

UP's T&L Continuity Plan 2022

Background

A useful framework to categorise and describe modes of learning is to use a time-space matrix (Johansen (1992), Hutchison (1999), Bostrom (2001), Bates (2020)). The time-space matrix defines four possible modes of learning. Students can learn online or offline, and synchronously (at the same time) or asynchronously (at different times).

		Synchronous (at the same time)			
Physical (face-to-face)	Physical synchronous Centralised face-to-face teacher-guided learning, such as face-to-face classes, laboratory work	Virtual synchronous Live-streamed interactive teacher-guided learning, such as Bb Collaborate class		Virtual (online)	
	Physical asynchronous Decentralised face-to-face learning, such as self-study, work integrated learning (WIL), project-based learning, informal collaborative learning	Virtual asynchronous Decentralised self-guided virtual learning via an LMS (Blackboard), courseware (personalised learning environments)			
		Asynchronous (at different times)			

Each modality offers both advantages and disadvantages. The optimal development of the undergraduate students for the world of work requires a combination of face-to-face, campus-based classes and online activities.

The COVID-19 pandemic requires a preparedness to pivot between the different modes of teaching and learning ([Hybrid](#) and [Remote](#)) at any stage depending on the different lockdown levels. A key component of any contingency plan involves the shifting between different modes of instruction without compromising instructional quality and student success. The most basic contingency plan, in case of a disaster, is the traditional (now dated) distance learning model which focuses on self-study. It should be noted that the University of Pretoria's undergraduate courses are only accredited for full-time contact mode. However, the CHE extended the concession for us to continue to offer our courses through remote online distance/blended modes in 2022.

		Synchronous (at the same time)			
Physical (face-to-face)	Physical synchronous On-campus class	Virtual synchronous Bb Collaborate class		Virtual (online)	
	Physical asynchronous Self-study (distance)	Virtual asynchronous LMS guided (online)			
		Asynchronous (at different times)			

