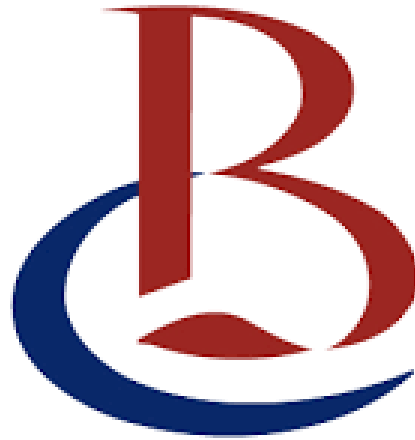


BORDERS



COLLEGE

Learning and Teaching Guide for Staff

March 2026

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1. Introduction

As well as our mandate to deliver learning in the Borders, our college plays a significant role in delivering for the Scottish Government's national priorities. Creating opportunities for learning and the provision of higher-level skills are fundamental to improving employability, increasing economic activity and reducing poverty.

This guide is intended to support Borders College Vision 30 – Your College, Your Future by enhancing learning, teaching, and assessment practice.

It has been developed to support Heads of Sectors (HoS), Department Team Managers (DTM), new and experienced lecturers and support staff.

Alignment with Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges:

Lecturers are expected to demonstrate ongoing development, maintenance, and enhancement of their professional practice and knowledge.

This includes the ability to:



Vision 2030 will see us deliver the following strategic outcomes for learning:

- Improved learner success
- Sustainable curriculum that meets the needs of our region
- Increased support to regional businesses
- Reduced environmental impact
- An efficient estate and optimal use of technology

2. Approaches to Learning and Teaching

Scottish Educational Context:

In Scotland, colleges operate within a national framework that emphasises inclusive, learner-centred education designed to prepare individuals for life, learning, and work.

Borders College mission:

Our mission is to provide the highest quality learning experience and outcomes, to support business and drive economic growth in the Scottish Borders.

Implications for learning and teaching at Borders College:

Learner-centred approach	Active learning	Continuous improvement	Professional development
Teaching will focus on engaging, inclusive, and flexible learning experiences that meet the needs of diverse learners	We encourage collaboration, problem-solving, and application of knowledge rather than passive listening	We regularly gather feedback from students and employers to refine teaching methods, materials, and course design	We support staff in staying up to date with pedagogical best practices and digital teaching tools

Implications for curriculum and assessment at Borders College:

Clear learning outcomes	Work readiness	Applied learning	Data-driven evaluation
Courses have measurable key performance indicators that align with both academic standards and employer needs	Our curriculum develops skills like critical thinking, communication, digital literacy, and teamwork	Learning incorporate industry projects, placements, and simulations that link theory to practice	Performance data tracks student progress and is used to make evidence-based improvements

The overall impact on learning and teaching culture:

- Teaching is purpose-driven, not just about education for its own sake, but education as a driver of individual success and economic progress.
- Staff and students work together as partners in learning, with shared accountability for quality and outcomes.
- The college fosters a culture of excellence, innovation, and relevance, ensuring learning keeps pace with the needs of society and industry.

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)

Its principles directly influence college-level teaching and learning, especially for school–college partnerships and younger learners.



Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)

DYW is a key Scottish Government strategy to reduce youth unemployment and ensure young people have the skills employers need.

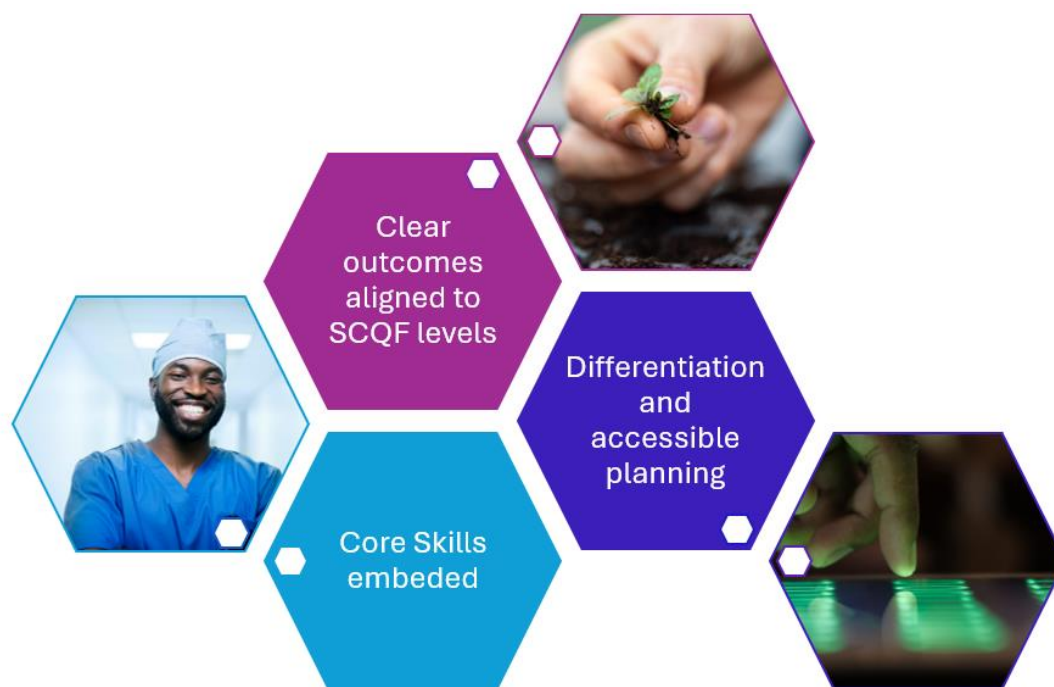
Implications for learning and teaching at Borders College:

Employer engagement	Enhance vocational pathways	Career management skills	Equality and inclusion
Courses are co-created with employers and provide authentic work-based learning opportunities (placements, projects, apprenticeships)	Clear routes from school to employment through Foundation, Modern, and Graduate Apprenticeships	Integrate employability, enterprise, and adaptability as core components of learning	Promote opportunities for all learners, helping close attainment and skills gaps

3. Planning for Learning

Learning Outcomes and Success Criteria:

More learners will be supported to achieve their learning outcomes and achieve positive destinations.



