

TELETUTORIAL GUIDE

A guide for CQUniversity staff



Teletutorial Guide

A Guide for all Academic Staff

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How to use this guide

This **Teletutorial Guide** seeks to explain what should be done to prepare and deliver a teletutorial, when things need to be done, and who should do them.

The procedure for teaching by teleconference which is outlined in the following pages assumes that flexible learning materials either in hard copy or on a Learning Management System for a course have already been prepared, and that they require teletutorials.

This part of the guide describes, in chronological order, what should be done by course coordinators and lecturers to arrange teletutorials. It also provides advice about how to undertake various activities required to prepare for, and conduct a teletutorial.

Teletutorials in flexible learning

Why use teletutorials?

One of the significant objectives in the pursuit of excellence in flexible learning is to impart knowledge, skills and values. To do this effectively, it is imperative to provide the most appropriate educational environment and experiences for students.

Teletutorials offer one essential element in the learning process that is missing from flexible learners learning environment—dialogue—with their tutor, and with other students. Dialogue can serve many purposes; it gives students an opportunity to discuss, brainstorm, debate, articulate, and share ideas—all of which provide for active exploration of ideas and information. This active exploration also is of prime importance when the desired effect is to introduce new concepts, deal with learner misconceptions or introduce students to new values and/or behaviours in an unthreatening manner.

Research in Australia, North America, the United Kingdom, Holland and some Scandinavian countries where teleconferencing is well-established, shows that teletutorials offer a readily available, extremely effective and invaluable communication tool for tutors and their students. While the most salient advantage of teletutorials is to provide occasions for dialogue, it is also useful for a whole range of other reasons. Teletutorials:

- offer a personalised learning experience, reducing students' sense of isolation
- present an opportunity for students to assess their progress with other students
- deliver immediate feedback to questions and problems, and can instantly clarify complex issues and concepts
- can promote motivation by stimulating interest and advising on managing workloads
- can confirm that learning is taking place
- give students the opportunity to develop skills not only in listening, but in expressing ideas and defending them clearly and succinctly

- are useful for remedial purposes, to help students boost their confidence
- set aside a time, free of distractions, when attention can be concentrated on a specific topic or task
- enable the tutor to reinforce key concepts in a subject
- give students an opportunity to feel they have some control over their learning and, therefore they can learn better.

Teletutorials, to be beneficial, must be used where appropriate. There are some topics, functions and circumstances that do not lend themselves to this medium. Project work, individually structured assignments, dictation of pre-prepared materials, and transmission of diagrams or complex information, for example, are best handled by personal telephone calls, streaming, CDs, DVD, or by distributing printed materials.

While it is not feasible, or possible, to conduct tutorials once or twice a week as in classroom situations, teletutorials (integrated with the printed study materials and online e-courses) should be strategically scheduled at intervals during the term. There is no formula that dictates the ‘correct’ number of teletutorials that should be planned. You must determine where dialogue is necessary and most effective for your particular course. Scrutinising the Course Profile should enable you to identify and select the most advantageous times—to effect a change of attitude or behaviour, to determine if students have correctly interpreted the message in the printed and online materials, to support difficult sections of the course work, or for remedial purposes.

What is a teletutorial?

A teletutorial links two or more students in distributed geographies (enabling each person to hear and speak to one another).

The ideal number of students for a teletutorial would usually be between nine and twelve if dialogue is to be effective.

Initiating updates

Initiating updates

Each year that a course is offered, the teletutorial materials must be changed to update dates and to allow lecturers to adapt or improve their presentation of teletutorials.

If applicable, students are supplied with a Notice of Teletutorial in their flexible learning package. This also includes other information that must be updated like assignment topics, due dates and tutorial arrangements.

To ensure teletutorial information meets deadlines in learning materials, the following processes and deadlines are suggested.

The course co-ordinator should:

1. Identify teletutorial requirements in each course offered.
2. Ensure teletutorial information is supplied to the Student Contact Centre - refer to Appendix A (Teletutorial Booking Form).

