

## Webinar

### What

*Description of the method:*

A webinar is an online seminar or tutorial and can be used to replicate traditional face-to-face teaching methods in an online or distance course. It provides a virtual classroom where tutors and students can use audio and text to communicate, write on interactive whiteboards, view presentations, show live programs on their computer and work in smaller groups using virtual breakout rooms. Sessions can be recorded for later viewing.

*Rationale for using it:*

Webinars provide a way for students to interact with each other and their tutors in similar ways to traditional teaching. Their 'live' nature and the ability for students to see and hear each other help to create a sense of community among the cohort. They provide an engaging way for students to discuss topics and share ideas in a distance-learning context. Recordings of sessions can be made available for students to watch later, which is extremely useful for revision and catch-up.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

A webinar provides a way for students to communicate with each other and the tutor and effectively replicates the traditional seminar/lecture. Hearing (and possibly seeing) tutors and other students and interacting with them in a live environment allows a sense of community to be built within the cohort. A webinar provides several methods of communication, including audio/video and text, and allows students to ask and respond to questions immediately, which helps limit the spread of misunderstandings. Webinar tools could also be used by students to communicate with peers for group work independent of the main teaching schedule.

### Who

*What does the teacher do?*

- Sets up virtual room for the webinar
- Notifies the students of the session
- Delivers presentations
- Facilitates student discussions
- Makes the recording of the webinar available to students afterwards

*What does the student or student group do?*

- Attend the session at the designated time
- Engage in discussion with tutors and other students
- Watch the recording later

*How does this support learner engagement?*

- Supports live interaction between geographically separated tutors and students
- Recordings allow students to review sessions later

## How

*What technology is involved?*

- Blackboard Collaborate

*How demanding will the technology be to introduce to others (e.g. remote students, ALs, etc.)?*

- Guidance is available on using Collaborate
  - Moderator/Tutor: <http://tinyurl.com/qeijh7r>
  - Participant/Student: <http://tinyurl.com/nak582s>

## Inclusivity

*How inclusive is this approach? If some students or staff are not able to use/access this approach, how else might they engage? Or, what are the implications of some students not engaging?*

This is an approach that is most effective when participants are able to be online at the same time and therefore may cause issues with courses with students spread across the world, or when sessions are running at times that would be inconvenient for distance learners (such as during normal office hours). This can be partly addressed by making recordings of the sessions and creating other ways for students to interact and share their ideas, such as online discussion forums.

There may also be cultural issues surrounding the use of Webinars because they may initially appear to be limited to lecture-type activities. This means that some students may be reluctant to interact because they feel that the tutor should be the source of information and that they should simply be receiving it. This can be addressed by setting out expectations of the use of webinars and by tutors taking a facilitator's role where they try to draw all students into the conversations.

Webinars tend to use voice as the primary communication methods and this may cause problems for some students due to language difficulties or hearing/speaking problems. The use of text chat and icon-based responses in the webinar environment can address this issue.

## Further Information

- Example of a Webinar - <http://tinyurl.com/op9met5>
- Webinars in Education - <http://tinyurl.com/k8f9l6h>

## Next

*Quick thing to do now:* Think about how a lecture you deliver could be run as a webinar

*Something for later:* Try out Blackboard Collaborate and plan out how you would use it

*Something with colleagues:* Try out a webinar with colleagues taking the part of students

## Collaborative Resource Creation

### What

*Description of the method:*

Students work together in groups to create a resource on a designated topic, which can be shared with the rest of the cohort. Individual contributions can be identified using the 'version' features typically found in collaborative editing tools.

*Rationale for using it:*

Encourages the students to investigate their topic and draw on the knowledge and ideas of the group to produce a single, cohesive resource. This approach also supports several of the SHU graduate attributes: Knowledge Application; Communication; Creative and Critical Thinking; and Digital Literacy.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

The approach helps move students away from remembering facts towards the integration of information and the creation of new knowledge. Most collaborative environments have 'History' functions that allow readers to see the changes that have been made over time and who has made them. This means that the tutor can check how engaged each student is in the group.

### Who

*What does the teacher do?*

- Sets up the collaborative environment, (or makes decisions about which environment to use, and how students can set up for themselves)
- Assigns students to groups and provides or agrees the topic for each group
- If necessary, resolves editorial disputes among the students

*What does the student or student group do?*

- Use the collaborative tool to create their resource based upon individual or collective research or discussion
- Communicate the reasons for their changes to other work and negotiate the specific changes to be made

*How does this support learner engagement?*

- Students work together to construct new information based on their research, experience and knowledge
- Students negotiate changes to each other's content among themselves, building communication skills and supporting critical thinking

## How

*What technology is involved?*

- Collaborative document editing tools such as Wikis, Google Docs, Google Sites, Prezi etc.

*How demanding will the technology be to introduce to others (e.g. remote students, ALs, etc.)?*

These tools are generally very similar to word processing software, therefore most students and staff should have no problem with using them. The main difference is in the collaboration aspects, for example, some tools might only allow one person to work on the resource at a time, or everyone might be allowed to edit simultaneously. This needs some initial explanation but should not require any significant support or training.

