions are hypothesized and debated. While this is a highly reflective phase, learners are also intimately engaged in critical discourse that will shape understanding.
- Resolution whereby the preferred solution is applied and tested directly or vicariously. Direct testing may be difficult and impractical in an educational context. Learners can engage in a vicarious or a mental model of solutions.

Practical implications

The challenge for educators is to move the discussion and individual cognitive development through each of the phases of practical inquiry. That is, to build the discussion from problem recognition (triggering event) through to exploration, integration and resolution. The tendency is to do the first two phases very well, the third phase less well, and the last phase hardly at all. This is very likely due to the nature of the task and lack of teaching presence moving the discussion forward.

Teaching Presence

Teaching presence is defined as

the design, facilitation and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes. (Anderson, Rourke, Garrison & Archer, 2001)

Teaching presence is essential to support the social presence and cognitive presence. The teacher's roles fall into three primary categories: design and organisation, facilitation and direct instruction.

Design and Organisation

Design and organisation has to do with the macro-level structure and process. Design refers to structural decisions made before the resource begins, while organisation refers to similar decisions that are made to adjust to changes during the resource.

The design of an e-learning resource is, at least initially, more demanding than a similar face-to-face resource. We need to learn how to use the technology and redesign approaches to teaching and learning to maximize the capabilities of the e-learning medium. This redesign may be a considerable undertaking if we tend to rely exclusively on lecturing. Here we need to design and organise teaching to encourage a community of inquiry.

Building the curriculum for an e-learning resource is made more complex by having to deal with the apparent contradiction of having both to increase and decrease content. That is, content is increased in the sense of providing links to other sites that may include important learning objects or supplementary material; and decreased in the sense that, if there is considerable interactivity, reducing the quantity of material presented cannot be ignored. In conjunction with this broadening and channeling of resource materials is the crucial task of selecting collaborative activities and assignments.

The collaborative nature of a community of inquiry places increased importance on organizational issues.

INDICATORS	EXAMPLES
Setting curriculum	"This week we will be discussing..."
Designing methods	"I am going to divide you into groups, and you will debate..."
Establishing time parameters	"Please post a message by Friday..."
Utilizing medium effectively	"try to address issues that others have raised when you post"
Establishing netiquette	"Keep your messages short"
Making macro-level comments about resource content	"This discussion is intended to give you a broad set of tools/ skills which you will be able to use in deciding when and how to use different research techniques"

Facilitating Discourse

Teaching presence plays an essential role in facilitating discourse in an e-learning experience. Managing and monitoring discourse in an e-learning context is no less important than in face-to-face discussions. The reflective and rigorous nature of text-based communication demands serious commitment but presents opportunities for deep and meaningful learning. To sustain this commitment and encourage quality contributions requires that the discourse be focused and productive. The learning community must be sustained to progress towards the intended educational goals.

Online postings must be closely monitored and the nature and timing of responses must be carefully considered. In addition, the community must be somewhat self-sustaining and self-correcting; therefore too little or too much teaching presence may adversely affect the discourse and the process of building understanding. While maintaining this balance, teacher postings must model critical discourse while shaping the discussion to achieve purposeful goals. Guidance is also required to engage less responsive learners and limit contributions of learners who tend to dominate the discussion. These skills are not so different from facilitating a face-to-face discussion.

The challenge is not simply to encourage or reward prolific responses. Teaching presence must encourage appropriate and relevant responses by bringing attention to well-reasoned responses and making linkages to other messages. Participants must feel the discussion is moving in a purposeful direction and timely manner. The threads of the discussion need to be brought together and shared understanding explicitly stated. All of this requires more than a 'guide on the side' but less than a 'sage on the stage'. That is, the teacher must negotiate something more substantial than a rambling conversation yet not just a prescriptive dissemination of information.

INDICATORS	EXAMPLES
Identifying areas of agreement/disagreement	"Joe, Mary has provided a compelling counter-example to your hypothesis. Would you care to respond?"
Seeking to reach consensus/understanding	"I think Joe and Mary are saying essentially the same thing"
Encouraging, acknowledging, or reinforcing learner contributions	"Thank you for your insightful comments"
Setting climate for learning	"Don't feel self-conscious about 'thinking out loud' on the forum. This is a place to try out ideas after all"
Drawing in participants, prompting discussion	"Any thoughts on this issue?" "Anyone care to comment?"
Assess the efficacy of the process	"I think we're getting a little off track here."

Direct Instruction

Direct instruction goes beyond that of a facilitation role and is most often associated with specific content issues, such as diagnosing misconceptions. Disciplinary expertise and efficient shaping of the learning experience are essential aspects of any educational process. The risk in e-learning is that the proper educational and intellectual climate and direction may be lost.

The need for direct instruction challenges the “guide on the side” concept. While the concept of a guide or facilitator is integral to teaching presence, in and of itself it is limited as an educational approach to e-learning. Unfortunately, at times we become too focused on learner-centeredness to the exclusion of the influence of a pedagogical and content expert.

Teaching presence is not possible without the expertise of an experienced and responsible teacher who can identify the ideas and concepts worthy of study, provide the conceptual order, organise the learning activities, guide the discourse, offer additional sources of information, diagnose misconceptions, and interject when required.

Notwithstanding the essential role of a teacher, it needs to be emphasized that in the Col framework, all participants have the opportunity to contribute to teaching presence. In fact, if the ultimate goal is to learn to learn, learners must be encouraged to become critical thinkers and be self-directed in monitoring and regulating their learning appropriate to the task and their ability. This becomes even more obvious if learners act as moderators in discussions.

INDICATORS	EXAMPLES
Present content/questions	“Bates says... what do you think”
Focus the discussion on specific issues	“I think that’s a dead end. I would ask you to consider...”
Summarise the discussion	“The original question was... Joe said... Mary said... we concluded that... We still haven’t addressed...”
Confirm understanding through explanatory feedback	“You’re close but you didn’t account for... this is important because...”
Diagnose misconceptions	“Remember, Bates is speaking from an administrative perspective, so be careful when you say...”
Inject knowledge from diverse sources, e.g. textbook, articles, Internet, personal experiences (includes pointers to resources)	“I was at a conference with Bates once, and he said... You can find the proceedings from the conference at http://www... ”
Responding to technical concerns	“If you want to include a hyperlink in your message, you have to...”

Online Discussions

Introduction

Discussion boards, or threaded discussions, are one of the most commonly used tools in online teaching. Discussion forums provide the ability for asynchronous discussion to occur over a period of time. The ability to learn asynchronously is one of the primary benefits of online learning. Learners are able to reflect upon their ideas before sharing them with the class, leading to more reflective responses and in-depth learning.

Some benefits of online discussions include:

- Building class community by promoting discussion on the topics of the learning event.
- Allowing time for in-depth reflection – learners have more time to reflect, research and compose their thoughts before participating in the discussion
- Facilitating learning by allowing learners to view and to respond to the work of others
- Developing thinking and writing skills

Purposes of online discussions

Online discussions can serve a variety of purposes and can be used to meet a wide range of instructional objectives. Instructional Discussion Boards should be used to meet specific learning objectives and should be aligned with the content of the learning event. Well-designed discussion board activities can be used to encourage the following:

- Demonstration of Knowledge of Key Concepts – Using the forum to discuss key concepts allows learners to learn from one another and share ideas. When learners submit an assignment directly to a teacher, this sharing of ideas is lost.
- Community Building – One of the primary reasons for using discussion boards is to build a community of learners. This tool allows learners to become part of a vibrant learning community, rather than just an independent learner completing and submitting assignments with no real peer interaction.
- Reflection – Reflective activities require learners to share a synthesis of the learning experience, or to describe how a situation or experience has personal value to them. These kinds of activities should allow for honest and open responses.
- Consensus Building – Consensus building activities require learners to work together to create a product or to come to an agreement on some topic.
- Critical Thinking – through the use of higher order questioning techniques and activities, the discussion board can be used to encourage critical thinking skills.

Problems and pitfalls of online discussions

While online discussions are a great tool for building community and providing a means for learners to share their ideas with the group, there are some common problems and pitfalls:

- Learners may misunderstand directions or may be unsure of what is expected of them.

- Learner comments can become off track or go in a direction that is not supported in the lesson.
- Learners may stall or put off participating in the discussion board until the last minute.
- Learners may not feel a sense of connection with their classmates.
- Learners may react in an inappropriate way by annoying other learners or making disinterested or disrespectful comments to their peers or in response to assignments.

Participation in online discussions may not just happen. Why might there be lack of learner participation?

- Learners may be unfamiliar with online resources.
- Learners may have difficulties accessing the VLE or discussion forum.
- Learners may associate classes with a lecture/listen model.
- Learners may feel very exposed commenting on something to people they cannot see and do not know.
- Learners may fear being misunderstood.
- Learners may refrain from participating in discussion forums if they sense that others are 'lurking' i.e. monitoring the forum without posting.
- Learners may stop participating when they do not receive reactions to their posts.
- Learners may not see any value in participating in online discussions. The value of participation may not be clear. This is particularly so if learners are not awarded for postings.
- Learners may stop participating in large group online discussions because they feel that their posts will be lost.

Encouraging participation in online discussions

- Lost or lurking? - Learners might not be posting because they are reading what others are posting but not contributing themselves - "lurking" in the online world. If a learner is not participating consider sending an email or call to ensure access is available.
- Marks - Consider awarding marks for participation in discussion forums, or at least make participation a stated requirement. Decide early on how you will deal with "I agree" posts. Will they "count" for participation marks?
- Clarify expectations - Requiring substantive contributions from participants reduces lurking. What are you asking for? Opinions? Reference to readings? A tie-in to personal experience? This should be clear in your question or discussion-starter. Instructions for participation can vary depending on the stage of the class.

We may hear comments such as the following: "I posted, but no one responded...."

One common problem with discussion forums is that learners post questions or comments and never get responses. When this happens, learners tend to think that no one understood what they were saying.

- Other learners thought the message wasn't worth responding to or didn't require a response.
- Everyone was too busy to respond.
- No one else is visiting the discussion forums.

If no one responds, learners will, over time, lose interest in the discussion forums and will not only stop contributing, but will also stop visiting. Usually the reason for the lack of responses is that learners are lurking, they're offline for an extended period, or everyone is posting isolated messages and not attempting to engage other participants in conversation. Clarifying your expectations and modeling appropriate discussion can help prevent this from occurring.

Learners may also say to themselves: "Where did everyone go?"

Post an "out of office" message if you're going to be away for a few days to forewarn participants that you won't be able to respond to their posts immediately. Encourage participants to do the same. No one minds waiting a day or two for a response if they know ahead of time not to expect an immediate reply.

Learners may also say to themselves: "That's not what I meant!"

The problem with text-based interaction is that without body language and tone of voice to convey clues, it can sometimes be difficult to understand the intent of a message. This problem is amplified when learners don't know each other outside the discussion forum. There's nothing worse than misunderstood sarcasm to dampen a discussion and put learners off further participation.

It's worth reminding learners at the beginning of the resource that sarcastic and facetious comments can lead to misunderstandings. If you're worried that your post may be misinterpreted, emoticons (used sparingly) can sometimes be helpful in conveying your intent.

Questions to consider when designing an online discussion

Many academics value online discussion because it encourages more learners to participate and engage more deeply with learning event material.

1. What would you like the learners to discuss that could be pursued online better than in a regular face-to-face classroom?

Activities that are placed online need to be chosen to reflect the advantages of the online environment. For example, a discussion online has the advantages of allowing the learners more time for reflection and contemplation before posting. Learners can also revise and edit their posts before uploading. In addition, learners can use links, pictures, etc., to complement their postings. On the other hand, face-to-face discussion encourages spontaneity and allows the tutor to have more immediate control over the direction of the conversation.

2. What is the goal for the discussion (e.g. community-building, peer feedback, specific conceptual learning outcome)?

Every assignment in a blended or face-to-face resource should meet a learning outcome of the learning event goal. We need to consider what goal the online discussion meets before we start creating the questions to be discussed.

What are your goals for asking learners to participate in online discussion? For example,

- Prepare for in-class discussion (by posting questions for learners to respond to prior to class).

- Identify key concepts in readings.
- Extend and apply issues introduced in learning materials.
- Continue in-class discussion outside of class time.

It is recommended that we include the specific learning outcomes for each online discussion. If these expectations are not communicated to learners, it's possible that they won't see the purpose of participating:

"I'm not sure what I'm supposed to be learning. A lot of postings are just post random stuff ..."
(A learner's comment)

3. How do I get the online discussion started?

Provide guiding questions or discussion topics, based on your goals for the online discussion, to remind learners:

- Why you want them to use online discussion (explore new ideas, review concepts, compare experiences ...)
- What you want them to base their discussion on (readings, in-class discussion, personal opinion ...)
- How you expect them to use it (when, how often, types of postings: original vs. response ...)

Without your questions to guide the discussion, learners may not be able to get a constructive discussion going:

"We need more guidance in the discussion. Most people (including myself) don't know what to write about." (A learner's comment)

4. What resources would you ask the learners to consult before they post? What experiences might you want the learners to undertake beforehand and then report on in their posts?

When devising a discussion assignment, be sure to clearly indicate the materials from which the learners should draw. These materials could be lecture notes or readings provided by the instructor, or they could be materials sought out and included by the learner, or they could be based on personal reflection or experience. Regardless of the type of resource material, the resources should be outlined for the learner.

5. Will the discussions take place in breakout groups? If the discussion takes place in breakout groups, how will discussion results be shared with the rest of the class (across groups)?

In a large class, it is often useful to create smaller groups of learners that can interact with each other. This method ensures each learner is not overwhelmed by the sheer amount of information and encourages the creation of a safe learning environment. If you are creating small groups you need to consider the size of the groups, how the groups will be divided, and whether the groups will report out to the larger class. The group size and composition of groups depends on the nature of the online discussion. For example, small groups are better if you want learners to discuss a case study. Also,

learners may be purposely assigned to groups according to their strengths.

6. How will the learners be expected to respond to one another? What counts as a good response?

Having the learners respond to one another's posts encourages a lively class discussion, but you need to be clear regarding what you expect learners to respond to and what constitutes a good response. You may consider spelling out the expectations for responses by including examples of effective responses and clear guidelines. For example, instead of writing "respond to two of your classmates' postings" you may write "choose a post from a classmate that offers a different interpretation than yours. What is the source of the difference? How can the two viewpoints be rectified?"

7. What will your role be in the online discussion, and how will that be communicated to the learners?

A common complaint from academics who are new to blended teaching is that they feel they must always be "on." They feel that learners expect them to be present 24 hours a day on the discussion boards. On the other hand, learners often complain that their tutor is not available and the learner is left to navigate the resource alone. One way to manage both of these issues is to clarify your role for each online discussion.

Let learners know your role in discussions. For example, will your main role be to ask questions? Actively participate? Provide summaries, in-class or online? Consider whether you want to:

- Respond to individual postings, or periodically respond to main themes in the discussion. Bring ideas from online discussions into class meetings.
- Ask learners to provide daily or weekly summaries
- Provide examples of good and poor postings for learners.
- Provide evaluative responses to learner postings.

Then, make clear to learners how you will participate in the discussion. For example, when will you check the forum, and what kinds of responses can learners expect from you? You may want to check in and respond to every thread once a day. On the other hand, you may want to let the discussion develop with little direction from you and post at the end of the discussion period. There are advantages to any method you employ, however, whatever method you choose should be clearly identified to the learner.

Your ongoing input can help learners see the value of the discussion, which can keep them from losing interest or wondering what they're expected to learn in the discussion.

"I learned a lot from other learners' postings, but the professor's involvement helped me sort out what was a valid point and what was just wrong." (A learner's comment)

8. What is the assignment timeline? How will the phases of discussion unfold? For example, how will discussion progress from introductory messages into substantive discussion and meaning-making?

When constructing a discussion assignment, consider the time it would take for learners to craft a thoughtful post and the time required for learners to read other posts and respond. Indicate the deadlines for each step in the process so learners can schedule their time accordingly.

9. How will the learners' work be evaluated? How will they receive feedback on their work?

Assessing learner learning in the online environment must be deliberate and explicit. What indicators can you identify in the online discussions that will tell you what learners are learning, and whether or not the discussion is accomplishing what you want it to? Consider creating discussion board rubrics that identify what is expected of the learners. Rubrics guide learner work and expose the process of improving within a discipline. Assigning grades to discussion board posts can be challenging, so determining guidelines at the outset of the learning event and making those guidelines available to the learners will help foster a creative learning environment.

10. How will the results of the online discussion be integrated into the face-to-face component of the learning event?

Online and face-to-face components of the learning event should be intertwined so that the learning is fluid and seamless. One suggestion is to consider ways to use the online discussion to bridge face-to-face meetings and allow for deepened dialogue on issues raised in a face- to-face setting.

NOTE: These notes were compiled from the following online resources:

- <http://at.simmons.edu/blendedlearning/learnhow/casestudies/haavind/index.php>
- <https://www.edutopia.org/pdfs/stw/edutopia-onlinelearning-mastering-online-discussion-board-facilitation.pdf>

Communicating with your learners

Discussion board assignments: Alternatives to the Question-and- Answer format

Rubrics for Online Discussions

Samples

Rubrics are assessment tools that help us clearly communicate expectations for learner work. Rubrics also present a valid way to reduce grading bias and set a level playing field so that each learner understands how to perform in order to achieve each standard.

Rubrics are often set up in a grid that defines quality of work (from excellent to poor) for each criteria of the assignment. Points may be associated with each quality indicator. Rubrics play a vital role in helping learners identify their own strengths and weaknesses. If learners understand their weakness then they can use rubric feedback to improve future performance.

You may wish to use or adapt any of the underlying sample rubrics for your online discussions.

SAMPLE 1

Class participation is an important expectation of this resource. Learners are expected to offer comments, questions, and replies to the discussion question that has been posed for each module as well as to classmate postings. Learners are expected to actively participate in EACH module's discussion EACH week throughout the semester. The faculty role is as an observer and facilitator. I will be reading all messages and I will participate in the discussion as appropriate. Learners may work ahead on the discussion boards but posting on past week's boards will not allow for stimulating discussions with your classmates.

Evaluation of Assignment

Postings will be evaluated on the quality of the postings and the degree that the postings promote discussion with classmates. Participation on 15 forums is required (13 modules, Breaking the Ice and Web Sites) and postings will be evaluated per forum on the below scale. Learners can earn the 5 additional points by showing good effort to engage classmates in discussion comparing activities done on other graded assignments. The discussion assignment will be worth a total of 50 points.

1 Point	2 Points	3 Points
Minimal response to the module question	Posting responds to the question but does not stimulate further class discussion.	Posting fully addresses the module question and stimulates at least one substantial follow-up posting

SAMPLE 2

The following points are what is looked for in your original postings to the Discussion Board and your replies to others postings (Total of 10 points for each Discussion Board assignment).

Original Posting (7 points):

1. Mentions at least 2 specific points from the article or reading. (1 point)
2. Relation of new information to old information learned in the resource to date. (1 point)
3. Relation of information in article or reading to personal experience. (1 point)
4. Discussion at a critical level, not just recitation of facts from the article. (3 points)
5. Length of posting approximately 1 word processing page. (1 point)

Note: Discussion at a critical level means discussing things such as your opinion of the point mentioned, why you hold that opinion, what you see wrong with the point mentioned, how you see the point consistent/inconsistent with what you have learned so far, implications for the future, consistencies/inconsistencies within the article or reading itself, and so forth. In other words, critiquing an article means analyzing the good and/or bad aspects of the article and justifying your analysis. Do not just tell me what the article or reading states...I already know this.

Reply to Others' Postings (3 points):

1. Discuss one point you like/agree with, and one point you dislike/disagree with, and why. (2 points)
2. Length should be about 1/2 page in length (approximately 100 words).

SAMPLE 3

Criteria	A (90-100) Outstanding	B (80-89) Proficient	C (70-79) Basic	D/F (0-69) Below Expectations
Critical Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rich in content• Full of thought, insight, and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Substantial information• Thought, insight, and analysis has taken place	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generally competent• Information is thin and commonplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rudimentary and superficial• No analysis or insight is displayed
Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear connections• To previous or current• To real-life situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New ideas or connections• Lack depth and/or detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited, if any connections• Vague generalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No connections are made• Off topic
Uniqueness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New ideas• New connections• Made with depth and detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New ideas or connections• Lack depth and/or detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Few, if any new ideas or connections• Rehash or summarize other postings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No new ideas• "I agree with..." statement

Timeliness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All required postings • Early in discussion • Throughout the discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All required postings • Some not in time for others to read and respond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All required postings • Most at the last minute without allowing for response time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some, or all, required postings missing
Stylistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few grammatical or stylistic errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several grammatical or stylistic errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obvious grammatical or stylistic errors • Errors interfere with content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obvious grammatical or stylistic errors • Makes understanding impossible

SAMPLE 4

Contents:

1. Evaluation Sheet
2. Evaluation Sheet Criteria and Explanation

Evaluation Sheet

Learner:

Learning event:

Semester:

Rating Scale

3 – Outstanding 2 – Acceptable 1 – Weak, unacceptable 0 – No Posting

Characteristic/Criteria

DISCUSSION BOARD	READING TITLE
Focused on topic	
Organization of ideas/thoughts	
Critical thinking evident in responses	
Correlations of contributions to assigned readings	
Use of other resources/citations	
Thoughtfulness in interactions	
Listening to others	
Grammar/mechanics	
Timeliness per course policy	
Total	x/27
Comments: Overall participation score: _____	

Evaluation Sheet Criteria and Explanation

Criteria	Explanation
Focused on topic	Clear indication that the response is motivated by the particular reading and that the writer has taken a particular slant on that reading and developed it.
Organization of ideas/thoughts	There is a sense in the response that ideas lead to each other and that there are connections being made.
Critical thinking evident in responses	The response is just not a summary but an attempt by the writer to push attempt by the writer to push toward a particular personal meaning.
Correlations of contributions to assigned readings	The response refers consistently to the reading and to particular ideas and situations within the reading that have made an impression.
Use of other resources/citations	The response makes connections to information, writers and other texts the writer has read or seen.
Thoughtfulness in interactions	Evidence of college level thinking that relates the writer's life to the social.
Listening to others	The response illustrates that the writer has been paying attention to those who have interesting and provocative things to say.
Grammar/mechanics	Few grammar or sentence mechanics errors—none that interfere with the meaning the writer wants to convey.
Timeliness per course policy	Possible pts: 3=posted on time; 2=late, 0=no post

Scores:	27 – 22	3 points
	21 - 17	2 points
	16 and below	1 point
	No post	0 points

SAMPLE 5

Category	1	2	3	4
Promptness & Initiative	Does not respond to most postings; rarely participates freely	Responds to most postings several days after initial discussion; limited initiative	Responds to most postings within a 24 hour period; requires occasional prompting to post	Consistently responds to postings in less than 24 hours; demonstrates good self-initiative
Delivery of Post	Unitizes poor spelling and grammar in most posts; posts appear "hasty"	Errors in spelling and grammar evidenced in several posts	Few grammatical or spelling errors are noted in posts	Consistently uses grammatically correct posts with rare misspellings

Relevance of Post	Posts topics which do not relate to the discussion content; makes short or irrelevant remarks	Occasionally posts off topic; most posts are short in length and offer no further insight into the topic	Frequently posts topics that are related to discussion content; prompts further discussion of topic	Consistently posts topics related to discussion topic; cites additional references related to topic.
Expression within the post	Does not express opinions or ideas clearly, no connection to topic	Unclear connection to topic evidenced in minimal express of opinions or ideas	Opinions and ideas are stated clearly with occasional lack of connection to topic.	Expresses opinions and ideas in a clear and concise manner with obvious connection to topic
Contribution to the Learning Community	Does not make effort to participate in learning community as it develops; seems indifferent	Occasionally makes meaningful reflection on group's efforts; marginal effort to become involved with group	Frequently attempts to direct the discussion and to present relevant viewpoints for consideration by group; interacts freely	Aware of needs of community; frequently attempts to motivate the group discussion; presents creative approaches to topic.

Other sample rubrics:

- **Chico Rubric for Online Instruction**
- **UCF Discussion Rubrics**

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Being "Present" in your online resource

Community of Inquiry framework

Online discussions

Communicating with your learners

Discussion board assignments: Alternatives to the Question-and-Answer format

Rubrics for online discussions

MODULE 7

Structure

Structure as an eLearning Quality Standard

By the end of this session learners will be able to:

- Write a set of 'policies' for your learners regarding (emails, plagiarism, netiquette, late assignments, postings and responding in the discussion forum, logging on, etc.).
- Describe strategies to manage time when teaching online.

What do we mean by 'Structure' in eLearning?

Structure is proposed as a high-quality standard for effective eLearning. Effective eLearning sessions and learning events require high quality content, high quality delivery or teaching strategies, high-quality support for learners as well as an effective learning community to facilitate effective learning. Structure provides the foundation to inform students of your policies and enables you to set up clear expectations and guidelines for assignments, postings, plagiarism, and participation so there will be fair, consistent, high quality standards in your online learning event that are clear to all learners. Quality standards in eLearning ensure that your online session will be equal to or better than the standards in a face-to-face iteration of the learning event. By now you have:

- identified 1-3 learning objectives for your online session;
- chunked content into organised, relevant, meaningful, succinct segments that progress logically and build on previous knowledge;
- uploaded supportive readings, videos, and adopted, adapted or designed a learning activity to motivate learners and enhance and extend learning;
- implemented strategies to ensure that learners feel a 'responsiveness' equal or superior to face-to-face instruction;
- utilised the full power of the Internet as a delivery tool, augmenting resource content through convenient links to online resources and eSamples, and;
- devised strategies to support the learner while they engage and interact with the content, other learners and the instructor.

In this session, we will:

- design and communicate clear policies so learners understand expectations;
- consider strategies to manage time when designing and delivering eLearning sessions.

