

# ONLINE / HYBRID Course Checklist

Use this checklist to effectively design or re-design an online or hybrid course.

*This checklist was made in consultation with Online Teaching Checklists from OCAD University, the University of British Columbia, the University of Toronto, and the Quality Matters website.*

## Planning and Preparation

- Review [Getting Started with Online Teaching](#)
- Use the [ECUAD Generative AI Guidelines](#) to define expectations for your course
- Review ideas for [Communication in Online Classes](#)
- Consider ways to encourage community and participation in online classes: [Building Community in Online Classes](#)
- Consider accessibility in your planning from the outset: [Creating Accessible Course Design](#)
- Define any additional learning outcomes: [Quick Guide for Learning Outcomes](#)

## Course Introduction and Overview

The introduction and overview section of your course site provides students with the necessary tools to get started and succeed in the course.

- Ensure that the following information is included in a highly visible section of your course site:
  - Course outline
  - Course meeting times and link (if applicable)
  - Instructor contact information and office hours information
- Provide clear written or video instructions on how to navigate course content
- Clearly list all asynchronous, synchronous, or in-person components of the course
- Let students know your response time for email communications and assignment feedback
- Communicate the minimum technical skills and software required to participate in the course
- By or before the course start date, make the course visible to students ([Basic Course Settings](#))

## Engagement

**Designing your online course for maximum engagement will help your students connect better with the course material and improve their learning.**

- Send an introductory email to explain key information and set the tone for your engagement in the class
- Indicate how and how often you will be engaging with the course (i.e. daily, twice weekly, weekly)
- Plan icebreaker activities throughout the course to encourage community building
- Establish a **group agreement** that highlights the role of engagement in class interactions and activities
- Develop a variety of different types of interaction (learner to learner, learner to instructor, learner to content)
- Define for students what different modalities they can use for engagement (spoken vs written) and what is considered effective and respectful engagement
- Consider assigning students to groups for particular activities to promote stronger peer to peer connections
- As appropriate, include synchronous community-building activities such as break-out rooms, polls, digital whiteboards, virtual meetings, etc.
- As appropriate, include asynchronous community-building activities such as collaborative documents, forums, glossaries, blogs, etc.
- Consider a midway feedback survey to gain insight into which activities are working well for students

## Learning Outcomes

**Learning outcomes state what a student should know, or be able to do, by the end of the course which helps students organize and prioritize their learning independently.**

- Review this guide on writing learning outcomes: **Quick Guide for Learning Outcomes**
- Clearly state course learning outcomes at the beginning of the course
- Assign learning outcomes for each week, module, or activity and link these to the course learning outcomes
- Indicate how assignments and activities will help students achieve learning outcomes
- Structure your assessments to help students measure their progress toward achieving learning outcomes
- Connect the course learning outcomes to degree outcomes (if available)
- Align learning outcomes with year-level learning outcomes (if available)



## Course Content & Design

**Students are more likely to engage in course content and activities when the course is clearly organized and easy to navigate.**

- Present course content clearly and in alignment with the course outline
- Consider including a checklist or to-do list for each week or module
- Prioritize ease of navigation in your course site:
  - follow a similar visual structure for each week or module
  - limit use of coloured fonts
  - divide large blocks of text into smaller chunks
  - use titles and headings where appropriate
- Provide instructions for each activity, assignment, and assigned reading/media
- Group materials related to individual assignments or activities together
- Ensure that any required texts, images or media files are available as downloadable files or via stable links to library or open-access resources
- Include instructions on how to access any non-digital materials (such as physical library resources or supplies)
- Model academic integrity by citing sources and images throughout the course

## Assessments

**Assessments provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in various ways that give students autonomy and agency in their learning.**

- Where possible, develop authentic assessments that give students the opportunity to apply learning in real-world contexts, such as case studies, problem-based learning, experiential learning, peer to peer learning, etc.
- Explicitly state the purpose for each activity and assignment so that students understand how it benefits their learning
- Provide clear guidelines for how student can meet expectations for course activities and assignments
- Where possible, design assignments and activities in such a way that students can demonstrate their learning in multiple ways (writing, video, audio)
- Provide rubrics or grading breakdowns for assignments
- Offer various forms of assessment throughout the course (summative and formative; individual and group; peer and instructor)

- Consider whether self-assessment should be incorporated into activities/assignments (self-assessment is particularly helpful for asynchronous online classes)
- Provide clear instructions on how to submit assignments and receive feedback
- Clearly distinguish between optional and required activities
- Include clear deadlines and any penalties for late work for each assignment; if using a calendar block for your course, include deadlines in the calendar as well

## Accessibility

**Accessibility in online courses is essential for learners with different learning needs, but also benefits many learners**

- Review the document: [Creating Accessible Course Design](#)
- Ensure that any PDF files are in [screen readable format](#)
- Include captions for all video and audio recordings: [Kaltura Captioning](#)
- Provide image descriptions and alt-text for any images used in the course
- Minimize the number of fonts and font colours to improve readability
- Provide space between blocks of text
- Use titles and headings to signal important content
- Design course content with the understanding that students may be accessing materials via phones or tablets and/or with limited access to high-speed internet
- Consider using open education resources, library resources, and other content that is available for free

## Learning Technology

**If used intentionally and carefully, learning technology can enhance the student's online learning experience.**

- Prioritize using [ECUAD-supported applications](#) whenever possible
- Confirm that using any unsupported technology is relevant to the learning outcomes or discipline
- Consider how difficult it may be for students to access and learn unsupported technologies
- Ensure that any unsupported technology is compliant with provincial privacy legislation and/or include a statement about how students can protect their privacy: [Unsupported Apps and Student Privacy](#)
- Screen unsupported technologies for accessibility, including on low-bandwidth internet

## Supports

Because online students might not be on campus with access to physical student supports, it is important to provide links to ECUAD resources that can support their online learning and student experience.

For all online courses, you may include links to:

- IT support
- Academic Integrity information
- Counselling and Wellness
- Accessibility Services
- Aboriginal Gathering Place
- Academic Advising
- Emily Carr Students' Union
- Writing Centre
- Library
- Shops and Studios

**Need further support?**

Or want to review your online course with someone?

Contact the Teaching and Learning Centre to **book an appointment**

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