WHAT? HOW? WHY?

1. Supporting participation in interactive tasks / using online environments

**Allow sufficient time for all learners to participate in activities**

Consider that it might take some learners longer to complete certain tasks than others and plan session timings accordingly. Familiarise yourself with information about the types of assistive technologies that learners might be using in order to appreciate the ways in which these might impact on their engagement with online activities.

**Provide instructions about how to navigate these environments and the format that activities will take.**

Promote / demonstrate use of the online space in face-to-face sessions. Provide opportunities for learners to engage with the technology in an informal / perhaps more social space prior to using it for structured sessions.³

Provide opportunities for learners to share about difficulties that they may be having with the technology.

**Those with upper-body mobility difficulties, and visual or hearing impairments might use assistive technologies (such as a foot-operated mouse, screen reader, captioning software, etc.), that require different interactions, which can be more time-consuming.¹**

Those with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) such as dyslexia, or for whom English is not a first language, might benefit from additional time to read or respond to instructions. Equally, those engaged in distance working might have slower Internet connection speeds which influence the speed with which they can participate.²

**Allow sufficient time for learners to become familiar with the layout of your online environment and the tools available in it.**

Such training does not assume prior knowledge of the software or the layout of the online environment. Providing guidance and opportunities for learners to explore and engage with this space will help to build their confidence and avoid excluding those who might take longer to learn how to navigate the space or to read and process written / verbal instructions. This feedback can inform future amendments to the online environment.

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The complete set of Being Inclusive In... guides is available at [http://www.sdduonline.leeds.ac.uk/inclusiveteaching](http://www.sdduonline.leeds.ac.uk/inclusiveteaching)
### WHAT?  
- Consider the extent to which learners need to be participating at the same time to fully engage in specific learning activities.

### HOW?  
- Consider providing ‘hidden’ additional descriptive information embedded in PowerPoint slides for screen-reading software.

### WHY?  
- Certain colour schemes and text formatting can present barriers for learners with SpLDs such as dyslexia or visual impairments.⁴

- Consider whether synchronous (e.g. when all learners are interacting in the online space at the same time) or asynchronous learning activities (e.g. blogs / activities that learners can contribute to at any time rather than all needing to be online at the same time) are most appropriate for a given learning activity.

- Try to be consistent in where you place information and the formats that you use for online activities.

- A familiar and regular format for the online space will help support those with SpLDs like dyslexia or dyspraxia, or those for whom English is a second language, in navigating the online space.⁵

- Such additional information can make graphics / pictures more accessible for visually impaired learners.

- Learners with caring responsibilities or part-time work might face greater challenges in coordinating their timetables with those who do not have similar responsibilities.

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WHAT?

Promote inclusivity via your delivery and task instructions

HOW?

Establish guidelines outlining appropriate ‘netiquette’ for interaction in online interactive situations (e.g. encouraging learners to virtually raise their hands to speak in group discussions using Blackboard Collaborate; advising learners about the appropriate use / tone of language when posting on discussion boards, etc.).

WHY?

As with face-to-face delivery, clarifying such expectations at the outset might encourage learners to participate in collaborative activities and remain mindful of the personalities, attitudes, values, learning styles and pace of others in the group. (See also Being Inclusive in Group Work)

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REFERENCES


4 Grace & Gravestock.

5 ALERT (as above).

6 ALERT. (as above).

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