



# TEACHING & LEARNING FRAMEWORK

For Academic Years 2022/3 & 2023/4

## Contents

Background .....	1
What will the teaching environment look like? .....	2
Timetabling .....	3
What should my teaching look like? .....	3
Supporting learning resources .....	4
Ensuring accessibility of learning resources .....	4
Assessment & Feedback .....	5
Technology .....	5
Supporting Our Students .....	6
Connection, belonging and cohort identity .....	6
How should I guide my students in their learning? .....	6

## Background

A temporary teaching and learning framework (TLF) was introduced in 2020/21 as part of the University's emergency response to the need to continue programme delivery within the constraints associated with the pandemic. This was then continued in a revised form for 2021/22. Alongside this, work being undertaken as part of the University's Portfolio Review Pathway (PRP) has led to the development of proposals to make long-term, institution-wide changes to the structure of the academic year, programme expectations, and enhancing learning activities through the use of technology. It is intended that these proposed changes come to fruition at the start of the 2024/25 academic year, giving time for Schools and Functions to implement the proposals in a thoughtful and planned manner.

This revised TLF is intended to support the institution's transition from current practice to the future approaches outlined in the proposals, alongside the implementation work being carried out under the Portfolio Review Pathway. It does not, therefore, specify a teaching approach that must be adopted by Schools but, rather, describes some key expectations for the student experience at Reading. It aims to encourage Schools to continue to deliver the ambitions explicated by the revised [Curriculum Framework](#), whilst highlighting opportunities to make some incremental programme and module improvements, as we prepare for the implementation of the recommendations arising from the Portfolio Review Pathway.

**Please note that this revised TLF is intended to be used by staff as support for planning, developing and delivering teaching and learning activities. Whilst it is**

not intended to be used for direct dissemination to students, it will hopefully be useful as a basis for Schools to prepare communications that are tailored to their programmes and student cohorts.

## What will the teaching environment look like?

The emergency-response blended approach adopted by the University during the pandemic was key to providing the flexibility needed for Schools to be able to continue programme delivery, whilst responding to shifts in government policy, legal requirements and ensuring the safety of our community. However, for the academic year 2022-23 onwards, we will be working on the premise of there being no pandemic-related restrictions to programme-related activity.

- With the lifting of pandemic-related restrictions, for timetabling purposes, teaching room capacity will return to pre-pandemic levels.
- We believe that the best learning experience for our students arises from being part of our campus community. Therefore, for the academic years 2022/3 and 2023/4, students will be expected to be able to engage with their programmes through on-campus activities. Students will not be able to enrol for study 'at a distance' (except for programmes which have been specifically designed and marketed as distance-learning programmes, and post-graduate research programmes/students for which distance study has been approved).
- It is recognised that, in future, students may still have periods of illness, or need to self-isolate for short periods of time, due to COVID-19 infection. This will be managed as for other short-term illnesses, with application of the Exceptional Circumstances process, where appropriate.
- The [University's Learning Capture solution](#) (using software called 'YuJa') will enable and support personal learning capture (e.g., screencasts). Staff can also continue to use existing methods for creating screencasts in conjunction with YuJa.
- From 2022/23, YuJa will enable audio and screen capture of live face-to-face teaching sessions in [centrally bookable teaching spaces](#). Schools should provide students with clear information about how Learning Capture will be adopted within their programme (e.g., the types of activity that students might expect to be recorded).

*NB: The Learning Capture policy and associated guidance is being updated to take account of this. Links will be added to this document at a later date (estimated to be by the end of Summer term 2022).*

## Timetabling

Teaching sessions will normally be timetabled for 60 minutes' duration, or multiples thereof. It is important that teaching is completed within 50 minutes of the 60-minute slot, so that a minimum of 10 minutes is available to allow changeover. This is particularly important given that teaching sessions will not be 'staggered', as they have been during the pandemic.

