



BLE Digital Champions Tutor-marked Assignments

Introduction

As Digital Champions for the Blended Learning Essentials for Vocational Education and Training course, you are not only providing invaluable support, advocacy and engagement, but also gaining substantial experience as course tutors, educators and mentors. This assignment is designed to give you a record of your professional development, and can be easily translated into a future CMALT portfolio submission or similar work.

If you are tutoring in October or November we would ask you to complete and submit the assignment to cmalt@alt.ac.uk before Christmas. There will be another opportunity in 2018.

Summary

Completing this assignment allows you to draw on what you have learned as a result of participating in the BLE (Blended Learning Essentials) course, and encourages you to reflect critically on your practice.

The assignment is drawn from the [CMALT](#) portfolio requirements, and will be marked and commented on by a CMALT assessor. Your assignment can be directly translated into a CMALT portfolio submission, or can help you in any similar future work.

You may use your BLE course experience as part of the evidence for this assignment.

Upon successful completion of the assignment you will receive a certificate and a badge, which may be used as evidence in a CMALT portfolio submission.

Assignment

For this assignment you may complete one of two evidenced statements, demonstrating either:

An understanding of the constraints and benefits of different technologies

OR

An understanding of your target learners

How to write

Your statement should include three elements:

- *Description of relevant activity/activities undertaken*
- *Reflection on this*
- *Evidence to support your work*

There are some example statements at the end of this document.

Description

Description should be succinct and relevant. Focus on one, two or three relevant examples.

Reflection

Reflection should demonstrate your ability to evaluate your own practice analytically, to learn from it, and to improve. It is helpful to bear in mind the following reflective questions:

- What have I learnt from doing what I describe above?
- What went well/what could have gone better?
- What would I do differently another time?
- What was the impact on my users/students/learning?

Evidence

Evidence should be as recent as possible, brief, clear, and relevant. Please ensure evidence/links provided are visible and accessible.

How much to write

The descriptive and reflective statements should cover approximately one A4 side. Less than this is likely to be too short, more to be overly long.

Criteria

The assignments will be marked against the criteria set out below. The assessment form can be viewed at: <http://go.alt.ac.uk/2vmE0nx>

Assignment A

An understanding of the constraints and benefits of different technologies

You should show how you have used (or supported others to use) technology appropriately, given the constraints and benefits it provides within your context. This might include how you selected particular technologies to meet the specific needs of users (students or staff). Evidence in support of such statements might include a brief commentary on the choices behind the development and use of learning technology that influence its fitness for purpose. (This might discuss issues such as affordances of the technology, viability, sustainability, scalability, interoperability and value for money.) You may already have something like this in the form of a design outline, proposal, conference presentation or similar. You should include such existing documentation wherever it seems relevant. Alternatively, you might want to take this opportunity to find out more about a technology you have deployed and produce a report on its viability.

BLE evidence guidance:

While acting as a Digital Champion on BLE you will have had the opportunity to use and reflect on the FutureLearn platform as well as the Learning Designer (BLE 2 and 3) and Moodle (BLE 1). You may also have used or guided participants in the use of the digital tools outlined in the crib sheets.

These were constraints put in place due to the platform being used and the choice of technologies suggested by the course designers. How did you use them and how did this impact upon your opportunities to influence learning? Were you able to suggest alternative technologies and online tools beyond those suggested by the MOOC designers, perhaps through some signposting you did on the discussion forums? What was the impact of this and why did you make these suggestions to participants? How did your experience as a Digital Champion affect the way you might recommend, propose the use of or work with learning technology in the future?

Assignment B

An understanding of your target learners

Candidates should demonstrate their understanding of and engagement with teaching, learning and assessment processes. 'Engagement' may include using understanding to inform the development, adaptation or application of technology. Note that your learners are the people with whom you work. For teaching staff this will typically be students. For many learning technologists this may be students or the staff that you support and train. This should include evidence of: b) An understanding of your target learners Statements should show how you have found out about learners' needs and the context for their studies, and how you have developed approaches that reflect this. Evidence might include a description of how assistive technologies have been used to support disabled students, how learner feedback has influenced the design of an e-portfolio, how the needs of work-based learners or overseas students have shaped the curriculum, or records of conversations with product analysts, marketing departments or course teams and the resulting plans for your design. Evidence of changed practice, rather than simply the recognition that this is an important area, is required.

BLE evidence guidance:

The BLE MOOCs put the Digital Champion in rather a unique position. You have not designed the course or recruited any of the participants and you will not be undertaking any synchronous online sessions with them. Your contact with participants will probably be chiefly via forum posts or through commentaries you provide evaluating their designs or their proposed use of technology.

Given these constraints, how did you go about gaining a knowledge of your learners and their needs? Were there any key incidents during your 'week' which you can share and reflect on? Did you provide the course design team or mentoring team any feedback on learner progress or comments you received; if so what and why?

How will your work as a Digital Champion and your reflections on it impact on your future practice? What do you think worked well about the MOOC and the Digital Champion role and what do you think might be areas for improvement on future runs of the course?

Some example statements

How you draw upon your experiences as a Digital Champion will be very personal to you, the week(s) you were supporting and which BLE course(s) you were involved with. Here are 2 example segments from a successful CMALT portfolio in which practitioner reflects on their experiences on supporting BLE or similar MOOC courses:

Emily Armstrong writes:

'My role as a mentor on the Blended Learning Essentials course has enabled me to spread the findings of our research more widely, to find out about other new technologies I can show to the teaching staff at the college and to share our experience of trying to roll out a blended learning approach in a number of subject areas.

As well as contributing to course wide discussions, I was also able to give more targeted support and exchanges thoughts and ideas with staff from my own college who were completing the course. The scale of the Blended Learning Essentials course made it difficult to support people from such a wide range of countries and sectors and I hope to help address this by participating in a more structured approach to the mentoring in the next iteration.'

'As well as providing me with a wider variety of high quality examples from other colleges, the Blended Learning Essentials course helped enhance my understanding of the pedagogies that can underpin Blended Learning and the different ways activities can be designed.

In particular, the Matching Technology with Pedagogy exercise in the Getting Started course enabled me to check my understanding of a subject I found complicated and the Learning Designer tool introduced in the Embedding Practice course enhanced my ability to translate pedagogy in actual lesson planning.

Over the years, I have come to see coaching theories as the closest fit for the training and development we deliver – particularly as confidence and commitment play a large role in getting staff to engage with new technologies.'