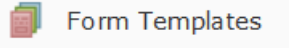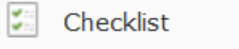# ONLINE ACTIVITY OPTIONS: CHOOSE THE BEST TOOL FOR THE JOB

How do you get students to engage with the content that they are viewing, reading and listening to? Get them to *do* something with it! A range of online activities can be used to assist students with recall of general knowledge, application of knowledge and reflection. The inclusion of activities at key points can help students manage their approach to studying and consolidate what they have learned. Here we compare a range of tools (some MyLO, some from elsewhere) that you can use to make students *do something* with the content of your unit. NOTE: *Help* column indicates whether your use of a tool is officially supported by the IT Service Desk.

	Help	Benefits	Considerations	Assessable?	Teacher involvement
MyLO Discussions	✔	• Suits a range of tasks: online socialisation (e.g. self-introductions); resource discovery and sharing, online 'role plays'; determining solutions to problems, sharing examples of theory application and so forth. • Can be used for submission of *Just In Time Teaching (JITT)* questions (refer to *Considerations**), though a **Quiz** may be more suitable in some circumstances. • Students can be exposed to ideas and experiences of other students, and have their own ideas challenged. • Can also function as an FAQ resource: students can ask questions, answer questions and the Unit Coordinator can respond to questions within an agreed time frame. This can help reduce email traffic. Discussions	• This may be a new experience for students. Be prepared to orient them to the purpose of online discussions, netiquette and expectations. • Time limits are important for most **Discussion** activities! Set an open and close date (one week is ideal) to add a sense of urgency to the task. You may wish to specify a date by which students must post and a date by which students must reply. • Success of a **Discussion** will depend on the design of the activity – clarity of instructions; nature of the question; motivation; pace and so forth. • *Students can benefit from seeing responses posted by other students, but do you want them to see other posts before they post for themselves? If not, you'll need to set up the **Discussion** so that students must post before seeing other posts. Even so, some may cheat by posting, viewing other responses, then editing their original post. • Application of a small grade may increase willingness to participate. • Are you happy for students to 'lurk'' – look but not post?	✔ A variety of methods can be used – application of a simple grade/score OR grade by Rubric. Peer feedback can also be used with the application of the **Ratings** feature.	**MEDIUM – HIGH** Your level of involvement will depend on student confidence/experience with online discussions, task design and task content. Your main role as a teacher, other than for assessment, will be to summarise, thread and weave posts and deal with any inappropriate posts.
MyLO Quiz	✔	• Good for *JITT (Just in Time Teaching)* or *Flipped Classroom* approaches. • Wide variety of question types, from multiple choice, ordering and matching questions, to long and short answer questions. • Most question types can be auto-graded. • Feedback can be question-based (general) or answer-specific, allowing students to check their progress and understanding. • Application of rules can prevent students accessing correct answers and feedback until after a set date. • S**pecial access** is easily provided to students who cannot complete the **Quiz** within the given time frame. Quizzes	• Long and short answer questions often require manual grading. • Students will need some guidance about how to find their **Quiz** results and feedback. • Students may save their answers but forget to **Submit** the **Quiz**. Setting up a non-assessable 'practice' **Quiz** should help students acquaint themselves with the **Quiz** tool.	✔ Associating a **Grade Item** will allow you to record the marks. Otherwise, the **Quiz** will function as a self-assessment.	**LOW – MEDIUM** Most question types can be auto-graded, however, short and long answer questions may require manual grading. If using this for *JITT* or *Flipped* approaches to teaching, you may wish to include a question asking students what they have had the most difficulty with, and adapt your teaching according to their answers.
