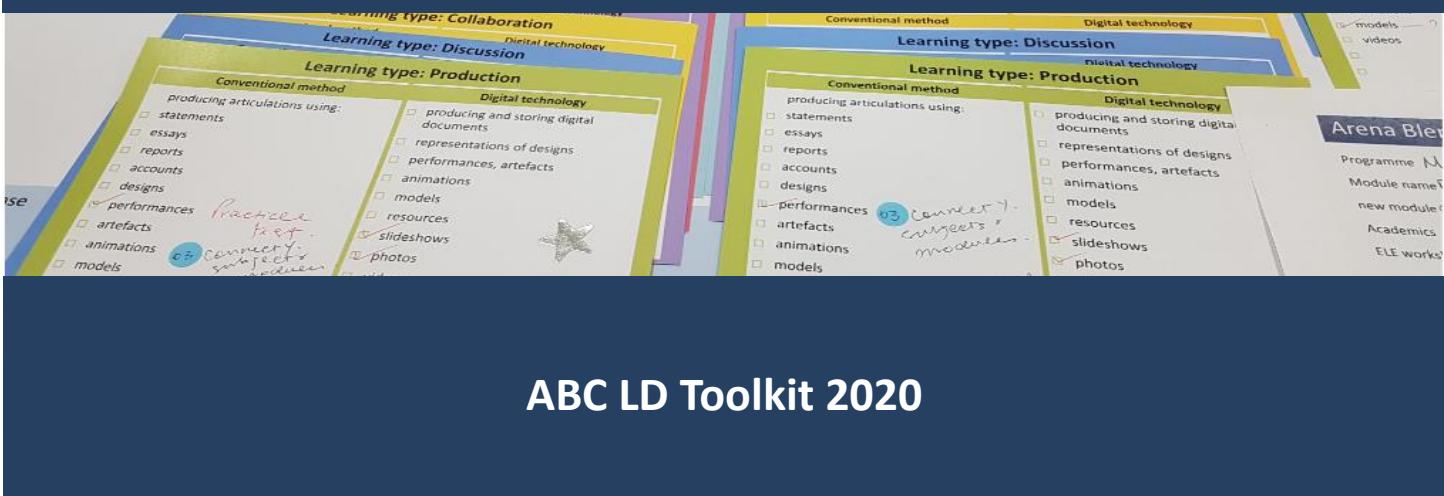


Erasmus+ project ABC to VLE: Beyond Curriculum Design



ABC LD Toolkit 2020

Part 2. Running the ‘Base’ ABC Learning Design Workshop and Variants

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Resources available from <http://abc-ld.org>

PART 2 RUNNING THE ‘BASE’ ABC LEARNING DESIGN WORKSHOP AND VARIANTS

2.1 INTRODUCING THE ‘BASE’ UCL VERSION



Fig 2.1 ABC workshops focus on collaboration and discussion.

As outlined in Part 1, the ABC curriculum design method was built on the Viewpoints principles (University of Ulster 2012) and was developed in 2015 as a ninety-minute, hands-on, rapid-development workshop for UCL module and programme teams. The name itself has significance, as it references Arena, UCL’s popular faculty development programme, blended learning and the Connected Curriculum, mentioned previously as UCL’s major strategic educational initiative (2020).

The Connected Curriculum aims to ensure that all UCL students are able to learn through participating in research and enquiry at all levels of their programme of study. To align with the Connected Curriculum and its foundation of activity-based learning, a new card-set was developed based on Diana Laurillard’s (2012) notion of six ‘learning types’, derived from her theory-based Conversational Framework. The six learning types are acquisition (or read/watch/listen), investigation, practice, production, discussion and collaboration. These types form the ABC six-card set. In addition, new workshop documentation was created, and the Viewpoints workshop sequence was adapted.

At least two or three members of the team involved in the programme or module development attend an ABC workshop. It is required that they bring the module specifications (or programme overview) with learning outcomes to the workshop.

