Online Teaching, Learning and Continuity Plan

Name of Policy	GUST Online Teaching, Learning and Continuity Plan: In response to COVID-19
Review Committee	DSL with SLT
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Rationale

An online learning plan covers the teaching strategies, communication rules, devices, solutions, and policies supporting online or blended learning in the school community. We will keep this plan as simple as possible, but make the expectations clear for learners, teachers and guardians as to how to learn and teach online.

This plan is updated regularly, as is common for schools using online learning under emergency circumstances.

A continuity of learning plan for emergency learning and teaching is slightly different. It is focused on the transitions of students from one type of learning to another as their learning context rapidly changes. Continuity of learning plans do not only involve the technologies the school will use to continue teaching, but also considers how the students will return to school after the emergency ends.

How to manage online learning and teaching

There are two kinds of online learning and teaching that we will need to balance at GUST based on circumstances: synchronous (happening collaboratively and at the same time with a group of online learners and usually a teacher) and asynchronous (happening at any time, not necessarily in a group, but with teacher feedback).

Teachers should not assume that synchronous teaching is required or even desirable in order to support effective learning. The goal is not to try to recreate face-to-face (F2F) classrooms, which is impossible to do. Online and blended learning provide opportunities for learners to work more independently, expand their agency, and learn to use tools and strategies that they otherwise might not have. While it is not recommended to experiment in emergency situations, innovation, creativity and resilience are required to make things work. Most schools will discover they need to be adaptive and fast-thinking in order to ensure that learning continues in a healthy way.

These are some strategies that are commonly used in online and blended learning, presented in alphabetical order:

- Blogging and vlogging (creating video blogs)
- Collaborative writing or story-making
- Content production (word processing, spreadsheets, etc)
- Discussion forums or text-based chats*

- E-portfolios
- Games/gamification*
- Intelligent tutoring (online teaching and assessment tools, often subject-specific)
- Live video chats*
- Mapping (mind-mapping, using interactive maps and charts, etc)
- Multimedia presentations
- Online drawing and drafting
- Quizzes and surveys*
- Video chatting and conferencing*
- Video creation and sharing*
- Virtual gallery walks (there are special sites and software for these)
- Virtual reality scenarios (sometimes requires special software)
- Wiki building

An asterisk (*) denotes activities that can be easily conducted using mobile devices. All activities are possible on mobile devices, but some may prove very difficult to do.

Which are the easiest activities to set up and find resources for?

In order:

- **Content production and collaborative writing.** There are many free or inexpensive ways to set up a word processing document online. Examples: Google Classroom, Zoho, Dropbox Paper.
- **Multimedia presentations.** Most content production solutions also allow for multimedia presentations, but more complex infographics and interactive presentations are possible. Examples: Beautiful.ai, Slides.com, Piktochart.com.
- **Quizzes, polls and surveys.** These can be set up online in a few minutes. Examples: Easypolls, SurveyMonkey, Typeform.
- **Games and simulations.** There are many options for educational games online that can be accessed by anyone. Examples: PhET interactive simulations, National Geographic Kids, The World's Future.
- **Video chatting and conferencing** (depending on bandwidth and access). Many free or builtin applications are available for individual and group chats. Examples: FaceTime, Microsoft Teams, Zoom.

Free interactive material and learning tools

BBC Bitesize

Beginning Monday 20 April, BBC Bitesize will publish daily online lessons for all ages. They'll also have a new dedicated TV channel full of learning content, podcasts on BBC Sounds and loads of educational videos on iPlayer.

Twinkl
The trusted home of teacher-created planning and assessment materials and teaching resources.

ActiveLearn
A digital learning space for your pupils and a toolkit for you, so that you can search, plan, allocate and assess all in one place.

Setting up online learning management

There are free or open source options for learning management. Examples:
- Google Classroom
- Moodle
- Opigno

Learning experiences that involve physical activities, resources, or spaces

The answer to this is specific to the school's situation. However, in most circumstances it is possible to assign activities and discussions so that students seek out the physical experiences they need, then bring back evidence of and reflections on what they have done. This is possible with all age groups, depending on the amount of supervision they need to conduct physical activities.

