



Teaching toolkits

Digital education: getting started at UCL

Digital technologies can enhance the student experience by providing a varied, flexible and supportive environment to enhance learning.

UCL is committed to teaching that is part face-to-face and part online, using the best from both styles.

Digital technologies help improve teaching and learning by:

- supporting authentic, creative and collaborative learning
- enabling a wide range of assessment approaches
- complementing face-to-face contact
- encouraging productive learning outside the classroom

Digital technologies can help you and your students create a variety of multimedia materials.

They can also give students new opportunities to interact with each other and with the wider world.

What digital education means

UCL offers a wide range of digital tools and resources, both produced by the university and by experts outside it.

It means using digital technologies to:

- create new types of curriculum, where students learn through a variety of methods and assessments
- provide well-integrated combinations of online and conventional modes of learning
- enable more interaction between students and staff, both inside and outside the classroom
- assess students in different ways and improve their engagement with feedback by making it quicker, more relevant and more contextualised

Putting it into practice

All taught modules and programmes at UCL must have a presence on Moodle, UCL's virtual learning environment.

UCL's E-Learning Baseline explains the standards that your e-learning content is expected to meet.

Well-presented materials on Moodle can help students get to grips more easily with the content and structure of your course.

Good practice usually includes organising your space in sections for resources (such as texts and handouts) and activities (such as conversations, quizzes and marking fellow students' work).

Take the course on getting started with Moodle (available online or face-to-face), see the Teaching and Learning Portal for more details.

Encourage students to produce and share work digitally

UCL offers a range of support for students who are producing digital work.

- MyPortfolio is a personal learning platform that enables students to blog, create a CV and connect with other students and staff in discussion forums.
- UCL Refect is a blogging service for students and staff to use for teaching and learning purposes.
- UCL Technology Society offers students the chance to produce digital resources through workshops, classes and hackathons.
- Box of Broadcasts is an off-air TV and radio resource to which UCL subscribes. Students and staff can view or listen to programmes, make clips and playlists, and share with others.
- UCL has a licence for LinkedIn Learning (previously called Lynda.com), which contains thousands of online courses in digital technologies.
- The UCL Wiki allows staff and students to co-create and edit web pages. It also contains lots of information about e-learning support for students.
- MediaCentral is UCL's platform for uploading and sharing video and audio. Staff and students can embed the content in web pages and Moodle and share it through social media.

Top tip

Encourage your students to use social media to increase their confidence as online communicators. Channels such as Twitter and LinkedIn can help students to build up their digital identity and reputation.

Use digital technologies to enhance traditional teaching

- Consider using Lecturecast, a system for recording lectures and making them available online. Lecturecast gives students 24-hour access to the taught components of their courses. It also gives you an insight into how different parts of your lectures were received, by showing which sections were watched the most. You can also upload your own media, such as screencasts.
- Use digital tools and resources to enable 'flipped' learning, where students engage with didactic material (such as a recorded lecture) in advance, freeing up large group sessions for more participative forms of contact.
- Try to make lectures more interactive, for example by using digital classroom response systems such as 'clickers' or free apps like Socrative.
- Create an online reading list for your modules at ReadingLists@UCL.
- Use the E-Learning Baseline to get more ideas on how to enhance online learning.

Arrange an Arena Blended Connected (ABC) Curriculum design workshop to get ideas on how to include digital elements in your module design.

Use digital technologies for research-based learning

UCL's Connected Curriculum is our framework for integrating a research-based education into all our taught programmes.

A research-based education means helping students to find things out for themselves and allowing them to get involved in research activities as part of their studies, whatever stage they're at.

These principles underpin decisions about using digital technologies.

For example, digital technologies open up vast new possibilities for learning through sharing data, resources and research.

For example, you could:

- get students to make use of open data sets
- create assessment or portfolios using UCL Reflect
- make use of open educational resources in modules
- encourage students to make the research they produce open for others to view.

Find out how people in your discipline are using digital technologies outside academia. Where possible, try and ensure that these technologies are embedded in your modules and programmes.

Enhance assessment and feedback

Assessment shapes what and how students learn.

Digital technology gives staff new ways to assess students, for example by asking them to produce videos, websites, presentations, blogs or apps, rather than write an essay.

Consider getting your students to submit their work online through Moodle. You can also provide feedback and assessment this way.

You and your student, and their personal tutor, can then view all their feedback through the student's My Feedback report.

Different departments may have different rules about online feedback, so check with your teaching lead about best practice. You can also speak to one of the Digital education team's advisers.

Where to find help and support

digi-ed@ucl.ac.uk: contact the Digital education team and read the team blog for ideas and support on using digital technology at <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/digital-education>.

The team:

- runs courses, workshops, masterclasses and briefings
- supports formal and informal networks
- jointly runs e-learning development grants for trying out new technologies
- produces the Digital Education newsletter
- its advisers also offer one-to-one support.

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

The UCL E-Learning Wiki is a good first port of call to see the range of digital education technologies available at UCL, and learn how to use them.

ABC Workshops, run by Digital Education, can help you embed blended learning when planning or reviewing programmes and modules.

If you can, take the Arena Digital short course. See online courses on the Teaching and Learning Portal (in the events section) for a selection of available training.

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