

Taking your teaching online – Guidance on the use of the VLE

The following guidance has been developed to support Directorate's minimum expectations, as set out below, for the use of the VLE in delivering teaching and learning online during the current situation in relation to COVID-19. The information contained within has been developed to suggest ways in which you can make the best use of the tools available to you, to encourage and support your learners to participate in their continued learning in an online environment. Appendix A considers online teaching scenarios and offers advice. Links to support materials and colleagues who can assist you also follow.

Minimum Expectations for use of the VLE:

Learning Materials:

1. As a basic minimum, lecture & tutorial notes and/or lecture capture recordings should be posted on the VLE no later than the time the F2F session was due to take place. Use Panopto if you want to record your lecture or narrate over your PowerPoint presentation. Whilst it is also possible to stream a lecture live via Panopto at the time that the lecture was due to happen, this can be recorded and shared for students that weren't able to attend at that time. See point 3 below for ideas to encourage interaction post lecture or materials review with students.
2. Relevant multimedia links could also be posted on the VLE by embedding within the relevant area of your course or module. These can be used as a way to generate discussion either within a discussion board or a Collaborate session, to set a task around a piece of content to drive engagement.
3. Where possible, discussion forum tools could be used to discuss uploaded materials before the point at which the F2F session would have taken place or soon thereafter. Alternatively Collaborate could be used as a virtual space where you can invite students to interact with you and their peers, to ask questions and engage in discussion on relevant topics.

In Appendix A we have highlighted a series of scenarios and the VLE tools that would be best placed to deliver the same. This is by no means exhaustive and if you have a scenario that you need to discuss with someone then please use one of the support contact options detailed later in the **Support Available for You** section.

Contact with Students:

1. Students should be proactively contacted at least once each week on an individual basis by Module and Personal Tutors with offers of help and support. You could do this through e-mail, telephone call etc..
2. Weekly sessions should be organised which allow students to come together virtually to discuss any issues or concerns; this could be either with their Personal Tutor or their Module Leaders or (preferably) both. You may use your Collaborate virtual space or discussion forum tools to facilitate this so that students have a consistent user experience and become familiar with the technology and how to engage in an online environment. If using Collaborate, it would help to allow time before the session to setup and deal with any technical issues that students may have.
3. All Modules should schedule in, at an appropriate point, a specific advisory session on preparation for assessment. This will be even more important if, as is likely, we change the intended method of assessment. See point 2 above re use of Collaborate and discussion tools.
4. Student email and other contact should normally be responded to within 2 working days.

Special consideration should be given to the needs of students with additional requirements or those who indicate they do not have access to the required technology. We'd expect these to be small in number but they may then require more telephone support.

What should students expect as a group:

1. All academic departments should communicate the position on the above with all their students. Updates on the Blackboard course/module Welcome page or Announcement could be used as a means to do this.
2. All departments should send a weekly update to students on matters of interest – this may relate specifically to contingencies in place re teaching and Coronavirus but may include good news stories or general updates on things that are happening to keep students engaged at a Department level. See point 1 above re using Blackboard to facilitate this. It is important to set the expectation for learners that this is the place that they should go to keep informed.
3. Any material changes to the support or expectations should be communicated to all students as soon as possible.

Expectation Setting for Students – Some Suggestions

It is important to make sure that your students are aware of what is expected of them in terms of their participation within online working and with the VLE in general. If Blackboard is used to keep students up to date on departmental and course/module specific matters, let them know that they need to keep accessing the VLE to stay informed. Setting an expected level of participation may encourage your learners to stay engaged. If necessary, inform them of the times that you will be available online and will be expecting them to participate, this could be added to the Welcome Page of the course and pushed out as an announcement.

Within the schedule, inform students of when they can expect learning materials to be available and what format that they will be available in (Panopto video recording, narrated PowerPoint Presentation, text based notes etc.) Remember to always consider accessibility to maintain inclusivity for all students.

Set expectations for students in terms of your contact with them. Let them know when you are going to be online, such as moderating a discussion forum, or in your virtual classroom (Collaborate) and whether you expect them to join you for a set period of time or asynchronously. Inform students of what these online sessions are for e.g.s. recaps of a lecture, assessment preparation, general question and answer, support and guidance etc.

If you plan to carry out one to one online sessions with students inform them of the timeslot when these will be, the likely duration and if possible a schedule. You can then send the relevant Collaborate session link to the relevant student for the relevant timeslot.

