

Want to develop a Recovery College Course?



The first section of this guide will give you an overview of all the things you need to think about when delivering a course.

The second section will offer advice, guidance, how-tos, tips, tricks and other useful information that will be helpful in you developing and structuring a course.

The third section offers clickable links and templates that may help with course creation.

9 Core Things to Think About

Defining what you want to do

Before you start getting into the details of course writing, it can be helpful to spend some time clarifying what it is you're hoping to achieve.

Here we offer 9 things to think about which may help you get the ball rolling. These are also the things that Recovery College facilitators will need clarity on so they can better support you. Once you have a clear plan, you can think in more detail using the guidance offered within the rest of this toolkit.

1. What is your course topic?

Finding the topic for your course shouldn't be a hard at all. It is about creating a course about anything you are passionate about.

We suggest that you look no further from your everyday reality and ask the following questions:

- Do you have experience or acquired specific knowledge that you think would benefit friends, colleagues, customers?
- Do you have knowledge to impart that you can be considered an expert on?
- Have you lived experience of problems that you think others are struggling with and your experience help?

2. Who are the target audience?

Think about the groups of people that will be accessing your course (either online or in person). Who is your course aimed at, and why? For example, it could be primarily for people who have experienced primary or secondary mental health care, or their families, or something you

want to communicate to health and social care staff.

Having a clear view or choosing the right target audience could have a huge impact on the success of your course.

This is important because you can structure your course based on your target audience

3. Working Coproductively

When developing a course it is easy to structure, research and compile information all by yourself... but remember students, service users, carers and others with lived experience can help enhance your course with their own knowledge, experiences and skills.

What makes the Recovery College special is that courses are coproduced between people with different perspectives and experiences. Included in this toolkit is a guide to help you find people to coproduce with.

4. Researching the subject

Research and planning the course is the most

important and crucial stage of your course creation. You can't have an excellent course if you don't have a plan!

Let your creativity roam free. Brainstorm all subtopics you would like to include in the course. Write everything down on paper.

Go online and find information for your course. You may already be an expert but there is always something new out there, right? Doing this will help you update your brainstorming ideas and include new subtopics in your course. Find new literature and external links to add to your course.

9 Core Things to Think About (cont.)

Defining what you want to do

5. Planning Your Course

You probably have many ideas about what Modules and Subtopics (Online Steps) you can include in your first online course, or what content you'd like to include in a face-to-face/live session lesson plan. Put all those modules in a logical order and make a list you can follow.

It is important is to know what exactly you want to teach and the impact you want to create. For example:

6. Writing Goals and Objectives

Learning Goals are at the heart of a course and need to be made clear at the planning stage.

They are broad, general statements of what we want our students to learn and provide direction, focus and cohesion for your work with learners.

Objectives tell the learner or us how they will be able to know whether or not they have learned and understood the course. This way, you can see in which ways you can shape each course module (subtopic) around their main priorities for learning.

By setting goals and objectives:

- You can communicate expectations to your learners, so you help them evaluate themselves.
- Learners will be able to interconnect their

goals through their courses.

- You can organise the course material by establishing a logical sequence of learning milestones.

7. Creating the course content

Research and planning the course is the most important

The next step is to create the actual content. Based on the course plan and the activities you have planned, you will probably need a variety of media productions for your course (i.e. Materials).

You probably have some digital material from information leaflets to word documents with valuable information.

Take a look and find some material that might be great for repurposing as an online course and save yourself precious time.

For example:

- Videos (recordings, screencast etc..)
- eBooks or PDF files
- Presentation slides
- Quizzes
- Audio files (talks, podcasts, interviews)
- Graphic Designs/images

8. Timelines

It can be helpful to set yourself some dates as targets (see next point) by which to work through each of these stages.

Look at your available time, resources and support (and those of anyone you're partnering up with) and set yourself your own realistic deadline. It can be helpful to give yourself these deadlines, and the world can hardly wait to do your course, but at the same time nobody wants you to feel under unnecessary pressure! More details on estimated timelines can be found within this toolkit.