MyLO Survey	✔	• Includes Likert-style questions, which are not available in **Quiz** activities. A great way of gauging student opinions about a topic. • Suitable for questions/directions like 'To what extent do you agree with the following statement?', and, 'Place these in order from the most to the least important'. • Good for self-assessment, formative assessment or teacher awareness of progress. Can be assessed, but some effort is involved to set this up. • Reports make it easy to get a general picture of student responses. Surveys	• You can set up the **Survey** to allow students one or more attempts, or give them the ability to edit an attempt. • If a student forgets to click the **Submit** button, their submission will not be recorded. Inclusion of instructions in the **Survey** (perhaps combined with an **Intelligent Agent** message confirming submission) may help avoid this. • Always set a close date so that the data collected is timely and there is a sense of urgency for students to complete the **Survey**. • Your students will expect some sort of feedback (even generic feedback to the class) as a result or their participation. Try to provide some general feedback to the whole class by **News** item or by email within 3-5 business days.	✔ Requires the use of standalone **Grade Item**. Mark with the **Grade Item** on one screen and the **Survey Report** on another. HTML report types are the easiest to read and interpret, while CSV (Excel) files allow for filtering.	**MEDIUM** Reports associated with a **Survey** are quick and easy to generate. Time needs to be dedicated to getting a general picture of how students are progressing and for providing students with feedback/adapting your teaching. You may also like to pick a few examples from the submissions to share with your students.
MyLO ePortfolio Reflection	✔	• Allows students to reflect on content they have just reviewed, such as HTML pages, PDFs or Word documents, or YouTube videos (if embedded in an HTML page). • Students click the **Reflect in ePortfolio** button to create a new **Reflection** in a pop-up window. • Good method of capturing spur-of-the-moment thoughts – almost like taking electronic notes. • Multiple **Reflections** can be compiled into a **Presentation** and submitted to a **Dropbox** for assessment. Alternatively, a single **Reflection** can be submitted to a **Dropbox**. Reflect in ePortfolio	• To 'guide' reflection, you will need to include instructions at the bottom of your HTML page or document. Alternatively, use an **ePortfolio Form** (see next page). • Students may benefit from tagging their reflections. Tags will help them find and collate reflections in their **ePortfolio**. • You will not be able to see students' reflections unless they share them with you, or submit them to a **Dropbox**. • Sharing or submitting a **Reflection** involves several steps for the student. They are likely to forget to complete these steps if you don't provide them with adequate instructions or opportunities to practise. It may also help to post reminders of the need to submit reflections to a **Dropbox** if the reflections are to be assessed (e.g. using the **News** tool).	✔ Students would need to create a **Presentation** of their reflections and submit this to a **Dropbox.** Alternatively, they can submit a single **Reflection** to a **Dropbox**.	**LOW – MEDIUM** Your level of involvement will depend on the extent to which you treat **Reflections** as opportunities to provide formative feedback. If you do wish to provide feedback, provision of general feedback to the whole class will prove less time consuming than provision of individual feedback.

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	Help	Benefits	Considerations	Assessable?	Teacher involvement
MyLO ePortfolio Form	✔	• Allows students to reflect on content they have just reviewed in a module. • You can set up a *Form* to have students respond to specific questions. This tool is best suited to guided reflection activities and is great for students who are new to reflection! • A direct link to a *Form* can be placed in a module. You can also link to a *Form* from a *News* item. • Can be submitted to a *Dropbox* for assessment. 🗒 Form Templates	• You will not be able to see students' reflections unless they share them with you, or submit them to a *Dropbox*. • If the *Form* is assessable, consider providing a practice *Form* and associated *Dropbox* (with no *Grade Item*) attached to give your students a chance to practise the submission process. • Don't include hyperlinks in your *Form* – they seem to slow down the *Dropbox* submission process exponentially. • If you don't wish to mark forms, but you would like to get a picture of what students are thinking about a topic, a *Survey* might be a more appropriate tool.	✔ Students must submit a *Form* to a *Dropbox* for assessment. Alternatively, *Forms* can be added to a *Collection* or *Presentation* which can then be submitted to a *Dropbox.*	**LOW – MEDIUM** Your level of involvement will depend on the extent to which you treat *Forms* as opportunities to provide formative feedback. If you do wish to provide feedback, you will find that providing general feedback to the whole class less time consuming than providing individual feedback.
MyLO Checklist	✔	• Functions as a list that students can 'check' to track whether they have completed certain activities or tasks. • A great tool for reminding students of the tasks they need to complete in a given week or module. • Students can return to a *Checklist* to update it. • A *Checklist* can be set up to open in a new window, so students can continue to update it as they progress through a module or navigate your MyLO site. • You can link to a *Checklist* from a *News* item. • You can base the release of content on the completion of a *Checklist*. ☑ Checklist	• If content is organised in modules with a logical order/structure, you probably won't require a checklist. • The *Checklist* will not automatically 'track' the completion of tasks: students have to check the boxes manually. • Avoid editing a *Checklist* after you have released it to students, as the sudden addition of a new item may be confusing.	✘ This type of activity is not assessable and cannot be linked to a *Grade Item*.	**LOW** Once set up, *Checklists* do not require any significant teacher involvement.