Structure may be understood as the required foundation that makes it possible to provide a superior level of content, delivery and support and an effective learning community to facilitate learning. Many of the 'Structure' prerequisite activities to ensuring a successful eLearning session have already been discussed in our sessions on Content, Delivery, and Support. As noted in the RoadMap and reiterated in our introductory face-to-face session, the five components of effective eLearning (content, delivery, support, structure, community, and outcomes) are totally integrated and trying to discuss one without the others is not possible. In this session we will not dwell on aspects of structure that have already been addressed in previous sessions (e.g. the importance of considering: the needs of the learner, a healthy learning environment, engaging teaching strategies that support the learning outcomes, and strategies to support the learner and enable them to feel responsiveness equal or superior to a face-to-face session). Although these aspects are all essential and prerequisites to superior 'Structure', in this session we will focus on Structure strategies that highlight how to manage your time when designing and delivering eLearning sessions, and you will establish clear communication and policies with learners.

Online learning event policies

When designing an online session, it is essential that your policies regarding participation, plagiarism, late assignments, posting, feedback, and office hours are established and clearly communicated in your study unit syllabus and RoadMap. Below are some examples of policies that may be incorporated.

Participation

Example: Learners are expected to devote the same amount of time to an online learning event as they would for any face-to-face learning event (approximately 6 hours per week).

Learners are expected to log onto the learning event every day or two to read emails and announcements. Learners should set aside one or two times each week to devote an extended amount of time to completing online readings and activities.

Track learner participation and quickly send an email if they have been absent from the resource for a week. You may say something like, "Hi Susan, I noticed that you haven't logged onto the learning event for the past 7 days. As you know from the resource's syllabus you are expected to log onto the resource every day or two. I am wondering if you need any help?" Usually the realisation that you are keeping track of the learner's participation will be enough to change the learner's participation level. Most often they will email you back apologising and saying they were just busy with other resources. Once they realise that their participation is as visible as it is in a F2F class and that lack of participation will affect their grade, participation typically abruptly changes their behaviour. Of course, if the lack of participation continues your second email will have a different tone and message.

Absence - failure to reply to email or engage in a discussion or chat, for example - is lack of participation. Research shows that the learners will make more effort if there

is a value associated with participation. Even a 5-10% value will have a huge effect on the quality and quantity of postings in your online sessions. If you choose to use this form of motivation, your code of conduct policy should so indicate, and both your assignment policy and your learning event syllabus should specify how attendance will be figured into the final learning event grade.

Posting

Example: Learners are expected to post at least once in each forum. Some weeks you may have more interest or expertise on a topic and want to post more often. Other weeks you may struggle to find anything to say that adds value to a conversation. If you absolutely have nothing to add to a conversation than do not feel obliged to post. However, this should not happen more than once in a learning event. When you respond make it thoughtful and respectful. Please do not respond with trite comments such as "I agree" or "good point". It can be frustrating and time consuming for your colleagues to click on and open a comment that doesn't have substance. Each posting should be approximately 30-200 words. Long posts can be time consuming to read. Responding to every post in the forum or posting too often can be equivalent to a learner dominating the conversation in a face-to-face class. Each learner should read all postings and respond to at least one posting in each forum. In posting, less is more. We are looking for quality not quantity. Postings for each forum are due, for example, on Wednesday evening at 12.00.

Office hours

Academics involved in online teaching should clearly define the time periods for online communication and instructional work. How often do I need to be online? How long should I be online? The frequency and duration for being online varies according to your teaching style, the activities that you need to monitor during a particular week etc. You may decide to log in the VLE every day for 20 minutes or else you may decide to log in three times a week for 1 hour etc. As the study unit progresses, you may decide to log in the VLE less frequently. See what works best for you.

One of the biggest advantages of online learning for both the student and you is its flexibility. The learner shouldn't have to wait for office hours to pose a question and you shouldn't need to be available several hours a week at the same time each week. Usually one or two hours per week will be sufficient for office hours. Even then, my experience has been that learners rarely use the office hour since their questions are usually answered quickly in the QandA forum.

It is important that you set standards for how quickly you will respond to learners' questions and when you will be online. Communicate these standards to learners so they will know when they can expect a reply to their questions. Also, try and stick to these standards. If you will be online Wednesday and Friday between 0800-0900hrs, communicate this to learners. If they post a question on Wednesday at 1300hrs, they will know that they are likely to get a reply at least by the following Friday.

For fully online learning events, you should consider scheduling virtual office hours every week and use a web conferencing tool (e.g. Google Hangout) to communicate

synchronously with learners. If you teach a number of learning events, you can post your virtual office hours on your profile page in the VLE.

Email

Establish a clear policy that emails should only be sent to the tutor for personal communication (to explain an absence or late assignments etc.). All communication regarding due dates, assignments, session content, expectations, technical issues etc., must be posted in the QandA forum.

Use the Help or Frequently Asked Questions forum

Create a specific forum for questions. By having a question forum, educators can quickly and frequently see any questions or concerns learners may have and promptly respond in a timely manner so learners do not need to wait until the next face-to-face session to get responses. Often a learner's questions regarding due dates, assignment criteria, or learning event expectations are in the resource's RoadMap or Syllabus and other learners will answer the question even before the tutor. Insist that learners post ALL questions in the question forum and not in an email to the tutor. It is likely that several learners will have the same question and by having the question posted in the forum you will only have to answer it once. Make this announcement in your first F2F class, and if your class is totally online, make this point clear in an introduction video. Also post this expectation in an announcement. If a learner does email a question, respond by referring them to the announcement and ask them to kindly post their question in the question forum so other learners can benefit from the response. Learners should only email you if it is a personal situation (e.g. they need an extension on an assignment, need to miss a class due to illness or a death etc.).

Assignment instructions

Your assignment instructions should be clear and concise. A good set of instructions reduces the amount of clarification questions by learners. Consider the inclusion of the following elements when providing instructions about assignments:

- Purpose/Objective – Why are the learners doing the assignment? What is the assignment's relevance to the learning outcomes of the learning event? In no more than three sentences explain what the learners will learn whilst working on the assignment. You may refer them to the learning outcomes in the study unit description.
- Question/s – The wording used for the assignment question/s should be clear.
- Grading rubric – The grading rubric contains the assessment criteria of the assignment. It helps you communicate to learners the specific requirements and acceptable performance standards of an assignment. The rubric also helps learners monitor and assess their progress as they work toward clearly indicated goals. When you return the marked assignments along with the rubric, learners can more easily recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their work and direct their efforts accordingly.

It is good practice to include eSamples of assignment from a previous iteration

of the learning event on the VLE. These sample assignments will clarify expectations in terms of content and format (read below) of assignment. Before you upload exemplary assignment submissions from a previous year obtain the learner's permission.

- **Format** – Provide instructions regarding the format of the assignment write-up. What content (e.g. name, surname, ID card number, programme of studies, semester, date, assignment question) should be included on the cover page? Page margins width? Single, one and a half- or double-spaced? Font type and size? How many words? Referencing and citation style? Your department may already have a set of standards for assignments.
- **Plagiarism** – Include information and links to resources that guide learners on proper citations and referencing. You should create Turnitin assignment activities so that learners can submit a draft version of their work to check for plagiarism and revise their work as necessary. Turnitin is an online tool that analyses the text in assignments and generates an originality report with text matches. Include information about the consequences of submitting plagiarised work for marking.
- **Submission** – Provide instructions so learners understand how you expect them to submit their work. Will they submit an online version and you mark and return it with track changes online, or will you request a hardcopy version of their assignment? An online version is certainly more convenient and environmentally friendly, and may be the only option if learners are not in the same geographical location.
- **For online assignment submission** you can create Turnitin assignment activities so that learners can submit a draft and final version of their work. If you plan to download the learners' assignments on your computer for electronic marking, you should instruct learners to follow a file naming convention for submitted assignments, for example, John Borg ID23475M. This will make it easy for you to identify the author of each assignment.
- **Submission date/deadline** – Apart from specifying the date by when an assignment should be submitted, you should also include implications of late assignment submissions. Will you accept these? If yes, will learners incur any marking penalties?

UM Digital Education policy

The University of Malta has a new Digital Education policy. You should become familiar with this policy if you are considering designing and delivering blended or online study unit. An overview video, UM Distance and eLearning policy is also available.

Tips for managing time when designing, delivering and evaluating online learning events

Academics typically put many hours into designing and administering an online session, especially the first time it is offered. What follows is a list of time saving strategies and techniques to help you whilst developing and delivering blended or online sessions and learning events.

- **Prepare in advance** – You should design and identify the learning resources and activities that you will use during the learning event several weeks prior to its start. It will be difficult to design and teach a learning event at the same time. You may need to consider some 'just in time' alterations whilst delivering the learning

event but it would help if the learning event is completely or substantially ready before its start.

- Develop a good learning event description – Dedicate significant time to develop a good and detailed syllabus. Having a detailed syllabus will reduce your workload, as you will have already worked out the learning outcomes, learning event schedule, readings, assignments, grading and other content. If you have already delivered the learning event in a face-to-face mode, you may recall the questions that learners asked about the syllabus. When you amend your syllabus for an online mode, try and include answers and clarifications that you made during a face-to-face iteration. A well-designed and detailed syllabus reduces the number of learner questions and will save you time answering these questions.
- It is important to adhere to the Library Copyright guidelines when making use of or adapting third party resources. Copyright permission may have to be acquired ahead of time, but it is well worth the effort.
- Develop content that can be reused – Try to create content that can be used from one year to the next without the need to conduct a major overhaul on it. Every year you will still need to update your content and make minor improvements and enhancements. Avoid content that makes references to specific assignments, assignment deadlines and semester specific information. Similarly, when possible, create content that can be used in other study units. Avoid study unit titles/codes, dates and reference to assignments in such content. Some content is common across learning events. Content that can be reused across several learning events may include information on your online role, online netiquette, discussion forum guidelines, assignment instructions and assessment rubrics.
- Develop a good filing system for the learning event material on your computer – Organise all learning event material i.e. syllabus, learning resources, readings, assignment instructions and rubric, learner's downloaded assignments etc. in a way that makes sense for you. It is time consuming and frustrating to be constantly looking for these materials simply because you failed to organise these well on your computer. You can organise your files by topic/week or else you can organise your files by type of content e.g. a folder for readings, a folder for assignments, a file for each learner within your assignment file etc.
- Adopt good online writing techniques – When reading text on a screen, many of us tend to skim through the text. The wording used for discussion prompts, assignment instructions etc. should be clear and concise. Learners may miss important instructions in wordy discussion prompts, and they may end up asking questions that will take up your time to reply. Try not to overwhelm learners with too much background information. Remove redundant information.
- Seek feedback on your learning event – During the design stage of your learning event, you should gather informal feedback on your work from a colleague. Ask a colleague to review a topic in your learning event. For example, ease of navigation, learning outcomes for the topic, clarity of instructions, the assessment activity etc. It always helps to have a second pair of eyes looking for any issues that can be corrected prior to the start of the learning event.

During and after the learning event, you should invite learner feedback on the session or learning event design, the structure, learning resources, activities, and clarity of instructions etc. This feedback will help you revise your approach for the remaining sessions in the learning event or improve your next iteration of the learning event.

- Use templates – When you prepare a good learning event description with all the sections, styling etc. use it as a template for other learning events. Save the original learning event description under a different filename and then replace the text accordingly. Similarly, you can save time when you update an existing learning event schedule for your other learning events.
- Use the VLE Copy Tool to copy material from a learning event of a previous academic year – You do not need to re-upload the same material on the VLE each time you deliver a learning event. The VLE Copy Tool is an online facility that automatically copies all the files, learning resources, links and activities from one learning event to another learning event. Any submissions made by learners e.g. assignments and forum posts will not be copied.
- Balance the distribution of grading and feedback work – Assess the amount of work that you will need to do for each learning event that you teach during the same semester. Once you have developed the learning event description, the learning resources and assessment activities for a learning event, the remaining time-consuming tasks are marking and providing feedback on learners' work.
- Help forums – As suggested in the policy section, help forums can really save you time if you enlist the help of everyone to respond to questions. Some academics adopt the '3b4 me' protocol i.e. they would wait for at least three responses or concurrent queries before replying, to see if learners could solve the problem/issue for themselves without the tutor's intervention. This is especially true for technical questions about the VLE or other tools that you are using in the learning event. Encourage learners to post in the Help forum if they know the answer to a question. You should provide tips on how to effectively ask and answer questions.
- Automate parts of the learning event – You can set the VLE to automatically display learning resources and activities on specific dates. This will save you the burden of reminding yourself to manually set the display settings for these. You can automate the assignment availability dates. You can also include some activities that can be automatically marked by the VLE e.g. multiple-choice quizzes, short answer questions, true or false exercises etc. In addition to automated marking of activities, you can make use of conditional activities in the VLE. This feature allows you to define conditions of progress and automate access to particular learning resources and activities. For example, access to an activity is not available to learners until a quiz is taken successfully or another activity is completed.
- Develop an easy and consistent navigation for your learning event on the VLE – This will minimise learners' questions about where to locate resources etc. and you will save time answering these questions. You can organise the learning resources, activities and discussion boards by topic/week. Alternatively, you can adopt a navigation scheme by function i.e. one having separate folders for readings, discussion boards, activities, sample past papers etc. There is no compelling research about which navigation structure works better. It is important to have consistency and clear indicators where different learning event materials/activities can be found. Try and minimise the number of mouse clicks required to access anything in your learning event. Use meaningful names for learning resources, activities, discussion boards etc. For example, use 'Reading 1 – Theories of Learning' instead of 'Reading 1'. Avoid using too many font styles or colours unnecessarily in the VLE.
- Add learner support links – You are the content and pedagogical expert in class, however, there will be times when learners ask questions that others are in a better position to answer more effectively or efficiently. For example, at the University of Malta, the I.T. Services helps students with technical queries, instructions on how

to submit an assignment online, use of Turnitin etc. The Library helps learners with locating and searching books, journal articles etc. The Institute of Linguistics offers support with academic writing etc. It is therefore a good practice to include links in the VLE to resources/guides available on the websites of these support departments. Direct learners to contact these departments as appropriate.

- Use the Announcements forum - By default, all VLE areas will have this forum. The Announcements forum is equivalent to the learning event noticeboard. This forum is used by the tutor to communicate important information about the study unit. All learners registered in the study unit will receive a copy of Announcement posts in their University mailbox.

The Announcements forum is a one-way forum which means that learners are not able to respond to posts in this forum. It is a good practice to post a weekly announcement that contains administrative information, details and clarifications of the upcoming activities including assignments and due dates.

- Assessment and feedback - Providing learners with feedback takes time. Some time-saving strategies mentioned earlier include making use of activities that can be automatically marked by the VLE e.g. multiple-choice quizzes, short answer questions, true or false exercises etc. Other time saving strategies include assessing group rather than individual discussion postings or providing a single weekly commentary summarising the main arguments in the discussion board of all groups. For assignments, instead of typing feedback, you can consider recording yourself talking about the assignment and uploading this on the VLE. As indicated earlier, using grading rubrics will save you some time and at the same time ensure grading consistency.
- Providing learners with lists of common errors learners in previous iterations made on assignments can help prevent many learners making the same mistake and save you time correcting the same mistakes over and over.
- Providing learners with eSamples of previous learners' exemplary assignments (with their permission) can help learners understand expectations and improve the quality of their work. It can also improve the quality of learners' first draft of their assignment and save you time grading work submitted that is below standard.

Learning dyads/triads

- Dividing groups into learning triads of 2 or 3 learners can be a huge time saver for you as the facilitator. I typically assign learning triads during the first session. In addition to providing support to one another and feedback on assignments, the learning triad is assigned a week to monitor the discussion. I monitor the first few weeks so learners get a sense of what is expected (pose open ended questions, jump in with another prompt if the discussion is not lively, answer questions in a timely fashion, and summarise the discussion at the end). Sometimes triad members share the monitoring work with each triad member facilitating two days during the Session. Sometimes one triad member will manage the week and another the summary. The monitoring of the session is part of learner's participation mark for the study unit along with all their posts during learning event when others are monitoring. Learners can become very creative when tasked with monitoring the Session and have created surveys, quizzes, summaries that have Top 10 lists and much more. This tactic will save you a lot of time! You may want to assign the discussion prompts for these sessions even though the learners are monitoring them. It depends on the year and maturity of the learners.

- Discussion forums should enhance your resource and not take you or your learners' excessive amounts of time. If learners complain in their temperature check that the discussion forums are taking an unrealistic amount of time, consider (1) creating smaller discussion groups; (2) reducing the number of questions, (3) extending the timeline for posting, (4) giving learners a week off from the discussion forum especially during a week when a big assignment is due, (5) shortening the length of the posting, and/or (6) reducing the number of expected responses. And for you, create learning triads to monitor one discussion forum during the study unit after you have provided enough modelling so that learners understand what is expected and feel comfortable taking on this task.

Hope you find these tips helpful!

Strategies for managing the online workload (Part 1)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqDPiiCTFY4>

Strategies for managing the online workload (Part 2)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZ5kL7Mk7UQ>

eSamples – Policies, Guidelines and Support

eSample 1: Policies, Guidelines and Support by Josef Trapani, Lecturer at the Department of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences

Dear participants,

The aim of this announcement is to provide an overview of the policies, guidelines and sources of support for this learning event.

General Forums

On the top section of the Moodle page you will find the following general forums for this study unit, all of which should be helpful to develop a community of learners.

- Through the Announcements forum, the tutors will regularly post guidelines and important updates about each session's resources and activities.
- In the Q and A Forum, you are more than welcome to post questions related to any aspect of this study unit, except its assessment.
- Questions on any of the assignments may be posted in the Assessment Forum.
- In the Problems with Moodle Forum you may post questions related to the use of

the virtual learning platform.

- On a lighter note, The Café is the place in which we can engage in online interaction of a social nature.

Apart from posting your queries in the respective forum, if one of your colleagues posts a question and you feel you can help, please do try to answer his/her question. Do not worry if you are not sure whether your answer is exactly correct; I will be following all questions and answers and will intervene to clarify certain areas when the need arises.

Contacting the tutor and each other

Should you have any query related to this study unit in general, its mode of assessment or the use of Moodle, the best way to tackle it is to ask about it in the respective forum, as outlined above. This is really important for two reasons: (1) enabling you to help each other rather than waiting the tutors to answer it; (2) allowing your colleagues to learn from your question as well.

However, if there is any aspect which you want to clarify exclusively with me, then feel free to contact me by sending me an email on josef.trapani@um.edu.mt. I will endeavour to answer your email within 24 hours. You may also send me a private message through Moodle: click on "Participants" on the top left corner of the Moodle page and then click on my name and choose on "Send a Message" in the pulldown menu at the bottom of the page. Alternatively, you can simply click on the small speech bubble next to your name on the top right corner of the page. Then click "New Message" and type my name in the search box. You can also use this system to communicate "in private" with other learners.

"New Message" and type my name in the search box. You can also use this system to communicate "in private" with other learners.

Learning Forums

Most sessions will include a discussion through a learning forum on Moodle. Detailed audio and textual guidance about the nature, duration and intended outcomes will be provided by clicking the respective forum. In these forums the class is divided into three groups. To avoid the discussion becoming too chaotic, you may only post your contribution in your group; however, you can still read what is being discussed in the other two groups. To check whether you are allocated to Group A, B or C please click on "Participants" in the top left corner of the page and find your name in the list. Your group is indicated in your name's row. Your participation in the online study unit will be marked on the basis of this rubric.

Netiquette Guidelines

In all online communication through this study unit, please make sure that we always treat each other with utmost respect. Remember that there is another person at the receiving end of your message. Kindly observe all netiquette guidelines available in text form in **this link**, and summarised graphically in the attached infographic.

Assignment Presentation

- Please ensure that all work has a title page which includes the title of your work, your name, the study unit code, study unit name, date of submission and actual word length.
- The font should preferably be Times New Roman font Size 12.
- Please use 1.5 line spacing.
- Each page should be numbered in one continuous sequence in the bottom right-hand corner. Commence numbering from the page following the title page. Include your last name at the top of each page.
- Appendices – information that is relevant to your topic can be included in appendices at the end of the assignment. The work in the appendices is not included in the word count – and is considered to be additional information. Your examiners may choose not to read the information included in the appendices – so make sure that important and pertinent information is included in the body of the assignment.
- Check your work with a UK English grammar and spell checker for spelling mistakes and grammatical errors

Check you have referenced your work correctly according to the 6th Edition of the APA referencing guidelines. The University of Malta librarians prepared this very helpful **guide** to enable you to follow the guidelines.

Assignment submission

The learning outcomes, instructions and deadlines for the assignment will be posted on Moodle. Examples of assignments from past learners will be made available.

To facilitate feedback, please save your assignment as a Word document (not PDF). Your file should be named using the following format: 'Name Surname_EBHC' (e.g. Joseph Borg_EBHC).

Before submitting your final assignment, you may submit a Turnitin Draft Submission.

You should submit the final version of your assignment twice

- (1) by clicking Assignment Submission for Marking and
- (2) by clicking Turnitin Final Submission.

Our IT Services colleagues prepared very helpful guidelines on uploading assignments and on Turnitin submission. These are available **here** and **here** respectively.

Extensions and late assignments

Requests for extensions should only be made for significant and major reasons. Such requests should be made in writing to the Study Unit Coordinator. It is up to the Study unit coordinator whether a late assignment will incur a penalty. The normal penalty is 10% off the allocated mark for each week late after the due date. Work not submitted on time, unless there is a major reason for being later, may not be marked. If you are having any serious problems with your study then you should discuss these as soon as possible with the Programme Coordinator.

Plagiarism

Using someone else's ideas/or work without citing the source is plagiarism and is not acceptable. The University Regulations state that there are strict penalties for plagiarism. Plagiarism applies to any material: written, spoken, recorded, electronic, broadcast, visual, performance or other medium. If you use the words of another author you must enclose them in quotation marks. You must cite a page number and the full reference in the Reference List. When you have included the ideas of another author you are required to reference the source of those ideas.

Detailed information for learners about Plagiarism detection can be obtained from **this website**.

In particular, it is important that you familiarise yourself with these University of **Malta Guidelines about Plagiarism and Collusion** and this resource pack with tips on **How to Avoid Plagiarism**.

Further help

The following are links to office hours and contact details for some other sources of help with technology issues, online searching and writing respectively:

- **The IT Services Department**
- **The LibraryThe Centre for English Language Proficiency**

eSample 2: Management of CRE patients – Policies and Guidelines by Claire Farrugia, Lecturer at the Department of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences

Dear Learner,

During this study unit you are expected to dedicate 4 hours per week to complete the online learning material, suggested readings and activities for each week. You are also expected to log in regularly to read the announcements and emails and contribute during discussions. Learners who participate actively by replying to questions and emails and contributing during discussions obtain 10% of the marks for this study unit.

Some sessions include learning through a discussion forum. As you are a large group, you are divided in groups of 15. You can view discussions in all the groups, but can only participate in discussions in the group you are assigned to. You can find the group you are allocated to by clicking on participants in the top left corner of the page, find your name and your group will be in the same row.

Postings

For those sessions which include a discussion forum, your contributions should be between 250 and 300 words and you should post by Friday of that week. By the following Sunday, you are requested to read the postings of the other members of the

group and give feedback to at least one posting. It is essential that everyone respects these set days for posting. I will read all your posts and will only intervene to stir up the discussion, to make any clarifications and if the discussion has gone off at a tangent.

Your contributions carry up to 20% of the assessment for this resource. Late postings and no participation in the discussion will result in a zero for that activity.

Grading online discussions

Discussion postings are assessed according to the criteria mentioned below. Postings that meet all criteria for a grade level will receive the highest points possible at that level while postings that meet mixed levels of criteria will receive a score within the point range of the appropriate levels.

A Discussion (9-10): Distinguished/Outstanding – 3 or more postings during the week

“A” discussion postings

- Are made in time for others to read and respond
- Deliver information that is full of thought, insight and analysis
- Make connections to previous or current content or to real-life situations
- Contain rich and fully developed new ideas, connection or applications.

B Discussion (80-89): Proficient – at least 2 times during the week

“B” discussion postings

- Are made in time for others to read and respond
- Deliver information that shows that thought, insight and analysis have taken place
- Make connections to previous or current content or to real-life situations but the connections are not clear and not really clear or are too obvious
- Contain new ideas, connections or applications but they may lack depth and /or detail.

C Discussion (70-79): Basic – at least 1 post during the week.

“C” discussion postings

- May not all be made in time for others to read and respond
- Are generally competent but the actual information they deliver seems thin and common place
- Make few if any connections and those are often cast in the form of vague generalities
- Contain few if any new ideas, connections or applications.

D-F Discussion (10-69): Below Expectations – at least 1 posting per week

“D-F” discussion postings

- May not all be made in time for others to read and respond
- Are superficial without any evidence of insight or analysis
- Contribute no new ideas, connections or applications

No participation in a discussion board activity will result in a zero for that activity.

Netiquette

Since online communication is non-verbal, communication may be easily misinterpreted. All postings should be clear, respectful and polite, use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation. You are all encouraged to follow netiquette to help you establish and maintain positive online relationships.

The Netiquette guidelines adopted for this resource are

https://www.um.edu.mt/vle/misc/pluginfile.php/120896/mod_resource/content/1/eDoc%20-%20Netiquette%20final.pdf prepared by McDonald and Cilia (2019)

Email

Emails should only be sent to the study unit coordinator to communicate issues of a personal and private nature (in case of sickness) on claire.farrugia@um.edu.mt or by using the speech bubble close to your name in the top right corner of the screen. Then click “new message” and select my name in the search area. All questions related to the study unit, assessments, technical issues, due dates should be posted in the QandA forum.

QandA forum

This is the area to post any questions you may have related to this resource and other technical issues. If you know the answer to a question in this section, you are all encouraged to reply so that we help and support each other throughout our learning.

