Online Faciliators' Manual

Directorate of Digital Education

- Dr Vikki Pollard
- Kirstin Donaldson
- Kym Fizzell

Contents

1. Welcome

Welcome to Online Facilitating with ACU Online.

The Directorate of Digital Education (DDE) is responsible for supporting the courses and units in ACU Online. We offer 15 hours of Professional Learning (PL) to support you before, during and after your time as an Online Facilitator (OF). As a new OF, you are expected to complete the Online Facilitators' Course (6 hours) prior to Term and to undertake Networked Coaching (6 hours) during Term. Both of these are discussed in this Guide.

The aim is this Manual is to supplement what you learn in the Course and in Coaching. It will be used to orient your Coaching Sessions.

2. Getting Ready

Here's a checklist to get you ready for facilitation.

Time	Tasks	How	Tick box
2 weeks prior to Term start	Contact Lecturer in Charge, if you haven't already, to discuss unit		
	Begin and complete the Online Facilitators' Course	An email invite will be sent to you inviting you to the Canvas course. The Course starts 2 weeks prior to Term start. The Course closes the weekend of Term Start.	
	Book into coaching sessions – beginning week 1	An email invite will be sent to you asking you to book into coaching sessions.	
Week 0	In Canvas- review the content in the unit you will be teaching, including assessments.	An email invite will be sent to you asking you to log in	

Table 1 getting ready

3. ACU Mission

ACU Online recognises it's likely that our students come from many different faith backgrounds – or none – but we work within the framework of respect for our mission and tradition, and commit to the pursuit of knowledge, the dignity of the human person and the common good. All are welcome.

Mission, identity and values at ACU

4. ACU Online calendar

ACU Online operates 4 terms per year, with intakes in each. Important dates (acu.edu.au)

Census date falls on the Monday of week 3.

Census date

Week 0	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Break	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	
Onboarding	Teaching Weeks				Mid-term break	Teaching Weeks				Final assessment/ exam week

5. Your support teams from the Directorate of Digital Education

Facilitation and Coaching Team
Dr Vikki Pollard
vikki.pollard@acu.edu.au

Learning Analytics Support
Kirstin Donaldson
kirstin.donaldson@acu.edu.au

Student Success Coach
Carolyn Rundell
carolyn.rundell@acu.edu.au

Canvas support - please contact for any Canvas issues
learning.technologies@acu.edu.au

6. Your Wellbeing

Your wellbeing matters to us. Here's some information, tools and resources to support you in taking care of your wellbeing

Employment Information:

Staff Connect provides you with your employee information, such as, personal information, timesheets. Info here:
https://staff.acu.edu.au/human_resources/working-here/staff-connect-access-and-support

Wellbeing matters for staff:

https://staff.acu.edu.au/human_resources/your%20safety%20and%20wellbeing/wellbeing%20matters

Complaints, Disputes and Appeals re employment:

https://staff.acu.edu.au/human_resources/working%20here/working%20well%20with%20others/complaints%20disputes%20and%20appeals

Student Counselling in Student Portal:

Counselling (acu.edu.au)

Out of Hours student counselling:

https://staff.acu.edu.au/our_university/news/2020/may/out-of-hours%20crisis%20counselling%20line%20helping%20acu%20students%20to%20manage%20their%20studies

7. Online Facilitation

We call those who teach with ACU Online, Online Facilitators. It is different but equal to, other forms of teaching at ACU. Asynchronous teaching may be new for many, so we have developed the Online Facilitators' course as a guide to practice and expectations. You'll undertake this course two weeks prior to the start of Term.

This Manual is to help to remind you of what you learnt in the course and to help you as you deliver your unit. It will hopefully answer many of your questions. Don't ever hesitate to contact the Facilitation and Coaching Team for support as you deliver with ACU Online.

This Manual is developed to align with the following documents.

Institutional Alignment:
- ACU Education Strategy
- ACU 7 principles of Teaching and learning.
- ACU Learning and Teaching Policy
- ACU Learning and Teaching procedures
- ACU Assessment Policy
- ACU Evaluation of Learning and Teaching Policy
- ACU Empathy to Experience Project
- ACU Teaching Criteria and Standards Framework

External Alignment:
- Higher Education Standards Framework
- Quality Matters Rubrics and Standards
- The Australasian Council on Open, Distance and e-learning, hereafter referred to as ACODE TEL Framework
- TELAS Framework
- TEQSA Online learning good practice
- Stone, C. (2017)

We have developed a particular approach to online education that is aligned to the ACU Education Strategy.

The ACU Online education is:

Engaging and connected	A distinctive, innovative and student-centred curricula that is co-developed with students, industry and community that allows for multiple opportunities for connection with peers, teachers, the wider university, industry and community.
Inclusive and flexible	Designed to allow for student choice and for diverse learners, the curriculum is inclusive of the right to different points of view, open educational resources are incorporated and Indigenous knowings and global perspectives are embedded.
Supportive	A personalised learning experience with timely feedback, co-curricular programs and responsive support services allow students to thrive. A Community of Inquiry model underpins this support.
Experiential and reflective	'Real-world' learning experiences, professional learning experiences, authentic assessments and opportunities to take action and reflect on situations of disadvantage and injustice are embedded into the curriculum.
Consistent and equivalent	The student experience is consistent to ensure ease of navigation and alignment to learning outcomes and is equivalent to other modes of delivery.
Data informed	The analysis of rich actionable data combined with evidence-based research allows identification and management of at-risk students and informs targeted support strategies.