2.2 STRUCTURE OF THE ABC LEARNING DESIGN WORKSHOP

In UCL, ABC is usually run as a ‘pop-up’ workshop located in the target department. The workshops are by invitation of the module or programme lead and are organised by the local administrative team. This lifts the burden of organisation from the central team, ensures a large turnout (the programme/module leads invites her colleagues personally) and gives the impression of a ‘business as usual’ activity rather than a centrally organised staff development exercise. One outcome is the ABC team do not know who will arrive on the day, so as a rule do not set pre-workshop ‘homework’.

Module workshops are timetabled for 90 minutes, and several modules can be redesigned at once. If the workshop addresses a whole programme, say 4-8 modules, it is scheduled for 120 minutes, usually 10:00 to 12:00 or 14:00 to 16:00. Nowadays at UCL, we try to run ABCs for whole programmes, with the core and main optional module teams invited to work together. The thirty minutes extension enables the programme leader to provide guidance to the whole programme team on issues to address together. This may include a focus on the educational strategy, diversity assessment, issues raised by students, changes in professional qualifications and so on. As we shall see, at the end of workshops for a single programme sessions, module leads explain their designs briefly to the rest of the room, providing opportunities to explore progression, through -lines of activity, and implementation of specific strategies across the programme. This adds considerable value to the workshop and provides a unique overview of the student experience across the programme.

The ABC support team try to arrive at least 15 minutes before the workshop to set up the room, and allocate an extra hour for follow up discussion. Although it is feasible, indeed normal, for teams to complete their designs, often individuals and groups wish to spend extra time designing or in discussion with colleagues and ABC support people.



Fig 2.2 Typical table set-up with ABC resources provided at each table.

Each table represents a course, module, or thematic team. About four people is optimal, although it runs well with two or five. Individuals can work alone but miss out on the conversation. In this case, the ABC mentors can team up participants in pairs, or allocate a support person to work with them. Large groups (six or more) can work, but there is a risk of people being left out of the conversation. Sometimes students who have done the course are invited to join the table to provide a user perspective. The programme or module lead will usually allocate tables.



Fig 2.3 Conversations during an ABC workshop.

The ABC workshop is organised in a very structured and time-conscious manner. Most of the 90 minutes is spent on group activity, but it starts with a brief presentation introducing the toolkit elements and their pedagogical background. The sequence of activities has been represented as follows,

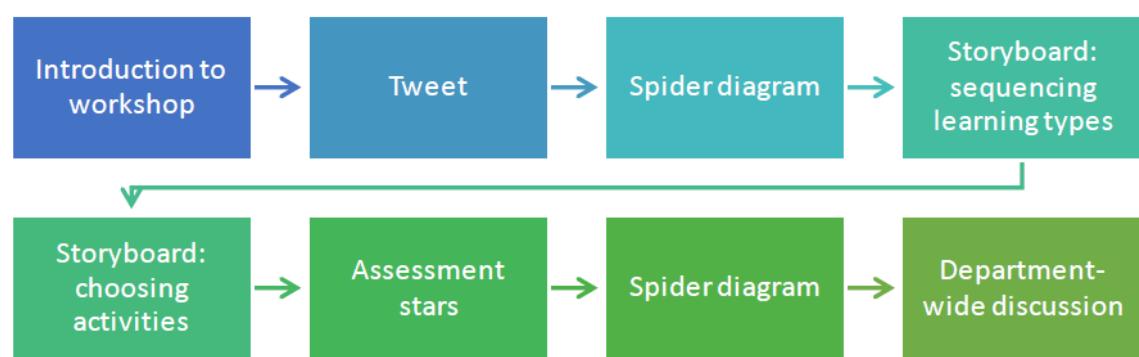


Fig 2.4 ABC workshop activities as a flow chart (Pieroni, 2019)

The ABC facilitators are in a supporting role, to ensure the workshop runs to time and to clarify any aspects of the workshop itself. As experts, they can provide at-table advice, but it is better for the ‘flow’ to let tables work out solutions for themselves and only intervene intermittently.