This booking form can be found on the Navigate CQUni webpage at:

<http://navigatecquni.cqu.edu.au>

Choose 'Staff forms & Resources' → 'Teletutorial Booking Form'.

Updating materials

Orientation

In this module, we assume that you have just been asked to facilitate students learning in a particular course delivered in the flexible delivery mode.

The problem of time

The rhythm of facilitating learning in flexible delivery mode is different from the rhythm of face-to-face facilitated learning—careful planning is required to ensure that flexible learners receive quality service. You may need to make a conscious effort to plan work for flexible students who will not enrol for another six months while your on-campus students make present demands on your time.

The study package

The standard study package sent to students can consist of the

- Notice of Teletutorial
- Study Guide (if required in the course)—detailed material on the content of a course. The student is directed to readings, other helpful reference sources and review exercises.
- Resource Materials (if required in the course)—a collection of set readings used in conjunction with the Study Guide for a course.
- Solutions (if required in the course)—to questions in the Study Guide
- Appendices—further information.

When preparing for a teletutorial lecturers use the Teletutorial Booking Sheet shown in Appendix A of this guide.

It includes information such as

- teletutorial topics
- information to be supplied by lecturer

- student preparation
- materials students should have on hand.

as well as other details such as the name of the lecturer or tutor, preferred group size and possible dates and times.

Lecturer's responsibilities—planning

When you review the study package and the Teletutorial Booking Sheet, you need to consider the following:

1. Check the dates

Select suitable days and dates for offering the teletutorial in the next term. Confirm that these dates are suitable with the teletutorial co-ordinator and enter the new dates in the Course Profile, if possible. Ensure dates do not fall on public holidays.

Plan times preferable for distance learners who often work during the day. The best time is usually between 6 pm and 8 pm. Remember other states have daylight saving.

2. Check the materials required

Ensure that any special materials not included in the study package but used in the teletutorial be identified in the Teletutorial Booking Sheet.

Preparing a teletutorial

Appendix A of this guide shows a proforma to facilitate the preparation for a Notice of Teletutorial.

Planning teletutorials

In preparing a teletutorial, two important issues must be considered:

1. the function of teletutorials in flexible learning
2. integration with course learning materials.

The function of teletutorials

The primary function of teletutorials is not content presentation but to provide an opportunity for dialogue between the lecturer and students and between students themselves.

Flexible learners may already have content presented in print, but CDs, DVDs or e-courses may also be used.

Short, content based presentations of up to five minutes duration may be justified if previous student enquiries indicate that a number of students are having difficulty with a concept, but supplementary notes or online information may also be prepared and sent to students to deal with this.

Teletutorials are effective when they use dialogue to:

- guide learners
- deal with learning difficulties
- develop required verbal communication skills
- make lecturers more approachable for learners
- provide motivation and support
- confirm that learning is taking place
- clarify assessment tasks
- identify and deal with weaknesses in the learning materials
- identify and deal with weaknesses in course administration.

Integration with study package

Teletutorials capitalise some of the disadvantages of flexible learning. They require attendance at particular times.

Anywhere between one and three teletutorials per course are reasonable. Teletutorials should be carefully integrated with both the study schedule and with important course outlines and assessment requirements.

A teletutorial in week two or three of a course is often useful to establish initial, personal contact with students and to overcome problems they may have as they approach a course and its outcomes. Some students need this

initial ‘breaking of the ice’ before they approach the lecturer with their particular problems.

Other critical times to consider offering a teletutorial include:

- before assignments to prepare students
- after assignments to review questions
- before residential workshops
- before the examination.

In addition to these critical times, there may be modules in a subject that include important course outcomes that are best taught by entering into dialogue with students in a teletutorial. These may include the development of:

- skills in communication of concepts,
- verbal argument skills,
- interpretation skills.

Before you begin to prepare a teletutorial, identify these important times in the study schedule. If you have taught the course before, your experience with student inquiries and student feedback may indicate an appropriate time for a teletutorial. If possible discussion with other lecturers who have conducted teletutorials may prove fruitful in suggesting times and topics.