If you have a novel question, it would be better to start a new discussion topic. If on the other hand, your query is similar to a question posted earlier, it would be better to follow the previous thread.

Virtual office hours are on Mondays from 9am-10am and Thursdays from 14:00 till 15:00

Assignment instructions

Kindly ensure that you include a cover page with the study unit code and name, your name and identification number, title of the assignment and word count.

The assignment should be typed using Times New Roman Font (12) with 1.5 spacing between sentences.

Include page numbers at the bottom of each page in the format page x of x and a running heading with the study unit code, your name and surname.

Use UK English language and check spelling and grammar using a spell checker.

Your arguments must be supported by reference to the literature. You are expected to use the 6th edition of APA referencing system and must provide a reference list at the end of your assignment. You are encouraged to refer to these guidelines for referencing

https://www.um.edu.mt/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/353661/APA6_Guide.pdf

Do not include any pictures unless these are necessary to support your discussion. Tables and figures should only be used to substantiate the content of the text, not replace it. When used these should be clearly labelled and referenced in the text.

Ten marks will be deducted if you exceed the word limit.

Submitting the assignment

You may submit a 'Draft' assignment to TURNITIN once. This platform is named 'Draft Assignment' on the VLE and should not be confused with the actual platform where you are to upload your final draft. TURNITIN will generate an originality report for your draft assignment. You will be able to view this report. A step-by-step guide on how to upload your assignment on Turnitin may be found here <https://www.um.edu.mt/itservices/intranet/pds/turnitinupld-std.pdf> This guide helps you interpret originality reports <https://www.um.edu.mt/itservices/intranet/pds/interpreting/turnitinrpt-std.pdf>

A soft copy of the assignment must be uploaded to TURNITIN as a single word document. You should name your file using the following naming convention before uploading it: NURxxxx- FirstName_Surname e.g. NURxxx-John_Borg.

A hard copy of the assignment must be handed in to the study unit coordinator.

The deadline for submission of both the soft and hard copy of the assignment is

You must submit both a hard and a soft copy of your assignment as indicated above. Failure to submit a hard and/or soft copy of your assignment will automatically result in the award of an F grade.

Late submissions

Requests for late submissions will only be considered in exceptional situations and must be addressed to the study unit coordinator. If an extension is granted, learners must keep to the extension date given. In cases where either no request for an extension was received or the request has been turned down, learners are expected to stick to the submission date set for the study unit. Late submissions will not be accepted and will be automatically awarded an F grade.

Plagiarism

The University of Malta is committed to award learners for the work they have done themselves. Hence it takes cases of plagiarism very seriously. Plagiarism is presenting other's people work as your own without acknowledging the authors. Plagiarism may be intentional, reckless or unintentional. Even in cases where plagiarism is found to

have been neither intentional nor reckless, there may still be an academic penalty for poor practice.

Hence you are strongly encouraged to familiarize yourself with the information for learners on Plagiarism Detection <https://www.um.edu.mt/itservices/vle/pds>

Further assistance

You may also require further assistance from colleagues at other departments:

The Library for online searches <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/helpandsupport>

IT services for helping with technology issues <https://www.um.edu.mt/itservices/help>

The Institute of Linguistics and Language technology for help with academic writing and speaking <https://www.um.edu.mt/linguistics/contact>

I hope you find this information helpful and wish you success.

eSample 3: Health Care Behaviours by Roberta Sammut, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences.

This announcement seeks to provide information with regards to what you can expect during this study unit and what the expectations are of you.

It provides information on how you are expected to participate online, what is expected of your assignment and how you will be graded.

So please take the time to read these instructions carefully.

The Fora

Several fora will be used during this online study unit.

Here is a description of what the scope of each forum is:

1. Announcements forum: the announcement forum will be used by the tutors to inform you on developments within the study unit and any news or events which are particularly relevant to you. You cannot reply to this forum.
2. The Virtual Café forum: this forum is available for you to use for social discussions, such as any social events you would like to organize or just a place for you to chat
3. The QandA forum: this is the forum which you need to go to when you have any queries. Please post all queries here so that other learners can see the response to your query as they may have a similar question. Only use e-mail to contact me if your question is of a personal nature.
4. The Discussion forum: each online session will include online discussion which will take place in a dedicated discussion forum. You are expected to post your comment of at least 30 words and a maximum of 200 words in this discussion forum before the last day of the week. Your contribution must be substantial in terms of quality and must make reference to literature. You are also expected to

comment on one of the posts of your fellow learners by the end of the week

What you can expect from your lecturer

Virtual office hours: I will be available online to answer your queries and provide feedback twice a week, on Tuesday and Fridays, between 3 and 4 p.m.

You will not receive an immediate answer when you post a question or discussion point. I will be waiting for at least three learners to reply before contributing myself. The aim of this is to encourage interaction, as your peers may have the answer to your question.

I will give overall feedback to the whole group when a discussion topic is closed. You will receive individual feedback in relation to your performance online and in your assignment after results are published.

The online behaviour expected of you:

You are expected to provide constructive criticism which is helpful and allows learning, but respectful. Please familiarize yourself with the following guidelines with regards to online learning, but is respectful. Please familiarize yourself with the following guidelines with regards to online behavior: <https://www.rasmussen.edu/learner-experience/college-life/netiquette-guidelines-every-online-learner-needs-to-know/>

Your assignment

Your assignment topic will be given to you just before the recess period.

When writing up your assignment, please follow the standard instructions for the Department of Nursing and upload your assignment as a word document to allow feedback to be provided.

These can be found here: [hyperlink to document](#)

Please note the points with regards to how you are expected to present your assignment, submission dates, and methods of submission.

How will you be graded?

Contribution to the discussion for a: your contribution to the discussion for a will be assessed using the following criteria: [hyperlink to document](#)

Assignment: your assignment will be graded using the following criteria: [hyperlink to document](#)

Additional Help

If you have any difficulties with aspects of the VLE please contact IT services at: <https://www.um.edu.mt/itservices/help>

[Assignment guidelines.docx](#)

[Assignment Marking Guide.docx](#)

MODULE 8

Community

The Importance of Community in Effective eLearning Quality Standard

By the end of this session learners will be able to:

- Describe the role of community as an integral component of effective online learning.
- Implement strategies to facilitate a learning community and provide learners with the best possible online learning experience.

What do we mean by 'Community'?

A learning community is the vehicle through which learning occurs online. An online community provides a safe place for members to interact with each other, and share their knowledge and experience. Creating a strong community in an online learning environment, means building trust through respect, listening and responding to feedback, and giving everyone the opportunity to find their own role to play as part of the greater team.

For the purpose of this resource, a learning community will be defined as:

A group of learners with a common goal engaging in reciprocal learning activities, learning new ideas and sharing perspectives and experiences to make meaning of the new knowledge and information. Learning occurs through discussion, reflection, collaboration and by taking the initiative and responsibility to listen, question, and think critically within the community of fellow learners.

To build an effective learning community, we must thoughtfully weave strategies for community building into our resource design. In Module 1 of this resource Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Online Study Units, one of the learning outcomes was to describe the importance of a learning community as a prerequisite for effective online learning. Learning community is also interwoven throughout several modules in this resource. In this module we will review what we have already addressed in Module 1 regarding Community and deepen our understanding of Community as an essential component of effective online learning.

Why is community important?

Building a learning community is a prerequisite for effective online learning. Success, engagement, satisfaction, and learning are dependent on the support and sense of identity that comes from being a member of a community. Engaging learners and making them feel valued as part of the community can be as simple as making informal sharing and conversation part of the process.

The concept of peer learning recognizes that learners are an important source of knowledge in addition to faculty and resource material. Learners are not passive receptacles to be filled with information, instead, they are active learners. Collaborative learning is possible to achieve online, which is important, given the need for more flexible models of delivery to meet the needs of a more diverse learner body in a digital age.

Online communities

Online learning communities can be educationally and personally fulfilling when learners approach their resources with a commitment to initiate, respect, value, and fully engage in the material, dialogues, and group work. Much has been written about the importance of the relationship between learners and educators in online resources, however limited attention is often given to the tremendous influence of the online peer community. The benefits of peer learning can be easily applied to the online environment. When applied appropriately, online collaborative learning can lead to deep, academic learning, or transformative learning. The asynchronous and recorded 'affordances' of online learning more than compensate for the lack of physical cues and other aspects of face-to-face discussion. Online collaborative learning as a result can also directly support the development of a range of high-level intellectual skills, such as critical thinking, analytical thinking, synthesis, and evaluation, which are key requirements for learners in a digital age.

Learners who may be struggling with language, cultural or epistemological issues, have time to prepare their responses before posting which can increase confidence and participation. When you tap into people's unique perspectives and invite them to share their expertise and knowledge with others, you inspire engagement and connections that are relevant and meaningful.

Underlying all the information regarding community in online learning is a belief that learning is enhanced when there is a commitment to the collective good and people engage in learning through and with others. Developing a learning community is one important strategy to setting the learner up for success.

Building an online community

Building an online learning community can be challenging. They don't run themselves! To do it right requires thought, planning and managed execution. Garrison, Anderson and Archer (2000), developed The Community of Inquiry Model (CoI) to address creating an effective online community of inquiry. What is a CoI?

An educational community of inquiry is a group of individuals who collaboratively engage in purposeful critical discourse and reflection to construct personal meaning and confirm mutual understanding.

Garrison, Anderson and Archer argued that there are three essential elements of developing an inquiring community in online learning:

- social presence: is “the ability of participants to identify with the community (e.g., course of study), communicate purposefully in a trusting environment, and develop inter-personal relationships by way of projecting their individual personalities.”
- teaching presence: is “the design, facilitation, and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes”
- cognitive presence: is “the extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse”.

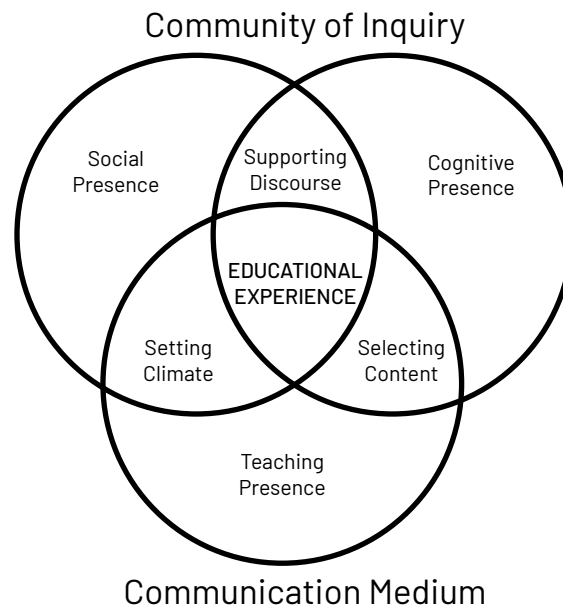


Figure 1: Community of Inquiry Image: © Terry Anderson/Marguerite Koole, 2013

In today's literature Anderson is including Shea and Bidjerano's idea that Learner Presence should also be included in the Framework to demonstrate the learner's role in the community learning process.

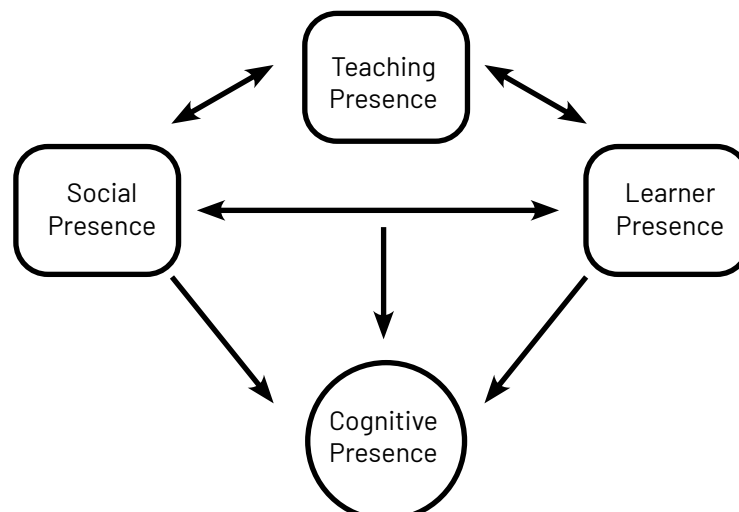


Figure 2: Suggestions for a revised COI Model from Shea and Bidjerano (2010)

Strategies for implementing the Three Presences in the Community of Inquiry framework into your online session (table adapted from Peacock and Cowan (2019))

Presence	Presence Defined	Strategies
Social Presence	Focuses on developing open, meaningful communications between facilitator and learners and among learners so that learners gain a sense of being connected to and engaging with other collaborative online learners. Learners need to feel that they relate, as real people, to those with whom they interact online. This helps develop feelings of trust and inclusion and value.	<p>Design icebreaker activities.</p> <p>Have learners develop learner profile pages where they can choose to share a photo, personal information such as schools they attended, the community they are from, their research interests, and hobbies. Have them read and comment on each other's profiles.</p> <p>Provide learners with honest and constructive feedback.</p> <p>Share netiquette document and outline rules for being polite, accepting and appropriate when posting online to ensure learners are always encouraged and supported as opposed to being offended or discouraged.</p> <p>Create and model supportive, caring relationships and an environment where learners sense enthusiasm, encouragement, and trust.</p> <p>Include an introductory video each week to welcome learners and outline expectations for the session.</p> <p>Encourage learners to meet online and offline if they are in the same vicinity. If possible, meeting for coffee or on campus in real time is beneficial.</p> <p>Set learners up in learner triads as a first step for support and asking questions. They can be grouped according to discipline or not. Provide a rubric and have learners read each other's assignments and provide feedback prior to submitting their assignment to you. This can develop an invaluable social network that supports learners and learning, improves the quality of their work and saves the instructor time in grading as mistakes will be caught first by others.</p>
Cognitive Presence	In communities of inquiry participants engage in thoughtful activities in order to create new meanings and deepen their understandings. This is done through constructive individual and group dialogues that include activities such as peer and tutor feedback, individual and group reflections, and the communal sharing and use of resources.	<p>In online learning, meaning-making is a joint responsibility that depends on learners working interdependently. Encourage learners to contribute collaboratively to the learning process as this promotes a sense of self-worth, and promotes a sense of belonging.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for relevant interactions that result in collaborative meaning making.</p> <p>Provide supplementary (optional) readings so learners can delve deeper into topics.</p> <p>Create a discussion board and carefully crafted probing questions to encourage reflection and critical thinking.</p> <p>When communicating set an example by the nature, type, and tones you use to create a trusting, caring, and encouraging environment.</p> <p>Getting the right tone is extremely important in online learning. Over the years I have learned to flip sentences so they have a positive tone. For example, whenever possible, I try to refrain from using words such as "Don't" and use words or phrases such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may not be a good idea to... • I have found it works best if you ... • You may want to consider ... • You may find it easier if you... <p>Intervene quickly if ever a conversation is inappropriate or unsupportive.</p>

Teacher Presence	<p>Tutoring presence refers to the ever-present facilitative role provided by a caring, trusting, and engaged tutor. Tutors will be involved in the design and planning of program activities to help learners achieve learning objectives. The tutor will also facilitate learning during the resource, leading to individual and group meaning making and deepening of understandings.</p>	<p>Log on often daily and let learner know and feel that you are present. Go to the QandA forum daily to respond quickly to learner questions. Monitor the discussions to prevent learners getting off topic, and provide encouragement for those who are making real contributions to the discussion.</p> <p>Associate a grade with online participation 5-10% to attach value to the discussion and learning and increase participation.</p> <p>Track learners not participating, and send personal messages informing them you noticed their absence and to offer support.</p> <p>Provide positive feedback to learners who take the initiative to post first or early.</p> <p>Express confidence in learners' work to motivate further participation and risk.</p> <p>Provide extensive feedback to early posts, especially if there is a misinterpretation of expectations. This guides other learners so they don't make the same mistakes, and will ultimately save you time.</p> <p>Summarise the discussion forum letting learners know that you read every post. Add a personal touch by using learner's names in the summary. For example, James pointed out that...Maria, Christina and Sarah all suggested that...Saviour had a different perspective.</p> <p>Strive to establish interpersonal relationships and a sense of belonging through the design and facilitation of both social and cognitive presences.</p>
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Best practices for building community online

The following best practices are some strategies that may be helpful to get learners to engage with the content, each other and you in your online sessions.

- Provide opportunities for learners to engage socially. Use "icebreakers" and other "get to know each other" strategies to counteract some of the social detachment felt in an online environment. When these strategies are used throughout a resource (and not just at the beginning), the possibility to create social connectedness among learners increases (Slagter, van Tryon and Bishop, 2009).
- Build intentional learning communities. Set clear standards and structure for learners to engage with one another through discussion boards, peer evaluation, and group work (Palloff and Pratt, 2007).
- Use technology to enhance collaboration. Integrate traditional and non-traditional learning tools into your resource. Traditional tools like blogs and wikis help build a constructivist learning environment that requires learners to engage with one another in a meaningful way (Beldarrain, 2006). Non-traditional tools like Twitter and other social media can be incorporated in the online environment as a means to facilitate learner-to-learner interactions (Baird and Fisher, 2005/06).
- Design discussions and group assignments carefully. Keep discussion groups small so that learners are able to process and contribute meaningfully to the conversation. Provide enough time for learners to participate in discussions. For group work, provide clear guidelines for group roles and assignment goals, and provide feedback to groups throughout the process (Bart, 2011).

Being “Present” in your online resource

<https://canvas.ucdavis.edu/courses/34528/pages/being-present-in-your-online-course>

Bounded community: Designing and facilitating learning communities in formal resources

<https://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/204/286>

Community plan eSamples

eSample - Dentistry - Veronica Montebello

Below are the strategies used in the online Evidence Based Dentistry Study unit for enhancing and supporting communities of learners. These have been arranged using the paradigm proposed by Peacock and Cowan (2019), Three Presences in the Community of Framework

Type of Presence	Overarching strategy	Specific activities/tasks
Social presence	During the first week of the study unit students are asked to participate in some icebreaker activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Welcome podcast and transcript· editing profiles· getting to know each other – students writing a short summary of what they intend to get out of this study unit and comment on each other’s posts.· At some point I acknowledge what they have written and add a comment which links their experience with the online content.· A video (Ted talk on Evidence based practice) is also uploaded to get students thinking· Students are asked to populate an online Padlet with virtual sticky notes sharing what they understand by “evidence”
	Weekly instructions	Podcast /video together with their transcript are uploaded before every topic/component within the study unit. This presents a clear scheme of work and learning outcomes to be achieved.
	Study unit planner	This is always presented to students at the beginning of the study unit and students are reminded of contents as throughout study unit.

	Study unit administration guide	From the beginning of the study unit the study unit administration guide which included all the relevant information for students to be supported throughout the study unit is uploaded and students are asked to access this and read it and refer to it when necessary. This includes: planner, deadline dates, learning outcomes, netiquette guide, quality standard guidelines and assessment rubrics to support and assist students in their learning process.
	eLearning Quality standards	This document is uploaded on VLE and students are guided to read through it. A podcast complimenting and summarising contents is also uploaded This included the netiquette guide.
	Group work	Group work enhances collaborative learning. A mix of audio visual resources -Guidelines and instructions on the use of the different tools are uploaded before students are asked to use them during their studies. This study unit includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · a simple poll to vote– critics vs champions · participating in a group WIKI to debate and discuss 'Champions vs Critics'. · develop a glossary of terms for EBD
	Social presence in the forums	Students are encouraged to refer to and reply to other students in post. They are also encouraged to ask questions to support a continuation of the discussion. At some point towards the end of the topic/component I upload a summary of the responses and main points featured – at times a concept map is used instead of a list or written summary.
Cognitive presence	Additional resources	Moodle page on VLE includes a whole section with mixed resources – audio, video, and text(books and literature) From experience I can say that the Café another forum which is opened on this study unit is a platform which students use to share resources
	Online forums and activities	Most online activities and online forums are collaborative in nature and promote communities of enquiry.
	Study unit Q and A	2 Q and A forums are created – one for the students to share questions on aspects of this study unit and the another regarding assessment. These forums are also open for students to answer each other and give feedback.
	Synchronous VOH	These real time office hours provides opportunity for group dialogues and feedback and even group/individual reflections

Teacher presence	Timely replies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When students leave emails and messages on VLE I try my best to answer quickly I make it clear at the start that emails are replied within 24 hours during the working week (Monday - Friday) and 48 hours over the weekend (Saturday and Sunday). <p>Students can contact me via phone during Office Hours or set a meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students who need individual encouragement or guidance are nudged through a personal VLE message or email.
	Discussion monitoring	Discussion are monitored and posts are added by the tutor to guide the discussion in areas required to ensure that learning outcomes are reached. Feedback is given constantly but more formal feedback is given after every component.
	assessment	Marks are assigned to the online component – in fully online study units 30-40% is allocated..
	Summary of activities and discussion fora	At some point towards the end of the topic/component I upload a summary of the activity/responses and main points featured – at times a concept map is used instead of a list or written summary. Reference to the work of particular students is highlighted. I try to include all the students who gave a substantial contribution.

eSample - Education - Leonard Bezzina

One of my main aims in MSM5001 Becoming a Mathematics Teacher is to help learners develop critical thinking and inquiry skills. I normally do this in my mainly face-to-face teaching by providing opportunities for sustained communication between myself and my learners and through learning activities in which learners have to engage in collaborative thinking and learning. Increasing the element of e-learning will help me improve this provision. The following list of e-learning strategies based on the Community of Inquiry Framework (Garrison, 2017) will help me build a learning community in which there is collaborative construction of meaning through critical reflection and discourse.

Strategies to build a Social Presence

Garrison (2017) defines social presence as “the ability of participants to identify with a group, communicate openly in a trusting environment, and develop personal and affective relationships progressively by way of projecting their individual personalities.” (p. 25). Thus, social presence essentially refers to the opportunities afforded to learners to interact with each other and with their tutor in an environment that is nurturing and protective. The greater the interaction, the greater the social presence. Thus, I will strive to set activities that increase meaningful and open interaction between the learners themselves and between the learners and myself. This will help learners feel that they belong to a community of learning – one that is inclusive, safe, and which will help them learn about teaching and grow as professionals. I will also actively encourage the learners to participate in the creation of the social presence because

as Anderson, Rourke, Garrison and Archer (2001) point out the creation of a suitable social environment is also the responsibility of the learners.

In practice, apart from providing the learners with encouraging, constructive, and sincere feedback using a polite, conversational tone and apart from fostering an environment that shows that I am engaged, encouraging, caring, and supportive I will also do the following:

1. Share Profiles – Learners will be asked to develop their learner profile as the first thing that they do once they are given access to the learning event area in the VLE. I will explain that this is important as it will help us get to know each other which is an important first step in establishing a community of learning. In the profile they have to include: (a) a recent photo of themselves; (b) details on their academic background including degrees and educational institutions they attended; (c) the main reason why they decided to enrol in the MTL Mathematics Education resource; (d) what they hope they will learn in the resource; and, (e) what they hope they will do once they graduate from the resource. In order to set the ball rolling I will direct them to read my profile.

2. Ice breaker – At the start of the resource learners will be asked to access Pinterest and to select a mathematics related joke that they feel says something about the teaching and/or learning of mathematics. They should then copy it into a MS Word document which they should then upload via a post in the 'What is Mathematics?' discussion forum. In the post they should also state what they feel it tells mathematics teachers about the teaching and/or learning of mathematics. In order to give them an example of what I want them to do I will go first:

"I like this cartoon because it raises the issue of how best to use technology, especially the calculator in the mathematics classroom. Technology should be used sensibly in the classroom in order to facilitate teaching and/or learning. When technology is not used sensible it can have a negative effect. In the case of the calculator, it can lead to 'calculator dependency'. We will discuss the sensible use of calculators and other technology in the mathematics classroom in MSM5007 Resources for Teaching Mathematics."

Learners are then asked to read their colleagues contributions and to select the one which resonated most with them and to give a reason for their choice.

Other online ice-breaking ideas which I can use if the situation warrants it can be found at:

<https://www.leveraginglearning.com/lcl-blog/6-engaging-icebreakers-for-your-online-learners>

3. Share Netiquette documents – I will share the UoM IT Services Netiquette document and will stress the importance of posts being polite, constructive, and supportive as this will help build an online learning community that encourages learning from each other.

4. Share an introductory podcast with each topic – I will introduce each topic via a short video (less than 2 minutes) in which I will briefly explain what we will be covering in the topic.

5. Meeting Online – I will suggest to learners that they should log-on at least three times per week. I will also encourage learners to post in the 'Speakeasy' forum as this helps build the online learning community. Suggested posts related to mathematics education include: (a) post links to useful mathematics education related websites; (b) upload interesting articles on mathematics education; (c) upload more examples of maths humour; and, (d) post examples of 'odd moment' activities that can be used in the mathematics classroom. I will set an example by creating a section in the VLE where I provide examples of useful websites e.g. NCTM, ATM, MA, MAA, etc

6. Meeting Offline – I will ask learners to organise a social activity (e.g. going to the pub for a drink; going for a pizza; etc) where we all meet together socially once every eight weeks.

7. Provide Emotional Support – I will encourage learners to inform me of anxiety and tension via email or via a face-to-face meeting.

Strategies to build a Cognitive Presence

Cognitive Presence is defined "as the extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse in a critical community of inquiry." (Garrison, Anderson, and Archer, 2001, p. 11) Thus, it critically depends on the amount and quality of interaction there is between learners and the content to be learnt. The greater the amount of quality interaction, the greater the cognitive presence. Hence, I will try to set various collaborative activities that encourage critical thinking and which stress meaning and understanding.

