Introduction
The Blended Learning Design Planner is a non-linear visual aid to help you in the process of developing your learning design. This resource pack provides supplementary material to inform some of the decisions you’ll make in the process of developing your learning design. Remember also to use the Learning Design Icons to structure the process of learning you’ll expect the students to undertake.

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3. Orienting Students to Blended Learning
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2. Improving Student Writing through Peer Review
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Created by Danielle Hinton and Tarsem Singh Cooner 2009. The University of Birmingham.
Blended learning refers to the enhancement of learning through the creation of learning designs that combine face-to-face and online elements.

Dziuban, Hartman and Moskal describe blended learning as a “pedagogical approach that combines the effectiveness and socialization opportunities of the classroom with the technologically enhanced active learning possibilities of the online learning environment” (2004). Or as the University of Calgary put it, "blended learning is an approach to course design that brings together the best of both face-to-face and online learning."

It is an approach that has application for campus, distance and placement students alike.

“The blended learning approach is not intended to supplant either of the individual approaches – online and face-to-face – but rather to build from each to create a new, more effective learning experience for students,” explains Dr. Randy Garrison, Director of University of Calgary’s Learning Commons.

**Aims of Blended Learning Designs**

A blended learning design aims to:

- thoughtfully integrate face-to-face and online learning technologies to support a more active and enquiring based learning approach
- support a fundamental rethinking of the programme or module design to optimise student engagement
- support learning activities that extend outside face-to-face sessions thereby promoting and supporting learner independence
- restructure and replace some traditional class contact hours by implementing online virtual class contact hours in both synchronous and asynchronous modes

**Is It Blended Learning?**

The Continuum of Technological Enhancement Learning image below (adapted from the University of Glamorgan) attempts to provide a context for blended learning:

- **ICT usage**: a mixture of traditional face-to-face teaching combined with the use of basic ICT (eg. Word, PowerPoint, Excel and e-mail).
- **E-enhanced**: online resources on WebCT (ie module handbooks, announcements, MCQs and lecture notes), eWhiteboards, Visualisers and Voting Tools are used, often optionally in conjunction with traditional teaching and learning.
- **Blended**: includes the use of discussion boards, wikis, blogs, online assessment tests and interactive learning materials alongside face-to-face delivery.
- **Pure Online**: modules or programmes are delivered and moderated entirely online.
Give Me an Undergraduate Example

The BA Social Work programme at Birmingham University created an enquiry-based blended learning design to deliver a Diversity in Social Work module to eighty campus-based students. Due to a significant increase in student numbers the module was re-designed to ensure that all students had an opportunity to engage in reflection-in-action at critical learning stages with the support of tutors and peers.

Using online lectures (captured using Echo360), workbooks, discussion forums in WebCT and face-to-face lectures, students working in small groups engaged in problem-based learning activities over an eight week period. Students were able to collaboratively reflect, reframe and reinterpret existing knowledge, values and beliefs in a way that would have been difficult in such a large cohort using traditional teaching methods.

Give Me a Postgraduate Example

A postgraduate qualification for teachers of the visually impaired is delivered to distance students via traditional paper based materials at the University of Birmingham. The students meet together face-to-face as a cohort twice a year at the University. An enquiry based learning strand was introduced that connected and ran through all modules - delivered using the WebCT virtual learning environment.

Students were required to engage in small groups with a number of online scenarios, working together to complete each task (2 weeks per task). Students utilized discussion boards and real-time chat to communicate and help them discuss, manage and administer each task. The tutor monitored the discussions and provided feedback to each group on the result of their tasks.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

- Orienting Students to Blended Learning TALT Guide
  University of Birmingham
  http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/talt/index.aspx

- Blended Learning Unit CETL
  University of Hertfordshire
  http://www.herts.ac.uk/about-us/learning-and-teaching/blended-learning-institute/home.cfm

- International Blended Learning Conference WebCast Recordings & PPT
  University of Hertfordshire

- Blended Learning and Higher Education: Opportunities and Challenges
  Charles Dziuban and Patsy Moskel,
  http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~rite/Presentations/Chuck%20Dziuban-Baruch%20College.ppt#9

- Creating opportunities for students in large cohorts to reflect in and on practice
  http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/fulltext/122213369/HTMLSTART

- Contact your College E-Learning Team
Enquiry is at the heart of the University of Birmingham’s Learning and Teaching Strategy. We are committed to enabling all our students to profit from a culture of learning, aligned with our research ethos, which is based upon critical enquiry, debate and self-motivation.

Academics who want to foster inquiry in their classes put less emphasis on lectures, while incorporating more critical discourse, research, and group work. Discussion and reflection are critical features of the enquiry process.

Enquiry: Process & Product

Enquiry-based learning is an approach in which learning is driven by a process of enquiry shared with the student. Depending upon the level and the discipline, it can encompass:

- problem-based learning
- evidence-based learning
- small scale investigations
- field work
- projects
- research

Enquiry-based learning enables students to take control of their own learning as they progress through their degree programmes. It encourages students to acquire essential skills for the highly competitive graduate employment sector, such as:

- Creativity
- Independence
- Team-working
- Goal-setting
- Problem-solving

Such skills are key to our graduates’ personal development and enrich their capacity for ‘lifelong learning’.

Essential Features

- Problem or question driven
- Involves critical discourse
- Requires self-direction from students
- Involves students in research activities such as information gathering, synthesis of ideas, and communication of research
- Evaluation of the student is aligned with enquiry learning goals

Fostering Enquiry in Your Session, Module or Programme

Enquiry is a simple concept, but complex to implement. The following list includes some suggestions for making your course more enquiry-based:

- Put less emphasis on the lecture method of teaching
- Use questioning techniques that focus on higher-order thinking skills, such as evaluating a situation or applying a principle, instead of factual recall
- Ensure congruency in questioning strategies between in-class (or online) discussions, and formal assessment activities
- Avoid accepting a single statement as an answer to a complex question
- Prompt students to extend their thinking, communicate their ideas, see issues in a different light or consider other ways of approaching a problem
- Facilitate learner interaction through group work, discussion boards, and peer feedback
- Use appropriate enhancement technologies, such as the iVLE (WebCT), tools such as questionmark, peer and self assessment, blogs, wikis etc
- Promote learning as a process, not a finished product; for example, break an assignment down into stages, giving feedback and credit for each stage
- Contact your local College E-Learning team for consultation in regards to course redesign
Evaluation in Enquiry Based Learning

Evaluation should give students the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned as a result of their investigation, as well as the processes and skills used to generalize learning to other situations. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Aim for fidelity between learning objectives, teaching and learning activities, and student evaluation. For example, if your objective is for students to learn how to write reports, work will involve writing reports and students will receive a portion of their grades from this work.
- Focus student evaluation on higher-order thinking skills, such as problem solving or applying new learning and skills.
- Communicate your expectations to students.
- Provide frequent and timely formative evaluation. It can come from instructor feedback, self and peer assessment. It should be frequent and timely.
- Give credit for participation in processes such as self and peer assessment, reflection, for the quality of student contributions to a discussion board (not the number of postings or words they have written).
- Ask a librarian to give students feedback and assign grades for the research portion of an assignment.

Other Considerations

- Provide rationale for using enquiry learning in the course, to promote student buy-in.
- Students need guidelines and well-defined parameters. Be clear about your expectations regarding course work and assignments.
- Set milestones for each assignment to assist students in staying on track and meeting deadlines.
- It takes a significant amount of time for tutors and PGTAs to provide the feedback, evaluation, and interactivity needed for an EBL course.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

- University of Birmingham Learning and Teaching Strategy (2007)
  http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/assess/learnandteach.shtml
- EBL Website (Video Case Studies)
  University Of Birmingham
  http://www.ebl.bham.ac.uk/
- Social Sciences (General) - Problem Based Learning Resource Centre (WebCT self enrolment)
  http://www.weblearn.bham.ac.uk/selfenrol_2008-09/
- Guide to Curriculum Design: Enquiry-Based Learning
  Peter Kahn and Karen O’Rourke
  http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/id359_guide_to_curriculum_design_ebl
- Teaching & learning through inquiry: A guidebook for institutions & instructors.
- Inquiry and critical thinking – Reflective inquiry.
  Garrison, D.R. (n.d.).
  http://commons.ucalgary.ca/documents/ReflectiveInquiry.pdf
- Technology and Problem-Based Learning.
- Your College E-Learning Team

Give Me an Example

Students select a topic or area of study from an approved list. This can be an individual assignment or a group project. Alternatively, they may define their own specific research question from a general theme provided by the tutor. Then they begin to investigate their question. This can involve research, study, scientific experiments, observation, interviews, and so on. As students work through the project, they learn the necessary factual knowledge while gaining new ideas and building new theories about the topic. They also make interdisciplinary connections and relate the learning to their own experiences. Tutors, PGTAs, peers and/or others provide feedback throughout the inquiry process. The inquiry process is iterative, not linear: Students might refine or reject their original research question as they progress through the project and learn more about it. Discussion and reflection are a vital part of the inquiry process. Discussion allows students to share the results of their investigation, compare their thoughts with comments from others, and share personal experiences in order to make sense of their ideas. Through reflection, students examine whether or not they have reached an adequate resolution to their question, what other conclusions could be made, and what new questions result from the investigation. At the end of the inquiry process, students communicate & evaluate their results.
Building community requires open communication and information exchange at several levels and should begin on or before the first formal day of a module. It begins with induction activities that help students get to know each other, the tutor, and the module structure, learning outcomes and expectations.

