Flip Edu Up

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Blended Learning Approach in Adult Education: Methodology, Quality Assurance and Evaluation

Guidelines for Educators

Erasmus+ KA204 project 2021

Flip Edu Up

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1. DIAGNOSING THE EDUCATIONAL / TRAINING NEEDS (BROADER, COLLECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL)

1.1 Adult education in EU

Adult learning is a key part of the lifelong learning spectrum, which includes formal, non-formal and informal learning activities undertaken by adults. Policymakers have long recognised that participation in adult learning is vital to unlocking the benefits of a changing world of work. Changes in skill demand brought about by megatrends such as technological change, globalisation and population ageing have put adult learning at the top of policy makers' agendas. Thus, placing our efforts into lifelong learning is undoubtedly a necessary investment. Continuous investment in the upgrading of human resources methodically and innovatively plays an integral part in the increase of national, European and Global productivity and healthy competitiveness in the market.

However, according to the latest results from the European Union labour force survey, in 2020, the proportion of persons aged 25 to 64 in the EU who participated in education or training was 9.2 %, a share that was 1.6 points lower compared to 2019. It is considered that part of the decrease could be related to the COVID-19 pandemic, i.e., cancellation of training activities.

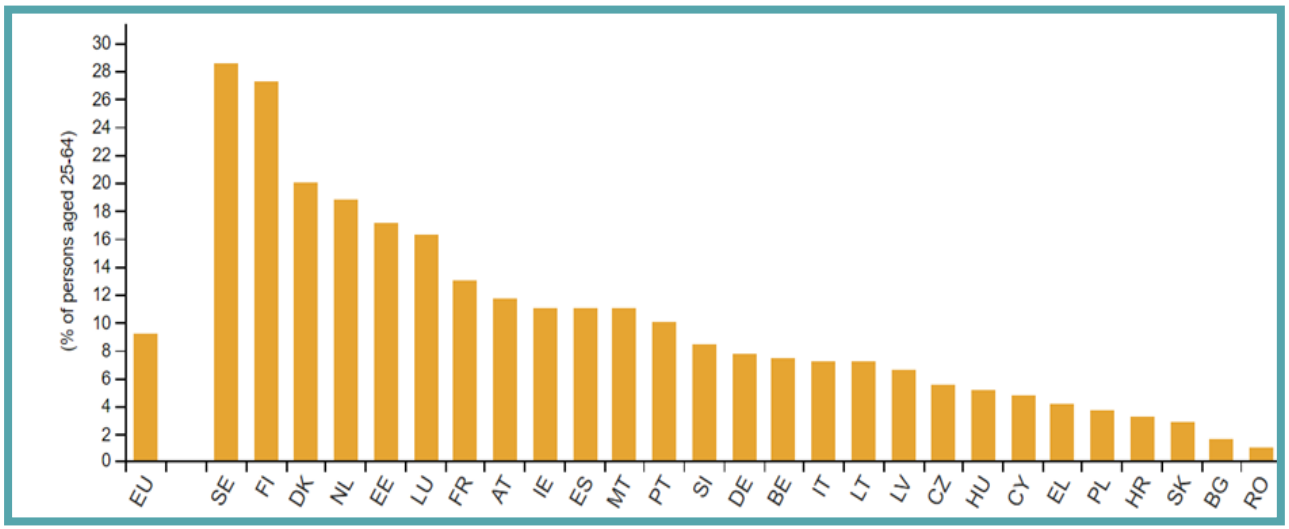
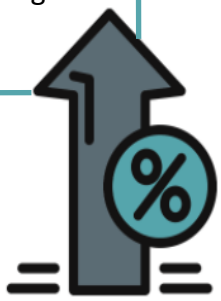


Figure 1. Participation rate in education and training, 2020 (Source: Eurostat (online data code: trng_lfse_01)

The participation rates in nearly all Member States increased steadily between 2010 and 2019, except for Denmark, Slovenia, Cyprus, Spain, Poland and Romania. However, this trend reversed between 2019 and 2020 as only three Member States showed a slight increase in this period: Spain (+0.4 pp), Greece and Lithuania (+0.2 pp for both).

Denmark, Finland and Sweden stood out from the other EU Member States as they reported considerably higher proportions of their respective adult populations participating in lifelong learning in the four weeks preceding the interview, ranging from 20.0 % to 28.6 %. Estonia, the Netherlands and Luxembourg were the only other Member States where the participation rate in 2020 exceeded the 15 % benchmark. By contrast, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Croatia, and Poland reported less than 5.0 % adult learning rates.

The new benchmark set by the European Commission for the participation of adults aged 25-64 in learning during the last 12 months is set to increase to 25% by 2025, making it quite an ambitious goal.



1.2 Blended Learning in adult education

Before we begin to discuss blended learning in adult education, it is essential to clarify the concept of Blended learning itself. The simplest definition is that blended learning is a hybrid approach that combines face to face learning with distance learning, including online learning.

However, what is blended learning in adult education? The authors of "Position Paper on Blended Learning in Adult Education" suggest that blended learning in adult education is not only about the use of tools and resources. Instead, it is a way to think about programme and curriculum development, including learning design and delivery.

Thus, blended learning represents a much more significant change than simply using digital devices and digital tools for learning purposes. In many cases, it represents a fundamental change in the way educators and learners approach the whole learning experience. A blended learning approach enhances and extends the application of adult learning principles to meet the changing needs of people learning, working and engaging in the 21st century.

