

SQT Training Ltd

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**2025 Annual Quality Report (SQT Training)**  
**CASE STUDY RELATED to**  
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# ENHANCING LEARNER ENGAGEMENT IN BLENDED AND ONLINE LEARNING: SQT'S APPROACH TO EFFECTIVE COURSE DELIVERY

**Theme:** Learner Engagement & Quality in Blended and Online Learning

**Keywords:** Learner Engagement, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Interactive Course Design, Digital Learning Tools, Virtual Learning, Tutor Support, Real-Time Feedback, Engagement Strategies, Coursecheck

## Introduction

SQT's transition to blended and online learning was initially driven by the necessity of adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, its success in maintaining high engagement and instructional quality has led to its permanent adoption as a core delivery methodology. Ensuring that learners remain active participants in their programme requires a structured approach that combines technology, pedagogical best practices and ongoing Tutor development. This case study examines how SQT successfully fosters engagement through pre-course preparation, interactive course delivery, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, mentoring and real-time learner feedback.

## Context and Rationale

Prior to the covid pandemic in 2020, SQT delivered all its programmes through traditional classroom-based methods. With the transition to virtual learning, ensuring engagement and interactivity became a key priority. Common challenges in this environment include online fatigue, limited peer interaction and disengagement during extended sessions. To address these issues, SQT has implemented targeted engagement strategies, incorporating structured course design, the purposeful use of digital tools and comprehensive learner support mechanisms.

## Key Strategies for Learner Engagement

SQT employs a variety of engagement strategies tailored to the specific needs of each programme, ensuring that learners remain actively involved throughout their learning journey. These are set out below.

### 1. Pre-Course Preparation: Setting Learners Up for Success

Effective pre-course preparation ensures learners are confident, technically ready, and fully engaged from the outset of their programme. SQT implements the following strategies.

- **Tech Checks:** Pre-course technical checks on Zoom and Moodle help learners navigate platforms, minimising any potential issues and anxiety.
- **Orientation & Needs Assessment:** A guided session outlines course structure, expectations, and engagement opportunities, ensuring learners are well prepared for their course.

- **Customised Learning Materials:** Relevant pre-course information is provided to learners via Moodle in advance to allow engagement at their own pace before the live sessions.

## 2. Course Delivery: Designing for Engagement

SQT structures its blended and online courses to maximise engagement using a learner-centric approach, ensuring that interactive learning elements remain a priority:

- **Balanced Delivery:** In some cases, theoretical content is allocated to self-paced learning, while online synchronous sessions focus on interaction and application.
- **Interactive Tools:** Breakout rooms, digital whiteboards, chat functions, polls, and quizzes are used to keep learners engaged and encourage participation.
- **Activity-Based Learning:** Tutors integrate discussions, problem-solving exercises, or peer reviews within every session.
- **Programme Scheduling Adjustments:** Longer courses have been redesigned to optimise engagement.
- **Small Class sizes:** Class sizes are limited to a maximum of 15 to foster a more personalised learning environment.

These strategies, along with the incorporation of external activities outside of web conferencing platforms, help create an immersive and dynamic learning experience that closely mirrors the benefits of in-person classroom training.

## 3. Universal Design for Learning (UDL): Inclusive and Accessible Learning

SQT has introduced a new policy and guidelines in relation to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as part of its QA Framework ([QAP5-2: Universal Design for Learning](#)).

To cater to diverse learning needs, SQT applies UDL principles to enhance course accessibility and engagement, as follows:

- **Multiple Means of Representation:** Course materials incorporate in a variety of formats, including video, text, infographics, and discussions, to support different learning styles.
- **Multiple Means of Engagement:** Learners interact with content through live discussions, quizzes, real-world case studies, and in some cases guided reflections to ensure active participation.
- **Multiple Means of Action & Expression:** SQT is currently exploring alternative methods of assessment submission to further support multiple means of expression and enhance learner inclusivity.
- **Support for Accessibility:** To enhance inclusivity, courses integrate accessibility features such as subtitles and translation tools in Zoom and Moodle, ensuring all learners can actively participate.