For many students, blended learning will be a new experience and thus it is important to provide them with a proper induction to your module. Students who understand what the tutor plans for the module and why, will be in a much better position to engage positively in the learning activities and to achieve the course learning outcomes.

On or before the first day of the module, your students should learn who you are, what the course is about, how you have designed the course, why you have designed it in a blended format, and what will be expected of them. There are three items, in particular, that you should address:

**Description and Rationale for Strategies Employed**

A blended learning approach is often selected because it is effective in supporting enquiry, reflection and deep learning. Let students know if you are using an *enquiry, problem or case-based approach* and explain that you expect them to engage in asking and answering authentic questions through an enquiry approach. Consider sharing with them what some of the literature says about the effectiveness of blended learning.

There are longitudinal research studies from the University of Central Florida (Dziuban & Moskal, 2005) that demonstrate blended (or mixed-mode) courses have a higher student success rate than either face-to-face or fully online courses and that 86% of students were satisfied or very satisfied with their blended courses as opposed to only 4% who were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.

In addition, you can share comments from students who have previously experienced this or other blended courses. This can be in person (persuade some friendly ex-students) get your students to write a letter to the next cohort explaining what it was like to learn in a blended manner.

Some teachers also provide students with an overview to deep versus surface approaches to learning or the Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education (Chickering & Gamson, 1987). They then discuss with students how a deep approach to learning and/or each of the Seven Principles has been incorporated into the design of the blended module.

**Schedule, Structure & Expectations**

Clearly articulate the module schedule in terms of *face-to-face* (F2F) and *time-out-class* (TOC) learning activities, expectations and student responsibilities. Introduce any enquiry based learning tasks through a series of active EBL group tasks (between 5-10mins each). An important aspect is to explore:

- group rules, roles and responsibilities
- when and for what objectives will the class meet in whole-group, face-to-face situations?
- what will be done individually?
- what evidence the students must provide of their independent learning and where must they post this?
- what monitoring and support will be provided by the tutor
- what are the assignments and how will they be assessed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Face-To-Face Sessions</th>
<th>Group Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Introduction to WebCT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room: OLRC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Introduction to Module and Task 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Room: OLRC 103 / Green Room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Introduction Task 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room: OLRC 103 / Green Room</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Resources Workshop</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tutor: Danielle Martin</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Room: OLRC 103</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Think Back Journal Reflection</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Introduction to Task 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Room: OLRC 103</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Ensure that the students are able to logon to WebCT (iVLE). A Treasure Hunt activity is a great way to gently introduce an online learning environment. Follow this with a ice-breaker type activity that allows students to explore the communication tools such as the discussion board.
Give Me an Example

Prior to the first module session, send an email to students indicating that you will be using WebCT to support the course and that they are required to log onto the site and complete an introductory survey (perhaps focused on assessing the prior knowledge or experience students have with the course content and/or discovering why students are taking the class and what they hope to achieve through the experience). Create a discussion forum in which you ask the students to introduce themselves to the rest of the class, providing information such as where they are from and where they see themselves headed after graduation. In addition, within WebCT, you might ask students to post a short biography and a digital image of themselves. Ice-breaker activities and opening discussions can then be designed for the first face-to-face session, which capitalize on the information collected and shared within the course WebCT site.

Support and resources

Explain to students what specific resources and software applications will be required, and how they can access support.

For instance, if you are using WebCT or related technologies direct students to the appropriate resources and support, for example:

- Weblearn: http://www.weblearn.bham.ac.uk or
- E-Learning Support: http://www.education2.bham.ac.uk/elearning/support/

In addition, the Training and Skills Development and Library teams will have many support options ranging from face-to-face sessions with librarians to online tutorials and instruction:

- Training and Skills Development: http://www.skills.bham.ac.uk/courses/
- eLibrary: http://www.elibrary.bham.ac.uk/
- Just Ask! Chat service: http://www.library.bham.ac.uk/help/ask.shtml

More Ideas

- Ask students to take a learning styles inventory (a number of them can be found on the Internet) and to reflect on their individual results. “What specific learning strategies and study behaviors will help me succeed in this course?” Individual written reflections can be turned in or posted to a discussion forum or shared in small groups.
- Invite a couple of students from a previous class to attend a F2F session or join an online discussion to talk about the nature of the course as they experienced it. They can share study approaches they found helpful and generally give suggestions about how to take best advantage of the learning environment to be successful in the course.
- Consider composing a letter or creating a Photo Story, which welcomes students, briefly describes your teaching philosophy and suggests the role you envision for students in this programme or module. This can be emailed to students prior to the first session with a outline.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

- Blended Learning Unit CETL
  University of Hertfordshire
  http://www.herts.ac.uk/about-us/learning-and-teaching/blended-learning-institute/home.cfm

- Blended Learning: towards a meaning for today
  Oxford Brookes University
  http://www.slideshare.net/georgeroberts/blended-learning-towards-a-meaning-for-today

- Blended Learning and Higher Education: Opportunities and Challenges
  http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~rite/Presentations/Chuck%20Dziuban-Baruch%20College.ppt#9

- Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education
  A resource page offering a variety of materials regarding Chickering and Gamson’s (1987) Seven Principles, provided by the TLT Group
  http://www.tltgroup.org/Seven/Library_TOC.htm

- Using EBL to Create a Blended Learning Module
  Hinton, D (2008)
  http://www.slideshare.net/cillier/enquiry-based-learning-to-create-a-blended-academic-skills-development-module

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Establishing expectations (a baseline for both of students and of tutor support) is as important aspect of creating a positive learning environment whether the mode is face-to-face, blended and online. Expectations give students an understanding of module requirements, help students feel comfortable, and establish a sense of trust between classmates. Expectations also make the module environment feel safer and learning is more likely to occur as a result. Due to the novelty of blended and online modules or sessions, setting expectations is especially important as a foundation. The majority of students will have little knowledge or experience of how to participate effectively in these types of learning environments. This uncertainty may lead to a lack of meaningful participation and therefore limit learning. Clearly stated expectations help students learn how to work with other students and with the tutor, and provide a reference for working with students who are not abiding by the rules.

### How can I Encourage Required Behaviour in Blended or Online Teaching & Learning?

Set and communicate your expectations for the blended or online session or module.

- Involve students in setting their own online group working (EBL/PBL etc) rules.
- Ensure that students agree to the group working rules so they can help hold each other accountable.
- Assign students individual roles within their EBL groups.
- Ensure that students are aware and understand the online attendance requirements for accessing “presentation content”.
- Model expected behaviour.

Discuss the need to create and set classroom norms for an online environment. Some typical problems that occur in online communication include:

- Misunderstandings due to unclear content in messages.
- Misunderstandings and wasted time due to unclear or pointless subject headings.
- Tensions resulting from word choices (online tone).
- Students feeling left out if no one responds to their postings.
- Students sending too many messages, especially messages that are not meaningful.
- Students not posting any messages or not responding to other students’ messages.
- Students posting several topics under one subject line.

### Some Typical Guidelines

- **Format** — Should be informal but thoughtful. Do not post a message until you have taken time to review its contents and header. Your message should have a meaningful and accurate subject line descriptor. This will eliminate the need for peers to sort through mail / discussion boards with topics that do not interest them.
- **Sensitivity** — Keep sensitivity in mind. Remember that there are human beings with feelings who read the messages.
- **Humour** — Be very cautious about using sarcasm and humour. Without nonverbal cues and voice tone, “subtle” humour can easily be interpreted as searing sarcasm.
- **Confidentiality** — Inform students that confidentiality is important and work that is posted in an online environment should not be shared outside the classroom, except with permission of the writer.
- **Context and quotes** — Include the points that you are responding to in the text of your reply by quoting or summarizing a portion of the text from the original message. Establish and use professional guidelines when citing references.
- **Response time** — Check and respond to your discussion board postings regularly (e.g., every morning, every other day) and respond promptly. This expectation could be negotiated during the induction development activity.
- **Respect** — Be respectful of differences. Do not expect all peers to agree with everything you say and be considerate of differing opinions.
Give Me an Example

You can use the following activity to set expectations for an online class. Plan the activity for the first week. If the module takes place in a blended learning environment, parts of this activity can take place online and other parts can be used in the face-to-face sessions.

Divide the cohort into small groups and assign each group an area (discussion board on your WebCT section or a page on a Wiki).

- Ask groups to generate a list of rules they believe are suitable for class behaviour. The list should contain five to ten items but can be longer. Each group must come to an agreement on the list and post the list in a discussion forum for others to read. Topics might include participation levels, message content and format, active listening, interpersonal communication, references (citations), confidentiality, attitude and timeliness. Remember to reserve your right to renegotiate norms that conflict with your beliefs about effective teaching and learning in online environments.
- Create two lists – one with common rules and one with rule suggestions that did not appear in all groups.
- Ask students to review the lists, discuss any points that you do not agree with, and then come to agreement on the final list.
- Review the list and post it. If there are any points you do not support, then renegotiate that point.
- Ensure that rules are followed throughout the course by encouraging students to monitor their own behaviours and the behaviours of others in combination with individual roles. You can intervene as necessary.
- Check with students after a few weeks to see if any rules need to be altered or new ones need to be added.