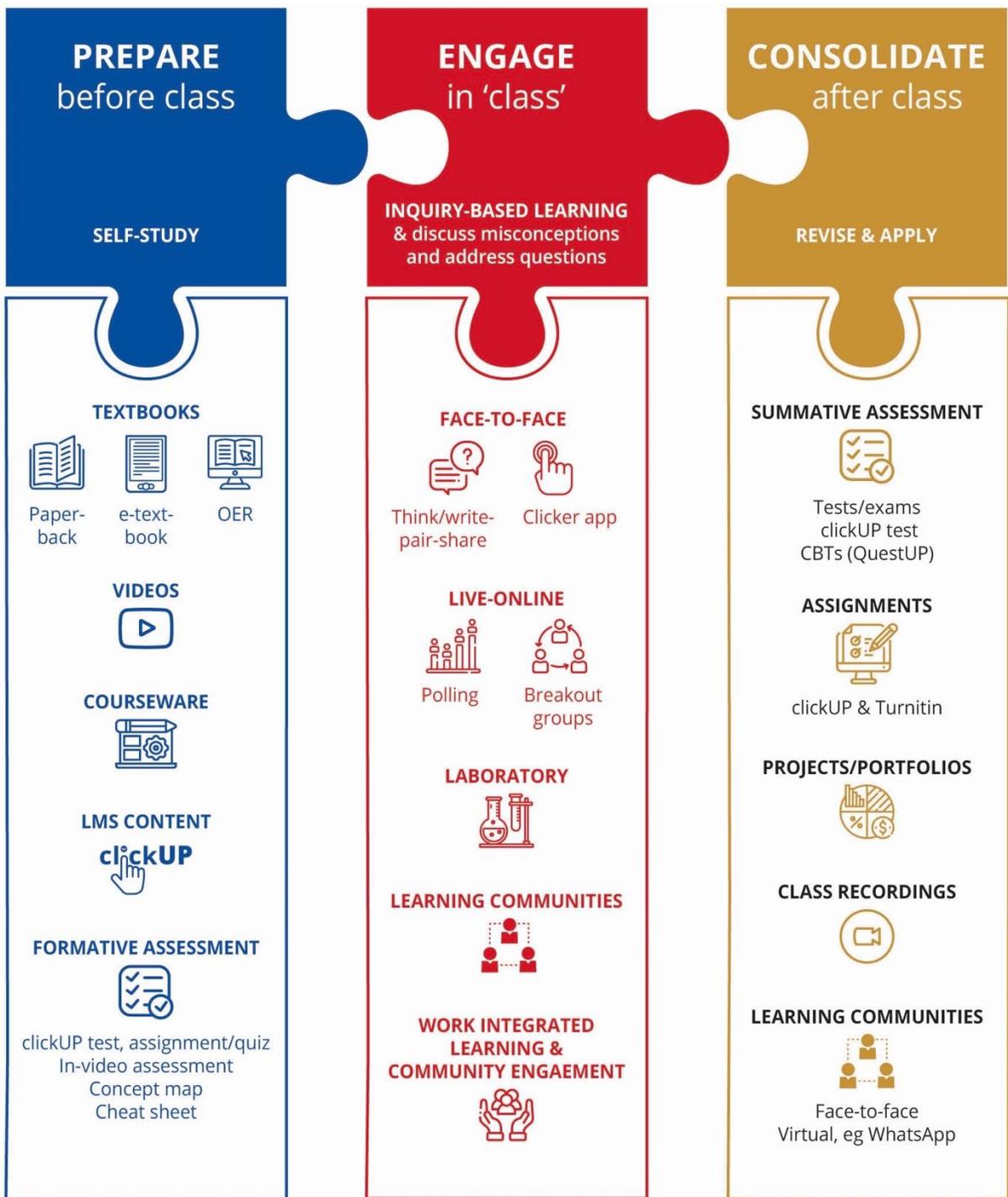
Different teaching modalities are better aligned to different student cohorts. In general, instructional models with low levels of immediacy, models that lack a sense of community, and those with low levels of lecturer and student interactions have lower undergraduate throughput rates. First-year university students, especially first-generation university students, enter a new and unfamiliar social and academic environment when commencing their first year at university. Adapting to this new environment is a significant aspect of the first semester at university. Adjusting to the university environment includes becoming familiar with the university's teaching and learning ecosystem, including clickUP, the online learning management system. Research indicates that failure to adjust adequately to this environment in the first semester of any university programme is a strong indicator of failure to perform academically, not only in the first semester but later as well. This risk may increase substantially where first-year students do not have the opportunity to interact with the new environment in a face-to-face manner. An on-campus presence should support students' development of a sense of belonging through the formation of informal support networks. This is an important determinant of student success. Also, interacting with lecturers and professional and support staff in a face-to-face manner improves students' willingness to seek assistance and support.

TEACH & LEARN The UP Way

The UP hybrid model assumes three phases in teaching and learning, namely (a) preparation before class, (b) engagement in class and (c) consolidation after class. This model articulates well with remote teaching and learning as it requires lecturers and students to use their online clickUP courses and encourages students to prepare independently for each class. Lecturers should be present and available physically or virtually (Bb Collaborate) during regularly scheduled class time to discuss difficult concepts and answer questions. This keeps students on track and makes them feel safe. The approach could be described as technology-enabled self-directed flipped learning, which is inquiry-based and assessment-driven.

The preferred option is physical contact classes if the situation allows it. The study guide must be available on clickUP and should provide a clear, weekly work schedule so that students can keep up independently. It is preferable that a schedule with the dates, times, pre-class and in-class activities be made available to students at the start of the semester in the study guides and clickUP. Clear descriptions of the in-class activities that pertain to the week's lecture/s should be provided to students in clickUP. Careful consideration should be given to the impact of the choice of activities on both academics and students as notional hours should be adhered to.