1.3 Increasing Demand for Lifelong Learning and Participation Rate in Adult Education

Participation in adult education and training is determined by several factors, such as educational attainment, employment status, occupational category, age and skills, etc. According to Eurydice report, adults with low level or no qualifications, in low-skilled occupations, the unemployed, older people are less likely to participate in lifelong learning. Based on Adult Education Survey (AES), barriers to adult participation in learning are often linked to time constraints, whether due to family responsibilities or the work schedule.

However, evidence collected from countries has shown that the adoption of certain practices in the way programmes are organised and delivered can facilitate adult participation in learning. Flexibility is key, particularly with respect to modes of learning.

Consequently, the provision of distance learning (including e-learning and blended learning); breaking programmes into more manageable units of study or modules; credit-based qualifications; validating non-formal and informal learning; as well as ensuring permeability between levels and pathways, all contribute to lowering the barriers which hinder adult participation in education and training.

Furthermore, the Europe 2020 strategy (European Commission, 2010) stressed permeability and flexible learning pathways as a precondition for modern European education and training systems that encourage lifelong learning. In the latest lifelong learning strategy 2020 – 2030, the European Commission also emphasises digital societies - adult learning increasingly focusing more on the use of digital tools.

Finally, according to data from the Texas Adult Education Management System (TEAMS), adult learners who participate in blended learning outperform students who only attend a traditional classroom, as well as students who spend more than 50% of their contact hours at a distance. Unfortunately, few empirical studies focused on adult learners in Europe, especially using outcome data covering a complete curriculum or offering a 'reasonable alternative' to traditional experimental designs are carried out.

ICTs have become widely available to the general public, both in terms of accessibility and cost. According to the Eurostat statistics, by 2018, the share of EU-28 households with internet access had risen to 89 %, and 69% of people use mobile devices (smartphones, tablets, etc.) to connect to the internet. Furthermore, according to Special Eurobarometer 460 survey conducted in 2017, 64% of respondents indicated that they are sufficiently skilled to benefit from digital and online learning opportunities.

Mobile devices, internet access, open educational resources (OER) and social media have a great potential for widening access to adult learning. They can support and encourage adults to participate in life-long education, whereas it is informal, formal or non-formal education.

Considering all data and research available, blended learning can potentially reduce some of the barriers they face, as they allow adults to choose the place, time and pace of learning. Educators and learners can equally benefit from blended learning in adult education. In a high-quality blended learning environment, learners can benefit from increased flexibility and diversity in learning opportunities and improve their digital skills. On the other hand, educators can reach more learners despite their location, find suitable mechanisms to recognise and respond to learner needs, and put the innovative and responsive curriculum into practice.

Adult learners' needs, covered by the blended learning approach, are:

Making decisions about their learning

As learners and educators co-create the curriculum based on the learner's goals and curiosity, learners start to see themselves as people who can learn and make decisions about their learning.

Having flexibility

Blended learning offers more choice and provides flexibilities for scheduling, setting practice times, etc. It is also more responsive to the way adults learn, beyond the narrow definition of learning styles and better reflects the complex relationship between learning processes and knowledge construction.

Developing skills needed for successful employment

In a blended approach, learners use digital technology to engage in critical thinking and reflection, be creative and exploratory, and develop communication and problem-solving strategies. In addition, learners build digital literacy skills, critically analyse information for relevance and trustworthiness, and build self-advocacy skills. All of these skills are highly sought by employers nowadays.

Developing essential digital skills

In the age of digitalisation, a lot of traditional services are going digital as well. For example, national governments increasingly require people to access public services (such as healthcare, social assistance benefits and taxes) through online portals. This will likely be experienced as a barrier to receiving services for some people who do not have the required level of digital skills. Blended learning encourages self-empowerment by building digital literacy skills. Educators play a vital role in learners' access to online public and consumer services by offering situated learning opportunities where learners build confidence navigating and evaluating online environments.

Reducing costs and increasing accessibility

Blended learning is often seen as a solution to reduce the costs involved in traditional education. For example, it can reduce travel costs if the learner lives further from the adult education institution or those living in the rural areas. However, it is important to keep in mind that blended learning still requires an internet connection.

Building social connections and networking

Blended learning incorporates online social interactions, information seeking, exploration, entertainment and many other reasons people use the internet for learning activities. There is collaboration both in face-to-face classroom group work and online group work. Through digital and face to face connections, adult learners build their networks, expand their circle of learning beyond the classroom and discover those with similar experiences around the world .

Making learning more fun

Some adults, especially low skilled adults, may not have good experience with traditional learning. Blended learning adds the "fun" element to education, which is more likely to enhance engagement with the content, which also helps learners to enjoy learning. Gamification, for example, can range from online games to virtual environments that simulate real-world situations. In addition, interactive material tends to facilitate higher recall and better knowledge retention. According to a survey conducted by Quizlet, 83% of teachers and 65% of students believe that class devices make learning more fun.

Educators' needs, covered by the blended learning approach, are:

Collecting accurate data

Blended learning programmes usually incorporates software that can automatically collect student data. This provides a more streamlined method for the educator to measure the student's progress – see student's performance and the areas where they may need a little more guidance, helping the learning journey become much more efficient.

Using time efficiently

Traditional learning usually involves educators spending time outside of class completing administrative tasks like printing out handouts, uploading attendance data, hand-grading assignments, etc. However, through the use of technology in blended learning, many of those tasks can be digitalised, allowing educators to spend more time helping learners comprehend the material and develop skills.

Redefining relationships

Blended learning provides a number of effective means for educators and learners to become more engaged with one another. In the end, both parties can benefit from this shift in the relationship. Teachers can stay in touch with student progress, while students can ask more questions and gain more profound knowledge.

