

Learning Partnerships – Co-design workshop plan

Introduction

Co-design is a form of learning partnership where learners and educators become partners in the creation of curricula or learning materials. Healey et al. (2014) described the benefits of learning partnerships as including improved learning gain and achievement, more authentic and transformative experiences. Bovill et al. (2015) further described the benefits as including improved learner engagement and motivation, enhanced meta-cognitive awareness and educator-learner relationships.

Cardiff University's commitment to learning partnerships, learners playing an active role in shaping their education and engaged in meaningful dialogue about their learning, is demonstrated in the education sub-strategy of The Way Forward 2018-2023 (Cardiff University, 2019).

This workshop plan, adapted from the 7Cs of Learning Design (University of Leicester, 2019) and based on co-design experience at the [School of Social Sciences](#) and the [School of Pharmacy](#), describes the steps in facilitation of a co-design workshop between educators and learners in support of teaching and learning activity design. The workshop begins with an analysis of learning outcomes and identification of characteristics of the learning experience, before the creation and review of a storyboarded design for learning.

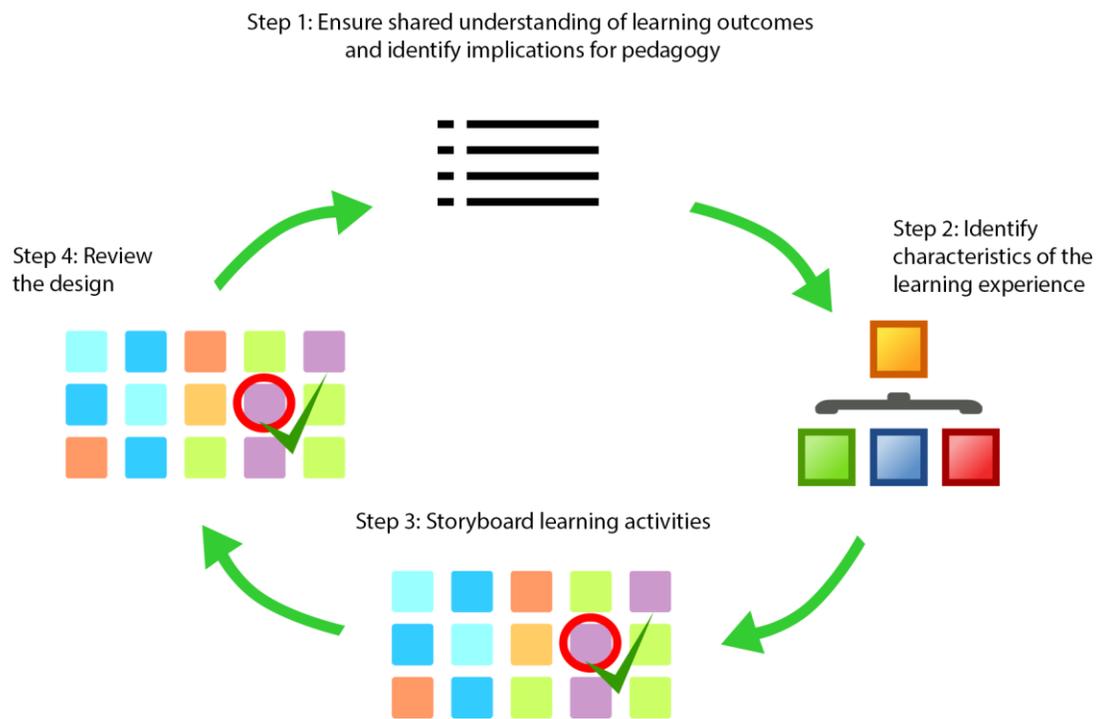


Figure 1: Co-design workshop format

This workshop was designed and delivered in the School of Social Sciences and School of Pharmacy as part of the [Centre for Education Support and Innovation](#)-funded Co-design of eLearning (CoDel) project.

Prerequisites

This workshop plan requires the following information and materials:

1. Learning outcomes for a digital learning resource/academic module
2. Whiteboard
3. [Feature cards adapted from the 7Cs of Learning Design](#) (University of Leicester, 2019)
4. Blank A1 sheet of paper to be used as a storyboard
5. 3 sets of post-it notes of different colour

Participants

The workshop plan is based on a collaboration between the following participants:

1. One or more educators expressing knowledge of learning outcomes, the learning environment and their own experience of teaching and learning
2. One or more learners expressing learner needs, motivations, preferences and their own experience of teaching and learning
3. Impartial facilitator clarifying meaning, guiding activities and preventing the anchoring of discussions by individuals

Workshop – Part 1

Part 1 of the workshop identifies, from learning outcomes and participants expectations, characteristics of the learning experience with which to inform learning activity design.