There are four phases of course creation:

- Pre-production (planning, researching, designing)
- Writing/Creating (typing, recording, developing materials)
- Post-production (checking, sharing with Recovery Steering Groups)
- Delivery (putting in online, delivering in person)

Make sure you allow yourself enough time to work through each of these main stages.

9 Core Things to Think About (cont.)

Defining what you want to do

9. Presenting your work!

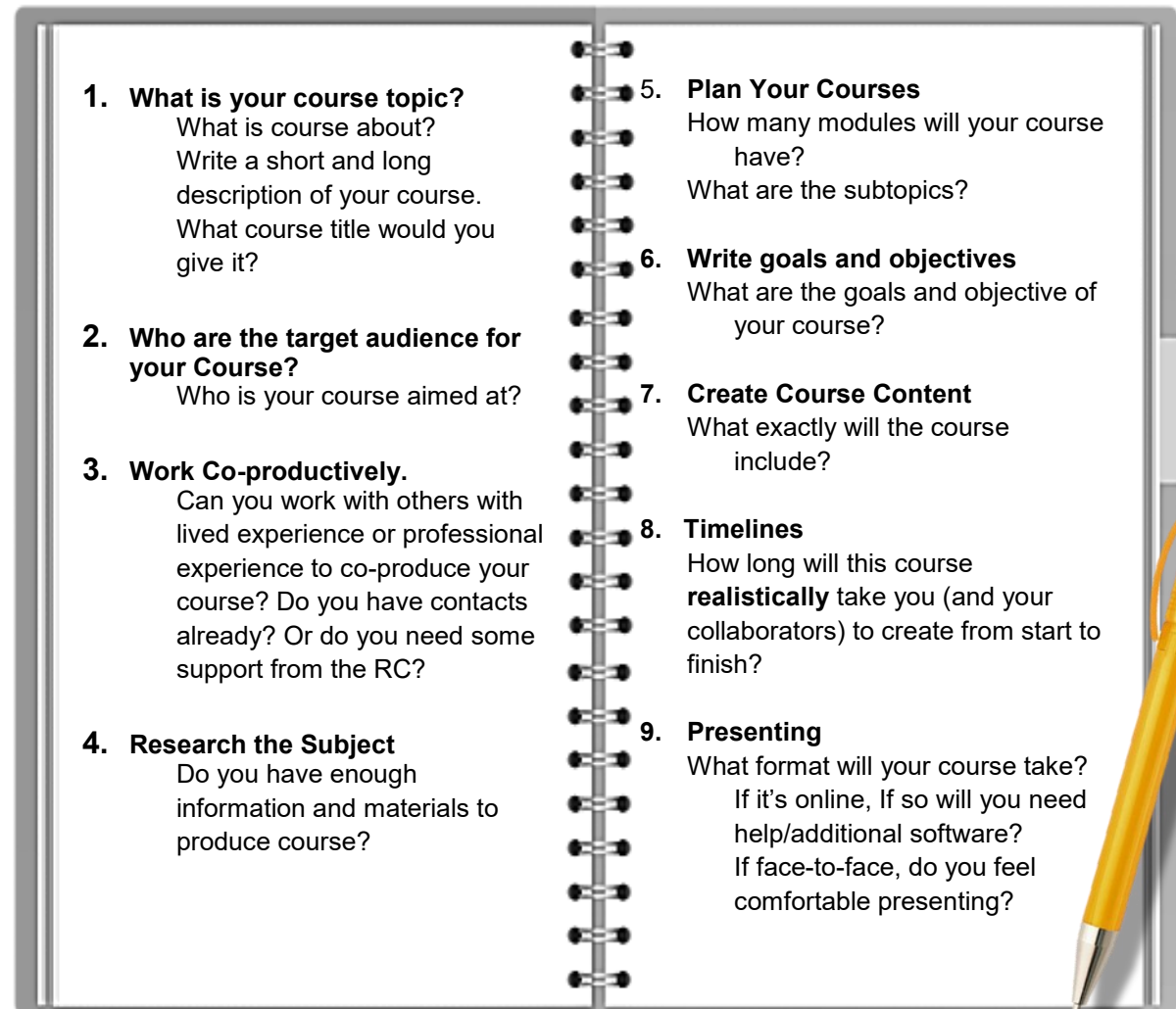
Is it a pre-recorded online course to sit on the platform? A live, virtual online session? Face to face in groups?

