

WRITING LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR YOUR COURSE

Definition of learning objectives

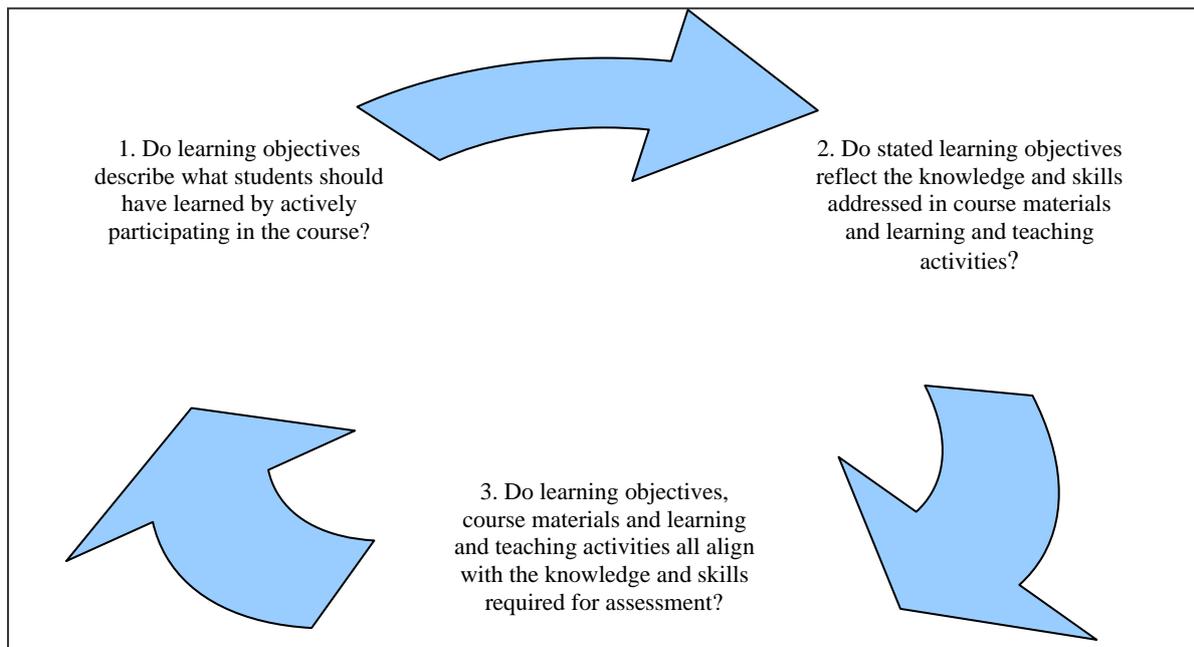
Learning objectives describe what students are expected to learn and what they will be assessed on as a result of participating in a course. It is important that course objectives are written for specific forms of learning that students are able to demonstrate as part of planning, completing or submitting their assessments; forms of learning include disciplinary knowledge, higher order thinking and skills.

Benefits of learning objectives

- Learning objectives maximise student study efforts and encourage independent learning by making the teacher's focus and decision-making for assessment transparent.
- They provide lecturers with a guide for what should be assessed
- They provide the basis for lecturers and tutors to link teaching design and teaching activities with desired student results
- Writing learning objectives provides course teams with the opportunity to demonstrate which USQ graduate skills are developed in their course
- They provide the basis for evaluating course effectiveness in relation to student learning.

Learning objectives and constructive alignment

Constructive alignment is a fundamental principle of learning and teaching design that requires lecturers to consider the following questions:



Writing learning objectives

When you are writing learning objectives, consider whether:

- all knowledge, skills or other forms of learning described in objectives are assessed in that course
- students are realistically able to demonstrate the type of learning described in learning objectives
- any USQ graduate skills assessed in the course are clearly described amongst course learning objectives.
- the learning described by the objective is at the appropriate level: whether introductory, intermediate or advanced, for the program and/or year position of the course.
- students will understand the language of course objectives, and be able to use them to judge the effectiveness of their own learning in the course.

Examples of learning objectives

1. *German language*

Students can apply introductory level rules of phonology (systems of sounds), morphology (word formation), syntax (sentence structure), orthography (spelling) and grammatical structures

2. *Sustainable economies*

Students can demonstrate problem-solving skills by appropriately applying different sustainable environmental management strategies.

Learning objectives excerpted here with permission from the authors Khorshed Alam and Gabriela Pohl (2008).

Further resources

Your LTSU faculty representative: <http://www.usq.edu.au/learnteach/>.