More Ideas

In your module handbook, WebCT or Wiki reserve a section where you clearly detail the expectations for being a blended or online student.

- **Timetable** — Detailing the group, individual elements whether F2F or online.
- **Attendance Statements** — Link to the University’s Due Diligence statement and inform the cohort how this covers the online elements of attendance. Clearly spell out what is expected as a minimum for logging on and engaging.
- **Reasonable Diligence** — Ensure that students are aware that “on this module is understood as being demonstrated as: …”. Include a section that makes students aware that “attendance if we wish, can be documented by any or all of the following methods: a) Student tracking records in WebCT/Wiki, b) Submission/completion of assignments; c) Communication with your Tutor”.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

- **Discussion as a way of Teaching: Tools and Techniques for University Teachers**

- **Research to Practice Online: Conditions that Foster Democracy, Community and Critical Thinking in Computer-Mediated Discussions**

- **Distance Learning List Guidelines**

- **Building Swift Trust in Virtual Teams**

- **Your College E-Learning Team**
Learning about each other is a critical part of building community in the classroom. A comfortable community encourages people to participate in and take the risks that help learning occur.

For example, learners participate in discussions and ask questions rather than remaining silent. In online sessions, creating this sense of community is just as vital to student engagement and learning, if not more so, since online learners are often initially concerned with a sense of invisibility as they cannot “see” each other.

The time to begin building a positive learning environment is at the beginning of the semester. That way, students begin to develop relationships and understand the norms of their class. Activities planned for the first week should include introduction of module participants as well as an activity related to course content. A good first step is student introductions.

Whether you are teaching a F2f, blended or online module you need to explain the need to build a community because:

- Students find it easier to communicate with classmates when they know a bit about each other.
- Better student groups can be formed when goals and interests match.
- You will want to better understand the class and the students as individuals.
- A sense of community allows students to feel more comfortable sharing thoughts, suggestions and information.

Create an opportunity for students to share a bit about themselves. Students can:

- Introduce themselves online on the WebCT discussion board.
- Communicate with each other by responding to each other’s introductions.
- Post their picture or develop a personal Web/Wiki page.

It is important to model the behaviour yourself. You should post your own introduction (include some personal information) and respond to students’ introductions.
Facilitating Effective Student Introductions

Give Me an Example

During the first week, introduce the module or programme and explain that the students will first be taking time to get acquainted with one another to form an online community and assess each other’s current skill levels. Ask your students to write an individual profile and post it on the discussion board within WebCT for the first week. Students might include:

- Their background (education, experience with course topic, work experience, culture, job, family or other relevant information).
- What they hope to gain from participating in the course.
- What they bring to the course.
- Anything else they would like the class to know.
- An interesting point about themselves.

You may wish then to transfer this information then to a Student’s Who’s Who page within WebCT along with their picture. If you are using a Wiki you can get the students to create their own page.

There are many Ice-Breaker type activities that can be successfully adapted for blended and online induction sessions.

More Ideas

- Create a personal Wiki or Blog site. Ask students to also develop a personal Web page within a Wiki or Blog.
- Suggest that students refer to each other’s introductions later in the module and remind them to update their own introductions throughout the module.
- Set up a virtual “Pub / Cafe,” an online discussion area where students can talk about the topics that interest them, just as on-campus students might do over coffee.
- Try an introductory team building activity. For example, create an online bingo game or treasure hunt. These activities help students get to know each other better and learn how to navigate the course Web site.
- Arrange for a chat room or audio conference session where students get the opportunity to talk face-to-face.
- Where possible take advantage of any F2F sessions you might have (such as residential) to model online communication in a safe environment first using Post-It Notes and then going online.

Other Considerations

Some students may be shy or less open to sharing their biographies. Allow students to decide what they would like to share by offering guidelines for introductions rather than prescribed contents.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

- Creating an Online Learning Community
  Downes, S (1999)
  http://www.slideshare.net/Downes/creating-an-online-learning-community

- Building Online Learning Communities: Effective Strategies for the Virtual Classroom
  Palloff, R & Pratt, K (2007)
  San Francisco : John Wiley & Sons

- E-tivities: The Key to Active Online Learning

- Promoting Learner Independence through Pre-Induction
  Greenhill, D

- Establishing an Online Community
  College of Education’s Learning Technology Center at the University of Texas at Austin.
  http://www.edb.utexas.edu/education/centers/ltc/services/teachnet/teachnet/inclass/community/

- Dispatches from Distance Education, Where Class is Always in Session
  http://chronicle.com/free/v46/i26/26a04101.htm

- Your College E-Learning Team
Resources – Section B

1. Enhancing Module Learning Outcomes
2. Reasons for Online Discussions
3. Case Studies: Connecting Theory to Practice
4. Integrating Video in Blended Learning
Learning outcomes should detail the knowledge, skills and related attributes that a student will be required to demonstrate on the successful completion of each module. It is recommended that a 20 credit module has between 3 and 7 learning outcomes.

One of the most common reasons for modules to be referred for further development is the learning outcomes are not appropriate for the level of study, especially between level H and M. The QAA Framework (FHEQ) and SEEC provide level guides that can be used as a foundation.

Writing Clear Outcomes

A learning outcome consists of a sentence made up of three parts:
1. a verb indicating what a learner is expected to be able to do
2. words that indicate on what or with what the learner is acting
3. a phrase that indicates nature (context or standard) of performance required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identify and evaluate</th>
<th>information and opinion</th>
<th>in English Language / Literature / Education using a variety of written and IT sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Bloom’s Taxonomy

Benjamin Bloom (1956) published a classification exploring learning behaviours. This framework eventually developed into a system of three domains: cognitive - knowledge based, affective - attitudinal based and psychomotor - skills based. Each domain is organized into 5-6 different levels, building from the simple to the complex and are most often displayed as triangle diagrams (cognitive domain right). Each level of the domain can be present in increasing degrees of difficulty from kindergarten through to Doctoral studies. A variety of verbs are available that help describe each level of a domain.

[http://tiny.cc/yx71u]
### Good Learning Outcomes Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics Checklist</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Accurately describes what students can do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensible</td>
<td>Helps students choose the module, especially for a MOMD or optional module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate</td>
<td>Within the scope of the module topic and at the right level for programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievable</td>
<td>Can be achieved within the period of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessable</td>
<td>Achievement and quality of achievement can be clearly observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair and Equitable</td>
<td>All students have a fair chance of achieving regardless of disability or constraints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important learning goals</td>
<td>Describe the essential learning which must be achieved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Where Can I Go for More Information?**

- **Academic Practice and Organisational Development (APOD)**
  University of Birmingham
  [http://www.hr.bham.ac.uk/development/](http://www.hr.bham.ac.uk/development/)

- **Curriculum Development Unit**
  University of Birmingham
  [http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/cdu/index.shtml](http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/cdu/index.shtml)

- **Credit Level Descriptors for Further and Higher Education**
  SEEC Southern England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer
  [http://tiny.cc/OIFD3](http://tiny.cc/OIFD3)

- **Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland**
  Quality Assurance Agency
  [http://tiny.cc/uUkK8](http://tiny.cc/uUkK8)

- **Subject Benchmark Statements**
  Quality Assurance Agency
  [http://tiny.cc/evt2E](http://tiny.cc/evt2E)

- **Learning and Teaching; Bloom’s taxonomy**
  James Atherton
  [http://tiny.cc/1fO2z](http://tiny.cc/1fO2z)

- **Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain**
  Benjamin Bloom (1956)
  New York: David McKay Co

- **Talking About… Learning & Teaching Series FAQs**

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### Give Me an Example (From U / Year 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb(s)</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Context/Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explain how</td>
<td>a constructively aligned approach to programme and module design</td>
<td>Is informed by the 6 UoB Reference Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate the</td>
<td>importance of physical fitness and associated concepts and their significance</td>
<td>in improved golf performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select and apply</td>
<td>appropriate grammatical, textual and discursive resources</td>
<td>to the analysis of a range of spoken and/or written texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding and knowledge</td>
<td>of the bonding schemes</td>
<td>found for d-Block compounds and solids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe</td>
<td>with simple diagrams the use of specific antibodies</td>
<td>in immunoassays &amp; immunoblotting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display an ability to reason</td>
<td>as a common lawyer</td>
<td>to a standard commensurate with Level I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Insert your verb(s) here: indicate on what or with what your learner is acting nature (context or standard) of performance of your learners*
The online discussion board tool is often one of the first features that many tutors try to use. You may, however, find that your first experience using the discussion board falls short of what you had hoped for.

It is first important to understand why discussion is a good teaching strategy and know what outcomes you can expect from a discussion.

When instituting discussions online, it is also important to plan upfront and make online dialogue relevant to module content.

**Why Discussions?**

Research and experience tell us that students retain more information and are better prepared to apply concepts if they are actively engaged with course material. Discussions are one way to help students become more involved in the classroom. When designed effectively, discussions allow students to talk about, question, restate and interact with course content and the perspectives of others students. This dialogue complements and builds on the lecture and textbook content.