How do you want to present your course? What will work best for what the course is about?

Online courses offer more flexibility (e.g. through text-based content, video tutorials, podcasts) but you can respond to your learners better within live/in person sessions. You could even take a blended approach, where you offer a bit of everything!!

Breakdown

When you have an idea for a RC course ask yourself these questions.



Course writing: Structure and Planning

Figuring out what's needed

Every course and workshop can look vastly different from the rest, depending on who is developing the content, the combined experiences, who it's for, and what the course is about, and how much time and/or resources an individual is able to share.

Whether you are an experienced teacher or not, structures and outlines can help you to plan and prepare before getting into the nitty gritty. Remember, there is a focus on coproduction so you'll never be on your own. Plus, the Recovery College is always on hand to support you in developing courses, giving you templates to work from, talking through things, putting you in touch with others or helping you pin down what you want to do.

Let's Chat...

A structure already exists for the online 'Let's Chat' series - this is to offer some sort of consistency across the whole series. You can also use the example below as a guide of how to structure other courses too.

Module 1: Introductions

Video welcome, overview of course

Module 2: What is... (condition or situation)

Clinical and lived experience definitions, symptoms and theories)

Module 3: How does (condition or situation) impact daily life?

Personal/organisational stories and experiences relating to work, hygiene, social life etc, impact on families and carers

Module 4: Managing (condition or situation)

Coping strategies, medications, implications of diagnosis/stigma, emotions

Module 5: How to support someone experiencing (condition or situation)

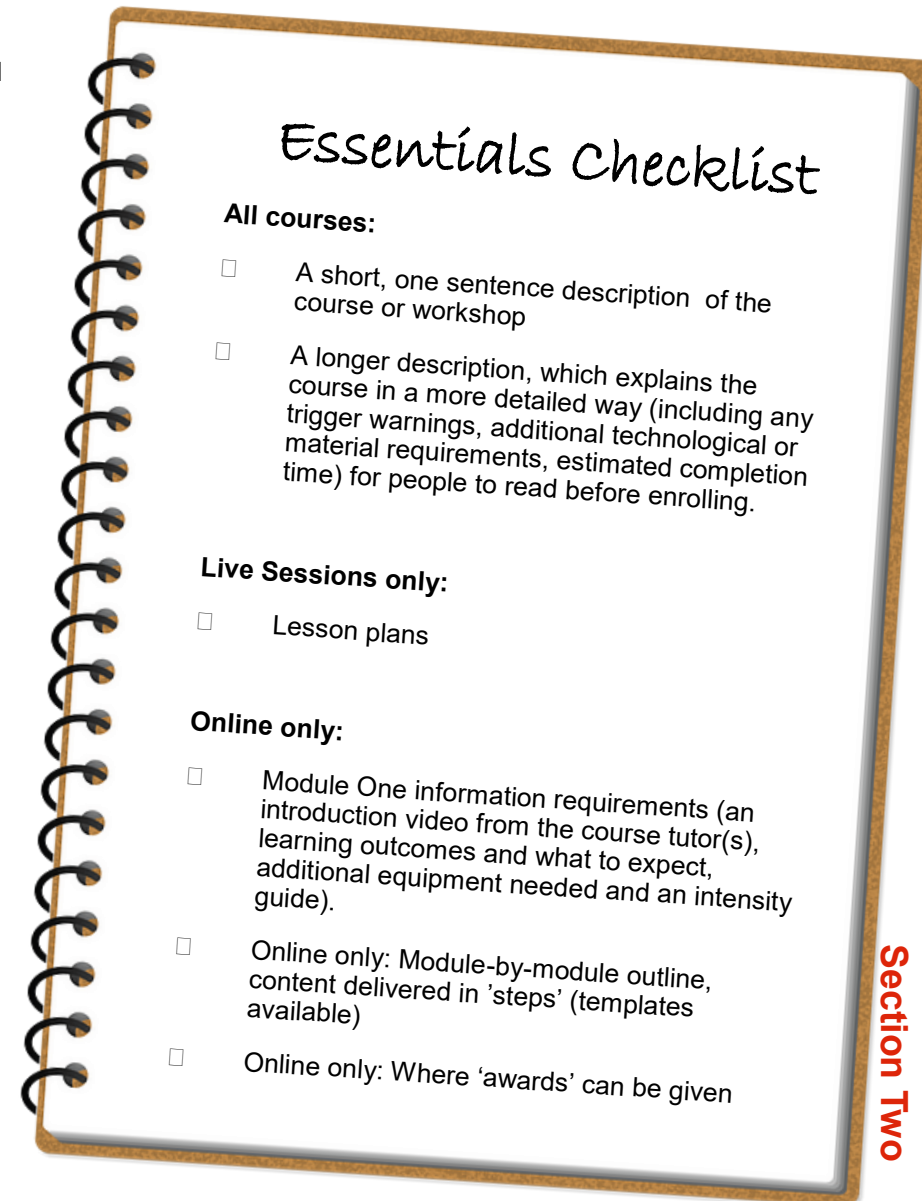
What helps? What's needed? What other support is out there?