Apart from continually emphasising that meaning needs to be negotiated between those who teach and those who learn (both in the resource and in the classroom), and apart from building and fostering a safe, trusting, open, and respectful online and lecture room environment that encourages such meaning-making via collaborative as well as independent learning, I will also do the following:

1. Create online fora – I will create online fora where learners can share ideas on how to resolve an issue or solve a problem. One example is the 'Critical Incidents in the Classroom' forum mentioned in previous posts.

2. Ask questions – I will ask questions aimed at encouraging reflection and critical thinking in both my online and face-to-face presentations. Examples of such questions can be found in the presentation I had uploaded in a previous post.

3. Set problem-based learning activities – I will set group activities that will help learners develop deep and meaningful learning via discussion and reflection in small breakout groups (2 to 3 learners per group). For instance, to strengthen my learners' deep knowledge of mathematics I will set non-routine mathematical problems that require higher order thinking to solve. This will allow me to stress the importance of 'relational understanding' over 'instrumental understanding' in the classroom as well as of working together. In order to develop my learners pedagogical knowledge I can also set teaching tasks that require collaborative development of teaching material that can be used in teaching episodes during the field placement to help pupils learn.

4. Encourage sharing of learning experiences – I will encourage learners to reflect on powerful learning experiences and to share their thoughts on why they found these experiences important and enriching.

5. Use Positive Language – I will use positive language in my online and face-to-face interactions with the learners. Thus, I will avoid using such words as 'don't' but will use phrases such as 'I think you ought to consider ...' or 'Maybe it would be better if ...'.

6. Provide Supplementary Materials – I will provide supplementary materials via uploaded readings such as book chapters and journal/magazine articles and via links to relevant websites so that those who would like to read about a subject can do so.

Strategies to build a Teaching Presence

Teaching Presence is defined as “the design, facilitation and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes.” (Anderson, Rourke, Garrison and Archer, 2001)(p. 5). It mainly refers to the facilitative role of the tutor in the community of inquiry through the thoughtful packaging of the content to be taught, through active, frequent, and caring engagement with learners, and through direct teaching when required. The greater the facilitation, the greater the engagement, and the greater the teaching, the greater the teaching presence. Therefore, I will aim to increase my teaching presence through appropriate resource design, by facilitating discourse, by directing the learning where necessary, by providing clear guidelines on how I am going to assess their work, and by giving quality feedback to learners.

Apart from stressing my engagement through logging in the VLE learning event area on a daily basis and interacting with the learners in the Q and A forum and/or updating and/or enhancing the resource area I will also do the following:

1. Encourage Participation – I will monitor discussion fora to make sure that discussions do not veer off-course and will provide encouragement to those who make early and/or substantial contributions to the discussion. I will also express confidence in learners' work as this helps increase the motivation to participate. I will also provide extensive feedback in early discussions as this helps set the standard to which I want learners to reach. Moreover, I will summarise what learners have said and will add a personal touch by mentioning learners' names.

Track the Quantity and Quality of Participation of Each Learner – I will check the participation of each learner by checking that they are logging in frequently and by checking and assessing their contributions. I will also send emails to those who are underachieving and offer them support if they so wish.

Module 8: The importance of community in effective eLearning

Community has been, perhaps, a somewhat neglected element of advancing eLearning solutions. Community, whether it's found online or offline, is valuable because it makes learners feel as if they belong. Garrison, Anderson and Archer argued that there are three essential elements of developing an inquiring community in online learning:

- Social presence: is "the ability of participants to identify with the community (e.g., resource of study), communicate purposefully in a trusting environment, and develop inter-personal relationships by way of protecting their individual personalities."
- Teaching presence: is "the design, facilitation, and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes"
- Cognitive presence: is "the extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse".

Ice-breaker activity: Acrostic Poem

Learners are asked to write an acrostic poem using the letters of their first name. Learners are invited to reflect on the acrostic poem of one other learner by providing one comment and asking one question of the other learners. Learners will then be required to interact with their partner by reflecting on the comment and question posed to them about their poem.

eSample - Oral Pathology - Maria Luisa Gainza-Cirauqui

Module 8- Community

Social presence

Icebreaker activities. Because I am planning to introduce some lectures throughout the study unit, I would like to have icebreaker activities, each of them a week or two before the online sessions happen (I am planning to have online sessions in both semesters and I will group them to avoid confusion when they have online or face-to-face lectures.)

I searched for engaging icebreakers online and found that these fit well my group of learners.

1. Unique things. Each person writes one thing that they have done that is unique. If someone else in the forum has also done it they have to find another unique thing. Post in the Café forum at the beginning of the semester.
2. Three things in common. Divide into four small groups (in my case groups of 4-5) and ask them to identify to find the three strangest things they have in common. Then, they will share the list in the Café forum and will vote on which group has the strangest things in common.

Cognitive presence

Assignment 1 of the week. Case scenario.

For each online session, you will be given a case scenario and will post your differential diagnosis table filled for the case presented.

You will explain the reasoning behind such differential diagnosis and the most appropriate treatment plan for this case. Reply to at least two (2) of your classmates who suggest a different diagnosis or a different treatment plan. Provide evidence-based arguments. Read the replies to your differential and make sure you reply appropriately to your classmates' arguments.

Assignment 1 is to be posted in the Differential Diagnosis forum between Thursday and Wednesday.

Assignment 2 of the week. Discussion

This assignment will follow the Case scenario assignment. You will be asked a question on history- taking, investigation tools, diagnosis or management. You will provide an evidence-based argument. Depending on the case, you will discuss the investigation tools required for that scenario, the diagnosis of the condition or the treatment plan. You will also explain the reasons why that choice is important. It is therefore important that you fill in the differential diagnosis table for each case.

Assignment 2a. Peer-review.

You will be divided into the groups organized for the icebreaker activity. You will share the assignment among your group. You will provide feedback among you. This first part of the assignment will be performed between Saturday and Wednesday of that week.

Assignment 2b. Evaluation forum

Following the discussion in your group, you will upload their assignment to the Evaluation forum by Thursday of the second week.

Kindly note that the assessment involves not only your response to the question, but also your participation in the discussion with your classmates.

Teacher's presence

The role of the tutor. I will be reading all of your arguments and discussions in the Peer-review groups and the Evaluation forum. However, I will only participate in a discussion in the Evaluation forum if there is a need of clarification or if there needs to be a redirection on the differential diagnosis or the treatment plan. This is mostly a peer-to-peer activity and would like your active participation. Assessment will take place according to your participation in the discussion. The rubrics are listed below.

Assessment in the discussion forums

Evaluation criteria	Outstanding (90-100)	Proficient (75-89)	Pass (45-74)	Fail (0-44)
Interpretation of data, quality of scientific data	Presents assignment on the stipulated time to allow others to read and respond Delivers evidence-based information	Presents assignment on the stipulated time to allow others to read and respond Delivers evidence-based information however it is either outdated or insufficient.	Presents assignment late. Delivers information lacking enough scientific evidence.	Presents assignment late. Delivers incorrect information or without a scientific base.
Discussion	Contributes significantly to the discussion. Responds thoughtfully with a clear knowledge Presents arguments with scientific evidence	Contributes to the discussion but connections are not clear. Presents arguments with little scientific evidence.	Contributes to the discussion with vague generalities. Presents arguments that lack scientific evidence.	Does not contribute to the discussion or does not participate in the discussion. Presents arguments that do not stimulate discussion.

eSample - Palliative Care - Leena Seriola

Here are some ideas for Palliative and end of life nursing – blended learning resource.

Social presence: is “the ability of participants to identify with the community (e.g., resource of study), communicate purposefully in a trusting environment, and develop interpersonal relationships by way of projecting their individual personalities.

- Icebreaker: Participation is the counterforce of exclusion. It is important to get to know each other. Now, this depends on the group. If they didn't know each other before, I would ask them to send a short video introduction of themselves.. I favor videos, it shows learners' personalities and makes us humans. Video is a good way to get to know each other, it is a good learning activity in the beginning of e-learning resource. Video enables body language and facial expressions. If the learners already know each other (which is often the case in our university) I would still stick with the video, but I would change the topic from introduction to something else, for example ask them to talk about expectations related to this resource. I would also make a video myself and be an example about how to make a homemade video and not to worry too much about how I look or sound in a video. PS. You can also use video feedbacks – makes teacher more visible.
- Community and a trusting environment: If the group is very big, I would divide them into a smaller group and give them a group assignment. This would help them to get to know each other and reflect and learn from each other. I would be present to give them support during this phase. I would make sure that I give positive feedback and don't embarrass anyone. Giving constructive feedback is important but I would be careful not to name a learner in front of the class and name a person who did something wrong or funny, that kind of feedback I would send in a personal message (if I would consider giving that kind of feedback important). This is about building a trusting environment.

“Teaching presence: is “the design, facilitation, and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes”

Online discussions as learning activity: assignment from instructor: teams solve it, instructor and learner discuss, debate, brainstorm. This could be synchronized or not synchronized, it could happen face to face by using ZOOM video conference program. Digital opportunities and “pitfalls” in learning:

- Good conversation doesn’t happen by chance
- Prepare learners to discuss
- Make sure that learners have necessary skills and support
- Allow just right amount of time
- Moderate –keep conversation lively

Cognitive presence: is “the extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse”.

Learning café using ZOOM videoc onference. This method is a very effective way if you would like your learners to think about complex problems and discuss, debate and brainstorm. It helps learners to build a learning community and learn from each other, construct knowledge together. In the beginning of the learning café meeting a task text/problem formulation is given to the learners. Participants are encouraged to talk about their own thoughts, opinions and reflections directly. They are divided in breakout rooms; one room has one problem to solve. In each room there is a host to keep the continuity of the discussions. Learners will participate into all these breakout rooms and discuss all the questions. This means that new breakout room can bring inspiration and build on previous conversations that have taken place. After all the learners have answered all the questions, a summary of the discussions can be done. All the learner will come back to the main meeting and the hosts at each breakout room are responsible for presenting a summary regarding their question. The whole session will take from 60- 90 minutes. 15- 20 minutes to discuss in each breakout room, 15- 30 minutes on a summary discussion in the main meeting.

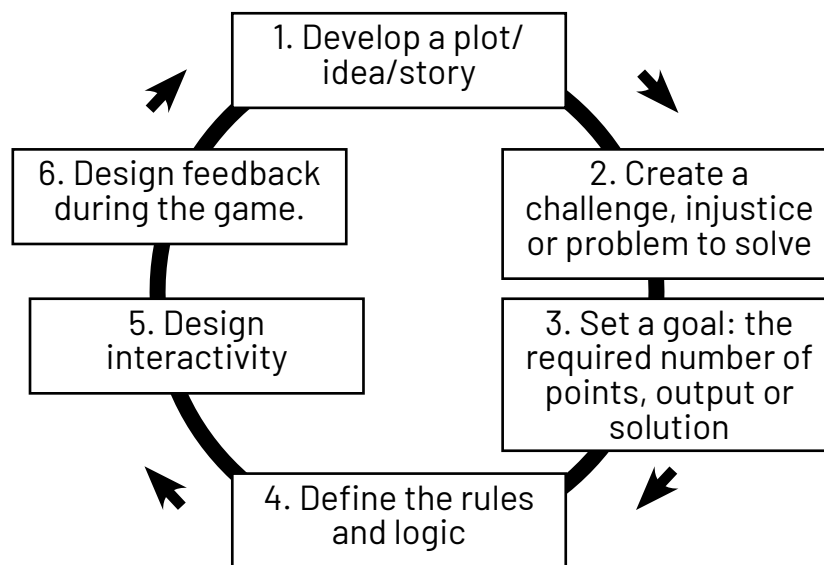
Questions related to palliative nursing could be:

1. How can you as a nurse be the best resource for a dying patient and their family?
2. What underlying factor(s) can influence you as a nurse when you are working with seriously ill and dying patients?
3. What actions can you do for yourself when you are working with seriously ill and dying patients?

Café Etiquette:

- Focus on what matters
- Contribute your thinking
- Speak your mind and heart
- Listen to understand
- Link and connect ideas
- Listen together for insights and deeper questions

Learning by playing a game. I wouldn't use this method in this palliative care topic but I wanted to share this idea for you. Maybe you would find it nice or have already used this kind of learning method to build a learning community and have some fun with our learners.



What would we play?

- KAHOOT - a fast-paced recreation - a social event, giving feedback on knowledge, helping to remember the lessons learned.
- Super Mario Bros - as the game develops, the knowledge builds on the previously learned - the lessons learned in the first field must be exploited to climb the ladder in the next field - the challenge level increases as the game progresses.
- Catan / Carcassone / Settlers - a strategy game where the goal is to create a functional mini-society with food / supplies / manpower for everyone. The importance of choices, requires experimentation, changes, creativity.
- Role Play - Make choices and learn about interaction. The role can be given or chosen by oneself


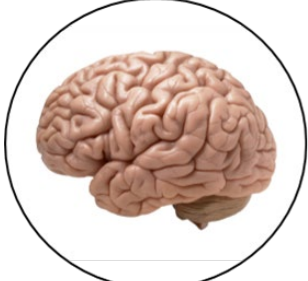

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CPH5555: Pharmacogenetics and Pharmacodynamics: Bench to Bedside

Creating and maintaining an active online community

SOCIAL PRESENCE	COGNITIVE PRESENCE	TEACHER PRESENCE
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a social forum with subdivided areas e.g. technology, music, film, fashion, sport, other ... to encourage focused social posting by learners and identification of common interests. • Encourage posting of already-existing links to learner's activities on other social media platforms. • Make students aware of social networking platforms already harboured by the institution, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc • Be social: Include yourself as part of the forum, and be a "silent moderator", i.e. promote positive social interaction and distract away any potentially damaging discussions such as politico-religious topics, without taking an overarching attitude. • Share real social events which learners might be interested in. • Organize real social events on specific occasions, e.g. during Christmastime, summer recess, end of course etc. • Privately probe learners who do not integrate into the social forum, by polite emails, taking care not to put undue pressure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish group tasks, BUT avoid single group assessment. Group tasks can be structured with specific roles such that each student can receive an independent assessment, but would need to interact with his/her group in order to complete the task. E.g. to identify the (a) theoretical, (b) analytical, (c) applications of pharmacogenetic testing for a specific drug. • Establish specific academic topics for discussion within appropriately created online fora. Some topics may be taken from international news, e.g. how the UK 100,000 Genomes project (widely promoted in the media a couple of years ago) will impact pharmacogenetics. Positively moderate the contributions. • Provide ready-available or custom-made multimedia material, to enhance visual learning. • If the course is postgraduate and learners come from different professional backgrounds, make use of the different expertise profiles to present multidisciplinary roles to pharmacogenetic testing. • Make use of learner's skills (identified from the social forum); e.g. someone good in technology might provide course-related IT-problem solving advice for his/her peers, someone knowledgeable about sports might be asked to source info about drug abuse in different sports, and a group task could look at the pharmacogenetics of such drugs. • Encourage membership to a relevant academic society, e.g., the British Pharmacological Society provides extremely low cost membership to all levels of students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access the system frequently and make this evident to students by posting messages, even if just in the social forum. • Be a social ice-breaker. • Be proactive. Stimulate discussion. • Provide answers to students' queries and concerns within a decent timeframe. • Provide regular positive feedback. • Probe students who show low interaction, with non-invasive personal emails. • Ask for course feedback. • Ask, and where possible, apply, students' opinions on some course decisions, e.g. suitable dates and times of virtual office hours, suitable timeframes for submission of assignments etc. • Provide post-course advice on career development. • Be knowledgeable beyond the normal narrow academic remit; e.g. to be able to direct students to the proper University offices if they enquire about specific administrative issues.

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MODULE 9

Outcomes

Designing a Learning Event Evaluation Plan to Assess Learners and Learning Events

By the end of this session learners will be able to:

- Create an effective evaluation plan to assess the learning outcomes in your learning event (you can adopt or adapt the evaluation plan from your face-to-face learning event)
- Create a temperature check and summative assessment tool to assess your online learning event or session (you may adopt or adapt the evaluation tools in this resource)
- Upload your assignments, rubrics, temperature check and summative study unit evaluation onto the VLE
- Set up, collect and provide feedback on learners' work via the VLE.

Assessment and evaluation

The terms assessment and evaluation are often used interchangeably in education. Some educators do distinguish between the terms stating that 'assessment' is formative and the gathering of data or information upon which to make the 'evaluation' (the judgment). Regardless of how you define the terms, assessment and evaluation are not something you tag on at the end of your planning. In both face to face and online learning, assessment and evaluation should be an integral part of the teaching and learning process. You start your planning with the end in mind (backward design).

- What is it you want the learner to know or be able to do by the end of the learning event or session?
- What content and activities need to be covered and designed to ensure the learner attains the learning outcomes?
- What have you done to ensure the online learning experience is engaging and enjoyable?
- How will you assess the learner to ensure that learning outcomes have been attained?
- How will you attain feedback on your study unit so you can continually improve the learning experience?

In this Session we will cover considerations for creating an effective learning plan for your study unit and tips to use the VLE to manage your evaluation plan (eMarking and eAssessment).

If an educator member is going to get into 'hot water' with learners regarding the quality of their teaching, it typically is directly related to learner assessment. I have witnessed learners tolerate unprepared educators, disorganized content presentation, and boring delivery of content. In my four decades of teaching, I have rarely witnessed learners tolerate assessment that they perceive is inconsistent or unfair. Clear expectations, timely constructive feedback and fair and consistent assessment are good indicators of a well-designed learning event and effective teaching.

Designing an evaluation plan

You begin to plan how you will assess your learners while you are creating the learning outcomes in the initial stages of designing your learning event. Your evaluation plan should include a variety of assessment strategies to address various learning styles. These are to be aligned with your learning outcomes to ensure learners have achieved the required knowledge and skills.

In any learning event you need a reasonable number of assignments for the semester. Typically, a learning event evaluation plan will have a variety of assessment assignments and strategies (2-4) paced over the duration of the semester (for example you may have - a written paper, a project, a final exam, and a participation mark) that will collaboratively add up to 100 percent of the learner's grade. Your evaluation plan requires that you identify the number and type of assignments, specific expectations and criteria for each assignment, the due dates, and the value of each assignment (for example 5-50%). Not every Session in your study unit will have an assignment due or an assessment component attached. So, in this Session we will adapt or adopt the evaluation plan from your face-to-face learning event (course, module, study-unit), including learner assignments, rubrics to act as a quality standard in communicating expectations and grading, and participation grades for your entire learning event.

Things to consider when designing your learning event evaluation plan:

- Assessment is reliable, with clear and consistent processes for the setting, marking, grading and moderation of assessment exercises. A reliable assessment will produce the same results on re-assessment and will produce similar results with a similar cohort of learners, so it is consistent in its methods and criteria.
- Assessment is valid, effectively measuring learner attainment of the intended learning outcomes.
- Assessment is inclusive and equitable, ensuring that tasks and procedures do not create disadvantages for any group or individual.
- Assessment procedures are transparent, and the criteria and methods by which learners' work is judged are made clear to learners, staff and external auditors.
- The amount of assessed work is manageable.
- The evaluation plan includes a variety of assessment types, in order to promote effective learning and allow a range of learning outcomes to be appropriately addressed.
- The evaluation plan provides a rubric(s) so learners understand the criteria for success and how the assignment(s) will be evaluated.

Answer the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the assessment?
- Why am I doing this assessment?
- What is being measured?
- What strategy can I use to gather evidence?
- Who will be conducting the assessment?
- Will this be a peer, self, or teacher assessment?
- How will it be evaluated?
- How will the information be analysed? How will I interpret the evidence? What criteria or performance standards will I use?
- How will the information be used?
- How will this be communicated to other learners, to change behaviour or practice?

APQRU provides an overview of the University of Malta policy of assessing learners. You will find a useful list of assessment strategies for the University of Malta's undergraduate and postgraduate learning events especially helpful.

Exploring assessment strategies and tools

Explore the Internet. Find examples of the following assessment strategies. Consider the appropriate recording devices (i.e., observation, checklist, rubric or marking scheme) for evaluating learner work. There may be more than one useful device for a strategy.

Achievement Target	Assessment Method and Strategy	Assessment Tool
Understanding of Concepts Application of Procedures	Paper and pencil test <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select response (matching, multiple choice, true- false, fill-in-the-blank) • short answer 	marking scheme
Understanding of Concepts Reasoning Communication	Graphic Organizer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mind map • word web 	rubric
Understanding of Concepts Application of Procedures Reasoning Problem Solving Communication	Extended Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • article • brochure • journal • portfolio • report • review 	checklist rubric exemplars rating scale
Understanding of Concepts Inquiry / Design Reasoning Problem Solving Application of Procedures Communication	Performance Task <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design project • inquiry • investigation • media production • presentation • role-play • simulation • skills demonstration 	checklist rubric exemplars rating scale
Understanding of Concepts Reasoning Communication	Oral Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conference • informal chat • informal discussion • oral questioning 	anecdotal record checklist

Types of assessment and evaluation

Assessment and evaluation can be conducted at various points in the instruction process.

Types of assessment evaluation	Diagnostic	Formative	Summative
Description	What knowledge or skills do learners already have?	How are learners progressing with knowledge or skills?	What is learner knowledge and skills now?
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To identify problems and group learners• To direct instruction or plan learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide specific feedback for improvement as a means to improve learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To derive a grade• To incorporate improvements and progress in the culmination of learner learning
Timing with respect to instruction	Before	During	After
Frequency during instruction	Once	Frequently	Once
Nature	Many questions related to general knowledge	Few questions related to specifics	Many questions related to specific and general knowledge

Conducting an assessment

In conducting assessments in the classroom, the person conducting the assessment can change depending on the situation and the purpose:

Type	Assessor	Benefits	Potential tool
Peer	other learners or teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• provide feedback to the learner (a new perspective!)• develop editing skills	checklist
Self	the individual who created the work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• reflection on own skills• develop editing skills	checklist
Teacher	the person instructing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• provide feedback to the learner• determine achievement of expectations	checklist rubric marking scheme

As outlined in the Digital Education Quality Standard Framework, the following considerations define Outcomes in eLearning:

Design an evaluation plan to assess learners

Use the information in this eDoc to design your learning event evaluation plan to assess if your learners have attained the learning outcomes. You should be able to easily adopt or adapt your evaluation plan from your face-to-face learning event. Include the assignments, a description of each assignment, criteria, due date and value of the assignment or task. Design a rubric for each assignment or task so that learners understand how the criteria and expectations of the assignment and how the assignment will be graded. There are many websites with sample rubrics that you can adapt or adopt. Some help you design your rubric. To support you in this process, eSamples may be helpful. See reference list at the end of the eDoc for some of the links to these sites.

Design a formative Temperature check and Summative learning event evaluation

It is essential to solicit continual feedback on your online session so that you can continually adjust and improve and ensure a quality learning experience for your learners.

Learning event evaluation

A brief online formative assessment (temperature check) should be conducted after approximately four weeks and again at eight weeks during the learning event. The formative assessment asks learners 'what is working' and 'what is not working' for them in the learning event. The anonymous feedback allows the instructor to keep his/her finger on the pulse of the learners' needs and address minor issues before they become major. Most of you designed a temperature check this week for your learning event. I started using the temperature check as a mechanism to provide me with an indication of how the learning event was going early on so I could make improvements before any problems festered. After the first iteration of an online learning event, I usually find there are often several changes to be made to improve the quality of the learning event. However, after the second iteration, I find there are rarely any changes to make. Once you 'get it right' things usually need little adjusting.

The temperature check doesn't need to assess all of your learning outcomes – it should just give you an indication of whether the resource is meeting learner expectations and an idea of what is working and not working from the learner's perspective. The temperature check should be short and take about 5 minutes. Be careful about asking too many questions because if learners tell you something and you do not respond – they will feel like their voices haven't been heard. You do not want to promise more than you can deliver. Some changes are easy to make but others just would not be feasible to make during the learning event.

A summative learning event evaluation is used to assess the eLearning learning event. The online survey addresses quality standards related to content, delivery, support, structure, community and outcomes and is administered at the end of each

term. The purpose of the learning event evaluation is to monitor quality assurance safeguards for teaching with technology, and to ensure best practices and cutting-edge knowledge outcomes remain robust, equal or superior to traditional face-to-face learning, and of international quality.

Learner assessment

Assessment must be integrated into the pedagogical strategies and mesh with the overall learning design. Therefore, assessment activities that encourage dialogue, collaborative activities, and problem solving will be more suitable than the traditional “test” (be aware that online technologies provide a plethora of high-tech ways to conduct the latter). If tests are desired, in blended resources they can be given during face-to-face sessions. Establish guidelines about how learners should submit completed assignments, due dates, expectations (quality, length requirements/restrictions), evaluation criteria, established feedback guidelines, and how to discuss their feedback if needed. An advantage of an online environment is that the instructor can attain permission from former learners to share their assignments to be published in an eSample.

eSubmission and eMarking

Another benefit of eLearning is that it allows the convenient submission of assignments and electronic marking (such as track changes), which can provide useful, sophisticated feedback on assignments. The eDoc – How does eAssessment work in the VLE? provides advice on setting up, collecting and providing feedback on learners’ work via the VLE.

- eAssessment is the end-to-end electronic assessment processes where ICT is used for the presentation of assessment activity, and the recording of responses. This includes the end-to-end assessment process from the perspective of learners, tutors, learning establishments, awarding bodies and regulators, and the general public. (JISC, 2007).

The process of e-assessment can be broken into two aspects:

- eSubmission refers to the process by which a learner submits work online for storage and retrieval by educators for marking, feedback or review. This is usually done through the VLE. This can also include plagiarism checking using Turnitin.
- eMarking is the process by which educators provide marks and feedback to learners online (through the VLE), which can include annotated files (e.g. using comments in Microsoft Word), audio, video, or the use of online forms.