The workshop begins with a PowerPoint presentation, which should be kept as short as possible, but explains the format of the workshop and the resources.

ABC Workshop Format

Workshop schedule:

- 1. Module info and graphs sheet**
 - **Tweet your module** – tweet size description of your module
 - **Module shape (Learning types activities graph)** distribution of learning types
 - **Blend** – (blended graph)
- 2. Storyboard sheet**
 - **Storyboard** – learning types sequences and activities
 - **Assessment** – align activities and assessment
- 3. Module info and graphs sheet**
 - **Review the graphs** – what has changed? Why?
- 4. Actions** – what next for team?

Fig 2.5 Typical slide from the initial presentation.

The first task for the teams developing either a module or a programme is to agree on a tweet size description (strapline, unique selling point, value proposition, etc.) of the module/programme and write it on the workshop graph sheet. Team leaders also report this back to the facilitators. The purpose of this step is for the teaching team to agree on the overall aim of the module being discussed.

The participants then draw the rough “shape” of their programme (as they envisage it initially) as represented by learning types on a spider graph (e.g., how much practice, or collaboration) and the envisaged blend of face-to-face and online learning.

Arena Blended Connected (ABC) curriculum design workshop

Programme: Arena digital
Module name: USE of videos in teaching
new module module review
Academics: Anna Moore, Jon Grabol
ELE workshop facilitators: CY, NP
Workshop date: 5th June 2015

Module summary (tweet size description of your module):
All you need to know about use of videos in 21st century teaching

RETWEETS:

Learning types activities graph

How do you envisage your module will look on the graph above? (in red - at the beginning of the workshop)
Your module activity graph at the end of the workshop (in blue)

online | face to face

Blended graph

Where do you want to be on the scale (in red)
What is your position at the end of the workshop (in blue)

Fig 2.6 Tweeting and drawing the module ‘shape’.

Next, the team plans the distribution of each learning type by sequencing the postcard-sized cards along the timeline of the module, represented by a large A1 sized paper ‘canvas’. Often, activity sequences are repeated and the module is usually represented by two or three patterns of activity.



Fig 2.7 Teams discuss the pattern of learning activities with the cards ‘face down’.

With this outline agreed by the group, participants turn over the cards. On the back of each card is a list of online and conventional activities associated with each learning type and the team can pick (by ticking) from this list or write in their own. The type and range of learner activities soon becomes clear and the cards often suggest new approaches. The aim of this process is not to advocate any ‘ideal’ mix, but to stimulate a structured conversation among the team.

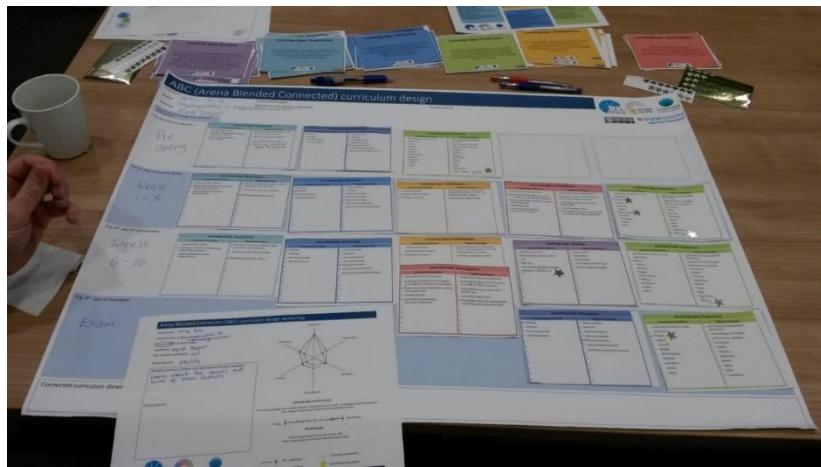


Fig 2.8 Once the ABC cards are ‘face up’, teams select or write activities.