Clear learning outcomes:

- Ensures purposeful teaching rather than a collection of disconnected activities.
- Teaching is at the expected level of challenge, complexity and autonomy.
- Outcomes guides how learning is assessed, ensuring assessments are fair and valid.
- Learners, employers, and other educators understand the skills and knowledge a learner has achieved.

Differentiation and Accessibility:

- Ensures all students can access and engage with the learning.
- Accessibility planning (e.g. alternative formats, adaptive technology, varied teaching strategies) removes barriers for every learner to succeed.
- When learners are challenged appropriately and supported effectively, they are more likely to stay engaged and progress.

Embedding Essential Skills:

- Equips learners for life beyond the classroom.
- Supports confidence and independence in future learning.
- Students understand how literacy, numeracy and digital skills are applied in context.

4. Teaching Approaches and Methods

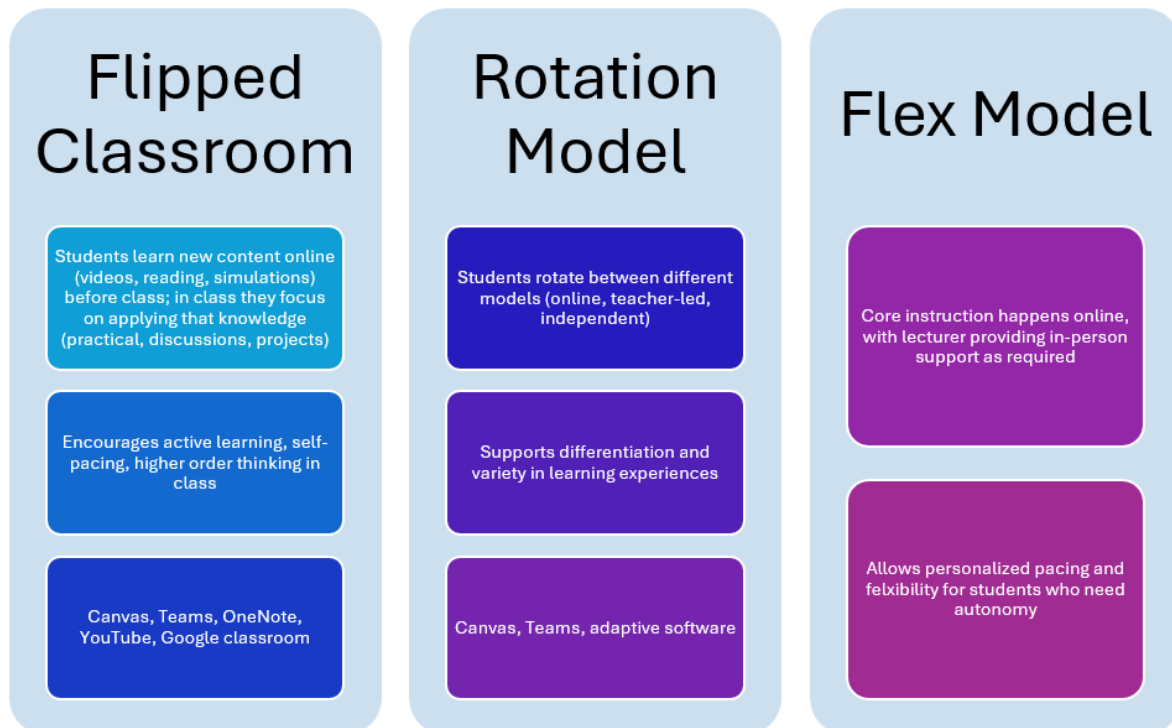
Active Learning Strategies:

Students are encouraged to participate, collaborate, and reflect throughout the learning process; practices strongly align with active learning strategies.

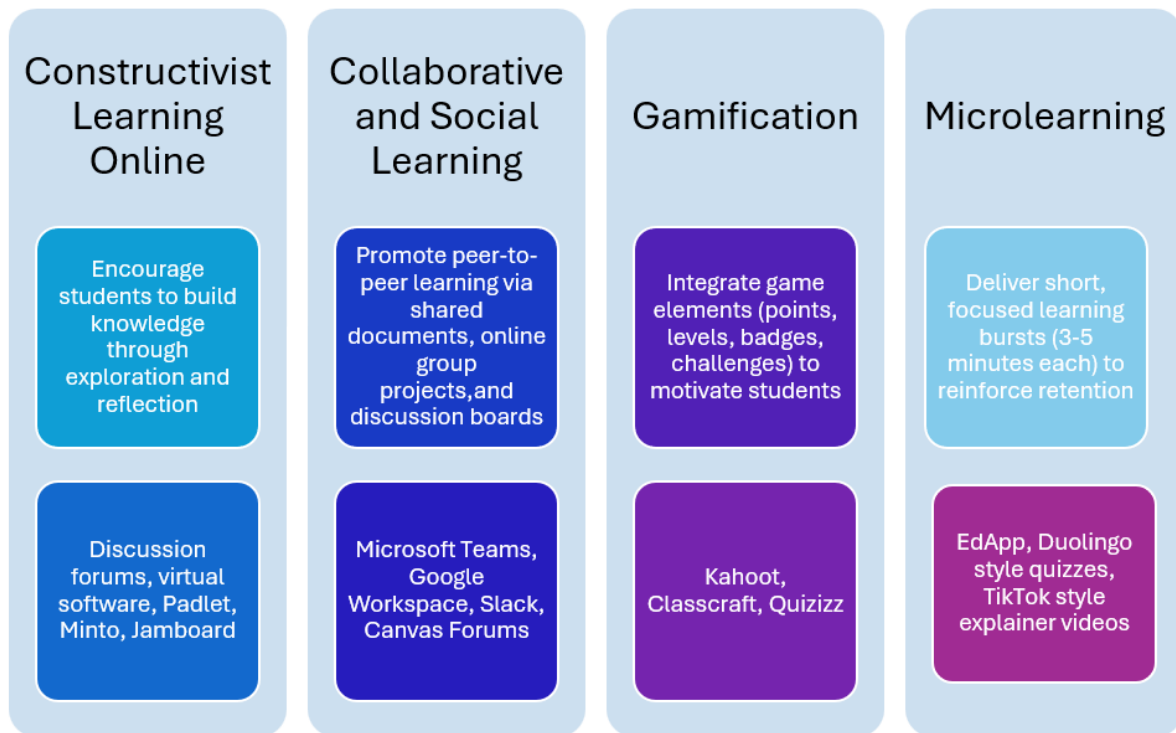
Learner-centred approaches:

