

## SALC Remote Teaching/Online Learning

### Key Principles

It is anticipated that, even if we are back on campus and lockdown has eased at some point in Semester 1, social distancing will still be in place until the end of 2020 and perhaps beyond. With this specific issue in mind, the University has instructed that all lectures in Semester 1 2020/2021 must be delivered online, and that we must also prepare for all seminars, if necessary, to be online too.

We are grateful to the way in which colleagues have responded to moving their teaching online since the closure of the campus in mid-March. Even allowing for our experiences in recent weeks, however, we recognise that the development of our remote teaching provision for 2020/21 will pose fresh challenges. **Colleagues are therefore strongly encouraged to start thinking now about their Semester 1 courses, and about changes they will need to make as teaching and assessment is moved online.** We appreciate that colleagues may need to get back into their offices to access some teaching materials, but we still encourage everyone to start thinking about Semester 1 preparations whilst university buildings remain closed, for example using your own Blackboard pages and podcasts from previous years as an aide memoire. There are other things you can think about too, for example:

- With the move to remote teaching for Semester 1, will you be able to maintain your original course content and planned activities, or do these need to change?
- Will you need to restructure the planned delivery of seminar topics?
- How might you keep students engaged with the course content in an online environment?
- Do you need to think about changing the methods of assessment for your course?
- What steps can you take over the coming months to keep your workload manageable once teaching resumes in October? (e.g. pre-recording and preparing all asynchronous material before the semester starts)

To ensure colleagues are supported, and that consistency in quality of offering is ensured, SALC has devised the following short guiding principles for the delivery of remote teaching/online learning as we head into 2020/21. Here we propose the use of a mixture of delivery methods (both synchronous and asynchronous) to ensure a balanced and fulfilling learning experience for all students. This document should be read alongside the Faculty's remote teaching guidance documents, which will be released in the coming weeks. Incoming and returning students will receive an enhanced induction/welcome back experience in September 2020 with information about remote teaching/online learning. Further information will be provided about this in due course.

We recognise that the transition to remote teaching is a challenge for all colleagues, but we hope these key principles will help. In addition, there are a range of tools available (outlined below), and training provided in these – please use the ones that are most comfortable to you, and don't be afraid to experiment.

## **Key Principles**

1. **Learning Outcomes:** Every session should clearly state the intended learning outcomes at the beginning. You may also want to emphasise to students other learning outcomes, such as transferrable and employability skills that they will gain.
2. **Engagement and Inclusivity:** All students will need to have confidence about SALC's teaching plans for 2020/21, to feel they can engage with their tutors, that they can ask questions, share ideas, and collaborate with others. Online teaching is a new experience for many students, so it is important to be as inclusive as possible by employing a mixture of teaching methods (as outlined in Principles 3 and 4 below). We also suggest that a series of measures are taken to make the online space as inclusive and welcoming as possible. These include:
  - a. Staff should introduce themselves at the start of the course.
  - b. Ensure you include a facility for students to introduce themselves to one another – for example, an additional discussion board which remains live throughout the course for general or informal discussion.
  - c. Course unit directors should offer an opportunity for one-to-one engagement with students – either via a weekly office hour for the course or inviting students to email to make an appointment.
  - d. Inclusivity – remember students may be in different times zones, they may have care responsibilities, or they may have to share space and computing facilities with others. Strategies such as using asynchronous teaching allow for greater inclusivity.
  - e. Emphasise to students the benefits they will be gaining, beyond the academic ILOs of your course, such as transferrable and employability skills.

Feel free to take any other measures to ensure students do not feel cut off or isolated, and that they feel valued (but NEVER give out private phone numbers).

3. **Lectures:** The traditional lecture format cannot be used for Semester 1 courses. Online teaching has the potential to be more flexible, and we encourage colleagues to exploit this flexibility. Alternatives you could employ are:
  - a. An asynchronous (i.e. pre-recorded) mixture of short lecture clips with online resources and activities totalling two hours per 'lecture', which could be undertaken over the week. This is the preferred option. [You can see an example here](#) (this example also gives you further guidance about online learning).
  - b. An asynchronous lecture that must be no longer than 50 minutes, plus a series of online resources and activities totalling two hours which could be undertaken over the week.

- c. Synchronous (live) lectures remain a possibility but are not encouraged (see Appendix 2 FAQ below). There are three main issues here: (i) synchronous lectures are not inclusive (see below), (ii) on-campus lecture theatres will **not** be available for delivering lectures during Semester 1, and (iii) running a live feed can be very complicated due to connection difficulties. Colleagues are therefore strongly encouraged to consider asynchronous methods for delivering their lectures. If colleagues do employ synchronous lectures they must take place in the timetabled slot, be no longer than 50 minutes, and combined with a series of on online resources and activities totalling two hours which could be undertaken over the week. *Please note that all synchronous lectures must also be recorded and made available to students who may not be able to attend synchronously.*

You could use a mixture of these delivery methods, and also refer to the Faculty guidance for further suggestions.