## Inclusivity

*How inclusive is this approach? If some students or staff are not able to use/access this approach, how else might they engage? Or, what are the implications of some students not engaging?*

The approach is inclusive because it will typically use tools with which the students are already familiar and any accessibility issues should already have been resolved. Students working in groups can be encouraged to support peers.

It is relatively easy to identify whether students have all been contributing to the resource by using the change history. This means that a more informed decision can be made by tutors in situations where students complain about peers who haven't made a significant contribution to the resource.

## Further Information

- All About Linguistics - <http://allaboutlinguistics.com/> (Student generated, public resource on topics related to linguistics - uses Google Sites)

## Next

*Quick thing to do now:* Think about the types of resources that students could create collaboratively

*Something for later:* Investigate the tools that might help create the desired resources

*Something with colleagues:* Find out how they work collaboratively and see if they have any advice

## Reflective Blogging

### What

*Description of the method:*

Each student is required to periodically (e.g. each week) write a reflective commentary on his or her work. The posts can be used to inform an assessed end of module reflective report. It can be helpful to frame this for the students who may not know what style or level of detail is expected of them. Consider modelling reflective blogging by running your own tutor reflective blog. Consider posing a reflective question each week for them to address - this may be easier for them than simply asking them to reflect. Weekly reflective questions can be posted as a Blackboard Announcement for example.

*Rationale for using it:*

Periodic reflective posts create a visible representation of each student's involvement in the course and collectively create a sense of progress. Posts can surface misconceptions. Student peers can be invited to post comments on other students' posts creating a sense of co-operation and belonging. Students can be asked to conclude with a question that they would like responses to from their peers.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

The reflective posts make thinking and learning visible to the tutor, the student and, potentially, to other students and provide insight into the student's learning which can be viewed months or years after the posts were originally written. Taken together, a structured set of posts chart student progress and can culminate in a report that captures key ideas and questions for the student in their own words.

### Who

*What does the teacher do?*

- Set up a blog space for each student in Blackboard, they can be configured in a number of different ways. Public blogging tools (Wordpress, Blogger) may develop transferable skills where privacy beyond the student group is not an issue.
- Introduce and model reflective blogging - consider creating a screencast or audio file to model reflective thinking by creating a post and talking through it.
- Frame the reflective process by creating a set of reflection questions in relation to the course content and activities.
- Read and comment on a selection of student posts each week. Aim to comment on all of the student blogs at least once during the module.
- Set expectations for students to comment on each other's posts (this is not always appropriate).

- Check all students are taking part, and then keeping up, with making their posts with the depth and quality of writing sufficient to demonstrate critical self-reflection and be useful to writing a final report.

*What does the student or student group do?*

- Each student will periodically make a post according to an acceptable word count range.
- They will refer to guiding questions to help them think critically and reflectively and ensure they are writing at a depth that will enable them to write a report as a culmination of the reflective activity.

*How does this support learner engagement?*

- Reflective thinking should challenge students.
- The process makes their engagement as learners visible.
- Peer co-operation can happen by requiring students to work in 'buddy groups' posting comments to each other's posts.
- Tutors can invite students to co-post or comment on their own blogs, thereby explicitly valuing staff-student interaction.
- Self-reflection, receiving and giving peer comments and tutor comments are all ways of providing formative feedback.
- Rounding off activities through structured reflection can result in self-efficacy.

## How

*What technology is involved?*

- Blackboard blog tool (or public blogging tools - e.g. WordPress, Blogger)
- If need be, use an illustrated handout (PDF) or a screencast to walk students through the technical process.

## Inclusivity

The approach values diversity, creating a personal environment for capturing learning. While it is important to explain how reflective blogging is critical to learning and to producing a successful summary report, periodic reflection can be facilitated using other media including face-to-face or Skype meetings, personal audio recordings, drawing/poster making, and email.

## Further Information

- "Learning About Blogs FOR Your Students" - <http://tinyurl.com/7hqv7fr>
- Example of a reflective blog: <http://fslt13.wordpress.com/>

## Next

*Quick thing to do now:* Write down ways in which your students would benefit from writing reflective blogs

*Something for later:* Set up your own reflective blog and make some posts to develop an understanding of the process. Consider sharing this blog with your students.

*Something with colleagues:* Find out how they reflect on their work, and how they encourage their students to reflect. Is a joined up approach across modules appropriate?

## Formative Objective Testing

### What

*Description of the method:*

Objective Testing refers to tests consisting of fact-based questions that can be answered with a single, unambiguous word or tick and marked by anyone with an answer key, or automatically by software. These can be set up in Blackboard and the students given their mark and feedback immediately upon submission of their answers.

This type of test is usually of insufficient complexity to be used as part of the formal assessment on a module; however, it is a highly efficient and effective method for students to self-assess their understanding of a topic.

*Rationale for using it:*

Formative Objective Tests are an effective way for students to check their understanding of a topic before asking questions about the material. The feedback for incorrect responses can direct the student to the relevant resources to address the deficiency.

Early student diagnostics can help to avoid complacency and drive engagement.

Once the questions and test are created within Blackboard, they can be configured to allow students to make as many attempts as they like without requiring tutors to mark and provide feedback on each attempt. This makes the approach a very effective one when dealing with large cohorts.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

This approach is useful for students to check their understanding of topics during the module and prior to formal assessments. Students can take the test multiple times until they are satisfied that they have fully grasped the concepts and can move onto more advanced topics.

