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Inclusive Core Practice

This guide outlines UAL's core approach to inclusive blended teaching (the combination of **asynchronous** online and **synchronous** online and on-site delivery) and responds to the [UAL Blended Academic Delivery model](#).

This approach helps us to:

- support students' wellbeing, engagement, retention and attainment.
- fulfil our Equality Act 2010 obligations to include students with a range of protected characteristics and to foster good relations between all students.
- include students who cannot attend for on-site delivery
- be ready to adapt teaching delivery rapidly, in response to emergency situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Core Practice Structure

We recommend all courses, regardless of their ratio of online and on-site delivery, have an online "core" that provides a structure into which onsite sessions can be integrated. The online mode should be comprehensive enough that students who can't attend onsite can meet the learning outcomes.

UAL's core practice is based on the use of **Moodle** to asynchronously provide:

- Structure, learning materials and assessment submission
- Forums for communication and various asynchronous learning activities
- Access to recordings of synchronous sessions

Synchronous sessions can be delivered either:

- Online:
    - for groups of any size using **Collaborate Ultra**
    - for groups of up to 20 using **Microsoft Teams**
- Onsite

Limiting the number of core online 'spaces' to three main platforms helps students navigate their course. Feedback indicates that students are significantly anxious when they are not sure where or when teaching is taking place. If you introduce other online spaces (such as **Workflow, myblog, Panopto, Padlet)** ensure their use is clearly signposted and integrated with the overall flow of blended activities.

Designing teaching

Design teaching as a structured flow of synchronous sessions and asynchronous activities. Keep in mind that designing the flow of blended activities, where they are located (online and onsite) and how they build on each other is more important than the design of any single activity.

When designing units to foster engagement:

- Ensure students understand learning outcomes.
- Facilitate discussion of initial plans.
- Share samples of developed work.
- Have a discussion of assessment criteria and near-completed work as 'fit to submit'.
- Ensure these opportunities are available to students who can't attend on-site.

Anticipate issues of inclusion and access whilst planning course delivery, rather than waiting for individual needs to emerge. In a traditional blended context, we often assume that all students will have equal access to online and onsite teaching and resources. This may not be the case.

Content and Contact

A simple way to plan the use of UAL Core Digital Learning platforms is in terms of content and contact.

Keep your students updated with relevant course content

Giving students timely access to relevant content aligned to learning outcomes is important for their progress. We recommend using Moodle to upload, link to and organise all course content to provide a 'one-stop-shop' for students.

As a **minimum requirement** we recommend you **divide your Moodle site into topics** (also known as sections) to organise your content. You should have topics/sections that cover at least these areas:

- **Announcements and discussions.** This area is for Moodle forums and should contain:
  - An **Announcements** forum for publishing news items about the course, including when and where the next synchronous session will be
  - A **Q&A (Question and Answer) forum** (See 'keep in contact with your students' section below for further details)
- **Unit information** which contains at least:
  - An up-to-date **unit guide**
  - **Contact details** of teaching and admin staff on the unit
- **Assessment** which contains at least:
  - All up to date **assignment briefs**
  - Links to **online submission tools** such as Turnitin and Moodle Assignment
- **Week 1 learning materials, Week 2 learning materials** etc. Each week should contain relevant learning materials such as:
  - Lecture slides, readings, links to websites, video clips etc.
  - Details about related activities
  - Links to tools such as forums being used to carry out activities
  - Links to synchronous online sessions
  - Links to video recordings of synchronous sessions

Organising your course

We have several resources for you to learn more about organizing your course:

- [A short video of a Moodle course illustrating this topic structure](#)
- [The Simple Strategies video series](#) on how to upload, organise and present course content
- LCF colleagues can visit [Tips for organizing Moodle pages](#) on LCF Digital Learning for additional LCF specific guidance on how to structure sites

Keep in contact with your students

Student learning develops through interaction with course **content** alongside interaction or **contact** with tutors and fellow students. Contact helps create a sense of community and group cohesion, as well as opportunities for students to share and critique each other's work. Contact with students can be asynchronous or synchronous.

The ratio of synchronous and asynchronous contact needs careful consideration:

- What are the advantages of each to support the requirements of the course?
- How are students' needs being supported?
- What is the availability of onsite teaching spaces if necessary?

Asynchronous contact

We recommend using asynchronous contact when supporting students across a wide range of time zones because schedules, time zones and internet connectivity may be subject to disruption.

When you use Moodle forums interactions can take place at a time, location and place suitable to all participants. Nor are they reliant on a high-speed internet connection. We recommend as core practice to:

- Under a topic/section title of 'Announcement and discussions':
    - Set up two forums entitled '**Announcements**' and '**Q&A**'.
    - Use the **Announcements forum** to publish announcements such as:
        - An introduction to the week ahead
        - When new course content is available and where to find it
        - Details and schedules of course activities such as synchronous sessions
        - Interesting subject related news, links etc.
    - Use **Q&A forums** for:
        - All course related queries: refer students here for any queries about coursework, assessments etc. to avoid dealing with repeat queries via emails
        - Discussions around course content.
- Advise students to regularly login to Moodle and check for announcements, and not to rely on email
- Use **Quickmail** only for private 1-1 or group correspondence with students
- Set manageable expectations for response times: e.g., you'll respond to emails/posts within 24hrs

Building a community
Course teams will need to consider carefully how they proactively foster a sense of community between students, both onsite and when accessing learning online. Consider how group or peer-to-peer activity online can be set up to help students come to know and support each other.

