

CONSIDERATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLETION OF SECTION 3 OF REVISED ACADEMIC OFFERING FORM ONLINE AND BLENDED DELIVERY

Please consult: [*Principles for Quality Assurance of DCU E-learning & Blended Provision*](#)

Education Committee will consider a change in mode of delivery to online or highly blended which meet the following criteria:

- The programme **must** be part-time taught postgraduate;
- Students will be predominately off campus (more than half of the learner contact will be online).

SECTION 3: ONLINE AND BLENDED DELIVERY

IF THE PROGRAMME IS TO BE DELIVERED ONLINE OR USING BLENDED LEARNING AS PER CRITERIA ABOVE PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ON LEARNING DESIGN AND SCAFFOLDED INTERACTION

1. LEARNING DESIGN

a) Design Standards

Teaching and design staff should articulate and document learning outcomes, assessment practices, and justification for teaching and learning within learning objects and environments. This transparency should be visible in all elements of course design.

- (i) Outline briefly how this requirement will be addressed.
 - (ii) Consider how Loop will be designed to support the programme delivery.
 - (iii) Please provide details of the plans in place for communication to students to explain why learning is organised in a particular way.
- Consistent with DCU's requirements, all learning outcomes and assessment practices will need to be explicit in Course Builder.
 - A common design template for Loop should be developed in consultation with the DCU Studio for all modules across the programme.
 - Consider what design features, structure and standards will be in this template to help meet specific learning outcomes and support assessment practices.
 - Consider how the programme will commit to a common design standard in Loop across modules for using content, including recorded videos, to support the learning outcomes consistent with the programme philosophy.
 - Consider how the programme will commit to a common design standard across modules for teaching and facilitation of learning through live synchronous classes using Zoom consistent with the programme philosophy.
 - Consider how continuous assessment is designed across the programme to ensure variety and innovative use of new learning technologies in meeting the learning outcomes.
 - Consider how continuous assessment has been mapped across the programme to scaffold learning, help sequence major assessment tasks and manage the demands on student workload.
 - Consistent with programmes that are delivered face-to-face, this programme should ensure that in the conduct of all teaching and learning and assessment activities the full fifteen weeks of semester will be utilised

b) Presence

- (i) How does the programme and module design ensure teacher presence? Please detail some of the activities that will demonstrate and ensure teacher presence. How are expectations of the teacher's availability made explicit?
- (ii) How will learners be encouraged to be active and present throughout the programme of study?

- Consider how the design of the common Loop template across the programme will help to convey a strong sense of teacher presence.
- Consider how content, including recorded video, will be designed across the programme to help convey a strong sense of teacher presence.
- Consider how asynchronous interaction through Loop discussion fora will be used across the programme to convey a strong sense of teacher presence.
- Consider how live synchronous classes will be used across the programme to convey a strong sense of the teacher presence.
- Consider what expectations there will be across the programme in terms of teacher availability for student consultations and response time to discussion posts in Loop.
- Consider how learners will be expected to engage both synchronously and asynchronously to promote active learning and their presence.

c) Flexibility

- (i) Please provide details on how the programme will accommodate the need for student flexibility in the context of online or blended delivery.

- Consider how the design of content, including recorded videos, across the programme will support flexible learning.
- Consider how core and supplementary content will be distinguished in the common Loop design template to help students prioritise and allocate sufficient time for their self-directed flexible learning.
- Consider how the programme is intentionally designed to encourage students to use the DCU Library and other online resources to find, engage with and share additional readings and course materials.
- Consider how the timetabling of live synchronous classes will take into consideration students who may be working full or part-time.
- Consider how you have incorporated advice and feedback from the DCU Studio and Teaching Enhancement Unit in supporting flexibility in the programme delivery.

d) Blended and online technology use

- (i) What continuous professional development has been undertaken by academic staff with respect to online or blended learning and how is that training reflected in the programme design and through the selection of the variety of tools by academic staff in preparation for the roll-out of this programme?
- (ii) What consideration has been given to the technology tools to be chosen to enhance or support the intended learning outcomes? Are the tools supported by DCU?

- Report recent professional development activities the programme team has completed, or plans to participate in, to support the online or blended delivery model.

- Report what efforts have been taken to ensure the programme design is informed by contemporary learning design and research on online or blended delivery.
- Demonstrate with examples how expert consultations and professional development has influenced the programme design.
- Describe how Loop will be used to support teaching, learning and assessment consistent with the programme philosophy.
- Consider whether the proposed online tools and platforms for online or blended programme delivery are adequately supported and they clearly ‘add value’ to students’ learning.

e) Alignment and Coherence

Modules should see a close alignment between the types of technology utilised, forms of assessment, and design choices.