Module 6: Random (optional)

For the stuff that might not fit anywhere else!

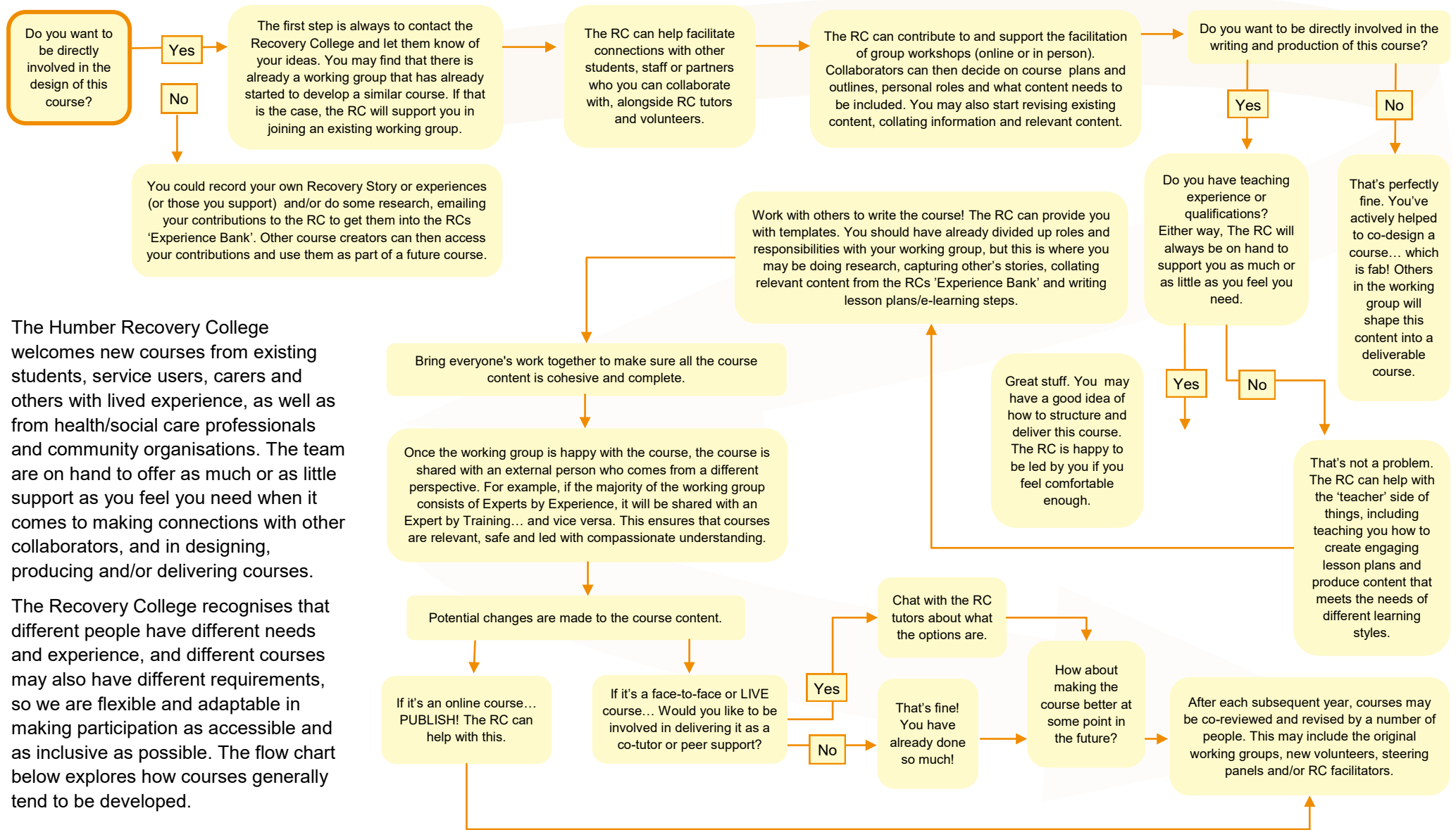
Module 7: Final

Exit video, any consolidation, information about any related live sessions



Course writing: The process

“I have an awesome idea for a course. How do I go about creating it co-productively?”



The Humber Recovery College welcomes new courses from existing students, service users, carers and others with lived experience, as well as from health/social care professionals and community organisations. The team are on hand to offer as much or as little support as you feel you need when it comes to making connections with other collaborators, and in designing, producing and/or delivering courses.

The Recovery College recognises that different people have different needs and experience, and different courses may also have different requirements, so we are flexible and adaptable in making participation as accessible and as inclusive as possible. The flow chart below explores how courses generally tend to be developed.

Course writing: Timescales

How long will all this take?

Lots of different factors may affect how long it takes to write a full course co-productively. Although we'd all like things to be shared as soon as possible, we *must* remember that real co-production takes time.

Rough Timeframes (on average)

Although it's tough to know for sure how long a course might take to produce, it's good to have an idea of how long things take. Based on the main steps outlined previously, for a course of average complexity, assuming there's minor delays, and that collaborators (who have little teaching experience) have a reasonable amount of time to invest... this is how long developing a course at a comfortable pace could take:

First Steps (1-4 weeks)

