

Learning Architecture

Introduction

Find out more at
bit.ly/AcademyLearningArchitecture

Welcome to the Learning Architecture

What is the Learning Architecture?

A tool for designing learning that reflects the Humanitarian Leadership Academy's Core Strategy. Using this document as a framework, you will be able to design learning for any stage (from self-guided to blended learning), at scale and contextualised to learners. That's because the Learning Architecture is built on a flexible Learning Methodology and provides principles, technologies and behaviours of Scaffolded Social Learning as an approach to learning design.

A Scaffolded learning approach

The Learning Architecture is a foundation for shared language and understanding within the Academy team and with our partners. It leaves open wide space for creativity and innovation in learning design by providing a scaffolding that supports and enhances learning rather than constraining it. Like any scaffolding, it can be built on over time.

How is the Learning Architecture used?

As a learning designer, you can use the Learning Architecture to be as detailed as you want on the practical side of design, from learning about new concepts to using templates that help you plan learning and tools to support the delivery of your learning opportunity.

Each section is divided into Thinking, Planning and Doing. If you are interested in the approach, you might consider the *Thinking* part in each section. Need design support? *Planning* is your best bet. *Doing* focuses on delivery and the actions you can take in a Scaffolded Social Learning programme. Working through the whole Architecture will give you a blueprint for learning design and delivery. Within the Learning Architecture we consider eight aspects which, together, cover the way that we design the learning, the environment within which it is delivered, the ways that learners are supported, and the way that success is measured.

Who is the Learning Architecture for?

This Learning Architecture is aimed at learning designers at the local and global level with whom the Academy partners, who are tasked with designing and delivering learning. Eight pillars form a learning ecosystem that fosters flexible and responsive networks well equipped to transfer and make existing knowledge visible, listen and learn from the sector.

The Learning Architecture fits within the Academy's three approaches:

Learning, Knowledge and Innovation.

The goal of the Learning Architecture

Adopting social learning is a way to foster a dynamic, purposeful community of practice, helping to develop innovative learning for social impact. The goal of this Architecture is to provide tools and ideas that promote iteration, experimentation with social learning in the humanitarian context, pushing learning opportunities out quickly, reviewing, sharing results (what worked and what didn't). This way of working and learning requires Designers and learners to develop capacity and contribute resources to a community of practice through Scaffolded Social learning opportunities in a learning community. The ultimate goal is to build networked response mechanisms so the Academy, with its global network of Centres and partners, can respond to a quickly moving sector with a coherent, evidence based offering.

Definitions

There are several terms used in the Learning Architecture that can have more than one meaning. The following definitions should help with this

Blended learning:

Learning design approach that combines self-guided learning with face-to-face elements.

Co-creation:

Defined by the Academy Glossary as 'Organisations or people working together to build, start or create. new products'. This term is about co-ownership. Every person involved is equally invested in the outcome of co-creation. Balanced ownership occurs when each person involved sees benefit from the outcome to their context.

Programme:

In the Learning Architecture, this term is used to refer to any learning opportunity produced for the Academy, that is more involved than training, for example: a learning pathway, a MOOC, self-guided learning, a playlist on Kaya, workshops.

Tools:

Activities and skills that support learning.

Self-guided learning:

Learning where the learner is not reliant on the input from a 'teacher' or their 'peers' in order to achieve the learning outcomes. It allows the learner to engage with learning at his/her own pace and at times that suit him/her. This can also be referred to self-directed learning.

Communities of practice:

Communities of practice bring together people in one local area or from across the globe to share ideas and experiences. Through the process of sharing with the group, members learn from each other, and have an opportunity to develop themselves personally and professionally. Learning communities referred to in the Architecture are people grouped around specific learning opportunities that allow them to learn and practice knowledge and skills that they can then contribute to a community of practice.

The eight pillars of the Learning Architecture:

Scaffolded Social Learning and Learning Communities are the core of the Learning Architecture. The Learning Methodology is used to build these. The rest of the pillars are part of the eco system that will inform those core elements