Table 2 ACU Online Principles for OFs

7.1   ASYNCHRONOUS DELIVERY: WHAT IS IT?

The different paradigm for teaching asynchronously offers new experiences and challenges including; new rewards and greater interactions with students (Coppola, Hiltz and Rotter, 2002), new frustrations and emotional connections (Morris, Xu & Finnegan, 2005) and the need to use learner analytics to support success and retention (Kebritchie, et al, 2017), amongst others.

7.2   SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

There are distinct roles for learners and teachers in an asynchronous learning environment designed with a social constructivist framework.

The **role of the learner** is to 'construct meaning and make sense of the educational experience' (Garrison, 2011: 22).

The role of the teacher is to design curriculum, facilitate learner discourse and reflection and offer direct instruction with the aim of supporting learners to construct meaning and achieve learning outcomes (Garrison, 2011: 24, cf Shaw et al, 2020). In the online environment, the teacher is very often supported with a team which includes learning designers and student support staff.

In terms of social constructivist online learning, there are three necessary 'presences which should be in place in any online learning environment' (Mbati, 2012: 196). These are social presence, cognitive presence and teaching presence. 'Meaningful learning is achieved by organising learning experiences that allow for' these (Garrison, 2011).

> '**Social presence** […] means creating a climate that supports and encourages probing questions, skepticism and the contribution of explanatory ideas (Garrison, 2011: 26)'.

> '**Cognitive presence** […] describes the intellectual environment that supports sustained critical discourse and higher-order knowledge acquisition and application (Garrison, 2011: 42)'.

> '**Teaching presence** refers to the design, Facilitation and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes" (Garrison, 2011: 24).

Teaching online differs from teaching on campus. Online teachers 'need new attitudes, knowledges and skills (Salmon, 2004: 9)'. The three CoI presences, with an understanding that they overlap, can be used to delineate how to develop online facilitation skills.
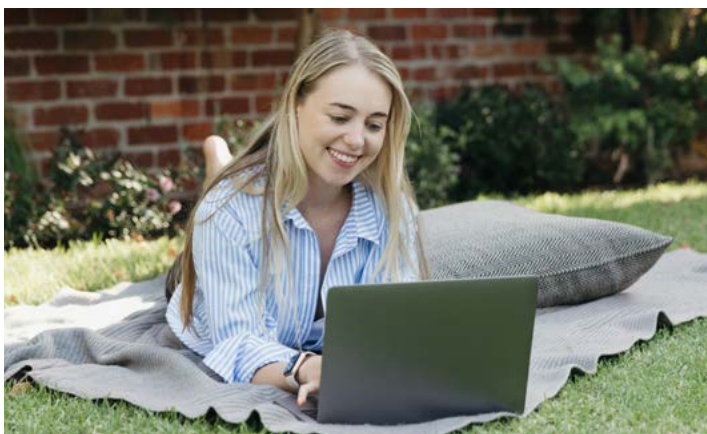
7.3 BEING AN ONLINE FACILITATOR FOR ACU ONLINE

Online Facilitators are absolutely crucial in building teacher-student and student-student relationships. A strong teacher-presence provides online students with a sense of belonging, helping them to feel connected to a community of learning and increasing their likelihood of persisting'. (Stone, 2017, p. 8). You will be critical 'in supporting and encouraging interaction and communication for knowledge and skill development in the interactive and collaborative online environments (Salmon, 2004, quoted in Baran et al, 2011: 427).

The **role of the ACU Online Facilitator (OF)** is to facilitate learner discourse and reflection, offer direct instruction with the aim of supporting learners to construct meaning and achieve learning outcomes and support students to succeed online (Garrison, 2011: 24, cf Shaw et al, 2020). Discussion boards are one of the main elements for such support.

As on ACU Online Facilitator you are expected to have the capabilities 'to establish and sustain the learning community to ensure progression toward intended educational goals' (Garrison, 2011: 58). The is achieved through facilitating discourses, clearly communicating goals and expectations, monitoring student achievements, assessing/evaluating and offering consistent and timely feedback. We have developed the following capabilities to encapsulate these ideas.