Questioning Techniques	Encourage deeper thinking and elicit further understanding
Clear Communication	Supporting the presentation of information
Check Prior Learning	Ensure that teaching builds on existing understanding
Resources and Equipment	Enrich learning experiences
Integrated Digital Technologies	Supports engagement and achievement

Blended Learning Models:



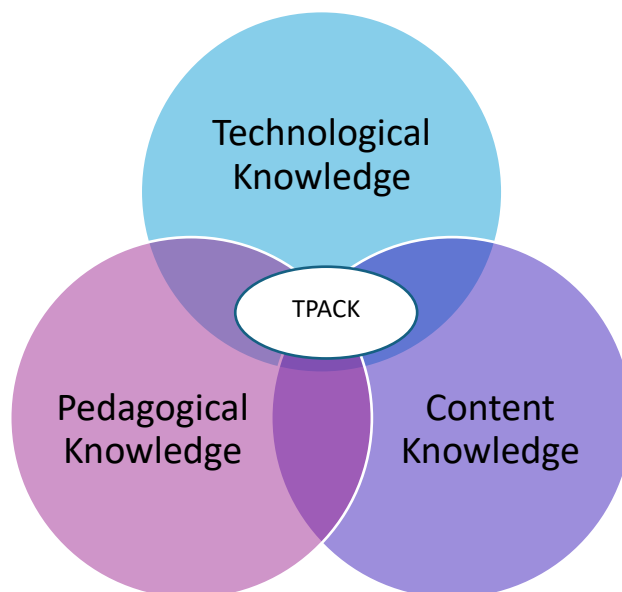
Digital Pedagogical Methods:



Pedagogical Frameworks for Digital and Blended Learning:

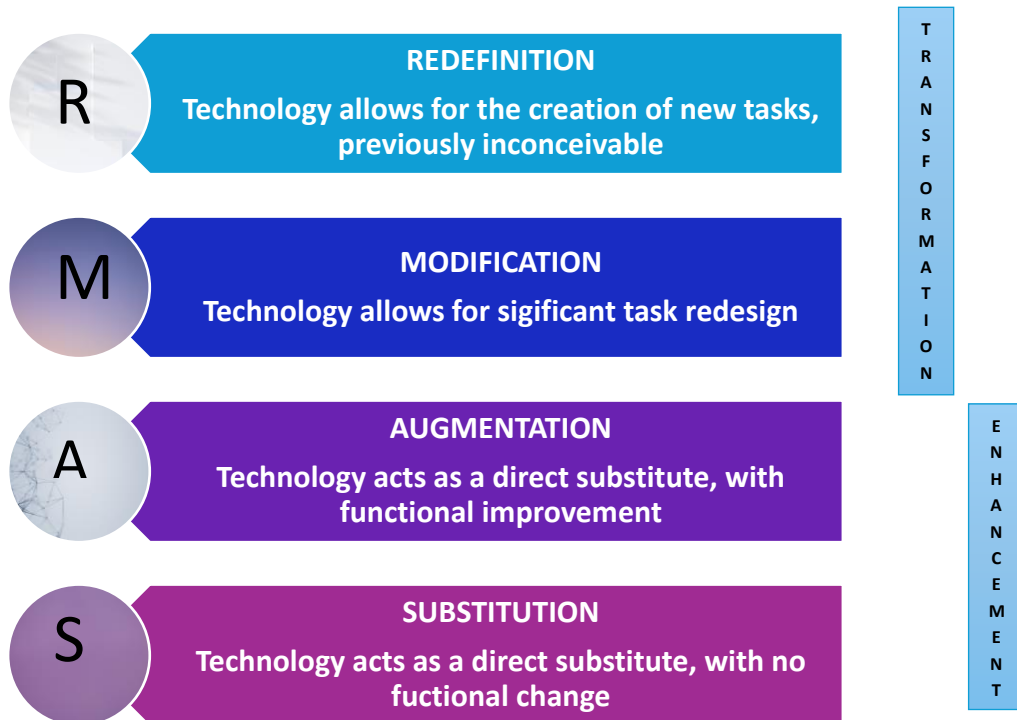
TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge)

Describes the knowledge required to integrate technology effectively into teaching by combining three core domains: content knowledge (the subject matter), pedagogical knowledge (how to teach), and technological knowledge (how to use technology).