Some reasons for considering the use of e-submission and e-marking include:

- Convenience, flexibility and cost savings for learners, who do not need to print out work and can submit assignments and access feedback without restrictions of office hours.
- Support for tracking of submissions and progress (for staff and learners). The VLE enables markers to monitor when the assignments have been submitted.
- Ability to use text-matching software (Turnitin), which is integrated with the VLE, to support academic integrity and to help deter and detect plagiarism.

- Archiving of assignments and feedback in the VLE for future reference.
- Enables markers to access learner work at any time and place without the need to carry heavy loads of paper.
- Enables markers to provide efficient, consistent, legible, timely and easily accessible feedback for learners e.g. using reusable comment banks or rubrics. Markers can re-use feedback comments relating to common issues.
- Opportunities for the provision of innovative and engaging feedback, e.g. through annotation tools, audio or video, and for easy re-editing of comments where required.
- Paper and toner usage, and its environmental impact, can be reduced.

Specific details on how to use the VLE for eSubmission and eMarking are available.

References

Assessments at UM

How to grade papers quickly and efficiently

TeachNology - Rubrics and rubric makers

Build a rubric activity

Quick rubric

Good practices for eSubmission and eMarking

- University of Malta guidelines – At present there are no official University policy guidelines regarding eSubmission and eMarking. It is important that you subscribe to guidelines issued by the Office of the Registrar. For example, we should refrain from providing marks or grades through the UM VLE since these will need to be approved by the Examination Board of the learning event. Learners should be directed to eSIMS for the official learning event grade.
- Provide clear sign-posting – It is recommended that you dedicate a section in the learning event area in the VLE for the assignment drop box, the assignment questions, the assessment criteria/rubric, sample assignments from previous years, guides related to academic writing and e-submission of assignments etc. Ideally you should make use of the General (top-most) section below the header (containing the Announcements forum).
- File formats and naming conventions – Instruct your learners in which format they should prepare the assignment (e.g. MS Word, PDF) for you to be able to add feedback to. You also need to instruct learners about the file naming convention e.g. MSC4109-JohnBorg- 778289M. This will make it easy for you to identify between learner assignments.
- Download all files as a batch – You are encouraged to use the bulk download feature in the VLE rather than downloading the learner files one-by-one. As indicated earlier, the VLE enables you to download all files in a ZIP folder.

different places, such as pen drives, laptops, your office computer etc. Try and work with one folder – if you will be using different devices for marking these, consider saving everything in your Google Drive.

- It is highly recommended that you adopt consistency with how you deal with marked and unmarked files. Consider renaming the files you are marking, for example, by appending '_MARKED' to the filename: MSC4109-JohnBorg-778289M_MARKED.
- Upload all feedback files in one batch – You are encouraged to use the bulk upload feature in the VLE rather than uploading the learner files one-by-one. As indicated earlier, the VLE enables you to upload all files in a ZIP folder.

Evaluation plan

eSamples

eSample - Education - Josette Farrugia

Evaluation Plan

(A) Learning outcomes

By the end of the study unit learners will be able to:

- a. write clear learning outcomes for lessons related to the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains;
- b. justify the decisions and choices made in planning lessons
- c. apply theory and evidence from research related to areas such as curriculum theory;
- d. identify challenges educators encounter in the Maltese science classroom;
- e. describe learning difficulties encountered in the science classroom;
- f. devise strategies to address learning difficulties in the science classroom;
- g. discuss, with the help of specific examples, strategies for differentiated learning;
- h. critically discuss the importance of establishing and sustaining the appropriate learner-teacher relationships for particular activities and situations;
- i. discuss, with reference to given specific critical incidents, how the way a teacher handles particular classroom situations will influence the attitudes and values of his/her learners.
- j. design a scheme of work for a given topic keeping in mind the age of the learners, their abilities and the school situation;
- k. write lesson plans for a given topic consisting of a series of learning activities and using a variety of resources, taking into consideration learner learning needs and reflecting learning theories.

(B) Modes of Assessment

The learning event will be assessed for grading purposes through:

- I. An assignment (72%)
- II. Online discussion and tasks (18%)

Tutorials linked to this study unit will involve classroom observation tasks but their evaluation is not used for grading of this learning event.

I. The assignment requires the learners to apply and demonstrate learning related to most of the outcomes listed above. The following is the description of the assignment: Teaching is a complex process which requires teachers to conceptualize what will probably take place during instruction. The primary function of planning is to provide the learners with a good opportunity to learn. Careful planning makes it possible to match the lesson to the needs of the learners. Planning also increases the likelihood that the material will be covered in the allocated time (Bellon et al., 1992).

Choose a topic that you will be teaching during your teaching practice.

1. Develop a scheme of work for this topic. Your scheme of work should indicate how you will develop the topic over a number of lessons. Include also an indication of assessment methods you will employ.

2. From your scheme of work develop a lesson plan (consider the lesson to be a double lesson). In your lesson plan you should include:

- The learning outcomes.
- The learning activities that learners will be involved in.
- The questions you will be asking the learners.
- The resources that you will be using.
- How you will assess the learners.
- The science content to be covered.

3. In about 1000 words, justify the choices and decisions made while planning the lessons in view of the class concerned. Include references to theory and related readings.

Any references made should be acknowledged and listed in a List of References, including websites.

The rubric for the Assignment is presented on the following two pages.

Rubric for assignment

Criteria	Exemplary 10-12 marks	Good 7-9 marks	Needs Improvement 4-6 marks	Unsatisfactory 0-3 mark
Scheme of Work	Scheme of work is logical and follows a well-planned sequence of lessons, giving an overview of the course content, methods to be employed, expected learning outcomes, assessment and resources. It also shows awareness of what students have learnt before and what they will learn in future.	Scheme of work is logical and follows a well-planned sequence of lessons, giving an overview of the course content, methods to be employed, expected learning outcomes, assessment and resources.	Scheme of work is organised but the sequence of lessons is not always appropriate. It provides some but not all of the following: overview of the course content, methods to be employed, expected learning outcomes, assessment and resources.	Scheme of work lacks organisation and focuses mainly on the course content.
The Lesson Plan				
The Learning Outcomes	Measureable learning outcomes that reflect key concepts, are aligned to the requirements of the curriculum and are based on students' needs and abilities.	Measureable learning outcomes that reflect key concepts and are aligned to the requirements of the curriculum.	Learning outcomes that reflect key concepts but are not aligned to the requirements of the curriculum.	The learning outcomes are not identified or are not properly phrased.
The Learning Activities	The learning activities align with the stated outcomes and consider classroom/school context and students' needs	The learning activities align with the stated outcomes and consider classroom/school context	The learning activities align with the stated outcomes but do not consider classroom/school context or students' needs	The learning activities are not aligned with the stated outcomes.

Procedures and strategies	Procedures include sufficient detail of teaching and learning strategies that are appropriate for the content, presented in a logical sequence, promotes higher order thinking, includes differentiation and actively engages students throughout the lesson	Procedures include sufficient detail of most of the following: teaching and learning strategies that are appropriate for the content, presented in a logical sequence, promotes higher order thinking, includes differentiation and actively engages students throughout the lesson	Procedures include details of some of the following: teaching and learning strategies that are appropriate for the content, presented in a logical sequence, promotes higher order thinking, includes differentiation and actively engages students throughout the lesson	Limited details of procedures given.
Assessment	Methods of assessment are aligned with and assess students on the stated learning outcomes and include a variety of modes of assessment.	Methods of assessment are aligned with and assess students on the stated learning outcomes and include some variety of modes of assessment.	Methods of assessment are somewhat aligned with the stated learning outcomes but variety of modes of assessment is limited.	Limited details of assessment included.
Reflections and justifications	In depth reflection on the planning process and choices made which conveys the reasons for the decisions and linking to theory.	Some reflection on the planning process and choices made giving some reasons and making some links to theory.	Rather superficial reflection on the planning process, the account is mainly descriptive with limited links to theory.	Very superficial reflection on the planning process mainly limited to description.
Mark	Grade			

II. Online discussion and tasks (as outlined in an earlier activity)

Rubric for online discussion

Participation in this online topic will contribute to 18% of the marks for this learning event. Your postings will be assessed using the following criteria:

Original posts

0 marks = no posting.

1 mark = minimal response to the prompt.

2 marks = posting addresses the prompt but reflection and/or analysis is limited.

3 marks = posting addresses the prompt, is reflective and analytical and stimulates discussion.

Responses to posts

0 marks = no posting

1 mark = minimal response with little or no reflection and analysis.

2 marks = posting responds but reflection and/or analysis is limited.

3 marks = posting is reflective and analytical and stimulates discussion.

(C) Resource evaluation

Learners will be provided with a Temperature Check after four sessions in order to obtain feedback about the resource. This will enable me to make changes that are necessary for the rest of the resource. Another resource evaluation tool will be administered at the end of the resource. This will provide information for future iterations of the resource.

eSample - Evaluation plan 1

Sample 1

Evaluation

The evaluation of your progress and achievement in EDU5261- Curriculum Design in Health Education will comprise a composite of three assignments: one brief paper (40%) of a historical episode and how it has impacted curriculum today and an online learning resource review; a portfolio of culminating module activities (30%); and a final project developing (20%) and delivering (10%) a personal model of curriculum.

Please note that all assignments, presentations, and the final project - are due on the dates indicated in the table above. Marks will be deducted at 5% per day to a maximum of 10 days for late submissions after which time an assignment will not be accepted. Due dates may be altered when a medical certificate or other documentation (e.g., court appearance) is provided or when mutually satisfactory arrangements have been made with the professor prior to the deadline.

Assignment 1: Brief Paper 1 (40%) – Part A (20%) Part B (20%)

Part A

For this assignment you will need to visit the “History of Education” section of the following website:

http://fcis.oise.utoronto.ca/~daniel_schugurensky/

As outlined on this website: “This site includes short descriptions of dozens of ‘historical episodes’ that took place during the 20th century and impacted educational theories and practices. The events are organized by decades and could be a policy, a court case, a piece of legislation, a scholarly article, a new theory, a research report, an incident, the release of a book, a speech, an empirical finding, a conference, the opening or a closure of an institution, a movie, an anecdote, or anything big or small that tells us something about education theory, policy, politics, research, or practice during the last century. Arguably, some of these episodes have been more historically significant or influential than others, and some may be more well-known than others, but each one uncovers a piece of that immense puzzle that was 20th century education. Education is understood here in its broadest sense and not only as schooling.”

Choose any event from this site and read the related article. You may also want to conduct additional research on the event. Write a brief (1-2 double spaced pages) summary of the event including the following:

- An overview of the event.
- A description of how this event was situated in the social, political, cultural, and educational context of the time in which it occurred.
- A reflection on how you feel this event impacted educational and curriculum policies based on your knowledge and experience with education and the philosophical and historical knowledge of education.

Part A: Marking Criteria

Criterion	Description	Percent of Grade
Overview	Succinct overview, clear presentation of ideas, comprehensiveness, depth of detail	5%
Situation of event	Thoughtful analysis of how this event was situated in the social, political, cultural, and educational context of the time in which it occurred; critical analysis of the event; objective critique of the event.	5%
Impact on curriculum	Clear description of how (if at all) this event did, could have, or should have impacted curriculum.	5%
Professionalism	Well written, organized, properly referenced; connectedness of ideas; flow of paper	5%
General comments		
Total		20%

Assignment 1: Part B

Review Caring Together Learning Resource

Describe your experience with the learning resource. What did you like? What didn't you like? How could the resource be improved? (1-2 double spaced pages)

Criterion	Description	Percent of Grade
My learning experience	Describe your learning experience with the Caring Together Learning Resource	5%
What did you like and didn't like?	Describe what you liked or enjoyed about the resource and what you didn't enjoy or like and why.	5%
How could it be improved?	Describe how you feel the learning resource could be improved	5%
Professionalism	Well written, organized, properly referenced; connectedness of ideas; flow of paper	5%
General comments		
Total		20%

Assignment 2: Portfolio of Module Activities (30%)

Each module in this resource has been thoughtfully planned and presents an overview of theory from a variety of resources (texts, articles, and personal experience). The content in each module is followed by carefully designed practical activities that provide an opportunity to apply the theory to practice. The portfolio should be compiled under the headings outlined in the table below under Portfolio Entry. The Portfolio should be handed in on the last day of class.

Module	Portfolio Entry	Grade
1. Introduction and Defining Curriculum	(Entry 1) Learning Activity 1: Strengths and limitations of curriculum definitions	(2%)
	(Entry 2) Learning Activity 2: Developing a personal definition of curriculum	(2%)
2. Philosophical Foundations of Curriculum	(Entry 3) Learning Activity 1: Developing or refining your philosophy of education	(2%)
	(Entry 4) Learning Activity 2: Align your curriculum definition with your philosophy	(2%)
	(Entry 5) Learning Activity 3: Impact of your philosophy on instruction	(2%)
3. Approaches to Curriculum	(Entry 6) Learning Activity 1: Theory and practice	(2%)
4. Delivering Curriculum	(Entry 7) Learning Activity 1: Exploring teaching strategies	(2%)
	(Entry 8) Learning Activity 2: Favourite teaching strategies and the multiple intelligences they address	(2%)
5. Context and Curriculum	(Entry 9) Learning Activity 1: Audience assessment	(2%)
	(Entry 10) Learning Activity 2: Hidden curriculum	(2%)
	(Entry 11) Learning Activity 3: Reflection on teaching	(2%)
8. Personal Practical Knowledge	(Entry 12) Learning Activity 1: Reflecting on school experiences	(2%)
9. Curriculum Evaluation	(Entry 13) Learning Activity 1: Exploring assessment strategies	(2%)
	(Entry 14) Learning Activity 2: Exploring rubrics	(2%)
	(Entry 15) Learning Activity 3: Exploring performance tasks	(2%)
Total		30%

Assignment 3: Final Project – Designing (20%) and Sharing (10%) Your Personal Curriculum Model

In assignment 3 you will develop a Personal Model of Curriculum (PMC) for a teaching experience (either real or hypothetical) that is important to you. Sometimes a PMC is also called a conceptual framework (CF). Consider your philosophy of education and the historical or political events that influence your specific teaching situation. Follow these steps for developing your PMC (also see module 10 for more details on this assignment):

1. Using a pencil, begin to create a diagram relating the major variables of your classroom or teaching event. Squares, circles, triangles, lines, arrows, boxes, spirals, and Venn diagrams are often used in PMCs. Play around with the arrangement of the constructs. It will often take several attempts before you figure out exactly what it is you want to do.
2. The more models/conceptual frameworks you look at the less foreign the exercise will become. Most M.A. and Ph.D. theses will have a CF to frame their research

study. Look though some of these in the library, in addition to the examples provided in this resource.

3. The final diagram should be done in PowerPoint or some other graphics program.
4. Once you have developed the diagram, write six to ten sentences that explain it. This description should highlight the relationships between and among the variables. It should be written clearly and concisely and will often form a logical argument.
5. Share your PMC with your classmates, colleagues, and anyone else who will listen and ask them to provide you with feedback. Explaining your PMC out loud is often a different experience from when you are thinking or reflecting about it. Often times you think you know what you want to say until you actually try to express your ideas to someone else. It is at that point that you realize you have a lot more thinking, reflecting, and reading to do.
6. Adapt and edit your PMC as necessary based on others' feedback.

eSample - Evaluation plan 2

Resource Assignments and Evaluation

Evaluation of your learning in the resource will be based on your regular participation, effective completion of tasks as outlined. The following rubrics will be employed, as appropriate, to evaluate each of the tasks assigned. A balanced approach to participant assessment and evaluation is used. It includes the combination of self and peer assessment and instructor evaluation. Participants will demonstrate their learning through online discussion, written and oral tasks. The evaluation methods are given in the following table:

Evaluation Method	Weight	Due Date
Weekly discussion	25%-group contribution 10%-leadership *	Each Saturday at noon
Oral presentation	25%	As scheduled
Final evaluation	40%	Apr. 12, 2006

Please note that all your papers and presentation handouts will need to be submitted electronically in the VLE.

Requirement for discussions (35%)

All participants are expected to contribute to weekly online group discussions. The assigned readings and the theme of the respective week will establish the basis of the discussion.

Each week, a minimum number of one original posting (250 – 500 words) and one reflective response to others (150 – 400 words) are required for each individual.

Starting from the week of Jan. 15, (Sunday), group discussion chair responsibilities will be rotating on a weekly basis. Each participant will lead at least one group discussion during the term. By Jan. 11, you will have signed up for the weeks in which you wish to be group leaders. The sign up form will be made available by Jan. 4.

* In addition to weekly group contribution, a group discussion chair will be responsible to:

- Provide one or two provocative questions for others to respond to (Sunday) – these questions will be relevant to the weekly assigned readings.
- Moderate discussion by ensuring a balanced set of points of view is presented.
- Summarize discussion at the end of the week (around 500 words). (Saturday at noon)

Please note that participants will be evaluated for their weekly group contributions. Leaders of the week will receive a leadership mark separately based on their performance. The mark will be based on the quality of the contributions as oppose to quantity.

C and lower	B	A	A+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •some participation in discussion •some evidence of interest and a little knowledge of the topic •rarely provide leadership when leading group discussion •does not meet the minimum requirement as stated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •required participation on discussion •demonstration of interest and some knowledge of the topic •sometimes provide leadership when leading group discussion •meets the minimum requirement as stated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •frequent participation in discussion •demonstration of interest and a clear knowledge of the topic •respectful of responses of others •demonstrate leadership when leading group discussion •exceeds the minimum requirement as stated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •regular and effective communication in discussion •presentation of thoughtful and original ideas •respectful and encouraging treatment of responses of others •demonstrate effective leadership when leading group discussion •Exceptional contribution to the group

Requirement for presentation (25%)

Each participant is expected to provide an oral presentation based on a research article critique. You must choose an article that has been published within the last 12 months. The articles will not necessarily be focused on health education, but inclusive of adult or postsecondary education that is enabled by technology.

Participants will need to sign up for the presentation date by Jan. 11. In order to avoid conflict, you will need to confirm your research article two weeks in advance to the presentation date. The presentation sign up form will be made available by Jan. 4. The first presentation date is Jan. 18 (Wednesday). The participants who wish to sign up for this date will need to confirm their article with the instructor by Jan. 16. Presentation will be 30 minutes in duration.

You will need to summarize the paper and then provide your interpretation. The summary should give the rationale, the methodology, and the implications or the conclusions for the work. As for critique, you should state the reason why you think this work is important, and whether the methodology was sound (e.g., did they make unrealistic assumptions?). You should also point out anything you would have done

differently, and also discuss what other research questions and problems the paper raises.

Sample guidelines for critique of research reports can be found here:

<http://www.uwm.edu/People/brodg/Handout/critique.htm>

The evaluation will involve self and peer assessment and instructor evaluation. The self and peer assessment sheet will be distributed and collected immediately after presentation. 10% out of total presentation marks will be based on self and peer response. Instructors' evaluation will be based on the following rubric.

C and lower	B	A	A+
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•little or no organization is apparent•presentation is pedestrian and fails to engage•little understanding of the topic is demonstrated•no resources are cited•no handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•satisfactory organization is apparent•demonstrates use of an interesting presentation technique•clear presentation of ideas•usually engaging•demonstrates a grasp of the topic•limited use of information technology for visual aids•few resources utilized or cited•satisfactory organized handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•well organized•employs appropriate presentation strategies and techniques•clear and engaging•demonstrates good grasp of the topic•employs information technology well for visual aids•a variety of resources utilized and clearly cited•very clear and well organized handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•excellent organization•very effective use of presentation techniques•extremely clear and engaging presentation•demonstrates and communicates a thorough understanding of the topic•very effective use of information technology for visual aids•effective use of a wide variety of clearly cited resources•handouts are exceptionally well done

Requirement for Final paper (40%)

The final evaluation will take the form of either:

1. A term paper that represents your interpretation of current research and the application of ICTs to the development of curricula in medical and health education. A minimum of 12 quality references is required. Participants will need to submit at least 20 double-spaced pages prepared in ICMJE style (the style of a manuscript submitted to "Academic Medicine"). The guideline of the style can be found here: <http://www.icmje.org/icmje.pdf>

or

2. A grant proposal that is research/theoretically based, innovative, and practical in medical and health education. A minimum of 12 quality references is required. Participants will need to submit at least 20 double-spaced pages prepared in the style indicated by the target organization. Please use one of the following sources (if you would like to use sources other than the ones indicated in the following, please

discuss with the instructor):

- CANARIE http://www.canarie.ca/funding/project_news/index.html
- PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS <http://www.pewtrusts.com/grants/index.cfm>
- SSHRC http://www.sshrc.ca/web/apply/apply_e.asp

file to help learners understand assignment expectation and can be an advantage to online learning.

1. Adapt and edit your PMC as necessary based on others' feedback.

eSample - Mathematics - Leonard Bezzina

Evaluation Plan

Learning event Structure

The face-to-face/online lecture sessions programme for learning event MSM5001 Becoming a Mathematics Teacher in the part-time MTL resource will be spread over 24 weeks and 24 one hour sessions as follows:

(a) Commencing in week starting on Monday 5th October 2020 and stopping in week ending on Friday 19th December 2020 (11 one-hour lecture sessions);

(b) Recommencing in week starting on Monday 4th January 2021 and stopping in week ending on Friday 26th March 2021 (11 one-hour lecture sessions); and,

(c) Recommencing in week starting on Monday 12th April 2021 and finishing in week ending on Friday 23rd April 2021 (2 one-hour lecture sessions).

The off-campus visit programme and associated face-to-face/online tutorials will be spread over twenty two weeks and seventy two hours of observation during the off-campus school visits which will normally be held in schools as follows:

(a) Commencing in week starting on Monday 12th October 2020 and stopping in week ending on Friday 19th December 2020 (10 weeks);

(b) Recommencing in week starting Monday 4th January 2021 and stopping in week ending on Friday 26th March 2020 (10 weeks); and,

(c) Recommencing in week starting on Monday 12th April 2021 and finishing in week ending on Friday 23rd April 2021 (2 weeks).

It is recommended that you do at least 2 hours of observation per week.

Learning event Assessment

The assessment of your progress and achievement will be based on a portfolio of short tasks (100%) that you complete and hand-in as the learning event progresses. The categories of tasks that will be set are the following:

Type of Task	Total Number of Marks Allotted	Number of Tasks	Number of Marks Allotted per Task
Lecture Tasks (24%)	96 marks out of 400	24 tasks	4 marks per each task
Behaviour Management Tasks (18%)	72 marks out of 400	12 tasks	6 marks per each task – 3 marks for initial post – 3 marks for reaction
Teaching Practice File Tasks (24%)	96 marks out of 400	12 tasks	8 marks per each task
Observing & Teaching Tasks (24%)	96 marks out of 400	12 tasks	8 marks per each task
Essay (10%)	40 marks out of 400	1 task	40 marks

The Lecture Tasks are short tasks that will be set during the face-to-face/online lecture sessions. The aim of these tasks is to make you reflect on the issues that will be raised during the lectures either before these are discussed or after they are discussed. Thus these tasks will either prepare you for what is to follow or will consolidate what you have learnt. You will need to submit your input online via the indicated online facility within the specified one-hour period.

The Behaviour Management Tasks are short tasks that will be set every second week starting from the second week of the learning event. The aim of these tasks is to introduce you to a number of different behaviour management techniques which you can use in the classroom once you start doing some teaching near the end of this learning event. Although the work you will be doing in these tasks is independent of what will be covered and discussed in the concurrent face-to-face/online lecture sessions, it is work that introduces and complements what will be covered during the final topic in the learning event, namely, 'Promoting Positive Behaviour'. You will need to submit your input (post and reaction to a post of one of your colleagues) online via the appropriate forum before the specified deadlines.

The Teaching Practice Tasks are short tasks that will be set every second week starting from the first week of the learning event. The aim of these tasks is to help you start building your teaching practice file so that by the time you start your teaching practice you will have already compiled or written some of the material that you need to include in your file. Although the work you will be doing in these tasks is independent of what will be covered and discussed in the concurrent face-to-face/online lecture sessions, it is work that is in line with the overall aim of this learning event which is to give you some of the very basic knowledge and skills you will need to start teaching. Thus the tasks will involve collecting relevant information about: the school, the mathematics you will be teaching, the available resources, the classes you will be teaching, and, the pupils you will be teaching. They are also meant to help start working closely with your school-based mentor and cooperating teachers. You will need to submit your input via the indicated online facility before the specified deadline.

The Observing and Teaching Tasks are short tasks that will be set every second week starting from the second week of the learning event. The aim of these tasks is to help prepare you to teach by: firstly, honing your observation skills through observing the teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil dynamics in the classes you will eventually teach during the teaching practice, and, secondly, gradually building your teaching skills via teaching episodes starting from teaching a pupil for part of the lesson and ending

with teaching a whole class for a whole lesson. Although the work you will be doing in these tasks is independent of what will be covered and discussed in the concurrent face-to-face/online lecture sessions, it is work that is in line with the overall aim of this learning event which is to give you some of the very basic knowledge and skills you will need to start teaching – observing skills, teaching skills and interacting with pupil skills. You are meant to do these tasks during your off-campus days in school and to submit your input via the indicated online facility before the specified deadline.

The Essay is a synoptic assignment that will be set in the final week of the learning event. The aim of this task is to help you integrate the knowledge that you have learnt during this learning event and the accompanying LLI5001 Field Placement 1 off-campus school visits. You will need to submit your input via the indicated online facility before the specified deadline.