Increasing students engagement

By providing digital opportunities for engagement, educators may see more engagement online from those students who aren't as comfortable sharing in front of their peers in person. In addition, through digital learning and engagement tools, educators can create more fun and engaging learning environment rather than simply reading text off a slide over video software, making their work more enjoyable.

Providing flexibility

Blended learning gives educators more flexibility in adjusting taught material to match what their learners are interested in and their learning styles. Educators also have a wide range of resources to provide learning materials across different contexts available. For example, they could use lectures, tutorials, and practical settings when teaching a particular topic.

Learning new skills

As learners, adult educators also learn various skills through teaching using blended learning such as creativity, problem-solving, digital content creation, etc.

Organisations' needs, covered by blended learning approach, are:

1. Allowing to operate even with restrictions in place

Blended learning was (and still is an ideal solution when in-person attendance is limited or not available. During the Covid-19 pandemic, this model allowed education to continue when it otherwise would have been paused.

2. Reducing the costs

Blended learning requires a few numbers of educators and physical space compared to traditional learning. Thus, cutting the costs of the educational programmes, renting (if the organisation is renting large spaces) as well as material (whiteboards, markers, notebooks, etc.) and printing costs.

3. Attracting more learners

Not every learner, especially those living in a rural area, having movement disorders or conflicting work schedules, can or want to attend educational programmes in person. Opening up educational offers to be completed both in-person and online allows the organisation to reach new populations and attract more learners.

All in all, blended learning seems to have the potential to make adult education more attractive, accessible and effective for adult learners. Using blended learning makes educational activities attainable for those learners combining jobs, leisure time and family life, living in remote areas, or having specific learning needs. Less time spent in the classroom and the online delivery of study materials, assessment and coaching, are particularly convenient for adult learners who often have other priorities and commitments.

For educators, blended learning provides more data, flexibility, tools and methods to use in teaching and enables them to focus on actual teaching instead of administrative tasks. For educational organisations, blended learning provided and continues to provide a way to continue with their activities even in force majeure situations (such as COVID-19 pandemic), which helps to reduce costs and attract learning coming from different backgrounds and areas.

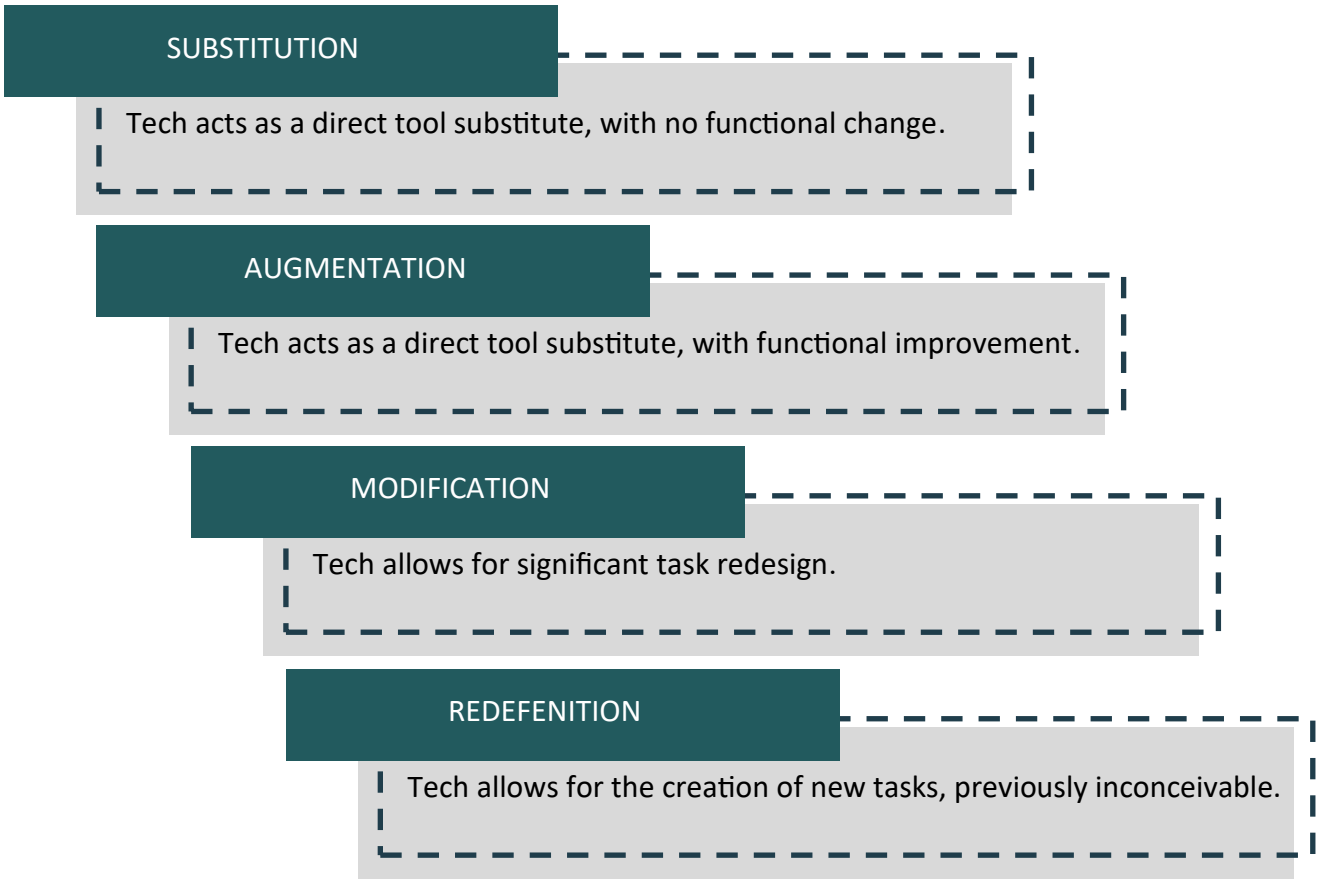
2. DESIGNING EDUCATIONAL / TRAINING PROGRAMME'S: METHODS, TECHNIQUES, TOOLS AND AIDS