Step 1: Ensure a shared understanding of learning outcomes and identify pedagogical implications

Format

Whiteboard task

Resources

1. Learning outcomes for a digital learning resource/academic module

Introduction

The purpose of this step is to ensure a shared understanding of the learning outcomes and identify any implicit assumptions for the pedagogical approach, as this will naturally have implications when designing learning and assessment activities.

When doing so, a useful approach is to consider if the learning outcomes are indicative of **Knowing**, **Acting** or **Being** (Barnett and Coate, 2005):

	Implied learning	Pedagogical implications
Knowing	Recognition and recall of information	Providing opportunities to identify, acquire and test composite knowledge and skills
Acting	Developing and applying skills or information	Providing opportunities to apply, reflect and modify knowledge and skills
Being	Evaluating and integrating skills and knowledge into practices and values (Internalisation)	Providing opportunities for evaluation and synthesis in encouragement of criticality and judgement

Table 1: Pedagogical implications indicative of Knowing, Acting or Being

More in-depth guidance on learning outcome interpretation is provided by John (2019) based on the three perspectives of learning by Mayes and De Freitas (2013): associative; cognitive; situative.

Facilitator instructions

1. Ensuring the learning outcomes are available on a whiteboard, summarise the purpose of this step of the workshop
2. Ask the educator to introduce the learning outcomes and solicit questions from the other participants to ensure a shared understanding
3. Ask participants to consider and volunteer their understanding of what Knowing, Acting or Being means
4. Building on the previous activity, summarise the type of learning implied by Knowing, Acting, or Being
5. For each learning outcome and using the action verbs as a guide, ask participants to identify if Knowing, Acting, or Being is expressed. Annotate the learning outcomes with participants responses.

6. For the learning outcomes as a whole, ask participants to identify if Knowing, Acting, or Being is expressed
7. Based on the participants responses, summarise any pedagogical implications from the learning outcomes

Step 2: Identify characteristics of the learning experience

Format

Whiteboard/Table task

Resources

1. [Feature cards adapted from the 7Cs of Learning Design](#) (University of Leicester, 2019)

Introduction

Biggs (1999) described constructive alignment as a strategy in the realisation of outcomes through an alignment between learning outcomes, pedagogical approach, learning activities and assessment. In support of constructive alignment, the purpose of this step is to build on the analysis of the learning outcomes and identify characteristics of the learning experience to inform storyboarding activities, including:

- Content and experience – Pedagogical characteristics; delivery method
- Guidance and support – Levels of direction and the role of the educator
- Communication and collaboration – The role of other learners
- Reflection and demonstration – Opportunities for demonstration and assessment of learning

Facilitator instructions

1. Ensuring the annotated learning outcomes are available on a whiteboard, summarise the purpose of this step of the workshop
2. Based on pedagogical implications identified in the previous exercise (Knowing, Acting, Being) and the participants knowledge and experience, ask participants to discuss and select from the feature cards, characteristics of the desired learning experience:
 - a. Content and experience

- b. Guidance and support
 - c. Communication and collaboration
 - d. Reflection and demonstration
3. Building on the agreed characteristics, ask participants to consider some or all of the following questions:
- a. How might the learning be grouped into logical and effective stages or topics?
 - b. What key literature or research might be included as part of a syllabus?
 - c. What key learning activities might be appropriate in support of developing and demonstrating understanding? For example:
 - i. Production of an artefact or portfolio
 - ii. Recording of a learning journal
 - iii. Completion of a specific task
 - d. How might peer learning and social support be nurtured?
 - e. How will progression be supported, measured and communicated? Including:
 - i. The approach to formative, summative or continuous assessment
 - ii. The role of self-assessment and peer review
 - iii. Feedback model
 - f. Are there any useful tools or technologies to be used?
 - g. What are the key employability skills to be developed?
4. Annotate the whiteboard with a summary of the agreed characteristics

End of part 1 summary

The workshop participants have now identified characteristics of the desired learning experience with which to inform learning activity design. For participants inexperienced in learning activity design and/or unfamiliar with the subject matter, this may be the end of the workshop, the characteristics instead being used by the teaching team to inform subsequent design activities.

Workshop – Part 2

Part 2 of the workshop builds on characteristics of the desired learning experience identified in Part 1 to produce a storyboarded design for learning. A storyboard is a useful visual tool for designing sequences of learning, benefits of a storyboard approach include: ease of collaboration and experimentation;

ability to measure the balance, timing and consistency of learning activities; ability to manage throughlines of skills development or research.

Part 2 of the workshop, suitable for participants experienced in learning activity design and with a good knowledge of the subject matter, may take place immediately after Part 1 or at a later date in support of reflection and a content audit.

