

# Laurillard's six learning types

(plus a couple of extras)

The six learning types are described below, with colours correlating to UCL's online [Learning Designer](#) tool. The final two in grey are additional suggestions for learning activities.

Words in bold denote terms from [Bloom's taxonomy](#) as commonly represented in various online resources (these are just provided as a guide, they are not exhaustive).

## Acquisition

**Students receive information through reading, watching and listening to materials provided by the tutor.**

This may be through a textbook chapter, lecture, handout, journal, website, video, podcast etc. There is specific information that the tutor wants the student to be aware of.

Acquisition helps students learn by giving them information to **remember**, on which more complex learning can be based.

## Inquiry/Investigation

**Students seek out and select information and make choices about its relevance.**

This may involve any of the above sources, but it is self-directed study aimed at answering a question of some sort. The student has to engage with the topic to choose where to search, and to analyse the information for accuracy and relevance to the question.

Inquiry/Investigation helps students learn by requiring them to **understand** the information and the question they are tackling, so that they can **evaluate** their sources.

## Discussion

**Students share knowledge, consider others' points of view, and attempt to defend their own.**

Discussions require students to be able to communicate their own understanding, which may in itself force them to examine it more critically. They must also understand and evaluate other points of view, compare with their own and potentially reconcile any contradictions. This process can highlight misconceptions and consolidate knowledge and understanding.

Discussion helps students learn by requiring students to **remember** and **understand** the information they present, and **evaluate** alternative points of view.

## Practice

**Students improve their skills through a cycle of trying out what they have learned, receiving feedback, revising their approach and trying again.**

This may be through performing calculations, manual actions, soft skills, cognitive processes etc. Feedback may come from tutors, peers or self-reflection, or be built into the activity. Some form of feedback is essential in order for the student to make meaningful changes to their practice through which they can improve.

Practice helps students learn by encouraging them to **analyse** a problem and **apply** their knowledge.

## Production

**Students apply their knowledge to create a tangible outcome for evaluation.**

This may be a presentation, performance, design, plan, or other artefact. The process of production helps to embed knowledge by giving it context, and making the student consider the information from different angles.

Production helps students learn by giving them the chance to **create** something through **applying** the knowledge they have gained.

## Collaboration

**Students work together to build on each other's learning through joint practice and production as well as discussion and feedback.**

Collaboration helps to construct knowledge within a social context. By sharing the process of learning, students hold up their ideas for scrutiny and receive feedback from a new perspective. Persuasion and negotiation, which require confidence in their knowledge, may be needed for their contribution to receive group approval. Synthesising these perspectives may lead to new knowledge.

Collaboration helps students learn by making them **understand** and **evaluate** different perspectives to **create** a joint outcome that all have ownership of.

## Reflection

**Students critically address tasks or activities they have completed to gain insight into how to improve and further their knowledge.**

Reflection is a form of feedback, but coming from the student's own deeper awareness and comparison against external reference points. In the same way that inquiry can embed knowledge more deeply than acquisition because the student is forced to process the information more, effective reflection can often be more valuable than feedback given by a tutor. It can also address areas a tutor would be unable to comment on, as a student can assess their own attitude and emotional responses.

Reflection helps students learn by encouraging them to **remember** what took place and **evaluate** it.

## Peer teaching

**Students explain concepts to their peers, present new information and give feedback on their peers' responses.**

Peer teaching, unlike discussion, requires one student to have greater knowledge and be responsible for imparting it to another. It could be employed in group work, where each member takes on a specific area to research and share with the group (like in a [Jigsaw](#)) or more informally in a peer instruction exercise. Having to teach a subject can be a very powerful way for a student to enhance their own understanding.

Peer teaching helps students learn by requiring them to have a thorough **understanding** of the subject, **applying** their knowledge in such a way that it can be communicated, and potentially **creating** resources to support this.



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