- Teaching by discussion is an extremely effective means of helping students apply abstract ideas and think critically about what they are learning. *(The Penn State ID newsletter, December 1992)*

- Discussion helps students find their own voices and develop their own understanding of the subject matter. *(Brookfield and Preskill 1999)*

- When the purpose of a class is to develop problem-solving skills and abilities, the least efficient discussion is superior to most lectures. *(Bloom 1953, as referenced in The Penn State ID newsletter)*

**Why Use Online Discussions if I Can Meet with Students Face-to-Face?**

While we tend to think of discussions as face-to-face activities, online discussions provide benefits sometimes not available in the classroom. For example:

- Tutors who have used the online format frequently report that more students are able to participate in online forums than in large group classroom discussions.

- Allows the tutor to utilize the Time Out of Class (TOC) to ensure that students to preparatory readings etc.

- Students who do not volunteer in class often become “vocal” during online discussions.

- Online interaction allows for further discussion of a topic. It also provides students with “think time” to reflect on module material and post more thought-out comments to the discussion board.

- Students and tutors often think of comments or questions after the lecture and can post them and discuss these inquiries online.

- The online environment lets you easily create small discussion groups within a large cohort.

- The online format is a convenient way to archive and preserve your module discussions.

- Online discussions can give you feedback prior to or after a session; this feedback may indicate what content students understand and what requires further clarification.
Give Me an Example
If your module textbook/lecture provides questions at the end of a chapter or section, you can post selected items to the online discussion board for students to respond to. Each week, you can assign a different set of two or three students to facilitate the online discussion and report the results of the dialogue to you or to the cohort as a whole. This format is particularly valuable to use in advance of a lecture. The online discussion will help you gain valuable insights into what students have learned and what they still have questions about. You can adjust your focus during lectures to spend less time on the points that most students seem to grasp well and expand on explanations in areas where students appear confused. It’s a good idea to actively facilitate and monitor the first online discussion so as to serve as a model for student facilitators. It is also a good idea to provide a list of expectations to the facilitator students. The list might include suggestions that students:
- Check the discussion at least once a day
- Respond to all substantive posts by pointing out good points
- In a respectful manner, challenge a point made
- Ask a question to provoke deeper thinking or more explanation
- Ask students to respond to or compare and contrast their response

More Ideas
- Discussion forums in WebCT can also be used for interactions like debates and feedback sessions, EBL/PBL, Small group work or dyadic learning partnership exchanges.
- Guest experts (including international) may join the discussion area with students to respond to posted contributions or answer questions.
- A discussion that begins in a F2F session can be continued online.
- Small groups can discuss cases and summarize their discussions prior to class and then present the summaries in session.

Other Considerations
- Be sure that the discussion activity is relevant to your course objectives and relates to students’ learning experiences.
- Bring the online discussion into F2F session or module materials.
- Be clear about the discussion questions, time period of the discussion and the expectations of all the students.
- Take students’ time into account – set expectations up front. Consider how much time students need to spend on the discussion and provide guidelines (ie. Logon 3 times minimum / regularly, should post minimum of 2 original and 3 reply messages).
- Take your own time into account - plan. Set expectations with the students of how much time you will spend monitoring and what type of feedback they should expect from you as tutor.
- Give clear explanations on if and how students’ participation in discussions will be evaluated (formative vs summative, group vs individual).
- Use students to facilitate and summarize online discussions (once you have modeled such facilitation) – assign individual roles to students.

Where Can I Go for More Information?
- **Discussion as a way of Teaching: Tools and Techniques for University Teachers**
- **Using Discussion in the Classroom**
  PennState [http://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/Tools/Discuss/](http://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/Tools/Discuss/)
- **Engaging Students in Discussion Online**
- **Taking Discussion Online**
  Dartmouth College Web site. [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~webtech/articles/discussion.html](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~webtech/articles/discussion.html)
- **Your College E-Learning Team**

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A case study is a scenario or problem written in the form of a story. It presents an issue relating to an event, activity, or problem, which students are asked to research, debate, and/or solve. Case studies offer a number of educational benefits, including forming connections between course content, real issues, and student experiences, motivating students, making interdisciplinary connections, strengthening student skills in analysis and critical thinking, and promoting active learning.

What are case studies?
Case studies are issues or problems presented in story format. There are two main types of case studies: cases based on real events, and fictitious scenarios that are loosely based on everyday situations and typical events. They can be used in any discipline.

Why use case studies?
Case studies offer the following educational advantages. They can:

- Place course content in a real-world context, making it more relevant and engaging.
- Have a student-centred focus, allowing students to relate personal experiences to the learning.
- Strengthen student skills in analysis and critical thinking.
- Involve multiple perspectives, allowing students to understand the different facets of an issue, and how a course of action can have a variety of impacts in a scenario.
- Enhance student learning of course content through problem solving.
- Allow students to investigate various aspects of an issue, facilitating deeper learning.
- Promote the development of communication skills when analyzed in a group setting.
- Be multidisciplinary, highlighting the complex nature of real-world issues.
- Involve ethical considerations.
- Increase interaction in a course.

How to select case studies
Good case studies focus on one issue or problem, and have a clear problem statement. They include an open-ended question or problem that allows for multiple solutions. Choose case studies that match your course objectives, allowing students to apply what they learn in the course to the scenario. The case study should be succinct, well written, and well researched. It should challenge students in a thought-provoking manner.

Engaging case studies tend to be controversial, prompting students to think about the ethical implications of various decisions or solutions. Many case studies have ambiguities and conflicting details, which require students to take a stance that will have both positive and negative implications.

When selecting case studies, look for scenarios that allow students to make interdisciplinary connections and relate to their own experiences. Good case studies are based on realistic situations that are meaningful to the students, and do not have clear cut ideal solutions. You may want to use case studies that include distractors, or pieces of information that are irrelevant to the case; this gives students practice at sorting out irrelevant details, which will always be present in the real world.
Give Me an Example

Create a case study using something like Comic Life. Set up a specific discussion forum for the case study in WebCT. Examining a case study in a group offers several advantages, including sharing ideas, insights, and experiences, and seeing other sides of an issue. When done on an asynchronous discussion board, students also have the opportunity to reflect and do research before responding.

- Select a case study that matches your curriculum objectives for the course, or write one if you can’t find one that’s appropriate.
- Set up a specific forum in the discussion board for the case study.
- Split students into groups to discuss the case if the class is large. Groups of about 10 should work well.
- Include the case and the initial discussion questions that students should address.
- Provide background resources for the case study, including supplementary readings and the necessary data to form an opinion about the case.
- Decide if you will ask students to do additional research as part of the case study.
- Give students guidelines about expectations for the assignment.
- Decide how you will evaluate student work.
- Facilitate the discussion by asking questions that will extend students’ thinking in relation to the educational objectives.
- Consider having one or two students moderate the discussion, since this can lead to deeper learning.
- Think about whether or not you want students to complete an assignment after the group discussion, such as a summary of the issues, individual position paper, or research paper. If students are asked to make a decision, ask them to justify their position.

More Ideas

- There are a number of case study repositories available on the web for free if used for educational purposes.
- Have students write their own case studies. In order to construct a plausible case study, they will research facts, consider various angles of an issue, and have greater engagement in the course.
- Incorporate more than one case study in your class, so that students build on the skills they have already learned.

Other Considerations

- Case studies can be an effective teaching and learning technique for both face-to-face and online classes.
- In the process of answering the initial questions, students find other unanswered questions about the case.
- If the case study is about a real event, look for one set within the past 5 years.
- After the group discussion, consider how students will tie things together. You may have them construct a concept map, write a reflection paper, a position paper, a summary of the discussion, or do further research on some aspect of the case.
- Typically you will get more involvement if students know one another a bit, so avoid using case studies in the first couple weeks of classes.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

1. UK Centre for Materials Education: Teaching Materials Using Case Studies
   An overview of case studies.
   http://www.materials.ac.uk/guides/casestudies.asp

2. Guidelines for Case Writing: Penn State Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence
   http://www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/pdf/CaseWritingGuidelines.pdf

3. The National Center for Case Study Teaching in Science
   A repository of science cases, as well as a portal site for other case study sites.
   http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/projects/cases/ubcase.htm

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Integrating Video in Blended Learning
Talking About... Learning & Teaching

University of Birmingham

There is a wide variety of multimedia based resources including video and or audio that can be use for Learning and Teaching. Resources include:

- commercially produced TV programmes & videos
- resources that you might have produced using a free tool such as PhotoStory, vodcast or podcast
- freely available resources such as YouTube and TeacherTube

These resources can be integrated into your PowerPoint presentations, into WebCT and beyond. Always check the copyright situation before you proceed.

**What Do I Need To Create My Own?**

You need firstly a good idea and the time to spend on planning. Then make sure that your computer is capable of recording audio. You will need to purchase or borrow:

- a microphone that connects into your computer
- a camera or camcorder and download the software.

**How Can I Create My Own Video and Audio Triggers / Resources?**

There are a variety of free or cheap software now available that allow you as tutor (what ever your skill level) to:

- create your own resources or
- get your students to create them as part of an enquiry based learning activity.

