

## **Classroom management in face to face delivery**

Most students want their classes to go well. Disruptive behaviour can occur for several different causes - many of them not to do with your teaching.

Whether you are delivering a lecture to a large group or facilitating a small group tutorial, managing the classroom so that you feel all students have equal opportunity to learn and participate is an important skill. There are several ideas that can help enhance these environments and manage unwelcomed disruption.

The aim of classroom management is ultimately to build relationships with your students to improve their engagement, retention and progression. Achieving this can be difficult depending on the size of the group, the mix of the cohort, the environment you are working in and your own expectations of how students should behave and interact in a learning environment. There are tools which you can employ to make activities stimulating and engaging, but there are some key things to consider when trying to create a positive, engaged classroom but also managing situations when students are not behaving in the manner you think is appropriate.

### **What is disruptive behaviour?**

According to Wright State University (Carmona, 2006), disruptive behaviour is “an action or combination of actions by an individual [or group] that unreasonably interferes with, hinders, obstructs, or prevents the right of others to freely participate in [an] activity, program, or service, including behaviour (sic) that may prevent faculty and staff members from carrying out their professional responsibilities.”

Classroom management should be considered at the very initial stages of planning and be discussed collectively within a course team to i) ensure there is an understanding between staff of what the different approaches are for dealing with disruptive behaviour and ii) clarifying the expectations of the students. What assumptions are you making about the knowledge of your students? What are you expecting that they can, and cannot do? Consider how you make expectation clear to all students on arrival at the University.

Here are some suggestions to improve students' engagement when undertaking classroom teaching in order to make it a positive experience for all parties. Many of these principles do not apply just to the physical classroom space but to the virtual online space too(see sheet on virtual classroom management).

### **Suggestions on how to manage a classroom:**

- Agree and establish clear expectations from the start: establish agreed ground rules for everyone (staff included). Consideration of the most common bad

behaviours relating to i) phone usage - texting ii) latecomers, iii) verbal interruptions v silence, iv) aggressive questioning, v) “safe space” conduct vii) persisting attendance issues viii) time wasting could be highlighted.

- Be consistent in your team, treat all students the same. Follow up your individual concerns about a student promptly with their academic advisor.
- Be prepared for disruption and think about how you will handle it in advance.
- Do not turn a ‘blind eye’ to minor disruptions. Several minor disruptions can be as disruptive as one large incident. Keep calm, do not over-react.
- Think about the underpinning reasons why a student might be disruptive.
- Do not humiliate the student(s).
- Think about changing how you approach a situation and work on all the students’ self-interest (assessment success, learning about being professional, using contact hours effectively).
- Take action to minimise opportunities for behaviour to be disruptive (e.g. save easily accessible seats for late comers, provide plenty of breaks, chunked activities, interactive activities).
- Regularly poll students about disruptive behaviour expectations - use peer views as part of the learning activity and encourage the students to build negotiation skills.

### **Bibliography and resources**

Anglia Ruskin University, 2016. Tackling disruptive behaviour in the classroom: a guide for staff. (online) Available at <https://www.anglia.ac.uk/anglia-learning-and-teaching/good-teaching-practice-and-innovation/approaches-to-learning-and-teaching/classroom-management>

Carmona, F.M.L., 2006. Managing Inappropriate Student Behaviour: A Guide for Faculty and Staff. (online) (Last updated July 2011) Available at [http://www.wright.edu/sites/www.wright.edu/files/page/attachments/Managing\\_Inappropriate\\_Student\\_Behavior\\_11\\_12.pdf](http://www.wright.edu/sites/www.wright.edu/files/page/attachments/Managing_Inappropriate_Student_Behavior_11_12.pdf)

Guides on Polling software - <https://teachlearn.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/guides/third-party-software-and-application-guides/>

Student Contract - <http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/public-information/student-regulations/student-contract.pdf>

Student Charter - <http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/assets/studentcharter/>

Student Code of discipline - [http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/public-information/student\\_code\\_of\\_discipline.pdf?la=en](http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/public-information/student_code_of_discipline.pdf?la=en)