

# Centre for Academic Development



## Guidelines for digitally enhanced teaching

As we move to a variety of teaching scenarios to incorporate teaching both at a distance and face to face, the University has enabled 'digitally enhanced teaching and meeting spaces'. Such spaces will allow you to practice a variety of teaching and learning scenarios in order to include both students who are in the face to face classroom, whilst also incorporating those who may be working remotely online at the same time. The following provides some suggestions on using these spaces and incorporating these into your teaching practice, whilst highlighting the challenges you may face.

### Teaching Activities

How to ensure your students get the best possible experience, in this different environment?

#### Expectations

- Wherever possible, do try to inform your students of what to expect prior to your teaching, eg will there be a mixture of online and face to face activity and attendance? What activities will you expect your students to undertake in the classroom/lecture theatre?

#### Pause and Reflect

- Build in time to your teaching for breaks, pause to give online and face to face students time to ask questions, catchup and engage with both online students and face to face students
- This will give you time to think about what is working well and maybe what is not working so well, whilst giving you time to alter your methods
- Make use of discussion forums, online whiteboard chat or do a quick poll

### Communicating with your Students

Whilst communicating with your students both face to face and online, consider the following:

- If teaching online at the same time what tools will you use? Blackboard Collaborate for a live broadcast? Will you enable online chat throughout the session? Do you record the live session?
  - Think about 'structuring' the chat sessions eg have set points when to contribute
- Will you be using 'flipped classrooms' and therefore sharing a pre-recorded session using Panopto?
- How will you present your material? Screen share? Upload slides? Prior access to material for students?
- Will there be an expectation for your students in the classroom to be online at the same time (to view chat and engage with others in the class)?

## Collaborative working and working in Groups

- What tools will you use to ensure a good experience for all students? How will students collaborate and feedback?
- For example will they discuss face to face, or use online tools such as Office 365? OneNote? Digital Whiteboard?
- Will group work be separated into 'those online' and 'those in the physical classroom' or will there be a mix of environments?
- If 'visiting groups' online be careful that everyone may hear the chat in the face to face environment

## Keep it simple and straightforward

- Don't try to include too much in your sessions, try to pace yourself and your students to get used to the different way of teaching and new environment
- Don't over complicate your teaching activities, try to keep it simple and straightforward, so easy to follow
- Plan for the unexpected, in case the technology doesn't work

## Remember Accessibility and Inclusivity

For many students this will be a new experience, ensure all your material is accessible and that you are engaging all students

- Do any of your students have any specific accessibility requirements?
- Some students may be exempt from wearing masks
- Think about how inclusive your teaching is for both face to face and at a distance students

## Using the 'Digital' Tools

Following is a list of some of the digital tools you can use to assist you with your teaching, which the University of Aberdeen can provide support and training on.

### MyAberdeen

- Discussion forums
- Collaborate
  - Chat
  - Polls
- Conversations (Ultra)

### Office 365

- Sharing OneDrive documents such as Word, PowerPoint or Excel to collaborate
- OneNote for informal notes
- MS WhiteBoard

### Web conferencing Tools

- Blackboard Collaborate
- MS Teams

### Polling/Quiz Questions

- MyAberdeen (quizzes/tests)

- Ombea
- Poll tool in Blackboard Collaborate
- Chat

## Interactive Whiteboards and Documents

- Whiteboard in Blackboard Collaborate
- MS Whiteboard
- Collaborate/shared documents in Office 365

## Recording of sessions

- Panopto
- Blackboard Collaborate
- MS Teams

## The Challenges

Not only will you be delivering in a physical classroom, where students and yourself are socially distanced, but you may also be wearing masks and delivering simultaneously to online students via web conferencing software. Due to the social distancing measures, wearing of masks and windows being open, you may encounter the following issues:

- Ability to clearly hearing each other and responding to facial expressions
- Sharing physical resources, such as pen and paper amongst students
- Engaging fully in face to face group work, whilst maintaining distance
- Anxiety amongst students being in a face to face situation
- Reduced flexibility regarding seating arrangements
- Co-ordinating online student experience with face to face students
- Familiarity with the 'tools' you will be using within your teaching environment
- BYOD? Bring your own device – will this be the recommendation? What about students who don't have an appropriate device? Or can't connect?
- Recording attendance / getting to know who the students are – recognising them
- Monitoring online chat, do you ensure the rest of the face to face students are aware of the online chat? Do you disable or pause to discuss any issues? Be wary of the online chat being a distraction to the teaching.
- If you have cameras enabled do you share the room or just the lecturer/tutor image
  - If room camera is shared, then is there an expectation remote students share their camera too? Or would they feel uncomfortable, as their image may be projected on the large screen?
- Be conscious if delivering both face to face and at a distance simultaneously that the face to face students don't feel they should just be 'online' therefore ruining the physical and social experience of their learning.
- Accessibility issues may be more prevalent due to hard of hearing (masks, open windows, at a physical distance, general background noise) and viewing online discussions or screen information, due to the size of the chat panel.
- Try wherever possible to clearly identify which students have a question, point to make or are reporting back to the room, so both in class and remote students can identify individual students (this can be challenging due to the use of face masks)

## Further Resources and References

- [Principles and guidance for blended learning](#)
  - [Examples & inspiration](#)
  - [Tools for Teaching](#)
- [Timetabling](#)

### External Links

- [Interactivity in a physically distanced classroom](#), University of South Florida
- [Active Learning while Physical Distancing](#), Reinert Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning
- [Learning and teaching in the socially distant classroom](#), The University of Sheffield

## Toolkit resources and QuickGuides

- Toolkit '[Staff Tools for Blended Learning](#)'
  - [MyAberdeen](#)
  - [Blackboard Collaborate Ultra](#)
  - [Panopto](#)
  - [Microsoft 365: Apps & Services](#)
  - [MS Teams](#)
  - Annotating, etc . . .
  - [Accessibility for Authors/Creators](#)