**Photo Story** is an entry level free piece of software allows you to create a story from photographs along with optional music and narration (http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/PhotoStory/default.mspx)

**Audacity** is a free, open source software for recording and editing sounds (http://audacity.sourceforge.net/)

**Movie Maker** is a free Windows software that allows your to simply edit video, insert photos, narration and music (http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/moviemaker/default.mspx)

**Can I Record a TV Programme and Then Incorporate it into My WebCT?**

The University has a licence from the Educational Recording Agency (ERA) that allows us to record TV programmes for ‘educational purposes’. Any ‘Teachers or employees of a licensed establishment... can make recordings’. The recording must carry the label: “This recording is to be used only under the terms of the ERA licence”.

The ERA licence allows the original recording to be copied onto another tape or into another medium under the same terms and conditions. The current licence does cover conversion into a digital format for use in a Virtual Learning Environment such as WebCT, PROVIDING ALL ACCESS TO THAT VLE IS CARRIED OUT ON THE PREMISES OF THE LICENCEE. Therefore, the use of this recording will be legal only if: the ‘recording’ on the VLE displays the 'label' given above, ie those words should be displayed in some way at the start of the ‘programme’; access to this recording IS RESTRICTED TO ON-CAMPUS ONLY.

The reason for this latter restriction, no matter how the access from anywhere else could be controlled by an ‘authentication system’, is that the ERA lawyers have declared that showing it on a system accessible ‘world-wide’ is deemed to be ‘re-broadcasting’ and therefore outside of the licence.
How Do I Insert YouTube Videos Into WebCT?

You've found a video clip in YouTube that you'd like to incorporate into your WebCT course. To the left of the clip you will find a box that provides a URL (Web address) and an Embed link. Copy the URL and insert this into WebCT via the Add Content Link > Web Link under the Build Tab.

How Do I Insert YouTube Videos Into PowerPoint?

- First download the YouTube video locally in either Windows Media or AVI format. In PowerPoint go to Insert → Movie → "Movie from file" to put the YouTube video in the current slide.
- Download the YouTube Wizard plug-in from http://skp.mvps.org/youtube.htm and upon installation, this will add a new "Insert YouTube Video" command to your PowerPoint Toolbar. You simply have to type the URL of the YouTube video and follow the wizard to add the YouTube video player in your current slide. You can resize as well as reposition the player anywhere on the slide.
- If you have a reliable Internet connection you can just insert the URL into the slide. However this is not ideal.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

- Streaming Audio and Video for Course Design Kerry Shepherd http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/resourcedatabase/id171_Streaming_Audio_and_Video_for_Course_Design.doc
- Copyright Advice from Malcolm Kendall Legislation Manager Library Services Tel: (0121) 414 4749 copyright@contacts.bham.ac.uk
- Electronic Material and Copyright http://www.library.bham.ac.uk/support/copyright/ElectronicMaterial.shtml
- YouTube http://www.youtube.com/
- TeacherTube http://www.teachertube.com/
- Your College E-Learning Team

Give Me an Example

The capability to embed video allowed a tutor to bring world experts in language acquisition right into the classroom instead of just talking about them. It also let me use some fantastic videos of brain structure, primate communication, etc. which really brought the sessions to life. Initially supported by the College e-learning team the tutor now embeds video clips into PowerPoint. Student feedback for the module was excellent and included, "I want to thank you also for what was a fascinating module-one of the best on this degree I feel."

You can also use short videos as triggering events within enquiry based learning whether delivered F2F, blended or online mode. Easy to use (and free) software allows you to create a powerful stimulus for student enquiry. Alternatively you could elicit practitioner, service user or student voice. You are only limited by your imagination.

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Resources – Section C

1. Student Roles in EBL
2. Preparing Students to Participate in eDiscussions
3. Supporting Reflection Through Blogs
4. Supporting Wiki Collaboration
5. Using Synchronous Chat for Learning
Whether face-to-face or online, discussions can provide valuable forums in which complex content and perspectives are examined and understood through collaborative processes and knowledge sharing.

Discussion can take many forms: EBL, PBL, debates, small group work, and case studies, for example.

Whenever tutors encourage and allow students to play more active roles in or to assume more responsibility for class activities, it is important to provide models and/or guidelines. Norms or expectations for behaviour can be suggested by the tutor, or developed in collaborative effort with the students.

Don't try to do everything at once. Stretch yourself, but maintain a comfort level. First, start the journey of online discussion and go a little further each semester until you are where you want to be.

### Defining Student Roles

Many tutors report that keeping up with online discussions takes up too much of their time. This would certainly be true if they did all of the work, from designing the discussion prompts, to monitoring and responding to all student postings, to summarizing and drawing conclusions, to bringing pertinent comments from the online discussion into class, to evaluating and marking student contributions.

While you, as an tutor, are responsible for designing the learning environment and might want to be involved in all of these activities at some points in your programme or module, you do not have to be responsible for all of them all of the time. **Students can help!**

Once the tutor states the learning outcomes and the learning tasks / activities, many roles for students can be established. Students can

- facilitate online discussions
- propose online discussion questions and topics
- summarize or analyze a discussion and present in class
- take on roles relating to content management / building, participation, community management,

Increasing student involvement in the development of the learning process can increase motivation, (individual and group) independence and participation. But this is just the tip of the iceberg. Once you challenge yourself to think about ways to involve students - ways to have them take on roles and responsibilities in online discussions, you’ll create exciting ways to involve students so they understand.

### Setting Expectations

It is important that the tutor decides what student roles are appropriate to their own situation. It is recommended that

- students are assigned a role along with accompanying clear job responsibilities.
- the tutor’s role within this situation and any additional staff that maybe involved are defined
- the collective role of all group members is clarified (ie. to participate in the discussion / research / project)

Where you can, you should pre-assign the roles – this saves valuable time and can reduce anxiety amongst the group. If you have two or more scheduled activities / tasks, then consider rotating these roles amongst the group members. In this way students have the opportunity to explore and develop their core transferable skills. Don’t forget to provide the students with a schedule (during an induction period) of when they are expected to take on specific roles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EBL Task 1 (Week 2-4)</th>
<th>EBL Task 2 (Week 5-7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bob Jones: Chairperson</td>
<td>Bob Jones: Chairperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet Hughes: Recorder</td>
<td>Janet Hughes: Recorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellie Bannerman: Summariser</td>
<td>Ellie Bannerman: Chairperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Mare: Time Keeper</td>
<td>Andrew Mare: Recorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trevor Crossley: Reporter</td>
<td>Trevor Crossley: Summariser</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are enough roles for one per person in small groups (4-6). You may decide in some circumstances to assign just two roles, like a chairperson and summariser.
Give Me an Example

You have a postgraduate module cohort which you have subdivided into groups of 6. After consideration it is decided to utilise and scaffold the non-contact hours (part of the 200 hours of student effort). At the conclusion of a f2f session, students are set a group based online discussion topic. Two people per group are assigned specific roles (chairperson and summariser). The groups have until the following week’s session to discuss the topic on their WebCT bulletin board.

After the success of the online discussion with the post grad cohort, it is decided to build in some EBL activities with a undergraduate module cohort as well. In addition to f2f contact, students are required to work on group tasks which are based around authentic real-world problems. Groups are given three weeks to independently work on their task, regularly posting evidence of their working on their Wiki. Each student is assigned a role which changes for each task.

During each of these situations the tutor monitors the activities and provides feedback during and at the end as appropriate and agreed with the students.

Functional / Project Roles

Watson (2000); Pilkington & Kumnek (2004)

- Chairperson / Leader
- Recorder / Secretary
- Summariser
- Accuracy Coach / Checker
- Time Keeper
- Reporter / Spokesperson / Webmaster
- Enquiry Checker

Conversation Roles

Brookfield & Preskill (1999); Pilkington & Kumnek (2004)

- Problem, Dilemma, or Theme Poser
- Reflective Analyst
- Scrounger
- Devil’s Advocate / Opinion Challenger
- Detective
- Theme Spotter
- Umpire
- Focuser (Textual or Conversation)
- Balancer (of participation)
- Netiquette Enforcer
- Response Checker
- Welcomer
- Motivator

Where Can I Go for More Information?

- Discussion as a Way of Teaching

- Using role-play activity with synchronous CMC

- The Power of Problem Based Learning

- Silicon, Circuits and the Digital revolution

Note: See resources above for detailed job descriptions.
Utilizing an online discussion board can deepen student learning and extend dialogue about core course concepts. Creating and facilitating effective online discussions requires just a bit of preparation and a few proven strategies. Motivating students to participate in online discussions is at the core of many frequently asked questions.

**Clear Purpose**

Be clear about your purpose, first in your own mind and then in your instructions to students. It is a very rare cohort (perhaps CPD) that will engage in voluntary discussion.

- Clearly note how the discussions form part of their attendance and participation contract in just the same way as lecture, seminar and workshop attendance is not optional.
- If the dialogue is a required part of or feeds into an assignment, make it clear how students will be evaluated.
- Always give students guidance in the form of reflective prompts or a structure you want them to use or the choice of two or three questions you want them to answer.
- If the forum requires students to interact with each other and read and respond to other ideas, be specific on what you expect of them.

