Determining how your students learn is where you have most influence.
In student-centred teaching, determining how your students will learn is where you as the class teacher have the most influence.

Keep in mind Thomas Shuell's principle: "... what the student does is actually more important in determining what is learned than what the teacher does." Learner-centred learning allows students to become creators of knowledge, rather than passive recipients of information. Learning proceeds by a series of interactions or conversations—between teacher and learner in the first instance, but also between one learner and others.

Your task, as teacher, is to plan interactions that will allow students to engage with the particular content, skills and understandings in your course outline. While these learning interactions are student-centred, it is the teacher and the University who are responsible for their planning and implementation. The quality of these interactions is at the core of learning.

The ways you choose to interact around course content will change according to your learners' educational needs and the context of the learning. The strategies you use to encourage student learning are sometimes called "teaching methods" or techniques. Choose your teaching methods with your course learning outcomes in mind.
What should I get my students to do, to achieve a learning outcome?

To answer this question, teachers need understanding in three different areas:

- **Understanding the Learners**
  Learners are different and individual. They prefer different learning methods.

- **Understanding the Content**
  You need to fully understand the topics that make up your course, and reasons why you cover them in a particular order.

- **Understanding Learning Processes**
  You can utilise a wide range of teaching methods to accommodate the differences in learners and the variety of course content.

These understandings apply in most university learning contexts, but should always be supplemented with discipline-specific knowledge and practices. Each academic discipline has developed effective traditional learning and teaching methods: **Case Studies** in management and law; **Studio Techniques** in fine arts; **Modelling in Engineering** (UNSW Handbook). This does not mean that you cannot be innovative, but the use of these teaching methods has been road-tested before and their use is part of your responsibility to introduce learners to the values of your profession.

You will continue to develop deeper knowledge, skills and confidence in learning and teaching as you continue teaching.

Technology Enhanced Learning and Teaching

The model diagrammed above clearly illustrates the traditional responsibilities of a university teacher when students and teacher actually meet face to face in a classroom or laboratory. However, increasingly learning interaction takes place in the virtual classroom, independent of time and place, using a range of communications technologies. Some of your lectures and tutorials may occur in a real lecture hall or classroom, but much independent and collaborative learning happens online using learning management systems, rich media and the Internet.

Face-to-face interaction with learners provides each of you with immediate feedback on the progress of student learning through engagement, body language and attention. There are far fewer cues in the online world to indicate whether the learner understands or is even participating in your class. Fortunately, skills can be learnt to help teachers to function in the virtual learning environment, to design and conduct engaging classes and to successfully facilitate learning. For more information see **Using Technology in Teaching**.

Engaging students

In these 2 videos, teachers discuss engaging students and using technology.

LOUISE Engaging Students

BEN Using Technology
How do my Learners Learn?

Document Version Date 04/03/2019
UNSW CRICOS Provider Code: 00098G
https://teaching.unsw.edu.au/how-do-my-learners-learn