

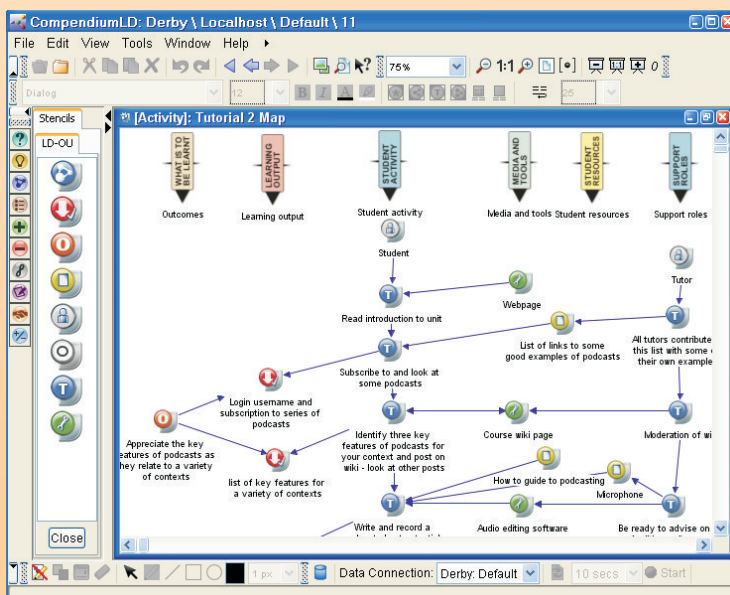
Introduction

CompendiumLD is a software package designed to help you create, edit and share diagrams of your learning and teaching. These diagrams may show the sequence of learning tasks, the relationship between elements of the learning such as objectives, tasks, resources and assessment, or a mind map of content and related student activity.

The process of creating visual diagrams helps you to (1) focus on the *component parts* of your teaching, (2) on what student tasks are involved in the learning, and (3) on the *relationships* between learning activity, resources, outputs etc.

Both experienced and novice teachers may find techniques for visually representing learning useful, especially as learning becomes more of a blended experience, uses greater amounts of online and offline material, promotes social as well as individual contexts, and becomes more adaptive and personalised.

CompendiumLD provides a set of specially designed 'learning design' icons and a blank canvas on which to map these out and draw lines to connect elements together. The canvas can be as large as you want (even made up of nested canvases) and you can export your diagrams or maps (your designs) as an image or save it to send to others in your team. There are also some suggestions about how you could lay out your diagram, such as using a Sequence (swim-lane) framework.



Using CompendiumLD can help you:

- Reflect on and improve your teaching and learning ideas and design (through the process of creating the map)
- Check for coherence and clarity
- Demonstrate that you have a thorough, well thought out design and to plan for module development specifications
- Share your understanding of what the module looks like with others in the development team
- Be creative and think through new ideas

The degree to which these benefits can be realised will rest in part on your own knowledge and competence in educational design, teaching, and designing modules (just like using Word can depend on your ability to write good English!)

User Comments

"CompendiumLD and course design is a mode of thinking and [one] I think that we were implementing beforehand ... The thoroughness [of the process]... thinking through the learning objectives and what we wanted to get and what we were trying to do... was aided and abetted by the software process... My view is that it's revolutionised our thinking...to learning and teaching, and now 'PREP' is in everyone's minds."

Joe, Senior Lecturer, Brunel University

"The mind-map structure is open and invites a creative response to the design, but some designers my find this lack of structure limiting. There are some stencils, or sample templates to use to guide the planning. The separate components of the design, tasks, resources etc, are indicated by icons that can be moved around the screen and linked together. This allows for easy exploration and revision of the design. The output is a mind-map of the design that is clearer and could be shared with colleagues for annotation and editing."

Helen, Staffordshire University

It was the first time I uses this tool. I agree with [Helen] that the freedom in choosing tools and placing them in white space is almost intimidating for a beginner. You do not really know what you are supposed to write in each node of the mind map you are expected to build. But after I saw one example from the tutorial, I understood that...