Capability	In action	Aligned to: ACU Online Principles
Clear and consistent communication	Write and/or deliver concise, motivating and personal messages. Communicate important course goals and topics. Communicate clear instructions on how to participate in course learning activities. Communicate clear expectations of online participation. Communicate important due dates/time frames for learning activities.	Engaging and connected Consistent, comparable and equivalent
Supportive of online learning	Support students to take advantage of the online environment in order to achieve. Help students to understand and practice the kinds of behaviors acceptable in online learning environments. Appreciate basic structures of online. Reaching out to students not displaying required online behaviours (including rules). Maintain student records through digital footprint data.	Supportive Consistent, comparable and equivalent
Ability to facilitate understandings	Support students in identifying areas of agreement and disagreement on course topics. Encourage students to explore concepts in the course. Support students to bring their experience to support conceptual understanding and integration. Trigger debates and encourage problem posing, Provide useful information from a variety of sources to support learning. Present content or questions that support students to explore ideas. Deliver learning activities. Provide active learning opportunities that allow self-assessment and preparation for assessment tasks With colleagues: Collaborate to ensure instruction is accurate and timely.	Inclusive Supportive Experiential and reflective Consistent, comparable and equivalent
Ability to facilitate discourse	Create channels for effective discourse Ensure teacher presence in discussions and ensure students are aware of it. Support the class towards agreement/understanding about course topics. Acknowledge student participation in the course. Keep students on task. Focus discussion on relevant issues. Synthesise/weave students' contributions.	Engaging and connected Inclusive Supportive Experiential and reflective Data informed
Able to assess and provide timely feedback	Deliver individualised feedback opportunities and practices. Provide feedback that acknowledges comprehension and integration of ideas. Support students to understand academic integrity. With colleagues: Take part in assessment panels and moderations.	Inclusive Supportive Experiential and reflective Data informed
Encourage enthusiasm and inclusion	Able to create an empathetic 'presence'. Encourage inclusive, respectful participation of learners. Create a welcoming and inclusive online environment. Facilitate a culture of critical inquiry and collaboration. Assign roles and determine groups where necessary. Value diversity, explore differences. Utilise different approaches to explaining concepts to facilitate a diverse range of students. Support students to collaborate with peers.	Engaging and connected Inclusive Supportive Experiential and reflective
Ability to evaluate and offer student support	Support the collection and analysis of evidence that contributes to continual improvement of Facilitation and learning and individual student support. Use special features to explore learner's use ie message history, amounts of time online Provide academic mentoring to students, including referring students to university services. Reflect on your own practice With colleagues: Participate in using evidence to implement changes to Facilitation.	Supportive Experiential and reflective Data informed

Table 3 OFs Capabilities Adapted from Arbaugh & Hwang (2006: 14), Salmon (2004) & Stone, C. (2017), Quality Matters

7.4 ACHIEVING EXPECTATIONS - ACU ONLINE PRACTICE NOTE

We have weekly expectations of Online Facilitators which will have you realise the capabilities described above. The table below outlines the weekly expectations of an Online Facilitator. It is referred to as the ACU Online Practice Note. The Note, as we'll call it from now on, has been designed to ensure that the student experience is coherent, equitable and engaging. It has been endorsed by the University Learning and Teaching Committee. Please refer to the glossary below for further explanation.

Activity	Week 0	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3 Census date	Week 4	Break	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Assessment week
Announce Beginning of week		Welcome	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Weekly wrap up		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Content Discussion Board (CDB) + Assessment DB (ADB)	Get to know unit	1 CDB	2CDB	1 CDB+ 1ADB	1CDB+ 1ADB		1 CDB + 1 ADB	1 CDB + 1 ADB	2CDB	1 CDB + 1ADB	
Provide Feedback			formative		formative		summative	formative	formative	summative	
Learning analytics reach out (RO)		to students not logging in	to students not actively participating	Census date	to students not actively participating			to students not actively participating			
Coaching	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	
Response times to emails		48 hours			24 hours	48 hours		24 hours	48 hours		24 hours
Assessment due					Assessment #1 DUE		Assessment #2 DUE				Assessment #3 DUE
Assessment session				Assessment #1			Assessment #2			Assessment #3	
Assessment marking							Assessment #1 return		Assessment #2 return		Assessment #3 return
Social session		Live/Video									

Table 4 ACU Online Practice Notes Expectations – assessment timings may vary

Glossary for Practice Note

Announcements:

> **Welcome:** A Welcome **video is required in the first week.** Use Canvas Studio to film yourself welcoming students and outlining what you'll be doing in the course. Keep it brief – 3 minutes- and general. It is suggested you do weekly welcomes.

> **Weekly Wrap up:** OFs are expected to post a short – not more than 3 minute (or equivalent) - **weekly** reflection/wrap up announcement using the announcement function. The aim is to be responsive to the weekly learnings, offer support, recognise student contributions, remind students about assessments/activities, etc.

Assessment session: OFs may be expected to run an assessment session to address questions and provide clarity. These sessions might be live or video/audio. Use BigBlueButton for these sessions - <u>Basic Features - Canvas – BigBlueButton.</u>

Assessment marking/return: Assessment marking takes place for two weeks after the assessment is submitted.

Discussion Boards: see section 5.3 below

Feedback: This is both summative and formative. See section 6 below

LA reach-out: See section 8 below

Response times: OFs are expected to respond to student's emails within one working day of receipt during assessment weeks and within two working days in non-assessment weeks. Students are encouraged to use assessment discussion boards (ADB) for assessment questions

Live sessions: OFs may run a short 'get to know you' live session in week 1 and/or post a video/announcement. This is aimed at developing social presence. Use BigBlueButton for these sessions - Basic Features - Canvas – BigBlueButton.

Teaching Coach team: See Section 4.6 below

Unit review: Contribute to Unit Review process.

'Wrap up' announcement: OFs are expected to post a short – not more than 3 minute (or equivalent) - weekly reflection/wrap up announcement using the announcement function. The aim is to be responsive to the weekly learnings, offer support, recognise student contributions, remind students about assessments/activities, etc.