If you are expecting students to carry out tasks that are directed from within the online area, give clear instructions on how you want them to participate in the task and how you expect them to provide the output from their work. It may help to keep communication channels with your learners open and flexible.

This is a new way of teaching and learning for many of us and we made need to be even more adaptable to keep delivering an excellent experience for our learners.

Support Available for You:

If you have any support requirements around the use of any of the tools within the VLE the LTD team are available to assist you with this. As with many other areas in the University we have reduced the number of staff on campus but we have colleagues available by phone and home workers who will be able to offer support to you remotely. Please contact us through the usual channels but please be advised that if you contact us via telephone we may not be able to deal with your enquiry immediately and we may pass your enquiry on to a colleague who is working remotely but be assured that we will deal with all enquiries.

LTD Support Contact Details

E-mail: LTDsupport@edgehill.ac.uk

AskUs: <https://askus.edgehill.ac.uk/learningtechnologydevelopment>

Phone: Internal – 7755

External – 01695 650755

For up to date information and how-to guidance please visit the Learning Edge Blog page:

<https://blogs.edgehill.ac.uk/learningedge/taking-teaching-online/>

This blog page contains:

1. Links to the guides you will need to make the best use of the VLE tools
2. Details of upcoming online drop-in sessions
3. Hints and Tips

If you require support or any discussion on how to develop online activities for you learners, or other aspects of online teaching, learning and assessment , please contact Mark Schofield in the first instance and he will cascade within the CLT team to ensure that all of your enquiries are answered.

Mark Schofield Contact Details

E-mail: schom@edgehill.ac.uk

Updates

We will be aiming to send you a weekly update each Wednesday which will include hints and tips on use of the VLE, along with examples of good practice from colleagues across the University.

Appendix A - Scenarios and Advice

These are the recommended solutions to help ensure consistency for students.

Pre-recording a lecture rather than live delivery is recommended to enable you to access resources and support on campus and avoid technical difficulties during delivery.

Consider alternative options for students who cannot take part or access them for whatever reason. Always record a session whether in Panopto or Collaborate.

N.B. Please contact ltsupport@edgehill.ac.uk or x7755 if you are unsure of the best approach to take.

Lessons

Scenario	Blackboard	Panopto	Collaborate	Advice	Requirements (Chrome is the preferred web browser)
Lectures: Pre-recorded (Small or large groups)	✓	✓		Record lecture in advance and upload to Panopto via Blackboard. Post lecture Discussion Board in Blackboard.	Panopto provisioned course in Blackboard. Optional Discussion Board set up in Blackboard. PC or Mac with mic or webcam; Video Camera or Mobile Device.
Lectures: Live webcast (Small or large groups)	✓	✓		Broadcast and record lecture using Panopto. Post lecture Discussion Board in Blackboard.	Panopto Recorder Software. Panopto provisioned course in Blackboard. Optional Discussion Board set up in Blackboard. PC or Mac with mic or webcam. Fast Broadband if at home.
Lectures or Seminars: Live interactive (Small to medium groups)	✓		✓	Collaborate offers options for interactivity - two way audio or chat communication, presentation.	Collaborate session scheduled in Blackboard course. PC or Mac with mic or webcam; Mobile device.
One to One	✓		✓	Collaborate offers the ability to share documents and screens	PC or Mac with mic or webcam; Mobile device. Restricted Collaborate session scheduled in Blackboard course.
Demonstration	✓	✓		Record demonstrations in advance and upload to Panopto.	Panopto provisioned course in Blackboard. PC or Mac with mic or webcam; Video Camera or Mobile Device

Assessments

Scenario	Blackboard	Panopto	Collaborate	Advice	Requirements (Chrome is the preferred web browser)
Student Presentations pre-recorded	✓	✓		Students to record and submit using Panopto	Panopto Assignments Folder set up in Blackboard course. Students require PC or Mac with mic or webcam; Video Camera or Mobile Device.
Student Presentations live	✓		✓	Collaborate allows recording and interaction.	Collaborate session scheduled in Blackboard course. PC or Mac with mic or webcam; Mobile device.
Assignment Submissions	✓			Continue to use Turnitin where appropriate	
Viva Voce	✓		✓	Collaborate would work. As these are with staff external to the institution it will depend on what they are comfortable with.	PC or Mac with mic or webcam; Video Camera or Mobile Device.