

Undergraduate vs Short Courses Teaching

If you are used to teaching on full time undergraduate course, you may find it useful to consider the following when planning for Short Course teaching:

Points of Difference between University courses and Short Courses

Full time BA course	Short Course (SC)
Takes place over a full academic year	Takes place over a much shorter time frame
Learners often pay via a loan, and are paying for the full university experience	Learners are paying personally and are paying specifically for the course experience
Learners will receive an accredited qualification at the end of the course	Learners will not receive a qualification at the end of the course, they receive a certificate of attendance.
Learners are often intending move into a career based on their course	Learners take SC for several different reasons: career development, personal interest, hobby / entertainment, in addition to a full-time course.

Possible Issues and Actions

Learners purchase a course based on the course description and learning outcomes advertised online. Make sure that the content and learning outcomes of the course are clear and correctly reflect the course you are delivering

Try not to include anything in the class time of the course that could be done independently (trips to galleries etc.) unless there is significant tutor input available during the activity (e.g.: guided drawing activities in a gallery space).

If you are using the course time for “independent work”, make sure the learning outcome of this is clearly explained and it is clear why it needs to take place then (e.g.: preparing for the next task) and take the opportunity to provide 121 feedback to learner individually during that time.

Because many learners are paying out of pocket, they will be aware of receiving value for money. While Youtube and other publicly available resources can be valuable try to ensure they are put into context and the reason for using them made clear.



Learners pay a premium for the courses based on the UAL brand and reputation. Consider how you can ensure the course you deliver reflects the values and experience of a BA course but is appropriate for a short course time frame and structure. Be sure not to assume that learners will have the same background knowledge and understanding as a BA learner.

Make clear the learning that has been gained through the course. Perhaps include a plenary at the end of the last session where this is reflected on. However, also consider if it is possible for the learners to have to “take away” physically from the sessions. What can they show friends and family they have achieved?

The level of engagement in some areas of the course content might be different for different learners. It may be worth building in an activity at the beginning of the course to find out the motivation of the learners to do the course.

Consider that learners might have different access to materials, equipment, time and space outside the course. They should be able to achieve the learning outcomes of the course within the timeframe of the course. Anything done as “homework” should be additional to this, but not necessary for progression through the course.

Make sure the course description is clear about any skills and knowledge required to undertake the course.

An issue that takes a week to solve is only a small proportion of the course on a BA, but can be the whole course in a SC. Issues like faulty logins, lack of equipment, not receiving documents etc. can have a greater proportional impact on a SC learner. You can utilize the Course Assistance and Customer service teams to ensure issues can be addressed as quickly as possible. Contact via email or phone during your sessions if needed.