...one good way to organise the LD (possibly not the only one) is to use the horizontal dimension to specify the objectives, sub objectives, the actors involved, the tasks to be carried out and the resources needed, while you can use the vertical dimension to represent the time dimension. All in all, I think this way to represent does have advantages with respect to more verbal approaches: it perhaps takes more time to learn to use it, but the final result is more 'readable'".
 Donatella, ITD, Italy

"I think that it would be useful for course teams to use devices like CompendiumLD when planning their courses. It would be good to have a visual representation of what the course was going to do, and how it was going to do it, at an early stage in course production. This would help to ensure that everyone involved was clear of the production plan, and would be able to understand their role accordingly."
 Staff member, LTS, the Open University

Feedback surveys from staff workshops have showed that around three-quarters of the OU staff who responded felt there is a need for clearer methods of representing the structure and key components of a course and that there were aspects of their work that would (or do) benefit from using some form of visual representations and techniques (n=20 to 50).

The software is also being used in one of the OU's postgraduate courses to help train educators and there are reports of similar use elsewhere.

Summary

The visual diagrams and maps that can be created with the software can certainly help in module design and development. There is a range of support material (see below) to help you learn more about CompendiumLD. To download the software or for links to these resources then simply visited the CompendiumLD website.

Where to Start?

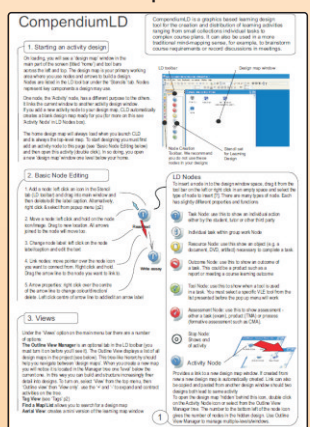
Read the Documentation

CompendiumLD Briefing

This 2 page introduction to the software is a useful place to start.

Quick Reference Guide

Next have a look at our 8-point quick start guide to some core features of CompendiumLD.



Research and Reports

Finally, browse the now numerous studies on the general benefits of creating and using visual representations. From the OU perspective try Brasher et al. (2008) and Cross & Clark (2010).

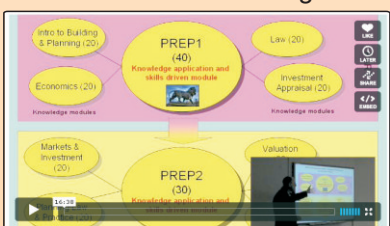
Watch the Videos

Getting started videos

For a quick overview of some core functionality watch these two presentations.

Case study of use

A really interesting case study can be found in this video by Joe Doak who first tried the software at a workshop and subsequently used it in his course design



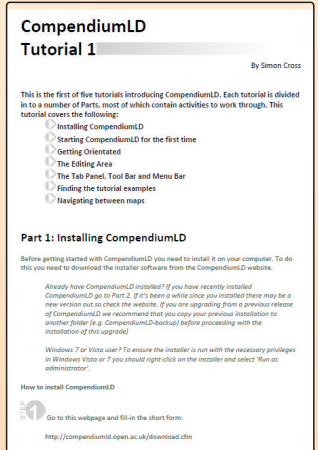
Worked example

CompendiumLD is a flexible tool and can be used in many different ways. Here Paul Clark presents an early example of how the mapping of an existing learning unit as a sequence of learning tasks helped

Sharing designs

Why not share you own design on Cloudworks or a similar site

Follow the Tutorials



Tutorial 1

- Installing on a Windows PC (for Mac/Linux see website)
- Starting for the first time
- Getting Orientated
- The Editing Area
- The Tab Panel, Tool Bar and Menu Bar
- Finding the tutorial examples
- Navigating between maps

Tutorial 2

- How to use and interpret icons
- Looking at your first design
- Icon descriptions
- Adding new nodes & map nodes

All available at <http://compendiumld.open.ac.uk>