Quizlet	✘	• A free online quiz tool. Enter key words/phrases and their meanings. Quizlet will generate a range of activities based on your entries, including Flashcards and Scatter games. • A fun way for students to test their knowledge of discipline specific vocabulary or definitions. • www.quizlet.com **Quizlet**	• You will need to sign up to Quizlet (it is free). Your students will not need to sign up. If you have a free account, students will see some ads in the page sidebar. • You can place a link to your Quizlet quiz in MyLO (e.g. in a *News* item, or module). However, the actual quiz will take place outside of MyLO. • Not suitable for testing knowledge of complex ideas. • You won't be able to track student results.	✘ This type of activity is not assessable.	**LOW** Once set up, this sort of quiz does not require any significant teacher involvement.
UTAS Blog (Wordpress)	✔	• A good way of keeping students up-to-date with changes in the industry/discipline. • Unlike the MyLO *News* tool (which students can only view), students can also *comment* on a *Blog* post. • Your students may find it easier to follow comments in a *Blog* than to follow posts in a MyLO *Discussion*. • Good for building a compendium of ideas that will continue to be available after a unit has finished. Great for discussions/communication at a course or year level. • Based on the popular *WordPress* platform. Ⓦ	• Students cannot add new posts – they can only comment on existing posts. • You will need to request a blog through the UTAS Web Services team: webservices@utas.edu.au • No official staff training is provided by Web Services. If you are really keen to use this tool, please contact the Flexible Delivery Team for advice: Teaching.TSBE@utas.edu.au • To see an example of a *UTAS Blog*, check out: blogs.utas.edu.au/teaching-at-tsbe/	✘ This type of activity is not assessable.	**LOW – MEDIUM** This depends on the amount of posts you intend to add and the amount of Comments you expect to receive from students. As with a Discussion, expect to check back on your *Blog* every 2 business days.
UTAS Wiki	✔	• Provides students with a means of creating content, as a group, online. • Similar functionality to Google Docs – create content online and track the changes made. There is no need for students to be logged in at the same time. • You can comment on the students' work from inside the wiki. • Useful for building compendiums of ideas or resources. Some disciplines have used wikis to compile class texts by creating groups as 'subject matter experts'. • Google Docs may be used as an alternative.	• Can be linked to from MyLO. • You will need to request the creation of wikis by completing this form: http://www.utas.edu.au/it/learning-services/wikis/request-access • No official training is provided by ITR. If you are really keen to use this tool, please contact the Flexible Delivery Team for advice: Teaching.TSBE@utas.edu.au	✔ Can be assessed. Students would need to download their wiki as a Word document and submit it to a *Dropbox* in MyLO for assessment.	**LOW – HIGH** This depends on the extent to which you provide guidance/feedback to students regarding their work in the wiki. Will you do this several times during the creation process, at particular points or on request?
Interactivity embedded in pre-recorded lectures or standalone games	✘	• It is possible to create a variety of interactive games and quizzes, which can also be embedded in lectures. • Examples include crosswords and drop – and – drag activities. Even simulations of software use can be created. • These kinds of activities may be suitable for special projects involving the Flexible Delivery Team (if approved by the Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning). Innovative approaches are encouraged and academics may apply for a Teaching Development Grant. The Flexible Delivery Team can support these applications and work with you on projects related to flexible delivery.	• The Flexible Delivery Team has limited licences available for Adobe Captivate, Adobe Presenter, etc. • Creation of objects such as these must be approved through the Associate Dean Learning and Teaching (Stuart.Crispin@utas.edu.au), as they often involve significant work for the Flexible Delivery Team.	✔ Sometimes, these sorts of activities can be converted to a format called SCORM and embedded in MyLO. They usually have the ability to record a student's overall score in the MyLO Gradebook, but not records of attempts/answers.	**HIGH (DURING THE DEVELOPMENT PERIOD)** You will need to spend a significant amount of time designing the content and 'storyboarding' activities. If the activity is designed with longevity in mind, it can often be used across several iterations of a unit, with minimal maintenance required.

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