Sharing initial ideas and forming/joining a working group. This period of time includes trying to pull people together in preparation for a working group meeting.

Designing (1-2 weeks)

Through a series of workshops or meetings, having discussions in equal partnership about what needs to be in the course, and why. This is also the time to be working out who may want to do what moving forwards.

Writing (1-4 months)

This is where the bulk of the work is, and involves research, writing out the steps/lesson planning, creating videos and resources, designing activities and proofreading. You may also discover at this stage that your ideas may be better shared over two or more courses, so you may need to adapt.

Checking (1 month)

This is the process of sharing the newly-written course with others from a difference perspective, and then discussing and making any changes with them. This ensures that courses are relevant, safe and led with compassionate understanding.

Sharing! (1-2 weeks)

This is the process of either: 1) Copying over and uploading content to the e-learning platform, or 2) Preparing for your LIVE sessions, including any rehearsal or facilitation planning.

TOTAL ESTIMATED TIME: 3 - 6 months on average

This is an estimated time for when a course is not predominantly led by the Recovery College. The process may be shorter or longer than this estimate, depending on the resources, circumstance and time available by those involved.

There is likely to be a number of coproduced courses being developed at any given time, plus opportunity to co-design and co-produce courses and LIVE sessions that the RC are already taking the initiative with (using their own lived experience as a foundation). The process for these courses may take place over 1-3 months.