Parents or guardians will need to supervise younger learners in their play and learning activities—the school needs to provide some basic guidelines on what to observe.

For students who are **not under quarantine** but separated from school, it is possible to use public libraries, sports facilities, or even art galleries as part of their learning. Some colleges and universities can provide space for science and art activities. Online databases for resources are available through most library subscriptions.

If students **are under quarantine or must remain indoors**, intelligent tutors and virtual learning environments can provide some support, especially for science-related activities. There are many open-source and free options for virtual science labs, galleries, physics simulations, etc that can

be used to support students. Physical health activities that can be conducted indoors are also reasonable options for students under temporary quarantine.

Mobile learning strategies

An option that might be considered is mobile learning. “Mobile” does not only refer to the portable computing device but also the learning that is best used with smartphones or tablets. The 4C framework below is a simple, well-established starting point to decide on how to implement learning through mobiles.

- Content: providing media (for example, documents, audio, video) to the learner/performer
- Compute: taking in data from the learner and processing it
- Capture: taking in data from sensors (for example camera, GPS, etc) and saving for it sharing
- or reflection
- Communicate: connecting learners/performers with others

The 4Cs of mobile learning can help teachers design experiences that are not possible without mobile solutions. It can also serve to expand experiences students can have if they do not have laptops at home or easy access to fast internet.

How online learning supports exhibitions and wider community activities

There are a few methods of exhibiting or sharing content and discussion for wider audiences.

- Virtual conferences or festivals. Usually a combination of visual content, webinars, online discussions, and text chats. If the school wants to “host” a virtual festival, they can create a website or use tools like YouTube or Wix.com to create opportunities for sharing.
- Virtual galleries. There are specific websites that use a 3D format where students can create virtual exhibitions with text and images. Example: Kunstmatrix Art.Spaces: https://artspaces.kunstmatrix.com/en
- Learning management unit sharing. If the schools want to share each other’s exhibition work, an LMS can be an effective virtual space to share and learn.

Use of social media for learning and teaching

It is possible to use social media for some communications or media sharing with parents, guardians, or learners who are over 13 years old. There are also some closed social media sites that are moderated and that younger learners can sign into. Examples include Edmodo and GeckoLife. For smaller cohorts of learners and teachers, we can consider family sharing apps such as FamilyWall that allow small groups to post media, keep calendars, and have text chats.

That being said, using social media does not protect the privacy of users adequately enough for the depth of sharing and discussion required for learning and teaching at GUST. If teachers want to do extensive sharing of content and reflections, this should be done through an LMS.

Guidelines to ensure the privacy and data protection of the school community

Privacy and data protection should be taken seriously. Recommendations for data privacy and protection in this document are GDPR-adherent whenever called for.

<u>GDPR rules</u>

If a school is in a GDPR country and transmits or asks for personal data or information from anyone, including video and images, even temporarily, GDPR rules apply for transmission. If a school is in a country that is not under GDPR but is transmitting data or information to or from anyone residing in a GDPR country, the rules also apply. If a citizen of a country under GDPR currently resides in a nonGDPR country, the rules do not apply—GDPR only applies to residents, not citizens abroad. However, students or teachers returning to a GDPR-adherent country from abroad may find some of their data is not transferable if the school does not comply with GDPR.

There are two major areas in online learning where privacy and data protection must be considered.

- Sharing personal data via the internet
    - Images, videos, or student submissions are all considered “personal information” under GDPR rules. It is required for GDPR countries (and recommended for others) that any information created by students, or with them included, is anonymised, blurred out, or otherwise protected unless the guardians give formal permission in writing that the information can be used. If the student is considered a legal adult in their country of residence, they can give formal permission, but guardians should be informed.
    - Children under the age of 13 must not participate in unmoderated social media activities as part of their learning. There are moderated sites for younger users or sites that permit moderators to be added (teachers and guardians).

    - If the school uses social media as part of its contingency learning plan, the personal information of students, teachers, other staff or guardians should not be used or transmitted to third parties online.
    - If the school uses learning management or reporting systems, the provider must be able to prove their systems are GDPR-compliant or the school must prove that GDPR rules do not apply to any member of the school community.