Once learning activities are selected and agreed, participants then look for opportunities for formative and summative assessment. These are represented by affixing silver (formative) and gold (summative)

adhesive stars to the activities. By this point, module/programme development team have an overview and the details of the learning and assessment activities on the module/programme.

Now they can go back to the graphs from the beginning of the workshop and adjust the shape of the module/programme on the learning types and the blend graph and discuss any changes. The new shape is drawn in a different coloured pen to indicate any changes. At this stage, with the design compete, the module teams can look at components of the course in more detail. In UCL we often ask teams to consider where the Connected Curriculum (UCL's educational strategy) is represented in the course and place numbered stickers on the design, each number representing a dimension of the strategy. This has proved an effective and natural way of addressing what can be a difficult exercise. The stickers could be used to represent other institutional frameworks such as employability, graduate outcomes, digital capabilities, data points for data analytic, areas where teams may need support and so on. Vives, one of the Erasmus+ partners, designed their own assessment stickers to add another level of discussion to that activity and to go more into depth about the assessment activities planned in the design.

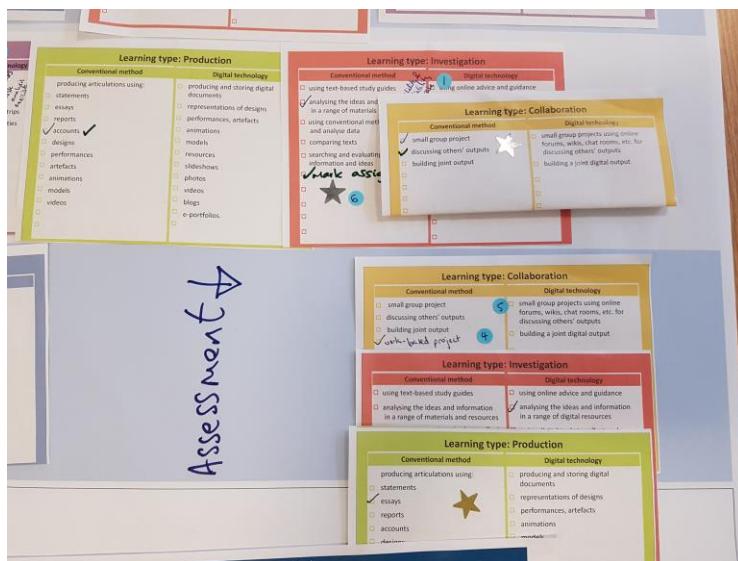


Fig 2.9 Stickers represent strategic 'dimensions'.

The final stage is to photograph the new storyboard. The storyboard can then be used to develop detailed student documentation, describe student 'journeys' or outline a module in the virtual learning environment such as Moodle. Teams can also refer to this during the development of their course, and we often see storyboards attached to office walls.

Teams are strongly encouraged to write an action plan to decide who will do what. The action plan can include further input from the Digital Education support team, additional resources to be gathered, identification of copyright issues etc. The evaluation of the HEFCE project in 2017-18 showed this to be a particularly important aspect of the workshop.

At UCL we prefer to work with whole programmes and in this case an additional stage has been introduced, the 'promenade'. Module leads present to whole group, with the whole room assembling round the table. In this way the room gains an impression of the student experience across the programme, practice and ideas can be exchanged and programme-level outcomes, assessment,

cohesion, ‘through lines’ (cross-module themes and activities) can be addressed. In this case the programme lead is advised to make an action plan.



Fig 2.10 Module leads describe the module to the whole programme group.