2.1 E-learning

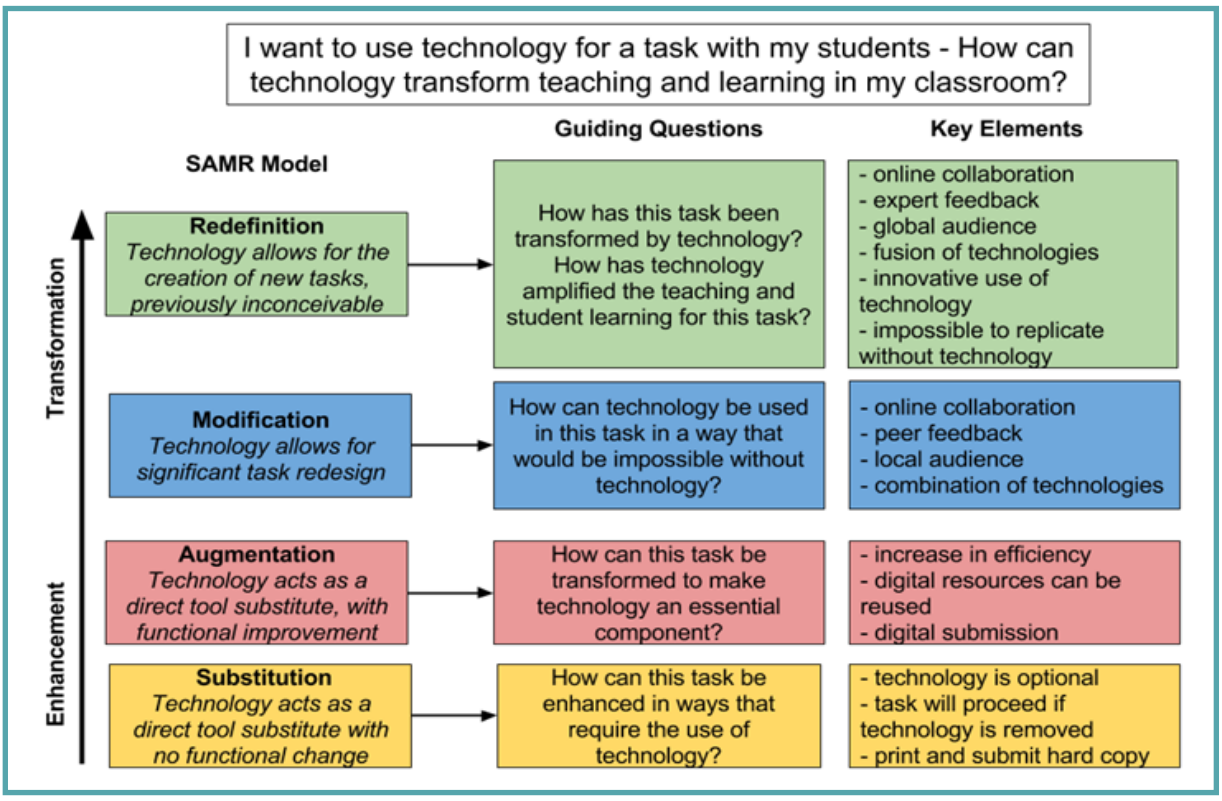
E-learning is learning that leans on the use of technology in terms of delivery and fruition. It is a mode of distance learning that physically disconnects the trainer from the user, while including the use of technological devices to integrate the knowledge acquisition process. Distance learning has attracted increasing interest in the last twenty years, spreading even in the most prestigious academic realities.

The SAMR model: inspire while teaching

This is a theoretical model developed in 2010 by Ruben Puentedura (founder of Hyppasus) that identifies 4 different levels of the introduction of digital technologies in education, which in turn are divided into phases of Improvement (the first two) and Transformation (the last two). The SAMR model is powerful because it enables us to think about how learning can be extended using technology. The four stages of the SAMR model are summarized below:



The SAMR model is essentially a planning tool that helps to design better learning activities for students. Starting with a purpose and a precise lesson plan prevents technology from being used for an end in itself.



Orizzontescuola.it

Types of E-learning

An initiative inaugurated by prestigious universities such as Harvard and MIIT in Boston, which is progressively spreading to other universities, is that of Massive Open Online Courses (**MOOC**), open and mass courses accessible online, very often for free. Participation in these courses has been increasing over the years showing a steadily rising trend.

MOOC is one of the many different forms Distance Learning can take, but there are others. Here, in fact, we are interested in Blended Learning, a variety that combines traditional training with online activities.

2.2 Blended Learning

So, what is Blended Learning, exactly?

Blended learning is an approach that combines traditional and online teacher-led learning activities, *with some elements of student control*. It identifies training paths involving an integrated use of different educational tools, combining elements of traditional education and technological tools. You should not confuse blended training with E-learning. While the latter takes place entirely online, in blended training the online part does not completely replace face-to-face training with a teacher. But most importantly, what is key to distinguish between traditional tech-based education or online courses and blended learning is **student control**. The student is empowered in blended learning, by being invested in decision-making, time management, personalization of content.

