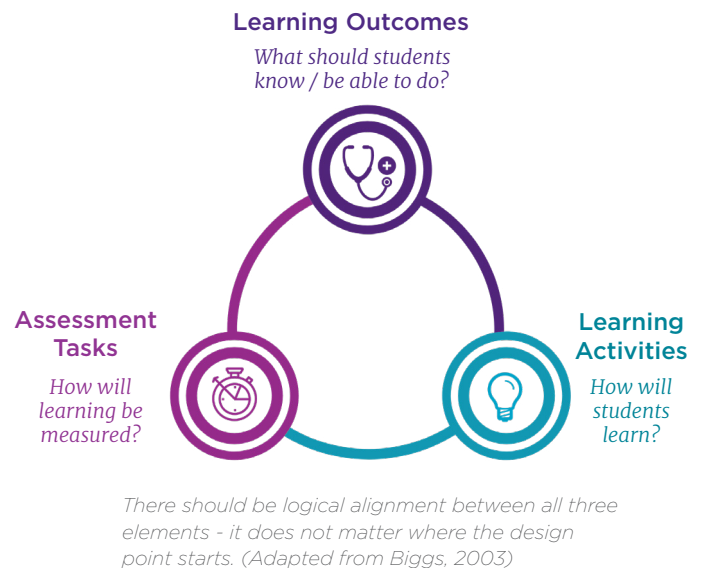


## ? What is it?

Constructive alignment is a simple but powerful design idea.

It is the idea that we should support students in achieving the learning outcomes we intend for them, by designing activities that support the learning, and assessments that test the learning (Biggs 1996).

This is achieved by aligning the course intended learning objectives (ILOs) with the planned teaching and learning activities and the planned assessments in a way that maximises the probability that students will learn what we want them to learn, and be able to demonstrate that achievement through the assessment.



## ! Why use constructive alignment

- It makes your course/s coherent - which helps students to feel confident that their work, their engagement and their study are leading them to both success in the assessments and to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.
- It ensures that the “learner cannot escape without learning what is intended” because they are trapped in a web of consistency between learning intentions, activities and assessment (Biggs, 2003).

### 📋 Quick Guide

1. Devise learning outcomes that are concrete, relevant, and achievable - see [how to write great ILOs](#)
2. Design learning activities that support students in achieving the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) - if the ILOs are practical, make the learning activities practical; if the ILOs are about reasoning, give student opportunities to practice reasoning etc.
3. Design assessments that assess the achievement of the learning objectives - use assessment tasks and types that match, mirror or emulate the learning outcomes

## 📖 According to Biggs:

- Describe the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) for the unit, using one verb (or at most two) for each outcome. The ILO denotes how the content or topics are to be dealt with and in what context.
- Create a learning environment using teaching/ learning activities (TLAs) that require students to engage each verb. In this way the activity nominated in the ILO is activated.
- Use assessment tasks (ATs) that also contain that verb, thus enabling one with help of predetermined using rubrics to judge how well students' performances meet the criteria.
- Transform these judgments into final grades. (Biggs, 2014, p. 8)

## Personal Practice Check:

- Are my intended learning outcomes relevant to students' future professional practice?
- Does my grammar line up? (e.g. “Take an appropriate & thorough patient history” in the ILOs; “Take an appropriate & thorough patient history” in the learning activities; and “Take an appropriate & thorough patient history” in the assessments) If not, why not?
- Do my learning activities help students to achieve the intended learning?
- Do my assessments resemble the way the physical skills, reasoning skills, or basic science knowledge will be used in professional practice?

## Further Reading

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