The lockdown period drastically accelerated the implementation of the UP flipped hybrid teaching methodology. The most significant changes focused on self-directed learning, teaching virtually online, using videos and recordings, using data analytics, and the shift towards online and alternative assessment methods.



Teaching under COVID-19 Guidelines

Limiting the number of students that attend classes is a current requirement in terms of COVID-19 lockdown regulations, but should not be the only driver for flexible teaching and learning options. The options provided have to be carefully considered, with optimal student learning and success as a priority. Different disciplines may require different approaches. The choice of mode should also be informed by the advantages and disadvantages of each. An array of possibilities exists of which the following are but a few adaptable ideas.

Level 1 (Adjusted Alert Level 1 COVID-19 regulations: 30 December 2021)

Gatherings are restricted to no more than 1 000 people indoors and no more than 2 000 people outdoors. Where the venue is too small to accommodate these numbers with appropriate social distancing, then no more than 50 per cent of the venue's capacity may be used. All other restrictions remain in place.

For all modules, the University continues with on-campus classes during the normal UP timetable. The relevant Dean must approve any exceptions. The contact time of the last period of a contact session should be reduced to 40 minutes (with 20 minutes break between classes) to allow time for the cleaning of a venue. Extra-large venues should be made available for the HIMS modules, gyms and the Normal Hall (Groenkloof). If the number of students exceeds 50% of the capacity of the venue, possible ways to limit the number of students that attend classes physically on campus but ensure optimal learning includes:

- Students could watch a class recording (in tandem with a textbook) with a clear explanation of certain concepts, processes and procedures. The recording (previous class recording or new recording) of the lecture should be available at least three days before the scheduled class time. After watching the video, before class, students should complete a short assessment ([in-video assessment](#) or [clickUP test](#)). This approach enables students to take more control of their own learning and monitor their own progress. Students could then make an informed decision if they need to attend the upcoming face-to-face class. Students could then book a seat on a first-come-first-served basis. The short assessment also permits the lecturer to grasp the students' level of understanding, preconceptions and design and refine instruction accordingly. The test (formative feedback) could also be used to formulate a few challenging questions/class assignments that could lead to in-depth discussion, provide the opportunity for questions and answers, or the opportunity to work on complex homework problems. Lecturers are also encouraged to use the clickUP [Retention Center](#) to identify at-risk students and require them to attend face-to-face classes. Access to the recording of a lecture may provide yet another asynchronous learning opportunity as an option; or
- Classes could be broadcasted live via Bb Collaborate and recorded for later viewing—AVER 340+ Camera instructions on how to stream and record Bb Collaborate lecture ([Guidelines and Video](#)).
- Rotation of students: Divide larger classes into smaller groups alphabetically and each group gets a week to attend class. Depending on the size of the class the regularity of attendance will differ.

Summative assessments (semester tests and examinations) should be on campus, but formative assessments could be online or in-class. The campus (including the library, social learning spaces and CBT labs) should be open to all students. All on-campus experiential learning and practicals should continue.

Level 2

The distancing regulations limit the class attendance to a sixth of the normal capacity of a venue with a maximum of 50 students under lockdown Level 2 (click this [link](#) to see the venue capacities under the Level 1 regulation and the [Higher Health Protocol on invigilation during COVID-19](#)).