Why would we want it?

The search for quality and the need to ensure training excellence, able to keep pace with an increasingly interconnected society, is leading to rethink the traditional ways of organizing and delivering education, not only in schools or universities but also in those of corporate training in every sector and field. Blended training is the one that seems to respond best to this challenge, since it can combine the advantages of interaction with teachers and peers with the almost unlimited potential offered by technology.

Technology serves the function of *enriching* the training experience and expanding knowledge of certain subjects. Multimedia tools also play a powerful role in amplifying cooperation as they allow for the sharing of content, which brings about a process of co-construction of knowledge. Nowadays, we interact with reality (and reality interacts with us) through a variety of devices, languages, stimuli. By integrating them in our teaching and training we will provide a more complex, direct, and diverse learning experience, thus contributing to the knowledge acquisition process.

Finally, Blended Learning can be particularly useful especially when it comes to Non-Formal Education (**NFE**) because it requires methods and techniques that are non-hierarchical, participatory, student-oriented, and can integrate educational activities that go far beyond the traditional "exercise in class". Moreover, by detaching the trainer from the students for a part of the training, it allows for the student's context to arise in all force, being ultimately integrated in the learning experience.

Blended Learning models

In general, a blended project involves a combination of:

- lectures or activities assigned to a teacher or tutor (classroom, virtual classroom, video, etc.);
- self-learning activities (digital content, Computer Based Training (CBT) an example may be language courses on interactive CDs), WBT (Web-Based Training Online version of CBT, refers to courses that can be followed with an Internet connection). But also manuals, texts, free resources, etc.);
- collaborative learning processes within a learning community (based on synchronous interaction, in presence or at a distance (chat, videoconference), or on asynchronous communication tools -forums, mailing lists, newsletters, etc.).

Most learning experiences with Blended Teaching are based on four main models:

ROTATIONAL

Students rotate through different learning modes. At least one of these is digital or online. Within this model we can further distinguish:

- ***Station rotation model***: where within a physical classroom students have one or more online stations available for in-depth study, research, etc.
- ***Lab Rotation Model***: students have access to a laboratory where there are online stations;
- ***Flipped classroom model***: electronic teaching replaces in whole or in part the traditional one.
- ***Individual rotation Model***: each student has his or her own personalized rotation schedule between traditional classes and virtual learning moments.

FLEX

Students do most of their activities online, inside the classroom and under the supervision of the Teacher, who thus has more time to turn his attention to the most problematic students.

A LA CARTE

The most customizable model by the student, who can autonomously build his own study plan, choosing online courses that complement or replace classroom lessons, which must remain in a predetermined quota. In short, while some courses are online, others are taken in school, so students continue to benefit from interaction with teachers and peers.

VIRTUAL ENRICHED

Students are free to complete coursework online and independently but have one-on-one sessions agreed upon with the Teacher.

2.3 How to design an instructional program?

When designing a course,
you should look at the following elements:

- **Objectives**: identify the learning objectives of the educational program, for each educational unit and for each lesson.
- **Target**: Identify the target students to whom the educational program is addressed
- **Expected outcomes**: describe the teacher's desired outcomes.
- **Learning environment/context**: identify the spaces in which teaching will take place (laboratory, classroom, DAD)
- **Devices available to teachers and students:** Interactive whiteboard, PC, Tablet, Mobile phone;
- **Technological tools**: choose the most appropriate tools according to the objectives (online research tools, email, cloud, network video, podcasts, images, e-books, presentations, documents, video recordings, teaching platforms, teleconferencing applications);
- **Teaching/communication strategy**: frontal lesson, study groups, brainstorming
- **Teaching materials**: you should think of what kind of materials you will want to provide students. The more diverse the materials, the more interesting and engaging your lessons will be. You will also need to think of what materials you will deliver for the online/asynchronous teaching part (this also depends on the blended learning model you choose – see above).
- **Timing**: you should consider when do you want to hold your (online and offline) classes. This also depends on the blended learning model you chose. Personalized models are easier in this sense because students can choose to log in when they prefer.
- **Assessment tools:** you should think about how to assess your student's progresses. You can use both formal and non-formal, self-assessments tools and so on.

You can also refer to something called the **ASSURE** model, described below:

A - Analyze Learners
S - State Objectives
S - Select Media & Materials
U - Utilize Media & Materials
R - Require Learner Participation
E - Evaluate & Revise

Some tools for blended learning

There are many tools the teacher/trainer can use when designing a blended training. Some of these are:

GOOGLE CLASSROOM

It helps teachers organize classrooms, track usage of files, and give access to documents and related media

(https://classroom.google.com/u/0/h).

ZOOM CLASSROOM

You can use Zoom to set up an educational classroom experience. Zoom Educational plans have a cost, but they are effective. More on this here:

https://zoom.us/education

KAHOOT!

Kahoot is "*recommended as a digital learning tool teachers can use to facilitate student assessment and track student learning in a fun and engaging way*".