These tasks will be set as follows:

Week	Portfolio Entry	Marks
1	Lecture Task 1: What is Mathematics 1?	4 (1%)
	Behaviour Management Task 1: Critical Incident in the Classroom 1	6 (1.5%)
2	Lecture Task 2: What is Mathematics 2?	4 (1%)
	Teaching Practice File 1: The Teaching Practice File	8 (2%)
	Observing & Teaching Task 1: Observing the Teacher 1	8 (2%)
3	Lecture Task 3: What is Mathematics 3?	4 (1%)
	Behaviour Management Task 2: Critical Incident in the Classroom 2	6 (1.5%)
4	Lecture Task 4: Why teach Mathematics 1?	4 (1%)
	Teaching Practice File 2: Supplementary Mathematical Activities 1	8 (2%)
	Observing & Teaching Task 2: Observing the Teacher 2	8 (2%)
5	Lecture Task 5: Why teach Mathematics 2?	4 (1%)
	Behaviour Management Task 3: Critical Incident in the Classroom 3	6 (1.5%)
6	Lecture Task 6: The School Curriculum & The Mathematics Curriculum 1	4 (1%)
	Teaching Practice File 3: Supplementary Mathematical Activities 2	8 (2%)
	Observing & Teaching Task 3: Observing the Teacher 3	8 (2%)
7	Lecture Task 7: The School Curriculum & The Mathematics Curriculum 2	4 (1%)
	Behaviour Management Task 4: Critical Incident in the Classroom 4	6 (1.5%)
8	Lecture Task 8: Principles of Effective Mathematics Teaching 1	4 (1%)
	Teaching Practice File 4: General Information - School	8 (2%)
	Observing & Teaching Task 4: Observing the Teacher 4	8 (2%)
9	Lecture Task 9: Principles of Effective Mathematics Teaching 2	4 (1%)
	Behaviour Management Task 5: Critical Incident in the Classroom 5	6 (1.5%)
10	Lecture Task 10: Principles of Effective Mathematics Teaching 3	4 (1%)
	Teaching Practice File 5: General Information - Mathematics	8 (2%)
	Observing & Teaching Task 5: Observing the Teacher & Pupils 1	8 (2%)
11	Lecture Task 11: Principles of Effective Mathematics Teaching 4	4 (1%)
	Behaviour Management Task 6: Critical Incident in the Classroom 6	6 (1.5%)
12	Lecture Task 12: Principles of Effective Mathematics Teaching 5	4 (1%)
	Teaching Practice File 6: Resources for Teaching Mathematics 1	8 (2%)
	Observing & Teaching Task 6: Observing the Teacher & Pupils 2	8 (2%)

13	Lecture Task 13: Planning, Designing, Delivering & Evaluating a Mathematics Lesson 1 – Facilitating Learning through Interaction with Pupils: Solving a Geometry Problem Behaviour Management Task 7: Critical Incident in the Classroom 7	4 (1%) 6 (1.5%)
14	Lecture Task 14: Planning, Designing, Delivering & Evaluating a Mathematics Lesson 2 – – Facilitating Learning through Interaction with Pupils: Solving an Algebra Problem Teaching Practice File 7: Resources for Teaching Mathematics 2 Observing & Teaching Task 7: Observing the Pupils 1	4 (1%) 8 (2%) 8 (2%)
15	Lecture Task 15: Planning, Designing, Delivering & Evaluating a Mathematics Lesson 3 – Introducing a Lesson: The Introduction 1 Behaviour Management Task 8: Critical Incident in the Classroom 8	4 (1%) 6 (1.5%)
16	Lecture Task 16: Planning, Designing, Delivering & Evaluating a Mathematics Lesson 4 – Introducing a Lesson: The Introduction 2 Teaching Practice File 8: Resources for Teaching Mathematics 3 Observing & Teaching Task 8: Observing the Pupils 2	4 (1%) 8 (2%) 8 (2%)
17	Lecture Task 17: Planning, Designing, Delivering & Evaluating a Mathematics Lesson 5 – Delivering a Lesson: The Development 1 Behaviour Management Task 9: Critical Incident in the Classroom 9	4 (1%) 6 (1.5%)
18	Lecture Task 18: Planning, Designing, Delivering & Evaluating a Mathematics Lesson 6 – Delivering a Lesson: The Development 2 Teaching Practice File 9: Timetable & Schemes of Work Observing & Teaching Task 9: Teaching a Pupil	4 (1%) 8 (2%) 8 (2%)
19	Lecture Task 19: Planning, Designing, Delivering & Evaluating a Mathematics Lesson 7 – Consolidating Learning: Setting SW/HW Behaviour Management Task 10: Critical Incident in the Classroom 10	4 (1%) 6 (1.5%)
20	Lecture Task 20: Planning, Designing, Delivering & Evaluating a Mathematics Lesson 8 – Closing a Lesson: The Closure Teaching Practice File 10: Class Profiles & Pupil Profiles 1 (Observed Class 1) Observing & Teaching Task 10: Teaching a Pair of Pupils	4 (1%) 8 (2%) 8 (2%)
21	Lecture Task 21: Planning, Designing, Delivering & Evaluating a Mathematics Lesson 9 – Some Overall Guidelines for Delivering a Lesson Effectively Behaviour Management Task 11: Critical Incident in the Classroom 11	4 (1%) 6 (1.5%)
22	Lecture Task 22: Planning, Designing, Delivering & Evaluating a Mathematics Lesson 10 – Evaluating a Lesson & Self-Evaluation Teaching Practice File 11: Class Profiles & Pupil Profiles 2 (Observed Class 2) Observing & Teaching Task 11: Teaching a Group of Pupils	4 (1%) 8 (2%) 8 (2%)
23	Lecture Task 23: Promoting Positive Behaviour 1 Behaviour Management Task 12: Critical Incident in the Classroom 12	4 (1%) 6 (1.5%)
24	Lecture Task 24: Promoting Positive Behaviour 2 Teaching Practice File 12: Class Profiles & Pupil Profiles 3 (Observed Class 3) Observing & Teaching Task 12: Teaching a Class of Pupils Short Essay (1500-2000 words)	4 (1%) 8 (2%) 8 (2%) 40 (10%)

The rubrics that will be used to assess your work are the following:

Rubric for Lecture Task

Task Component	Levels of Performance			
	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
Task (4 marks)	- All of the task was skilfully & comprehensively completed. - All the required work and/or reasoning was shown. - Shows outstanding effort. Superseded expected level. - There were no or negligible issues associated with language.	- Most of the task was skilfully completed. - Most of the required work and/or reasoning was shown. - Shows sufficient effort. Met expected level. - There were some issues associated with language.	- Some of the task was completed. - Some of the required work and/or reasoning was shown. - Shows some effort. Did not meet expected level. - There were numerous issues associated with language.	- Very little of the task was completed. - Very little of the required work and/or reasoning was shown. - Shows negligible effort. Far removed from the expected level. - There were extensive issues associated with language.
	(4 - 3 marks)	(2 marks)	(1 mark)	(0 marks)

N.B. Late submissions will be penalised by deleting 1 mark.

Adapted from the following two sources:

<https://www.rcampus.com/rubricshowc.cfm?code=CB8B87andsp=yesand>

<https://www.rcampus.com/rubricshowc.cfm?code=CB8B87andsp=yesand>

Rubric for Behaviour Management Tasks

Task Component	Levels of Performance			
	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
Post (3 marks)	A substantial post that not only contains reasons for proposed actions but also shows careful deliberation of possible implications.	An adequate post that contains reasons for proposed actions.	A post that does not contain reasons for proposed actions.	No post.
	(3 marks)	(2 marks)	(1 mark)	(0 marks)
Reaction (3 marks)	A substantial reaction to a post that not only contains reasons for proposed actions but also shows careful deliberation of possible implications.	An adequate reaction to post that contains reasons for proposed actions.	A reaction to a post that does not contain reasons for proposed actions.	No reaction to post.
	(3 marks)	(2 marks)	(1 mark)	(0 marks)

N.B. Late submissions will be penalised by deleting 1 mark.

Rubric for Teaching Practice File Tasks

	Levels of Performance			
Task Component	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
Task (4 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All of the task was skilfully & comprehensively completed. - All the required work and/or reasoning was shown. - Shows outstanding effort. Superseded expected level. - There were no or negligible issues associated with language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most of the task was skilfully completed. - Most of the required work and/or reasoning was shown. - Shows sufficient effort. Met expected level. - There were some issues associated with language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some of the task was completed. - Some of the required work and/or reasoning was shown. - Shows some effort. Did not meet expected level. - There were numerous issues associated with language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very little of the task was completed. - Very little of the required work and/or reasoning was shown. - Shows negligible effort. Far removed from the expected level. - There were extensive issues associated with language.
	(8 - 7 marks)	(6 - 4 marks)	(3 - 2 marks)	(1 - 0 marks)

N.B. Late submissions will be penalised by deleting 3 marks.

Adapted from the following two sources:

<https://www.rcampus.com/rubricshowc.cfm?code=CB8B87andsp=yesand>

<https://www.rcampus.com/rubricshowc.cfm?code=CB8B87andsp=yesand>

Rubric for Observing and Teaching Tasks

	Levels of Performance			
Task Component	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
Task (4 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All of the task was skilfully & comprehensively completed. - All the required work and/or reasoning was shown. - Shows outstanding effort. Superseded expected level. - There were no or negligible issues associated with language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most of the task was skilfully completed. - Most of the required work and/or reasoning was shown. - Shows sufficient effort. Met expected level. - There were some issues associated with language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some of the task was completed. - Some of the required work and/or reasoning was shown. - Shows some effort. Did not meet expected level. - There were numerous issues associated with language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very little of the task was completed. - Very little of the required work and/or reasoning was shown. - Shows negligible effort. Far removed from the expected level. - There were extensive issues associated with language.
	(8 - 7 marks)	(6 - 4 marks)	(3 - 2 marks)	(1 - 0 marks)

N.B. Late submissions will be penalised by deleting 3 marks.

Adapted from the following two sources:

<https://www.rcampus.com/rubricshowc.cfm?code=CB8B87andsp=yesand>

<https://www.rcampus.com/rubricshowc.cfm?code=CB8B87andsp=yesand>

Rubric for Short Essay

	Levels of Performance			
Area of Assessment	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
Content & Development (15 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content is clear, comprehensive, accurate, and persuasive. It indicates synthesis of ideas, in-depth analysis and evidences original thought and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content is clear, accurate and persuasive. It indicates original thinking and develops ideas with sufficient and firm evidence. - Major points are stated. Critical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content is not comprehensive and /or persuasive. It indicates thinking and reasoning applied with original thought on a few ideas. - Major points are addressed, but not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Content is incomplete. It shows some thinking and reasoning but most ideas are underdeveloped and unoriginal. - Major points are not clear. Ideas are
	support for the topic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Major points are stated clearly and are well supported. Reveals high degree of critical thinking. - Responses are excellent, timely and address topic. - Specific examples are used. 	thinking is weaved into points. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responses are adequate and address topic. - Specific examples are used. 	well supported. Some critical thinking is present. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responses are inadequate or do not address topic. - Specific examples do not support topic. 	vague with little evidence of critical thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific examples are not used.
	(15 – 12 marks)	(11 – 8 marks)	(7 – 4 marks)	(3 – 0 marks)
Organization & Structure (15 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structure of the paper is clear and easy to follow. - Transitions are logical and maintain the flow of thought throughout the paper. - Conclusion is logical and flows from the body of the paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structure is mostly clear and easy to follow. - Transitions are present. - Conclusion is logical. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structure of the paper is not easy to follow. - Transitions need improvement. - Conclusion is missing, or if provided, does not flow from the body of the paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organization and structure detract from the message. - Writing is disjointed and lacks transition of thoughts.
	(15 – 12 marks)	(11 – 8 marks)	(7 – 4 marks)	(3 – 0 marks)
Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling & Style (5 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rules of grammar, usage, and punctuation are followed; spelling is correct. - Shows outstanding style going beyond usual university level; rhetorical devices and tone used effectively; creative use of sentence structure and coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rules of grammar, usage, and punctuation are followed with minor errors; spelling is correct. - Attains university level style; tone is appropriate and rhetorical devices used to enhance content; sentence variety used effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paper contains few grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors. - Approaches university level usage of some variety in sentence patterns, diction, and rhetorical devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paper contains numerous grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors. - Mostly in elementary form with little or no variety in sentence structure, diction, rhetorical devices or emphasis.
	(5 – 4 marks)	(3 marks)	(2 marks)	(1 – 0 marks)
Format (5 marks)	Meets all formal and assignment requirements and evidences attention to detail; all margins, spacing and indentations	Meets format and assignment requirements; margins, spacing, and indentations are correct; essay is	Meets format and assignment requirements; generally correct margins, spacing, and indentations; essay is neat but	Fails to follow format and assignment requirements; incorrect margins, spacing and indentation;

	are correct; essay is neat and correctly assembled with professional look.	neat and correctly assembled.	may have some assembly errors.	neatness of essay needs attention.
	(5 – 4 marks)	(3 marks)	(2 marks)	(1 – 0 marks)

N.B. Late submissions will be penalised by deleting 12 marks.

Adapted from the following two sources:

Source: <https://www.rcampus.com/rubricshowc.cfm?sp=yesandcode=N4AA82and>

Source: <http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/criteria.pdf>

Temperature Check

The following Temperature Check survey will be administered at the beginning of the fourth week of the twenty-four week long learning event via the learning event VLE area. Use will be made of the feedback activity facilities as found in the IT Services booklet 'Using Feedback in the VLE'.

This brief 'temperature check' survey focuses primarily on the design of the learning event. The survey contains 10 multiple choice items. In addition, there is an additional final questions which will allow you to provide further comments related to the overall design of the learning event. The survey should take approximately five minutes to complete.

Please read each of the statements and select your response using the provided 5-point Likert Scale:

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree

Your participation is completely anonymous. Thank you.

Item 1: The learning event VLE area is easy to navigate. It was clear to me where to find all the instructional material (e.g. presentations, handouts, videos, readings, supplementary readings, suggested textbooks, etc) that I was expected to peruse.

Item 2: The learning event is well organized into a number of topics and sub-topics. This is making it easier for me to help me learn.

Item 3: Each topic starts with a set of learning outcomes which are clear and specific. This is making it easy for me to know exactly what I will be able to do after completing the topic.

Item 4: I feel the instructional materials (e.g. presentations, handouts, videos, readings, supplementary readings, suggested textbooks, etc) are helping me attain the specified learning outcomes.

Item 5: I feel that the technology tools (e.g. fora, website links, external apps, etc) used are helping me attain the specified learning outcomes.

Item 6: I feel that the number of opportunities to interact and learn from my classmates are sufficient and they do not need to increase.

Item 7: I feel that the number of opportunities to interact and learn from the lecturer are sufficient and they do not need to increase.

Item 8: I feel that the set tasks are helping me attain the specified learning outcomes.

Item 9: I feel that the amount of work that I have to do in the set tasks is reasonable.

Item 10: I feel that the grading criteria used for assessing my work are quite clear.

Item 11: Please write any additional comments in the spaces provided below. In the first space you can comment on the things you liked most up till now while in the second box you can comment on what you think needs to improve.

(a) The best things about this learning event so far have been ...

(b) This learning event could be improved by ...

Summative Learning event Evaluation Survey

The following evaluation survey will be administered at the end of the learning event via the learning event VLE area. Use will be made of the feedback activity facilities as found in the IT Services booklet 'Using Feedback in the VLE'.

Please take ten minutes to provide me with the final feedback on MSM5001 Becoming a Mathematics Teacher. Your participation is completely anonymous. Thank you.

Content

Please evaluate the following statements using the provided 5-point Likert Scale:

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree

The content was well organized.

The content included readings that were relevant.

The content included teaching of skills necessary for teaching mathematics.

The content included an appropriate number of learning activities.

The content included strong links between theory and practice.

The content included recent research.

The amount of work was appropriate.

The material covered and the tasks set were aligned with the learning outcomes.

The material covered and the tasks set were relevant and authentic.

The material covered and the tasks set were professionally presented.

The material covered and the tasks set were organized in meaningful segments that built on previous information.

Delivery

Please evaluate the following statements using the provided 5-point Likert Scale:

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree

The study unit included (offered) opportunities for engaging in activities.

The study unit included (offered) collaborative learning opportunities.

The study unit included (offered) regular feedback on assignment and tasks.

The resource materials were helpful and relevant (presentations, handouts, videos, supplementary readings).

The practical activities helped me understand the study unit content.

The lecturer was knowledgeable.

In the learning experience there were opportunities for self-evaluation.

Information on the associated VLE site was kept up to date, with no dead ends or stale links.

I felt that the lecturer was 'present' and responsive in the online environment (reading and responding to posts and questions).

The study unit provided timely detailed feedback on assignments.

The study unit provided timely responses to questions.

The study unit provided samples of required work to increase learner understanding of expectations. The study unit included (offered) useful and regular feedback from the lecturer.

The study unit included (offered) useful and regular feedback from other learners.

Support and Structure

Please evaluate the following statements using the provided 5-point Likert Scale:

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree

The learning experience made use of suitable technological applications.

The learning experience respected my experience.

The learning experience respected my current knowledge.

The learning experience considered my learning needs.

The learning experience kept my interest.

The learning experience adhered to ethical pedagogical, internet and privacy responsibilities. The learning experience utilised an accessible free learning platform.

Community

Please evaluate the following statements using the provided 5-point Likert Scale:

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree

In the study unit, the lecturer was a partner in the learning experience. In the study unit, my opinions were considered.

In the study unit, learners were respected.

In the study unit, learners respected each other.

In the study unit, the lecturer was empathetic to my need.

In the study unit, the learning community was inclusive and safe.

The lecturer created an online community built through respect, listening and responding to feedback, as learners found their own role as part of the greater team. Learning occurred through discussion, reflection, collaboration and by taking initiative and responsibility to listen, question, and think critically within the community of fellow learners.

Outcomes

Please evaluate the following statements using the provided 5-point Likert Scale:

Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree

(a) Knowledge and Understanding

Section 1: What is Mathematics?

After completing this learning event I am able to:

- describe the dual nature of mathematics as a product and a process;
- describe the main products of mathematics: facts, skills and techniques, and, concepts and conceptual structures;
- describe the main processes of mathematics: understanding and doing strategies, reasoning and deducing strategies, and, communicating strategies;
- identify examples of the products of mathematics in mathematical tasks;
- identify examples of the processes of mathematics in mathematical tasks;
- compare and contrast the teaching and learning implications of mathematics as a product and as a process;

Section 2: Why teach Mathematics?

After completing this learning event I am able to:

- describe the aesthetic, utilitarian, and communication aspects of mathematics;
- identify examples of arguments that emphasize the aesthetic, utilitarian, and/or communication aspects of mathematics;
- compare and contrast the implications of teaching that emphasizes the aesthetic, utilitarian, and/or communication aspects of mathematics;
- compare and contrast the ideologies of education of the mathematical purists, industrial pragmatists, progressive educators, and, social reformers and their implications for the teaching of mathematics;
- state the principles underpinning the National Curriculum Framework;
- state the aims of education as found in the National Curriculum Framework;
- describe the role of mathematics education as found in the National Curriculum Framework;
- identify the ideologies of education that underpin the National Curriculum Framework;

- describe the structure of the SEC Mathematics and SEAC Mathematics syllabi;
- discuss the implications of the hierarchical structure of the mathematics curriculum across the primary, secondary and post-secondary sector;

Section 4: Principles of Effective Mathematics Teaching

After completing this learning event I am able to:

- describe effective teaching as defined in the National Curriculum Framework;
- describe the characteristics of effective teaching;
- explain why careful planning, preparing, reflecting on, evaluating, and adapting schemes of work and lessons is crucial for effective teaching;
- identify factors that can have a positive or negative effect on effective teaching;
- define instrumental and relational understanding;
- identify examples of teaching that emphasizes instrumental or relational understanding;
- compare and contrast teaching that emphasizes instrumental and that which emphasizes relational understanding;
- explain why effective mathematics teaching emphasizes relational understanding over instrumental understanding;
- define conceptual and procedural knowledge;
- identify examples of teaching that emphasizes conceptual or procedural knowledge;
- compare and contrast teaching that emphasizes conceptual and that which emphasizes procedural knowledge;
- explain why effective mathematics teaching needs to strike a balance between conceptual and procedural knowledge;
- define concept image and concept definition;
- explain the relationship between concept image and concept definition;
- explain why effective mathematics teaching emphasizes synchronisation between concept image and concept definition;
- define cognitive obstacles;
- identify examples of cognitive obstacles;
- define the generic extension principle;
- identify examples of the use of the generic extension principle;
- explain how the generic extension principle may lead to cognitive obstacles;
- explain why effective mathematics teaching needs to take into consideration cognitive obstacles;

Section 5: Planning, Designing, Delivering and Evaluating a Mathematics Lesson

After completing this learning event I am able to:

- describe the main components of a mathematics lesson and its lesson plan (introduction, development, and closure);
- explain the importance of moving seamlessly between the main components of a mathematics lesson;
- explain the importance of accurate record keeping (record of attendance, record of finished work, record of assessment);
- explain the importance of reflecting on and evaluating one's performance (self-evaluation);
- explain the importance of reflecting on and evaluating one's evolving relationship

- with the class as a whole (class profiles) and with individual pupils (pupil profiles);
- explain the importance of the affective domain: feelings and motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic);
- describe how one can use the basic resources that can be used in the mathematics classroom: textbook; handouts; worksheets; charts; wall charts; markerboard/ interactive white board;
- explain the relationship between planning and preparation and keeping discipline in class;

Section 6: Promoting Positive Behaviour

After completing this learning event I am able to:

- explain the relationship between planning and preparation and keeping discipline in class;
- describe various behaviour management strategies that can be used to effectively control pupil behaviour: using tactical ignore, using appropriate language, making appropriate verbal and non-verbal signals, making presence felt, using privately understood signals, pausing and directing, distracting and diverting, using partial agreement, disengaging pupil, using closed questions, setting appropriate seating arrangements, using face-saving time, and, using cool-off time;
- explain why it is important to observe and reflect on mathematics lessons with the aim of building up professional knowledge of teaching and learning as well as professional judgement about managing learning and behaviour.

(b) Skills

After completing this learning event I am able to:

- apply theory about effective mathematics teaching to plan, prepare, deliver, reflect on, evaluate, and adapt mathematics schemes of work and mathematics lessons;
- write learning and teaching objectives for my lessons;
- organise content for an effective lesson;
- effectively introduce a lesson;
- effectively deliver content and engage the learner;
- set SW/HW to help pupils consolidate their learning;
- effectively close a lesson;
- move seamlessly between the main components of a mathematics lesson (introduction, development, and closure);
- keep accurate records (record of attendance, record of finished work, record of assessment);
- write reflections on their performance in class (self-evaluations) and act on them;

- write reflections on their evolving relationship with the pupils in their classrooms (class profiles and pupil profiles) and act on them;
- use effectively the basic resources that can be used in the mathematics classroom: textbook; handouts; worksheets; charts; wall charts; markerboard/interactive white board;
- use a variety of behaviour management strategies to effectively control pupil behaviour: using tactical ignore, using appropriate language, making appropriate verbal and non-verbal signals, making presence felt, using privately understood signals, pausing and directing, distracting and diverting, using partial agreement, disengaging pupil, using closed questions, setting appropriate seating arrangements, using face-saving time, using cool-off time; and,
- systematically observe and reflect on mathematics lessons with the aim of building up professional knowledge of teaching and learning as well as professional judgement about managing learning and behaviour.

Some Overall Comments

(a) The best things about this learning event were ...

(b) This learning event could be improved by ...

eSample - Palliative Care - Leena Seriola

Medical and Palliative Nursing (5 ECTS)

Purpose of the resource:

The aim of this resource is to provide a theoretical basis for planning, implementing and evaluating nursing and palliative care for patients with internal diseases.

Competences of the resource:

Evidence based nursing and decision making competence

Health promotion competence

Client competence in health and social care

Learning outcomes of the resource:

After completing this resource, you are able to plan, implement and evaluate nursing care for patients with internal diseases both in acute and in the stable situations. You understand the nurse's role as part of the multi-professional team. You utilize evidence-based information in decision-making and in resource-based health promotion. You are able to prevent and care for possible complications associated with patients' illnesses and you deepen patient counselling skills. You are able to evaluate and provide nursing care for the symptoms of palliative care patients according to their individual care needs. You recognize ethical issues in internal diseases patient care and palliative care.

Assessment criteria – 5 ECTS

Sufficient 1	You have the basic knowledge to plan, implement, and evaluate nursing care for patients with internal diseases. You make decisions based on textbooks in relation to prevention, treatment, and follow up of patients with internal diseases and palliative patients. You can tell patients about their illness and guide them about the basics of self-care.
Satisfactory 2	You have a satisfactory knowledge base to plan, implement and evaluate nursing care for patients with internal diseases while reasoning own decisions. You make decisions based on textbooks in relation to prevention, treatment, and follow up of patients with internal diseases and palliative patients. You can tell a patient about his or her illness and guide the patient about the basics of self-care.
Good 3	You have a versatile knowledge base to plan, implement, and evaluate nursing care for acute patients with internal diseases, while taking into account their individual situation. You are able to reason your decisions based on evidence in the prevention, treatment and follow-up nursing care of patients with internal diseases and palliative patients. You are able to consistently tell the patient about his or her illness and guide the patient about the basics of self-care.
Very good 4	You have versatile knowledge base to plan, implementing and evaluating nursing care of acute patients with internal diseases in an informed and analytical way. You are able to make decisions by utilizing multidisciplinary, evidence-based knowledge in the prevention, treatment delivery and follow-up of a patient with internal diseases and palliative patients. You are able to tell the patient about his or her illness in a consistent way, and to guide about self-care, while taking into account the individual situation of the patient.
Excellent 5	You have a broad knowledge base to plan, implement and critically evaluate nursing care of acute patients with internal diseases. You are able to make informed decisions by using multidisciplinary evidence-based information. You take into account the individuality and resources of the patient and apply them at different stages of care. You are able to provide detailed and targeted patient counselling, while justifying and taking into account the individual situation of the patient.