- Video conferencing and recording
    - Just as with personal information, video imaging of minors needs permissions from parents or guardians for all age groups. With learners under the age of 11, video conferencing should happen with said guardians present. Learners can also chat in groups regardless of age, through one-on-one conferencing with students is best for feedback on individually-assigned activities and general wellness.
    - As much as possible, video conferencing should be set up to eliminate backgrounds that provide information on learners' personal lives and locations. A simple white or light-coloured background is best.
    - Personal names should be avoided in any chat invites or titles. For conferences, the student and guardian should be informed if the conference will be recorded.

How to ensure students are not disadvantaged by online teaching

Effective online teaching is not the same as face-to-face (F2F). It is not a matter of whether it is equal. It requires different activities, some which are better done online. However, learners become disadvantaged if they are not provided with certain resources for learning independently and online:

- Access to devices appropriate for online learning. Some learning activities can be conducted using mobile devices.
- Internet access and adequate bandwidth (speed). Poor bandwidth can make many synchronous activities very difficult. For schools with students in poor bandwidth areas, a combination of asynchronous activities and telephone check-ins provides more support.
- Time zone friendly schedules. Changing teaching schedules to shorter class times in similar time zones with more meetings but fewer students at one time is more effective in online learning situations. If meeting times are combined with collaborative activities, students are more likely to log on and complete tasks or discussions.
- Effective feedback. Checking in with learners regularly is important. If systems allow, students can also get valuable feedback automatically from online quizzes and intelligent tutors as well as direct comments or discussion from peers and teachers.

- Opportunities for independent learning. Wherever they are, students are learning informally every day. Designing learning activities and discussions that capture students' experiences while they are away keeps them engaged and gives teachers valuable feedback on how the students are feeling. It also provides opportunities for multiple perspectives in learning that might not happen if students were all physically together.
- Meaningful screen time and conferencing.
    - For children over the age of 5, this means developing activities that keep their attention and engage them with the environment around them. Common Sense provides a wealth of information on interacting online. An example of their offerings is here: https://www.commonsense.org/education/articles/5-online-discussion-tools-to-fuel-student-engagement

Online safeguarding

For Parents:

Know what your children are doing online and who they are talking to. Ask them to teach you to use any applications you have never used. Keeping the computer in a family room means that you can share your child's online experience – and that they are less likely to act inappropriately (i.e. via webcam). Help your children to understand that they should never give out personal details to online friends – personal information includes their messenger ID, email address, mobile number and any pictures of themselves, their family or friends. If your child publishes a picture or video online, anyone can change it or share it. Remind them that anyone may be looking at their images and one day a future employer could! If your child receives spam/junk email and texts, remind them never to believe them, reply to them or use them.

It's not a good idea for your child to open files that are from people they don't know. They won't know what they contain – it could be a virus, or worse – an inappropriate image or film. Help your child to understand that some people lie online and therefore it's better to keep online mates online. They should never meet up with any strangers without an adult they trust. Always keep communication open for a child to know that it's never too late to tell someone if something makes them feel uncomfortable.

Please see the links below to a selection of websites that may be useful to you and familiarise yourself with our **e-safety policy**. They are rich in content with useful guidelines and other extremely important legal information and procedures all parents and pupils should be aware of.

Resources for parents and school staff:

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre)
www.ceop.police.uk

The child exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) delivers a multi-agency service dedicated to tackling the abuse and exploitation of children in the 'real world' and the 'e-world'. Young people and parents can get support ona range of issues such as viruses, hacking and bullying on-line. They can also report someone who is acting inappropriately.

Think you know
www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Explore one of the six Thinkuknow websites for advice about staying safe when you're on a phone, tablet or computer:

- 4-7
- 8-10
- 11-13
- 14+
- Parent/Carer
- Children's Workforce

The Virtual Global Taskforce: combatting online sexual abuse
www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com

An international collaboration of law enforcement agencies, non-government organisations and industry partners to protect children from online and offline sexual exploitation.

Internet watch foundation
https://www.iwf.org.uk/

Website and hotline where members of the public can report images of child abuse (from anywhere in the world), criminally obscene content hosted in the UK, and criminally racist content hosted in the UK.