Planning the teletutorial

Objectives

Teletutorial outcomes should be clear to students so they know exactly how to prepare. Consider the functions of teletutorials outlined in the previous section.

Early teletutorials should have some administrative and socialising objectives. In level one courses, they should allow time for students to familiarise themselves with the teletutorial process. Initially students will require fairly structured discussion in areas in which they feel reasonably comfortable.

Topics

This informs students what content they should study beforehand. If the topics relate to the Study Guide or Resource Materials, indicate both the topics and the pages of the material to be studied.

Type of teletutorial

The following checklist offers some teletutorial options. Choose activities that will promote achievement of the outcomes. If you are introducing a ‘new’ activity to the group, give students a short explanation of the activity at the teletutorial.

Typical teletutorial activities include:

- problem solving
- unstructured, open-ended discussion
- structured discussion
- debate
- clarification of issues, concepts, theories
- brainstorm
- role play
- question—answer—discussion exercises
- case-studies
- interpretation
- mini-seminars.

Keep in mind that some students in level one courses may require some structure and need to feel safe because teletutorials and flexible learning are new to them. Some mature students may need time to become comfortable. You may have to consider limitations to the group size for some of these activities. Indicate this on the booking sheet and to the Teletutorial Co-ordinator in the Student Contact Centre so this can be considered when organising the teletutorial(s).

Once students overcome the novelty, learn procedures and learn to interact without visual cues, teletutorials usually become easy to manage and productive.

Student preparation

Indicate in e-courses or in the Teletutorial Booking Sheet what students should do to prepare for the teletutorial. They may have to read particular parts of the Study Guide or readings. Certain exercises may have to be completed beforehand. Students may be required to prepare topics for presentation and discussion. Students should still be encouraged to participate even though they not fully prepared. Students may still benefit from attendance.

Materials students should bring

Students should at least have available for the teletutorial their flexible learning materials. Please be aware that the noise of moving paper can cause problems over the telephone. Some students and the lecturer may have to use an ordinary phone handset leaving one hand free to write and handle the materials.

Administrative requirements

The use of teleconferences must also be approved by the HOS.

Setting dates

Select suitable dates and times and check that they have not been allocated for another course the student may be enrolled in by contacting the Student Contact Centre and in the Suggested Study Schedule.

Approval

Teleconferences require resources to plan, implement and deliver. Consult your program coordinator/director or HOS for approval. Teletutorial Booking Sheets require a cost code and HOS signature before the Notice of Teletutorial can be sent to students.

The completed booking sheet is to be sent to the Teletutorial Coordinator at the Student Contact Centre.

Preparation

Introduction

In preparing for this phase of the activity a number of people need to be informed and briefed. The following sections outline who receives teletutorial information, what they receive and the purpose of the information.

Who receives teletutorial information?

Teletutorial documentation is distributed to the following people:

1. Lecturer/tutor given responsibility for the teletutorial
2. Teletutorial Co-ordinator at the Student Contact Centre
3. Students.

What information does each person receive?

Lecturer/Tutor	confirmation of teletutorial
Teletutorial Co-ordinator	completed Teletutorial Booking Sheet
Students	each student receives details of the teletutorial in the Notice of Teletutorial for the course

Despatch of the information

Students need to have all teletutorial information in their study package to allow adequate lead time for study preparation and arrangements to cater for work and family commitments to be made (e.g. rescheduling of appointments, babysitting etc.).

The Teletutorial Co-ordinator at the Student Contact Centre must have all the completed Teletutorial Booking Sheets in advance of the despatch of study materials.

Conducting a teletutorial

Conducting a teletutorial

This module provides advice to lecturers and tutors regarding the four main issues that must be dealt with in conducting a teletutorial.

They are:

1. lead up for a teletutorial
2. meeting protocol
3. teaching in a teletutorial
4. technical problems.

The following four sections of this module deal with each of these in turn.