Typical week for an Online Facilitator Current 14/01/2022	
7 hours per week delivery Expected log in twice a day on weekdays	
ACTIVITY	**TIME SPENT**
Discussion Boards (DBs)	3-4
Feedback	1-2
Content Management, using announcements and DBs.	Up to 1
Announcements	Up to 1
Learning Analytic Reach out	1-2
Meet with Online Facilitation Advisor (Coach)	0.5 (alternating weeks)
15 hours Professional Learning across 8 weeks (weekly average)	
ACTIVITY	**TIME SPENT**
Coaching	See above
Online Facilitator's Course	Approx 6 hours
Community of Practice	Approx 2 hours
6.25 hours student consult across 8 weeks (weekly average)	
ACTIVITY	**TIME SPENT**
Consult	0.5

Table 5 Typical week for an OF

8. Online Facilitators' Course

Two weeks prior to the start of the ACU Online Term.

This consists of 6 hours of online modules, designed and delivered by the Directorate of Digital Education. It includes Canvas training. You will be enrolled by the DDE and will receive an email invite.

9. Coaching

Coaching is aimed at supporting you to achieve the ACU Online Practice Note and to support you as you continue to be a reflective educator. Coaching occurs during the 8 week delivery; the week before, during and the week after. It is done with the Directorate of Digital Education and is consistent with research in professional development that finds benefits in working with a peer working to develop teaching practices (Boud & Brew, 2017).

You'll meet with your coach on a semi-regular basis and will be expected to set a goal for yourself that is aligned to the ACU Online Facilitation Principles.

Goal setting coaching

In the initial coaching session, the following four themes, based on SELT and ACU Online - Online Facilitation Principles are discussed. These themes are used in the initial coaching session to 'encourage teachers to consider their approach to teaching, unpack assumptions about online teaching, and to identify an area of their practice to hone' (Gilmore, 2021: 126). Bearing in mind that OFs need to demonstrate all four themes – only one is chosen as a focus for implementing a professional goal. The goal is developed in the initial session and evidence chosen as to how to evaluate if the goal is met. In the Break Week session (one hour) the goal can be evaluated through evidence and re-set or a new one set for the final 3 weeks.

Themes
1. I aim to explain key ideas or concepts clearly. (Experiential and reflective)
2. I aim to encourages active participation. (Engaged and Connected)
3. I aim to support the attainment of assessment tasks and provide timely and useful feedback. (Supportive)
4. I aim to respond to student needs and concerns. (Inclusive and Flexible)

Example:

- Theme 3: Supportive
- Goal: To ensure I provide regular formative feedback in a variety of modes
- Practice: What I will do to achieve goal (using ACU Online Practice Note as a guide)
- Evaluation: How will I know the gaol has been achieved?
- Evidence: research-based practice, quality and quantity of feedback itself, mid-unit student survey, learning analytics, reflections, case notes.
- Review: Ask a peer from my cohort to review

Practice

The practices are evidence-based. It is up to the OF to choose a practice and collect evidence.

Evaluation and Review

The final coaching session will be to evaluate the implementation. Review is undertaken by a peer in the Community of Practice.

Week	Time	Discussion Points	Evidence - all weeks use the OF Manual plus	Record of session
O	One hour	Goal setting to themes Communication- announcements, emails Discussion Boards Teaching Portfolio (TP)	Research, TP, ACU Online Practice Note	Case notes – Coach TP - OF
1	30 mins	Learning Analytic interventions Discussion Boards- Sparking, weaving	Learning analytics, Reflections, case notes, student comms and discussion boards	Case notes – Coach TP - OF
2	30 mins	Learning Analytic interventions Discussion Boards- Sparking, weaving Student Support	Learning analytics, Reflections, case notes, student comms	Case notes – Coach TP - OF
3	30 mins	Mid-term Survey Assessment/feedback Student Support	Learning analytics, Reflections, case notes, student comms	Case notes – Coach TP - OF
Break	One hour	Goal setting review Pulse survey results, review Online Facilitator practices	Pulse Survey, Learning analytics, Reflections, case notes, student comms	Case notes – Coach TP - OF LA database
5				
6	30 mins	Feedback Sparking activity after the break	Learning analytics, Reflections, case notes, student comms	Case notes – Coach TP - OF
7				
8	30 mins	Assessment Evaluation	Learning analytics, Reflections, case notes, student comms	Case notes – Coach TP - OF
Post	CoP	Review Online Facilitator 8 weeks using LA, reflections, case notes	Learning analytics, Reflections, case notes, student comms	Case notes – Coach TP - OF Unit Review Process

Table 6 Weekly coaching schedule

10. Communicating with students

Communication is very important in asynchronous teaching. You will communicate with students through announcements, discussion boards, emails and live sessions.

10.1 COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS

- ACU Online expectations for communicating with students
- Use Canvas email;
- Maximum of 48 hours response time for any email;
- Out of office email- please specify how long you will be out of office and provide the contact details of the LIC;
- During Week 1 - Welcome announcement;
- Participate in (instigate / respond) to comments in online discussions at least every 48 hours
- Review and respond to anonymous feedback / questions and other inputs submitted by students at least once weekly;
- Weekly welcome and wrap ups;
- Provide announcement and/or live session pre assessment tasks;
- Reach out to students not participating/logging as per Practice Note.