## What should my teaching look like?

- The main mode of delivery of programmes will be on-campus face-to-face.
- In line with pre-pandemic practice of encouraging innovation in pedagogical approaches and technology enhanced learning, schools are encouraged to reflect on their experience of the past two years (taking into consideration student feedback) and, where pedagogically appropriate, explore and integrate online learning activities that have a clear benefit in enhancing the student experience and/or supporting inclusive practice.
- Note that, in order to meet our current contractual obligations to students, the main mode of delivery for 2022/3 and 2023/4 **must** be face-to-face (unless explicitly stated otherwise in the existing programme specification). Schools should be mindful of this when considering the extent of online learning activities to maintain/introduce.
- Given that students will be expected to be on campus, there will not be a need for duplication of sessions in different modes (i.e., teaching the same session face-to-face and online), or hybrid teaching (i.e., live teaching sessions involving both students in the classroom and students online).
  - It is recognised that, in a small number of scenarios, carefully designed hybrid teaching may be appropriate. Staff can employ hybrid teaching approaches in these limited situations if they wish – noting there will not be centralised support for such activity. Schools wishing to incorporate hybrid teaching sessions should discuss this with their Teaching & Learning Dean. Further guidance on Hybrid Teaching can be found [here](#).
- Schools must ensure that they continue to meet the contact hours described in their module descriptions and programme specifications.

It is important that different teaching and learning activities, however they are delivered, are aligned and explicitly connected or related to each other to form a coherent learning path and help students achieve their module and programme learning outcomes. The relationship needs to be made clear: for example, asking students to watch or read material because this will prepare them for discussions that will take place in a seminar or workshop.

Teaching activities should be designed to be engaging and inclusive:

- For information on designing engaging online learning activities, see [Designing learning activities using TEL](#)
- For information on building inclusivity into teaching and learning activities, see [Inclusive practice in teaching and learning](#)

Live sessions, whether on campus or online, should provide students with the opportunity to raise questions about content and actively engage with their learning, for example, through debates, discussion, and problem-solving tasks.

## Supporting learning resources

Whilst the focus of our teaching and learning delivery will be through face-to-face activities, you may wish to adapt or re-use resources developed as part of the emergency Blended Learning approach and provide them to future cohorts as supplementary or support materials. This may include handouts, targeted reading, or digital material. Existing learning resources (for example, Study Advice, Library, LinkedIn Learning, virtual labs, etc) may also continue to be useful. Such materials should be selected with care, ensuring that they continue to be relevant and appropriate.

- Consider the amount of supplementary material you are requiring students to engage with, and how long they may spend on these activities.

[Student Study Advice Guides and Videos](#)

## Ensuring accessibility of learning resources

It is a legal requirement that audio and video recordings must meet accessibility standards. A key accessibility step is to include captions. Videos recorded in or uploaded to YuJa will benefit from the system's auto-captioning and transcript features. This enables students to take advantage of YuJa's accessible player features. For example, they can download the accompanying transcript, adjust the format and position of on-screen captions, enable audio description tracks where they have been made available, as well as utilise extensive keyboard shortcuts for viewing and navigation.

Blackboard Ally can efficiently assist you in creating accessible materials. The University also provides accessible templates for PowerPoint and Word.

[Making inclusive teaching and learning resources](#)

[University policy for Captioning and Transcription of Recorded Sessions](#)



## Assessment & Feedback

Assessment must follow what is outlined on a given Module Description Form.

- Ahead of a new academic year, Schools are encouraged to review assessment practices and work to ensure that the volume and type of assessment is appropriate for assessing the learning outcomes of their modules. This may include:
  - moving towards a reduced number of assessments per module, particularly where the equivalent of a 20-credit module has more than three assessments
  - reducing reliance on ‘unseen invigilated examinations’

*NB such changes should only be made as part of the University’s normal module/programme review cycle and process – see the [CQSD Policy & Procedure](#) webpages for further information. Changes to the overall method of assessment across programmes should only be considered for new intakes.*

- Wherever possible, coursework should be submitted online, except where online submission is technically not possible or is not consistent with fair assessment of the work.
- Centrally timetabled, ‘end-of-year’ written examinations will, by default, be administered online – MDFs will contain a statement highlighting where it has been agreed that a module will be associated with an ‘in-person’ examination. Schools should ensure that they communicate to their students the format that they will be adopting for such assessments in their modules/programmes.
  - ‘In-person’ examinations will normally be restricted to assessments meeting one or more of the following criteria:
    - ‘In-person’ examination is a requirement of programme accreditation by a relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body
    - An assessment is highly technical/quantitative in nature
    - Significant issues have been experienced/are anticipated affecting the assessment’s academic integrity

## Technology

A range of technologies that support teaching and learning will continue to be available, including Blackboard, Blackboard Collaborate, Microsoft Teams meetings and YuJa. Guidance on the appropriate technologies for different teaching and learning activities, and details about the facilities and support are available at the links below.

