

# Guidance Document for Blended Learning Policy

## Contents

- 1.0 Relevant policies for blended learning
- 2.0 Requirements for applicants
  - 2.1 Course catalogue information
  - 2.2 Open and applicant day information
- 3.0 Welcome Week
- 4.0 Checklist for Blackboard sites
- 5.0 Staff Training
- 6.0 Student Training
- 7.0 Digital Champion Job Description
- 8.0 Reflection tool kit

## 1.0 Relevant policies associated with blended learning

There are a number of other policies which are relevant to the implementation of the Blended Learning policy.

- [Lecture Capture for Education Purposes](#);
- [Inclusive Education Policy](#);
- [Intellectual Property \(IP\) Regulations](#); and
- [Peer Observation Policy](#)

## 2.0 Requirements for Applicants

### 2.1 Course catalogue information

Potential applicants must be informed of blended learning on the course catalogue. This is a general statement and should not include any specific information which may put us at risk of Competition and Marketing Authority (CMA) compliance. This statement should be approved by the Course Director and can be tailored for your specific use. If you do not provide a tailored statement, then this one will be used.

*Blended learning is used to deliver this course. Blended learning environments blur the boundaries between physical and virtual spaces and exploit the unique potential of each these spaces to enhance the learning experience. This means that lecturers on this course will use a range of approaches to help students achieve their learning outcomes.*

Alternative:

*This course will be delivered through a blended learning approach. Blended learning is a pedagogical approach that has been demonstrated as the most effective and inclusive for all student. 'Blending' means that some activities will take place synchronously (in real time), with students working together with lecturers during scheduled teaching events. Other activities will take place asynchronously, when students work together or independently in their own time. Activities can take place either in-person or online. Lecturers will use a range of approaches to help students achieve their learning outcomes.*

2.2 Example information on the use of blended learning for open/applicant days and also for Welcome Week presentations.

This information can be tailored for use, it does not have to be used word for word.

*Blended learning is used to deliver your course in [.....]. Blended learning environments blur the boundaries between physical and virtual spaces and exploit the unique potential of each these spaces. Blended learning also combines the timing of pedagogical design, reflecting on what students do on their own and what they do with their peers, either synchronously or asynchronously. This means that your lecturers will use a range of approaches to help you achieve your learning outcomes for your chosen course. The approaches may use electronic discussion boards, or polling and electronic whiteboard tools to help shape your understanding. You will be provided with a range of electronic resources which you can interact with on UEA's virtual learning environment. Where possible your lectures will be recorded and made available to you.*

Blended Learning enhances your experience because it is:

**Engaging**, you will be involved in different tasks at different times during the day and during the week.

**Empowering**, because it will allow you allow to explore different modes of learning, and to identify which mode suits your needs.

**Effective**, because you will have active learning tasks, which are proven by research to improve your learning in an inclusive way.

**Enhanced**, because you will have increased interactions with other students on your course, as well as teaching staff.

**Efficient**, because your learning can take place within as well as outside the classroom, synchronously (during timetabled events) or asynchronously (in in your own time).

2.3 Example statements on technologies used for learning which should be provided by course directors.

This information can be tailored for use in open/applicant days and also during Welcome Week presentations. It does not have to be used word for word, but it is important to highlight to students the software packages that they will be expected to use as part of their course.

*In your course you will use a range of software including Microsoft Office for coursework, and PebblePad for generating portfolios. More specific software*

*includes [.....] and [.....]. You will receive training on both general and specific software packages to enable you to achieve your learning outcomes. Learning how to use this software will also allow you to develop valuable skills, which you will be able to apply in different contexts.*

### 3.0 Welcome Week

Students should be aware of the blended learning strategy used in their course. They should be shown Blackboard, and where to find specific resources within it. They should be told about the advantages of using approaches such as:

1. Active learning
2. Peer to peer class and online discussions
3. Creation of videos, posters, blogs, as well as the use of social media for communication, debate, and exchange.

### 4.0 Check List for every Blackboard site

To support the student experience and to achieve consistency it is important that all Blackboard sites achieve a required standard. This is a set of minimum expectations at module level (Table 1). The course director, or other appointed teaching lead or professional service colleague should have oversight of the blended learning in all modules in their course. The check list is there to guide the requirements. Checking colleagues Blackboard sites can be used as evidence [for Peer Observation](#).

Table 1 Blended Learning Minimum Expectation Checklist for Modules

Module component	Created Object(s) or Approaches	Y/N
Module overview	A short welcome message to the module, which could be a video to introduce the module organiser and the teaching team, or it could be text.	
	Provide details on module learning outcomes	
	Guide on how to use online resources, and how this will support learning and enable students to achieve their learning outcomes.	
	Design the layout of content on Blackboard according to the template used by the School/Faculty. This will provide students with a consistent experience across their Bb module sites.	
	A reading list should be provided using Tallis	
Module content	Provide meaningful descriptions for all resources. Images should be provided with alternative text. This can be managed with the use of Ally in Blackboard.	
	Provide information on the time it will take to complete specific tasks. Note where content is compulsory or where it is provided for extra study.	
	Use a range of content formats, e.g. reading, video, audio to generate learning resources	

	Lectures should be recorded using the university lecture capture system, ECHO360. Lectures will be scheduled for recording unless a specific staff member has opted out. <sup>1</sup>	
	Events designed to include significant student participation and/or interaction should be recorded only if students have given consent through the student registration task.	
Communication	Make sure that the contact details for all staff teaching on the module are available. Set expectations on when and how staff will communicate and respond. Meetings with students can be managed through 'Bookings with Me'.	
	Use the range of communication tools available, such as discussion boards, chats and virtual classrooms to maintain contact with students and to help develop interaction between students and build a community. Aim for a consistent use of the communication tools across the modules in a course.	
Assessment	Provide assessment briefs for all formative and summative assessments.	
	Provide information on the marking criteria	
	Do not provide assessment deadlines in recorded material which can become out of date if the learning resource is re-used. Ideally assessment deadlines should remain as a single point of truth on SITS and accessed by students through e-vision. If assessment deadlines are also elsewhere, then the MO must ensure they are consistent with information on SITS.	
	Provide information on when feedback on coursework is available	
Evaluation	Conduct and then provide feedback on mid-module evaluation	
	Provide instructions, and conduct in class (if possible) end of module evaluation and provide feedback to students	

## 5.0 Staff Training

### 5.1 Self-access training courses

- Course on delivering blended learning can be found [here](#), this takes approx. 30 minutes to complete.
- Course on getting the best out of Blackboard Learn can be found [here](#)
- A course on getting started with, and making the most out of, Blackboard Ultra is available, alongside synchronous training sessions to familiarise staff with the features of Ultra that can be tailored according to need. Access to all support resources for Ultra can be requested [here](#).
- Training on specific pieces of teaching and learning software can be found [here](#). This includes further training for Blackboard, as well as other technologies to support activities such as portfolio learning, interactive polling and improving accessibility.

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of presenting this Blended Learning policy to LTC the position to opt-out on lecture capture has not yet been approved. If the decision to move to opt-out is rejected, then this policy will be amended and approved by Chair's action.

### 5.2 Other

[Sign up to the CTTEL Network](#) – this comprises a Teams site to share ideas, questions and best practice, a quarterly seminar focussing on how technology can support specific pedagogical practices, and a quarterly newsletter.

### 5.3 Bespoke training opportunities

- Your School can request training on specific technologies from CTTEL, please get in touch at [ltt.support@uea.ac.uk](mailto:ltt.support@uea.ac.uk).
- Your School can get advice and training on the pedagogical aspects of blended learning through CHERPPS. Get in touch with the Centre Director at [cherpps@uea.ac.uk](mailto:cherpps@uea.ac.uk).

CTEL facilitate a number of Communities of Practice (CoP), each focussing on a specific area of pedagogy or technology, such as the video-based learning CoP and the Blackboard Ultra. These CoPs are held on a semi-regular basis and are an opportunity for staff to share their questions and examples of best practice.

## 6.0 Student Training

### 6.1 Self-access training

- Students are able to self-enrol onto the 'Preparing to Learn' course which can be found [here](#).
- Students have access to a range of resources on specific technologies which can be found [here](#). It is a good idea to link these to your Blackboard sites.

## 7.0 Digital Champion Job Description

### Background

As part of the UEA Blended Learning Policy there is a requirement to have staff in the role of Digital Champion. This can be at School level or at Faculty level depending on capacity. This role is important in overseeing the implementation of the Blended Learning Policy.

### UEA Digital Champions: Approach and Workload

1. Time required per School: 0.2 FTE.
2. It is recognised that many Schools face challenging staff-student ratios and that they would not be able to identify one academic member of staff with the appropriate expertise who could perform this role on top of current workloads.
3. To mitigate point 2, the work could be delivered by a group of suitable staff, from academic, technical and/or administrative areas, at School level or Faculty level, to share the workload. If Faculty level support is anticipated, the team would need to represent a cross-section of disciplines and arrangements should be in place to ensure that all members of the Faculty are signposted and can access the expertise offered by their designated Digital Champions .
4. Where a Faculty level approach is taken, each School should provide a liaison person to whom communication can be directed and who can work with CTCL to ensure that all staff are supported. (If no liaison is indicated, it will be assumed that this is the Teaching Director, by default).
5. In terms of distribution of tasks, some (e.g. mentoring and technology training) might be undertaken by Faculty Professional and Technical Services. However, the design and delivery of learning material and assessments should be done by academic staff.

**All staff working as digital champions should develop their role by taking part in:**

1. The Community of Practice for Digital Champions facilitated through CTCL.
2. Relevant training courses e.g. Bb Ultra training course(s), ECHO 360 and PebblePad.
3. Relevant activity offered through the Centre for Higher Education, Research, Practice, Policy and Scholarship (CHERPPS).

### Reporting

1. Meet with DoTL and HoS to feedback on how training and adoption of new technology is progressing.
2. Highlight potential issues with training to CTCL through the Community of Practice.
3. Work with the UEA Blended Learning Implementation Group.

### **Work with staff on the use of technology**

1. Work with the DoTL in the School to identify specific training on specific pieces of software which can be delivered by CTEL
2. Work with CHERPPS to identify training on pedagogical approaches to using online tools
3. Highlight training opportunities offered by CTEL and CHERPPS.

### **Work with staff to consider design and delivery of course material**

1. Work with colleagues to understand the best ways in which learning can be organised through blended learning and broken down into effective online and in-person delivery.
2. Work with colleagues to help design material which can be used to deliver the learning outcomes of their teaching.
3. Work with colleagues to understand issues of inclusivity.
4. Work with colleagues to consider pedagogical evidence for effective blended and online delivery.
5. Work with library staff to identify subject specific content which can be populated in Bb modules, e.g. digital book content.
6. Design and or collate resources from staff and liaise with CTEL so that we can share across the institution.
7. Collect examples of resources designed to support students in a blended learning and online learning environments and share with CTEL for wider dissemination.

### **Work with staff to consider design and delivery of assessment**

1. Work with colleagues to consider innovative, diverse and authentic/relevant assessment methods (link to employability agenda).
2. Work with colleagues to consider inclusivity issues within assessment.
3. Work with colleagues to consider pedagogical evidence for effective assessment.
4. Design and or collate resources from staff and liaise with CTEL so that we can share across the institution.
5. Collect examples of resources designed to support students through assessment and share with CTEL for wider dissemination.
6. Work with CTEL to understand the best ways in which assessment and feedback, including online exams can be delivered with current online tools.
7. Work with CHERPPS to understand pedagogical approaches to using online tools for assessment and feedback.

### **Benefits for academic digital champions**

- Prioritised direct line with CTEL support to perform duties specified in the role and support colleagues.

## Guidance for Blended Learning Policy

- Evidence for promotion on School, Faculty and Institutional influence on development of innovative digital learning and the implementation of the UEA Blended Learning Policy.
- Evidence and/or case study for Fellow or Senior Fellow HEA status
- Full membership of CHERPPS
- Evidence for University Teaching Fellowship Application
- Opportunity for wider university networking
- Opportunity to take part in externally provided training
- Opportunity to apply for CHERPPS ring-fenced funding for implementation, evaluation and pedagogical research project.

### 8.0 Blended Learning Reflection Tool Kit

To help Schools develop their blended learning strategies inline with the Blended Learning policy a reflection tool kit is available. This can be found in Appendix 1.



**Appendix 1 Benchmark Statements for Blended Delivery**

<b>Features</b>	<b>Dual-mode delivery</b> -actively planned blended delivery
<b>Learning outcomes</b> - Map content and assessment to learning outcomes.	1. Clear and relevant.
<b>Score</b>	/1
<b>Inclusive learning</b> - make sure all materials are accessible; take into account the digital divide and students learning in different time zones	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Relevant learning materials are available 48 hours in advance of a teaching event.</li> <li>2. All materials accessible across the Bb platform.</li> <li>3. All materials are mobile compatible.</li> <li>4. All materials have a green Ally score (except mathematical and scientific notation).</li> <li>5. Consideration is given to design of materials and use of images and colours.</li> <li>6. Learners receive full instructions about expected interaction and engagement with blended learning.</li> </ol>
<b>Score</b>	/6
<b>Diversify learning opportunity</b> - produce content in a range of formats both asynchronous and synchronous to give multiple opportunities to engage with content.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Asynchronous and synchronous learning is designed within a learning journey.</li> <li>2. All directed learning asynchronous learning is timetabled and in a correct sequence to complement other learning activity.</li> <li>3. There are multiple opportunities for social learning.</li> <li>4. Social learning happens in clearly defined spaces which are inclusive and safe.</li> </ol>
<b>Score</b>	/4
<b>Learning objects</b> - provide content in learning objects, which are small chunks of learning. "Learning objects for learning outcomes".	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Multiple learning 'objects' each covering a single learning outcome, e.g. PowerPoint file, text document, video, interactive vignette, discussion board.</li> <li>2. Learning objects are constructed within a learning journey.</li> <li>3. Comprehensive opportunity for reflection on progress linked to the learning outcomes.</li> </ol>
<b>Score</b>	/3
<b>Embedded third party licensed resources</b> – provide third party content e.g. e-textbooks, books, journal articles, databases, etc.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Third party resources (ebooks, journal articles, databases, specialist software, etc.) and tools are introduced and provided.</li> <li>2. The third party resources are within a learning journey with clear opportunities to use resources to enhance independent learning and improve quality of learning outcomes.</li> </ol>

Guidance for Blended Learning Policy

<b>Score</b>	/2
<b>Active learning-</b> incorporate participatory teaching tools	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students are introduced to a wide range of digital tools with which to explore the subject.</li> <li>2. Polls and quizzes are embedded in all learning opportunities to monitor progress and understanding.</li> <li>3. Students are actively challenged by their course leaders to demonstrate understanding and higher order skills in a supportive environment.</li> </ol>
<b>Score</b>	/3
<b>Collaborative learning-</b> ensure there are appropriate opportunities for students to work together and for them to interact with the lecturer.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Good use of collaborative tools e.g. Bb collaborate to manage group learning and produce collaborative outcomes.</li> <li>2. The discussion board moves from the periphery to the centre and becomes the interface between the physical and virtual components of the course.</li> <li>3. Peer to peer learning opportunities are provided for within activity.</li> </ol>
<b>Score</b>	/3
<b>Student preparedness-</b> training to get the best out of online learning.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students understand how to engage with blended content.</li> <li>2. Students know where to seek support if required.</li> <li>3. Students have good communication routes to staff.</li> </ol>
	/3
<b>Quality and review-</b> of learning content and assessment opportunity.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A review of content by a peer or academic digital champion.</li> <li>2. Clear opportunities for student review using digital feedback to streamline processes. Dynamic review leads to rapid improvements.</li> </ol>
<b>Score</b>	/2
<b>Students as partners-</b> students are involved in review and co-creation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Some activity where students are generating content.</li> <li>2. Opportunity for student feedback to improve course and module delivery.</li> <li>3. Academics work closely with students to tailor courses as they develop to ensure they are relevant and representative of the specific cohort.</li> </ol>
<b>Score</b>	/3
<b>Assessment for learning-</b> formative and summative.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Formative and summative assessment opportunities clearly linked to learning outcomes.</li> <li>2. Diverse assessment types.</li> <li>3. Embedded authentic assessment opportunity where appropriate.</li> </ol>

Guidance for Blended Learning Policy

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Work submitted and marked using online tools and feedback delivered online.</li> <li>5. Assessment briefs provided in Blackboard.</li> <li>6. Online support for assessment, e.g. discussion boards.</li> </ol>
<b>Score</b>	/6
<b>Analytics</b> linked to learning and assessment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Comprehensive review of engagement with learning content and assessment</li> <li>2. Targeted intervention for individuals and groups.</li> </ol>
<b>Score</b>	/2
<b>Staff training</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Every member of staff has engaged with relevant training materials and courses relevant to their pedagogical design.</li> <li>2. Blended learning is peer reviewed.</li> <li>3. Staff seek out external learning and training opportunities.</li> </ol>
<b>Score</b>	/3
<b>Student experience and engagement</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students have received a comprehensive blended learning experience where there have been multiple opportunities to meet with staff either in groups or individually.</li> <li>2. There is a strong sense of an online community within the school.</li> <li>3. Students are told what is expected of them in engaging with blended learning, e.g. completion of directed learning is crucial for understanding and engagement in other learning events.</li> </ol>
<b>Score</b>	/3
<b>Innovation and development of blended learning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The development of blended learning is regularly considered at teaching executive meetings and also at course review.</li> <li>2. Students are closely involved in discussions.</li> <li>3. Developments are split into short, medium and long term goals and discussed with relevant support at the institution (e.g. CTCL)</li> </ol>
<b>Score</b>	/3