Evaluation plan – Palliative care nursing (2 ECTS)

Title of this study unit is Palliative care nursing. The aim of this study unit is to increase 3rd year nursing learners' knowledge and skills related to palliative care. Palliative care should focus on the patient's physical, mental, social and existential needs. This learning event will focus on increasing nursing learners' knowledge related to palliative patient symptom management and improve nursing learners' communication skills. Palliative care can be personally demanding and cause different stress responses in nurses. Therefore, this study unit will also address the well-being of a nurse. Study unit has 2 ECTS and it runs for 8 weeks.

Assignments:

1. Written assignment- 30%

Learners read the materials, watch a video and write an assignment on a case study. After you have posted your answer you will receive a "model answer". Compare your answer to the "model answer" and assess what went well and what you forgot to take into consideration. Aim: increase knowledge of palliative patient symptom management.

Assessment: self-assessment and teacher assessment.

2. Simulation training - 40%

Learners participate in a simulation training session. Assessment: from teacher and peer done in the debriefing session. Aim: improve nursing learners' communication skills and to train effective management of palliative patient symptom management. Assessment: self-assessment, peer assessment and teacher assessment.

3. Learning Café webinar - 30%

Learners read the materials related to topic and prepare themselves to learning café webinar. Aim: address the well-being of a nurse. Assessment: teacher assessment.

Learning Outcomes	How the learner is expected to show her/his competency	Assignment	What is evaluated and how?
Palliative patient symptom management and nursing learners' communication skills	Learners show ability to apply knowledge gathered by solving a case study of a palliative care patient.	1. Written assignment -a case study (pass/fail)	What: Learner is able to plan the nursing care required for palliative care patient. Learner is able to prioritize the needs of the patient requiring palliative care. Learners are able to describe the different stages of grief and to identify different communication strategies for dealing with bad news. How: After writing an answer learner receives a "model answer", compares her/his answer to a "model answer" and evaluates her assignment on what went right and what they forgot to say.
Palliative patient symptom management and nursing learners' communication skills	Learners show competence by implementing their knowledge into practice in a simulation training session done with an actress patient.	2. Simulation training (pass/fail)	What: Learners are able to assess the palliative care needs of a patient and their family using appropriate communication techniques when dealing with difficult conversations. Learners demonstrate ability to apply clinical reasoning following patient assessment. Learners are able to recognize the current stage of grief in a patient needing palliative care and appreciate how this would influence the care management. How: peers and teacher give feedback to learners in the debriefing session after simulation training session. Assessment criteria checklist -Learner is able to filter and summarize the information from the handover and start to formulate questions that they are going to ask the patient using the identified assessment documentation. - Learner shows awareness of the stage of grief for the scenario and is able to respond appropriately with their engagement with the patient. - Learner is able to summarize findings from the assessment and verify this with the patient to start formulating a plan of care. In the debriefing session: Focus on the positive aspect; what did your learners do well? Let them tell you how they managed the simulation training session. You can also point out things that might have done differently. Fail: If there is evidence that the learner is not able to establish dialogue and undertake the assessment then the scenario needs to be closed.

Learning Outcomes	How the learner is expected to show her/his competency	Assignment	What is evaluated and how?
Well-being of a nurse	Learners are able to find necessary tools to get help with their own stress reactions.	3. . Learning café webinar (pass/fail)	<p>What: Explain the different reactions that can occur when working with seriously ill and dying patients. Learner are able to recognize stress factors in themselves and have insight into their own reaction patterns.</p> <p>How: teacher follows the discussion as it takes place and analyze if learners are able to solve these questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can you as a nurse be the best resource for a dying patient and her family? 2. What underlying factor(s) can influence you as a nurse, when you are working with seriously ill and dying patients? 3. What actions can you do for yourself, when you are working with seriously ill and dying patients? How would you take care of yourself?

Temperature Check

Content, Materials and videos support my learning of palliative patient symptom management

Sufficient 1 - Satisfactory 2 - Good 3 - Very good 4 - Excellent

Delivery Learning methods used in this study unit enhance my learning Sufficient 1 - Satisfactory 2 - Good 3 - Very good 4 - Excellent 5

Support The teacher is available to answer my questions Sufficient 1 - Satisfactory 2 - Good 3 - Very good 4 - Excellent 5

Structure Study unit is well organized

Sufficient 1 - Satisfactory 2 - Good 3 - Very good 4 - Excellent 5

Community I have a sense of belonging to this learning community Sufficient 1 - Satisfactory 2 - Good 3 - Very good 4 - Excellent 5

Outcomes I am pleased with my learning outcomes Sufficient 1 - Satisfactory 2 - Good 3 - Very good 4 - Excellent 5

eSample (a) - Pharmacogenetics - Anthony Fenech

Pharmacogenetics and Pharmacodynamics: Bench to Bedside

Evaluation plan

This learning event will be evaluated through two separate components with the weightings shown below. Please read this document, including the rubric before embarking on any assessment component.

Evaluation Method	Marking weight
Contribution to two specific online fora Assignment (2500 words)	10% 90%

Contribution to online fora

Two specific online discussion fora will be set up. One will focus on the theory of pharmacogenetics and pharmacogenomics and will be set-up midway throughout the learning event. The second will focus on applications of pharmacogenetics and pharmacogenomics and will be available at the end of the learning event. Both discussion fora will run for a week. Your contributions to each discussion forum will carry 5% of the overall final assessment mark. During these discussion fora, you should demonstrate an active initiative to contribute both by initiating postings as well as by replying, and you should show evidence of having read about the subject matter, beyond what was directly presented in the study-unit.

Assessment criteria	Marking weight
Active participation	2
Demonstration of independent study beyond the provided resource material	3
Total	5

Assignment task

This task incorporates two components. The first is a theoretical component, which provides you with the opportunity to expand on the scientific aspects that underlie pharmacogenetics and pharmacogenomics. The second is an application component, which allows you to research novel applications in the field. Please read the Guide to writing a successful assignment, useful Resources and Instructions sections of this document before attempting the actual assignment

Component	Topic for assignment
1.	The identification of functional pharmacogenetic variants has progressed through different scientific methodologies throughout the last 20 years. Describe the scientific principles of one currently used approach that is suitable for the identification of novel functional CPY450 gene variants. Emphasize the experimental aspects that are needed to confirm the functional relevance of identified variants. (approx. 1000 words, 40 marks)
2.	Pharmacogenetic applications exist both in the drug development industry as well as in direct patient bedside therapeutic care. Identify from the scientific literature, a specific example where pharmacogenetic drug rescue may be a potentially feasible option for a drug which currently has a withdrawn marketing authorization. What arguments would you bring in favour of your proposed rescue? Discuss the benefits and risks that would be associated with patient management, if the drug is successfully rescued from its withdrawn status. (approx. 1500 words, 50 marks)

Assessment criteria	Weighting (%)	Poor	Good	Excellent
<i>Component 1</i>				
Research relevant to the topic	20	1-8	10-14	16-20
Use of correct technical nomenclature	10	1-4	5-7	8-10
Demonstration of understanding of the relevant science	10	1-4	5-7	8-10
Subtotal	40			
<i>Component 2</i>				
Research relevant to the topic	20	1-8	10-14	16-20
Use of correct technical nomenclature	10	1-4	5-7	8-10
Correct rationale used in proposing the scientific application	20	1-8	10-14	16-20
Subtotal	50			
TOTAL	90			

Guide to writing a successful assignment

The aim of an assignment task is to provide you with the opportunity to address a topic by using knowledge you acquired through the resource, and combining it with additional research, which you carry out as independent study. Assignments may target different issues. For example, you may be asked to describe, discuss and apply specific knowledge within a practical scenario. You may also be asked to provide arguments for, and against, a specific theory, or to assess a specific problem and suggest how it should be best dealt with.

The following guide is aimed to help you address an assignment task successfully.

- Read and understand the question: Make sure that you clearly understand what is being asked of you. Use this as a primary focus and guiding light for your assignment.
- Be concise: Every assignment has an approximate word count associated with it. This will be provided. Try not to deviate too much from this. Length is not necessarily associated with grade.
- Be technical: Use the correct terminology. Be attentive to the correct use of super- and subscripts, Latin words, Greek characters and correct nomenclature rules.
- Do your research: This cannot be over-emphasized. An assignment is not meant for you to simply reproduce knowledge learnt during a session, but to demonstrate a personal incentive to additional independent learning, and the necessary skills to source relevant information. Try to use the scientific literature or official documents as sources of information. Minimize the use of standard textbooks. Avoid the use of unofficial websites, including Wikis such as Wikipedia.
- Illustrate: Use diagrams, figures, flow charts or whatever illustrations you consider necessary. These do not contribute to your word count and if used properly, can greatly enhance the clarity of your work.
- Cite your sources: Use the referencing system indicated. You may choose to use citing and referencing software to help you. The University of Malta offers RefWorks (<https://www.um.edu.mt/library/refworks>), but there are also other third party applications, to which you may happen to have access. Make sure that you have a correctly formatted reference list at the end of your assignment. It is not unusual for any citing and referencing software to also require some minor additional editing of the exported reference list.
- Discuss with your peers: Feel free to discuss the material with your peers or colleagues. This is part of the learning process.

- h. Be original: Do not plagiarize and do not collude. Plagiarism and collusion are a clear sign of lack of academic integrity. Further information on avoiding plagiarism and collusion is available here: <https://www.um.edu.mt/itservices/vle/pds/learners>.
- i. Read the instructions: Your assignment may include specific instructions regarding its presentation and/or content.

Useful resources

The list below provides examples of some useful resources. However feel free to use whatever resources are most suitable to your particular assignment.

University of Malta library (includes access to the British National Formulary through the HyDi system)	https://www.um.edu.mt/library
University of Malta Open Access Repository	https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/
Open access journals	http://www.freemedicaljournals.com/
Directory of Open Access Journals	https://doaj.org/
Electronic medicines compendium (includes access to Summary of Product Characteristics and Patient Information Leaflets)	https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc
Malta medicines list	http://www.medicinesauthority.gov.mt/advanced-search
Pharmacogenomics Knowledgebase	https://www.pharmgkb.org/
Clinical Pharmacogenetics Implementation Consortium	https://cpicpgx.org/
PubMed database	http://www.pubmed.gov/
NLM Medline Plus and Health Information	https://medlineplus.gov/
The Merck Manual	https://www.merckmanuals.com/home
European Unionropean Medicines Agency	https://www.ema.European Unionropa.European Union/
US Food and Drug Administration	http://www.fda.gov/
IUPHAR/BPS Guide to Pharmacology	https://www.guidetopharmacology.org/
International Union of Basic and Clinical Pharmacology	http://www.iuphar.org/

Instructions

- This assignment comprises two components. The approximate word count expected from each component, and the marks allocated, are indicated after each question. You are not required to go beyond this word count.
- Compose your assignment using Microsoft Word or alternative word-processing software, and save as a text-editable file in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format.
- Make sure that the cover page includes (a) your name and surname, (b) your University of Malta learner number (in most cases this is identical to your ID Card number), and (c) the learning event code of this assessment.
- Label your figures sequentially as "Figure 1", "Figure 2", etc and your tables as "Table 1", "Table 2" etc. Make sure that every figure and table has a detailed descriptive legend following the Figure or Table number, as is the normal practice in scientific peer-reviewed publications. Descriptive table legends should be placed above a table, while figure legends should be placed beneath a figure.
- Use the Harvard citation and referencing system described in this document https://www.um.edu.mt/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/353662/Harvard_Guide.pdf which is available from this page <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/guidelinespolicies/referencingguides>
- Submit your assignment by uploading it by midnight of the deadline indicated on the cover page of this document, to the purposely set up VLE upload areas for CPH5555. There are two upload areas provided, labelled DRAFT and FINAL respectively. The DRAFT area is for your personal use. Upon upload, your assignment will be processed through Turnitin plagiarism detection software, and you will be provided with an Originality Report. Anything uploaded into the DRAFT area will be ignored by your examiner/s. Please upload the final version of your assignment into the FINAL area. This is the assignment that will be assessed. Assignments uploaded to the FINAL area will also be processed and have an Originality Report generated, but this will only be accessible to your examiner/s.

eSample (b) - Pharmacogenetics - Anthony Fenech

Pharmacogenetics and Pharmacodynamics: Bench to Bedside

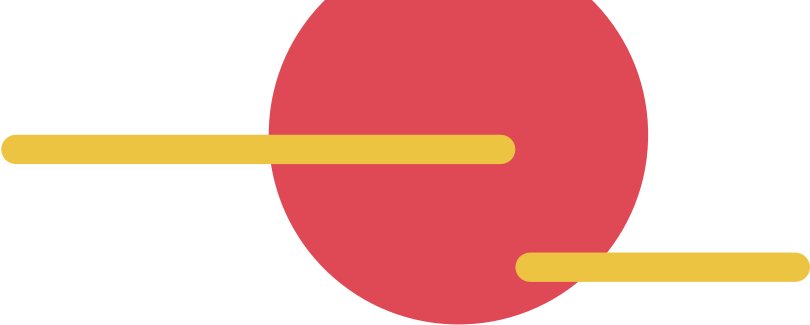
Learning event feedback

Thank you for joining and completing this learning event.

In order to continually improve on further deliveries, we would appreciate your unbiased feedback on the delivery and content of this module. All feedback will be treated anonymously. Please remember, that negative feedback is as important to us as positive feedback. All that we ask for is honest feedback. You may provide any additional comments in the free text field below this form.

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Delivery						
1.	The components of this study-unit were delivered according to schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	The study-unit material which I was expected to source, was indeed accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Electronic communication with lecturers was effective, and replies were timely	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Assessment rubrics were clearly defined	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Individual assessment feedback was provided	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Content						
1.	The study-unit content was relevant to the overall learning outcomes of the degree course I am following	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	The academic level I was expected to attain is in conformity with the MQF level of the course I am following	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	The content presented was designed to provide me with the opportunity to think and apply, rather than recall and reproduce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Opportunities to further expand my knowledge through independent study were acknowledged in assessments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	The skills which I learnt are relevant to today's job prospects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Resources



RESOURCE



3

**Train the
Online Educator
Resource**



General Resource

Information and Communication

Welcome to the *Train the Online Educator* resource. This resource has been adapted from an online asynchronous course meant to be delivered and guided by a facilitator to support **educators**¹ already teaching online, further improve their online teaching knowledge and skills. In this eBook version of the course, the terms course, resource and **learning event**² will be used interchangeably. Feel free to adopt or adapt this course and deliver it to your own **learners**³. We feel the resource is best delivered with the support of a facilitator. However, we feel much can also be learned by simply following the resource for your own benefit without the guidance of a facilitator.

We are delighted you have decided to join us in this exciting 3 Module learning adventure! Being a skillful online educator requires a lot of work. In Module 1 we will spend time on teaching and learning theoretical foundations, in Module 2 you will learn about the intentional use of technology and in Module 3 you will reflect on your online teaching and evaluate and continue to improve your learning event.

Consider providing learners with a certificate for successful completion of the Train the Online Educator resource.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the 3-week resource, you will be able to:

1. implement pedagogical and theoretical approaches, technological solutions, and professional values to effectively develop an asynchronous online resource.
2. develop online facilitating skills to align with the **European Union Framework: A Quality Standard to Guide the Design, Delivery and Evaluation of Effective eLearning.**

In each module, there are assignments to help you transfer your knowledge into practice. Successful completion of the learning resource requires you to complete ALL assignments. The resource will require approximately 15 hours of work.

Pre-Assignment

To begin, we would like you to reflect on your digital skills and competence by completing the **DigCompEdu Check-In**⁴ for academics teaching in further and higher education. After answering the questions you will receive a personal competence profile to help you determine any shortcomings and strengths regarding your online teaching. While reflecting on your test results, you can determine the areas that you feel are most important to focus on in your learning and plan how you will improve these facilitating skills.

¹ The term used to include all educators at all institutions at any level or country. Educator is to be used interchangeably with facilitator, professor, academic staff member, lecturer, instructor, teacher, tutor, and trainer.

² Learning event is the term used to encompass resource, learning event, module, class, lecture or session.

³ Learner can be used interchangeably with learner, participant, and trainee.

⁴ In this resource we use DigCompEd check-in. Panopto, Google Jamboard. These are free resources.... Feel free to use these resources or substitute these with any other that you prefer and serve the same or similar service. If any of these technologies are no longer available, for example when we started this resource we used --- . This technology was no longer available the next time we delivered the resource so we replaced it with....

MODULE 1

From Teaching to Learning

Theoretical Foundations

Learning Outcome:

Upon successful completion of this module, you should be able to:

- describe your teaching philosophy, values and pedagogical approach.

Joe is a 45 year old professor who has been teaching face-to-face classes for 22 years. With COVID-19 shutting down universities, he was given two weeks to convert his face-to-face class online. With little knowledge or skill of how to design, deliver and evaluate online learning, Joe did his best but shared this sentiment: : 'It feels like I lose myself in the online environment. I am not as good a teacher as I am in the classroom setting' (Joe).

Reflect on the following:

What kind of teacher is Joe when he is in his classroom? Is he an interesting speaker and subject matter expert, does he love to open interesting and critical conversations with learners? Joe's learners adore him. But online... Joe loses something that makes him great. Feedback from learners has been crushing. We know that he is not alone.

Being an online teacher is complex. **Technology**⁵ offers many different teaching and learning opportunities. Perhaps Joe's colleague recommended that he tries a useful application or tool to modify his online resource. We know Joe added materials and assignments to support the learners' learning, but in the end, this was not enough to make his learners happy. What can Joe do to restore the same kind of energy and environment that he had in his face-to-face class? What is the fundamental problem? We will make a plan to help Joe become more effective in the online environment but first, we would like to know more about you.

You will find materials and instructions for the assignments below. It is recommended that facilitators (when used) provide feedback to the groups after reviewing all learners' assignments.

⁵The tools featured in this course are simply indicative. You are free to use other tools you find readily available that serve the same purpose. However, since third-party tools are not supported by IT Services, we encourage you to go through the Terms & Conditions before making use of a tool

Assignment 1.1 – Values as a Teacher

“Lecturer’s philosophy, their values, and beliefs are reflected in the ways they facilitate online dialogue” (Coker 2018, p.138). Please, read more on **Purpose, Pedagogy and Philosophy: “Being” an Online Lecturer (Coker, 2018)**, so you would understand why we ask you to reflect on your values as a teacher. After reading the article answer the following two questions **What kind of teacher are you? What are your values as a teacher and why?**

Assignment 1.2 – Pedagogical Approach

People often talk about their ‘pedagogical approach’ to teaching. But what does it actually mean? What is pedagogy? Read [here](#).

Go back to Google Jamboard (to your own page) and write down the pedagogical approach you will use in online teaching in general or in one of your own resources. Most of us use several different pedagogical approaches, not just one, you may choose the one you like best.

WHAT?

“Based on De Gagne and Walters’ 2009 qualitative meta-synthesis, one of the most significant changes was in the role from lecturer to guide, from knowledge dispenser to resource provider, and from authority to facilitator” (**Chiasson, Terras and Smart, 2015, p.238**). Please read and reflect on the 2017 paper by **Arghode, Brieger and McLean** that analyses critically four selected learning theories and their role in online instruction for adults.

Joe was not able to facilitate learner groups as well as he was able to do in the classroom. His learners did not feel his presence in the online environment. Online discussions were not as engaging. Learners didn’t participate and there were no debates or critical reflections. Postings were more of a monologue than a dialogue. Joe’s values as a teacher were to encourage, motivate and foster critical reflection skills. Joe realised that there was a conflict between his values and ongoing online education.

Read more about this topic in Online Teaching, Change, and Critical Theory (Wang and Torrisi-Steele, 2015). It provides a tool to examine your own online resource. It also reminds us not to be driven by technology but to rely on our experience as educators to choose learning activities we think are relevant.

WHY?

While many educators in higher education are using technologies in their teaching, their use of technology is generally restricted to meeting purposes of convenience and efficiency. Rarely are the affordances of technology being exploited by educators in higher education in order to develop teaching strategies that truly engage learners, and help learners develop self-regulation and the ability to work collaboratively – both of which are important capacities in the information age. (Wang & Torrissi-Steele. 2015, p.18).

Read more about this topic in **Online Teaching, Change, and Critical Theory (Wang & Torrissi-Steele, 2015)**. It provides a tool to examine your own online resource. It also reminds us not to be driven by technology but to rely on our experience as educators to choose learning activities we think are relevant.

Assignment 1.3 – Discussion and Reflection

Go back to your Google Jamboard and read your values again. Which of these values has been most difficult to implement into your online teaching? Share your thoughts in the discussion forum.

Comment on at least one colleague's post.

TAKE AWAY MESSAGE!

As a teacher, it is important to recognise your values. How can you implement good values into your online course to improve the learning experience?

References

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MODULE 2

Use of Technology

Learning Outcome:

Upon successful completion of this module, you should be able to:

- implement technological solutions to effectively develop an asynchronous online resource.

In this module, you will learn how to use different technical tools to support pedagogical and practical needs. Pedagogy and technology should be compatible. As an academic, you should always aim to find technological tools and platforms that support the pedagogical aim of your teaching. Technology shouldn't be used just for the sake of using technology but as a tool to achieve a goal.

This module consists of five short case stories. In these case stories, Prof. Joe, whom you've met in Module 1, is facing different challenges and problems but luckily we also have several possible solutions. This week you need to evaluate the solutions provided and share your thoughts on three of these case stories. More detailed assignment instructions are available below.

CASE STORIES

Case Story 1: VLE area structure and layout

All the VLE learning event areas in the virtual learning environment look the same – just a long list of text and files. Prof. Joe doesn't know how to edit the structure of the VLE area and how to add colours or other visual effects.

Can you help Prof. Joe? What kind of methods could he use to make the workspace look more appealing?

Suggested solutions:

1. **Logical hierarchy** – it is important that VLE areas have an intuitive logical structure to help learners navigate quickly, understand the sequence of activities, access information and easily understand the layout of the VLE area. Teaching material can be organised in a Topical or Weekly format.

2. **Avoid clutter** - a cluttered VLE area can be difficult to navigate. One must regularly check the VLE area to fix or remove any broken hyperlinks (URLs), if any. Avoid overloading the VLE area's homepage by placing content into folders and hiding unused items. If the VLE area is still long, one can consider using the Collapsed Topics format to aid navigation.

3. **Section heading** - use section heading for each topic to maintain consistency across sections and help learners see where they are.

4. **Section overview** - provide a description in each section to introduce the topic or set of resources / activities. This gives the learners some context of what they should find in a particular section.

5. **Labels** - bring together common elements by using labels to provide common sub-headings across sections to help learners navigate. When providing titles for resources and activities make sure they are clear, unambiguous and consistent. Labels can be images as well. The internet is full of material that you can use for free for your teaching. Pixabay and Pexels are probably the most well-known, free-to-use image databases.

6. **Accessibility** - all the points mentioned above will prove practical for all your learners. Moreover, these points are of the utmost importance for learners who require assistive technologies to access online content. Other things to keep in mind:

- when using images, add alternative text that is read by screen readers
- coloured text must have high contrast against backgrounds
- links are descriptive (avoid 'click here')

7. **Copyright practices** - intellectual property and copyright legislation must be observed. Refer to the Library guidelines about the copyright and intellectual property rights of content published on the VLE.

Case Story 2: Communication

Prof. Joe feels like he has really good communication and interaction with his learners in the classroom but somehow he is unable to transfer the same fluent communication on the VLE. His only way of communication is via the Announcements forum to simply inform learners about important notifications and deadlines' reminders.

What kind of tools or communication methods could you introduce to Prof. Joe so that he could make his communication more versatile? How could you help learners to interact more?

Suggested solutions:

1. Small “bite size” introductory videos. These ought to give him a better chance to act in a classroom-like setup. These can be created with Panopto Personal capture.
2. Asynchronous interactive platforms like the Forum activity within the VLE or Padlet (a free third party platform). On such platforms, the discussions can be a lot more informal and both educators and learners can interact more easily.
3. Training/counseling/discussion sessions in small groups via Zoom to increase the confidence to interact.

Case Story 3: Assessment

Prof. Joe doesn't know how to set up and use particular activities for assessments. He has asked learners to send their assignments via email.

Can you help Prof. Joe? What activities can be set up in the VLE?

Suggested solutions:

1. Assignment activity - allows tutors to collect work from their learners, review it and provide feedback. Learners can submit any digital file type, including, for example, word-processed documents, spreadsheets, presentations and images.
2. Turnitin Assignment activity - allows educators to collect work from their learners and check for potential plagiarism.
3. Workshop activity - is a powerful peer assessment activity. Learners first upload their work and this is then distributed amongst their peers for assessment based on a grading scale specified by the tutor.
4. Forum activity - allows educators to set up forums for discussions, where usually learners post their initial contribution and then reply to their peers' discussion. Forums encourage communication, collaboration and debate.
5. Panopto Assignment folder - allows educators to collect work from their learners for which the learners need to submit a multimedia file (an audio or video file).

The activities mentioned above provide a convenient database of learner submissions that educators can manage online. Moreover, if tutors specify a due date within the activities, the dates will appear in the Calendar and Upcoming events block of a particular VLE area. Learners can see at a glance when their work is due.

Case Story 4: Workload

Prof. Joe is now working really hard to provide timely feedback to all his learners. He spends his evenings reading and replying to all posts made to a discussion forum.

Is Prof. Joe working even harder than his learners? How can we help?

Suggested solutions:

1. **Groups** - for particularly large cohorts, learners can be divided into smaller, more manageable groups. Consider assigning triad groups of learners to manage the weekly discussion, where each week a learner would be responsible for summarising their group's contributions.
2. **Combined feedback** - synthesize and combine information into one message instead of replying to individual messages. The feedback main idea is that learners can reflect and deepen their understanding of the subject at hand.
3. **Rubrics** - help to clearly communicate expectations for learner work. Rubrics set a level playing field so that each learner understands how to perform in order to achieve each standard.
4. **Learning analytics** - the VLE offers various tools to help tutors analyse and track the learners' progress.