### Who

*What does the teacher do?*

- Create the questions and tests
- Make the tests available to students at the appropriate time
- Monitor responses to identify areas of common misunderstanding
- Addresses these areas through Blackboard

*What does the student or student group do?*

- Take the test
- Respond to feedback
- Retake the test as many times as necessary until understanding is confirmed



- Later, consider involving students in generating question banks as a formative activity.

*How does this support learner engagement?*

Being able to take tests at a time that suits them and receive instant feedback means that students can check their understanding and immediately address any misunderstandings, rather than allow them to become ingrained. Being able to take tests multiple times enables students to see their own progress and understanding develop.

In order to be an effective learning and revision tool, the test should be composed of questions selected at random from a larger bank of questions (or make use of randomised data in the question) wherever possible. This will check a student's understanding of the concept being tested rather than encouraging them to find and remember the single correct answer.

## How

*What technology is involved?*

- Blackboard tests

*How demanding will the technology be to introduce to others (e.g. remote students, ALs, etc.)?*

There may be a small training issue for students if they are not already familiar with tests in Blackboard; however, this is unlikely to place significant demands on staff. Tutors would need some training in how to create the questions and tests if they haven't used them before, but this is also unlikely to be particularly demanding. Guidance on creating effective formative questions and tests should be provided, though this is readily available online.

## Inclusivity

*How inclusive is this approach? If some students or staff are not able to use/access this approach, how else might they engage? Or, what are the implications of some students not engaging?*

The tests would run through Blackboard and so would generally be familiar to the students. As the tests are formative, they are primarily a way for students to check their own understanding and it is their decision whether they want to engage or not.

## Further Information

- Improve Learning Through Formative Assessment - <http://tinyurl.com/mlo4bnn>
- Assessment for Learning: Research Summary - <http://tinyurl.com/dy8qopm>

## Next

*Quick thing to do now:* Identify common errors made by students and think about how formative tests might help students to develop their understanding

*Something for later:* Write some sample questions, answers and feedback

*Something with colleagues:* Share and discuss your sample questions - check the level, whether the feedback would be useful, etc.



## Social Media for Building Communities

### What

*Description of the method:*

Students can be encouraged to make use of social media tools, such as Facebook, Flickr, Diigo, LinkedIn and Twitter, to build a sense of belonging, stimulate meaningful interaction, and develop a community of practice. The students would be encouraged to use these tools to highlight interesting resources, share their thoughts on the topics in the module, and increase their professional networks.

*Rationale for using it:*

Many, perhaps even the majority, of the students will be familiar with these tools. Moving social and learning interactions into locations where the students are already comfortable helps to empower the student and can help the learning community to develop beyond the original cohort. Many of these tools provide features that are impossible or difficult to reproduce with systems such as Blackboard, however it is often possible to draw the generated content back into Blackboard.

Students will quite often use these tools to support their studies anyway and, by recognising this, it is possible to expose this learning and harness the interactions.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

Supportive use of social media can help a cohort to develop a group identity and turn names on a screen into real people. This means that a great sense of community can develop and students feel more 'connected' to their peers and tutors.

Sharing links to interesting resources via tools such as Twitter or Diigo (social bookmarking) helps students and tutors to maintain currency with developments in their field(s), and allows the development of a curated set of information resources.

### Who

*What does the teacher do?*

- Encourages the use of social media to support the formal learning activities and systems
- Suggests Codes of Conduct for the use of social media tools to support learning
- Optionally, interacts with the students through these tools

*What does the student or student group do?*

- Select and configure the tools to support their interaction, e.g. agree a Twitter hashtag, create a Facebook group, etc.
- Interact in a mature, professional manner

*How does this support learner engagement?*

By allowing the students to select the tools, they will be able to make use of those that integrate most easily and effectively with their existing internet patterns. This means that there is less of a barrier to accessing learning materials, e.g. having to log into Blackboard, and increases the likelihood that students will participate in the development of a new Community of Practice.

## How

*What technology is involved?*

- Tools would be agreed by the students and could include:
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
  - Diigo social bookmarking
  - Youtube
  - Flickr image sharing
  - Google Apps (students already automatically have accounts)

*How demanding will the technology be to introduce to others (e.g. remote students, ALs, etc.)?*

The students can select the tools that are to be used. However, there will be a learning process for anyone not already familiar with those chosen.

## Inclusivity

*How inclusive is this approach? If some students or staff are not able to use/access this approach, how else might they engage? Or, what are the implications of some students not engaging?*

Some students may not be comfortable using social media tools as part of their learning, so depending on the context, level of formality of the activity and the learning outcomes required, you may consider whether anonymous accounts can be set up and used, or elements of the activity imported, duplicated, or take place in institutional systems such as Blackboard. This thinking is necessary to ensure that these students are not disadvantaged.

## Further Information

- Social Media in Education: Resource Roundup - <http://tinyurl.com/kfvslcy>
- Overcoming Hurdles to Social Media in Education - <http://tinyurl.com/bn6vhh6>

## Next

*Quick thing to do now:* Think about the different social media tools and how people use them to interact

*Something for later:* Ask the students about which tools they currently use and investigate the most popular

*Something with colleagues:* Co-ordinate which tools to use and discuss how they would help support students

## E-books

### What

*Description of the method:*

The term e-book relates to any formal e-publication, particularly text-based where the content is likely to be read on an e-reader or smart device. There are two ways to begin thinking about the educational potential of e-books: where the tutor is the producer and where students are involved in producing and possibly publishing artefacts.

