

8 Situational Lenses

S6. Scene, S7. Standards & S8. Scholarship

Overview

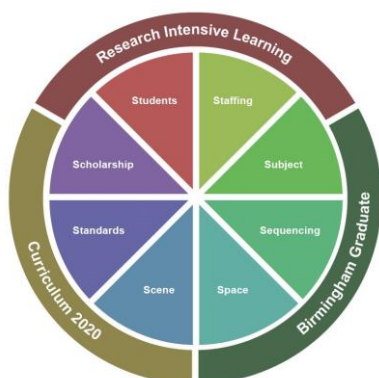
When designing or redesigning learning, whether small scale (course sections), medium (a course, module or MOOC) or large scale (programme or MOOC) the first step needs to be a careful review of the situational factors that may affect your key decisions. The situational lenses include:

1. **Students**
2. **Staffing**
3. **Subject**
4. **Sequencing**
5. **Space**
6. **Scene**
7. **Standards**
8. **Scholarship**

These all sit within the wider University of Birmingham priorities of

- Research-Intensive Learning,
- Curriculum 2020 and
- Birmingham Graduate Attributes.

You may find some lenses to be more important than others. By exploring them all you will identify the factors that are important to creating a robust learning design.



Scene

A wide range of contextual factors impact on teaching and supporting learning that can't be ignored. It is important to be aware of how they do or can impact. If you're not aware now, talk to a colleague or your School Director of Education or departmental Teaching and Learning Manager.

Themes and factors might include:

Institutional Context

- Physical and organisational **structures**
- Institutional **philosophy**
- Institutional policies and strategies (eg. Birmingham **Education Strategy** and Birmingham **Academic / Graduate** profiles)
- Management approach

Departmental Context

- Departmental **interpretation of institutional conditions**
- Departmental and disciplinary **philosophy**
- Departmental disciplinary **discourse and policies**

External Context

- If your discipline has a Professional Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB) you need to be aware of their impact (including on accreditation, monitoring, and review of academic provision)
- External / internal political environment
- (Higher Education Surveys – national (NSS) and institutional; TEF, REF and KEF; Society and Higher Education more specifically)

Standards

As part of the local and national quality assurance process within Higher Education there are a number of standards related factors to be aware of and aware of how they impact our teaching and supporting learning. They include:

University Regulations

The Regulations contain principles and standards designed to control or govern conduct or provide direction at a more detailed level than Ordinances.

University Codes of Practice

Codes of practice, policies and guidance are supplementary to Regulations, setting out the procedures to be followed in specific areas.

QAA Subject Benchmarks

Benchmark statements describe the attributes, skills and capabilities that a graduate with an honours degree in a specific subject might be expected to have. Compiled by academics and other specialists (such as representatives from professional bodies, industry and commerce) from the subject area, the benchmark statements help to ensure that the standards of degree programmes across the UK meet an agreed level.

Subject level descriptors

Credit level descriptors define the level of challenge, complexity, and autonomy expected of a learner on completion of a defined and bounded learning activity such as a module or programme of learning.

Professional bodies

Professional bodies are dedicated to the advancement of the knowledge and practice of professions through developing, supporting, regulating and promoting professional standards for technical and ethical competence. There are approximately 400 professional bodies in the UK, together they represent 13 million professionals.

Scholarship

It is important that all professionals who support learning engage with and where possible contribute to the **research informed evidence base for teaching in Higher Education**. Themes that you might wish to explore fall into the following three areas:

1. content of the discipline,
2. future directions of the discipline and
3. pedagogy (how students think, learn and effective teaching)

A great deal of evidence and practice is published in Higher Education books, journals, newsletters, blogs and social media focused on Higher Education in general or more specifically via the discipline and/or technology.

Have a browse of our

Disciplinary Higher Education and Related Journals ResourceList:
<https://tinyurl.com/HEjournals>

Support is also available via participation in a recognised teaching qualification scheme (whether PGCertHE or Beacon HEA Fellowship).

References

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Fink, L.D., (2013) Creating significant learning experiences: An integrated approach to designing college courses. John Wiley & Sons.

SEEC (2016) Credit Level Descriptors for Higher Education, SEEC, <http://www.seec.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/SEE-C-descriptors-2016.pdf>

QAA (20??) Subject Benchmark Statements, <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements>

University of Birmingham Codes of Practice <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/legislation/codesofpractice/index.aspx>

University of Birmingham Regulations <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/legislation/regulations.aspx>