Stop it now
https://www.stopitnow.org.uk/

A partnership of leading children's charities who work with the government and child protection agencies to promote public education and prevent child sexual abuse.

Get safe online
https://www.getsafeonline.org/

A one stop shop for reliable up to date information about online safety.

Accessible information and resources for Parents, Children and Young people:

Childnet

Kidsmart

CBBC Stay Safe

Bullying UK

Click on the link for a website with information for parents parentinfo.org

Managing screen time

"Screen time" refers to the amount of time a user spends on a device to access on-screen activities. There are limits as to the amount of time everyone should spend online, but the amounts and the rules for screen time vary by age. Videoconferencing and social interactions using video do not count towards screen time.

For more information, please check this blog that summarizes the research on screen time for children: https://forge.medium.com/screen-time-is-good-for-kids-if-theres-a-human-on-the-otherend-d33124c1f74

Recommended screen time, that is not video conferencing for learners and teachers, are based on the recommendations created by the American Academy of Pediatrics:

- Ages 2–5: 1 hour, broken into sessions of a maximum of 30 minutes.
- Age 6 and above: no specific screen time limits, but screen time should not affect physical activity and face-to-face interactions at home and school. Consistent limits on screen time are also very important.

Some screen time activities such as online socialising and gaming can be very immersive. Creating learning experiences with limited capacity to engage are key. Make sure that activities are limited in length with clear goals that learners can retain when they are finished.

How can teachers authenticate work that is being completed remotely?

It is easier to authenticate student work online than most people think. However, it requires some changes to how assignments are presented and submitted for review. It also requires teachers to monitor students' online activity more closely than in normal classroom situations. Note: these guidelines are for school-based assessments only.

Here are some basic guidelines to designing and evaluating online work for authenticity:

- Use more formative assessments that are designed to get students to work together and use online resources.
- Have a very clear policy on how to submit work online. Students who are given a precise procedure are less likely to make mistakes in submissions, which accounts for many online learning integrity violations.
- Create questions and inquiries that require learners to embed their personal experiences and context into any assessed content. Since many online students will be in different locations, it will be easier for the teacher to see when a student is using their surroundings to compose their work.
- Create more multimedia assignments that require students to remix pictures, videos and text into their own creations.
- Create libraries and pathfinders for students to use as part of assignments, then ask students to quote from them as part of their work. This check how well they are able to reference and cite work as well as reduce opportunities for copying the work of others.
- Interview students about their work using a synchronous chat with audio or video feeds, if possible. It is much more difficult to produce spontaneous answers when talking online.
- For ActiveLearn, check login time, collaboration data, and submission types to see how often and long students are involved with assignments.

Transitioning from online back to face-to-face learning

A continuity of learning plan is advised to transition learners and teachers back to school.

Learners may have:

- become accustomed to more independent learning and will need time and guidance to transition from it. Some learners may have preferred learning remotely and will find the constraints of school difficult to accept.
- become accustomed to shorter activities, asynchronous assignments, more freedom in their work and less face-to-face collaboration. The school should consider how to slowly transition learners to in-school schedules.
- been temporarily transferred to other schools. The school will need documentation from parents and guardians to assess what learners have studied and how that fits into the school's programme(s) and pedagogical aims.
- experienced illness, isolation, intensive traveling and other challenges that require them to have time to process. Schools should be prepared to create space and interactions that take into account what their learners might have gone through.
- not had the opportunity to be prepared in traditional ways for examinations. The school should consider how to re-focus learners and assure them they are ready.

Teachers may have:

- experienced fatigue and stress due to the rapid professional development they experienced when facilitating online learning, creative scheduling, and exposure to a wide variety of apps, solutions, and technical challenges. Reduced schedules and less administrative activities might help teachers transition more easily.
- been under quarantine or been separated from their students for extended periods of time. Giving teachers opportunities to collaborate and discuss student progress will be essential.
- not had time to evaluate student work. They may need more time for catching up.
- felt less confident that their online teaching prepared students for examinations. Creating activities that are specifically designed to prepare for examinations may be helpful.

Summary

Many teachers, leaders and learners are experiencing an unprecedented situation in their schools. This guidance reflects the schools' desire to stay open **in some form** and provide the best possible learning experiences for students despite difficult conditions.