Lead up for a teletutorial

The lecturer should:

1. receive all relevant information from the Teletutorial Co-ordinator
2. ensure the teletutorial is conducted in a learning space that is quiet
3. ensure students have the appropriate learning materials ready for the teletutorial.

Meeting protocol

This section of the module explains the main features of a typical teletutorial. They are, in approximate chronological order:

- welcome
- roll call
- explain routine for interaction
- explain procedure for equipment failure
- course administration notices

- outline of program
- deliver program
- recording follow-up problems
- evaluation
- general questions session.

In addition, this section provides some guidance for managing the interaction, the dialogue between lecturer and student and among students themselves—dialogue that is the primary purpose of most teletutorials.

Welcome and roll call

Students will be contacted by a service provider and asked to hold while all students are connected. Once this is done the lecturer is connected and a roll call done.

A teletutorial begins very much like a radio talk-show, with the presenter greeting and introducing each of the participants. Aside from the obvious purpose of establishing rapport and finding out who has not shown up, these exchanges also help to lessen the anxiety of students who are unfamiliar with the process. Initially, you may not feel completely comfortable either, but this will abate with experience.

As part of the preparation for each tutorial, you should have obtained a list of students nominated for the teletutorial from the Teletutorial Co-ordinator. This is emailed to the convenor/lecturer on the afternoon of the teletutorial.

Much more time will be devoted to introductions during the first teletutorial than with any succeeding sessions if they occur. This time can serve the purpose of familiarising students not only with each other, but with use of the medium as well. Getting members of the group to state their names, tell a little about themselves and how they feel about taking part in a teletutorial, personalises the event and helps to reduce anxiety.

Routine for interaction

Your primary concern is to organise the contributions of the participants to ensure that:

- there is no confusion about who is speaking

- only one person speaks at a time
- everyone is given the opportunity to speak
- discussion does not digress from the topic
- everyone is audible
- the flow of information is controlled.

Remind students to give their names when they begin to speak, especially when their comments are unsolicited. You can call on individual students by name. Purposively use students' names whenever possible—when praising a good idea, referring to a previous contribution, assigning a project, soliciting feedback, etc. Over time, if more than one teletutorial, it may be possible to attach names to voices, however, if there are a large number of participants or if they change frequently, the problem of unidentified speakers will persist.

To cover all eventualities, it is best to continue to have students identify themselves whenever they speak. Try to set this pattern from the start.

Recording the teletutorial

All teletutorials are recorded. Recording the teletutorial can help you evaluate your own performance and can be electronically streamed to the e-course or copied on a CD for students.

Managing the interaction

Like the radio talk-show moderator, the most important function of the teletutor is to facilitate discussion with tact and sensitivity. As a teletutorial moderator, you will have to resist any temptation to dominate discussions, or speak at great lengths before inviting input from students.

Purpose of teletutorials

Remember what was said in Module 3, in the section headed 'The function of teletutorials'.

the primary function of teletutorials is not content presentation but to provide an opportunity for structured dialogue between the lecturer and students and between students themselves.

If you have not done so, you are advised to read the following sections of Module 3 which explain the purpose and function of teletutorials:

- the function of teletutorials
- integration with study package.

Management

Students expect the tutor to control the discussion. When, for example, more than one student speaks at the same time, the group will anticipate your intervention. In such cases, you could stop discussion, identify the individuals, and simply state the order in which they should speak. You would also want to exercise your power of control if one student tended to dominate a discussion, or if discussion began to stray from the point or be sidetracked by detail.

It would be useful to establish some protocol for students to follow which would make it acceptable for them to interrupt a discussion to interject a pertinent idea or to ask a question.

Involving students

One suggestion is that you tell students that you will periodically call for questions or contributions from students in turn. Ask students to write down issues as they arise and report them at these opportunities. This can help keep the main discussion on track.

