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# **Adapting Curricula for Virtual Training – the Australian experience**

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# Adapting Curricula for Virtual Training – the Australian experience

## Outline

- What DITC and DFSL do
- Curricula at DITC and DFSL
- Considerations when teaching online
- The main changes needed in curricula from F2F to virtual
- How DITC and DFSL managed the change to virtual training
- Feedback on curricula for virtual training
- Ongoing considerations for future



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## **DITC**

Defence International Training Centre  
English Language and Preparatory Training  
Approx. 1300 students per year  
RAAF Laverton

## **DFSL**

Defence Force School of Languages  
Foreign Language Training and Preparatory Training  
Approx. 500 students per year  
RAAF Laverton



# DITC's Role

- DITC's role is to provide training and support in support of Australia's Defence Cooperation Program.
- DITC contributes through the conduct of reception and onforwarding, English language and English language teacher training, as well as preparatory training for other military courses throughout Australia.
- Every non-English speaking foreign military student who comes to Australia comes through DITC.







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## What curricula look like at DITC and DFSL

Learning Management Package (LMP) components:

- Learning Management Information such as: course description, aim, duration, student pre-requisites, required teacher qualifications and modes of delivery.
- Specific (verb-based) learning outcomes, teaching points and assessments.
- Human, physical and financial resource requirements.
- Learning and assessment materials



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Considerations when teaching online:

- providing materials
- online platforms
- poor internet connection
- digital literacy of students and teachers
- time differences
- working/family while studying
- isolation, demotivation, screen fatigue, student check-ins
- creating a sense of community and achieving our IE mission
- DFSL – increased difficulty online with: typing (vs handwriting) for non-Romanised scripts; pronunciation (esp tonal languages)
- DFSL – Loss of cultural immersion during in-country-training



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The main changes needed in curricula from face-to-face (F2F) to virtual training:

- transfer F2F interaction to online option
- identifying software/equipment needed for teachers and acquiring on time
- length of time people can be online
- conduct assessments differently
- timing of courses
- synchronous vs asynchronous delivery





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## How DITC managed the change to virtual training

- Split MELT into Phase 1 and Phase 2
- Added ETDC
- Bought online books
- Converted PowerPoints to H5P
- Shortened courses with nil field trips
- Created asynchronous content
- Grouped students by timezones where possible
- Assigned forum admins to monitor forum engagement



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## How DFSL managed the change to virtual training

- During 2019 all learning material was made available via ADELE (Moodle LMS)
- Implemented an infrastructure (hardware/software) and training/support program that supported a flexible virtual training approach
- Initially utilised online savvy teachers and students to champion new methodology and technology
- Applied a rapid lesson redevelopment (overnight) approach to adapt to remote/online learning (incl remote assessment)



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## Feedback on our curricula during and after virtual training:

- Teachers/HLTS/HTTS
- Learning Review Reports
- DFSL – student and teacher focus groups and workshops – rapid integration of lessons learned



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## Ongoing considerations for the future:

- hybrid courses
- MTTs
- knowledge development to skills development
- benefits of online training into the future
- flexible curriculum management and efficient systems
  
- DFSL – due to travel restrictions, continue to offer short (two week) Refresher Courses online only
- DFSL – consideration of face-to-face and blended learning approaches during redevelopment (currently) of long courses



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Thank you