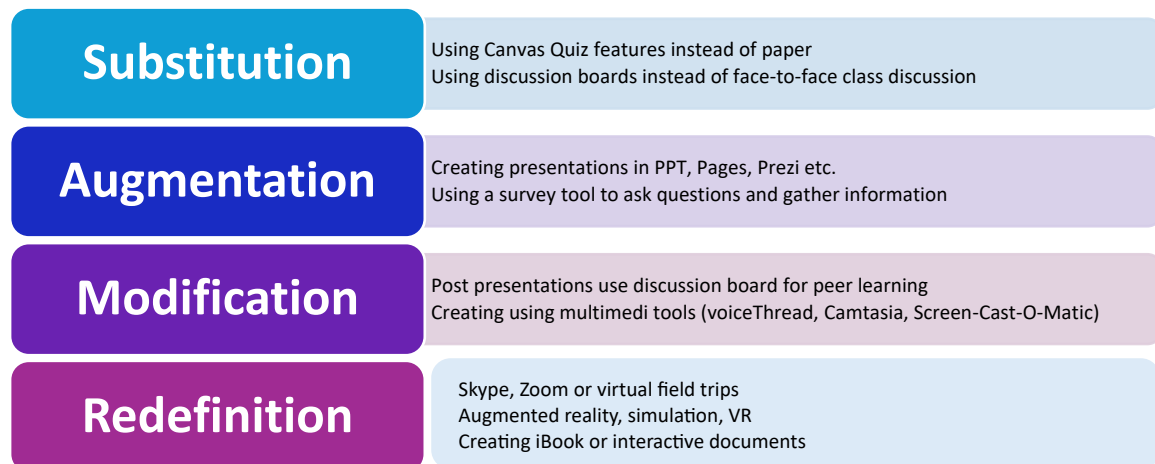
<https://dd4f3d25-1ff2-4561-83c4-468fb842e819.libsyn.com/tpack>

SAMR Model

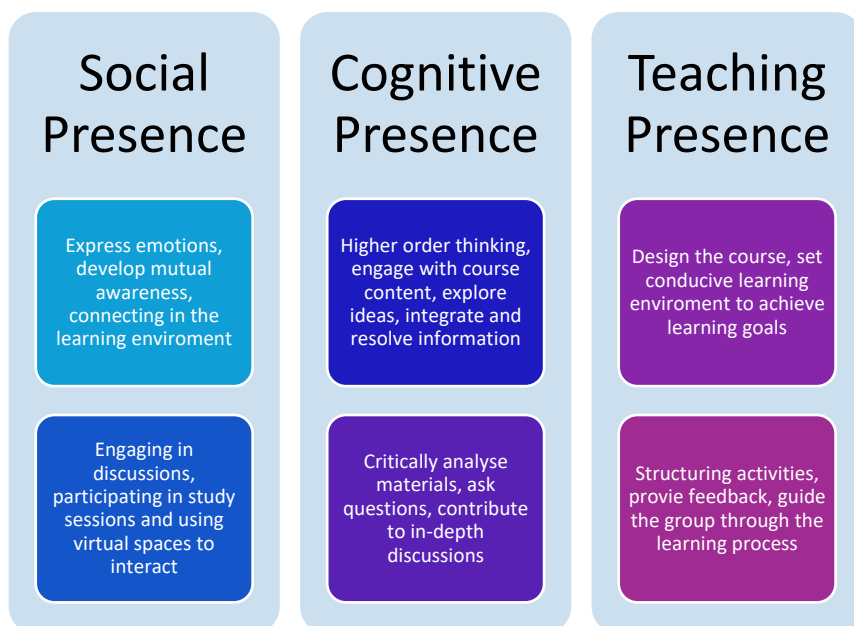
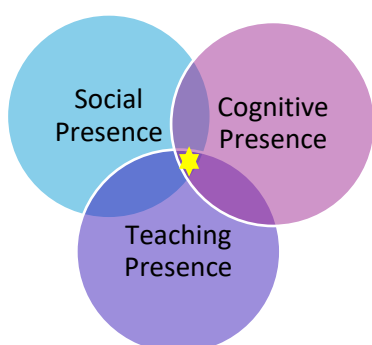


<https://www.3plearning.com/blog/connectingsamrmodel/>

Examples:



Community of Inquiry (CoI)



<https://www.thecommunityofinquiry.org/coi>

5. Assessment for, and of Learning

Assessment Principles:

Assessment at Borders College aims to be digitally rich, varied, relevant and aligned to the Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges. In addition, we are also required to comply with guidance from the relevant awarding body.

Designing Effective Assessment:

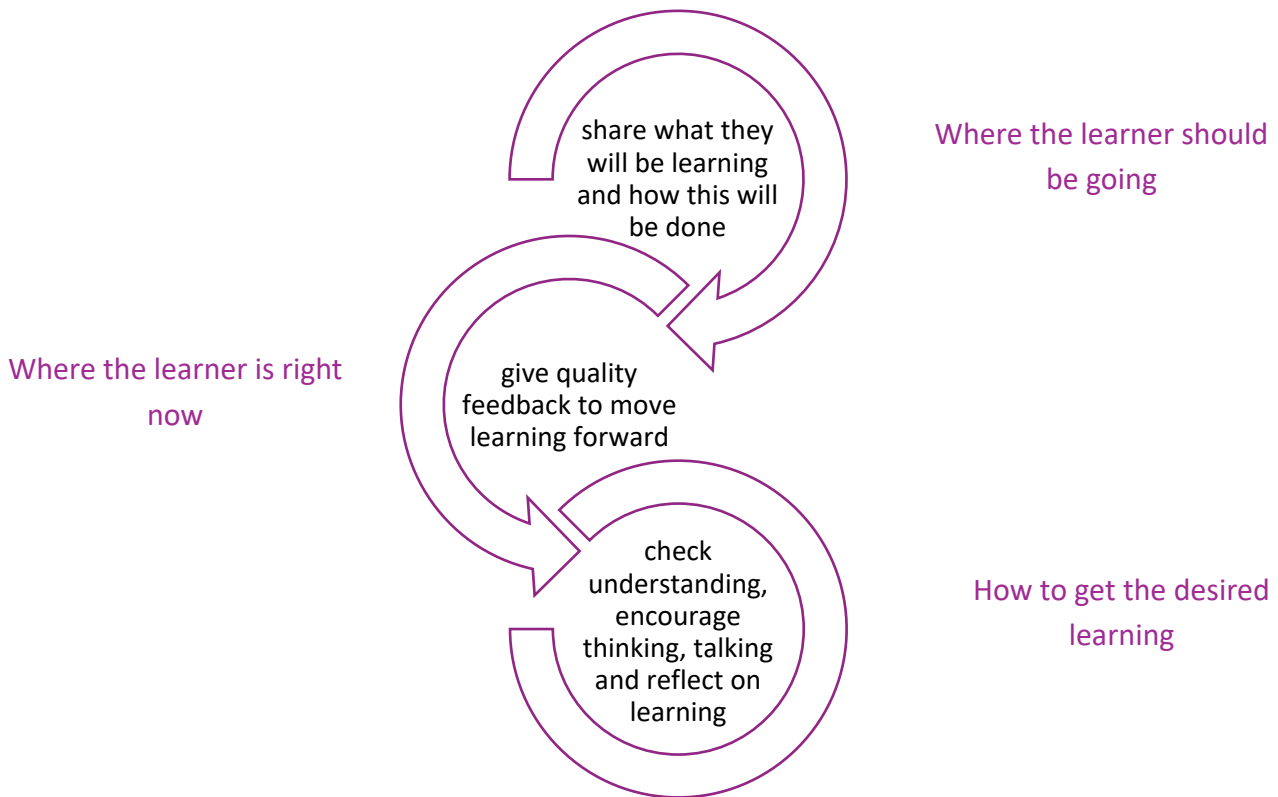
If you are assessing students for Qualifications Scotland (formerly SQA) qualifications, the following guidance applies for assessment:

Develop innovative and flexible approaches. Only ask students to do something to demonstrate evidence that meets subject-specific guidance and requirements. Significantly reduce invigilated closed-book assessment to allow open book, remote, home-based assessment, unless Qualifications Scotland (formerly SQA) instruct you otherwise because of your specific qualification.

Introduce integrated assessment that combines units and/or outcomes in one assessment. This reduces the volume of evidence required where the candidate demonstrates a skill multiple times.

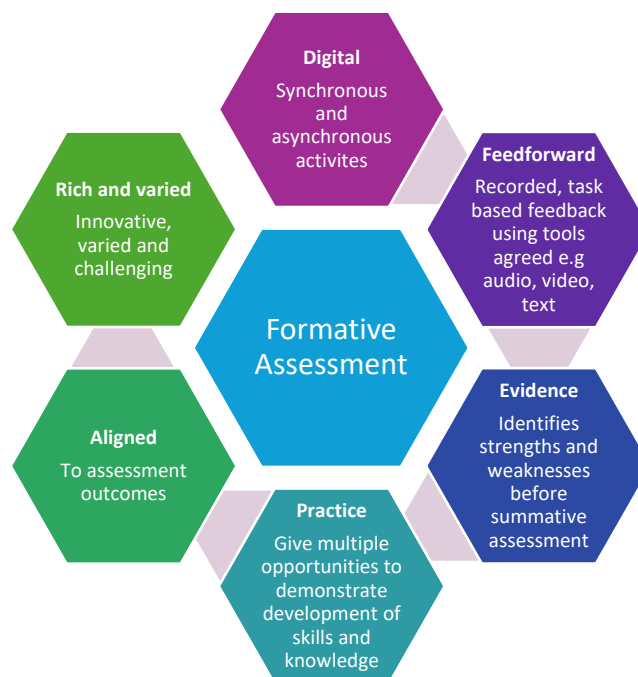
Provide opportunities for students to collaborate on how they will be assessed. Collaborative approaches support transparency, fairness, and inclusivity, enhancing student engagement and assessment literacy.

Assessment for Learning



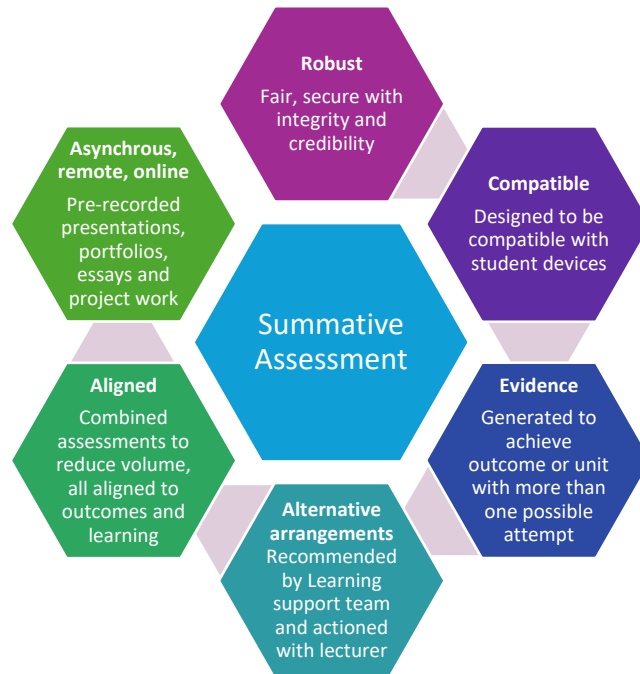
Assessment for Learning (AfL)

Formative Assessment:



Formative assessment generates evidence of learning. This evidence is not used to count towards a unit outcome and does not contribute to getting the qualification.