Frequency of contributions to discussion

Another useful technique is to mark against your student attendance form each time a student makes a contribution to the discussion. You will soon compile a histogram that identifies the verbally active and passive members of the group. This can be used to encourage contributions from the quiet listener, but don't seek equality of interaction from all participants on every teletutorial. The histogram is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Learners have different learning styles, they have their 'off' days too.

This histogram approach is most useful for larger groups (over seven) where it is not easy to identify students by their voice. Unlike the face-to-face tutorial, you can not 'see' which students find it difficult to break into the tutorial dialogue.

Dealing with silence

Other situations that requires explanation are silences that occur during the tutorial. Meaningful pauses or silences—to give students an opportunity to make a few notes, organise their thoughts before entering a discussion, consider what has just been said, come up with an appropriate answer to a question, or find a particular reference—are not only legitimate, but necessary.

Pauses that are too long or are unexplained, however, tend to cause a measure of anxiety in presenters as well as students. Simply stating that a period of silence is about to begin, when it will end, and who will end it should prevent this uncomfortable situation from occurring. You might, for example, give the students a time limit to consider the answer to a question. After the time limit has elapsed, you might call for anyone to voice their ideas on the subject, or on a particular student for his or her thoughts.

If the silence continues, don't panic, resist the urge to fill the silence by launching into a monologue. If no answer is forthcoming, you have to assume there is a problem and will have to find out what it is. Perhaps the question was not understood or perhaps there is some confusion about who was supposed to reply, or perhaps the link has cut out. Once identified, the problem can be dealt with.

Difficult questions: Follow-up

Briefly note details of issues that you must follow-up after the teletutorial. Unlike a face-to-face tutorial, you cannot give a questioning student a copy of a useful reading you have on hand or in your room. It takes time to recite references to resource materials. You may be asked administrative or academic questions that you cannot answer.

In cases where difficult questions cannot be answered and follow-up is required, it is best to quickly record the student's name, contact details and problem and deal with the problem after the teletutorial through other means. Make it clear to all students that you are recording these details and not brushing the question aside.

Such an approach helps keep the teletutorial moving at a suitable pace.

Concluding the teletutorial

Important events

Remind students about any important deadlines and about any possible future teletutorial planned.

General questions session

It may be useful to allow ten minutes before closing time as a time for discussing problems not directly related to the outcomes of the teletutorial.

Students who wish to leave the teletutorial can do so.

If you decide to have such a session, mention it in the introduction.

You will need to take care to finish on time so following teletutorials can be set up and begin on time. Tell students at the start of this **General questions session** that if you do not have time to deal with their problems, they should call you (give your preferred hours and method—phone, email, online etc.). An alternate approach is to speak to the group one by one to see if they have any final questions. This ensures everyone has a chance to speak.

Teaching in a teletutorial

Following an overview, this section begins by ‘looking’ at the audience you will not see and suggests you will need to consider their age and experience in your dealings with them. It then presents a summary of some research findings regarding students’ perceptions of teletutorial presentations. The next section suggests ways of adapting face-to-face tutorial techniques to teletutorials.

Overview

If teaching using teletutorials the plan should have been prepared and sent to students either by mail or online giving them enough time to prepare.

Know your audience

Knowledge of your audience is an important factor in effective communication. While it may be unfortunate, it is by appearance that we

initially judge most people. As a teletutorial presenter, you will not have even the appearance of audience members to assess.

The danger that may initially arise in this situation is that the presenter may assume the audience is similar to the audience faced each day in lecture rooms. Note that 80% of flexible learners are over 25 years old, bring a wide range of experience to the learning situation and may not have engaged in formal education for some years.

According to Baath (1986) adult distance learners learn best when

1. they can make sense of information presented
2. they discover meaning themselves
3. they feel 'safe'
4. they feel someone cares
5. they have opportunities to practice
6. they feel they are progressing successfully
7. learning meets their needs and relates to their experience.

Effective education of adults, especially those who are motivated but find the going difficult, is facilitated by opportunities for dialogue with the lecturer and other students. Teletutorials can provide this dialogue, but sometimes a lecturer finds it difficult to come to terms with the unseen students.

