

The CSU Online Learning Model

Overview

The Online Learning Model consists of a set of elements designed to increase student engagement, retention and overall satisfaction. The model builds on Moore's (1989) model which incorporates *learner-teacher*, *learner-learner* and *learner-content* interaction. The model broadens Moore's notion of interactivity to one of engagement and adds *learner-community* engagement as a key component of professional courses, as well as *learner-institution* engagement to ensure a connected student experience.

This then leads to five categories of student engagement:

- » learner-teacher engagement
- » learner-learner engagement
- » learner-content engagement
- » learner-community engagement, and
- » learner-institution engagement.

Each of the seven elements of the Online Learning Model are designed to increase one or more types of engagement. The elements, which are outlined in the following sections, are designed to be combined together in varying degrees of intensity within the subjects making up a course.

Learning Communities



Feeling part of and actively contributing to a learning community is directly linked to student motivation and resilience. Studying within learning groups can be an important foundation for effective interaction between students, their peers

and teachers in support of deeper learning. Proactive support from teachers for learning within smaller groups, provided synchronously or asynchronously, is important if the benefits of intellectual rigour and deep engagement are to be achieved. This element supports enhanced *learner-teacher* and *learner-learner* engagement.

The Learning Communities element is exemplified by:

- » Smaller sub cohorts within large cohorts facilitated by a tutor who guides community building, provides formative feedback and marks summative assessment tasks.
- » Orientation, socialisation and personalisation of the online environment prior to curriculum focused learning activities.
- » Contribution to a shared resource such as a gallery of photos from professional placement.
- » Social media streams using tools such as Twitter, Instagram or shared bookmarking.

Interaction Between Students



Student learning is enhanced through online peer learning activities aligned with the subject outcomes and actively facilitated by an online teacher. These activities may be conducted synchronously or asynchronously and

student participation and learning benefits are highest when they support the completion of assessment tasks. This element supports enhanced *learner-learner* engagement.

The Interaction Between Students element is exemplified by:

- » Synchronous and asynchronous discussions that allow students to share their experiences, knowledge and perspectives.
- » Peer-to-peer teaching activities.
- » Collaborative small group projects.
- » Online reflective journals including video or audio blogs, allowing peer comments and feedback.
- » Co-operative inquiry-based or problem-based learning activities.
- » Co-creation of authentic learning products.

Teacher Presence



Awareness of the presence of a passionate, knowledgeable and skilled online teacher improves student confidence supporting independent learning and socialisation of the learning experience. Regular online

communication can bolster student awareness of the support and availability of the teacher and humanise the expectations around learning activities and assessment. Teacher presence can also support the development of learning communities for purposeful interaction between students. This element supports enhanced *learner-teacher* and *learner-learner* engagement.

The Teacher Presence element is exemplified by:

- » Welcome videos, audio recordings and photographs.
- » Teacher photographs or voice snapshots throughout the online materials.
- » Thoughtfully managed communication tone to encourage student participation and agency.
- » Explicit acknowledgement and naming of all staff involved in the subject delivery.
- » Timely responses to student online questions and comments.
- » New resources, including voice or video commentary, during the session in response to emergent ideas.

Interaction with the Professions



Online strategies which connect students with professionals and sites of professional practice can provide a valuable context for engagement with subject content and make clearer the relevance of the subject learning

outcomes by connecting theory to practice. This engagement also supports the development of professional capabilities, induction into the culture and values of the profession, and an ethos of lifelong learning and career planning. This element supports enhanced *learner-community* engagement.

The Interaction with the Professions element is exemplified by:

- » Case studies that highlight professional contexts through rich media.
- » Guest online lectures by professional practitioners.
- » Authentic practice-focused assessment tasks.
- » Assessment tasks requiring students to draw on and reflect upon placements.
- » Online discussions with peers and teachers during work placements.
- » Online role plays and simulations.
- » Online mentoring and professional networking.
- » Video conference connections to sites of practice.

Flexible and Adaptive Learning



The diversity of contemporary online learning cohorts requires learning experiences that are designed for high engagement but are flexible and adaptive to the needs of autonomous learners. Adaptivity in learning design,

online teaching and student support has been made possible by technologies providing timely data on learners' knowledge, perceptions and study behaviour. Alongside this, flexibility in the timing and mode of engagement with teachers, peers and learning content, and data driven feedback on study approaches can promote agile and personalised learning experiences. This element supports enhanced *learner-content*, *learner-learner*, *learner-teacher* and *learner-institutional* engagement.

The Flexible and Adaptive Learning element is exemplified by:

- » Subject and course design informed by data drawn from student and peer feedback, research and learning analytics.
- » Data informed during session adaptation of teaching strategies and resources.
- » Data informed recommendations for students to connect with university support services.
- » Dashboards that provide feedback to students on their learning strategies.
- » Flexible or adaptive lesson, subject or course designs providing individualised pathways based on demonstration of knowledge and competency.
- » Flexibility in assessment providing opportunities for students to build on their specific discipline knowledge or professional expertise.

Interactive Resources



High quality rich media learning resources can support understanding of conceptual material, provide visual examples of practice and contextualise the broader learning experience. Interactive learning resources can

provide a place for experiential engagement and experimentation with content and interaction with peers and teachers. Resources can be curated from those available commercially, within Open Educational Resource libraries or MOOCs, or developed and quality assured by teaching and educational design staff, students or media specialists. This element supports enhanced *learner-content* engagement.

The Interactive Resources element is exemplified by:

- » Video resources to contextualise online discussions.
- » Rich media resources supporting problem based or cooperative learning activities.
- » Critical reflection upon cases illustrated through photos, audio or video.
- » Conceptual simulations supporting exploratory learning strategies.
- » Immersive environments where students undertake simulated professional practice.

e-Assessment



Digital technologies present new possibilities for the ways in which students undertake and submit assessment tasks, the way in which feedback is provided and the kinds of learner activities that can be assessed.

Authentic assessment tasks which require students to demonstrate practices of the target profession can be provisioned in ways that scaffold students and ensure professional and practice-based learning outcomes. This element supports enhanced *learner-content* and *learner-learner* engagement.

The e-Assessment element is exemplified by:

- » Construction of rich media artefacts modelled on the products of the profession.
- » ePortfolios to capture student reflections and record and demonstrate professional practice capabilities.
- » Blogs and online journals for formative and summative assessment.
- » Self-marking quizzes.
- » Automated plagiarism checking, online marking and online peer assessment.
- » Badges for micro-credentialing of competencies.
- » Contemporary computer-based exams with remote exam invigilation.