



# Course Good Practice Guide

20/21

## Introduction

In the academic year 2019/20 UAL published the Good Practice Guide which outlined best practice in relation to 12 key areas relating to communication, course organisation and management and key priority areas within teaching and learning. At LCC significant work has been carried out in these areas.

Since then we have seen our teaching & learning practices transformed as we've responded to the covid-19 pandemic and lockdown. Course Teams have worked consistently, at speed and with great agility to pivot to online teaching. We now approach blended delivery whilst making plans for those students unable to attend on-site for periods of time. This again means changing our pedagogic approaches to adapt to an evolving situation with flexibility and making accommodations. At the same time as responding to these changes, key areas relating to course organisation and management, student experience and equity in assessment continue to be ongoing priorities.

This **Course Good Practice Guide** brings together existing resources to support all of this on-going work under key headings such as: Community, Timetabling / Delivery, Communication, Valuing Attendance, Diversify & Decolonise the Curriculum, Build the Course Team. It highlights the Good Practice that is already happening at LCC in these areas and contains links to further guidance and resources.

We hope it is a useful reference point to support you with course planning, delivery and assessment, as well as supporting your broader work around student experience.

## Content

Building Student Community ...	1
Partnership ...	2
Timetable Stability ...	3
Communication ...	4
Signposting ...	5
Value Student Attendance ...	6
Personalised Learning ...	7
Diversify and Decolonise ...	8
Build the Course Team ...	9
Enhance ...	10
Inspire ...	11
Listen ...	11

## Building Student Community

Developing a strong cohort culture, a sense of belonging and student community supports students' transition, retention and attainment. Great work is being undertaken at LCC in this area. Drawing on that good practice, we would suggest:

- Meet with student groups at the beginning of the year to discuss what's ahead, set and manage expectations, and with second and third year students let them know how we have responded to their USS feedback. Identify at least three positive actions that have been taken in response to USS feedback to share with current students.
- Draw upon the diversity of your students and adopt an enhancement approach that recognises students' strengths, skills and prior experiences; provide opportunities and explain how important it is they learn from one another.
- Offer community building opportunities within year groups and across year groups so students can get to know their peers, either as part of the curriculum or through extra curricula activities. For example set up on-line interest groups or utilise Workflow, MyBlog or Padlet so students can make their work visible to each other and start discussions.
- Consider asking students to make short films or audio pieces introducing themselves that can be shared.
- Incorporate opportunities for peer-to-peer learning through introducing Peer Mentors or Peer Assisted Learning.
- Use Moodle Forums to give your students opportunities to engage with each other and with you and the course team online. This will help address the isolation that some students may be experiencing if they are unable to attend on-site.
- Identify potential barriers to a student's sense of belonging and work to develop teaching strategies that nurture belonging especially for minority and marginalised student groups.

**Read about Fostering Belonging & Compassionate Pedagogy:**  
[https://www.arts.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/223417/AEM3\\_FBCP.pdf](https://www.arts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/223417/AEM3_FBCP.pdf)

## Partnership

Our ethos is to work in partnership with students and to provide opportunities for engagement, feedback and support. At this time of unprecedented change and related anxieties, it's important we sense check our tutorial support systems, both pastoral and academic. We would suggest that you:

- Have a course management structure appropriate to the size of the course that enables regular and close engagement and sense of community for students.
- Outline to students Tutor's roles and responsibilities on the course, e.g. Course Leader, Year Leader, Unit Leaders, Personal Tutors; when they are available, onsite or online, for bookable tutorials and Office Hours.
- Explain how do you want students to communicate with you about how they are feeling about their lives and their studies. At this difficult time it is good to give students a chance to 'check in' referring to issues or challenges that are important to them (and a chance to share successes and good news).

## Timetable Stability

We're adapting to changing circumstances and on-going health & safety advice constantly at this time. Great work is being undertaken at speed to respond to this and to deliver to students studying both on-site and online. Students' will naturally feel the need for reassurance and will appreciate a stable weekly timetable that's predictable and easily accessible, regardless of location and time zone. In light of this, we would suggest you:

- Provide a clear and predictable timetable that remains the same from week to week and never cancel any teaching sessions (put in place a plan for cancellations).
- Schedule Activity - Students will be looking for elements of routine in a world that feels uncertain and insecure. Make sure that students have a fixed weekly schedule that they can locate easily online that combines synchronous and asynchronous activity.
- For online teaching & learning prioritise asynchronous (self paced) activities over synchronous (real time) ones. For synchronous online delivery consider time zones and schedule sessions for when they will be accessible. Record these sessions when possible.
- Ensure that the online mode is sufficiently comprehensive to enable a student to meet the learning outcomes by accessing resources, teaching and learning remotely. Design teaching as a structured flow of synchronous sessions and asynchronous activities or content, treating on-site sessions as one of the synchronous options. This way the 'online core' of the course acts as the principle structure, with on-site sessions included where practical and pedagogically relevant.
- We advise not using hybrid approaches: it may seem sensible to try to teach across the on-site and online spaces concurrently (sometimes referred to as Hybrid teaching). This can be difficult to do well and those in the online space can feel 'distanced' by this approach.