*Rationale for using it:*

Producing content for emerging technologies ensures its longevity and optimises its usefulness. While the concept of e-book is hard to define it is useful to think about how students can use text given the potential of mobile technologies. Written and illustrated content can find new purpose and meaning when students are able to engage with it in real world situations as well as in traditional learning contexts.

Where students are involved in *publishing* e-books or e-content, the context creates a clear structure for their research and potentially connects them with a real world audience.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

E-books, e-hand outs, and other forms of electronic publishing for distance learning students are useful, as students are likely to access their course in a more fragmented way than 'typical' home students are. The smart devices (i.e. phones and tablets) that students are likely to use often support e-book reading. Handouts and other documents, including module handbooks, produced as PDFs will work on PCs as well as in e-reading devices like Kindles. This means that the students will be able to integrate e-books into their daily routines much more easily than with printed materials. E-books and Print-on-Demand publishing are relatively easy to do. Amazon and other online publishers and stores provide simple tools for anyone to use for making and publishing e-books for specific or general audiences.

### Who

*What does the teacher or student do?*

Publishing e-book content is straightforward (see further information).

*What does the student or student group do?*

A project with the objective of publishing a book or a journal requires the students to develop a plan to conduct research, write up their findings, review and then present the content to a given audience.

*How does this support learner engagement?*

Content delivered to e-readers is increasingly highly accessible. Reading devices often have integrated note-taking functionality.

Book production requires peer co-operation, continuous feedback, and addresses a real-world audience. Student-generated content of this kind requires a demanding attention to quality, something that will be valued by employers.

## How

*What happens and how is this supported?*

What happens depends on the nature of the task associated with the material or its production. The technical process usually starts in Word:

- Learn to use Word's Styles and then use them systematically and rigorously
- Create a FINAL script - proofread and only then start to build the book.
- Start with the PDF version and find out about different formats including ePub, KDF, iBook.
- Each format has different needs for handling: Tables of Contents; page numbers; headers; links; embedding tables; embedding images; front cover; etc.

*What technology is involved?*

Produce PDF using the PDF print option on PCs (download CutePDF if necessary). Other technology is freely available for other e-book formats. Sites like Smashwords and Amazon can convert Word texts.

*How demanding will the technology be to introduce to others (e.g. remote students, ALs, etc.)?*

Readers who are already accessing e-books will need no introduction.

Producing e-books or e-handouts can be as simple as good word processing. Approaches that are more sophisticated can be used and there is a good range of online information about how to proceed.

## Inclusivity

Working with e-books promotes inclusivity. While there is no single agreed technical standard format for publishing e-books, e-books are both human and machine readable if publication conforms to guidelines.

## Further Information

- Middleton, A. & McElearney, G. (2013) Publishing e-books: recent experience. MELSIG. Online at: [http://extra.shu.ac.uk/melsig/?attachment\\_id=164](http://extra.shu.ac.uk/melsig/?attachment_id=164)
- How to publish on Smashwords. Online at: [http://www.smashwords.com/about/how\\_to\\_publish\\_on\\_smashwords](http://www.smashwords.com/about/how_to_publish_on_smashwords)
- All About Linguistics: <http://www.allaboutlinguistics.com> (Student-developed information resource that could be easily converted into an ebook)

## Next

*Quick thing to do now.* Think about a large topic for which students could write (sub-)chapters

*Something for later.* Plan out an assessment or learning activity based on students writing the chapters

*Something with colleagues:* Divide the large topic into chapters

## Group Work: Scenario-based problems

### What

*Description of the method:*

Students are placed into groups and work together to solve realistic problems.

*Rationale for using it:*

In many professions, group work is extremely common, sometimes involving teams who work remotely and never meet in person. However, because of the need to provide individual marks for each student the use of group work is often limited and disliked by students. By emphasising real-life scenarios and the importance of acquiring group work skills, the students will find the approach more beneficial and understand the reasons for using it.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

Distance learning students are usually from varied backgrounds with different experiences to share. Framing group work around specific problems allows students to share insights that these experiences have given them and helps students to value the views and opinions of others.

The real-world nature of the problems allows the groups to explore issues that they might be faced with in their career and develop strategies for addressing them. By drawing upon and sharing their own contexts the group gains a wider understanding of the issue and ideas leading to approaches that may not have occurred to students working in isolation.

### Who

*What does the teacher do?*

- Assigns students to groups
- Defines the problem to be addressed by each group
- Facilitates the discussions and answers queries about the process

*What does the student or student group do?*

- Decide on an appropriate mechanism for collaborative working
- Agree terms of reference and a code of conduct for the collaboration
- Work to produce a 'solution' to the problem while taking all views into account and interacting in a mature, professional and respectful manner

*How does this support learner engagement?*

- Students are able to share their own thoughts and experience
- Supportive discussion among the students increases sense of belonging to a learning community

- Problem-based learning (PBL) situated using real-work scenarios offer feedback to the students as they set about resolving the problem.
- The challenge may be high, but the way it is situated is highly motivating.