What makes a teletutorial successful?

A brief overview of some conclusions drawn from research in the use of teletutorials provides some useful cues to guide presenters.

Regarding student perception of teaching ability of teletutorial presenters, research suggests the following:

1. Presenters should inspire interest in the subject material.¹

¹ Haaland 1985

2. Presenters should inform students regarding what is expected in examinations and assignments.¹
3. The purposes of the teletutorial should be clearly stated.²
4. Discussion should be encouraged.²
5. Use should be made of printed materials.²
 - (a) Use should be made of printed materials.¹
 - (b) The pace of the teletutorial should NOT be slow.²

Regarding the students' perception of the quality of the course, research suggests:

1. The presenter should inspire interest in the subject material.¹
2. The presenter should encourage students to answer each others questions.¹
3. The pace should be lively.¹
 - (a) The pace should NOT be too fast.¹
 - (b) The presenters should NOT control discussion too much.¹

Grace and Thompson (1989) found that a sizeable majority of students involved in teletutorials found them useful for the following purposes.

1. To answer specific questions
2. To clarify course requirements
3. To clarify concepts
4. To stimulate exchange of ideas between all participants
5. To stimulate study
6. To reduce their sense of isolation

They also point out the presenter must maintain a balance between conceptual and management issues.

¹ Haaland 1985

² Haaland and Newby 1985

Studies indicate that sessions flow more smoothly when activities are organised into six to seven time blocks, with presentations limited to about 3 minutes. Time blocks set aside for interaction can be alternated with information-giving sections to control continuity, stimulate interest and creative thinking. The format should provide for some flexibility, and it need not be the same for each teletutorial.

How teletutorials differ from classroom tutoring

The most important, and most obvious difference, is that you do not have the use of the visual cues you would ordinarily have in a classroom situation. Gone is the eye contact, facial expression, body posture, gesturing, movement around the room, and other familiar physical signals you normally use to convey emphasis, information, your personality, attitudes, feelings, or even to ask a particular student a question!

The teletutorial situation, however, is not as unfamiliar as it may seem. There are no visual cues when talking on the telephone either, and teletutorials are not that different from using a telephone to communicate. However, because there are more than just two individuals involved, there are some adjustments to be considered. These will be discussed in detail later in this module.

Although teletutorials usually do not provide the time for the social interaction, casual and friendly exchanges, jokes, etc. that often take place in the classroom, these activities are still possible. Early teletutorials do tend to be more impersonal and formal. Part of this formality is, perhaps, because teletutorial sessions need to be more structured, more organised, it also takes time to get to know the tutorial group members.

This brings us to the second major difference, for as well as being a tutor, you also need to be a moderator or manager, catalyst, facilitator, and reinforcer.

And, if you are not as yet familiar with the medium, your first teletutorial will more than likely produce some anxiety—for you and the students. That's the bad news!

The good news, you will be happy to learn, is that all of these disadvantages can be overcome—with planning, and practise.

Adapting your tutorial style to teletutoring

Basically, you will still be employing many of the same traditional and creative teaching strategies and techniques you employed in face-to-face teaching. Most lecturers adapt quickly to the medium, and a successful lecturer usually presents a successful teletutorial. Without the use of visual cues, however, you will have to make some adjustments.

Vocal presentation

Lack of visual contact, the major difference between teletutoring and classroom tutoring, means that your vocal presentation will take on more significance and you will have to translate visual messages into verbal ones. Actually, in a teletutorial, your voice is not merely the medium, it's part of the message. Your personality is reflected by the tone of your voice, your natural and spontaneous conversational style of speaking, the words, sentences and phrasing you choose, as well as the clarity of the ideas you present.

Your vocal presentation is most important in early teletutorials, at the beginning of teletutorials and when you begin short presentations. Initial impressions are most important.