(https://kahoot.com/kahoot-news/kahoot-highlighted-as-a-top-tech-tool-for-the-classroom/)

VIDEOS AND VIDEO EDITING PROGRAMS

You can use videos in your activities, even interactive ones that the students can play with. But you can also make students create their own video, to foster the learning processes (by creating a content on a subject they will learn more about the subject). You can find a list of free video editing resources here:

https://www.shopify.com/blog/best-free-video-editing-software

MOODLE

Moodle is an open-source learning platform, a software you can download for free which is "designed to provide educators, administrators and learners with a single robust, secure and integrated system to create personalised learning environments"

(https://moodle.org/?lang=en)

Things to consider when designing a course

CONTEXT

You should take into account the social, cultural and organisational context of your students when designing a course – and while implementing it. The idea is that the learning experience becomes relevant to your students' realities, to make the content more attractive and the learning long-lasting. In fact, the transition between the learning process and the "follow-up" will be easier and the multiplication effect more impactful.

VARIETY AND RELEVANCE

Blended learning is mostly based upon task-based activities. It is important to maintain engagement and motivation, therefore tasks need to be relevant, challenging and attractive for the individuals and the group. Task-based learning is recommended for familiarizing participants with the technical aspects of the platforms. It is important, however, not to turn it into a list of "to dos" with deadline, which might be associated with formal education. A "clear and effective" task-based learning at the beginning can be very discouraging in the long run.

HOLISTIC APPROACH

The teacher needs to take into account the cognitive, affective and practical capacities of learners. Online learning might have some downsides that you need to counteract (e.g. the limitations of the virtual interface for dealing with emotions and the de-personalisation of the classroom; the tendency to mostly lean on "writing-based" tasks; the need to follow up online activities with offline practices within participants' different contexts). "The organisation of synchronic meetings, talking not just writing, the use of drawings, mindmaps, videos for certain parts of the training units and the participation in E-actions (E-consultations, E-campaigns…)" have been recognized as best practices for a holistic approach to blended learning.

2.4 To conclude

The inspiring principle of Blended Learning is flexibility and placing the student at the center of the educational activity through the use of new technologies, combined with the traditional interaction with the teacher and fellow students.

The aim is to provide the student with a complete, richer, more formative experience, respecting his or her personal learning time, personal activities outside of school and, why not, his or her inclinations and aspirations.

As much as blended learning has been codified in four models, respecting the principles that differentiate this model from simple online training, its ways of application can be endless.

Further readings:

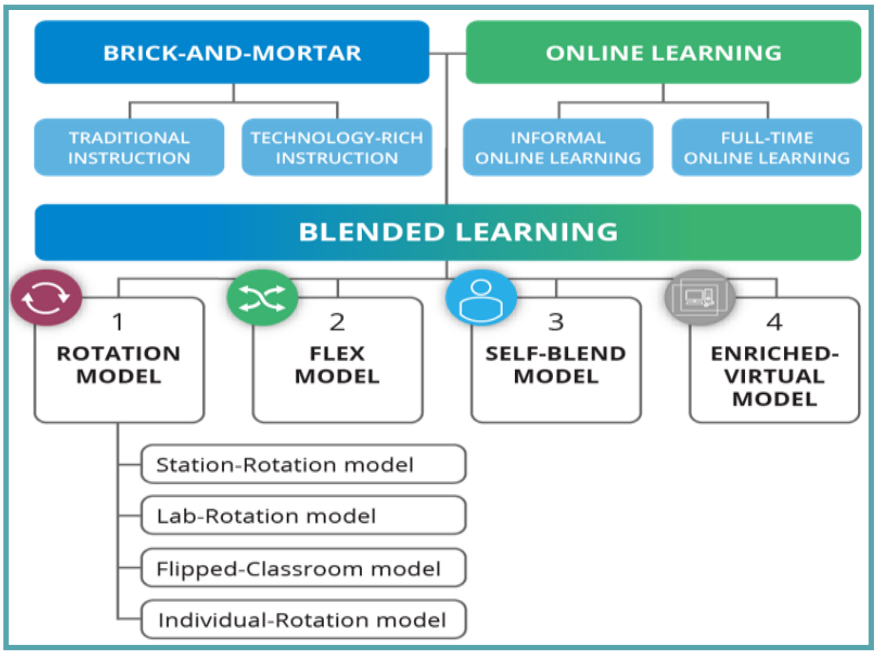
- https://rm.coe.int/16807023b3
- http://hippasus.com/resources/sweden2010/SAMR_TPCK_IntroToAdvancedPractice.pdf

3. BLENDED LEARNING MODELS, HOW TO IMPLEMENT AND CREATE YOUR OWN TO SUIT YOUR CLASSROOM AND LEARNER NEEDS

Blended learning is the place where synchronous learning meets the asynchronous learning techniques and both spheres takes advantages. Blended learning not only benefit from the implementation of synchronous learning, but also have the chance to benefit from "go at your own pace" techniques that are part of asynchronous learning. However, if you want to take full advantage of blended learning, in Non-formal Adult education, it's a good idea to learn about the various blended learning models and how to utilize them. Blended learning involves leveraging the Internet to afford each trainee a more personalized learning experience, including increased trainees' control over the time, place, path, and/or pace of learning.

