

# Learning & Teaching

The new pedagogical approach at the University of Northampton [UN] is being characterised as ABL [active, blended learning].

**Active Learning:** is a learning and teaching approach that strives to directly involve students in the learning process. In short, active learning requires students to do meaningful learning activities, process new information and think about what they are doing with it. In active learning, students will be expected to contribute and discuss ideas, try out concepts and skills, create resources, and actively reflect.

## What does it look like?

There are lots of ways that this can happen, both in the physical classroom and online. Examples include:

- collaborative learning, peer learning and groupwork
- discussion, debate, roleplay
- project work
- problem-based learning
- team-based learning
- informal question and answer, or structured tasks like 'think pair share' etc

**Blended Learning:** Blended approaches (also known as hybrid or mixed-mode) use multiple methods to deliver learning, by using technology to enhance and extend learning activities where appropriate. This doesn't mean creating a split between 'face to face' and 'online' work, but rather creating activities that 'blend' learning across different contexts, including collaborative and independent study. Learning becomes an integrated experience, rather than a sequence of 'bolt-on' or disconnected tasks which do not have opportunities for feedback and reflection. Tutor presence is an integral part of the blended learning experience and tutor support (contact time) can happen in both face-to-face and online environments.

## What does it look like?

See above, but sometimes online! This can include:

- online blogs, discussions or debates
- online independent study activities ('sense-making')
- tests, quizzes and knowledge checks
- Live (synchronous) online labs or virtual classrooms
- 'flipping the classroom', where information delivery (lecture content) might happen online before class, to help students prepare for activities in class.

With this as a basis, **UN 'Active Blended Learning'** is being defined as:

**The programme [or module] is taught through student-centred activities that support the development of subject knowledge and understanding, independent learning and digital fluency. Our face-to-face teaching is facilitated in a practical and collaborative manner, clearly linked to learning activity outside the classroom. Opportunities are provided for students to develop autonomy, Changemaker attributes and employability skills.**

For more information see:

<https://www.northampton.ac.uk/ilt/current-projects/waterside-readiness/>

You can access this document at [http://bit.ly/UoN\\_ABL](http://bit.ly/UoN_ABL)