## How

*What technology is involved?*

The technology selected will depend on the problem that is being addressed, but there should be a private collaboration area for each group, possibly within Blackboard. Students are likely to be assessed on group accounts given in presentations. Consider how students could work together to produce a PowerPoint structured around different aspects of the scenario or a student-produced video (or set of videos) describing the outcome of the collaboration.

*How demanding will the technology be to introduce to others (e.g. remote students, ALs, etc.)?*

The demands of the technology will depend on which tool is selected. However, there should be negotiation among the group to ensure that a mutually satisfactory option is selected. The appropriate selection, use and evaluation of technology may be part of their challenge, supporting the development of their digital literacy.

## Inclusivity

*How inclusive is this approach? If some students or staff are not able to use/access this approach, how else might they engage? Or, what are the implications of some students not engaging?*

The approach is an inclusive one because the students are able to select their tools. However, some students may still not engage with the activity and the implications will depend on whether or not the group work is part of the formal assessment of the module. Some students will gravitate towards particular roles in the group work and you will need to decide if this is useful and equitable.

## Further Information

- Problem Based Learning guidance at Queen Mary, University of London - <http://www.sems.qmul.ac.uk/pbl/materials.php>
- Facilitating Small Groups: PBL Learning - <http://tinyurl.com/mrkjlns>

## Next

*Quick thing to do now:* Think of some scenarios that you might use

*Something for later:* Plan out the scenarios you identified earlier

*Something with colleagues:* Discuss the scenarios and intended outcomes

## Independent Study: Learner-Generated Content

### What

*Description of the method:*

Students are assigned an individual topic and are required to research it and create learning materials based on their findings. These materials are then shared with other students on the module (or on another module), so that they are performing the tasks of a student (by viewing other students' resources), teacher and researcher.

*Rationale for using it:*

Teaching a topic to others is a very effective way to learn, particularly if research is required to gain an initial understanding of the topic. This approach gives the students a sense of empowerment by recognising that they can make valuable contributions to the teaching of the topic and reduces the workload on tutors. The student-developed resources could be edited (for anonymity) and used in other modules and courses.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

By empowering the students to become the 'teacher', there is an implicit acknowledgment of their own existing knowledge and experience. This encourages students to see themselves as part of a Community of Practice where the differing skills, experiences and contexts of the whole cohort is viewed as a major source of knowledge to be 'tapped into' by individual members of the group.

This approach also supports the development of most areas of the SHU Graduate Attributes: Knowledge Application; Motivation and Engagement; Social Responsibility; Creative and Critical Thinking; Research and Enquiry; Digital Literacy; and Communication.

### Who

*What does the teacher do?*

- Assigns topics for students to research and develop related learning materials
- Supports students in the creation of effective learning materials
- Provides advice and guidance related to the topics
- Moderates the critiques of the student-generated resources

*What does the student or student group do?*

- Research their topic
- Create and share their learning materials
- View and critique each other's materials



*How does this support learner engagement?*

Students are fully involved in the teaching and learning process and are able to share their knowledge and understanding with others. By viewing and critiquing each other's work, they are also contributing to the development of a Community of Practice.

## How

*What technology is involved?*

- Blackboard would be used to collate and present the student-generated resources
- Other technologies would be dependent on the individual students, but could include video, audio, quizzes, images, etc.

*How demanding will the technology be to introduce to others (e.g. remote students, ALs, etc.)?*

The students themselves choose the technologies that they will be using and so they have the choice of how demanding it will be to produce the materials. Some students may use tools with which they are already familiar, while others may use the activity as an opportunity to learn how to use new ones.

## Inclusivity

*How inclusive is this approach? If some students or staff are not able to use/access this approach, how else might they engage? Or, what are the implications of some students not engaging?*

The approach can be very inclusive because the students are able to decide how best to present their learning materials, e.g. as videos, written documents, presentation, podcasts, etc. This means that most students will be able to produce materials, and there is also likely to be a variety of different types of resource.

It is important that there are alternative materials available for each of the topics, particularly if they are important concepts. This is to provide a 'fall back' option if some students don't engage and produce resources for their assigned topic, or if the produced resources are not of sufficient standard to serve as learning materials for the rest of the cohort.

## Further Information

- Student-Generated Content for Learning (SGC4L) resources - <http://tinyurl.com/lqap365>
- Developing and Using Student Generated Content - <http://tinyurl.com/mms4ekz>
- 5 Tips for Adding Student-Generated Content to Your Curriculum - <http://tinyurl.com/lbw963e>

## Next

*Quick thing to do now:* Think of some topics for students to research and develop

*Something for later:* Develop (or locate) guidance for students on how to create effective teaching materials

*Something with colleagues:* Identify topics that could be developed by students and used in their modules

## Tutor Concept Blogging

### What

*Description of the method:*

Tutors write short posts about specific concepts on a module blog with students adding comments and discussion points. Posts can link to others to help create an integrated overview of the module topics, but each post should be able to stand alone as a resource.

Alternatively, a similar approach can be taken using a course podcast in which regular five-minute audio posts are made. In this approach 'other voices' can be invited to contribute: employers; students; clients; etc. Concepts or case studies can be produced to create a rich resource.