10.2 EMAIL COMMUNICATION

You are expected to communicate with students via the Canvas inbox, rather than an external email inbox. There are a number of reasons for this:

- It keeps everything within Canvas.
- When larger units run with multiple OFs, it ensures transparency when picking up communications from students.
- If another OF needs to cover your unit for any reason, they will have visibility of all contact history.
- You can quickly communicate with an individual student, group of students or all students enrolled in your unit.

You can access the inbox by clicking the link in Global Navigation. Note:

- If the inbox shows a numbered indicator, this is how many unread messages you have in your inbox.
- If you right-click on the Inbox you can open it in a new tab/browser to keep it handy while you complete other tasks in Canvas.

10.3 DISCUSSION BOARDS

Discussion boards are one of the main ways that students communicate with you and with each other. It is important to make sure these are a valid , lively and interesting feature of your unit. The three techniques of Sparking, Weaving and Summarising, which are covered in the Online Facilitator's course, are invaluable for you in developing discussion boards which maintain student interest, acknowledge contributions and allow you to be involved.

SPARKING, SUMMARISING, WEAVING
*adapted from: eModerating.docx (westernsydney.edu.au)

SPARKING

You need to decide what information will be provided as a starting point- the spark to begin the process of group learning and knowledge construction.

The Online Facilitator presents an issue, a dilemma, problem, challenge or model. Use different kinds of data and information but keep spark paragraphs and links short. If appropriate, you may well wish to provide references, further reading or illustrative links, but try to avoid any of these being necessary for active engagement in the online task.

There are many types of sparks. The main types are providing a small piece of information, a model, concept or example to which students can react or by asking for views, information or experiences. Use student experience- Consider what they bring, what might their interests be, what kind of content will interest them, what kind of activities they will want to be engaged in.

SUMMARISING

This is a powerful technique and is possibly the most important of all the e-moderating skills. Summarising is rather like reproducing the material in shortened form, picking out the main points. The original meanings are not removed. The following information might be helpful. Summarising:

- provides the opportunity to acknowledge and quote others' contributions
- draws the various contributions into a single message which can help latecomers to catch up
- signals the end of a discussion and opens up the opportunity to start a new dialogue
- can help those that have been pushed for time to look again at the discussion and reflect further

Here are some tips:

- pick out the really key points - aim to be brief and try to avoid lists
- be encouraging by making a comment about the quality of all the contributions
- select a title that will stand out
- unless you aim to close off the topic, end with a question that moves the topic on and back to the students

Process for creating summaries:

- copy and paste all messages to be summarised into a single word document
- look through it to identify the most commonly occurring theme and copy one entry that captures this best to the top of the page
- delete all references to that theme from the copied messages
- repeat the process until all the common themes have been captured
- decide whether to incorporate any other material or not.
- edit the emerging summary and add any points that seem appropriate
- sign it and send it to the Board you are summarising

WEAVING

This term describes the process of pulling discussions or contributions together - like weaving a cloth. Weaving is a more creative task than summarising as it selects themes and rearranges them into a new statement making connections that may not have been intended by the writers. Weaving is a keyway to add focus and value to a discussion. For instance, you might spot an opportunity to highlight and reflect back an important theme that is emerging in messages. By collecting together some relevant statements you can not only acknowledge contributions, but also point out their significance and encourage a further iteration by ending with an open question/invitation/challenge to respond.

FURTHER TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH DISCUSSION BOARDS.

- Be clear and consistent
- have students introduce themselves
- create an online social space
- encourage sharing of knowledge and experience relevant to the curriculum
- give regular reminders about assessments and expectations
- encourage students to extend their thinking
- encourage students to provide constructive and respectful feedback on peers.

See the table on next page for more information.

10.4 MAKING ANNOUNCEMENTS POP!

You are expected to make 2 weekly announcements- a welcome to the week and a wrap up.

Use images, videos and emojis to make the announcements attractive

10.5 LIVE SESSIONS- BIGBLUEBUTTON

You'll see in the Practice Note that live sessions are suggested at strategic times during the delivery period. The BigBlueButton is used for these sessions. Here is a link to instructions - Basic Features - Canvas – BigBlueButton.