**Further Guidance can be found through this link:**

<https://www.arts.ac.uk/about-ual/teaching-and-learning-exchange/teaching-online>

## Communication

Given the evolving nature of covid-19 and blended or online delivery, regular, timely and easily accessible communications to students are key. Great work is being undertaken at LCC on this. We would recommend you:

- Provide regular communication identifying what is happening each week for the students and signpost enhancement activity around the taught curriculum using Moodle Announcements and Forums.
- Consider greater use of audio and video in your communication. It adds a personal touch and helps develop a sense of community. You can use Panopto to easily make quick videos to include in Moodle Announcements.
- Follow the latest guidance on how to structure your Moodle site following four design principles: logical (topic areas organised weekly or thematically); predictable (content should be easy to find & familiar); accessible (pages should meet Web Accessibility Guidelines); Mobile Friendly (activities & resources must adapt and display on a variety of devices).
- Use the Staff Guide to Moodle Unit Sites, accessible here: <https://lccteaching.myblog.arts.ac.uk/files/2020/08/Staff-Guide-to-Moodle-Unit-Sites.pdf>
- Use approved Unit Guide ,Unit Assignment and Project Brief templates to communicate unit information to students and details of assessment tasks.

**See Staff Guide to Unit Guides and Staff Guide to Unit Assignment & Project Briefs on the Coursewares Page on the LCC Teaching & Learning Hub:**

<https://lccteaching.myblog.arts.ac.uk/teaching-and-learning-%20resources/>

## Signposting

More than ever at this time, students' will need signposting to specialist advice and guidance, including the revised Extenuating Circumstances Process in light of covid-19. We suggest you:

- Signpost the students to academic support services and communicate when they will have their regular tutorials. Make sure the tutorial statement on Moodle clearly sets out who tutors are and the ways students can access tutorial support.
- Explain the revised Extenuating Circumstances process in light of covid-19.
- Use LCC Tutor Handbook as a resource to direct students to specific services such as Student Services, Disability & Dyslexia Support, Careers & Employability, Language Centre, Academic Support, International Student Support.

### Revised Extenuating Circumstances

<https://www.arts.ac.uk/coronavirus-important-guidance/autumn-term-202021-attendance-and-enrolment>

LCC Tutor Handbook can be accessed via the link below:

<https://lccteaching.myblog.arts.ac.uk/course-organisation/>

## Value Student Attendance

Given the current situation students' attendance, both on-site and online, will be affected. It's important to monitor attendance and to signpost those students struggling to engage with the appropriate tutorial support and support services. We would recommend you:

- Monitor attendance and contact students when they are not present - this is vital for first year students to create a non-punitive culture of attendance that indicates their engagement is valued.
- Value students' online engagement - track student engagement and celebrate positive engagement to motivate students. Identify students who are not engaging online and follow up in a supportive way that recognises the complex challenges students may be experiencing. See Online student engagement policy below.
- Utilise the support of LCC's Academic Progression Tool (APT) – a collaborative monitoring and communication aide for prioritising support for students. APT provides course teams with a unique combination of information about their students through a secure and interactive workbook. APT also offers assistance for reaching out to students who are struggling to engage.

Read more about the LCC Academic Progression Tool here:

<https://lccteaching.myblog.arts.ac.uk/supporting-our-new-students/>

Read the AEM Toolkit on Teaching for Retention:

[https://www.arts.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/201935/Teaching-for-Retention-PDF-489KB.pdf](https://www.arts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/201935/Teaching-for-Retention-PDF-489KB.pdf)

Read the Online student engagement policy:

<https://canvas.arts.ac.uk/documents/sppreview/a1a9e73a-3587-4c9e-b4dd-c1aa52984cff>

## Personalised Learning

LCC's work on recognising the importance of students' individual identity and interests in relation to their learning is significant and growing, working towards eliminating awarding gaps. In light of this substantive work, we would recommend you:

- Track the performance of students, and identify those who are not engaging or whose learning needs are not being met. Pay close attention to individuals who are members of groups who are most affected by awarding differentials.
- Build into your course methods for the early identification of students' support needs and ensure they are met through consistent and effective tutoring. The Academic Progression Tool (APT) can help with this from year 1.
- Offer inclusive assessment methods which provide students with flexible ways to demonstrate their knowledge and ensures that their identity, experience and backgrounds are acknowledged and supported.
- Offer opportunities for formative assessment and formative assessment feedback such as 'fit-to-submit' in-unit tutorials.
- Utilise the rich range of resources that have been developed to support the development of inclusive teaching, learning and assessment through the Academic Enhancement Model (AEM)

### Read about Supporting Attainment in Unit Design:

[https://www.arts.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/201934/Supporting-attainment-with-unit-design-PDF-683KB.pdf](https://www.arts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/201934/Supporting-attainment-with-unit-design-PDF-683KB.pdf)