*Rationale for using it:*

Gathering the relevant material into individual posts enables students to concentrate on one aspect of a complex topic at a time. This makes the information easier to consume and the blog posts ultimately become a library of concise resources that can be updated and reused, both for the original module and for other modules.

If the blog or podcast is created using an external platform, such as Wordpress or Blogger, it can also be made to be publicly accessible and serve as a promotional tool for the module.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

Each post provides an overview of a single concept. This focused approach makes the materials more manageable for students who have work and family commitments in addition to their studies. The posts can provide a starting point for students to explore related material and develop into a comprehensive resource on the module topic(s).

Students can add their own thoughts, links, etc. to the posts through the discussion features. This helps to gather all the knowledge related to a topic in a single place and allows the students to engage with staff and other students in a focused manner.

Posts can be written in advance and scheduled to be published later. This means that students can be encouraged to engage over time and tutors can write posts when they have time and queue them for publication.

### Who

*What does the teacher do?*

- Writes posts related to a specific concept
- Responds to comments made by students

*What does the student or student group do?*

- Read the posts
- Comment on the posts

- Respond to comments by other students

*How does this support learner engagement?*

- Gradually releasing posts means students are encouraged to access materials over time
- Commenting allows students to share their knowledge and views and seek clarification on particular aspects of the concept

## How

*What technology is involved?*

- Blog system
  - Blackboard
  - External tool, such as Wordpress or Blogger

*How demanding will the technology be to introduce to others (e.g. remote students, ALs, etc.)?*

Blogging tools are typically quite simple to use and anyone who can use a word processor should be able to create posts and comment on them. The initial setup of the blog requires slightly more technical skill, but only needs to be done once. For media-enhanced posting and podcasting tools and skills used for audio and screencast feedback would be used (see the separate sheet).

## Inclusivity

*How inclusive is this approach? If some students or staff are not able to use/access this approach, how else might they engage? Or, what are the implications of some students not engaging?*

There are generally no inclusivity issues with the use of Tutor Concept Blogging. However, if audio, video and images are being used then some consideration needs to be given to accessibility.

## Further Information

- Blogs for Learning: <http://blogsforlearning.msu.edu/>

## Next

*Quick thing to do now:* Identify some of the concepts that you could blog about

*Something for later:* Write up a couple of the posts that you identified earlier

*Something with colleagues:* Get feedback on your posts and encourage them to start writing their own

## 10 Minute Screencast Lectures

### What

*Description of the method:*

Instead of recording full-length lectures, a series of shorter lecture videos is created to cover the same material. These are created using screencast software, which allows on-screen activity to be recorded along with voice narration.

*Rationale for using it:*

Distance learning students often need to fit their studies into their work and home lives and may struggle to find hour-long blocks of time when they can watch a lecture undisturbed. Breaking the lectures down into smaller portions means that they can watch one when they have a small amount of spare time, such as during a lunch break. This helps students to keep up with the course and the videos can also serve as useful revision materials.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

Screencasts can be used to record PowerPoint-type presentations, but, because they can record anything that is happening on screen, they can also be used for software demonstrations or to record any other interactions with the PC.

The videos themselves can help to engage students because they can hear the lecturer's voice, which helps them to form a social connection with the lecturer. For this reason, the narration should be natural rather than the well-rehearsed, slick, advertising-type narration seen on marketing materials.

Some screencasting software has features to include interactive quizzes within the videos. This means that students can check their understanding at the end of the video and go back to rewatch it if necessary.

By creating short 'video nuggets', it is easier to be flexible in planning activities around the video content. It is easier to replace videos with more up-to-date versions, or use the screencasts as part of a 'Flipped Classroom' approach.

### Who

*What does the teacher do?*

- Plans and records the screencasts
- Makes them available online

*What does the student or student group do?*

- Watch the videos
- Answer any quizzes that might be in the video
- Use the videos for revision

*How does this support learner engagement?*

- Students can hear their lecturers, promoting a social connection with them
- Students can answer questions embedded in the videos
- Students can watch the video as many times as necessary until they understand the content. This can be especially useful for students who have English as a second language

## How

*What technology is involved?*

- Microphone or headset
- Software
  - Installed software: Camtasia or Captivate
  - Free online software: Screencast-o-matic, Jing or Collaborate

*How demanding will the technology be to introduce to others (e.g. remote students, ALs, etc.)?*

The online software is relatively straightforward to use, but tends not to support the advanced features of the installed software such as captions, editing and zooming. The need for a microphone is likely to be the main barrier to getting people to use this technique, but most laptops and many monitors contain microphones that can produce acceptable results.

## Inclusivity

*How inclusive is this approach? If some students or staff are not able to use/access this approach, how else might they engage? Or, what are the implications of some students not engaging?*

There could be an issue with the use of screencasts when there are deaf students on a module. In these cases, a transcript of the narration should be supplied or subtitles added to the video.

If the screencasts are replicating the aims of lectures in face-to-face teaching then the consequences of a student not engaging would be the same as not attending lectures. However, if the screencasts are intended to provide concise information suitable for revision then the students may not need to view them if they are comfortable with the concepts being covered.