10.6 MAKING DISCUSSION BOARDS BETTER!

Theme	Description	Possible solution
Reticence	'Students who feel apprehensive about participating is more common than you might think. Frequently these students will reveal their apprehension subtly or even blatantly by mentioning their 'newness', their angst, even suggesting that they 'don't have much to contribute''. *taken from Morrison, D. (2012) here	Create *facilitation* teams of 2 or 3 students that rotate throughout the course the duties of the moderator for a given week. Each facilitation team would be responsible for guiding the discussion for one week. Duties would involve responding to students, challenging, encouraging discussion and summarizing key points at the end of the week. Pair reticent students with stronger or more experienced learners. Contact the diffident student via email indicating that you have noticed he or she has not participated. Offer support and encouragement.
Shallow posts	'This comment refers to an important theme that addresses quality and depth of student responses that directly relates to the level of critical thinking skills applied. One of the goals of the discussion forum is to encourage students to engage in meaningful and thoughtful dialogue which won't be achieved with lightweight replies'. *taken from Morrison, D. (2012) here	Challenge students that provide one-sentence responses by asking the student to elaborate and/or provide further examples. Calling out students that post shallow replies might also address the problem.
Student confusion	Students might not know why they should be posting	Set clear expectations- link it to assessment and getting to know fellow students.
Students feeling alone	Students may feel like they are posting to a void	Let them know when you'll be in the discussion boards. Set daily times.
Teacher overload!	You are responding to *each and every post*. This will take up a lot of your time and can lead to a sense that you the Online Facilitator dominates.	Use the 3 techniques- Sparking, Summarising and Weaving. How about a teacher-free discussion board? Let students know you will NOT be in there- except to moderate for disrespect etc.
Passive students	Students tend not to post or don't respond to others.	Why not get students to facilitate a discussion board? Here's a blog post on the topic
Technical issues	Simply a problem of the tool.	Response time to student questions should be within 24 hrs Know where students can get tech help and make sure students know
Put off by other students	Some students may feel others dominate, some may be offended by others, some may be put off by the length of others' posts	Moderate all discussions and use the 3 techniques to summarise all posts – not just ones that are longer than others. Acknowledge short posts and posts by students who don't contribute as often. As student by name to contribute…'I'd like to know what X thinks, given their post on topic X'. Remind students of being respectful and polite. Escalate any pressing issues re offence to Lecturer in Charge.
Not linked to assessment	Students are known to love anything to do with assessment	Make it clear how the discussion board can support students in assessment.
Students are bored by them	Common enough problem	Have a guest thread. Ask areas such as the library or academic skills to participate. Ask a guest speaker from the profession students are aiming to enter. Encourage posting of pertinent video clips/podcasts/online talks. Shake it up – why not have a debate in a discussion board, or a different way of posting – a scavenger hunt? Post a video of you talking on a topic.

Table 7 Making discussion boards more effective communication tools

11. Learning Analytics

You are expected to use learning analytics to support students. Check the Practice Note for weekly schedule.

When teachers are informed by learning analytics they can offer more appropriate support to students (van Leeuwen, 2019; Dix & Leavesley, 2013). Learning analytics should deliver actionable knowledge (Dix & Leavesley, 2013) to teachers during a course to allow them to engage in an appropriate pedagogical intervention. This doesn't mean that intervention will always be necessary as the data may show no reason for teachers to intervene (van Leeuwen, 2019). This method of informing teachers during a course moves away from data points that are either too late (end of year marks) or too simplistic (log-in details) to allow effective intervention.

11.1 CANVAS DATA

In an online learning environment, it can be difficult to know if students are engaged and on track to succeed in their studies (van Leeuwen 2019). Canvas collects:

- log-in information,
- participation in specific learning activities,
- the amount of time spent interacting with online resources or with other students and
- student grades.

This data allows you to be more informed about student behaviour, to examine the relationship between engagement and learning outcomes and to make evidence-based decisions about which students to prioritise for additional support. Using data about students in this way is a form of learning analytics.

Interventions can also be a positive way to participate and get to know your cohort(s) better.

Remember that Canvas' definition of 'course' what ACU Online refers to as a unit. If you'd like a quick refresher on Canvas terminology Basic navigation in Canvas.

You will use this data to:

- track student participation,
- monitor assessment submissions;
- identify students that may be at-risk and in need of your additional support.

Timely intervention requires timely action. Effective teacher-to-student interventions can offer early identification of at-risk students and enhance the quality of the learning experience (Siemens, 2011) and boost student engagement.
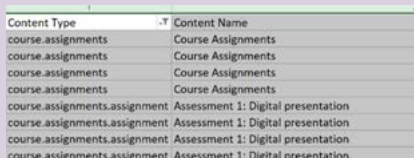
Week	Data	Canvas Report	Suggested Intervention
1	Last login to Canvas	New Analytics > Students > 'last page view'	Group message to students who have not accessed their learning materials yet (blank 'last page view') - reminder of importance of keeping up with the content to best prepare for assessment 1 in week x.
2	Low participation* in unit	New Analytics > Students > 'participations' * The following student actions will generate analytics course participation: - Announcements: posts a new comment to an announcement - Assignments: submits an assignment - Collaborations: loads a collaboration to view/edit a document - Conferences: joins a web conference - Discussions: posts a new comment to a discussion - Pages: creates a page - Quizzes: submits a quiz - Quizzes: starts taking a quiz	Group or individual message students who have low participations in the unit – reminder of link between engaged/active learning and student success.
4	Not accessed Assessment page or specific assessment details	New Analytics > Reports > Course Activity Run the course activity report, export it to excel and filter on the 'Content Type' and 'Content Name' columns to see which students have accessed the assessments page and (if required) the specific assessment details. 	Group message to students who are yet to access the details for assessment 1 - reminder of the importance of clearly understanding the assessment requirements to give themselves the best chance of a good grade.

Table 8 Suggested weekly interventions

12. Assessment and Feedback

You are expected to provide regular feedback. See the Practice Note.

Although feedback is usually linked to assessment, a broader view allows us to consider the concept of feedback in all learning contexts, and not just assessment tasks. Thus, feedback should not simply be thought of as something you give to students, or that they receive, but rather as a process integral to learning.

- Students often **don't recognise feedback** when they receive it
- When students do recognise something as feedback, they often **misunderstand it, misinterpret it**, or simply **don't act upon it**.

There are two types of feedback:

Summative feedback entails judgement of the student's level of achievement up to a given point (Taras, 2005).