Nowadays at UCL, we try to run ABCs for whole programmes, with the core and main optional module teams invited to work together. The workshop is then extended by thirty minutes to a two-hour session. This enables the programme leader to provide guidance to the whole programme team on issues to address together. This may include a focus on the Connected Curriculum, diversity assessment, issues raised by students, changes in professional qualifications and so on. At the end of workshops for a single programme session, module leads explain their designs briefly to the rest of the cohort, providing opportunities to explore progression, -lines of activity, and implementation of specific strategies throughout the programme. This adds considerable value to the workshop and provides a unique overview of the student experience across the programme.

2.3 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BASE VERSION

WHAT VARIANTS DO YOU RUN AT UCL?

These are all versions of the face-to-face workshops. Online versions will be discussed later

- **Module/courses/MOOCs** (90 minutes) Each team works on their module/course. The teams are not from the same programme.
- **Programme workshop** (120 minutes) All module teams from a programme participate in the workshop. Programme lead introduces the workshop aims prior to the workshop (for example: alignment with strategic initiatives, response to students' feedback, change in learning outcomes, etc.). The introduction should not be longer than 10'-15'.
- **Demo workshops** (90 minutes) The teams get together just for the workshop. Each team works on one team member's course. Usually, this is an academic development session or a conference session.
- **'Train the trainer' workshop** (120 minutes) Sessions tailored for a particular group/external institution and their needs.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND ABC LD WORKSHOPS?

Anyone planning to design or review their design for learning. Workshop participants can be lecturers, students, researchers and professionals without teaching experience. The workshop can be facilitated for programmes, modules, short courses and MOOCs.

WHO SHOULD BE IN THE LEARNING DESIGN TEAM?

Teams seem to work best with 2-4 people per module (course). All of them should be teaching on a module, including the module lead. Exceptions are:

- *One person teaching on a module* If there is only one person teaching on a module it is recommended that they invite a colleague to join them as a ‘critical friend’ team member. If someone has to work on their own, they would still benefit from the workshop, but will miss on collaboration and discussion with a colleague, which is one of the valuable aspects of the workshop (as reported by participants).
- *Large groups* The module lead should discuss with all of them how to organise the module, maybe by dividing the work. If all ‘teachers’ are external speakers/experts, it is recommended that the module lead should design the module.
- *Demo session team* The demo sessions may consist of teams without a specific module. The group decides on a ‘lead’ (usually a person with a specific idea for a module re/design) and work on the lead’s module.

Optional team members:

- If there is an educational technologist or instructional designer in the faculty, they should also be invited to the workshop.
- Students (previous or current), academic developers.
- Programme lead

It is important that the person that identified the need for the workshop (often the programme lead) agrees with module teams on most important elements that should be demonstrated in the design (an overview of intentions).

AT WHAT STAGE OF COURSE/PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT SHOULD THE WORKSHOP BE FACILITATED?

The workshop can be facilitated for modules/programmes at any stage of the course life cycle: pre-approval, after the validation, or as a review of an existing module. It is important to discuss the development stage with facilitators prior to the workshop, so that the workshop can be tailored to focus on local needs. E.g., strategic dimensions, institutional strategy, change in learning outcomes or requirements from professional bodies, employability, etc.

WHERE SHOULD THE WORKSHOPS TAKE PLACE?

At UCL workshop facilitators work with teams in their local setting (department/institute). The department books a suitable room (see room set up below). The facilitators (if they are from same institution) will bring workshop resources. The access to the room should be provided at least 30

minutes prior to the start of a workshop, so that the facilitators can prepare the room before participants' arrival. Some institutions have academic development facilities that would allow for workshops to take place in a central location which can be organised by the facilitators.

WHO CAN FACILITATE AN ABC WORKSHOP?

The workshop can best be facilitated by a person who attended 'train the trainer' ABC LD session and facilitated ABC LD workshop observed by approved ABC LD facilitator(s). ABC session should not be facilitated by less than 2 facilitators (except for a small group of participants).