Tone your voice

This sets the mood and reflects your attitude. The tone of your voice can indicate warmth, enthusiasm, sharpness, irritation, gentleness, condescension, happiness, sadness, irritation, dissatisfaction, and a host of other emotional qualities. To ensure effective communication, you want to establish a warm supportive atmosphere reflecting your openness for questions and discussion. Variety in pitch, volume and inflection, where appropriate, are invaluable to sustain interest, and enthusiasm.

Clear delivery

Care should be taken to enunciate clearly and concisely to avoid the tedium of having to repeat what you say. Of course, repetition to reinforce learning is another matter again, and you may want to promote this by restating information using other words. You should attempt to think graphically,

create visual imagery, and focus on verbal description by using metaphors to a greater extent than you would in a classroom.

Style

Your style should normally be conversational without the formality of an academic paper.

When possible, introduce drama or humour to alleviate the formality teletutorials tend to adopt. Incorporate meaningful, and familiar visual examples in descriptions. You can personalise the sessions by using words to express how you feel about what is said by students, or the direction a discussion may be taking.

The goal of your speaking style should be to communicate clearly and simply, especially if students are novices to the discipline.

Pace of delivery

You will need to control the speed with which you speak to convey information. For example, you will want to speak slower to emphasise important ideas, when presenting new material or complex ideas and perhaps faster when reviewing or summarising a topic.

Graphic presentations

Lack of actual visual contact also means you will not have the use of a whiteboard, document camera or overhead projector as you ordinarily would in the classroom. Attempting to explain any complex diagrams, graphics, photographs, or formulae you require for discussion or reference during a teletutorial is not only time-consuming, but more than likely doomed to failure. The best way to transmit this type of information is to post it by mail or online to students well in advance, enabling them to have it in front of them during the session in which you plan to use it.

Difficult questions

Learners appreciate a lively pace in a teletutorial. One or two students who have a problem or need information that is not relevant to the rest of the group can monopolise the teletutorial for some time and slow the pace for other students.

Your judgement is necessary in such situations. It is important that you do not give the impression that you will ‘brush off’ difficult questions of interest to the group.

Individual problems and requests

If the problem cannot be dealt with quickly, ask for the student’s name and home or work phone number or email address or note the issue for discussion after the formal teletutorial session is over.

For example, a student may require bibliographic information. In a classroom tutorial you may have the article with you or the student can get it from you after the tutorial. How do you pass this information on to students in a teletutorial? It is better to send references or short articles by email, online or by a phone call.

The unanswerable group problem

Questions may be asked that are of interest to most of the group and you find you don’t have the resources needed to deal with them. A tactical decision is required—it is often advisable to clarify the issues and then offer to reply after the teletutorial. Using platforms like Blackboard and Webfuse make it quite easy to send out a ‘group’ email.

Sum-up: follow-up

It is important to assure the students that you have not passed over their questions. In your summing up, work quickly through the list of issues and requests you must follow-up. Give students the opportunity to remind you of requests you missed and to add new requests.

Technical problems

While many teletutorials run without a hitch, there are occasions when the technology is unfriendly. Additionally there are times in the initial connection of a teletutorial when it would seem that the equipment is malfunctioning. The following has been prepared to overcome some of the problems staff may encounter when running a teletutorial.

The initial hook-up

To establish the network each site is connected separately. As each connection is made comments from participant remote sites can sometimes be heard. On other occasions there may be complete silence until the service provider hands over to the presenter.

Whatever the situation the service provider will usually get back to the Teletutorial Co-ordinator at the Student Contact Centre for direction when students do not answer or incorrect numbers given.

Problems

Noisy lines

There have been instances when a telephone line has been noisy, that is, had some static or secondary conversation being carried on it. In these instances have the party hang up. Operators monitor each conference and if lines drop out the operator will reconnect the student. Mobile phones often are noisy and students should be discouraged from using them.

Lines dropping out

This can happen at any point in a teletutorial although very infrequently. It can be caused by storms, someone accidentally pressing a wrong button or for unexplained reasons. [Again wait for the Service Provider to make contact for directions.]