**Model Participation**

Where possible model participation in an online discussion with some simple ice-breaker style activities (using Post-It notes)....

**Explicit Expectations**

Make your expectations explicit, to the extent that you have quality or quantity standards in mind.

- **Be clear about length of a post** (one or two sentences to postcard sized).
- **Deadlines should be clearly outlined** (by noon on Tuesday, before the next session).
- **Indicate how many postings students should read and reply to** (post 2 original, read all other posts and select two that are the most like/unlike yours to respond to).
- **Define what constitutes an acceptable response** (one that identifies points from the text to support arguments, one that contributes a new line of thinking or a challenging question).
- **Indicate how often students should try to logon** (little and often, at least 3-4 times per week)
- **Signal the length of suggested time spent on each online session** (We suggest that you spend approx 10-15 minutes online each time you log on)
- **Students should be aware of the timetable and their individual roles** (Assigning roles such as Chair, Summariser etc are an important management mechanism)
- **Suggest the amount of time that should be spend engaging per period of task time** (2-3 hours per EBL Task Memo ie every two weeks. This includes your time spent online (reading and responding to messages) as well as task related workload (research, synthesising and reporting).
- **Remind them to pace themselves the course of each task.**
More Ideas

• Create a friendly, social environment in which learning is promoted.
• Make the activity interesting. Post challenging questions relevant to module activities.
• Require participation and include the online discussion in a participation grade.
• Use various learning options to stimulate learner participation and interaction. Activities to encourage participation include small group discussion, debates, polling activities, peer review, case studies and one-on-one message exchanges that recognize students’ messages.
• Form learning teams or small groups that work together in a discussion forum.
• Require a hand-in assignment. Students can individually (or in small groups) submit a summary of or reflection on the posts in a particular discussion.
• Use peer grading or peer-feedback as part of the discussion experience.
• Model ways to support arguments in your own postings. Cite research studies or theories to back up your comments.
• Make the material relevant to students’ lives. Develop questions and activities for learners that relate to the student experiences.
• Invite visiting experts to add to the discussion. Guest experts may join the conference to respond to posted contributions from students or to answer questions.
• Do not underestimate your impact as a model - demonstrate your enthusiasm for their exchange of ideas.

Give Me an Example

Post two or three questions on the discussion board, each in a separate forum and ask students to respond to each question. Then ask students to select at least one discussion forum, read ten posts from fellow students, and respond to three of them. You can then browse all forums and read or skim a number of postings in each forum, making note of key points made, questions raised and misconceptions revealed. Then send a class email with written reactions and comments. Alternatively, you can use the first fifteen minutes of the next class to discuss selected themes and issues from these notes.

Sample discussion questions:
• What do you see as the two key points made in the lecture and how do they relate to your own experience?
• What question lingers in your mind after the lecture?
• If you had to prioritize the three main points of the lecture, how would you rank them in terms of importance and why?
• What information or concept from the lecture helped you the most in terms of what you need to gain from this class? Explain.
• Select one of the lecture points and offer an alternative perspective in two or three sentences.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

• **Discussion as a way of Teaching: Tools and Techniques for University Teachers**

• **The Role of the Instructor/Facilitator**

• **Eight Ways to Get Students More Engaged in Online Conferencing**

• **Your College E-Learning Team**

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A weblog is an online personal journal. Easy to create and use, blogs – a short hand term for weblogs – are a forum for Internet publishing that have become an established communication tool.

**What is a Blog?**

Blogs are often referred to as a Web-based public diary with dated entries, usually by a single author, often accompanied by links to other blogs that the author of the site visits on a regular basis (Downes, 2004). They have been compared to online personal journals, and are noted for being the “unedited, published voice of the people” (Winer, 2003). Blogging is considered the act of writing your thoughts within your blog, and the blogosphere is regarded as the intellectual cyberspace that bloggers occupy.

Although online journals have been around longer than the term “blog”, their use in higher education has gained momentum with the introduction of free services that allow students to publish blogs easily, without needing to code HTML. Bloggers simply enter posts into a blogging application. They add formatting or hyperlinks, and save the post. The software application adds the entry to the blog, making the content available online and alerting users who have subscribed to that blog’s content.

Entries can include text, hyperlinks, images, or multimedia. Visitors can read postings, submit comments, find blog entries by date, and search the site by keywords. Effective blogs tend to be updated on a regular basis.

WebCT provides a secure blog facility within a university environment. You may also have access to an internally hosted blog system. In addition there are a multitude of externally hosted systems (ie. Blogger - https://www.blogger.com/).

**Why Use Blogs To Support Reflective Learning?**

Blogs can be used for reflection about assignments, course work, careers, or current events; they can also capture and disseminate student and faculty generated content.

Blogs offer students, academics, staff and others a high level of autonomy and freedom, while creating a new opportunity for interaction with peers. They provide a far-reaching forum for discussion that goes beyond coursework to include culture, politics, and other areas of personal exploration. Students often learn as much from each other as from tutors or textbooks, and blogs offer an effective medium for peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and application.

RSS feeds make blog content accessible. Whether this is through newsreaders, it allows bloggers to increase the sharing of this information among interested individuals.

Equally blogs can be made private, only accessible to the writer and tutor. This supports a situation where you may wish to promote reflection of a more personal nature. For undergraduates you may label them “Think Books” instead of the more threatening “Reflective Journal”.

**WEB 2.0**
Give Me an Example

Blogs can be used by students for self-reflection and peer review of course assignments:

1. Create a blog (“Think Book” / “Reflective Journal”) for each student in WebCT (discussion tool area).

2. After the completion of each module (group or individual) assignment have the students post responses to reflective questions on their blog. For example:
   a. What did you learn in the process of completing this assignment?
   b. How will you apply what you learned from this assignment to the next class assignment, other courses and/or your career?

3. In terms of peer review, you can have students post drafts of course assignments to their blogs. Then other students in the class can be selected to review these documents and post responses to the blogs. Examples of guiding questions for the peer review process could include:
   a. What did you learn from reviewing this document?
   b. What were the strengths (e.g. content, writing style, format and structure) of the document?
   c. What constructive advice and/or recommendations could you provide for improving the quality of this document?

More Ideas

A blog can also be used to:

- Replace the standard module Web page within WebCT. Tutors can encourage student engagement, allowing them to participate in posting group/individual profiles and group rules, questions, resources facts and news.
- Annotate and link to Internet-based resources that relate to courses
- Organize and facilitate course based discussions
- Create summaries of course activities and readings

Other Considerations

Blogs can be mediated or unmediated, public or private. They allow students to openly express themselves and air their opinions, ideas and attitudes. Blogs have great potential in their support of learning and teaching. Like all technologies you need to decide why you would use them, the benefits to your teaching and the student’s learning. Allocate enough time to experiment yourself and explore the scaffolding requirements (advice, trigger questions etc) that your level of student may require.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

- Reflecting on Blogs in Assessment
  Chris Ashford
  http://www.ukcle.ac.uk/directories/previous/issue12/blogs.html

- What makes a weblog a weblog?
  David Winer
  http://blogs.law.harvard.edu/whatmakesaweblogaweblog.htm

- Educational Blogging
  Stephen Downes

- Content Delivery in the ‘Blogosphere’
  Richard E. Ferdig, & Kaye D. Trammell
  http://www.thejournal.com/articles/16626_6

- Using Blogs for Peer Feedback in a Creative Writing Course
  Jess Moriarty and Vy Rajapillai, University of Brighton
  http://www.english.heacademy.ac.uk/explore/publications/casestudies/technology/blogs_feedback.php

- Placement Blogging
  Steven Curtis, London Metropolitan University
  http://www.c-sap.bham.ac.uk/events/conference_jan_09/papers/curtis.ppt

- Your College E-Learning Team
A wiki is a collection of Web pages that can be edited by anyone, at any time, from anywhere from a Web browser. Content is posted immediately to the Web, eliminating the need for email distribution with the associated risk of virus transmission. Wikis are able to incorporate text, images, sound and video, creating a high-quality interactive, collaborative Web environment.

The first wiki was developed by Ward Cunningham in 1995. Cunningham took the name from the WikiWiki shuttle bus at the Honolulu airport, which means, “super fast”. He describes a wiki as “the simplest online database that could possibly work” (Leuf & Cunningham, 2001, p.5). The wiki provides efficiency, accessibility and an enormous forum to distribute information.

The possibilities for using wikis as a platform for collaborative projects are limited only by one’s imagination and time.

Why Use A Wiki To Support Student Collaboration?

Wikis have recently emerged as a very powerful digital tool for supporting student collaboration. Their flexibility, ease of use and low barrier to entry, makes them equivalent to “digital paper” (Lamb, 2004). Higdon (2005), suggests that wikis allow students to “co-construct meaning in a democratized digital space” (p.1), and Fountain (2005), states that the use of wikis to support collaborative projects helps “promote ‘pride of authorship’ and ownership in the team’s activities” (p.8). Wikis allow tutors and students to engage in collaborative activities that extend well beyond the classroom walls.