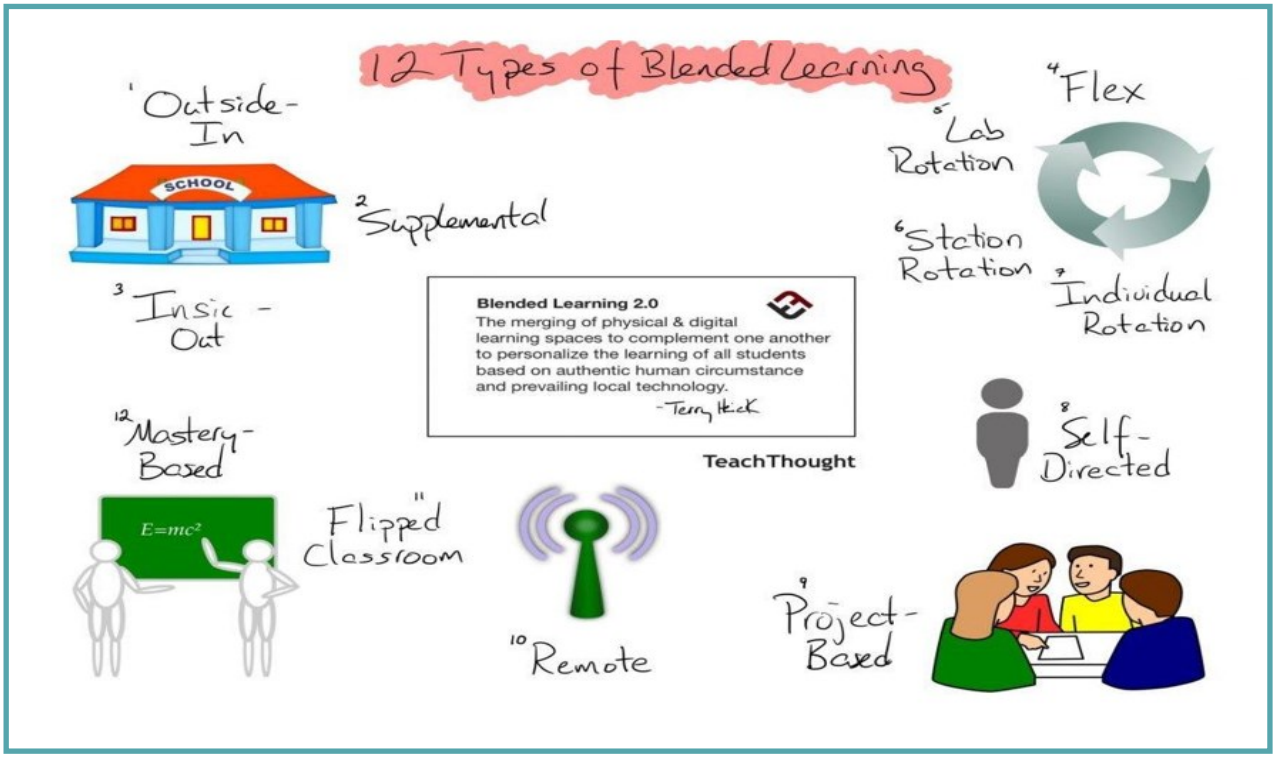
3.1 Blended learning models

The Christensen Institute outlines 4 distinct models of blended learning. The majority of blended-learning programs resemble one of four models: Rotation, Flex, A La Carte, and Enriched Virtual. The Rotation model includes four sub-models: Station Rotation, Lab Rotation, Flipped Classroom, and Individual Rotation.



Blended learning definitions

TeachThought, organization dedicated to innovation in education, distinguished 12 models: Station Rotation Blended Learning; Lab Rotation Blended Learning; Remote Blended Learning (also referred to as Enriched Virtual); Flex Blended Learning; The 'Flipped Classroom' Blended Learning; Project-Based Blended Learning; Self-Directed Blended Learning; Inside-Out Blended Learning; Outside-In Blended Learning; Supplemental Blended Learning and Mastery-Based Blended Learning.



Types of Blended learning

3.2 How to implement and create your own model

"Flip Edu Up (FEU)" aims to modernise the adult education and vocational training system through Blended Learning via the main objectives listed below:

- Improve the teaching skills of adult educators/trainers
- Improve the digital skills of educators/trainers and adult learners
- Improve the capacity of adult educators to deliver high-quality courses using blended learning
- Support modernisation of educational training systems
- Help prepare education providers' readiness, resiliency and efficiency when handling force majeure situations by equipping them with tools and mindset necessary to continue the learning process and progress
- Smoothen the transition from traditional classroom learning environments to online learning environments for situations where a hybrid/blended learning environment is not an option

