

Course Title

Harnessing learning design to create more effective learning activities

Duration

One and a half days

Delivery method

Face-to-face workshop

Course overview

The course will introduce the concept of learning design and consider how this can be used to help course designers create more pedagogically informed learning activities which make effective use of technologies.

Background

Despite the range of new technologies now available there is a gap between the *potential* of technologies to support learning and the reality of how they are *actually* being used. A key question is ‘how can we provide more effective support to creating pedagogically informed learning activities which make effective use of technologies’? ‘Learning design’ as a set of activities provides a means of addressing this. ‘Learning design’ refers to the range of activities associated with creating a learning activity. Learning design provides a means of **both representing learning activities** so that they can be **shared** between tutors and designers [for example illustrating learning activities in an easy to understand way (as a diagram and/or text) so that they can be a) shared between a teacher and a designer or b) repurposed from one teacher to another] and a means of scaffolding the process of **creating new learning activities** [for example an online tool to aid a teacher in the steps involved in creating a new learning activity – including tips and hints on how they might use particular tools]. Learning activities are those tasks that students undertake to achieve a set of intended outcomes. Examples might include: finding and synthesizing a series of resources from the web, contributing a view to a ‘for and against debate’ in a discussion forum, manipulating data in a spreadsheet, jointly constructing a group report in a wiki or summarizing the salient points of a podcast.

Why is it important?

There are several reasons why adopting a learning design approach is beneficial:

1. It can act as a means of eliciting designs from academics in a format that can be tested and reviewed with developers, ie a common **vocabulary/language** and understanding of learning activities.
2. It provides a **means by which designs can be reused**, as opposed to just sharing content.
3. It can **guide individuals** through the process of creating new learning activities.
4. It creates an **audit trail** of academic design decisions.

5. It can **highlight policy implications** for staff development, resource allocation, quality, *etc.*
6. It **aids learners** in complex activities by guiding them through the activity sequence.

Who should attend

The workshop will be of interest to teachers and course designers involved in the development and delivery of courses. It will help provide them with a better understanding of how to use different pedagogical approaches to make more effective use of different technologies.

Course Aims

The course will introduce the concept of learning design and consider how this can be used to help course designers create more pedagogically informed learning activities which make effective use of technologies.

Course Objectives

1. To provide delegates with an understand of the key concepts of learning design
2. To give delegates a summary of current activities in learning design, including the collation of a series of case studies of good practice and the development of a specification for a learning design tool.
3. To give delegates hands on experience of using a Learning Design software tool to create learning activities.
4. To discuss faculty needs in terms of support for creating more effective learning activities.

Course Content

The programme will consist of the following components:

1. An introduction to the concept of learning design and its benefit. An overview of key learning design work
2. Introduction to a means of creating learning activities and representing them visually using a Learning Design software tool
3. Hands on sessions to create learning designs using the LD tool
5. Group activity working up a learning design (delegates asked to come with existing examples in mind or ideas for something they would like to work on) using compendium
6. Plenary discussion – report back from the groups
7. Where next – outline of future learning design plans and suggestions from the group

The workshop will be interspersed with a number of interactive, hands on sessions and discussion sessions to consider the topics being presented and reflect on their relevance to participants' own interests.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the workshop delegates will have:

- an understand of the key concepts of learning design
- an overview of current activities in learning design
- experience of using the Compendium software to create learning activities