4. **Seminars:** Seminars will continue but in an online format (unless campus re-opens and we are instructed otherwise). You can decide the right format for your online seminars and we encourage you to employ a mixture of methods. We advise that students are given guidance on “Netiquette” (see Appendix 1 below) to ensure best practice in online communication. The format of your seminar should include both:
  - a. A synchronous (and also recorded) seminar for at least some of the timetabled slot. It is up to you how to use this slot. You could follow the usual format of a face to face seminar, or simply give a brief introduction to the asynchronous task – or something in between.
  - b. An asynchronous interactive activity such as a discussion board, VoiceThread, Learning Journal or other activity based around a seminar reading or readings (or as appropriate to your subject area – e.g. based on a film or recording).

You should use a mixture of the above or other methods of engagement appropriate to your subject. It is also important to be aware that if on-campus seminars do become possible cohorts may still remain mixed, with some students online and some on-campus, and therefore the measures outlined here will allow for this.

5. **Assessment:** The School aims to make assessment easier for you by suggesting that this is reduced to fewer individual components and that these be largely coursework based. It is not necessary to assess the same learning outcomes repeatedly or more than once. Of course, we still warmly encourage you to retain novel and creative assessment methods or find ways to deliver these within the online environment. Frequent assessments will need to be approved by the School. Further details on this will be circulated in the coming weeks.
6. **Attendance:** Discussions are ongoing at University level about how student attendance in Semester 1 will be monitored. Until these details are finalised and we have a clear set of

processes in place, colleagues should work on the principle that attendance will not be linked to assessment – see point 5 above, specifically that frequent assessments will need to be approved by the School. Details about attendance monitoring measures will be circulated in the coming months. These will be made clear to students at the start of the academic year.

7. **Content release:** We suggest that you employ a pattern of rolling release which ensures that students will have to engage with the material in pace with the course, rather than leaving it to the last minute. This could be either:
  - a. A 2-week rolling pattern of content release – release lecture content for the current week, plus leave content from the previous week open for active engagement for one week. Previous material can then be left available for the rest of the duration of the course, but it should be closed to contributions.
  - b. A 3-week rolling pattern of content release – release lecture content for the current week and the week ahead, plus leave content from the previous week open for active engagement for one week. Previous material can then be left available for the rest of the duration of the course, but it should be closed to contributions.

### **How will I meet these principles?**

#### **Faculty will provide:**

- [Guidance and resources from the Institute of Teaching and Learning](#)
- A set of principles to guide online teaching at course unit level
- A set of easy to use templates for the design and delivery of your online teaching
- Initiatives, resources and online teaching ideas under the umbrella of the Teaching Academy to support time and energy investment into developing as an online teacher
- 1-to-1 or 1-to-few instructional design consultations facilitated by eLearning Team, using an established design model ([HeLD](#)) for enhancement of core units prioritised by Schools, while design consultations will also be opened to individuals interested in enhancing online delivery
- Online drop-in [support from the eLearning Team](#)
- Online training sessions on core tools and the effective use of online environment
- Mentoring and sharing of best practice from staff experienced in online teaching

#### **The School will provide:**

- An initial training resource to introduce you to some of the key tools you can use in your remote teaching and point you in the direction of further training in specific software

- [Online drop-in support from the eLearning Team](#)
- [A dedicated virtual office hour for staff with SALC's eLearning Lead \(Hannah Cobb\), every Tuesday 10-11](#)
- Monthly Teaching Innovation Collective talks to highlight and share best practice
- The development of "how to" guides for students and other resources about getting the best from online learning
- [A SALC specific intranet page where all of these resources, and more, can be found](#)

### **What tools are at your disposal?**

Click on the coloured text for links to these resources

- [Blackboard Collaborate](#)
- [Zoom](#) (link opens a pdf) and you can also find further guidance [here](#)
- Video sharing platforms – the University recommends using its own [Video portal](#) where features like subtitling can be provided, but other platforms include [YouTube](#) (upload videos as unlisted), and [Vimeo](#).
- Blackboard tools like [discussions boards](#), [wikis](#), [quizzes](#)
- Quizzes – These can also be added using tools like [Quizlet](#)
- Polling – e.g. using [TurningPoint](#)
- [VoiceThread](#)
- [Adobe Spark](#) NB this link is a YouTube video, Faculty guidance and training will follow in the next few weeks
- [Multimedia resources](#) e.g. [Box of Broadcasts](#) -
- [Open Educational Resources](#)
- [Faculty eLearning page](#) – including links to most of the above, training and best practice exemplars
- [My learning essentials](#)

You may also find useful a series of one-page help sheets produced by the Open University, free to download here <http://www.open.ac.uk/blogs/innovating/> on the following topics; Flipped learning, Teachback, Seamless learning, Learning to learn, Evaluating information, Making thinking visible, Personal inquiry learning, Science in remote labs, MOOCs to support language learning, Maker culture.