The social distancing requirements limit the class attendance to a sixth of the normal capacity of a venue (with a maximum of 50 students under lockdown level 2). This allows the University to continue with some face-to-face classes. Final year students should be prioritised to attend on-campus physical classes. If the class sizes exceed the number of students allowed in a class as prescribed by the lockdown regulations, possible ways to limit the number of students that attend classes physically on campus includes:

1. **Option 1 (small classes <50):** [UP Hybrid T&L](#) (pre-COVID) with on-campus classes.
2. **Option 2 (medium-sized classes 50-200):** [Remote Teaching & Learning](#) or rotation - divide larger classes into smaller groups alphabetically and each group gets a week to attend class on campus. Depending on the size of the class the regularity of attendance will differ. Other options are rotation based on year group or faculty, e.g. each faculty have all students on campus for a week, next week the following faculty is on a rotational basis. In this way, more students can be accommodated as more venues are available. The limitation would be if there are enough lecturers to present the learning opportunities in the venue.
3. **Option 3 (large classes >200):**
 - a. *Modules with low pass rates <75%:* Students could watch a class recording (in tandem with a textbook) with a clear explanation of certain concepts, processes and procedures. The recording (previous class recording or new recording) of the lecture should be available at least three days before the scheduled class time. After watching the video, before class, students should complete a short assessment ([in-video assessment](#) or [clickUP test](#)). This approach enables students to take more control of their own learning and monitor their own progress. Students could then make an informed decision if they need to attend the upcoming face-to-face class. Students could then book a seat on a first-come-first-served basis. The short assessment also permits the lecturer to grasp the students' level of understanding, preconceptions and design and refine instruction accordingly. The test (formative feedback) could also be used to formulate a few challenging questions/class assignments that could lead to in-depth discussion, provide the opportunity for questions and answers, or the opportunity to work on complex homework problems. Lecturers are also encouraged to use the clickUP [Retention Center](#) to identify at-risk students and require them to attend face-to-face classes. Access to the recording of a lecture may provide yet another asynchronous learning opportunity as an option.
 - b. *Modules with high pass rates >75%:* Continue to use Bb Collaborate for [Remote Teaching & Learning](#) or in subjects, where in-depth discussion and debate of concepts are important, students may be given the option to choose between face-to-face lectures or synchronous online opportunities with small-group break-away options. A short stimulus presented upfront (whether a quote, a pre-recorded video, an artwork or an article coupled with a short assessment) may serve as an indicator to the student about their preferred mode of learning. Watching a recording of a lecture, combined with asynchronous online discussions is another option. In all instances (face-to-face or online; synchronous or asynchronous) and for all disciplines, student engagement with and on the material should be a priority.
 - c. *Any large module - HyFlex:* To accommodate the students who continue with remote learning, the classes could be broadcast live via Bb Collaborate and recorded for later viewing (combining remote and face-to-face teaching) --- AVER 340+ Camera instructions on how to stream and record Bb Collaborate lectures ([Guidelines](#) & [Video](#)). Students should book a seat on a first-come-first-served basis.

When there are still seats available, lecturers are encouraged to use the clickUP [Retention Center](#) to identify at-risk students and require them to attend face-to-face classes.

The campus (including the library, social learning spaces and CBT labs) should be open to all students. All on-campus experiential learning, work-integrated learning, and practicals should continue.

Levels 3-5

Students continue mainly online synchronously (see [REMOTE TEACHING The UP Way](#)) under all lockdown levels. In some special cases, students are allowed on campus under Levels 3 and 4.

Lockdown Level 3 special cases:

- Students with clinical training requirements, for instance, in the Faculties of Health Sciences and Veterinary Sciences, and Humanities, clinical students in the final year of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (usually 4th year). The South African Committee of Health Science Deans (SACOHSD) has written to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) requesting that undergraduate students with clinical training requirements in the Faculty of Health Sciences be allowed to return to campus.
- Again, final-year students are mainly students who have to do laboratory work to complete their studies (for example, in Natural and Agricultural Sciences), but also others, such as the third-year BCom and BAdmin students in Economic and Management Sciences.
- Students involved in work-integrated activities deemed essential under the applicable lockdown regulations, for example, the Law Clinic, the Mamelodi Animal Health Clinic, and the Cochlear Implant Unit.

Lockdown Level 4 special cases:

- Final-year students in programmes requiring clinical training return to campuses, starting with medicine (MBChB).