

CRITIQUING



A student shares or demonstrates their work, such as a piece of writing, a design, or a performance, and the other students analyse and make comments about it. These comments are discussed amongst the group with the aim of devising a set of practical recommendations that could be used to improve the work. This approach helps students develop their skills in critical thinking and reflection, and can highlight ways for all of the students to improve their own work.

DEBATE



A topic with at least two opposing viewpoints is selected and students are required to research and argue for a particular viewpoint, responding to counter-arguments from the other(s). This approach develops critical thinking, presentation and rhetorical skills and, by possibly making students research and argue for a viewpoint they do not personally hold, encourages them to explore all aspects of the topic.

LECTURES AS PRE-WORK ('FLIPPED CLASSROOM')



Material that would usually be covered in a lecture is made available to the students online before the timetabled session, meaning that the contact time can be used for other purposes. In this approach, lectures are often recorded as a screencast that the students can watch at a time and place that suits them. The screencasts also become a useful revision tool as they can be re-watched as needed.

MICRO-RESEARCH



Each student is given a small, but unique, topic (or aspect of a broader topic) to research. They present their findings to the class and the students and tutor discuss the implications and attempt to identify themes and differences across all of the findings. This approach helps students develop research skills, builds confidence in their presentation skills, and challenges them to draw conclusions by integrating a wide range of sources.

PRACTICAL / PROJECT WORK



A piece of work is undertaken which demands that students draw upon and integrate multiple aspects of their learning to produce an output of significant complexity. This could be a final-year project or dissertation, or a smaller piece of work in a single module. Students may work individually or as a collaborative group.

PHASED LEARNING / MASTERY



Phased Learning (or Mastery) is about ensuring that advanced knowledge is built on solid foundations, meaning learners need to show a good understanding of the basic information, or demonstrate competence at the fundamental skills, before moving onto more advanced topics or skills. This usually takes a multi-step approach with learners moving through several levels of increasing difficulty. If students fail to reach the next level, additional resources can be made available to help them next time.

PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING



Students investigate real-world problems with the intention of devising possible solutions. The problems could be provided by external organisations, such as businesses and charities, or may be general problems. This approach can also be applied to problems without a solution, or with multiple solutions, depending on the purpose of the learning activity. The approach emphasises creativity, the application of varied skills and knowledge, and encourages students to develop an understanding of previous attempts to solve the particular problem.

REFLECTION



Reflection is about asking questions that require more than descriptions as answers ("Why is this the case?" and "What does it mean?" rather than "What did I do?") It is a process where new knowledge and experiences are evaluated to see how they fit with existing knowledge and experience. The connections and contradictions that are revealed can then be considered further, resulting in a deeper understanding.

RESOURCE-CENTRED / -FACILITATED DISCUSSION



A resource or artefact is presented to the students and inspected. The tutor poses questions and acts as a moderator as the students attempt to come up with an answers, using the resource as a focus for their thinking and discussion. Through this discussion, students gain new perspectives based on the comments and ideas of others, helping to expand their own knowledge.

ROLE-PLAY



Students are presented with a scenario and each act out a specific part, interacting in ways that are consistent with their characters' motivations and personalities. Students may receive 'secret' instructions on how to behave (such as, "you refuse to listen to logical arguments and only respond to emotional ones") and it is possible that a tutor would play one of the characters. This approach encourages students to identify and respond to the different motivations of individuals to come up with the most practical solution for all parties.

SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING



A loose set of constraints, such as general subject area, time period, etc., is placed upon the students and they then agree a topic to research with their tutor. The tutor acts as a guide and mentor, helping the student to come to their own conclusions and produce their own results, rather than an instructor. This approach helps students to develop useful skills for lifelong learning, such as time management and identifying suitable resources.

SIMULATION



Complex situations, closely modelled on reality, are created and students make informed decisions based on their observations, reacting to changes as they appear. These simulations may use specialist equipment (e.g. medical mannequins), software (e.g. flight simulators) or the information source could be the lecturer (e.g. a stock trading simulation). Simulations allow students to explore situations in a 'safe' environment and test strategies to address the changing situation. Electronic simulations are generally very easy to reset so students can try different strategies and see how they compare.

TEACHER-DIRECTED LEARNING / TRADITIONAL LECTURE



This approach consists of the tutor passing on potentially large amounts of information to the students in a formal setting. The students are gathered together and interaction is often limited, resulting in a primarily one-way flow of information, with students' attention focused on the tutor. The approach is particularly suited to large cohorts.

WORK-BASED LEARNING / PLACEMENTS



Students apply their learning in the workplace and develop new skills, knowledge and insights from work on genuine tasks in real environments. This presents the students with unique challenges and opportunities and helps them understand how their learning fits into a workplace context. The new ideas and perspectives that students develop through this process can later be drawn upon when they return to the university.
