COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE
ACTIVE LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

A teacher’s guide to developing pre-class checkpoint questions.

The following are a set of principles that will assist you to design effective questions for pre-class/content checkpoints. These questions contribute to the formation of interactive activities/or checkpoints crucial to flipped classes for either out of class flips, in class flips and/or fully online flipped courses.

• Questions should test basic/foundational concepts that are linked to learning outcomes
• Questions should test a student’s understanding of these foundational concepts and can be formative (a space to give students a try) or low stakes summative items (encourages students to complete)
• Questions and students’ responses should be linked to the in-class time–for relevance and teacher accountability
• Pre-class questions can be an opportunity for fun and room for humour; increase student engagement
• Distractors such as those embedded in (MCQs) should (mainly) be plausible (except when making them humorous)
• Questions can be open ended to welcome opinions and debate through online discussion
• Include feedback on student responses. This can be achieved online during the pre-class activity or in-class. Ensure to include feedback even on the correct answer
• Keep it simple/concise/short
• Make it clear what you are asking for
• Peer review your questions for clarity
• Questions should only checkpoint the pre-class activities and related content
• Focus on devising questions related to the foundational concepts that are harder to understand to enable students to learn in a self-paced manner
• Questions where the answer is obvious (‘duh’ questions) are acceptable for pre-class checkpoints – helps to build students’ confidence
• Use a mixture of question types (fit for purpose) e.g. MCQ, drag and drop, pairing, matching items, labelling diagrams etc.