

Peer Observation Report – Synchronous Session¹

Lecturer Name: Sandra Picarra	Module Code and Name: Graphic Design and Illustration using Illustrator
Observer name: Fernanda Zamboni	Number of students: 40 participants attending
Date of observation: 10/04/2026	Class duration: 1h

Class type		
Lectures to <50 students ☒ 51-150 students ☐ > 151 students ☐	Tutorial ☐	Labs ☐
Other (please specify) ☐		
Online Platform used: Zoom		

Pre-observation meeting/discussion
Please note any information you gathered from the Pre-observation meeting (any issues requiring particular focus or feedback) Sandra and I met in advance of the observation to discuss the context of the lesson and to agree on the key areas of focus. Prior to the peer-observation session, Sandra also shared the lesson plan and her research question in relation to the TL6012 module (To what extent does the integration of UDL principles, real-world tasks, and peer feedback enhance learner engagement, retention, and performance?) The observation is based on a recorded synchronous session delivered to a cohort of approximately 40 students. A recording of the session was shared for review and observation. The module is delivered by Cenit College on behalf of SOLAS, within the Further Education and Training (FET) sector, as part of a free, accredited, part-time programme. The course runs over 16 weeks in a fully online and flexible format, with three scheduled synchronous sessions designed to support engagement, consolidation of learning, and learner interaction. The peer-observed session is the welcome/introductory lecture of the module. This session plays a key role in establishing the tone of the course, orienting students to the module structure, and clarifying expectations, learning outcomes, and modes of assessment. We agreed that the primary focus of the observation would be on the use of multimodal teaching and learning strategies, with particular attention to how content is represented and communicated in alignment with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. This includes the use of multiple means of representation, such as mnemonics, visual supports, and verbal explanation, to accommodate diverse learning preferences and enhance accessibility, comprehension, and knowledge retention.

¹ A synchronous session is a class which is delivered in real time using a virtual classroom software.

During our pre-meeting, Sandra also indicated that she would particularly welcome feedback on strategies that support learner engagement in an online synchronous environment. This includes the extent to which opportunities for interaction, active participation, and collaborative learning are embedded within the session, as well as how a sense of community and belonging is fostered among learners in a fully online context. These aspects are particularly significant in supporting motivation, persistence, and meaningful engagement in remote learning environments.

Observation	
Topic of online session/learning unit	Graphic Design and Illustration using Illustrator Introduction (C1 2026) Live Class
Date of report	11/04/2026
Beginning of the session:	
How were the students welcomed and introduced to the session:	The content demonstrates a clear and logical structure, appropriate for an introductory lecture. Sandra outlines the syllabus, learning objectives, and course timetable in a coherent manner. She introduces the teaching team and provides relevant background information about herself, along with contact details.
How successfully were the intended outcomes of the session made clear to students at the beginning of the session?	One suggestion for improvement would be to replace the stated objectives with clearly defined learning outcomes and explicitly link these to the assessment activities (as demonstrated in TL6011). This would strengthen constructive alignment between teaching, learning activities, and assessment.
How effectively were the asynchronous learning materials and learning activities linked to the session?	Regarding the assessment learning activities, it was explained that there will be one formative e-portfolio project and one summative final examination, alongside multiple formative “Challenge” tasks. While the e-portfolio rubric was presented, the grading weight distribution between the e-portfolio and the final exam was not specified. Additionally, policies regarding late submission penalties were not clarified. Although it was mentioned that students may have two attempts at the repeat exam, there was no discussion of procedures for students who may need to pause or delay participation due to extenuating circumstances.
Style and approach	
Comments on accessibility of the session, availability of materials and clarity of links between the live and recorded sessions.	Sandra walks students through the Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), clearly explaining how to navigate the platform and access course materials. Sandra also showed that for the student to progress to each domain, they need to pass a pre-assessment and a post-assessment. Sandra also clearly outlined the resources students must obtain prior to the start of the course, such as access to Adobe Illustrator, which helps set expectations early.
Comments about the general tone and style of the presentation	Sandra’s slide deck is visually appealing and professionally presented. It follows a consistent colour theme and makes effective use of animations and transition effects, which enhance the overall flow of the presentation without being distracting.
How well were teaching aids used to enhance students’ learning?	The recorded live session contained an audio transcript and subtitles, which are a very important aspect in supporting accessibility and aligning with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. These features provide multiple means of representation and are particularly