FOR HOW MANY PEOPLE CAN WORKSHOPS BE FACILITATED?

There is no ideal number of participants per workshop. It is important that they can all see and hear the facilitators' presentation and that there is enough space for facilitators to walk around the working teams. If you are facilitating a workshop for more than 6 teams (tables), it is advisable to invite more than two facilitators, in order to pay the required attention to all participants. This provides better 'at table' support and ensures the smooth progress of the workshop.

WHAT IS THE ROOM SET UP?

Some points to remember

- PC/laptop and projector are required for ABC presentation.
- Tables should be arranged for group work ('cabaret style'). Each surface should be larger than A1 sheet, in order to fit all workshop resources. There should be enough space for participants to sit comfortably and for facilitators to move around the tables and interact with the participants during the workshop.
- The room should be set up before participants' arrival (it usually takes 20 - 30 minutes to set up the tables for 6-8 teams).
- The workshop is demanding, so tea/coffee and especially water should be provided, if possible. Although there are no breaks in the workshop facilitation plan, a break can be taken at the storyboard stage. If refreshments for the teams are provided, it is advisable to keep them in a separate area of the workshop room.



Fig 2.11 Typical room layout

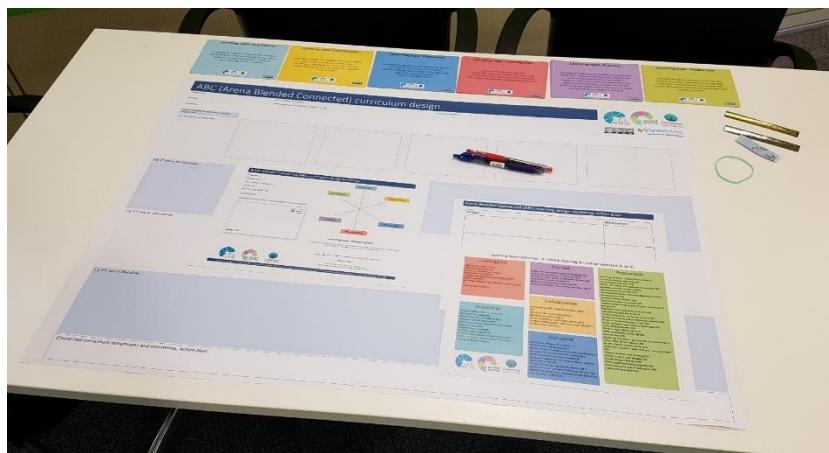


Fig 2.12 Each module is set up in exactly the same way

It is strongly recommended to keep the resources tidy, and to have the same order of cards and other resources on each of the tables. Each set of resources is arranged around A1 sheet (storyboard sheet). A1 sheet represents a canvas for one module/course. In most cases one sheet is big enough for a design of one course/module.

Additional sheets such as local strategies are useful, but try not to ‘overcrowd’ the table with too many documents as these can be distracting. See the appendix for links to the resources for the base version.

2.4 ABC TRANSLATIONS

ABC metoden
AB SALON

Kort over læringstyper (forsiden)

Videnstilegelse (læse, lytte, se)

Læring gennem videnstilegelse sker fx når man læser litteratur, lytter til en forelesning eller en podcast, ser en video eller en demonstration på campus eller i et digitalt format.

Kollaboration

Læring i kollaboration handler om at tage del i en social læringsproces baseret på fælles tilgang til udforskning og tillegnelse fx grupperarbejde, diskussion og produktion

Diskussion

Læring gennem diskussion handler om at formulere og udtrykke sine ideer og spørgsmål og udfordre og respondere på andres ideer og spørgsmål fx dialog eller en debat

Undersøgelse

Læring gennem undersøgelse er fx at gå på opdagelse, sege information, interviewe, undersøge og sammenligne samt forholde sig kritisk til information, kilder og viden

Øvelse

Læring gennem øvelse sker gennem at øve og afprøve sin viden og kompetencer, ofte i et rammesat og procesmælt forløb, fx en quiz, sport, opgaveløsning, laboratorieforsøg, mindre projekter m.m.