[TEL website](#)

[Blackboard Help for Staff](#)

[Blackboard Help for Students](#)

## Supporting Our Students

Academic Tutor meetings can be held face-to-face or online, according to students' preference. Schools may also wish to continue practices found to be effective during the pandemic, for example, the use of scheduled office hours (either on-campus or virtual).

[Microsoft Bookings – schedule appointments and offices hours with students](#)

### Connection, belonging and cohort identity

Supporting cohort cohesion and fostering cohort identity is particularly important for student satisfaction and optimal learning. Whilst this was a particular challenge during the pandemic, we should not forget the importance of this aspect as part of future practice.

Students need opportunities to learn collaboratively and to feel part of a learning community. Formative and summative assessments often contain elements of group work and presentation which provide an opportunity for interaction and getting to know fellow students. Feedback also creates opportunities for social connection and interaction. Continued use of digital approaches may help to create informal spaces for peer-to-peer learning outside of scheduled teaching.

Linking the students' experience of their programme and modules to support from Academic Tutors, Support Centres and Student Services, and to school or university-level events, can be valuable in developing a sense of belonging and connectedness. Schools are encouraged to consider offering a range of activities in this context.

### How should I guide my students in their learning?

The following teaching activities will be reflected in students' timetables:

- Modular teaching events
- Programme level co-curricular events
- Department level co-curricular events (a small number of essential events)
- Field trips
- Assessments taking place in a specified timetabled slot (except for formal examinations scheduled by the Examinations team) and their associated preparation sessions

Feedback from students and staff has shown us that students value guidance from their lecturers to help them to structure their learning, particularly in relation to what preparation, reading and/or other activities they should be doing, which may include advice on how long they may normally expect to spend on these activities.

- Module convenors will continue to provide a module roadmap at the beginning of each module. These will provide students with an overview of how the module will be delivered. Schools may use the template provided at the link below or produce their

own module roadmap template. Schools are encouraged to be consistent in the approach they adopt.

- The module convenor will ensure that students are informed on a weekly basis of what they are expected to do in the coming week. This information can be provided in a variety of ways, including:
  - Completing and sharing a weekly plan
  - Posting a weekly Blackboard announcement outlining expectations
- Weekly plans might also be used as a place to signify which teaching sessions will be recorded as part of the School's approach to Learning Capture.
- Further information on module roadmaps and weekly learning plans can be found at [Module Roadmaps and Weekly Plans](#)
- It is recommended that students are signposted to guidance on how they can use these weekly plans to create their own personalised plan of learning. The Study Advice webpages have guidance for students on time management and planning learning: [Study Advice – Time Management](#)
- In line with our policy on Inclusive Practice (under section 8d on the [CQSD Guide to Policies & Procedures for Teaching and Learning](#) webpages), learning resources/materials will be made available to students at least two working days prior to the corresponding 'live' activity. However, this is a minimum expectation and, in many cases, earlier access will be required, for example where students are expected to undertake pre-session preparation.
  - It is suggested that, where possible, a regular pattern is adopted (for example, releasing supporting material for the next week's interactive session the day after the previous week's session) and that individual schools/ departments work towards standardising this to provide students with a consistent learning pattern.
- Staff preparing teaching and learning activities will work with their library liaison colleagues to ensure availability and access of any required/recommended reading and reference materials
  - Module convenors will work with their library liaison colleague to ensure the module Talis reading list is updated ahead of the start of their module(s)

[Online Reading Lists: a guide for Academic Staff](#)

## Version control

Version	Keeper	Reviewed	Approved by	Approval date
1.0	CQSD	Annually	UBTLSE	16/05/2022