### **Student Accessibility**

If you have students who you are concerned can not get online, or have bandwidth issues, the University has introduced a single email address that they can contact for advice and support with engaging and accessing online learning and assessment: [helpmegetonline@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:helpmegetonline@manchester.ac.uk). Alternatively, students can also call +44 (0)161 306 6199 (Monday to Friday during UK Office hours). You could also make all of your online learning content available as PDFs so that students can download it and look at it offline.

## **DASS Students**

Further guidance on this from DASS will be forthcoming, however making teaching asynchronous and applying for subtitles to be added where possible (to videos and Voicethreads, for example) are two key features that staff can employ to help DASS registered students.

## **Appendix 1 "Netiquette"**

Netiquette means appropriate behavior while using Internet facilities such as individual websites, emails, newsgroups, message boards, chat rooms or Web communities. Some examples of netiquette are listed below:

- Not posting or distributing material that is illegal (this includes photocopying and distributing copyright work).
- Not posting or distributing material that may be disturbing to others.
- Not using abusive or threatening language.
- Not posting offensive remarks regarding sex, race, gender, age, sexuality, disability or any other [protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010](#).
- Not trying to obtain or use someone else's password.
- Not trying to obtain inappropriate personal information about someone.

We want all our students to feel safe online, so any posting that is considered offensive or inappropriate will be deleted by the course tutor.

## **Appendix 2 FAQs**

### **I need specialist software for my teaching in 20/21, how do I get this?**

Please contact [Hannah.Cobb@Manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Hannah.Cobb@Manchester.ac.uk) about this urgently.

### **When will we know about the return to on-campus, face to face teaching?**

We have no information at this stage, except to reiterate the University position that all lectures in Semester 1 must take place online, and seminars should take place online until further notice. We advise that you prepare all of your teaching to be online for Semester 1, for lectures and seminars, but you could retain a flexible model of seminar delivery which would allow for the move to on-campus seminars if this becomes possible. Any information about the return to campus will be communicated as soon as a decision is made by the University.

**Students like synchronous learning and removing this from our courses will cause dissatisfaction, do we have to?**

We are not asking that you remove synchronous teaching, but rather we suggest that you consider using synchronous engagement for shorter times and alongside other methods including greater pre-recorded asynchronous content, discussion boards, Voicethread and other flipped classroom methods. If you do use synchronous learning please make sure it is recorded to ensure student accessibility.

**Students don't like discussion boards – do I have to use them?**

You don't have to use them but consider that many students have only been introduced to them under the emergency measures of the last few months. Using discussion boards when integrated into a course properly designed for online learning will enable students to see and benefit from their pedagogic value. They can also be used for monitoring engagement with seminar activities and can be used more informally as a space where students from the course can catch up and chat. These are important things for encouraging student engagement, inclusion and retention. Online inductions will emphasise the value of tools like discussion boards too so both new and returning students will begin Semester 1 2020/2021 with a potentially different view of discussion boards.

**When can I activate my Blackboard for 20/21?**

We encourage staff to get going as soon as possible with the development of their remote teaching for 20/21. However, it is not possible to activate Blackboard courses for the next academic year at this stage – we anticipate this will be possible by mid-late June. We will alert you when activation is ready and, as per previous years, we will provide clear instructions about how to activate your Blackboard pages. Meanwhile, though, you can experiment and create content in your Blackboard Playground space. This space is personal to you and you can then copy content over into your courses when they are activated.

**What we can do/advise for students who do not have access to the internet at home? (and only patchy or no phone signal):** New students in 2020/2021 will be supported on entry to ensure they have the right equipment for online learning. Meanwhile if you have current students who you are concerned cannot get online, or have bandwidth issues, the University has introduced a single email address that they can contact for advice and support with engaging and accessing online learning and assessment: [helpmegetonline@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:helpmegetonline@manchester.ac.uk). Alternatively, students can also call +44 (0)161 306 6199 (Monday to Friday during UK Office hours). You could also make all of your online learning content available as PDFs so that students can download it and look at it offline.

**My home bandwidth is not enough to use synchronous remote learning methods. What should I do?**

We appreciate that this may be the case for some colleagues. If this is the case please do let students know that your teaching will be asynchronous so that their expectations are managed from the outset. In this case, the best option is to work offline to record your lecture

(see the School and Faculty training resources on this) and then only go online to upload it to the video portal. It may take some time with low bandwidth but should still be possible. Alternative asynchronous methods are suggested [here](#) and in the training we are providing. Alternative synchronous methods for meetings or seminars with low bandwidth could be to conduct these on your mobile phone if you have better phone signal than bandwidth. However, we do appreciate that data costs or simply the size of your phone may not make this option possible.

**Where should we point students who are having technical difficulties connecting to Collaborate Ultra and other services to? Is there eLearning support for them in the same way that there is for staff?** Yes! They can contact eLearning via email [elearning@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:elearning@manchester.ac.uk) or point them to this [link](#) from Blackboard.

**My students are struggling to download large PowerPoint or other lecture recording files. What can I do?**

If this is the case, we recommend uploading these to the [University video portal](#) instead, or alternative video sites such as YouTube or Vimeo. Students will then be able to stream them and not have to download them.