Things which will help speed things along:

- If people in the working group have experience teaching/facilitating
- If your course is straightforward
- If you already have collaborators on board with you
- If the RC doesn't have too many new other courses to also support
- If there is already a lot of usable content in the 'Experience Bank'

Things which may take more time:

- If, even with RC support, we can't find additional people to coproduce courses with quickly
- If you or somebody else gets ill or has a relapse
- If other pressing things in life need to take a priority
- Disputes on course content, or between collaborators
- Trying to find a time to meet that suits all, or almost all, those involved
- If the course is complex
- Learning new technological skills or processes
- Working accessibly and inclusively

Course Development: Additional things to Consider

Important things to remember when developing and writing courses

When writing a course, there's some things we must keep in mind. These things ensure that it's accessible and inclusive for everyone, that we stay on the right side of the law and that we're sticking to recovery-oriented principles.

Learning Styles

The role of a teacher in any context is to enable learning in your students. When we write courses and workshops, we must remember to use different teaching methods since everybody [learns in different ways](#)...

Keep it interesting

Ways in which you could explore topics include:

- Quizzes (single answer questions and multiple choice)
- Open ended, reflective questions
- Group discussions and pair work
- Prompting hands-on activities
- Offering additional reading or watching using external links
- Powerpoint presentations (visuals and text)
- Videos of the tutor explaining things through
- Videos of two-way/group conversations
- Sharing resources and printable worksheets

Copyright

- Do not use any media or written material that you yourself have not produced, have explicit written permission to use, is from the RCs 'Experience Bank' or that sits under a Creative Commons Licence. You can reference external content (via links) but you cannot embed resources within a course.
- Give credit to everyone who has produced something that you yourself have not developed.
- You are encouraged to write things in your own words - you are the expert here after all!

Lived Experience

It can be very easy to reel off and share generic tips that you yourself have heard a thousand times. When developing courses, try to think about what has actually been helpful to you, and why? What hasn't helped? It's this insight that is most valuable to others going through something similar, and to those trying to support them. Be honest and speak your truth as you see it - there's no need to shy away (even if it's unconventional).

Branding and Visuals

This bit is relevant if you're producing your own content. Anything that gets produced for the Recovery College must have the logo on it (top right). We have beautifully designed night and day backgrounds/imagery to consistently use across College content, which we can pass over to you.

Being part of the NHS, we must also stick to [NHS Identity guidelines](#). Fonts must be 'Frutiger' or 'Arial' and colours must be chosen from a predetermined colour palette. You can see examples of our branding below. Look familiar?



Course writing: Language and Perspective

Making sure our words best support meaningful mental health recovery

Language and Perspective

The way we say and frame things really make a massive difference to a learning experience.

- Write everything as if you're talking directly to a student. Use plain language and if you use lingo, make sure it's explained well and/or provide external links which explain what it is in plain English.
- The Recovery College is all about promoting Hope, Opportunity and Control. You don't need to be afraid of tackling difficult subjects, but remember to bring it back around and provide opportunity to reflect and learn something positive from it. What lessons came from these experiences?

Words really DO matter

Common phrases surrounding mental health comes from a very '[medical model](#)' of health and disability, but it very often adds to the stigma surrounding mental health. This model looks at what is 'wrong' with a 'defective' individual who is defined by their labelled "illness". They may be congratulated for "overcoming" their disability, as they are usually framed as someone who needs pity, sympathy and/or charity. The focus is on how different they are from everybody else whilst trying to make them 'normal' through 'interventions' (such as medications or treatments) rather than focusing on what they're actually experiencing, who they are independent of any

impairment, and the barriers already exist in society that make it more difficult to exercise rights or lead a full life.

Language that comes from a medical model creates low expectations and strips people of independence, choice and control. Similarly, old language referring to mental, physical and cognitive disabilities are just as hurtful. When writing, avoid medicalised words and phrases and choose words that are more empowering. You may want to read about [Social Model of Disability](#) for more context.

