Preparing for the New Academic Year: Reviewing your Course Checklist

You can use this checklist as a prompt to make sure your course is set-up effectively for **Globally Connected Learning** ready for the new academic year. There's no expectation that you cover all the points. Some will be more relevant to your teaching than others. If you would like to explore whether a point might be relevant to your course, please feel free to get in touch with the Learning and Teaching Academy at LTAcademy@hw.ac.uk.

We recommend that when check your course site on Canvas, you also look at how your course looks to students and you can do this using the student preview mode.

You may also find it useful to refresh your knowledge of Canvas using the Canvas Fundamentals training, or accessing the Canvas Instructor Guides.

1. Have you included all key course information on the VLE? ☐

- The course site introduces the course teaching team and provides their contact details and office hours.
- The course site includes copies of the course handbook and a link to the programme handbook.
- The course site explains how and when the course team will communicate with students. This may include, for example, a weekly announcement on key activities for the week.
- The course site explains how to study the course, including where to find course resources.
- The Learning Outcomes are clearly presented for your students, including how they are aligned to each of the relevant assessment elements.
- Course assessments, submission dates, and rubrics are included in the 'assessments' section of the course site.

2. Does the course structure make it clear to students how to study the course? ☐

- The course has a clear structure which enables students to know what they should be doing each week, as well as when and how, along with any coursework deadlines.
- The Course 'modules' on Canvas and resources are named and numbered (e.g. week 1 - 6th Sept 2022, topic 1), so that they can be easily navigated.
- Students are guided on what to focus on whilst engaging with resources (e.g. videos, podcasts, readings etc). For example, provide key points to think about or specific questions to address.
- It is clear to students how different activities and content link together e.g. asynchronous activities and live sessions.
- It is easy to find additional book lists, reference materials, e-books, websites, apps or other online resources.
- Any content or items which are no longer in use have been removed from the VLE.
- The course site has been published.

3. Have you provided a course induction and ongoing activities to support student engagement? ☐

- A welcome message on the homepage gives an outline of the course for students (this could be video, audio or written).
- There are clearly identified spaces for students to meet independently of their scheduled live sessions.
- As part of induction:
  - Time is scheduled for students to meet and get to know the teaching team, and each other.
  - Students are provided with guidance on study expectations and how to manage their studies.
  - Students are supported to navigate and use the course site and shown where to find and submit assessments.
  - Guidance on using course-related tools and netiquette is provided.
- Where possible across the course, time is scheduled for informal, unrecorded discussion to facilitate community building and build student confidence in sharing ideas – both online and face-to-face.
- Students are signposted to additional subject or study support they may need throughout their studies, e.g. Maths Gym, support with Academic English, study skills.
- Additional subject-specific support is provided, where necessary, throughout the programme of study in recognition of learning missed due to any Covid-disruption.

4. Are coursework and assessments co-ordinated and clearly communicated? ☐

- The course makes clear how assessments relate to learning outcomes.
- Information is provided for both formative and summative assessments.
- Descriptive criteria or a rubric are included for each assessment.
- Deadlines for coursework and assessments have been co-ordinated across the course and wider programme to ensure that they are reasonably spread out and students are not being over-assessed.
- Assessment submission methods are clear and students are signposted to guidance on how to use these tools. This should include links to Canvas Assignment guidance and Turnitin Similarity Checking Guidance, as appropriate.
- Guidance is provided on promoting academic integrity, avoiding plagiarism and how to use referencing.
- Help is available to students to understand assessment expectations. This may be through providing exemplars or class discussion of marking criteria.
- Students are provided with information about how they will receive feedback and how to engage with that feedback to help them with subsequent assessments.

5. Is the purpose of live sessions and asynchronous activities clear? ☐

- The course is planned so that live session and asynchronous activities are linked and the purpose of each is clear.
- The location of live sessions is clear, including whether these take place on-campus or online.
- It is clear to students what preparation / activities they should complete before live sessions.
- Activities directly contribute to the achievement of the course learning outcomes.

6. Does the course provide signposting to relevant student support? ☐

- Students are informed that there is a direct link to Student Wellbeing from the help menu on Canvas. This is accessible from the left-hand menu on every page.
- You may find it useful to signpost to or include the standard list of '**University resources**' as provided in the HW VLE template on [Canvas Commons](#) and any additional services specific to your course.

7. Is the course designed to be accessible? ☐

- Audio and video transcripts and / or captions are provided.
- Alt text has been included for all images and diagrams and colour has not been used as the only way to convey information.

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