

Guide to creating a MOOC

This guide provides an overview of the procedure involved in proposing, designing, developing and running a massive open online course (MOOC) on the FutureLearn platform. The Leicester Learning Institute (LLI) MOOC team will work closely with you on this but it is important to understand the time and quality commitments involved.

Proposing

When you have an idea for a suitable course, complete the MOOC proposal form and return to the LLI. If you would like any advice on filling in the form please contact Rachel Tunstall (rct13@le.ac.uk).

It is advisable to have an academic lead (expert in the subject area covered). Consider the timescales involved in creating a MOOC (at the end of this guide) and allow at least **9-12 months development time for a six week course**. On average you should expect to spend 33 days on designing, developing and running a MOOC. This time must be allocated and signed-off by your Head of Department. You must also ensure you have allocated time for future re-runs of the course.

Designing

FutureLearn MOOCs can be either 'mini-MOOCs' (1-3 weeks) or 'full MOOCs' (6-10 weeks). They should be designed to deliver around 2 hours of learning per week, and must adhere to FutureLearn's course development standards. In addition, the course should encourage social collaborative learning, through discussion or other activities.

Decide on a level for the course: the FutureLearn platform is aimed primarily at beginners in a subject, but courses can assume prior undergraduate, postgraduate or professional experience.

You can also choose which certification options you wish to implement (Statement of Participation – for completion of 50% of the course, or Certificate of Achievement – for completion of at least 90% of the course). If you opt for either, your course should include tests (summative multiple choice questions or peer assessments) at the end of each week or section.

You will need to complete a Course Contribution Agreement (CCA) with FutureLearn, in conjunction with Marketing and the LLI.

Developing

A course trailer (video) and course description are required approximately 4 months in advance of your course start date. Creative Services will produce the trailer, and along with LLI, will discuss options with you for producing this video, and advice on what to include.

When writing course materials, make sure that work is either original, or is available to publish openly worldwide: this includes text, images, video material etc. If in doubt, or to gain help in sourcing appropriate content, contact the University Copyright Officer.

Allow time for testing the course with a small pilot group.

Course content need to be completed two months before start date.

Work closely with the LLI and Marketing to promote the course. A news item/press release is normally scheduled about a month before the course start date. Consider what steps will be taken at the end of the course to provide further opportunity for learners to engage with the university.

Running

Work with LLI to prepare emails which will be sent to all enrolled learners:

- one month before the course start date
- one week before the course state date
- on the first day of each week of the course
- at the end of the course.

These emails function as a reminder to learners to continue with the course, provide feedback and feed forward, a summary of what they have learnt so far, and give information about possible further study or events at the university after the MOOC.

Monitor the discussions on the course, to spot any errors or clarifications needed (it will be impossible to read and monitor all discussions, but a brief skim through will reveal any glaring problems). Either amend the course materials on site, or include a clarification in the following weekly email, as needed. It is recommended to allow two-hours per week (or around half an hour each day) for this.

Going forward

A month after the course end, FutureLearn will provide overarching data for the course, and more detailed learning analytics will be available on the course dashboard. Use these to plan amendments to the course before a future run.

Work with LLI to update the course ready for future re-runs.