- Outline briefly how this requirement will be addressed, using specific module examples.
- Outline what engagement has taken place or is planned to take place with DCU Studio with respect to the development of online or blended delivery?

- Report the level of engagement with the DCU Studio and Teaching Enhancement Unit and how these consultations have contributed to programme alignment and coherence.
- Consider how the choice of different activities, learning resources and the purposeful blend of technologies used across the programme maps to those outlined in the [ABC Learning Design Framework](#).
- Report efforts to map the choice of assessment practices and use of innovative learning technologies across the programme to ensure they align with learning outcomes and there is sufficient depth, challenge, and variety.

2. SCAFFOLDED INTERACTION

a) Scaffolding appropriate learning technology use

- Learners have two ways of engaging in a module, one is by directed learning by the academic/facilitator and the other is self-directed. How will students be given support in learning to how to effectively use learning technology for their study and encouraged to be active in their self-directed learning in the context of the online or blended environment?
 - Consider how the programme will support student readiness for online or blended learning by promoting a range of study skill resources, including Discover and DCU’s FutureLearn course, “[A Digital Edge: Essentials for the Online Learner](#)”.
 - Consider how the common programme Loop design template will embed relevant links and study resources available through DCU central units, including the Library and Student Support & Development.
 - Consider with examples how the programme delivery will maximise opportunities for active learning and small group activities (both synchronous and asynchronous) consistent with the programme philosophy.
 - Consider with examples how assessment practices will encourage students to engage in self-directed learning activities with other students.

b) Facilitating independent and inter-student engagement

- (i) How is the programme designed to promote a rich, vibrant and socially interactive learning community? What elements of your programme and module design encourage students to actively engage online with their peers?
- (ii) How will interaction be encouraged between learners and teacher?
 - Consider across the programme how you will ensure sufficient time is allocated for student discussion during live synchronous lectures and what balance is expected between teacher delivery and learner-learner interactivity.
 - Consider across the programme how you will design learning activities to actively engage students in asynchronous learner-learner interactivity.
 - Consider across the programme how you will purposefully use polls, formative quizzes, and other online sharing tools such as the Loop Board as a design feature to generate student interest and online discussions.
 - Consider across the programme whether you will incorporate an element of peer assessment to intentionally design for students to actively engage with their peers.
 - Consider across the programme whether you will provide opportunities for live synchronous ‘drop-in’ workshops related to major assessment tasks where students can ask questions and seek advice about forthcoming assignments.
 - Consider whether you will design a ‘parent’ Loop programme site to provide administrative support, access to key online resources relevant to all modules, and to promote student interactivity and a wider sense of community across the programme.
 - Consider whether you will offer regular events or guest speaker webinars open to all students across the programme.

c) Supporting digital best practices

- (i) How is the programme informed by international benchmarks and contemporary literature on online or blended delivery?
- (ii) How will the teaching and learning approaches ensure student awareness of academic ethical awareness and integrity?
- (iii) How have you taken account of the [principles of academic integrity](#) and the [universal design for learning](#) in the development of the programme?
 - Consider how the programme design can be mapped to or has been influenced by the different learning activities presented in the [ABC Learning Design Framework](#).
 - Briefly report what research informs the programme design and who you have consulted with in identifying relevant literature (e.g., NIDL Director, subject matter expert, etc).
 - Report whether any other quality frameworks or useful resources for designing effective online or blended delivery offerings have helped to influence the programme design and, if so, how. (e.g., [Blended Learning Guide](#), [EMBED Guidelines](#), [Quality Matters Design Rubric](#), [QQI Blended Learning Guidelines](#), [NIDL Teaching Online Resource Bank](#) & [Student Workload Calculator](#)).
 - Report how the programme has taken into consideration DCU’s [Principles of Academic Integrity](#) and those related to the [Universal Design for Learning](#).

3. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (APPLICABLE TO ALL PROGRAMMES ONLINE OR BLENDED)

By ticking the boxes below the programme proposer(s) are committing to the following actions:

- | | | |
|---|-----|--------------------------|
| 1. Learning materials are tailored and updated regularly | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. DCU QA Processes are embedded in design processes | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. A culture and cycle of 'continuous improvement' is applied internally | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Student feedback is collated, documented and where appropriate, actioned | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Ongoing consultations with the DCU Studio and Teaching Enhancement Unit | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |