



Teaching toolkits

Five steps to developing a Community Engaged Learning programme, module or project

Approaches to curriculum design when working with external partners in the community to enhance the student experience.

As a programme or module leader, you can incorporate Community Engaged Learning activities in all aspects of the academic cycle.

Community Engaged Learning at UCL for more information on adopting this approach, the benefits for you and your students, and the support you can access.

bit.ly/CEL5steps

The online guide has links to further reading and resources.

This includes the main CEL page which outlines what it is and the services available.

We recommend five steps to follow when integrating this approach into your teaching.

1. Design learning outcomes and skills for your programme or module
2. Integrate Community Engagement into an existing or new programme or module
3. Design Community Engaged Learning activities
4. Design Community Engaged Learning assessment(s)
5. Evaluate student learning and the effectiveness of engaging with communities

1. Design learning outcomes and skills for your programme or module

The first step in the Community Engaged Learning journey is to identify the learning outcomes of your programme or module in order to understand how collaborations with external partners can enhance student experience.

Where to start: ask yourself

- Who are your students and who do you want them to be by the end of your programme or module?
- What are the most important ideas that students will understand after taking this programme (theories, approaches, perspectives, and other broad themes in your field or relevant fields)?
- How does the programme or module prepare your students for the jobs of the future in a changing world, i.e. Artificial Intelligence (AI), change in employment types, sustainability challenges such as climate change?

Developing learning outcomes

- Are there particular outcomes that will be difficult to achieve with lecture and reading alone?
- Do your programme learning outcomes Improve students' ability to apply what they have learned in "the real world"?
- Do your programme learning outcomes help students develop transferable skills such as problem-solving skills; critical-thinking; creative skills; ability to understand the social and ethical implications of their practice; communication and team working skills; interpersonal skills and empathy, listening and respect for others?
- What learning outcomes do you wish to deepen or broaden by adding Community Engaged Learning activities?
- Have you thought what is going to be the role of the external partner(s) in meeting the learning outcomes?

Resources to help you at this stage

- Boyer, E. (1996). The scholarship of engagement. *Journal of Public Service and Outreach* 1(1), 11-20.
- O'Meara, K. (2008). Motivation for faculty community engagement: Learning from exemplars. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* 12(1), 7-29.
- *Global Opportunity Explorer 2019*. UN Global Compact (2019).
- *Researcher Development Framework*. Vitae (2010).
- *The Future of Jobs and Skills*. World Economic Forum (2018).

After you design your learning outcomes, you might want to use the toolkit "**How to build partnerships with external partners to enhance learning**" to build partnership with the external partner and meet your learning outcomes.

2. Integrate Community Engagement into an existing or new programme or module

There are many ways to integrate community engagement into an existing or new programme:

Option within a programme

Many faculties begin community engagement with an optional community engagement pathway module, within a module or project.

In this design, students have the option to become involved in the community-based project.

A portion of the normal coursework is substituted by the community-based component. For example, a traditional research paper or group project can be replaced with an experiential research paper or personal journal that documents learning from the engagement with the external partner.

Faculties report that it is easier to build community partnerships if a consistent number of students are involved each semester, but that it is important to offer students different pathways and options.

Disciplinary capstone module projects

Students can explore ways their disciplinary expertise and competencies translate into addressing community needs and opportunities as part of a capstone module project.

Students can engage in a substantial piece of project work in order to solve a problem that is set in agreement with the external partner.

Requirement within a programme

In this case, all students are involved in the Community Engaged Learning activities as an integrated aspect of the programme. For example, as a placement.

This expectation must be clearly stated at the first class meeting, on the programme handbook, with a clear rationale provided to students as to why the community engagement component is required.

Exceptions can be arranged on an individual basis or there can be different pathways and options, i.e. some students can work directly with communities and some might do desk based research as part of Community Engaged Learning coursework.

If all students are involved in a Community Engaged Learning activity, it is easier to design coursework (i.e., class discussions, writing assignments, exam questions) that integrates the community engagement experience with programme learning outcomes.

Class sessions can involve agency personnel and site visits.

Multiple programme projects

Community engagement projects with one or more partners may span different programmes or modules in the same semester or multiple programmes or modules over a year or longer.

These projects must be broad enough to meet the learning outcomes of multiple programmes or modules over time, and because of this they may have a cumulative impact on both student learning and community development that is robust.

It is important to think how prepared are your students before they embark on a community engaged learning journey. If, for example, there is a community engagement component in the 3rd year of their programme, what preparation has there been before that for them to be able to engage with external partners?

Resources to help you at this stage

- O'Connor M.C., McEwen L., Owen D., Lynch K., Hill S., (2011). Literature Review: Embedding community engagement in the curriculum: An example of university-public engagement. *NCCPE*.
- Saltmarsh, J. (2010). Changing pedagogies. In H.E. Fitzgerald, C. Burack, & S. Seifer (Eds.), *Handbook of Engaged Scholarship: Contemporary Landscapes, Future Directions, Volume 1 Institutional Change* (pp. 331-352). East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press.
- Community Engaged Learning. Stanford University Teaching Commons (2017).
- Chapter 8: Academic Partnerships Framework. UCL Academic Manual (2019).

3. Design Community Engaged Learning activities

There is a variety of Community Engaged Learning activities that can take place in the classroom, the community or both.

You might choose for students to actually collaborate with external partners or not.

Community Engaged Learning activities draw from pedagogical approaches such as:

- Experiential learning
- Service-Learning
- Authentic learning
- Community-Based Research (CBR)
- Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)
- Place-Based Learning
- Problem-Based Learning
- Project-Based Learning
- Scenario-Based Learning
- Glocal Pedagogy
- Participatory Action Research (PAR)
- Work-Based Learning
- Case-Based Learning

We would recommend students working with external partners for developing more transferable skills, but offering students options is also advisable.

Faculty capacity also needs to be taken into account for choosing the appropriate Community Engaged Learning activities.

Models of Community Engaged Learning activities

Inside the classroom

In-class activities tend to be smaller, limited to one class and often tied to a particular concept or body of knowledge.

Students don't necessarily come in contact with a community representative.

1. Case studies can bring the real world into the classroom. Case studies can be real or developed. They can provide students with an opportunity to apply concepts to a problem or situation in the local or global community. Students can be offered the opportunity to provide solutions on local challenges and make the connections on a global level.

Example: Biology students working on case studies that present the effect of climate change on the production of pollen and allergy season in the UK and other countries around the world.

2. Authentic or "real-world" activities can be an effective Community Engaged Learning tool.

Example: Economics students in a programme on poverty have to create a budget using various datasets.

3. Role-playing activities can be used in the absence of community partners in the classroom that also give students the opportunity to understand different interests and perspectives.

Example: Architecture students work in a group in order to develop designs and recommendations on how to address the problem of homelessness in Hackney with each of them representing a different stakeholder and interest.

4. Scenario-based learning normally involves students working their way through a storyline, usually based around a complex problem that can come from the local or the global community.

Example: Engineering students are given scenarios on global health issues in order to design prototypes individually or in groups.

5. Community guest lecturer(s) or fellow(s) can bring their perspective and expertise into the classroom to inform students' practical and contextual understanding.

Example: Local artists discuss with fine art students the landscape of art industry in the UK.

6. Classroom projects can enable students to be more actively involved with a project that a community suggests, but the students continue to work on in the classroom.

Example: History students develop a photo exhibition in the classroom with the guidance of external partner(s).

Models of Community Engaged Learning activities

Outside the classroom

1. Community-based consultancy projects

involve student interactions working with a client, organisation or community group in order to identify and analyse issues or opportunities within the organisation and develop a solution or strategy or offer advice.

Example: Law students, under supervision, offer free legal advice to individuals with housing and benefit problems.

2. Community-based research projects

can enable students to work with community partners to create new knowledge or understanding about a practical community issue in order to bring about change. These projects can also be Participatory Action Research (PAR) projects.

Example: Planning students do research in order to develop a map with community assets for local groups involved in neighbourhood planning, in close partnership with the local groups.

3. Community-based research projects (PGT dissertations):

Community Research for Students at UCL connects not-for-profit organisations, academic staff and masters students who are keen to research a community need in the capital as part of their dissertation.

4. Community-based design thinking projects

involve an individual or team-produced project as a central component of the programme or module. Projects provide experience in the design process, from identifying needs or problems through consultation with community partners and determining solutions to prototyping and testing designs. These projects may take many forms such as graphic design projects, engineering design projects, or entrepreneurial (social enterprises or start-ups).

Example: Business students create a platform for individuals and organisations to lend money directly to community entrepreneurs.

5. Creative performance or exhibit involves an individual or team-produced dramatic, artistic, or musical performance, exhibit, or display that is presented to an audience consisting of members other than, or in addition to, the programme instructor and classmates.

Example: Information studies students create a living archive in Tower Hamlets.

6. Object-based learning activities

can enable students to use objects and engage in activities with local communities. Teaching and object-based learning with UCL Culture.

Example: Education students use objects from Petrie Museum to engage pupils from local schools.

7. Placements or internships

can be where students commit a certain amount of time to a project in a community. Placements are assessed and need to be formally embedded into the curriculum. You need to follow the principles and placement documentation in Section 8 of the Academic Manual. UCL Careers can support with the employability aspects of internships and placements.

Example: Museum studies students are placed in museums to develop more practical experience.

8. Volunteering opportunities:

Students' Union UCL Volunteering Service offers students the opportunity to work with community partners outside the classroom and develop transferable skills.

9. Sustainability opportunities: 'Education for Sustainable Development' is the process of equipping students with the knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes needed to work and live in a way that safeguards environmental, social and economic wellbeing, both in the present and for future generations. A global curriculum looks at sustainable development in terms of problems and solutions in local and global contexts and empowers students to contribute to social change across cultural and geographical contexts.

How to make community engaged learning activities successful

- Make sure that the students have an opportunity to get to know their partners in our communities before they engage with them. This can be done by asking the partner to come to the class (if the engagement is external) or having the students investigate the partner agency or organisation as part of the assignment.
- Provide opportunities for discussion about difficulties in the programme.
- Co-design Community Engaged Learning activities with students and community partners to ensure that everyone feels involved and that the projects are mutually beneficial.
- Prepare your students in advance before they engage with external partners. To receive training for your students on how to engage with external partners, email communityengagedlearning@ucl.ac.uk.
- Use digital collaborative tools if students from different universities and communities work together on any of the above activities i.e. wiki, blogs and web conferencing.
- If the opportunities are work-based (such as an internship or placement) students can look at the Internship Toolkit and/or book a short guidance appointment on myUCLCareers about how to make the most of the experience in terms of their future career aspirations before they start.

Resources to help you at this stage

- Boland, J.A. (2011). Positioning Civic Engagement on the Higher Education Landscape: Insights from a Civically Engaged Pedagogy. *Tert. Educ. Manag.* 17, 101–115.
- Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. (2007) Classification for Community Engagement. Available at: <https://www.brown.edu/swearer/carnegie>. Accessed: 10th August 2019).
- Moore, Thornton David (2013). *Engaged learning in the academy: challenges and possibilities*. New York: Palgrave and Macmillan.
- Rooks, R.N. & Holliman, B.D., 2018. Facilitating Undergraduate Learning through Community-Engaged Problem-Based Learning. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 12(2), p.13.
- Shultz Lynette and Kajner Tania (2013). *Engaged Scholarship: The Politics of Engagement and Disengagement*. Rotterdam/Boston/Tapei: Sense Publishers (ISBN: 978-94-6209-288-4).

4. Design Community Engaged Learning assessment(s)

Community Engaged Learning activities offer students the opportunity to produce outward facing outputs for specific audiences.

Community engaged experiences can open up new forms of assessment in addition to traditional ones.

They range from traditional assessments, such as essays and reports, to some interesting and innovative ones such as project and portfolio-based assessments which present students with the opportunity to demonstrate what they know, what they have done and what they have learned.

Planning assessments

- Build in very clear directions for assessment.
- Co-design the assessment briefs with students and community partners to ensure that there is clarity across the partnership.
- Think how will students demonstrate their learning to the class, tutor, and community partner

Formative assessments

Formative assessments give external partners the opportunity to offer students feedback about their engagement, the way they approach their projects and the progress on the development of their skills.

Students get the opportunity to adjust their work to the needs and requests of “real-life partners”. This makes students more life-ready and it is an inclusive way of assessment as students get feedback and the opportunity to improve before their summative assessment.

Formats of assessment:

- interim presentation
- video
- blog
- prototype
- draft report
- draft design etc.

Summative assessments

Community Engaged Learning Activities focus on contextualised tasks, enabling students to demonstrate their competency in a more ‘authentic’ setting.

A rubric against the learning outcomes can be developed to evaluate how well a student demonstrates the ability to complete the task.

Because most authentic assessments require a judgement of the degree of quality, they tend toward the subjective end of the assessment scale.

Rubrics are an attempt to make subjective measurements as objective, clear, consistent, and as defensible as possible by explicitly defining the criteria on which performance or achievement should be judged.

Formats of assessment(s):

- e-portfolios
- reports
- blogs
- videos
- photographic exhibition
- models
- processes
- services
- performance etc.

Reflection

Having students reflect on their experiences in engaging with community in an ongoing manner is a central aspect of experiential education.

Reflection allows students to investigate and evaluate their experiences, connect this learning to their academics and then build on this learning to expand their understanding of the not only the programme material, but the broader world around them (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999; Elyer & Giles, 1999; Hatcher, Bringle, & Muthiah, 2004).

If employability is an important component for the experience then encourage students to book a short guidance appointment on myUCLCareers so they can learn how to articulate their experience to future potential employers.

Formats of reflection-based assessment:

- case studies
- journals or blogs
- structured journals
- team journal
- portfolios
- discussions
- presentations
- interviews etc.

5. Evaluate student learning and the effectiveness of engaging with communities

In Community Engaged Learning there are several layers of evaluation you might wish to engage in.

You might want to evaluate:

- the success of the programme or the module
- how student experience was enhanced through the partnership; and
- the impact on the external partner.

Resources to help you at this stage

- Reddy, Y., & Andrade, H. (2010). A review of rubric use in higher education. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 35(4), 435-448.
- Stevens, D. and Levi, A. (2005). *Introduction to Rubrics*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Tractenberg, R. E., Umans, J. G., & McCarter, R. J. (2010). A mastery rubric: Guiding curriculum design, admissions and development of course objectives. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 35(1), 17-35.

Formats of evaluation:

- surveys
- exercise with clickers in the classroom
- focus groups, interviews
- classroom discussion
- quizzes etc.

Resources to help you at this stage

- Thea F van de Mortel, Robert Trigger, Christine Ahern & Jennifer Bird (2013). Evaluating a community-engaged vertically integrated teaching and learning pilot project, *Education for Primary Care*, 24:3, 165-172.

Where to find help and support

communityengagedlearning@ucl.ac.uk to:

- request advice or consultancy services
- book a curriculum design workshop
- book training for your students

Other toolkits in the Community Engaged Learning (CEL) series:

- How to build partnerships with external partners to enhance learning
- Working with schools to enhance your curriculum
- Engaging the local London community in your teaching: how to find out more about them

For general teaching advice or curriculum support:

arena@ucl.ac.uk: contact the UCL Arena Centre

bit.ly/CEL5steps to access this full online guide, including links and further resources.

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