

Course Unit Best Practice Guide - 2014

1. Unit Content

	Getting Started	Moving On (Progressing?)	Becoming Expert
Goals and Objectives	Easily located, clear, appropriate to desired outcomes, measurable (students know what they are expected to learn).		
Content Presentation	Content is well organised into manageable segments, with a logical flow/progression; intuitive to navigate. There are a range of appropriate presentation mechanisms (folders, single pages, links to external resources).	Content is enhanced with visual and auditory elements. Supplementary resources are made available and are well-integrated with other course materials.	
Learner Engagement		It is clear how the instructional strategies will enable students to reach course goals and objectives. Guidance is provided for learners to work with content in meaningful ways.	Higher order thinking (e.g. analysis, problem solving or critical reflection) is expected of learners and explained with examples or models. Individualised instruction, remedial activities, or resources for advanced learning activities are provided.
Technology Use	Technology is used to: - Make available materials used in face-to-face sessions. Reduce the labour-intensity of learning (e.g. providing links to needed resources where they will be used in the course);	Technology is used to:- Enhance and extend face-to-face teaching materials. Facilitate learning by engaging students with course content (e.g. discussion board). Engage learners through multiple formats / tools. Automate existing teaching processes	Technology is used to:- Creatively transcend traditional, teacher-centred instruction and support innovative teaching practices.

Technical Accessibility issues	<p>Course materials use standard formats to ensure accessibility (e.g. pdf).</p> <p>If specific software is required to which some learners may not have access, alternative file types are provided.</p> <p>Large files are identified to help learners consider download times.</p> <p>Alternative (smaller) files are provided where appropriate.</p> <p>Videos are streamed whenever possible; graphics are optimised for web delivery and display without needing extensive scrolling. (CHEM/EEEN)</p>	
Orientation to Course and VLE	<p>Clearly labelled explanation of how to navigate the module is included. (FOUN10001)</p> <p>Materials are easy to locate (within a few clicks).</p>	Materials support multiple learning modalities: audio, visual, and text based.(MATH)
Instructor Role and Information	Contact information for the instructor is easy to find and includes multiple forms of communication (for example, e-mail, phone, chat, etc.).	<p>Expected response time for e-mail replies is included.</p> <p>The instructor's role online and methods of collecting and returning work are clearly explained. (FOUN10001)</p>
Course/Institutional Support	<p>Links to institutional policies, materials, and forms relevant for learner success (for example, plagiarism policies) are clearly labelled and easy to find.</p> <p>Links to institutional services such as the library are clearly labelled and easy to find.</p>	Course/instructor policies regarding netiquette/behaviour are easy to find and written clearly.
Supportive Software		Clear explanation of optional and/or required software is provided including links to where it can be captured and installed.
Accommodations for disabilities	<p>Supportive mechanisms allow learners with disabilities to participate fully.</p> <p>The design and delivery of content integrate alternative resources (e.g. transcripts) or enable assistive processes (voice recognition, for example).</p> <p>Links to institutional policies, contacts, and procedures for supporting learners with disabilities are included and easy to find.</p> <p>Design factors such as colour, text size manipulations, audio and video controls, and alt tags reflect universal accessibility considerations.</p>	

2. Communication and Interaction

	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
Communication Channels	There are opportunities for synchronous and/or asynchronous online interaction, as	Asynchronous communication strategies promote critical reflection or other higher order	Synchronous communication activities benefit from real-time interactions and facilitate

	appropriate (e.g. discussion forums). The instructor uses communication tools to provide course updates, reminders, special announcements, etc.	thinking aligned with learning objectives.	“rapid response” communication.
Interaction Logistics		The instructor participates in communication activities, including providing feedback.	Guidelines explain required levels of participation (quantity of interactions). Expectations regarding the quality of communications (e.g. what constitutes a “good” answer) are clearly defined. A rubric or equivalent grading document is included to explain how participation will be evaluated.
Development of Learning Community		Communication activities are designed to help build a sense of community among learners. Students are encouraged to initiate communication with the instructor.	Student-to-student interactions are required as part of the course. Collaboration activities reinforce course content and learning outcomes, while building workplace-useful skills such as teamwork, cooperation, negotiation, and consensus-building.

3. Assessment and Feedback

	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
Online/Offline	Assessment details are displayed online. Student Grades are available online.	Assessments can be submitted online. Feedback for assessments is provided online.	Assessments are marked online.
Expectations	Assessments match the goals & objectives. Instructions are written clearly and with sufficient detail to ensure understanding.	Learners are directed to the appropriate objective(s) for each assessment.	Rubrics or descriptive criteria for desired outcomes are provided (e.g. models of “good work”).
Assessment Design	Assessments appear to measure the performance they claim to measure (e.g. activities are explained using appropriate	Multiple types of assessments are used (research project, objective test, discussions, etc.). Different types of	Assessments are designed to mimic authentic environments to facilitate transfer.

	<p>reading level and vocabulary).</p> <p>Higher order thinking is required (e.g. analysis, problem-solving, etc.).</p> <p>Assessment activities occur frequently throughout the duration of the course.</p>	assessment :	
Self/peer-assessment	Many opportunities for self-assessment are provided.	Self-assessments provide constructive, meaningful feedback.	Opportunities for constructive peer assessment.
Feedback from students	Feedback mechanisms allow students to participate anonymously in course evaluation.	Learners have the opportunity to give feedback to the instructor regarding course design and course content both during course delivery and after course completion.	
Feedback to students		General feedback is provided on assessed work.	Personalised feedback is provided on assessed work.