Soft reception

In many instances an adjustment of the volume control will correct this problem. Some microphones are directionally sensitive and participants may need to be instructed to speak directly at the equipment being used. Others may need to be advised to speak loudly.

After hours assistance

Student Contact Centre staff are on call on the night of the teletutorial. Should you experience any difficulties, please telephone 07 4930 9717 for assistance.

Reporting problems

If you have problems contact the Teletutorial Co-ordinator after the teletutorial if the problem is serious.

Report major and minor technical problems to the Teletutorial Co-ordinator at the Student Contact Centre.

Follow-up

Teletutorial follow-up

The previous module 'Conducting a teletutorial' suggested a need to follow up student requests. As presenter of the teletutorial, you can also provide useful feedback for others.

Follow-up of student problems

If you have difficulty contacting students requiring follow-up, contact the Teletutorial Co-ordinator at the Student Contact Centre.

Try to resolve follow-up work within 24 hours of the teletutorial or as quickly as possible to maintain student motivation. Fast response to their problems is very much appreciated by students, and reduces their sense of isolation from the University and from sources of help.

Evaluation

Evaluation

Teletutorials can assist in evaluation of courses, teaching, administration and learning materials.

In this module, we address the evaluation of teletutorials themselves.

Informal verbal feedback

If presenters use the planning process suggested in this guide and note the advice provided for conducting the teletutorial, they should experience no major problems in its delivery.

Experience and feedback from students will soon polish delivery skills. You may like to receive a recording of the teletutorials to help evaluate performance. Request this from the Teletutorial Co-ordinator at the Student Contact Centre.

However, more formal evaluation is important to determine whether, when and why particular teletutorials succeed or fail. It is also useful to understand why some teletutorials are more successful than others. More formal feedback is required to gather significant data for such evaluations.

Appendix A: Teletutorial Booking Form

TELETUTORIAL BOOKING FORM



Student Contact Centre
 Teleconference Coordinator
 Phone: 07 4930 9000
 Fax: 07 4923 2100

Lecturer's name	
Course name	Course number
Connect number	Account number

Dean/HOS approval

Name Signature

This course will have a series of teletutorials Yes No Number of teletutorials required

Maximum number of participants (per teletutorial)

Other requirements

Indicate anticipated date of teletutorial

Tutorial No. 1 / /
 Tutorial No. 2 / /
 Tutorial No. 3 / /

Indicate anticipated connection location

Home
 Office
 Other

Note: Sessions usually begin from 6 pm. Indicate anticipated sessions required.

4 pm 5 pm 6 pm 7 pm 8 pm Other

Tutorial no 1 topic
Student preparation
Materials to have on hand
Tutorial no 1 topic
Student preparation
Materials to have on hand
Tutorial no 1 topic
Student preparation
Materials to have on hand

Appendix B: Notice of Teletutorial

NOTICE OF TELETUTORIAL



Lecturer's name	Term
Connect code	Course name

Students **MUST** register their intention to participate at least one working day prior to the scheduled date. A home or office connection can be arranged. To register please complete the online teletutorial booking form at <http://studentforms.cqu.edu.au-eForms-Teletutorial> Booking.

Late registrations please telephone the Student Contact Centre, CQUniversity on 13CQUni (132786) to guarantee registration.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY! IF YOU DO NOT REGISTER, YOU WILL NOT BE CONNECTED.

If a tutorial is listed on two or more successive nights e.g. 18 and 19/03/09 then you need only register for one of those nights.

If dates are given for more than one tutorial eg Teletutorial No 1 and Teletutorial No 2 and you wish to participate in both then you are required to register for both tutorials.

This course will have a series of teletutorials Yes No

Date	<input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>
Topic	<input type="text"/>
Preparation	<input type="text"/>
Materials	<input type="text"/>

Date	<input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>
Topic	<input type="text"/>
Preparation	<input type="text"/>
Materials	<input type="text"/>

Date	<input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>
Topic	<input type="text"/>
Preparation	<input type="text"/>
Materials	<input type="text"/>