Avoid words and phrases like:

- "special"
- "housebound"
- "need of a cure"
- "can't cope" or "burden"
- "unable to make decisions"
- "attention seeker"
- Any outdated and offensive terminology or slurs

Instead of: Use:

Patient	Person with lived experience, service user
Carer	Family, friends and/or personal assistants
Mental health patient	Is accessing mental health services
Mentally ill person	Person living with mental health difficulties
Suffering from...	Experiencing symptoms of... Person living with...
A victim of mental illness	Has a history of mental distress.
Paranoid/Schizo	Experiencing paranoid symptoms Person experiencing psychosis
He is autistic	He has autism
Committed suicide, or made a suicide attempt	Died by suicide, took their own life, made an attempt on his/her/their life
Normal behaviour	Usual, or typical, behaviour

Course writing: Practical Tips, Tricks and Hacks

Things that may be of help to you

Here are some other things that need to be considered when developing a course, and some tips and tricks that have already proven useful in the Recovery College.

Capturing, Transferring and Storing Digital Files

Don't have fancy equipment? No problem; you can record things using your phone/tablet, and even edit them directly on there with apps and the like. Files can be transferred (by USB cables, SD cards, emails, iCloud, [Dropbox](#), Whatsapp, [WeTransfer](#) etc) onto a PC for editing or for sharing.

Please bear in mind that NHS Firewalls do not allow access to many file sharing websites or USB access, so those using NHS laptops will need to find alternatives.

We recommend keeping all your course files together in a specific folder. And keep a back up!

Software and Programs

To support the programs you're also familiar with and/or already have installed, we've also found some other useful tools online and in app stores which may help develop content for courses (they're also watermark-free!)

- [Unsplash](#) - Royalty Free Images
- [Lunapic](#) - Free photo editing
- [OpenShot](#) - Free basic video editing software (PC download)
- [YouCut](#) - Free basic video editing software for Android phones/tablets
- [Filmora](#) - Video editing
- [Audacity](#) - Free audio editing software (PC download)
- [QuickRec](#) - Free .wav file audio recorder for Android phones/tablets (because pre-installed voice memo apps don't often save in a usable format)
- [EZGif](#) - Free video to gif converter
- [Miro](#) - Free online collaboration/mind-mapping tool

Using Templates

To write courses, we recommend using a word processor (e.g. Microsoft Word or Libre Writer) and using the templates that the Recovery College has available. By using templates, you can see how to format courses so they're ready for the website or what a lesson plan might look like. We also have branded and templated Powerpoint slides you can use. No need to reinvent the wheel!

Do you know of anything you could use to make course development easier? Write them here to remind yourself:

Email them to HNH-TR.RecoveryCollege@nhs.net to get them added to this document!

Remember, the Recovery College are here to offer support with everything... so try not to worry if it's all a bit confusing!

Templates and Examples

Resources that may help you see what's needed

Click on the icons and it should open the documents up for you. If you have any difficulty opening/viewing these documents, email HNF-TR.RecoveryCollege@nhs.net who can support or email you documents directly.

NHS
Humber Recovery
& Wellbeing College

**Participation and Coproduction within
The Humber Recovery and Wellbeing College**

Understanding Coproduction
How to get involved

“Not about us, without us!”

Coproduction Toolkit V2. (developed by Lauren Saunders) Oct 2020 - Co-Revision Date: Jan 2022

Coproduction within the Recovery College

Online Course Template

In order to standardise and help you produce the right content we have developed this online template to aid you.

Course Title: Click here to enter course title.

Short Description Write down a brief sentence about your course

Click here to write brief description.

Long Description Explain what your course is about in more detail?

Click here to write course description.

Learning Goals i.e. Learners will know everything about.....

Click here to write course description.

Learning Objectives i.e. Learners will be able to.....

Click here to write course description.

Online Course Template

**Face-to-face / Live Virtual
Session Lesson Plan Template**

NHS
Humber Recovery
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DEBT MANAGEMENT

BY
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(First Draft)

Example of how an online course looks