Learning Online: Communicating and Collaborating

Improve your communication skills and learn to collaborate effectively with others in an online environment.

If your students are completing the whole of this course online then they can complete useful and engaging activities, or a test based on the content covered.

You can choose for your students to complete individual tasks by themselves or encourage group work. Though you may have your own ideas about what your students can do with the course content, we've made things easy for you by suggesting some activities that you can submit to your students below. Choose whichever suits your students and needs.

Each task has student-facing instructions you can use (found later in this pack).

Individual student tasks taken from the course

Reflection: Students write a 500-word reflection on what they learned from the course, including anything they might do differently now as a result of their learning and anything additional they found out from their own reading around the topic. They will submit this reflection as a written essay, podcast or video.

Individual activity: Students individually create a 500-word summary (in any format) to answer the question: How can we reduce the environmental impact of over-consumption? This will be peer-marked so you need to allocate work for your students to mark once they've submitted it to you.

Group tasks based on the course

Research task: Allocate students into four groups and assign each group one of these online tools: Doodle, Google Docs, Trello and Wikipedia. Your groups should produce a slideshow to explain how their particular online tool works and what it can be useful for. They can also identify issues or highlight disadvantages. The presentations need to be made available to the whole class after they've been submitted to you so that all students can benefit from the evaluation.

Collaboration task: Allocate students to a group of any number you choose. Groups collaborate to create a 500-word summary (in any format) to answer the question: How can we reduce the environmental impact of over-consumption? Their presentation needs to be submitted with a description of how the group decided to work together – which online tools they used, who completed which part of the presentation and how they reviewed each other's contribution.

Test

You can use the test questions listed in the instructions below as a short assessment to enable your students to demonstrate what they have learned on the course. The assessment has 15 marks in total.

The questions have been designed to be flexible and open. The questions indicate which steps the answers can be found on. The marks available reflect the likely length and complexity of the answer expected, and how many points they are likely to make. For example, a 5-mark question might reflect a longer, more complex question, or one where they have asked to describe or explain a number of elements. Depending on the level and ability of your students, you can decide how you wish to award the marks, so they are appropriate for your class.

Each question suggests which steps the students may wish to return to answer the questions. You can decide if you want to include this information when you share the assessment with your students.

Additional support

You can use the [How to use Futurelearn guide](#) with your students to get started. If you have any more questions, please refer to the [FAQ](#) section.

Student instructions

Reflection

Write a 500-word reflection on what you have learned from the course. It should include anything you might do differently now because of what you learned and anything additional you found out in your reading around the topic. Submit this reflection to your teacher as a written essay, podcast or video.

Individual Activity

You need to submit a summary answer to this question: **How can we reduce the environmental impact of over-consumption?**

This is an example of a 'wicked problem' – a social or cultural problem that is hard to solve because lots of factors come together to make it complex.

You can explore this question under any of the different forms of consumption, such as:

- clothing industry (fashion and retail)
- electronic goods
- food waste
- farming and meat consumption.

You may want to conduct your own research or use the video on Step 2.7 of the Learning Online: Communicating and Collaborating course to help you write your answer.

You can submit your summary in any format you want – a written essay, a poster, a slideshow, a video or a podcast – but it must be no more than 500 words long.

Think about the following three criteria as you write:

1. Have you provided a clear and coherent response to the problem?
2. Is your argument crafted well and convincing?

3. Do you make use of suitable evidence to support your opinions?

Once you've submitted your work to your teacher, they will allocate it to one of your peers to mark and you will get someone else's work to mark too. Use the three criteria to help you provide constructive feedback.

Group research task

There are many online tools that can help you manage group work, share your work and track your group's progress more easily. Your group has been assigned this online tool:

Doodle: This is an easy-to-use polling tool. [Doodle](#) provides an efficient way to gather information from a group. It is particularly useful for time management, as it allows you to quickly determine when others are available or busy.

Google Docs: [Google Docs](#) is a cloud-based collection of software for word processing, spreadsheets, presentations and forms. This software allows you to work collaboratively on documents at the same time. This means your group can make changes to a document, see who is editing it and add comments at the same time as each other. It also has an auto-save function to stop work being lost.

Trello: [Trello](#) is an intuitive project management tool (other similar tools are also available, such as [Microsoft Planner](#)). The software works by separating tasks or notes into cards. You can then organise the cards into lists and prioritise them. You can also set up checklists for tasks, and add deadlines to certain tasks. This is a useful tool to help you allocate tasks and manage work in a group.

Wikis: A wiki is an online information resource managed by a group. The most well-known wiki is [Wikipedia](#). Wikis allow a community of users to both access and upload information. If you use a wiki, you should always validate the information by comparing your findings with a reputable source.

Your group's task is to collaboratively create a slideshow the explains how your tool works, what it can be useful for and what issues or limitations there might be with using it. Your presentation will be made available for the rest of the class to use so it needs to be clear, informative and interesting.

Group collaboration task

Your group needs to submit a summary answer to this question: **How can we reduce the environmental impact of over-consumption?**

This is an example of a 'wicked problem' – a social or cultural problem that is hard to solve because lots of factors come together to make it complex.

You can explore this question under any of the different forms of consumption, such as:

- clothing industry (fashion and retail)
- electronic goods
- food waste
- farming and meat consumption.

You may want to conduct your own research or use the video on Step 2.7 of the Learning Online: Communicating and Collaborating course to help you write your answer.

You can submit your summary in any format you want – a written essay, a poster, a slideshow, a video or a podcast – but it must be no more than 500 words long.

Think about the following three criteria as you write:

1. Have you provided a clear and coherent response to the problem?
2. Is your argument crafted well and convincing?
3. Do you make use of suitable evidence to support your opinions?

You also need to submit a brief description of how your group decided to work together – which online tools you used, who completed which part of the presentation and how you reviewed each other's contribution.

Test

Complete the assessment questions below to demonstrate your understanding of the course. You can refer back to the course to find the answers or more detail as you need to. You should not however share your answers with other students.

Your answers should be written in full sentences and be appropriately detailed. Make sure you read the questions carefully before starting to answer. Each question shows how many marks are available – use this to guide how much detail or how many points you need to include.

The questions also indicate where you can start to look to find the answer. You can also include information from other steps if that is relevant.

1. How can communicating online be useful when you are learning? (2 marks) [Step 1.4]

2. Give three examples of good online communication and explain why each is important, (6 marks) [Step 1.6]

3. How can you share other people's work online appropriately? (3 marks) [Step 1.11]

4. How can you give other students useful feedback on their work? (4 marks) [Step 2.6]