

The Anatomy Behind Task Design in Higher Education

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THE ANATOMY BEHIND TASK DESIGN WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION

Within the fundamentals of lesson planning in Higher Education, task design is vital to support student learning. The aim of the infographic is to provide "THE SKELETON" to assist the task design process for new academics.

"THE SPINE"

- How does the task link to the lesson plan? Communicate this to the group.
- What Learning Outcomes does the task map too?
- Which transferable skills are embedded in the task? Think about how you can develop a range of skills across different tasks! *For example working with others, presentation skills, team work.*
- Do you need to "scaffold skills" for task success? *For example if they are required to present information to a full group, have previous tasks assist them in presenting to to each other in pairs, then smaller groups first*

"THE TORSO"

- What type of task do you want to do?
 - Is it a closed, structured task to identify key concepts?
 - If it is a larger task, can this be split into smaller tasks first
 - Is it more open, unstructured for students to apply their understanding of the concept in a wider environment and to create discussion?
- Through the group or individual task:
 - How can we reinforce the concept?
 - How can we get students to verify their understanding of the concept?
 - How can we consolidate the concept, with context and relevance, to the group?

"THE ARMS"

- Identify any pre-task activities or previous learning that will assist students in completion of the task
- Do you need a ice breaker to help group dynamics?
- What are the clear aims of the task and it's duration?
- Is the task emphasising the level of study and expected skills?
- What's your exit task - take home messages!

"THE LEGS"

- How can you assist the student engagement?
- Can you get students to think individually, discuss in pairs and then share with a wider group. THINK - PAIR- SHARE.
- How can you assist group dynamics? Do you allocate groups? Choose groups? How do you identify roles within the tasks? How can they work with each other for a common goal?
- Consider the environment you are delivering the session in. Is it online or face to face? How does the environment work for you and them?
- Don't feel that you need to provide a variety of activities. Focus on the aim of the task and how it assists the lesson/module/unit more widely.
- What resources can you use to facilitate the task? Can this resource be collated for all the group to share and access after completion? Can you direct students for further resources and reading to support the task?

"THE FINGERS & TOES"

- **Be innovative!** Try different approaches!
- How did it go? Reflect on;
 - Did the task achieve what you wanted?
 - Were students engaged?
 - Did you achieve the session aims?
 - Did students improve their understanding?
 - How did the task work within the session?
 - What would you change or do differently next time?