Case Story 5: Teaching methods

Prof. Joe is always sitting in front of the laptop and giving lectures online. At the end of the semester, he assigns the learning event's assignment and/or exam.

Is that all there is left? He remembers all the versatile learning activities he used to manage in the classroom. Can this be achieved online?

Suggested solutions:

1. **Case studies activities** - Zoom allows educators to easily set up breakout rooms during an online session. Allowing learners to discuss case studies and then present their thoughts to the entire classroom allows for a level of interactivity even when lectures are being delivered online.
2. **Flip the classroom** - educators make the study material available on the VLE prior to the online session so that learners may engage with the content at home. During the online session, learners have more time to interact and share their understanding and ideas.

3. **OER and MOOCs** - Open Educational Resources are teaching and learning materials that are freely available for everyone to use (for example, OER Commons, Merlot, Academic Earth, Open Education Consortium). Similarly, MOOCs are free online resources available for anyone to enrol (for example, Coursera, EdX, Futurelearn, Open Yale Resources). Such resources remind tutors that they do not need to re-invent the wheel.

Assignment 2.1 - Praise, Criticise and Apply

Read all the case stories and brief introductions of the suggested solutions. Pick **THREE** case stories that you want to share with us. For every story, pick one solution that you would like to **praise**, one that you would like to **criticise** and one that you could **apply** to your own teaching. Test these three solutions as well as you can and evaluate them.

TAKE AWAY MESSAGE!

- There is almost always a technical solution for your problem. You just need to find it.
- Don't use technology in teaching just for the sake of technology. Make the technology work for you and for your learners. The technology should help you achieve new goals.
- Take the overall learning situation into consideration when planning the online lesson. Sometimes less can be more.

MODULE 3

Discussion, Reflection and Continuous Improvement

Learning Outcome:

Upon successful completion of this module, you should be able to:

- use the European Union Digital Education Framework to identify strategies to address the shortcomings of your online session
- reflect upon and further develop your online learning event.

In this module, you will critically examine your own online learning event. Use all the ideas you have attained from the previous two modules and develop your online learning event. First, we ask you to recognise your learning event's trigger points. Trigger points are positive or negative factors, that you have discovered while designing, delivering or evaluating your online learning event. Subsequently, you will solve them and present them to your Train the Online Educator colleagues. In the discussion area, you will provide feedback and development ideas for your colleagues to help them solve their trigger points.

But let's introduce Prof. Joe again. So far he has successfully reflected on his teaching philosophy in detail and he noticed that changing the overview has inspired him to embrace several new technology tools to enhance learner engagement. He has also realized that his lessons had been quite passive from learners' point of view - although he has always imagined being an activating and inspiring teacher... "Times change and so should we.." he reflects and implements a plan to communicate his new strategies with his learners. Prof. Joe takes a look at the **European Union Digital Education Framework** and realizes that it can help him to describe his resource to the learners.

Familiarise yourself with the **European Union Digital Education Framework**. We also recommend that you take a look at the **Digital Education Variables and Sub-Variables**.

Task 1

Elevator Pitch

We would like to hear about your learning event (a really short version of it)! Assume that you need to introduce your learning event to prospective learners while in an elevator, meaning you have 2 minutes max to describe your learning event. You can use this recording later on in your learning event as an introduction video.

Record a short and inspiring video or podcast – you can be creative! Try to be clear so that everyone can understand the main idea of your learning event.

- We encourage you to record your video or podcast using Panopto Capture via this Panopto Assignment folder or anyother recording technology available to you.
- Once you are happy with your video / podcast, please share your recording's link via the Elevator Pitch forum activity.

eSample 1 Key Principles of Dementia Care default, Mr. Christian Vella, University of Malta

eSample 2 Multimedia Representation and Coding CCE3101 Elevator Pitch, Prof. Saviour Zammit, University of Malta

eSample 3 Team Based Software Engineering,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovzP4le4xaQ>
Dr. Mark Micallef, University of Malta

Task 2

Learning Event Trigger Points

Re-examine your learning event critically to identify the strengths and areas that can be improved. Identify 1-3 “trigger points” in your current online session. Post your trigger points in the Learning event trigger points forum. Concentrate on explaining the trigger points – don’t try to solve them yet.

You can use the **European Union Digital Education Framework** to help you find the areas that need more attention (e.g. theoretical foundations, outcomes, content, delivery, support, community and structure). Remember: a trigger point may be positive or negative.

If you are having problems identifying your trigger points you can also use these questions as guidelines.

1. What aspects of your online learning event are aligned with your values and teaching philosophy?
2. What is working well in your resource? (Have you received positive feedback on certain learning assignments or other activities?)

3. What has been problematic and why? (Too many learning assignments, too much material?)

eSample 1: Dr. Stefan Attard, University of Malta

My first trigger point has to do with the organisation of the resource. I have a gut-level feeling that, though I give lots of material in class, learners do not always see the logic of the itinerary I take them on. This probably has got to do with the fact that I do not like being bound by specific targets, choosing fluidity over rigidity. But learners end up paying a price for this freedom!

The second trigger point has to do with the first. I am often unsure how much I will manage to cover in a session, so I have not been keen on giving a list of learning outcomes at the beginning of the session. However, I am more convinced that this is a necessary tool in order to make things clearer for learners. Hence, “a clear roadmap of expectations and learning outcomes” is a *sine qua non*.

A more intelligent way of using technology is one other area that I need to explore in order to bring variety to the learning experience as well as to make it evermore effective. It is clear that technology should not be used merely for the sake of technology, but that one should choose the digital strategies that would best foster learning. In other words, creativity is at the service of learning, and not an end in itself.

Facilitator Feedback: Good morning Stefan, Thank you for sharing such an honest analysis of your learning event. You are quite hard on yourself. I would strongly suggest starting your session with learning outcomes. Not only to provide your learners with clear expectations, but also to guide you and keep you on track. All content presented in your session should relate to these learning outcomes. At the end of your session, your take home message should loop back to these learning outcomes to summarise what was covered during the session. If you don't cover everything, you could still loop back and recap - “we only covered two of these learning outcomes today but will continue with the third one in the next session”. Then in your next iteration of your learning event, adjust your expectations accordingly. Most of us don't get this right the first time.

Most learners like structure, they want to know what is expected, what they need to read, do, discuss, what their assignments are, when are they due, how long are they expected to be, how will they be assessed, what value is each assignment, can they be submitted late, what penalty is there for doing this, is there a rubric etc.? I find the more structure I provide for learners, the more they understand what they have to do, the safer they feel, the more risk they take and the more creative they become. This stuff isn't easy - most of my best practices have been learned through trial and error and good role modeling. But analysing your teaching, acknowledging short comings, and making changes to improve will take you a long way toward providing your learners with an excellent learning experience. Good luck!

3. What has been problematic and why? (Too many learning assignments, too much material?)

eSample 2: Christian Vella, University of Malta

1. What aspects of your resource are aligned with your values and teaching philosophy? I like the fact that this particular learning event centers around a constructivist philosophy. In the sense that it is a two-way process where learners engage in collaborative learning activities on online discussion boards. This sense of engagement is brought by real-life case scenarios which the learners would have experienced, or perhaps something they yet still have to encounter.

This study unit is also embedded within a Humanism approach, this is why it is important for the group to get to know each other so that understanding and the idea of a safe virtual learning space is established. Initial ice-breakers help in establishing this, later on, online activities such as discussion forums further provide various perspectives on the subject being discussed.

2. What is working well in your resource? Feedback received was that certain concepts further justified and added on previous knowledge, to which they could relate. The use of videos and case discussions is also found to be helpful.

3. What has been problematic and why? What could be problematic is the fact that at times too much material is given and since one concept builds on previous concepts, at times there may be an element of repetition.

Facilitator response: Dear Christian, Thank you for the comprehensive analysis of your study units perceived strengths and shortcomings. It sounds like a constructivist/humanistic philosophy is spot on to teach learners about dementia. Real-live scenarios, videos and case discussions are teaching activities that would engage learners further and provide an opportunity to apply knowledge. Too much material is a common issue - presenting the content in manageable chunks often takes a few tries to get the right balance. Similarly, repetition - if often criticised by learners - however when I don't summarise, recap or remind - often I get questions regarding things already presented or stated. Again, we need to find the right balance - and this isn't always the same for all learners. We just can't win! Excellent job. Thanks for sharing. cj

eSample 3: Saviour Zammit, University of Malta

Identify the strengths and areas that can be improved.

Method: The European Union Digital Education Framework [1] was used to find the areas that need more attention. I incepted the CCE3101 Learning event and passed it through the PVC more than fifteen years ago. I only stopped teaching

occasionally when I was required to replace other academics on sabbatical. The learning event syllabus has not changed much, because the development of compression standards has been evolving rather than undergoing quantum leaps. However, the volume of material has grown significantly and the transition to fully-online will allow me to revisit priorities.

Learning event CCE3101 is built on very strong theoretical foundations, starting from Shannon's Information theory in the 1950's. However, the recent explosion of AI techniques will have to be woven in the learning event fabric now.

Before COVID-19, all the study content was already on the VLE. Indeed, there has never been a time when I did not have Power-Point presentations for all 13 lecture weeks. The well-structured power-point presentations were always accessible immediately to learners in well labeled chronologically organized sections so that learners could see at a glance the structure and progression of the study unit. The resource material was thus well chunked at a macro level, and the power-point slides themselves serve as very good chunking points. I also used to separate groups of slides with a title slide as required, to help learners identify transitions in our focus. A technique I use, is to have a content slide at the start of each slide deck, and then present the same slide at transition points, but highlight the bullet point that we were going to follow.

Sometimes I also include short summaries of the important points in the previous slides that would guide the current section. However, once I move to fully-online I will have to re-think structure. Also, are slides enough to capture and retain learners' attention, or do I now need to include more animated material?

I did have a class announcement forum that comes with the VLE and used it extensively to communicate Learning event delivery changes to learners. It was also used to announce learner groupings for Lab sessions (three per learning event iteration) and when tutorials were to be held. Occasionally learners did reply to my prompts via the forum, but in a less structured way than required for a fully online programme. However, forums will have to feature more in a fully online study unit to provide enhanced support and foster community.

At the start of every learning event iteration, I try to impart to learners that rather than just consider me as the sage on the stage, I want to be their guide on the side. I make it known that the material is a bit voluminous but that if they follow the lectures, work through tutorials and past papers, then the chance of passing is very high. To excel, they must put in the hours though. I must pass on this message in the fully online learning event as well.

Assessment for learning event CCE3101 comes in the form of Lab-assignments (30%) and a final exam (70%). Nominally, I hold six one-hour tutorial sessions, grouped in chunks of two-hours. However, I sometimes increase the number

if I sense a weaker class. This needs to be re-evaluated in the fully online mode.

Finally, in face-to-face delivery, I relied on student interaction to receive feedback. The official course evaluation process also gave me excellent feedback on what students thought of the study unit. The pass rate and assessment performance also helped me gauge whether students understood the material and which sections proved the most challenging. However, this now has to be improved as well.

Facilitator Response: Dear Saviour, Thank you for your very reflective analysis of the strengths and shortcomings and what you perceive needs to be done to change your face-to-face learning event to an effective online learning experience. There is a lot to digest here.

Your concern regarding. "are slides enough to capture and retain learners' attention, or do I now need to include more animated material?" is a valid point. Through trial and error, I have learned that an eDoc or slide presentation in an online session (chunking your content to address the 3-5 learning outcomes in the 2-3 hour session), needs to be limited to approximately 30 minutes of content. If it is longer than 30 minutes - you lose learner engagement. The slides are even more engaging with voice overs, links to short videos, photos, tables, etc. The remaining 2.5 hours of time in the resource should be reading background research or professional articles, applying the knowledge in activities, reading and posting in the discussion forum. So to answer your question - if your current slide presentation takes learners longer than 30 minutes to go through - I would consider shortening it.

Your concern regarding ... "Occasionally learners did reply to my prompts via the forum, but in a less structured way than required for a fully online programme. However, forums will have to feature more in a fully online study unit to provide enhanced support and foster community." If you haven't tried, associate a small grade - I recommend 5 or at most 10% to the participants in the discussion forum. Any higher, I find inflates the grades as even with a rubric it is hard to assess learners 'opinions' and 'values'. Even with 5% (when expectations are clear regarding how often, how long to present etc. and a rubric outlining how they will be assessed presented), I think you will find a huge increase in learner participation and the quality of their posts.

Finally, your concern - "To excel, they must put in the hours though. I must pass on this message in the fully online learning event as well". Being able to see when learners log on is helpful to knowing if they are participating. If they haven't logged on to the resource in several days - you can assume they are not participating. I usually emailed them privately and say, : 'I noticed you haven't logged on to the course in the last 7 days. You know, from the course syllabus, that you are expected to log on to the course at least once a week or preferably every few days. Do you need any help?' This is usually enough to help the learner realise I am watching and at least log on regularly. If they don't

respond, they will receive a second email from me saying, "I noticed you haven't logged on to the course in the past 10 days. Would it be better if you dropped the course and took it at a more convenient time?" That usually provokes immediate participation. My third email, if necessary will explicitly inform them that if they do not respond by a certain date they will need to drop the course. Of course, logging on does not tell you how long they are staying on or if they are actually participating but it is the first step. Having weekly tasks usually does ensure they need to read the background information in order to apply the knowledge to the task - and is a way to get around the participation problem in online learning. Posting their task and having them review, read and comment on their fellow students' tasks - helps ensure participation and develops the learning community. Thanks for sharing. Good luck! Excellent work!

Task 3 | Development ideas

Now that we know a bit about your resource, we would like to know the development ideas that you have formulated during the Train the Online Lecturer resource.

Keep it - One thing you are happy with and you would like to keep in your resource. Why?

Drop it - One thing that needs to go, it is not serving the purpose anymore. Why?

Try it - One thing you would like to try. Why?

Post your ideas in the Development ideas forum activity.

EXTRA Resource MATERIAL (TIPS and TOOLS)

FOLD - The Guide to Fostering Asynchronous Online Discussion in Higher Education

TAKE AWAY MESSAGE!

- Remember to estimate your learners' workload, be sensitive to tiring your learners with too many similar assignments. Remember to estimate your own workload as well.
- We know academic life is busy. Develop your course piece by piece to make it build with each module or session. Be kind to yourself. Your learning event won't be perfect on the first try.
- Evaluate and improve your resource systematically. Use the **European Union Digital Education Framework** or other tools you find convenient to recognize your trigger points.

eSample 1: Rosette Bonello, University of Malta

Keep it: The use of real-life scenarios and case study presentations. Also, the use of video clips. Learners can relate and grasp new ways of problem solving.

Drop-it: Decrease the time of the one-way communication. Too much direct information is overwhelming. Also, perhaps decrease the amount of reading material. The list is too long and for some students, this might create stress since they think that they have to read all rather than selecting a few.

Try-it: To use the temperature check more often and to make use of more technology tools. I would like to use more the break-out rooms so as to enhance participation and communication and hence group cohesion. It is important that learners learn from each other's experiences. Also, I would like to make use of Panopto especially to introduce the learning event; to make use of voice-overs and podcasts; and definitely to explore the world of OER's.

Facilitator Response: Hi again Rosette, I have already discussed your terrific case study work and provided an example of how to cover theory in what may be a less monotonous and more meaningful way - using breakout rooms so I won't repeat myself here.

I do find the temperature check a good way to figure out what is not working for learners - especially the first or second time you design and teach a learning event. After that, there usually isn't that much to change if you listened to your learners the first few times.

Video and podcasts definitely make the online content more engaging. It takes time to create - but pays off because you can use it repeatedly for many iterations. Be cognisant of the fact that you do want to reuse and do not mention dates etc. Pain to do but you will be glad you invested the time. Thanks for sharing. Well done.

eSample 2: Saviour Zammit, University of Malta

Keep it: Definitely I will keep my well-structured and well-labelled VLE organization. It will of course be updated with the many learning outcomes of the two e-Learning resources I have just followed, including this one.

Drop it or Improve it: In all honesty I could not identify one thing to drop. Maybe streamline material?

However, this is more than counter-balanced by the many things I will have to improve. I list the items that must, inter alia, happen:

- Re-organize resource material and bring it up to date.
- Update slides with better chunking points and include voice-overs for all slide deck videos.
- Create or source OER animated material.
- Include more additional material and links per labeled section.
- Add support and QandA forums and ensure they are properly run.
- Stimulate online community through incentivized forum participation.
- Impart the resource pedagogical philosophy to learners.
- Update assessment to include QandA participation and online quizzes.
- Include feedback points to allow in learning event realignment and end-of-learning event evaluation.

Try it: The flipped classroom. Definitely. I have been intrigued by this mode of delivery ever since I became involved in online learning at the UM. COVID forced me to experience synchronous, online delivery (with all its plusses and minuses). However, I must try out the flipped classroom for my one-semester CCE 3101 study unit.

First, I will create thirteen, two-hour chunked animated video versions of my current slide decks with exciting voice-overs. This will impart the knowledge component of my study unit.

I will also improve the lab sessions to foster learner community as they work together on three labs, tutored by my in-breakout-room presence and assistance.

Finally, I will increase the frequency of my tutorials to 14, one-hour online synchronous sessions, one per learning event week. These will serve to clarify class-wide pain points, guide tutorial and past-paper solutions, and foster real-time discussion of current compression industry topics.

I believe that this mode marries online with the face-to-face pedagogies to achieve the best of both worlds. The synchronous sessions will be recorded and made available asynchronously on demand. In this way learners need not attend any sessions at the UM, although I will strive to deliver the synchronous sessions at the UM and invite those who can attend, to attend.

Facilitator Response: Hi Saviour, You presented quite an ambitious list of additions you intend to implement to your learning event. This list represents a lot of work but that is what it takes to deliver effective eLearning. And, once you do the work, it usually only takes minor tweaking each year to adapt, drop or add an aspect. So the blood, sweat and tears - do pay off. Also, the flexibility not only benefits learners - but your lifestyle also.

I provided a tip that I used in the flipped classroom to motivate learners to arrive prepared and ready to apply what they read in the F2F session in my response

to Stefan. You may want to read it if you haven't already. I predict your proposed 'marriage' is reasonable and will not end in divorce.

I like the idea of providing learners with the option to attend or not the one hour F2F session and alternatively watch the synchronous session via video. I will be curious, when given the option, how many will actually attend. My experience (at least with graduate learners) - not many. It is probably different with undergraduate learners. I would be interested to hear. Excellent work. Thanks for sharing.

eSample 3: Christian Vella, University of Malta

Keep it - One thing you are happy with and you would like to keep in your resource.?

I like the use of graphics and videos with my PPTS. It makes the sessions more pleasing to the eye and engaging (fun)!

Case studies also are beneficial as a point of discussion or towards the end of a concept, as they seem to combine theory with practice in an engaging way!

Drop it - One thing that needs to go, it is not serving the purpose anymore. Perhaps dropping the extra information, which they could easily research themselves. This may come across as spoon-feeding rather than motivating the learners to join the dots themselves and delve further into the subject.

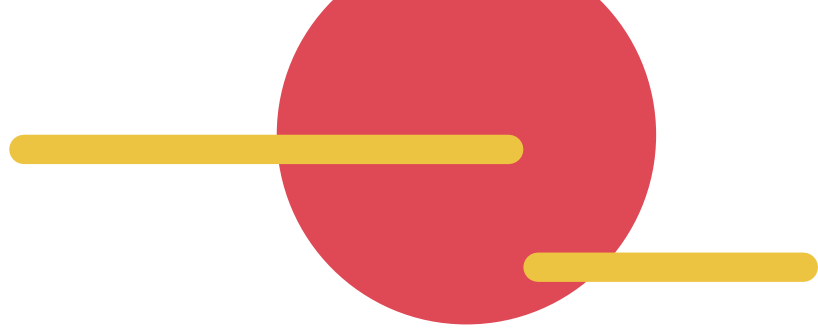
Try it - One thing you would like to try.

I would like to make better use of the Zoom function. Especially in using the break-out rooms rather than posing the question/case to the class and waiting for someone to stick their head out. This also provides the opportunity for all to participate in class when in smaller groups sharing ideas would be less intimidating and later the ideas generated from the small groups could be shared with the entire class. I think that zoom is the closest thing to physical interaction which is also live and spontaneous.

I also like the idea of exploring online resources (OER and MOOCs) rather than sticking with the usual journals, reports, and videos. This is an avenue that I have never really explored and I believe this may add to the flair of online lectures.

Facilitator Response: Hi Christian, Using videos, case studies and graphics would definitely increase learner engagement. You could make extra readings 'optional' for your learners. That way they could choose to read and further research or not. My experience is it will mostly be 'not'. You could have a bonus question - ask them to find the answer to something in an optional research article for an additional 2 marks - possible to make 102 in the learning event. This might motivate some and those that didn't want to wouldn't be penalized.

I think using zoom in the break out rooms, exploring OER and MOOCs are good ideas. There are a lot of free resources out there - many created with research grant money and a lot of experts - that most educators wouldn't have the time or resources to create themselves. When you find them they are a 'real find'. I created an interactive learning resource once in a research grant on how to create a conceptual framework that was assessable online. When the link would break, I would get emails from all over the world saying, "I use this resource in my graduate research resource and the link is broken". So I know it was being well used. So finding these resources may take a little time - but when you do - they can enhance your learning event and save you time in the long run. Excellent work!



RESOURCE



**Digital Videos
to Support
Online Learning**



In our Erasmus+ funded research grant entitled **Teaching Online: Video Initiatives in Digital Education and Mobile Learning (TOVID)**, we developed the three video series listed below in collaboration with partners from Universities in Finland, Malta, and Slovenia as well as Learning Works, a Further and Higher Education Institution, Mater Dei Hospital and the Post Graduate Medical Training Program at the University of Malta.

The Get Ready Video Series – three 5-7 minute videos,

The Get Started Video Series – four 5-7 minute videos; and

The Get Online Teaching Tips Video Series – nineteen 2-4 minute videos.

Our purpose in developing these very brief videos is to support educators wishing or needing to make the transition from traditional face-to-face teaching to teaching effectively online. The videos can be viewed on a phone, tablet or computer. The videos provide a rationale for teaching online, ideas and strategies for effectively designing, delivering and evaluating digital education, and Teaching Tips from colleagues who share their best practices on how to effectively teach, save time and build an online learning community.

The Get Ready Video Series

Get Ready is intended to address the portion of educators who are still resistant to digital education. For early users, this video series may seem redundant as it addresses topics they may have dealt with a decade or more ago. But in reality, particularly before COVID, in some countries such as Malta, Italy and Slovenia, we found there was still considerable resistance to transitioning to teaching online. It wasn't uncommon to hear educators suggest eLearning was inferior and express concerns that students would cheat if not attending face-to-face sessions. Educators expressed conviction about the quality of their face-to-face teaching even though learners admitted to being distracted, texting, completing assignments, shopping or browsing the internet during face-to-face lectures. The set of three approximately 5-minutes Get Ready videos covers topics such as; what is eLearning, when is eLearning appropriate, what are the benefits and shortcomings of eLearning; and the rationale for teaching online. The expectation was that this digital education series would convince sceptical educators of the merits of eLearning and motivate them to continue to view the second TOVID video series, Get Started. The titles of the Get Ready series are the following:

What is Online Learning and When is it Appropriate?

Benefits and Shortcomings of Online Learning

Online Learning in Healthcare Industry

The Get Started Video Series

The Get Started video series consists of four approximately 5-minute videos that summarize topics highlighted in the Designing, Delivering and Evaluating Effective Online Learning Resource and the European Union Digital Education Quality Standard Framework (<http://project-digit.European Union/index.php/resources/>) such as:

- Designing Content for effective eLearning
- Delivering Effective eLearning
- Structure
- Policies Supporting the Online Learner
- Importance of Community to eLearning
- Evaluating Online Learners and Learning Events

The Get Started digital video series contains links to practical resources to help improve pedagogies, digital literacy, assessment methods, and the learning experience of learners in a digital age. The series was designed to motivate learners to take first steps in teaching online and to enrol in additional digital education training. The videos are conveniently available by clicking on the links below.

First Steps in Planning Effective Online Learning

Delivering Effective Online Learning

Supporting Learners in an Online Environment

Evaluating Online Learning

The third TOVID digital video series entitled **Get Online Teaching Tips** consists of 19 approximately 2-minute videos sharing online teaching tips by educators who have transitioned to teaching online. Topics are related to organizing content, saving time, and engaging learners. Educators wrote their scripts in a standardized template, so all videos have a consistent look and feel. The purpose of the Teaching Tips video digital series is to create a learning community among educators and provide continuous support for digital education allowing countries, universities, and the private and public industry to learn with and from one another. The Get Teaching Tips video series provided an opportunity for academic staff and healthcare educators to continue to learn and improve the quality of their online teaching.

The videos are conveniently available by clicking on the links below.

Making the Theoretical Tangible, Applicable and Tacit

Efficient and Effective Chunking – A Read it, Discuss it and Apply it Model

Long Live Formative Assessment

RoadMaps: A Game Changer To Effective Online Learning

Connecting with Learners Through Weekly Announcements

Podcasts in Education

Group Activity in Zoom

Quizzing to Improve Exam Results

How to Engage Learners in Social Interaction and Opinion Exchange via Padlet?

How to Visually Enhance your Presentation for Free?

Using Road Maps to Facilitate Learner Engagement in An Online Study Unit

SeeSaw in Teacher Education

Activate on a Distance

Team Teaching On-line for a Diverse group – or How we Survived our First On-line Resource

Keep on Offering Virtual Office Hours to Learners

Be Creative with Canvas

‘Connect’!

Using Kahoot to Boost Learners’ Participation in the Classroom

Teaching Employability Skills in a Collaborative Online Environment like MS Teams

We hope you will watch all the videos, but understand you are busy and may only be able to watch a few. Enjoy!

Reference

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