### Learn more about Creating Inclusive Assessment Briefs:

[https://www.arts.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0023/190148/AEM-Creating-Inclusive-Briefs-PDF-304KB.pdf](https://www.arts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0023/190148/AEM-Creating-Inclusive-Briefs-PDF-304KB.pdf)

### Read about eliminating inequality in formative assessment:

[https://www.arts.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/190153/AEM-Eliminating-Inequality-Formative-Assessment-PDF-288KB.pdf](https://www.arts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/190153/AEM-Eliminating-Inequality-Formative-Assessment-PDF-288KB.pdf)

<https://lcc-teaching.myblog.arts.ac.uk/teaching/inclusive-teaching-and-learning-practices/>

## Diversify and Decolonise

In our work to close awarding gaps, we've paid close attention to diversifying, decolonising and internationalising the curriculum at course & unit level and in our assessment methods. Drawing on and developing this work further, we would recommend you:

- Engage in the development work around student diversity and diversifying the curriculum, reviewing course contents, visiting practitioners and reading lists to ensure the currency and relevance of curricula to our students.
- Research in attainment suggests decolonising the curriculum improves the student experience by identifying and dismantling barriers to access and success in HE. Decolonising the curriculum interrogates the on-going impact and legacies of colonialism and imperialism on the production of knowledge and the dominance of the western European canon.
- It is critical that we offer inclusive and diverse curricula. Draw on the decolonising zines and Shades of Noir resources to diversify online curriculum.
- The Liberate the Curriculum Project at LCC involves academic course teams, students and librarians collaborating to review and reimagine reading lists and course resources through the lens of 'liberation' and 'decolonisation' within broader debates about how disciplines have been developed and who has developed them.

### Utilise the Decolonising Reading List Toolkit:

[https://www.arts.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0021/201936/Decolonising-reading-lists-PDF-703KB.pdf](https://www.arts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0021/201936/Decolonising-reading-lists-PDF-703KB.pdf)

### Read more about the Decolonising Zines and shades of noir:

<https://decolonisingtheartscurriculum.myblog.arts.ac.uk/>

<https://shadesofnoir.org.uk/>

### Read more about strategies for de-biasing in the curriculum:

[https://www.arts.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/190152/AEM-De-biasing-Strategies-PDF-294KB.pdf](https://www.arts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/190152/AEM-De-biasing-Strategies-PDF-294KB.pdf)

### Engage with our on-going work to internationalise the curriculum by using this tool to stimulate reflection and discussion about internationalisation within the context of your teaching:

[https://www.arts.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/190154/AEM-Internationalising-curriculum-PDF-313KB.pdf](https://www.arts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/190154/AEM-Internationalising-curriculum-PDF-313KB.pdf)

## Build the Course Team

These are challenging times for teams – adapting to new working methods, meeting students' needs both on-site and online, adapting our pedagogies, responding to a fast evolving situation with speed and agility. We recognise these challenges and are mindful of staff well-being as a consequence of these. We would suggest you:

- Plan regular course team meetings to discuss the philosophy, shared team vision and delivery of the course, and judge how things are going across the whole provision, to counter silo experiences in units and years.
- Support the course team by having regular online course team meetings to help you judge how things are going across the whole course offer week by week. Check in with staff to make sure they are getting the support they need.

**Signpost staff to the Well-Being pages on Canvas for support and guidance:**

<https://canvas.arts.ac.uk/sites/explore/SitePage/73721/wellbeing>

**Make staff aware of the Employee Assistance Programme – a confidential advisory and counselling service run by the company CiC:**

<https://canvas.arts.ac.uk/Video/42416/employee-assistance-programme-video-test>

## Enhance

Great work has been undertaken at LCC as part of the Academic Enhancement Model and utilising the AEM Toolkit has led to changes to the curriculum, to our pedagogies and our assessment methods. Building on this existing work, we would recommend you:

- Engage positively with the Academic Enhancement Model process, annual monitoring and the resources available for assurance and enhancement.

**There are three strands to AEM in 2020/21**

**Fostering Belonging & Compassionate Pedagogy:** exploring how belonging relates to learning, teaching and student success.

**Enhancing Assessment for Equity:** addressing attainment by focussing on equitable assessment for learning with the aim of eliminating awarding differentials.

**Decolonising Pedagogy & Curriculum:** involving a set of on-going and emerging practices which evolve out of reflections on how to improve the experience of all students but especially those who are marginalised.

**Read more about AEM 2020/21:**

<https://lccteaching.myblog.arts.ac.uk/course-organisation/academic-enhancement-model/>

## Inspire

Ensure students have confidence in the university, college and course. This doesn't mean we do not want feedback, we certainly do. And we want to make changes when we can, or explain when we cannot.

This is an uncertain time for students and they will be looking to us to inspire confidence and to build trust in UAL at this difficult time. We may not have all the answers but we can reassure students (even when things might feel uncertain for us too). Ensuring students have confidence in the university, college and course will help students focus on their learning in a positive way.

## Listen

This is new territory and we can get better fast if we take the time to listen to students and staff and make adjustments to our pedagogies as we progress through the academic year.