CHARM-EU

Co-funded by the European Union

TOL WORKSHOP TEMPLATE

Interaction in Intercultural and Online Learning Settings

WORKSHOP AT A GLANCE

Suggested duration	60 minutes (adaptable)
Target group	New and experienced TOL course coordinators / teachers
Format	Online or hybrid
Facilitator(s)	[Add names]
Date / context	[Add date, TOL round, or local context]

OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To support teachers in increasing meaningful interaction in transnational online courses while taking the intercultural and online learning setting into account.

SUGGESTED OUTCOMES

- Identify common interaction and engagement challenges in transnational online learning.
- Reflect on what meaningful student participation should look like in a specific course or activity.
- Adapt learning activities to strengthen learner–learner and learner–content interaction.
- Integrate intercultural perspectives into online discussion, collaboration, and reflection.

PARTICIPANT PREPARATION

Invite participants to think about one course or learning activity in advance and identify an interaction challenge they would like to address during the workshop.

- Share the TOL one-pager and/or readiness checklist before the session.
- If available, provide a short summary of previous student expectations and experiences.
- Ask participants to bring one concrete course activity, discussion prompt, or group task that they may want to redesign.

MATERIALS TO PREPARE

- Workshop slide deck or equivalent presentation material.
- Short summary of student expectations, experiences, and recurring challenges.
- Scenario cards or scenario slides for the breakout activity.
- Breakout rooms for online delivery.
- Optional collaborative board or interaction tool (for example Miro, Mentimeter, or the institutional Virtual Learning Environment [VLE]).
- TOL one-pager and readiness checklist for follow-up.
- Evaluation questionnaire or feedback form.

TOL WORKSHOP TEMPLATE

EXAMPLE 60-MINUTE SESSION PLAN

The sequence below generalises the format used in the CHARM-EU workshops. Timings can be adapted to group size, local priorities, and the amount of theoretical input included.

Time	Segment	Suggested activity	Materials / notes
0–5	Welcome and focus	Introduce the purpose of the session. Ask participants to briefly identify the interaction challenge they brought with them.	Prompt / chat / poll
5–15	Set the scene	Introduce the TOL context and share selected student expectations and experiences. Highlight recurring issues such as engagement, focus, guidance and expectation management.	Slides / evaluation insights
15–25	Interaction and interculturality	Discuss what meaningful interaction means in an online course. Connect learner–learner and learner–content interaction with intercultural participation, communication, and collaboration.	Slides / examples
25–40	Scenario exercise	Participants work in breakout groups on one scenario. They identify the interaction goal, potential barriers, and concrete changes they would make to the activity.	Breakout rooms / scenarios
40–55	Sharing session	Groups share one practical adaptation. Invite participants to compare approaches and identify ideas they could transfer to their own course.	Plenary / board
55–60	Close and next step	Ask each participant to identify one change they will consider for their own TOL course and signpost the reusable resources.	Checklist / one-pager

FACILITATOR GUIDANCE: SETTING THE SCENE

- Use local or alliance-level evaluation findings where possible. The CHARM-EU workshops used student expectations and experiences to make the session evidence-led.
- Keep this section concise. The purpose is to establish why interaction matters and to connect the workshop to challenges teachers recognise from practice.
- Useful prompts include: What do students expect from an online international course? Where do expectations and actual course experiences diverge? Which challenges can be addressed through course design?

FACILITATOR GUIDANCE: DEFINING INTERACTION

- Ask participants what they want students to be doing at the moment they are expected to be 'active'.
- Distinguish between learner–instructor, learner–learner, and learner–content interaction where useful.
- Encourage participants to move beyond participation as mere attendance or speaking frequency and to focus on meaningful academic and social engagement.

TOL WORKSHOP TEMPLATE

INTERCULTURAL ONLINE INTERACTION: FACILITATOR IDEA BANK

The following practices were used as examples in the CHARM-EU workshop materials. Select only the ideas that fit the course context and the time available.

BEFORE THE COURSE OR MODULE

- Use reading materials and examples that represent multiple cultural or geographical perspectives.
- Provide clear guidelines for online communication, including turn-taking, silence, disagreement, and respectful discussion.
- Offer more than one mode of participation where possible, for example spoken contributions, text-based responses, or participation through the VLE.
- Create space for students to exchange contextual information, experiences, and perspectives.
- Use global or comparative case studies.
- Design group work and assessment activities that intentionally mix students from different backgrounds or institutions.
- Where appropriate, involve guest speakers or co-teachers from partner institutions.

DURING THE COURSE OR MODULE

- Use directed questions that invite students to relate the topic to their own institutional, national or cultural context.
- Use small-group formats such as breakout rooms or think–pair–share.
- Use jigsaw activities when students are working with different texts or perspectives.
- Give teams a shared goal or product so that collaboration has a clear purpose.
- Use cultural comparison tasks where comparison is relevant to the learning objective.
- Create semi-structured breakout or affinity spaces for focused exchange.
- Build in short reflection exercises so that students can consider how their assumptions or perspectives changed.

QUESTIONS FOR ADAPTING AN ACTIVITY

1. What do you want students to do, think about or produce during this activity?
2. Which type(s) of interaction does the activity rely on?
3. How will students from different institutions or backgrounds be invited to contribute their perspectives?
4. Are participation expectations explicit enough?
5. Could one mode of participation unintentionally exclude or disadvantage some students?
6. What support, structure or digital tool would make the activity easier to participate in?
7. How will the activity connect back to the course content or learning objective?

CHARM-EU

Co-funded by the European Union

TOL WORKSHOP TEMPLATE

SCENARIO EXERCISE

Select one or two scenarios. Participants can work in small groups and record their proposed changes on a shared board, in the chat, or in a short group note.

Scenario 1: Intercultural perspectives in discussion

You are sharing the results of a research paper during an online lecture and ask students to discuss the findings together. How could you encourage students to include intercultural perspectives in their discussion?

Scenario 2: Active involvement in an online lecture

You are giving an online lecture. How do you get students actively involved? More importantly, what do you want students to be doing at the moment of engagement?

Scenario 3: Redesigning an online discussion prompt

You have created a VLE discussion question on the challenges of using AI in research. How could you redesign the prompt or the activity so that students are encouraged to bring in different institutional, national, or cultural perspectives?

SUGGESTED TASK FOR BREAKOUT GROUPS

- Clarify the interaction or learning goal of the activity.
- Identify what may make participation difficult in an online and intercultural group.
- Propose one or two concrete changes to the activity.
- Decide how you would explain participation expectations to students.
- Identify any digital tool, facilitation technique or grouping strategy that would help.

SHARING AND CLOSING

- Ask each group to share one practical change rather than reporting the full discussion.
- Invite participants to identify one idea they could transfer to their own course.
- Signpost the TOL one-pager, readiness checklist, and any local technical or pedagogical support.

OPTIONAL EVALUATION

Use the local evaluation questionnaire where one exists. If a short workshop-specific evaluation is preferred, consider asking participants about:

- the relevance of the workshop to their TOL teaching;
- whether they gained practical ideas for increasing interaction;
- whether the intercultural dimension was useful for their course design;
- what additional support or training they would still find useful.

LOCAL ADAPTATION NOTES

- Replace CHARM-EU/TOL examples with local or alliance-level examples where appropriate.
- Adapt the technical tools and platform references to the systems available at the participating institutions.
- Use evaluation findings from the relevant student cohort if available.
- Shorten or expand the theoretical input depending on participants' prior experience.
- The workshop can be delivered to new teachers, experienced TOL teachers, or a mixed group.