

Session title: Beyond Blended: curriculum and learning design to meet the evolving challenges of time, space and learner engagement

Session type: Workshop (60 mins)

Main presenter: Sheila MacNeill, Jisc

Co-presenters: Helen Beetham (Jisc), Elizabeth Newall, (Jisc)

Session summary:

The shift to online modes of learning during the pandemic, followed by the return (for the most part) to campus, has raised opportunities and challenges for curriculum and learning design. There are questions about the use of place and platform in new arrangements, concerns over student engagement, and issues of presence and pace in the new learning modes.

Session outline:

Over the past 2 years, the authors have undertaken a research review, survey and consultation with the UK HE sector to expand understanding of how approaches to curriculum and learning design are evolving. We contend that in 2023, almost all learning is in fact blended, and what the sector needs is a more nuanced understanding of different elements of the 'blend', and how they meet different curriculum challenges and learning needs. Leadership in curriculum and learning design must move 'beyond blended' to meet expectations around flexibility, accessibility and inclusion.

We propose a renewed focus on the times and places, platforms and modes of learning. To support this focus we have identified five principles of design for blended learning that we have mapped to other curriculum issues and strategic priorities. Our choice of modes aligns with work done by Advance HE (2022) and draws on lessons learned across the sector during the pandemic online shift including Eyal and Gil (2020)'s design patterns for future learning spaces, and Goodyear's (2020) review of design and co-configuration for hybrid learning. (274 words)

Participants will review and explore resources in development that support :

- Six pillars for designing 'beyond blended' with actions for curriculum design and for strategic planning
- Four aspects of learning 'beyond blended': time, pace and timing, space and place, learning materials - print, digital and other media, and, groups, roles and relationships
- Four modes of participation in learning that shape every session, activity and interaction
- Key prompts for curriculum teams and educators

Through engagement with the resources participants will also be able to share, discuss and provide feedback on the links between the 'beyond blended' approach and existing design frameworks, as well as the potential benefits of using 'beyond blended' in their own institution/practice.

References:

Beetham, H., & MacNeill, S. (2023). Beyond blended. Jisc.
<https://beta.jisc.ac.uk/reports/beyond-blended>

Bryant, P., The Snapback, Available at:
<https://peterbryant.smegradio.com/the-snapback/> (Accessed April 21, 2023)

Eyal, L. and Gil, E. (2020), Design patterns for teaching in academic settings in future learning spaces. Br J Educ Technol, 51: 1061-1077. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12923>

Goodyear, P. (2020), Design and co-configuration for hybrid learning: Theorising the practices of learning space design. Br J Educ Technol, 51: 1045-1060.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12925>

MacNeill, S., & Beetham, H. (2022). Approaches to curriculum and learning design across UK higher education Jisc.
<https://beta.jisc.ac.uk/reports/approaches-to-curriculum-and-learning-design-across-uk-higher-education>