Step 3: Storyboard learning activities

Format

Storyboard task

Resources

1. Blank A1 sheet of paper to be used as a storyboard
2. 3 sets of post-it notes of different colour

Introduction

The purpose of this step is to storyboard learning activities, considering:

- a. Activities consistent with the characteristics identified in Step 2
- b. How learning feeds into assessment
- c. How assessment feeds into learning

Facilitator instructions

1. Summarise the purpose of this step of the workshop
2. Using the characteristics identified in Step 2 as a guide, a blank storyboard and the post-it notes, ask participants to map out the learning activities for each stage of learning. Use a different set of post-it notes to identify:
 - a. Learning resources or tools (e.g. Journal article)
 - b. Learning activities (e.g. Critique the journal article)
 - c. Assessments (e.g. Perform a literature review)

Top tips

1. Start small, perhaps storyboard a single week/topic of learning activities, you may discover there are patterns that can be repeated across blocks of learning
2. Encourage the annotation of post-it notes to capture detail from the discussions, encourage participants to share this responsibility

Step 4: Review the storyboard

Format

Storyboard task

Introduction

The purpose of this step is to review the storyboard in its expression of learning characteristics and alignment to learning outcomes.

Facilitator instructions

1. Summarise the purpose of this step of the workshop
2. In relation to the storyboard, ask participants to consider if the following questions are being answered:
 - a. Are the characteristics identified in Step 2 expressed across the design?
 - b. Are there sufficient and appropriate opportunities for the learner to develop understanding?
 - c. Does learning feed into assessment?
 - d. Does assessment feed into learning and provide learners with an opportunity to use feedback?
 - e. Are self and peer assessment encouraged?
 - f. Are the learning outcomes being satisfied?
3. Ask participants to identify any quality criteria for the design not captured in the storyboard, for example:
 - a. Visual identity guidelines
 - b. Accessibility guidelines

c. Strategies to measure engagement/participation

Ask participants to annotate the storyboard with quality criteria

4. Ask for a volunteer participant to summarise the storyboard, and the now completed design for learning, to the rest of the group

Post-workshop

The following actions are recommended at the end of, or shortly after, the workshop:

- a. Photograph the learning design
- b. Insist that participants take the learning design with them, this increases the sense of ownership of the design
- c. Email participants with a digital copy of the learning design and thank them for their participation
- d. Ask participants to complete a short survey of their workshop experience
- e. Reflect and record lessons from the workshop, share reflections with your learning design peers
- f. For more formal learning design activities you may wish to transfer information from the storyboard into a digital format for collaborative ongoing development (e.g. Excel Online, Trello)

Summary and lessons

Depending on the experience of the workshop participants, the workshop delivers two key outputs: characteristics of a desired learning experience; a storyboarded design for learning. The outputs act as a record of learner-educator engagement and should inform teaching and learning design.

When preparing to deliver a co-design workshop, if possible obtain early access to the learning outcomes, becoming familiar with any explicit or implicit guidance therein prior to the workshop. Be responsive to the experience of the workshop participants, for example, avoiding high-level pedagogical vocabulary. If you are inexperienced in delivering a workshop, perhaps practice the workshop with your peers acting as participants, this will help familiarise you with the processes, articulation and group management. Finally, you may find the suggested activities from this workshop plan useful but don't be afraid to try your own ideas and reflect on the success of the workshop.

More information

The following tutorial includes more in-depth information on learning outcome interpretation and expression in learning design, with the role of storyboarding explored in greater detail:

- Interpreting and expressing learning outcomes in learning design

About the author

This workshop plan was designed by Christopher John, eLearning Team Leader, School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University



- e: johnc11@cardiff.ac.uk
- w: <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/people/view/john,-chris>

References

Barnett, R. and Coate, K. (2005) *Engaging the curriculum in higher education*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Biggs, J. (1999) 'What the Student Does: teaching for enhanced learning', *Higher Education Research & Development*, 18(1), pp. 57-75.

Bovill, C., Cook-Sather, A., Felten, P., Millard, L. and Moore-Cherry, N. (2016) 'Addressing potential challenges in co-creating learning and teaching: overcoming resistance, navigating institutional norms and ensuring inclusivity in student–staff partnerships', *Higher Education*, 71(2), pp. 195-208.

Cardiff University (2019) *The Way Forward 2018-2013*. Available at: <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/thewayforward> (Accessed: 01 February 2019).

Healey, M., Flint, A. and Harrington, K. (2014) *Engagement through partnership: students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education*. Higher Education Academy.

John (2019) *Interpreting and expressing learning outcomes in learning design*. Available at: <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/learning-hub> (Accessed: 06 June 2019).

Mayes, T. and De Freitas, S. (2013) 'Technology-Enhanced Learning: The Role of Theory', in Beetham, H. and Sharpe, R. (eds.) *Rethinking Pedagogy for a Digital Age*. London: Routledge, pp. 17-30.

University of Leicester (2019) *The 7Cs of Learning Design Toolkit*. Available at: <https://www2.le.ac.uk/projects/oer/oers/beyond-distance-research-alliance/7Cs-toolkit> (Accessed: 22 June 2018).