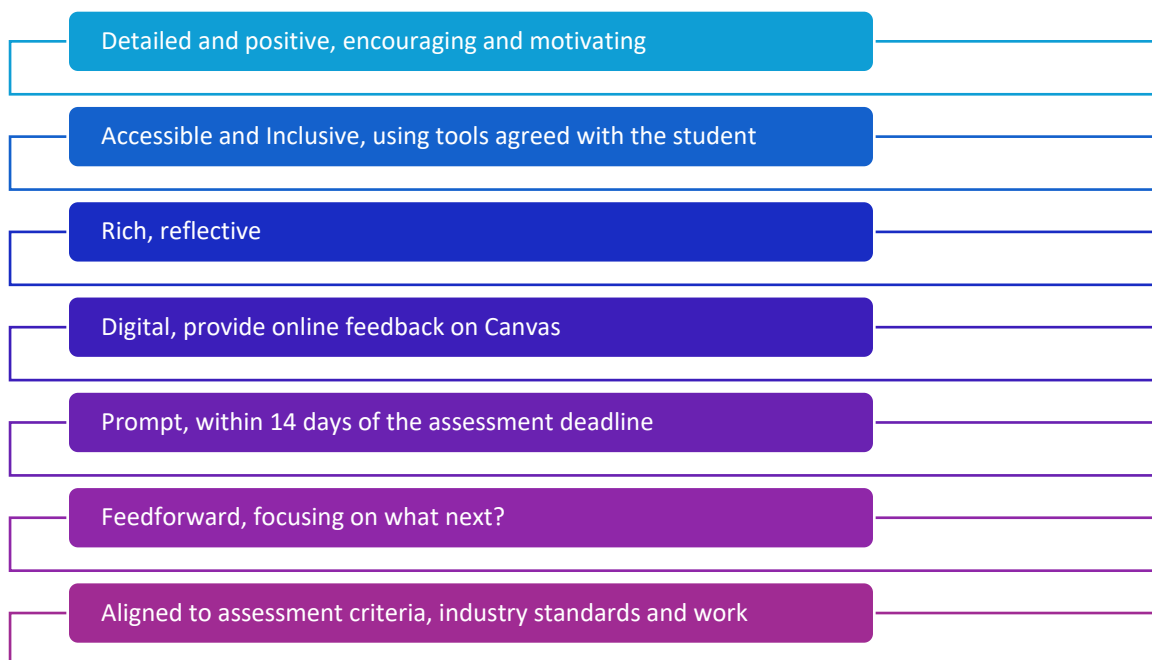
Summative Assessment:



Summative assessment produces evidence which counts towards a unit outcome. Each outcome could have a different summative assessment, or you might combine outcomes and have one summative assessment which generates evidence from several outcomes for the same or different units.

The conditions for assessment must be in line with the conditions specified by the awarding body in the Unit Specification, e.g., 'open book' (free access to resources), 'closed book' (no materials other than the assessment instrument are available to candidates, but the assessment instrument may contain, for example, a vocabulary list or datasheet).

Key Features of Feedback:



6. Internal Verification and Quality Assurance:

All assessed units and awards submitted for certification must comply with the College's Internal Verification (IV) and Quality Assurance procedures, alongside the specific requirements of the relevant awarding body, including any external or systems verification processes.

Assessment Arrangements

Some students may be entitled to Alternative Assessment Arrangements (AAAs). Lecturers must:

- Check any Personal Learning Support Plans (PLSPs) in advance of assessment
- Liaise with the Learning Support team to ensure required arrangements are in place
It should be noted that not all students with a PLSP require AAAs.

Assessment Design and Approval

Lecturers are responsible for selecting appropriate assessment instruments and solutions, all of which must be internally verified prior to use. Assessments may be developed by:

- Course teams
- Awarding bodies (e.g. Qualifications Scotland Assessment Support Packs)

Internal Quality Assurance Framework

The College's Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) procedures and templates are available on the Learning & Teaching Canvas course.

The Internal and External Verification Procedure, available on the College website, provides the overarching framework, with supporting documentation accessible via Canvas.

Awarding Body Requirements

The Qualifications Scotland framework is used as the standard model for internal verification. Where awarding bodies have specific requirements (e.g. City & Guilds or BTEC/Pearson), these must be followed in line with the awarding body's published guidance.

A list of external supporting documents and links is provided within the Internal and External Verification Procedure.

7. Inclusive Practice and Equality

Legal and Policy Context:

The legal framework guiding equality and diversity at Borders College is based on the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The Equality Act protects individuals from discrimination and requires organisations to remove disadvantages, meet the specific needs of protected groups, and promote participation in public life. The PSED obliges the College to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations among people with different protected characteristics. To achieve this, the College reports on equality progress, reviews the impact of its policies, publishes workforce and pay data, and integrates equality considerations across its operations. Beyond the nine legally protected characteristics, Borders College also recognises and supports other groups at risk of disadvantage, including care-experienced individuals, carers, and those affected by social exclusion or deprivation.

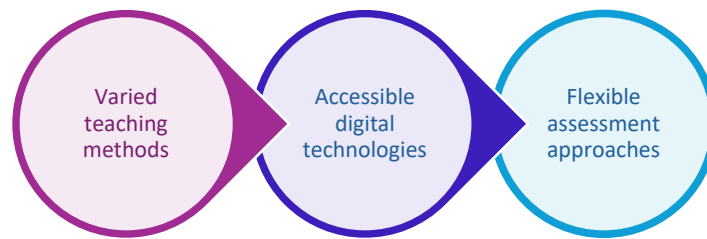
Supporting Diverse Learners:

Borders College not only fulfils its legal duties but also promotes a culture of equity, participation, and respect that reflects the spirit of both the Equality Act and UDL

Universal Design for Learning (UDL):

Legislation encourages staff to design learning environments that are proactive rather than reactive by requiring the College to anticipate and meet the diverse needs of learners. Both the Equality Act 2010 and UDL achieves this by offering multiple means of engagement, representation, action and expression, ensuring that all students, regardless of ability, background, or protected characteristic can access, participate in, and succeed in learning.