## Further Information

- 'Giving the students what they want: Short, to-the-point e-lectures' - <http://tinyurl.com/lyarhwk>
- Khan Academy - <http://www.khanacademy.org/>
- Flipped Classroom - <http://www.knewton.com/flipped-classroom/>

## Next

*Quick thing to do now:* Think about how you could divide one of your lectures into 10 minutes sections

*Something for later:* Plan and record a 10 minute lectures and share it with students

*Something with colleagues:* Get feedback on the screencast you have created

## Peer Feedback

### What

*Description of the method:*

Students are provided with guidelines on how to write effective and constructive feedback and given the assignment submissions of others on their course to mark and give feedback on. This is then either given back directly or collated by a tutor first.

It is important that submissions are anonymised and each student receives several submissions, with each submission being assessed by several students in order to ensure that all students receive a range of feedback. If using current student submissions is problematic, this approach can also be used with 'model' answers or the work of previous students, though this would remove the benefits of the approach for large cohorts.

*Rationale for using it:*

In modules with large numbers of students, it becomes increasingly difficult for tutors to mark and produce feedback on all of the assignment submissions. Having students assess each other's work helps to spread the load, gives students valuable insight into how others have approached the same piece of work and helps them to understand the marking and feedback process. Therefore, this activity is particularly useful when used early in a module.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

Peer feedback is useful when working with very large cohorts because it distributes much of the workload back onto the students themselves, with tutors performing moderation of the collated feedback. The process has significant benefits for the students because, by assessing other students' work, they feel part of a larger cohort all working towards the same goal. Being able to see other students' work also has the potential to help students form new ideas and see connections that they may not have otherwise.

### Who

What does the teacher do?

- Advises students on how to write high-quality feedback
- Anonymises and distributes the assignments for feedback
- Collates and moderates peer feedback
- Grades students on their submission and the quality of the feedback they produced

*What does the student or student group do?*

- View the work of other students
- Prepare fair, constructive feedback according to the guidelines
- Send this back to the tutor

*How does this support learner engagement?*

Students gain an insight into the marking process and an understanding of the aspects that can influence a grade. By critiquing other students' work they also see different approaches taken for the same assignment, helping them to see that there are many different ways to address a piece of work.

## How

*What technology is involved?*

The technologies used would depend on the original assessment, but may involve distributing assessments by email and have student submit their feedback as a standard assignment submission through Blackboard.

*How demanding will the technology be to introduce to others (e.g. remote students, ALs, etc.)?*

The technology is likely to be familiar to students and tutors and the main demand will be in ensuring that the students give fair and appropriate feedback on each other's work.

## Inclusivity

*How inclusive is this approach? If some students or staff are not able to use/access this approach, how else might they engage? Or, what are the implications of some students not engaging?*

It is unlikely that there will be anyone who is unable to engage for technical reasons because the process is generally very similar to that of submitting the original assignment. However, some students may not feel that they understand the topic enough to comment on the work of others, don't have sufficient language skills to articulate their comments appropriately, or they may come from a culture that makes it difficult to criticise peers. Most of the issues can be addressed by providing clear guidelines and a standard marking sheet, as well as a clear explanation of the reason for using this approach.

Students should each provide feedback on several assignments and each assignment should have several students giving feedback on it. This helps 'average out' the feedback and means that, even if some students don't engage, each assignment will receive peer feedback.

## Further Information

- Peer feedback: benefits and application - <http://tinyurl.com/l8yzt5e>
- Assessment for Learning: Peer feedback - <http://tinyurl.com/k66jxol>

## Next

*Quick thing to do now.* Consider how you could add peer feedback to one of your modules? What activities do you already have that would lend themselves to peer feedback? What could you add?

*Something for later.* Create guidance on peer feedback for your students

*Something with colleagues:* Discuss experiences of peer assessment



## Online Role-Play

### What

*Description of the method:*

Students simulate realistic situations and interactions using online tools. They are typically given 'secret' instructions on how they are to act in their role (e.g. stubborn, arrogant, knowledgeable, etc.), along with their aims, and the conversation develops naturally through the student's interactions. The conversations can be observed by other students and tutors or conducted in private.

*Rationale for using it:*

Role-play is an important learning activity in many courses as it allows students to simulate real-world situations and learn strategies that will help in their careers. This was difficult to achieve in distance learning, but online technologies provide different ways to support the necessary interaction. Tools are available that allow students to role-play live, or asynchronously over a longer period of time. Using online tools has many benefits for this type of activity, even for students in face-to-face modules, because the interactions can easily be recorded for later review and analysis.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

Role-play can help students understand and explore situations that they may face in the workplace and get advice on what steps they might take in a given situation. Unscripted role-play allows a dynamic conversation to develop in ways that may not have been foreseen by the tutor, and which could create interesting discussion points for other parts of the module. Online systems tend to make it far easier to make a record of the session and so use it later (either as a live recording or a transcript).

### Who

*What does the teacher do?*

- Selects the appropriate tool and creates the roleplaying environment
- Monitors the interactions
- Responds to queries from the students

*What does the student or student group do?*

- Use the tool selected by the teacher
- Acts out the scenario
- Discuss the implications of the way the scenario unfolded and try to work out different ways of achieving the desired outcome

*How does this support learner engagement?*

By interacting directly with their peers, the students will feel part of a learning community. This is especially the case when synchronous voice-based tools are used.

