

# Designing for connection

## Course component suggestions

Introductory materials	A welcome message/pod/vodcast is provided. Photo and bio may also be provided.
	Students are provided with staff contact details (teaching and administrative)
	Students are given clear explanations regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the uses of course components</li><li>• expectations for interaction</li><li>• the timing and frequency of coordinator moderation and</li><li>• protocols for interaction.</li></ul>
	Students are introduced to the philosophies and processes of learning online. They receive explanations about differences between learning online and face-to-face as well as guidance about study skills for online learning.
	Students are informed about technical assistance available to support their online learning.
	Students are given clear information about scheduling and timetabling of course components including clearly articulated expectations and deadlines for what they are required to do.
	Orientation materials for the course include overview of assessment, specific task details, marking frameworks and relevant policy information (e.g. referencing, plagiarism, extensions, requests for remarking, etc)
Online communication processes	There is a course tool that enables the teacher to communicate important course information and updates to students, and the purpose of this tool is explained to students.
	There are tools which enable students to contact and receive feedback from the teacher.
	The course also uses tools that enable communications directly among students.
	Students receive appropriate and timely responses to their questions within the course.
	When students are required to use tools or software in the online environment, they are told about required technical skills and given direction about how to use the new software or processes.
	Clear directions and escalation pathways are provided to guide students with respect to technical issues, pedagogical issues and other problems they might encounter.
	Strategies are in place to build rapport student-to-instructor and student-to-student in the discussion forums and other course contexts online.
Where students are asked to communicate and cooperate on tasks or assignments, clear guidelines for group interaction are provided.	
Where collaborative tasks are assessed, explicit guidelines and criteria for marking are included.	
Assessment supports	Course assessment tasks are accompanied by clear instructions and comprehensive marking criteria and are provided to students in their entirety from the beginning of the semester.
	The course has clearly articulated strategies for moderation and response with respect to assessment tasks and students receive timely, accurate and well-targeted feedback.
	Students are provided with general instructions from the course coordinator about assignment writing requirements and expectations for the course (e.g. via pod/vodcast) including referencing style requirements and presentation protocols (fonts, font sizes, line spacing, cover sheets, etc)
	Students are given a specific pathway for directing their enquiries about assessment, e.g., a specific online discussion forum to address FAQs about assessment tasks.
	Students are provided with information about how and where to access academic skills support.
	Assessment scaffolds are available to students, such as sample tests, past exams, model answers and/or examples of student work, with explanations of grading relevant to the samples.
	Support structures are provided for students who submit unsatisfactory work to assist them to progress towards required standards.
Systems and procedures are in place to ensure students are not disadvantaged if technology fails during online assessment tasks.	