Formative feedback (or feedforward) is "any information, process or activity which affords or accelerates student learning based on comments relating to either formative assessment or summative assessment activities'" (The Higher Education Academy, 2014, p. 7).

A play on words can help you to remember this:

'summative feedback sums-up, formative feedback helps people to form'.

You are required to give both forms and we encourage you to give feedback regularly. Use your wrap up and announcement posts and discussion boards for providing formative feedback to the group. Use emails to provide formative feedback to individual students where required.

Hint: Label when you give students feedback- they don't readily recognise it as such.

Timely	offered soon after the learning event, at the mutually agreed time.
Recognisable	labelled as feedback so students know what it is.
Supportive	encouraging, builds motivation and self-esteem
Regular	provided frequently and ideally on every learning activity.
Constructive	supports students to progress from lower to higher forms of knowledge
Specific	provides information about how the student has addressed the task
Meaningful	students can understand the feedback and make sense of it.
Creative	offered via different mediums of communication as well as from different perspectives (peer-feedback).
Consistent in style	allows students to recognise feedback and to apply it in their next piece of work.
Expected	Be explicit at the beginning of unit about: type, when it will be provided, how it will be provided and what students are expected to do with it.
Future oriented	applicable to future situations.
Aligned	summative feedback is aligned to a rubric.
Personalised	aims to address the student as an individual and is cognisant of their specific needs.
Group based	Provided to let students know what the cohort is doing well, what is challenging and to address recurring questions.

Table 9 Elements of good feedback

*adapted from: https://staff.acu.edu.au/our_university/centre-for-education-and-innovation/curriculum-design-and-quality-assurance/assessment-design-and-feedback/feedback-principles-and-aims

https://staff.acu.edu.au/our_university/centre-for-education-and-innovation/curriculum-design-and-quality-assurance/assessment-design-and-feedback/good-feedback-practices#EffectiveFeedback

12.1 SPECIAL CONSIDERATION AND EXTENSIONS

Common issues that students face throughout their studies include stress, anxiety, running out of time and having many other commitments outside study. There is no magical solution that fixes all of these issues, but directing your student to the most relevant service to support them will give them the best chance for success. Some students may be eligible for Special consideration (Links to an external site.) or an Extension (Links to an external site.). Visit the links provided for further information about requirements. **Your Lecturer in Charge must approve all extensions and Special Considerations.**

13. Mid-Term survey

Mid-term surveys are embedded into the unit and opened in week 3 and closed in week 4. The aim is to gain an understanding of the student experience and to direct attention for Online Facilitators to where they might direct change. The questions are based on the themes aligned to ACU Education Strategy and provide evidence for coaching gaols and for future direction for online facilitation. **The data will be available to Vikki Pollard, Kirstin Donaldson and you as the Online Facilitator.**

Mid Term survey questions

1. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement.
   - Key concepts or ideas are clearly explained in my learning materials
   - I feel motivated to do well in this course
   - Feedback is provided in a timely manner to support my learning
   - My queries / concerns are responded to quickly
2. Is there anything further we could do to support you in your studies?

14. ACU Online human support for students

Students learning online, whether it is asynchronous or not, highly value human support. Salmon (2004:23) found 'the issue of 'access to tutors and to others is a key aspect of making the course not only more flexible but also friendlier, more motivating, achievable and satisfying'. A key differentiating aspect of the ACU Online experiences is that such human support extends beyond the Online Facilitator and is one way in which institutional support is evidenced (Kebritchi et al 2017).

ACU Online will provide a network of human support for students. The network consists of:

- An experienced student recruitment team using a CRM system to deliver a high-touch, concierge experience throughout the enrolment process.
- A seamless onboarding process for our students. Enrolled students will have immediate access to an engaging and thorough online orientation that equips them with the skills and confidence they need to succeed in online study.
- The AskACU Online team will provide front line support to ACUO students. The multi-channel (phone, SMS, email, live chat) contact centre will be available seven days a week to assist with queries relating to: enrolment, fees, IT, course progression
- The Online Facilitators support students through their units. The Facilitators are subject matter experts in each unit and are there to establish and sustain the learning community within the unit to support students towards successful unit completion.
- Student Success Coaches provide students with pro-active ongoing support throughout their studies.
- Academic Skills Unit supports Online students through a range of resources to help build study habits necessary for successful university study and to support skills development.
- Studiosity online support available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, plus the option to discuss with a tutor.
- Quality Assurance process consisting of regular review of unit undertaken with faculty and ACU Online.

14.1 ASKACU ONLINE

The AskACU Online team provide front line support to ACU Online students via phone/email and SMS. They act as a single point of contact for students and will liaise with other teams within the university to resolve queries on a student's behalf.

