Course level alignment (CLAT, previously Initial alignment table)

Alignment is one of the most important aspects of course design. Ensuring that assessments, content, and objectives are in sync makes the development process more effective and efficient.

The course-level alignment process focuses on identifying the assessable skills, concepts, and knowledge necessary to achieve the stated learning outcomes. It also examines the evidence required to confirm that learners have acquired these skills, concepts, and knowledge – preferably with evidence observable in the vocation or industry with which the course is aligned.

A completed course-level alignment contributes to:

- **Summative Assessment Plan:** The observable performance or evidence of acquisition should inform both the type and frequency of assessments – to enable the development of authentic and holistic assessments and tasks that reflect the expectations of the industry, workplace, or vocation the course is aligned with.
- **Course Map:** With the summative assessment plan in place, the identified skills, concepts, and knowledge should determine the topics and placement of assessments.

Considerations

The information necessary to inform course-level alignment is typically found in the programme documentation or course description.

- Aim/Outcome Statement
- Learning Outcomes
- Indicative Content

Completing this alignment effectively will likely require significant engagement with a subject matter expert (SME). This ensures that the alignment not only adheres to the educational standards and objectives outlined in the documentation, but also incorporates the depth of knowledge and practical expertise essential for accurate and relevant course content. Engaging an SME helps guarantee that the course aligns with industry standards and meets learning outcomes

effectively.

A course usually has multiple learning outcomes that often overlap. Skills, concepts, and knowledge are likely to be shared in a course, and observable performance or evidence of acquisition will combine multiple skills, concepts, and knowledge.

Example

Learning outcomes	Assessible skills, concepts, knowledge	Evidence of acquisition
LO1: Apply sandwich-making techniques	• S1: Techniques (spreading, layering, cutting) • S4: Use of condiments and sauces • S5: Assembly speed and efficiency • K1: Types of bread and fillings • K5: Food safety and hygiene	Demonstration of techniques, including efficient use of tools and ingredients, showcasing adaptability and food safety.
LO2: Identify flavour combinations	• S2: Flavour pairing and nutrition • K2: Dietary requirements and adaptations • K4: Historical and cultural contexts	Experimentation and identification of flavour combinations, supported by nutritional balance and cultural understanding.
LO3: Arrange components for presentation	• S3: Presentation and plating • K3: Aesthetic principles in food presentation • K5: Food safety and hygiene	Application of aesthetic and practical presentation techniques, focusing on layout, garnish, and style.

Assessment overview: Sandwich showcase

Type: Practical, Summative
Weighting: 100% of final grade, with components evaluated on technique, flavour creativity, presentation, and documentation.
Components: Students prepare, present, and document three types of sandwiches, demonstrating practical skills, understanding of flavour combinations, and aesthetic presentation.

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