Examples of how we embed inclusive practices across teaching, assessment, and support include:



8. Student Engagement and Support

Building Positive Learning Relationships:

By embedding trauma-informed practice, ensuring consistency of support, strengthening partnerships, amplifying student voice and closely monitoring outcomes, we create safe, trusting and inclusive learning environments for all students, including those with care experience.

These approaches foster positive, respectful learning relationships, enhance engagement and belonging, and support improved retention, attainment and wellbeing.

Learner Support Services:

The Learning Support team act as a central coordination point, ensuring all students, including care-experienced students receive clear, predictable and joined-up support. Through agreed processes, named contacts and clear referral pathways, students experience continuity and stability in their relationships with staff.

They maintain and develop effective partnerships with internal teams (Borders College Students' Association (BCSA), delivery teams, estates and facilities) and external agencies (social work, carers, third-sector organisations). This coordinated approach reduces duplication, supports early intervention and ensures holistic responses to student need.

Enhancing the Learner Experience:

Regular, sensitive monitoring of attendance, progress, wellbeing and achievement allows lecturers to identify concerns early and intervene appropriately. When monitoring is framed as supportive rather than punitive, students feel that lecturers are invested in their success, which strengthens trust and reinforces positive learning relationships.

9. Quality Enhancement and Evaluation

Quality is at our core, both in our delivery of learning and the wider services we offer.

QAA Scotland:

QAA was commissioned by Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) to lead key areas of [Scotland's Tertiary Quality Project \(TQP\)](#). The TQP involved the development and delivery of Scotland's Tertiary Quality Enhancement Framework (TQEF). It comprises a shared set of principles, delivery mechanisms and outputs to give assurance on academic standards, the quality of the student experience and ensure accountability for public investment in learning and teaching.

Self-Evaluation and Action Planning (SEAP):

Our SEAP demonstrate to staff and students how their contribution, through participation in activities that impact the quality assurance and enhancement of learning, teaching and the student experience, are collated and used to document and drive strategic enhancement at college.

Along with the wider TQEF, the SEAP supports annual engagement with SFC and provides assurance on the effective use and impact of public investment to deliver high-quality learning provision at Borders College.

Sharing Good Practice:

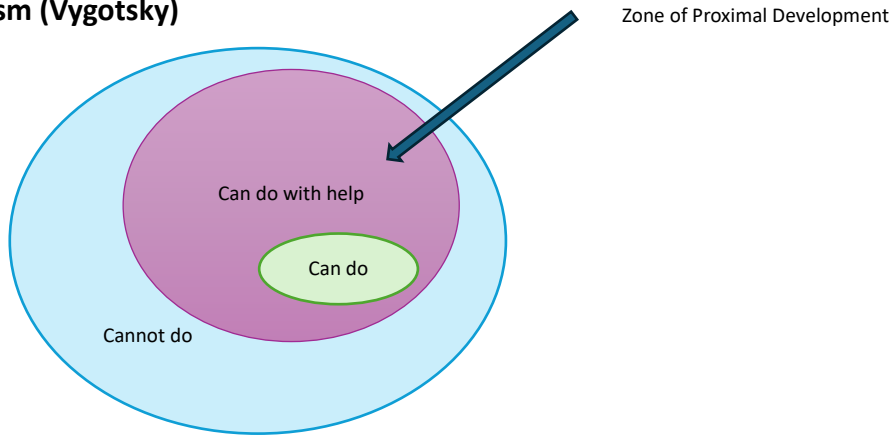
QAA will continue to partner with College Development Network (CDN) to deliver Scotland's Tertiary Enhancement Programme (STEP), the national enhancement programme of activity for Scotland's colleges and universities. Borders College is part of the SAPSO project, which puts the student voice at the centre and examines attainment gaps for disabled students and aims to improve outcomes by highlighting both success stories and barriers.

10. Appendices and Resources

Appendix A

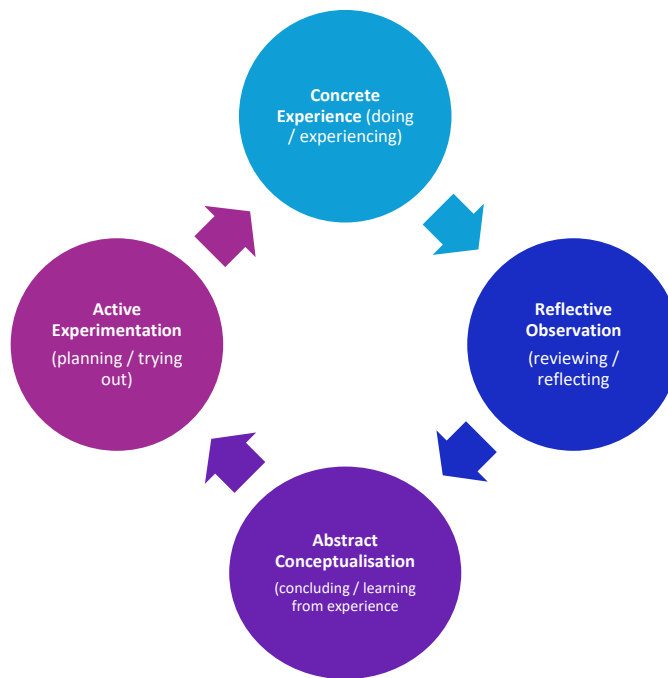
Learning Theories Overview:

Constructivism (Vygotsky)



