



DIME ONLINE E-LEARNING POLICY

1 Introduction

1.1 Studying online is very different to campus-based provision where students and staff physically share the same spaces and times in which learning takes place. Online (or 'distance') learning often allows students to have more flexibility around when they study and how they study, but it also means that there need to be clearer expectations regarding levels of engagement and communication than there might otherwise be for campus-based provision.

1.2 Additionally, DIME has a duty of care towards all members of its community. This policy, alongside the DIME ONLINE Code of Conduct, intends to reflect and support this obligation, which is why DIME ONLINE has developed a series of guiding principles to help manage student and staff expectations in relation to online learning, communication, feedback and support.

1.3 This policy applies to all members of the DIME ONLINE community, including:

- students
- tutors
- professional services staff

2 Canvas: The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

Overview

2.1 All DIME ONLINE courses are delivered through a VLE called Canvas, which is accessible to DIME ONLINE staff and currently enrolled students; all course content and correspondence is delivered and facilitated by the Canvas VLE on a week-to-week basis, as outlined in the course specification documents and "**My Modules**" pages.

2.2 Students and staff are responsible for ensuring that their computing hardware is up-to-date and that they are able to access the VLE. This link provides advice on the recommended browsers supported by Canvas: <http://guides.instructure.com/m/4214/l/41056>

2.3 For Falmouth University accredited courses, staff from the University and appointed External Examiners may also be granted access to the VLE, where it is in the interest of the student(s) and/or pursuant to certain procedures, investigations, or quality assurance monitoring, including (but not limited to):

- reviewing student work/assessments;
- learning and teaching observations;

- managing module set-up and module enrolments;
- reviewing learning and teaching content; and
- investigating academic misconduct cases, complaints and/or appeals.

2.4 Student profiles/data are recorded and kept current in the Canvas VLE for the duration of the student's studies and/or as such information is pursuant to student assessment. Upon the student's completion or withdrawal from the course, any data that identifies the student within the Canvas VLE will be deleted after the twenty (20) days appeals window. Students registered on a Falmouth University award should, additionally, refer to the University's policies on Data Protection & Freedom of Information: <https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/data-protection-freedom-of-information>.

Assessment

2.5 Student are required to submit all assessments via the Canvas VLE, and in accordance with the assessment brief guidelines and course documentation.

2.6 Where applicable, Turnitin Originality Check (a text-matching tool) will be used to screen assessment submissions. Further information on Turnitin Originality Check can be found here: http://www.turnitinuk.com/en_gb/what-we-offer

2.7 It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all their work is securely backed-up and easily retrievable in case of technical failure. Students should allow themselves enough time to upload assignments, the process of which may be affected by connection speeds. For students registered with Falmouth University, computer device failure will not normally be considered as grounds for extenuating circumstances.

Course correspondence

2.8 All course correspondence is mediated via the Canvas VLE. Students are advised to edit their notification preferences in the "**Settings**" area of Canvas to ensure that they receive regular updates and information about the course.

2.8 Students can communicate with their peers via the "**My Studio**" area in Canvas. This is where students should upload evidence of work when requested.

2.9 For students registered on a Falmouth University award, it is important that they regularly check their **Falmouth University email account**, which is provided upon enrolment. This email account can be accessed via <https://studentmail.falmouth.ac.uk/>. The Falmouth University email account will be used to communicate important information such as summative assessment results, degree classification, (re)enrolment instructions, and confirmation of your registration status.

Use of Social Media

2.10 It is understood that students may wish to use other social media platforms, outside of the Canvas VLE, to facilitate their studies and/or network with their peers. **However, for the purposes of assessment, DIME ONLINE will only consider material that is published/submitted within the Canvas VLE.**

2.11 Students and staff are reminded that the use of external social media platforms is subject to the **DIME ONLINE E-Code of Conduct**. Additionally, students registered on a Falmouth University award should familiarise themselves with the University's **Social Media Good Practice Guide**, available at: www.falmouth.ac.uk/studentregulations

Accessibility

2.12 The National Federation of the Blind has certified Canvas as accessible to visually impaired users.

2.13 Canvas also supports a range of screen readers:

- For Apple Mac users please consult information available at: <http://www.apple.com/accessibility/osx/voiceover/>.
- For Windows operating platforms please consult information available at: <http://www.freedomscientific.com/jaws-hq.asp>.

3 What students can expect from DIME ONLINE

3.1 DIME ONLINE is a UK based organisation; courses operate within the national jurisdiction of the UK, and the language of correspondence, delivery, and assessment is English.