- Use approaches which make students' work visible to each other, such as using Moodle Forums or Padlet. Shared sites in Workflow or myblog can also be effective.
- Foster student peer networks in the online space e.g. by creating interest groups.

Course teams also need to support students' welfare and progress:

- Regularly ask students how they are, how well set up they are to study, if they have any questions or concerns etc.
- Use existing information provided by students to anticipate or identify the support they might need at this time.
- Refer students to these resources for support: Student Services, Academic Support, Language Centre.
- Students and staff can report instances of bullying, harassment and harm in learning environments via the University's Tell Someone.

Synchronous contact
Synchronous contact can provide a greater level of immediacy and presence which are important in fostering a sense of community and group cohesion. Remember to pace yourself: online sessions can be tiring for both you and your students.

Record synchronous teaching and support
Some students may be unable to participate in online or onsite synchronous sessions due to time constraints, caring responsibilities, the need to self-isolate, differing time zones and so on.

We recommend you provide video recordings or suitable alternatives of online and on-site synchronous sessions so students who can't attend can stay connected to these core scheduled sessions and engage in any follow-up activities. Post recordings on your Moodle unit page and label them with a date and session title.

If it is not possible or helpful to make a recording, provide an alternative, such as:

- the tutor's summary of the key points covered and resources referred to. This could be in written, audio or video format.
- organise additional opportunities for all students to reflect on and discuss the session e.g. an online Q&A session or tutorial 'surgery', a Moodle discussion forum.

- If students were sharing work at the session, support students to share their work openly with each other. e.g., by using Padlet. Visit Teaching Online for guidance on using more sophisticated platforms such as Workflow or myblog.

Ensure students can access technical support and guidance in a variety of ways, whether working on-site or remotely. Where possible:

- Provide recordings of technical processes.
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to access essential on-site inductions.
- Consider the needs of students who require one-to-one support to access workshops and studios. Examples could include: ensuring the student and support worker have sufficient space; providing workshop access at flexible times; factoring in Study Assistants when considering capacity.

For more information about the benefits and applications of educational videos, visit [Creating educational video.](#)

Example activities

Here are some example online activities combining content and contact you can do with your students: The contact elements in these examples are all asynchronous but can be changed to synchronous online or on-site as appropriate.

Activity	Content	Contact
Lecture plus Q&A session	Provide lecture materials, e.g. PowerPoint presentation with accompanying notes or audio commentary, video recordings	Use the Q&A forum or a Padlet board for students to post questions about the lecture
Discussion	Provide resources relevant to discussion via Moodle (e.g. readings, websites, video or audio clips) alongside prompt questions to focus student thinking	Facilitate discussion using a Moodle forum
Practice Activity	Provide a practice brief with a related tutorial (e.g. sourced from LinkedIn learning) on Moodle	Students post a digital representation (e.g. photo, video, audio) of their work to Padlet for sharing and commenting
Peer sharing	Students engage independently with a project brief and maintain an e-portfolio of their work in progress using Workflow	Students share their e-portfolio with their cohort and invite them to comment and feedback

For more detailed guidance and examples of blended activities review the [Inclusive Blended Learning Design toolkit](#).

Assessment
Making assignment tasks inclusive should not mean compromising learning outcomes.

Adjust assessment methods
Design practical assessment tasks that allow learning outcomes to be demonstrated by students who cannot attend in person.

Be mindful that students may not be able to use the tools and materials in UAL studios. Assignments should not require materials or tools to be provided by the student that may be impractical for use at home, or unreasonably expensive to purchase.

If it is not possible for students to demonstrate achievement of learning outcome without attending /access to facilities please seek appropriate guidance at the earliest opportunity. It is really important to discuss this with the Disability Adviser for your

course, in particular, as it may have significant implications for how they advise disabled students.

Scheduling assessments

When setting times for remote international teaching and assessment, course teams should be aware of the implications of date and time differences for students.

It will be especially important to ensure that where the timing of an activity is significant (i.e. for time-released assessments, or for synchronous forms of teaching delivery) students have equal access to the activity, and the timing of the activity is fair.

The fairest time to release assessments, that will allow the most students globally to access them in waking hours, **is 12-2pm London time**, which equates to 7-9 pm in Hong Kong and 7-9 am in New York. When releasing assessments that have a time limit for completion, we advise that they be released in this time window, and that the **time limit set is at least 24 hours**, to allow all students the same number of waking hours to complete the assessment.

To check time zones quickly, course teams can make use of the World Clock Meeting Planner that enables easy comparison of times across multiple cities.