More Ideas

A wiki can be used by:

- **Students** to create undertake EBL/PBL activities, online journals, lab books, research notebooks, ePortfolios, and even online textbooks for their own benefit, or for peer or tutor review.
- **Tutors** to communicate with their students and to collaborate on research and writing projects with their peers (e.g. textbooks, articles) through the collection of ideas, papers, timelines, documents, or to study results within a collective digital space.
- **School or departmental personnel, tutors and PGTA** can use a wiki to organize and discuss common course assets such as; syllabi, office hours and assessments, to schedule face-to-face meetings.
- **Conference organizers** as a means of planning, coordinating and implementing events.
Other Considerations

There are many wikis technologies (PBWiki, Wetpaint etc) available for use for educational purposes that allow tutors to restrict access (if they wish) to their cohort only. If you wish to use an externally hosted Web 2.0 service there are a few things to consider:

- Security of Service Provider
- Confidentiality
- Ownership of data
- Security of data
- Performance Reliability
- Support
- Single sign-on
- Lock-in
- Longevity
- Functional stability
- Data Protection and Freedom of Information
- Accessibility Legislation
- University Regulations (assessment, branding, computing regulations)
- Risk Management

More information is available from the University of Edinburgh’s document, “Guidelines for Using External Web 2.0 Services”.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

- Wide Open Spaces: Wikis Ready or Not
  http://connect.educause.edu/Library/EDUCAUSE+Review/WideOpenSpacesWikisReadyo/40498

- 7 things you should know about… Wikis
  Educause (2005)

- Teaching, Learning, and Other Uses for Wikis in Academia
  Higdon, J (2005)
  University of Southern California

- Wiki Pedagogy
  Renee Foundation (2005)
  http://www.profetic.org/dossiers/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=110

- The wiki way: Quick collaboration on the web
  Boston: Addison Wesley

- Guidelines for Using External Web 2.0 Services
  University of Edinburgh (2007)

- Your College E-Learning Team

Give Me an Example

A wiki was used to provide a learning space for campus based students. Students were immersed in an module which had a key strand based around an enquiry based (EBL), authentic real-world learning scenario. Students (in their groups) took on the role of a professional staff member who had just graduated from the University. The module tutor took on the role of line manager and provided group EBL tasks in the form of a email memo.

The EBL tasks took place over a three week period, with the students supported to undertake the activity in an independent manner. To ensure that students were undertaking their task and to provide support where required, various sub-tasks were required. These included posting agendas and minutes of meetings on the wiki along with To Do Lists, Action and Task Schedule Planners and a working area.

The settings on the wiki meant that students could edit but not permanently delete any work. The wiki provides functionality whereby page versions are kept. These previous versions can be consulted, compared or rolled back at any point. Another useful feature was the ability to have email notification of student’s editing the wiki – the frequency could be changed by the end user. This avoided by tutor and student time that can be taken up by logging onto a system to find nothing has changed.
Most synchronous (real-time) online discussions are text-based chat. All participants must logon to the Chat Room at the same time and the text-based conversation takes place in real time.

When entering into a text based chat environment we lose the non-verbal cues that assist us in making sense of communication:

(1) visual cues (facial expressions, posture, gestures, gaze, gender, class, age & ethnicity), auditory cues (voice volume, inflection & tone)

(2) olfactory cues (perfume, cologne & body odour)

which help us process communication. A useful analogy would be to compare how the visually and hearing impaired compensate when communicating.

### Enhancing Learning

Chat can potentially be used to enhance the experience and quality of an online or blended course. These few examples are designed to spark ideas and should be combined with the protocols and strategies examined earlier. Transcripts of chat sessions (where appropriate) should be made available to those participating, either through email, print or bulletin boards.

- Work Group Projects / Brainstorming / EBL
- Socialisation
- Review and Exam Preparation
- Quizzes / questions and answers
- Guest speakers
- Virtual office hours
- Progress review tutorials
- Role play
- Supporting language skills development
- Supporting those with special needs
- Learning support
- Talk to a Librarian

Murphy and Collins (1997) collected data on communication conventions from a synchronous and asynchronous communication as well as pre-course surveys. The following 10 conventions can be used to assist tutors and students in coming to a common understanding:

- Shared meaning
- Keywords
- Shorthand / TXT speak
- Social presence
- Playfulness and humour
- Non-verbal cues in text
- Questions
- Status and directions to others
  - Continuation through ellipses
  - Emoting and smilies :o)

### Challenges & Opportunities

Chat can be a fast-paced and often confusing communication medium. Some opportunities and challenges of this medium include:

- The lack of visual cues (not being able to see others in the group) may in turn block usual prejudices (based on physical social cues) and cultural inhibitions.
- Absence of social context cues (physical environment, auditory and non-verbal behaviour).
- Disruption to turn taking can mean that shyer and more reflective are less inhibited (less “barrier” social cues and tutor domination).
- Learners are afforded more processing time while reading and typing messages, whilst still retaining the “feel” of live interaction which is gained when speaking face-to-face.
- Lines of communication often confusingly move out of sync. While you’re typing your response, other students may already have moved on to other topics.
- Typed text can be easily saved for sharing, reviewing and reflection where as face-to-face discussion can often be “lost”.
- Provide reinforcement, immediate feedback and discussion opportunities for students.
- Providing the opportunity for real-time social interaction.
- Flexibility with scheduling classes.
- Ultimate convenience, when and where you choose.
- Instructors are more accessible.
- Personal consultation and discussion between tutor-student and student-student allowing for instant clarification.
Give Me an Example

Some of the following ground rules specifically relate to the WebCT Chat software. It is advisable to provide a link to these guidelines from the Chat Room entry screen.

- Keep your posts short - the same as in a spoken conversation, to allow the dialogue to flow back and forth between you and others.
- Be as clear and concise as possible.
- If arriving late, wait for at least 5 posts to determine the topic being discussed before posting yourself.
- Decide what tone the conversation has taken before posting.
- Do not type in capital letters - it is considered to be shouting.
- If you feel you have been misunderstood, restate your case.
- Allow enough time for the respondent to read, think, and type before posting the question again.
- Avoid assumptions - ask to have something explained.
- Try to encourage all participants to share their ideas.
- Address each post by name, unless you are speaking to the entire group, so they know you are talking/replying to them.
- Read carefully, and more than once when necessary, to be sure you are reading what the sender has written.
- If you do not want to participate in the ongoing discussion, but want your presence known, state that you are observing. This is polite, especially if you plan to chat once the topic shifts.

Protocols and Strategies for Meaningful Synchronous Interaction

Students and tutors need to develop new frames of reference and skills to get the most out of all online communication, especially synchronous chat. Without a range of protocols understood by all participants, instructional sessions can turn into stressful conversational chaos. These strategies can also enable the tutor to dominate the dialogue less, leading to community building.

There are a number of strategies that can be used to ensure meaningful interactions:

1. Ground rules / etiquette
2. What to expect
3. Conventions / e-Body language guide
4. Preparation: seating guide
5. Clear discussion topic
6. Induction Activities, ie retell Cinderella (21st Century)
7. Role taking
8. Group numbers (5-10)
9. Timing
10. Patience

Where Can I Go for More Information?

- Communication Conventions in Instructional Electronic Chats
  Murphy, K and Collins, M (1997), http://disted.tamu.edu/aera97a.htm
- Lessons from the Cyberspace Classroom: The Realities of Online Teaching
- Certificate of Online Education and Training Portfolio
- Your College E-Learning Team
Resources – Section D

1. Creating and using Rubrics for Assessment
2. Improving Student Writing through Peer Review
3. What is Evaluation?
Rubrics help illustrate course and assignment expectations and can save tutors valuable time during the student assessment process. Rubrics also help educators and students define “quality” for a particular class.

Additionally, rubrics assist students in understanding how their work will be evaluated and help them judge and revise their own work before handing in their assignments.

**What is a Rubric?**

A rubric is a scoring tool that lists the criteria for a piece of work or “what counts.” For example, a rubric for a paper or research project lists the items that students must include in order to receive a certain score or rating. Generally rubrics specify the level of performance expected for several levels of quality. These levels of quality may be written as different ratings (excellent, good, needs improvement) or as numerical scores (4, 3, 2, 1) that are added up to form a total score and then associated with a grade (A, B, C).

**Why Use Rubrics for Student Assignments?**

As outlined by Andrade (2000), rubrics appeal to academics and students for several reasons. First, they are powerful tools for both teaching and assessment. Rubrics monitor and improve student performance by making your expectations clear and by showing students how to meet course expectations. The result is often marked improvement in the quality of student work and learning.

Rubrics can also help students carefully judge the quality of their work and the work of their peers. When rubrics are used to guide self- and peer-assessment, students become increasingly able to spot and solve problems in their own and one another’s work.

Additionally, rubrics can reduce the amount of time you spend evaluating student work. You may find that by the time an assignment has been self- and peer-assessed in accordance with a rubric, you have little left to say about it.

If you do have a comment about an assignment, you can simply circle an item in the rubric rather than struggle to explain the flaw or strength and figure out what to suggest in terms of improvement.

Finally, rubrics are easy to use and explain. Montgomery (2002) states that through the use of rubrics in her courses “students were able to articulate what they had learned” (p. 37).

Several challenges of using rubrics include the time it takes to create the rubric, lack of clarification for assessment items, and the potential for over-articulation of a task (Luft, 1999).