	beneficial for students who have auditory processing difficulties and may benefit from reading the content while listening to it.
Comments on tone-of-voice, clarity of diction, audibility.	Sandra has very clear diction and demonstrates enthusiasm while presenting the content, which makes the session more engaging and less monotonous for students who are attending the session live or accessing the recorded session for the first time.
Any other comments on style and approach?	n/a
Student Participation	
To what extent were students encouraged to share their views?	Students were given opportunities to share their views via the chat function or by interjecting during the session, allowing for real-time interaction and informal engagement.
How well were activities incorporated into the session?	The session did not include student activities, as it was an introductory session designed to set the context and establish the foundation for the programme. It focused on orienting students to the module structure, expectations, and overall aims of the course.
How well were students' questions and contributions handled during the session?	Sandra demonstrates strong engagement with students throughout the session. She frequently pauses at key checkpoints to invite questions and ensure understanding, fostering an interactive and supportive learning environment.
To what extent were the students encouraged to interact with each other?	At the end of the session, Sandra encouraged students to share ideas and tips with peers on Moodle forums. This reinforces a collaborative learning culture and promotes continuous improvement.
To what extent were opportunities provided for the students to apply the learning to their own context/examples?	The application of students' learning to their own context is demonstrated through the portfolio project. Students are given full autonomy to select and develop a project aligned with their interests and professional or personal contexts. Within this module, they are required to create a graphic design artefact, allowing them to apply theoretical and practical learning outcomes in a meaningful, authentic, and self-directed manner.
Close of Session	
How effectively were the learning outcomes revisited towards the end of the session?	Sandra concluded the session by revisiting the programme schedule, providing detailed information on the content area covered and clarifying the specific learning objectives that session was designed to address.
To what extent was the session linked to other resources and asynchronous sessions?	Sandra reiterated at the end of the session how to navigate the Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), including how to access course materials and submit the challenge tasks and portfolio. She also clearly emphasised the resources that students are required to obtain prior to the start of the course, including access to Adobe Illustrator. In addition, she explained that the final examination is externally set by a third party.
Any further comments about the close of the session?	I particularly appreciated the closing slide, which encouraged students to share ideas and tips with peers on Moodle forums and to provide feedback to tutors and the course overall. This reinforces a collaborative learning culture and promotes continuous improvement.
Summary, Suggestions and Recommendations	

What was the most effective element of the session?	Sandra demonstrated to students how to navigate the Moodle platform. She also provided a preview of the Adobe portfolio and Illustrator resources, including videos, workbooks, and exemplar materials.
What was the least effective element of the session?	I think that in this session, the incorporation of breakout rooms could encourage students to mingle and introduce themselves within small groups. In these breakout rooms, students could share their reasons for taking the course or discuss their aspirations. This type of activity could help foster a sense of belonging within the group, which is often more difficult to establish in courses delivered solely online.
Any further comments and suggestions?	n/a
Any key learning points for observer?	For me, as the observer, it was a valuable opportunity to view the session through a peer lens rather than from a student perspective. Typically, when attending another lecturer's session, I would be taking the place of a spectator (learner) focused on the content itself. In this case, however, I was able to focus more deliberately on the pedagogical approach. This shift allowed me to focus on how the content was being delivered, structured, and communicated, rather than solely on what was being delivered. I can see elements of Sandra's teaching style that I could meaningfully incorporate into my own practice.

Observer signature: Furuaola Zamboni

Date: 11/04/2026

Lecturer signature: Sandra Pearce

Date: 11/04/2026