## How

*What technology is involved?*

- Synchronous tools
  - Blackboard Collaborate - using break-out rooms to support simultaneous group work
  - Instant Messaging, such as Google+ Hangouts or Skype
- Asynchronous tools
  - Blackboard discussion boards
  - Blogs

*How demanding will the technology be to introduce to others (e.g. remote students, ALs, etc.)?*

The technology used for this technique is likely to be the same as that used for other aspects of the course, and so will already be familiar to teachers and students.

## Inclusivity

*How inclusive is this approach? If some students or staff are not able to use/access this approach, how else might they engage? Or, what are the implications of some students not engaging?*

The approach is quite flexible and both the Synchronous or Asynchronous methods can be set up with students making choices depending on their own needs. This means that students who find it difficult to be online at the same time as others can use the discussion boards, whereas dyslexic students could choose the synchronous, voice-based option.

## Further Information

- EnRoLE resources - <http://tinyurl.com/m2zqzmk>

## Next

*Quick thing to do now:* Consider which aspects of your module(s) might work with Online Role-play

*Something for later:* Plan out some potential scenarios and likely results

*Something with colleagues:* Try out one of the role-play scenarios

## Audio or Screencast Feedback

### What

*Description of the method:*

Audio Feedback and Screencast Feedback usually involve the tutor in giving one or more students feedback on their work using digital media technology in a simple way. Audio feedback can be produced using a PC with a microphone, an MP3 recorder or the Voice Memo app on a mobile phone. Screencast Feedback allows the person giving the feedback to record their screen too, resulting in a video file.

*Rationale for using it:*

The recorded voice of the tutor can make a strong personal connection with the student, even in situations where it is normally difficult to meet in person.

### Benefits

*What is this good for? How will it impact student learning and/or sense of belonging or engagement?*

A spoken explanation can be a lot clearer for the student in terms of content and intent. The recorded voice is better than the written word for some aspects of feedback - and vice versa - but hearing a tutor talking about their work can be highly motivating to the student, turning an activity or task from something perfunctory into something more meaningful and motivational. Generic audio feedback can be produced to summarise key points. For some students this will confirm their understanding and encourage them to go further on the next assignment. For others it will confirm their understanding and expectations. For all it will be anonymous, quick to return and probably complement more personal, detailed feedback on their work.

Audio and Screencast Feedback methods can be used to focus in on particular qualitative aspects of an assignment. Media-enhanced feedback techniques work well when used in combination with other feedback tools (e.g. assessment grids or tutor annotations) more suited to addressing other aspects of the student work. Screencasting software comes with annotation, zoom and pan tools. These give the tutor a high level of control over how they engage with and discuss the student's work and mean that the tutor has a technology that can respond to visual information as easily as written information.

### Who

*What does the teacher do?*

- Records the audio or the screencast video. This could take the form of a commentary produced while going through the assignment, or reflective summary of the whole work.
- Concludes with suggestions for what the student should do next with the feedback and how to improve this work or future work.
- Includes the student's name and the title of the assignment at the beginning of the file. The recorded file (do not plan to edit recordings) is named systematically, uploaded and distributed to the student.

*What does the student or student group do?*

- Listen or watch the feedback
- Make notes or action plans based on the feedback, and possibly confirm these with their tutor.

*How does this support learner engagement?*

Audio or screencast feedback, as with all feedback, has many purposes and forms and can even be used with Peer Feedback activities. Students can also review their own work - creating a spoken review of written work, for example, can help students to find a space to think critically.

Screencast feedback on group work can be viewed and discussed by the group as a whole.

## How

*What technology is involved?*

- Audacity recording software is freely available for staff who want to produce audio feedback at home (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net>) and is on all SHU PCs. Mobile phones and tablets enable feedback to be produced in quiet spaces, or 'in the field'.
- Microphone or headset if using a PC.
- Camtasia screencasting software is licenced by SHU, or there are free tools available on the Web, such as Screencast-o-matic (<http://screencast-o-matic.com>).

*How demanding will the technology be to introduce to others (e.g. remote students, ALs, etc.)?*

In general, the technology is not demanding though unfamiliar to many. Making recordings is often a case of starting and stopping the recording as you think and then speak. Feedback can be uploaded to Blackboard for distribution. Do not plan to edit the audio - it is usually quicker to re-record it, especially as good audio feedback is usually no more than 5 minutes in duration. Some 'rough edges' can add to the authenticity of the feedback.

## Inclusivity

Audio and screencast feedback is noted for its inclusivity with students often commenting on how they find it much more useful and personal than purely written feedback. Students with a hearing impairment or dyslexia have commented on how it benefits them, though it can exclude profoundly deaf students.

## Further Information

- Using Audio Feedback for Assessment - <http://tinyurl.com/m4o67v2>
- Delivering Screencast Feedback on Assessments to Large Cohorts (Case Study) - <http://tinyurl.com/lrxpku5>
- Media-Enhanced Feedback - case studies and methods. Online at: [http://melsig.shu.ac.uk/?page\\_id=259](http://melsig.shu.ac.uk/?page_id=259)

## Next

*Quick thing to do now:* Find out if your computer has a microphone

*Something for later:* Try out Audacity and/or Screencast-o-matic and check the results

*Something with colleagues:* Get feedback on your recordings