## 4. Mentoring and Coaching: Supporting Learners Beyond the Classroom

SQT provides personalised support to enhance learner engagement, ensuring learners have direct access to Tutors and learning resources, with specific approaches varying depending on the programme. Examples include the following:

- **Scheduled Mentoring:** Learners can book one-on-one coaching sessions with Tutors to discuss course material and project work.
- **Moodle Communication Features:** Announcements and course messaging functions allow Tutors to provide individual and group feedback in real time.
- **Check-Ins and Progress Reviews:** Learners receive structured feedback at key points during the course to ensure they remain on track.

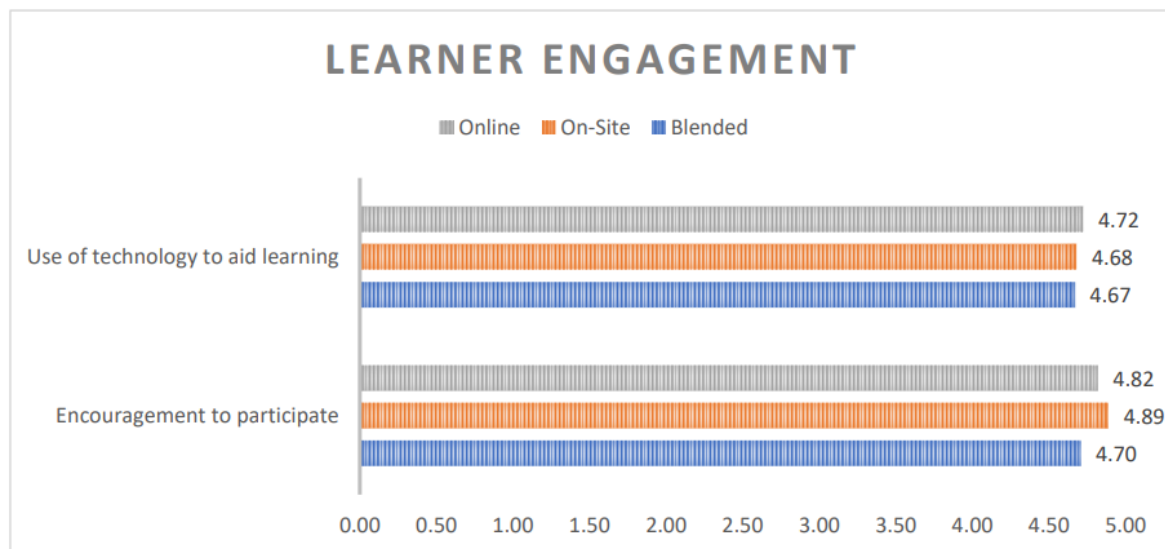
### 5. Real Time Learner Feedback: Leveraging Learner Feedback for Continuous Engagement Improvement

Since 2022, SQT has been using Coursecheck, a real-time feedback platform that captures learner insights to drive continuous course improvements.

- **Immediate Response to Feedback:** Tutors receive daily and weekly alerts highlighting learner comments, allowing for quick adjustments where necessary.
- **Increased Transparency:** Learner testimonials and course ratings are integrated into the SQT website, showcasing the value of training to potential learners.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Coursecheck analytics provide insights into engagement levels, pacing effectiveness, and Tutor performance, guiding continuous improvements in learner engagement strategies.

## Evidence of Success

To evaluate the effectiveness of SQT's learner engagement strategies, feedback data has been collected across different course delivery modes. The following figure illustrates engagement levels across all three modalities highlighting two key metrics: Use of Technology to Aid Learning and Encouragement to Participate.



Feedback indicates consistently high ratings across all modalities, with slight variations. While on-site courses naturally facilitate immediate interaction, blended and online environments require intentional design to achieve similar engagement levels. The data suggests that SQT's structured approach to interactive learning, Tutor engagement, and digital tools successfully replicates the classroom experience in online settings.

## Conclusion and Key Learnings

SQT's success in maintaining learner engagement in blended and online courses demonstrates the importance of structured design, interactive delivery, and continuous support. By embedding UDL principles, fostering purposeful engagement strategies, and leveraging real-time feedback, SQT has not only sustained but enhanced the quality of its learning experiences.