Produktion

Læring gennem produktion sker ved at bruge sin viden, faglighed og kompetencer til at skabe et produkt fx rapport, præsentation, video, konstruktion, objekt, workshops og meget andet.

Læringsaktiviteter på forsiden og eksempler på bagsiden

Fig 2.13 Danish translation

ABC resources have now been translated into 14 languages by members of the Erasmus project (denoted by *) and the ABC Learning Design community. Translation is not a straightforward task, as the learning type terminology that Prof Laurillard (and hence ABC) adopted are technically specific not necessarily aligned to the common English definition. ‘Acquisition’, ‘practice’ and ‘Inquiry’ in particular can be quite challenging to translate into other languages, where the ‘equivalent’ term means

something else entirely, is too broad or narrow in scope, or has other connotations in the local (educational) culture. It is important to have this type of conversation and come up with a practical solution before any workshops to avoid participant confusion. In this sense, translation is the first stage of the ABC process. It is also recognised translation is itself a provisional process and we encourage translators to work collectively to ensure broad acceptance of the versions.



Fig 2.14 ABC cards in Finnish

BASE ABC RESOURCES IN TRANSLATION

- [Croatian translation](#) *by Sandra Kučina Softić, Tamara Birkić and Tona Radobolja from University of Zagreb University Computing Centre.
- [Danish translation](#) *by Svend Tveden-Nyborg and Anders Nordbøge Thiel from [Absalon professionshøjskole](#).
- [Dutch translation \(“ABC Curriculumontwerp”\)](#) * by Teaching & Learning Centre, Universiteit van Amsterdam.
- [Finnish translation](#) * by Sanna-Katja Parikka and Veera Kallunki from the Educational Technology Services at the University of Helsinki, Finland.
- [Estonian translation](#) *by Linda Helene Sillat and her colleagues from [Tallinna Ülikool, Estonia](#).
- [Flemish / Dutch translation](#) *by Sylke Vandercruysse, Delphine Wante and Sofie Bamelis from [VIVES Hogeschool, Belgium](#).
- [French translation](#) * by Bernold Hasenknopf and Vassiliki Michou, UPMC, Sorbonne Universités and Sylvaine Perrichot, Université Paris Sud.
- [Italian translation](#) * by Manuela Milani and Iris Pinelli from [Università degli Studi di Milano – UniMi](#).
- [Japanese translation](#) (by Sato Hiroaki, Chiharu Negishi and Shunsuke Tao from [Department of teaching and Learning Support, Osaka University](#)).
- [Norwegian translation](#) by Vegard Skipnes / LearningLab / BI Norwegian Business School (<https://www.bi.edu/>)

- [**Spanish translation**](#) by Robert Pardo and Centro de Apendizaje UAI, Universidad Adolfo Ibanez, Santiago, Chile. @ApendizajeUAI
- [**Swedish translation**](#) (Maria Sunnerstam, Pedagogisk utvecklare, PIL-enheten, [Göteborgs universitet](#)).
- [**Welsh translation**](#) by Dewi Parry, Swyddog Technoleg Dysgu | Learning Technology Officer Canolfan Arloesedd Addysg | Centre for Education Innovation Adran Ymgysylltu â Myfyrwyr a Chefnogaeth Addysgol | Student Engagement and Education Support Division Prifysgol Caerdydd | [Cardiff University](#).

Several more translations were in the pipeline at the time of writing, including Romanian, German and Basque and will be added to the Toolkit when available.

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UCL (2020) Connected Curriculum: a framework for research-based education.
<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/connected-curriculum-framework-research-based-education>



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Learning types, Laurillard, D. (2012).
Download at <http://abc-ls.org>