3.2 A working day is defined as being from **9 am – 6 pm (GMT) Monday to Friday**. DIME ONLINE acknowledges the national holidays of England.

3.3 DIME ONLINE staff will usually respond to general queries within the hours of a normal working day as specified above. However, this may vary in some cases based on the availability of DIME ONLINE staff outside of normal working hours (for example, if a member of staff is teaching abroad) and during summative assessment periods when work is being marked.

3.4 Student support in all areas (academic, pastoral and careers) will normally take place by arrangement between staff and student within the regularly scheduled office hours of 9 am – 6 pm (GMT) Monday to Friday. However, there may be exceptions and these will be arranged on a case-by-case basis.

3.5 Students are not limited to the number of support sessions they can request, but the amount of support given will be dependent on student demand and the availability of staff within the hours of a normal working week. **As a minimum, DIME ONLINE staff commit to a 20-minute one-to-one (1-2-1) tutorial for each student every two weeks.**

3.6 DIME ONLINE is committed to providing timely and constructive feedback on assessed work. The following are the time-frames in which students can expect communication and feedback to take place. Please note that these response times are indicative and may vary if there are unforeseen circumstances such as staff illness.

- Responses to general enquiries – two (2) working days.
- Feedback on weekly tasks – five (5) working days

- Feedback on formative assessments – five (5) working days
- Feedback on summative assessments – fifteen (15) working days

4 What DIME ONLINE expects from students

4.1 Students are expected to maintain an online presence and engagement with the VLE content that enables them to:

- make relevant weekly contributions to discussion forums and collaborations; and
- evidence their progress and development via
 - correspondence with tutors (including scheduled one-to-one meetings)
 - uploading of assignment/assessment tasks.

4.2 In all correspondence and online contributions, students are expected to comply with the **DIME ONLINE E-Code of Conduct**.

4.3 Students who are unable to communicate for a period of more than one (1) week must advise their Module Leader of this in advance, where practicable.

5 Duty of care and monitoring of online activity

5.1 DIME ONLINE staff use the Canvas analytics software to monitor an individual student's activity within the VLE. DIME ONLINE uses this software for the following reasons:

- to fulfil its duty of care towards students, such that students whose online activity suddenly changes, (eg) sudden absence/lack of online presence, are contacted and asked if they require any support
- to inform the development of course curriculum/module content and assessment, based on the quantitative analysis of submission rates, levels of engagement/hours spent on modules etc.

5.2 DIME ONLINE recognises students as individual learners and respect different ways of learning; for this reason, the analytics tool is only used indicatively, to assist DIME ONLINE staff in the identification of potential problems. If DIME ONLINE perceive that a student's online presence and/or interaction with online content is a cause for concern, then the student will be contacted by email and/or telephone requesting that they attend a conference call with their Module Leader or Head of Education.

5.3 In most cases, any causes for concern will be resolved through discussion with the student. For students registered on a Falmouth University, the implementation of a **Learning Agreement** may be used to support academic progression (see Falmouth University's policy on Learning Agreements: www.falmouth.ac.uk/studentregulations)

5.4 Failure to engage with the conference call, or failure to adhere to the terms of a Learning Agreement, may ultimately result in the termination of a student's studies.

5.2 DIME ONLINE's duty of care obligations are informed and supported by the following principal policies/duties:

- DIME ONLINE E-Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Duty
- Prevent Duty
- Attendance Monitoring (Falmouth University registered students)
- Health, wellbeing, and fitness to study (Falmouth University registered students)

6 Student feedback

6.1 There is a dedicated discussion board within the **“My Studio”** space for students to give feedback on their experience at DIME ONLINE and comment on the modules they are studying. DIME ONLINE encourages students to use these discussion boards to celebrate the positive aspects of their studies, as well as areas that might need improvement.

6.2 Further information about student feedback and representation for students registered on a Falmouth University is set out in the **DIME ONLINE Student Feedback and Representation** document.

7 Technical Support

7.1 Technical support is embedded throughout the Canvas VLE; Canvas Guides and Canvas technical support is accessible 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Support can be accessed via the **“Help”** menu by pressing the help button at the top right hand side of the screen. From here, students will be presented with a series of options. These options will allow students to select and contact the appropriate department for their query.

- “Ask Your Instructor a Question” (for queries relating to the content within the VLE, e.g. course information)
- “Search the Canvas Guides” (to find out how to perform an action in Canvas, e.g. how to change your notification preferences)
- “Report a problem” (if Canvas is not working properly)
- “IT Services” (for problems relating to Falmouth University access and permissions)
- “Request a feature” (for sharing ideas about how to improve Canvas)