**Tips on using a rubric**

- Provide models for students. Show examples of previous student assignments (with names removed) to demonstrate different quality levels of work.
- List and explain the criteria within the rubric. Use the discussion of previous student work to begin a list of what counts in quality work.
- Articulate gradations of quality. Describe the lowest and highest levels of quality, then fill in the middle levels based on your knowledge of common student problems.
- Allow students to practice on models. Have students use the rubrics to assess examples of previous student work.
Other considerations
Avoid unclear language in your rubric. Since a rubric is used to teach as well as to assess be sure that all the terms used are clearly defined. Also avoid unnecessary negative language. Use terms and phrases that will help students identify the deficiencies in their work and ways they can improve for the next assignment.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

1. Using Rubrics to Promote Thinking and Learning

2. RubiStar: Online Tool for Creating Rubrics
From High Plains Regional Technology in Education.
http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php

3. Rubrics: Design and Use in Science Teacher Education
http://www.mtsu.edu/~itconf/proceed99/Martin.htm

4. Authentic Tasks and Rubrics: Going Beyond Traditional Assessments in College Teaching

5. Rubrics for Web Lessons
http://edweb.sdsu.edu/webquest/rubrics/weblessons.htm

Give Me an Example
The following rubric will be used to assess your learning design during the Showcase and Review Session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Level of Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triggering Event</td>
<td>Did not create one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blended Learning Design—Facilitation and Management of discussion</td>
<td>Did not create one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection about the two-days</td>
<td>No reflection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Peer review is an active learning strategy with a number of benefits for learners. It focuses on the writing process, improves students’ critical analysis skills, and allows them to improve their work before it is graded.

Facilitate the peer review process online by using tools such as WebCT, email, or Blogs and Wikis.

What is Peer Review?
Peer review is a learning strategy in which a student reviews another student’s written work and provides feedback. Since students are asked to revise their work based on the feedback they receive, peer review puts the focus on the process of writing.

Peer editing generally refers to commenting on a paper’s organization, tone, format, flow, grammar, punctuation, and so on. Peer review usually includes an examination of the content as well. When reviewing a paper for content, students assess factors such as a well-defined thesis statement, the depth to which the topic was adequately covered, assumptions and biases, and the strength of the paper’s argument.

Benefits of Peer Review
Peer review is a student-centred, active learning strategy that increases student engagement in the course. More benefits of peer review are listed below.

Student authors:
• Refine their ideas as a result of the feedback they receive.
• Focus on writing as a process that emphasizes editing and revisions.
• Develop a better sense of audience.
• Improve their work before it’s submitted for grading.
• Are motivated to produce high-quality work, since they know their peers will be critiquing it.

Student reviewers:
• Gain insights about their own work from reading other assignments.
• See other approaches to an assignment or perspectives of an issue. Become familiar with important aspects of the assignment as they use the rubric or criteria to perform the review.
• Improve their ability to read a paper critically.
• Strengthen their communication skills, especially in respect to critiquing and providing feedback.
• Gain knowledge of a wider variety of course topics.

Peer Review in a Blended Online Course
Consider facilitating the peer review process electronically through one of the following ways:
• Manage the process using file sharing, email attachments, or discussion forums.
• Organize the process online using software such as the Peer Review Tool, which makes it possible to implement peer review in large classes.
• Provide resource materials online, such as feedback forms and rubrics, samples of poor feedback and constructive criticism, guidelines as to how students will be evaluated, and writing resources.
• Incorporate informal peer feedback into a course through student blogs. This is a great way to increase interaction in a course.
Following Up on Feedback from Reviewers

Decide how you will have student authors follow up on the feedback they receive. You may want to try one of the following suggestions:

- Student authors note each comment or suggestion they’ve received. They state whether or not they have accepted the suggestion, and provide a rationale for their decision. Then they include the revision, if applicable.
- Make sure you leave enough time for each step in the process.
- Decide what characteristics you want students to look for in each others’ papers.
- Create a rubric or feedback sheet for student reviewers to use.
- Have a practice session with students. Critique work samples, using the rubric or feedback sheet for the assignment. Demonstrate constructive criticism; show poor feedback as well. Make the examples available online for future reference.
- Give students clear guidelines about what is expected from reviewers.
- Let students know how they will be evaluated on the feedback they give. You may decide to make it a graded assignment, or a credit assignment for completing it. By assigning marks to the review, students will realize that you value it.
- Tell students how to use the feedback they receive on their work.
- Decide how you will handle late or incomplete reviews. Student authors should not be penalized with less time to complete their assignment if they receive feedback later than other students. At times you or a Teaching Assistant may need to review a student’s work, if the assigned student reviewer doesn’t submit a review.

Other Considerations

Decide on a standard format for the reviewers’ comments. For example, if you want the authors’ papers to retain formatting, you can have the reviewers attach their comments or a rubric at the end of the paper. If you want comments to appear next to the relevant text, students can insert comments throughout the document.

- Have student reviewers read a paper on a different topic from their own to limit plagiarism and expose them to a wider range of course topics.
- It takes time for students to develop skills in providing constructive criticism. Don’t expect perfection the first time they try it. Peer review will be more effective if you use it three or four times over the term.

Where Can I Go for More Information?

1. Incorporating Peer Review
   Good examples of negative comments and constructive criticism.

2. Peer Review Tool
   An online document management system designed to assist the peer review process.
   http://www.tlc.ucalgary.ca/projects/prt

3. WISPR: Web-based Inquiry Search Process for Research in the Library
   An interactive model that focuses on the research process.
   http://webapps2.ucalgary.ca/~commons/servlet/wispr/app?service=page/GENERIC-Home
Evaluation describes activities designed to measure the effectiveness of an instructional system or a section or component of it. Undertaking evaluation will provide you with a strong foundation from which to develop your teaching practice that is based on reflection, data collection and analysis.

**Why is evaluation important?**

There are different reasons for evaluating your teaching:

- External reasons such as an audit or an accreditation by an external body
- Institutional reasons such as quality assurance processes (e.g. BIQAES) and policies on teaching enhancement
- Individual reasons such as improving and enhancing your teaching

**Evaluating reactions**

This level of evaluation is based on qualitative data such as participants’ perceptions. It cannot measure what has been learned or guarantee that it will be put into practice. It can, however, provide some indication as to how favorably the participants/students have reacted to your session and what they hope to achieve having taken part.

To evaluate reactions you may collect feedback from participants using feedback forms, asking them to put reactions/outcomes onto post-it notes or to provide verbal feedback at the end of a session. In addition you could use a reflective journal to reflect on how the session went and think through what went well and what didn’t go so well? Remember to ask yourself why you think this happened?

**Evaluating learning**

This level of evaluation is based on quantitative and qualitative measure of knowledge and skills learned and behaviour and attitudinal change.

To evaluate learning you may simply look at the outcomes of the session in terms of the formative and summative assessment results from your module. However, you may choose to undertake research into your teaching to provide clear and focused evidence of the impact of any particular changes you have made to your programme. Ultimately, different evaluation methods will prove useful for different purposes. The following methods are just a few of those available to you when evaluating your teaching:

- writing a critically reflective journal
- asking students to provide feedback at various stages of teaching
- undertaking a critical incident analysis
- asking someone to act as a critical friend through peer observation
- undertaking action research.
Where Can I Go for More Information?

- Birmingham Integrated Quality Assurance and Enhancement System (BIQAES)
  http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/work/teach/quality/biqaes/

- Handbook for Evaluating LDU Projects: An Introduction to Evaluation
  Dr Alison Davies

- Evaluation of teaching
  Oxford Learning Institute
  http://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/oli.php?page=43

  http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/evaluate.htm


What is Evaluation Talking About…

Give Me Examples

The one-minute paper
Students write brief, answers to 1 or 2 questions right at the end of a teaching sequence (e.g. what is one thing you learned? What is the one thing you are confused about? What was the clearest moment in this class? Which moment was the least clear?).

Analysing their responses allows you to gather useful feedback on how the students are learning, as well as to identify areas where they are having difficulties.

Post-it notes
Give each student three Post-it notes. On one they could write ‘learned’, on another ‘need to know more about’ and on the third ‘don’t understand’ (you can vary these prompts to suit your needs).

Ask your students to write a response to the prompt on each Postit, and to stick the Post-its on the door or wall as they leave the room. You collect and sort them and quickly learn something about what they are thinking about both the learning and the teaching.

Online Quizzes
Put a few questions on a WebCT quiz following a teaching sequence. This can either be used for quick feedback on learning, to see if students are understanding what you hoped they would, or for feedback on teaching, by establishing what students like and don’t like about your teaching.

More Ideas
You can also evaluate your teaching in informal ways. This could involve collecting evidence yourself, collecting evidence from your students, or collecting evidence from peers, colleagues and mentors. Evaluation can be conducted throughout your course to allow you to act on student feedback (Morss and Murray, 2005).

You can collect evidence in the following ways:

- Teaching diary: you can keep a record of what you do, your rationales and reflections, student responses, and what student responses reveal.

- A self-evaluation checklist to keep you focused (e.g. Did I ask questions which stimulated lively discussion? Did I manage the time well? Did students all participate in discussion and tasks? Were there any difficulties? What would I change if I was to do this again?)