

# Connecting Blocks with Learning Hubs

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The Learning Hubs were created as spaces for supporting individual learners' trajectories of skill development in a block and blend format of learning. While presenting a range of advantages, the focus on singular module in a block curriculum bears a risk of approaching learning through accumulation and banking (Freire, 1970) rather than continuous construction and development (Dewey, 1938).

Co-creation has been highlighted as a mechanism for involving students in influencing higher education curricula, enhancing student engagement and experience (Healy & Healy, 2019). At the University of Suffolk, a group of students, lecturers, and learning designers gathered as a learning 'community of practice' (Lave & Wenger, 1991) to achieve a common purpose in a 'commission' (Trowsdale & Davies, 2024) to co-create 'Learning Hubs' – interactive digital resources for skill development (Lessner Listiakova et al., 2024).

Participatory and iterative research design allowed for continuous revisiting of the pedagogical principles and digital allowances. The project included several stages with layers of co-construction and evaluation utilising a mixed methods approach of surveys, focus groups, and qualitative reflective questionnaires.

Based on data generated through this process, principles of Learning Hubs for Brightspace, the University's online learning environment, were created, utilising pedagogical knowledge, student and lecturer experience. The principles, such as connecting learning to previous experience, active and applied learning with immediate feedback, are practically showcased in an exemplar Learning Hub activity.

With university learning rapidly changing, the Learning Hubs project is an invitation to co-create a university that works for its community. The aim is to share the principles of Learning Hubs with colleagues across institutions to encourage learning communities to enhance their blended learning spaces. The long-term vision is to empower universities to co-create educational practices and policies that respond to and pro-actively construct contemporary learning environments.

## References

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