This includes

- Information on processes
- How to enrol/defer/withdraw from a course
- Required forms
- Important date reminders
- How to pay tuition/apply for FEE-HELP
- Catch up calls
- Re-enrolment
- 'At risk' students
- Canvas
- Library
- Student Email
- Other/General Advice

They will also conduct some outbound calls to students including:

- a welcome call (post completion of enrolment and prior to term commencing)
- non-completion of fee-help documentation (prior to census)
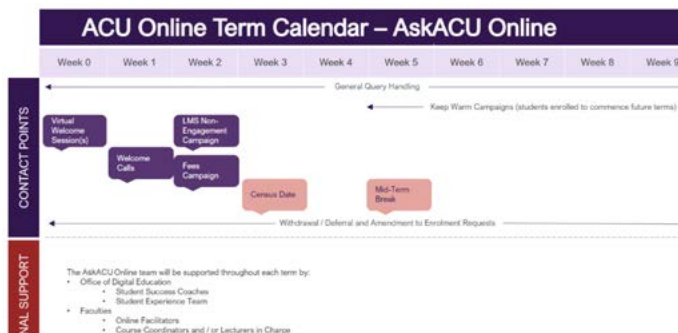- non-engagement with the LMS (prior to census)

Table 10 Overview of the activities ASKACU Online undertake each term

14.2 STUDENT SUCCESS COACHES

Each student is assigned a Student Success Coach who is the non-academic person that students can go to for:

- Encouragement / Motivation
- Time management
- Developing positive study habits
- Setting realistic study goals
- Practicing self-care while managing their study load and other work / family / caring responsibilities.

14.3 STUDIOSITY

This is shown as **'Study Help 24/7'** in Canvas Global Navigation.

All ACU students have access to Studiosity services within each of their enrolled units of study:

Academic Writing Feedback – feedback (grammar, spelling, structure, use of sources) on written assessment drafts within 24 hours.

Connect Live – access to online tutors in real-time around general academic skills in the areas of English, Maths, Sciences and Study Skills

Canvas Tips

15. References

Arbaugh, J. & Hwang, A. (2006). Does "Teaching Presence" Exist in Online MBA Courses?, *Internet and Higher Education*, 9(1), 9-21.

Boud, D. and Brew, A. (2017). *Learning to teach as the development of practice.* In Leibowitz, B., Bozalek, V. and Kahn, P. Theorising Learning to Teach in *Higher Education: Sociomaterial, Social practice and Realist approaches.* London: Routledge, 77-92 available, and access at: Microsoft Word - Boud & Brew in Leibowitz et al Theorising Learning to Teach in HE.docx (uts.edu.au)

Coppola, N., Hiltz, R.S. & Rotter, N. (2002) Becoming a Virtual Professor: Pedagogical Roles and Asynchronous Learning Networks, Journal of Management Information Systems, 18:4, 169-189, DOI: 10.1080/07421222.2002.11045703.

Devine, M., Meyers, R. & Houssmand, C., (2013). How can coaching make a positive impact within educational settings, *Procedia- Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 93, 1382-1389.

Dix, A., & Leavesley, J. (2013). Learning analytics for the academic: An action perspective. Journal of Universal Computer Science, 21(1), 48–63.

Garrison, D (2011). *E-Learning in the 21st Century: A Framework for Research and Practice*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2011. ProQuest Ebook Central, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/monash/detail.action?docID=668750 (Links to an external site.).

Gilmore, D. (2021) Implementing a coaching model for the development of online teachers, *International Journal for Academic Development*, 26(2). 121-133, DOI: 10.1080/1360144X.2020.1822847.

The Higher Education Academy. (2014). *HEA Feedback Toolkit*: March 2013. Retrieved https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/feedback_toolkit_whole1.pdf

Kebritchi, M., Lipschuetz, A, and Santiague, L. (2017). Issues and Challenges for Teaching Successful Online Courses in Higher Education: A Literature Review, *Journal of Educational Technology Systems* 2017, Vol. 46(1) 4–29 DOI: 10.1177/0047239516661713.

Pleschova, G., Roxå, T., Thomson, K.E., & Felten, P. (2021). Conversations that make meaningful change in teaching, teachers, and academic development, *International Journal of Academic Development*, 26(3), pp 201 -209. https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2021.1958446.

Ladyshewsky, R. K. (2006) Peer coaching: a constructivist methodology for enhancing critical thinking in postgraduate business education, *Higher Education Research & Development*, 25:1, 67-84, DOI: 10.1080/13600800500453196.

Mbati, L (2012). Online learning for social constructivism: Creating a conducive environment, *Progressio* 34(2):99-119.

Morris, L., Xu. H. & Finnegan, C. (2005). Roles of faculty in teaching asynchronous undergraduate courses, *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 9(1), 65-82.

Morrison, D. (2012). 3 Reasons students don't participate in online discussions, Online Learning Insights, 3 Reasons Students Don't Participate in Online Discussions | Online Learning Insights (wordpress.com). accessed 10/03/2022.

Salmon, G. (2015). *Five Stage Model*. Gilly Salmon. Retrieved December 15, 2021, from https://www.gillysalmon.com/five-stage-model.html.

Salmon, G. (2004). *Emoderating: The key to Facilitation and learning online*, 2nd edition, Taylor & Francis: Abingdon.

Shaw, P., Green, P., Gration, M., Rhodes, C., Sheffield, D., & Stone, J. (2020). Within these hyperporous walls: An examination of a rebundled online learning model of higher education. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 36(5), 85–101. https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.6061.

Stone, C. (2017). *Opportunity through Online Learning: Improving student access, participation and success in higher education*. The National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE). Curtin University: Perth.

Taras, M. (2005). Assessment – summative and formative- some theoretical reflections, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 53(4), 466–478.

Van Leeuwen, A. (2019). Teachers' perceptions of the usability of learning analytics reports in a flipped university course: when and how does information become actionable knowledge? *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 67(3), 1043-1064.