





# The six pillars as prompts for curriculum design and strategic thinking



|  | Curriculum prompts  | Strategic prompts   |
|--|---|---|
| <br><b>Place</b><br>Learners and educators are always (physically) somewhere                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where are our learners in each session, and across a typical learning week? How does this pattern suit their needs?</li><li>• What do learners need in place for each aspect of their learning?</li><li>• What is the value of co-presence in this particular learning? How are we maximising that value?</li><li>• Can learning spaces be reconfigured, or do we have access to a variety of spaces to suit different requirements?</li><li>• What makes it difficult for learners to be physically present and how are we helping? What are the needs of different groups of students eg international students, commuter students?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How are the needs of each programme of study factored into timetabling and room bookings?</li><li>• How are campuses and learning spaces designed to maximise the benefits of in-person learning?</li><li>• Are spaces flexible and reconfigurable?</li><li>• What specialist learning spaces are available and might we need to develop in response to emerging technologies?</li><li>• What does it mean to be on site at their HE provider's premises for our students? How are we building inclusive in-person communities?</li></ul> |
| <br><b>Platform</b><br>Learners and educators can always be (virtually) somewhere else                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What generic platforms are provided and what specialist platforms, apps and online communities do we ask students to access?</li><li>• What alternatives are students choosing and why?</li><li>• What is the value of virtual participation for learning in this programme and how are we maximising that value?</li><li>• What makes students want to engage online?</li><li>• What makes it difficult for learners to participate fully online and how are we helping?</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What platforms are provided and what are learners choosing for themselves?</li><li>• How do learners and educators rate our online platforms and what improvements or alternatives would they like?</li><li>• How are the needs of different programmes and groups of students taken into account in the development of platforms and digital infrastructure?</li><li>• How are we building inclusive online communities within and beyond programmes?</li></ul>  |
| <br><b>Pace</b><br>Learners experience time and pace differently (synch/async or responsive/reflective) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What different kinds of session (synchronous/asynchronous) are offered for different aspects of learning?</li><li>• How are these timetabled across the week to provide a predictable rhythm and to support good study habits?</li><li>• How do we ensure that live sessions are used to maximum value?</li><li>• How does independent, reflective study time support learners' growing self-direction?</li><li>• What different kinds of assessment are scheduled (eg live, time-limited, extended) and how are they timetabled to avoid overload?</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What flexibility is afforded for curriculum teams to choose different session types and schedules, including assessment schedules?</li><li>• How do we support students outside of timetabled hours?</li><li>• What opportunities do we offer, or plan to offer, for flexible study such as part-time, staggered start, micro-credentials etc? How do these meet the changing needs of learners and stakeholders?</li></ul>   |
| <br><b>Blend</b><br>Most learning has both in place and online, sync and async elements                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How are curriculum resources (tasks, materials, interactions) distributed in a range of session types (sync/async)?</li><li>• How are places and platforms combined to support different activities, including assessment activities?</li><li>• How is the value of different modes explained to learners?</li><li>• How do we help learners to use their own digital devices and resources, as appropriate?</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What constraints of the physical campus can we mitigate by using our virtual estate (eg carbon costs, outdated teaching rooms)?</li><li>• How are we planning to integrate online and in-place learning experiences better?</li><li>• How can we do this across places and courses of study, rather than for a few specialist locations?</li><li>• How do learners and educators contribute to our curriculum models and frameworks, including for blended learning?</li></ul>  |





**Flex**  
Learners and educators expect choice and flexibility in mode(s) of participation

- Curriculum prompts**
- When are decisions made about modes of participation and who makes them (eg programme team, cohort teacher, individual learner)?
  - What choices do learners have about how they participate, and what are the trade-offs (eg staff workload, loss of cohort effects)?
  - How is engagement sustained in different modes?
  - How do learners integrate their learning across different modes (eg notes, task outcomes)?
  - What choices do learners have in how they are assessed?
  - Is assessment well matched with modes of learning and teaching?

- Strategic prompts**
- What day-to-day flexibility is afforded to educators and learners to support their needs? Are our systems flexible enough?
  - How does curriculum flexibility support our strategies for accessibility and inclusion?
  - Do we have a strategy for offering diverse modes of assessment and feedback?
  - How is resilience being built into the curriculum system to meet future shocks?
  - How can learners access services away from campus and out of timetabled hours?



**Support**  
Learners and educators need support to engage with a diversity of modes

- What devices and skills are needed by learners to engage fully in this learning?
- How are skills practised and supported in the curriculum? How are individual needs identified?
- Have we identified the time and workload associated with each element of the curriculum and allocated staff appropriately?
- How are staff supported with any additional skills to manage teaching in diverse modes?

- What did we learn during the pandemic shift and how are we consolidating that learning?
- How are we investing in staff/student digital capabilities, eg for different modes of learning, teaching and assessment?
- How are we investing in platforms and devices for a greater diversity of modes of learning?
- What support is in place for learners and educators accessing learning online?
- How do we keep our curriculum up to date as new modes emerge (eg immersive learning, AI-assisted learning)?