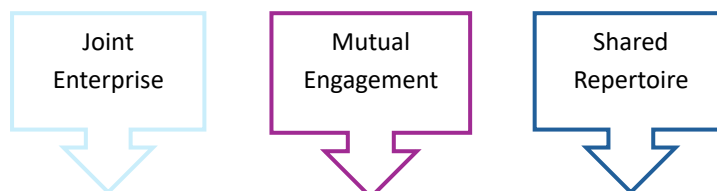
<https://edtechbooks.org/studentguide/constructivism>

Experiential learning (Kolb)



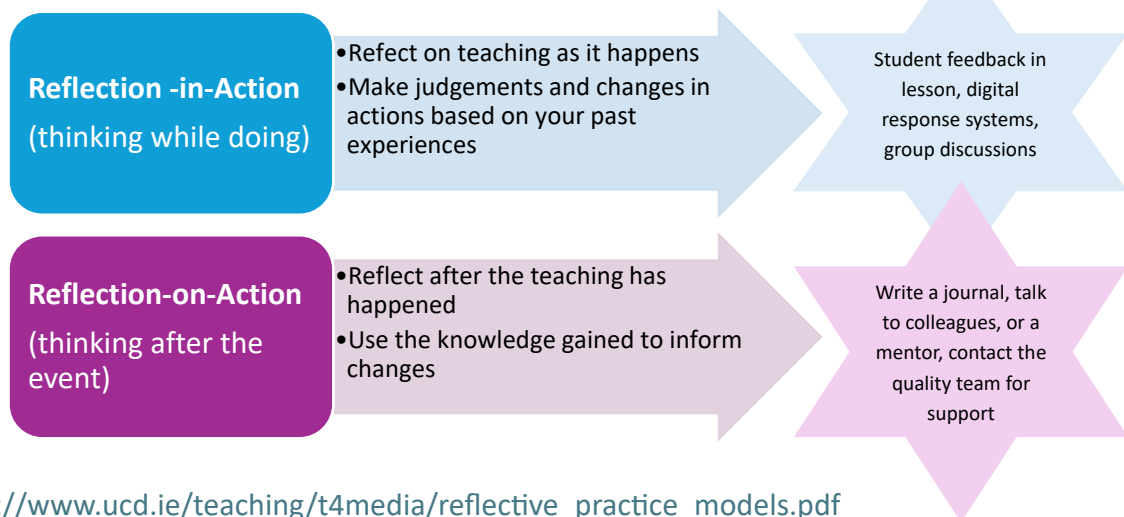
<https://cloudassess.com/blog/kolb-learning-cycle/>

Communities of practice (Lave & Wenger)



<https://newlearningonline.com/new-learning/chapter-6/supporting-material/lave-and-wenger-on-situated-learning>

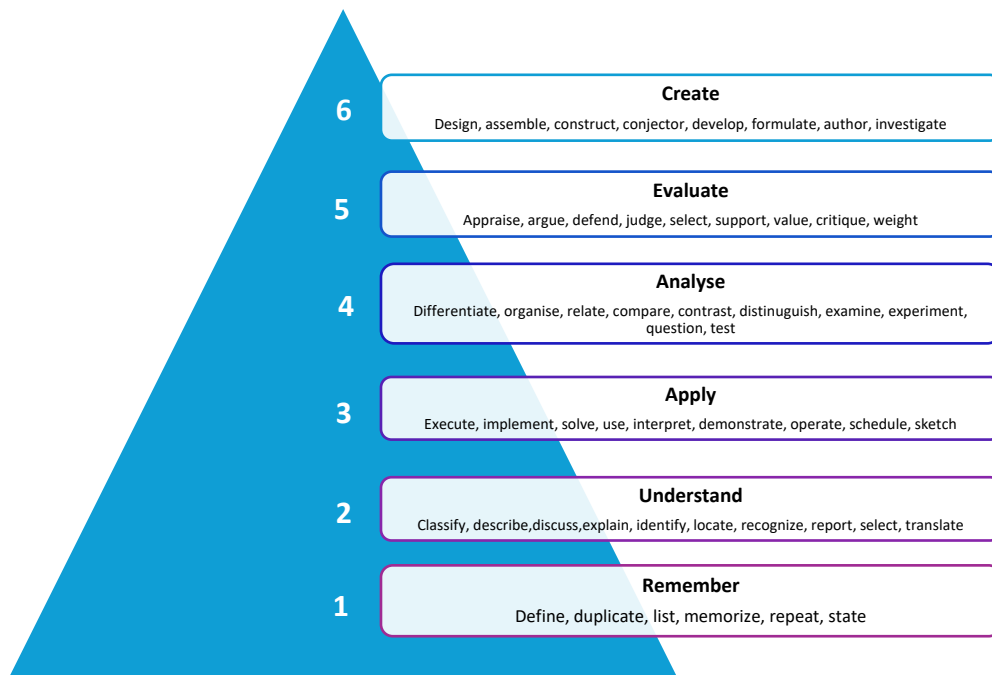
Reflective practice (Schön)



https://www.ucd.ie/teaching/t4media/reflective_practice_models.pdf

Blooms Taxonomy (2001 revision by Krathwohl and Anderson)

Used to classify different levels of cognitive skills, from simple recall to complex creation, and to structure lessons and assessments.



<https://www.simplypsychology.org/blooms-taxonomy.html>

Appendix B

Key Policy Documents:

Borders College [Vision 30](#)

Borders College [Skills and Enterprise Strategy](#)

To earn more about the TQEF see SFC's [Guidance on Quality for Colleges and Universities AY 2024-25 to AY 2030-31](#)

For information on all of the STEP projects, including lead and co-lead institutions, please visit the [STEP website](#).

[Internal Verification Documentation](#)

Sample Templates and Tools:

Learning and teaching plan

Assessment Schedule Template

Further Reading and References:

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