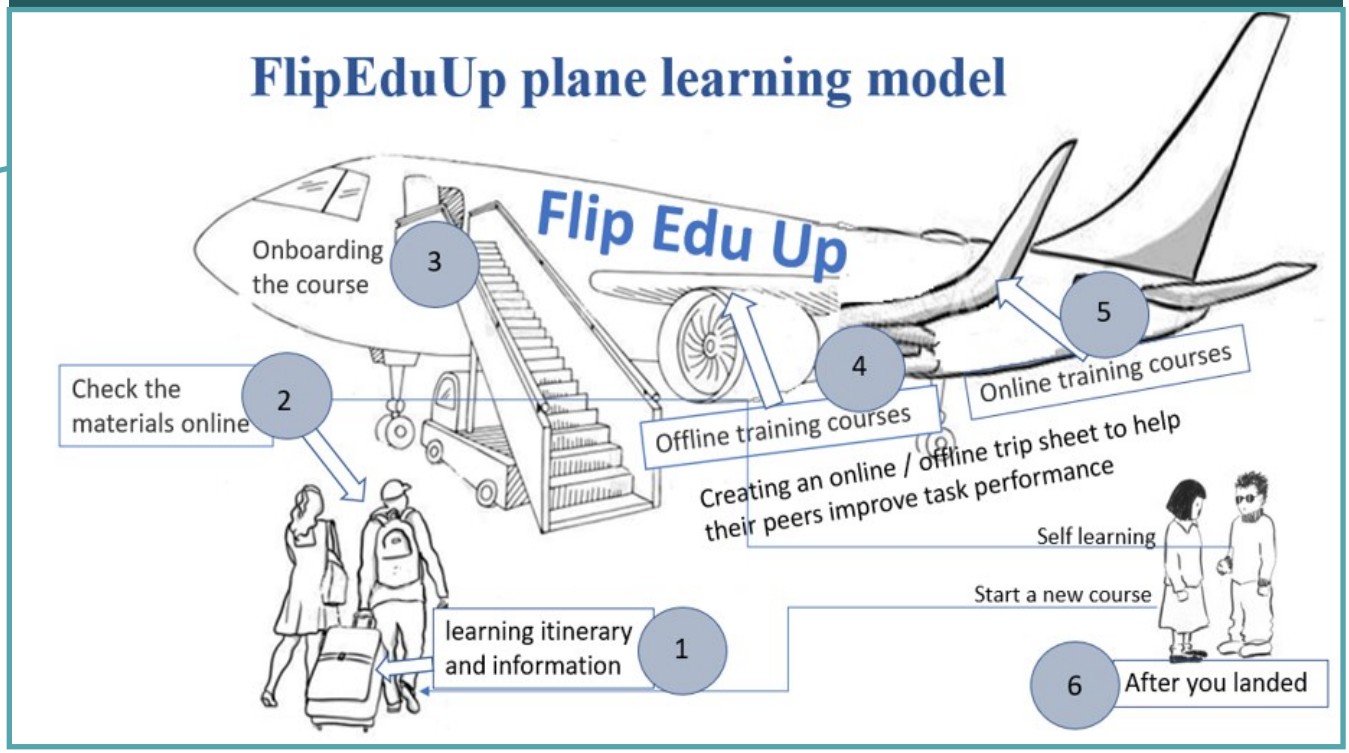
The model "FlipEduUp" project propose is based in the needs of analysis system, blended learning management and collaborative/cooperative learning. To make it easer to understand, we should think the learning process like a long trip on a plane. That is why we called our model: FlipEduUp plane knowledge model.

3.3 Flip Edu Up plane knowledge model

For many, adult people to plan a Long-life learning trip can be a stressful situation due to learning restrictions, education warnings, terror alerts and high fees. The methodological methods are often confusing; however, with proper planning and preparation, learning can be successful and simple. It is essential to be thoroughly organized prior to arriving at the "classroom" for an easy learning experience.

Adult learning programmes are being planned and revised on an ongoing basis, and geared towards the needs of different groups. As adult education is – at least in principle – characterised by voluntary participation, it is essential to investigate the interests of potential participants. For example, if an adult decided to develop language skills and his workplace do not offer the possibility to cover the language course costs, the adult actively looking for courses might be in the following situation:

- Search for the cheapest courses available in the market
- Search for online course available in apps
- Search for language courses on the web
- Search for NGOS or associations that offer free of charge courses
- Weekend or flexible hours courses



STEP 1: Print out your learning itinerary and information immediately after booking the course

CreaCreating adult learning courses gives learners the opportunity to expand their skills and build vital knowledge even if they are short on time and hesitant to hop on board the “FlipEduUp plane knowledge model”. The course we propose should use blended learning programs that allows them to unlock new opportunities at their own pace and access online and offline training resources whenever it's most convenient. Here are 5 tips to help you develop a successful ***FlipEduUp plane knowledge model*** for adult learners that are motivational and memorable.

When the course syllabus has been created, you should give to the adult learners the possibility to find the course using the media adults use in that region for finding information [Radio, newsletters, leaflets, webpages, apps…] and make possible to download it to be analysed by the possible learners.

This step we call: Print out your itinerary and information immediately after booking the course. The itinerary [syllabus] states all the important information, such as course description, course goals, learning objectives/outcomes, assessment plan, schedule of activities, reading list. The itinerary or syllabus also works as a guide for adult learners. By setting course goals and adult learning outcomes, you are informing the learners about the materials they will engage. The schedule also tells them what they should expect from the course and provides a timeline of these expectations.

Do not forget to bring the itinerary [syllabus] to the classroom.

STEP 2: Onboarding the course

Onboarding the course is the action or process of integrating a new trainee into a pre-determined course or familiarizing a new learner with the course mates and trainers. As we offer blended learning courses, the adult learner will be able to enrol in currently available courses in just a few steps from the project webpage.

Select the "Go to class" button. This will take you to the course page on its learning platform. If this is your first course, you will need to sign up or register with your name, email and a password. Some course platforms allow you to sign up via social media, or may ask for more contact information as well. Once you have signed up, you can click on the Enrol/register or Join course button to start learning.

Onboarding a training is one of the most important activities in the learning process because thanks to this we will avoid early leaving [drown out learners]. This process will introduce the new responsibilities and make the learner familiar with the Educational Institution culture. Like any learning experience, effective onboarding is a journey, not a one-time event. Onboarding prepares new learners to become productive quickly and reinforce the decision to join the learning process.

STEP 3: Offline training courses

Face to face training also allows for a multitude of learning modes and styles to be met, as well as ad-hoc teacher coaching, as the physical presence facilitates more interactive and practical activities that would not be possible online.

Although more time-consuming, less scalable and harder to organise than online learning, the face to face learning environment will always bring significant benefits to the learner and the overall learning experience.

During the Face to Face training period, some parts of the rotary model can be implemented:

- Station Rotation
- Lab Rotation
- Flipped Classroom
- Individual Rotation

In this modality we suggest to work in small-group or full-class instruction, group projects, individual tutoring, and pencil-and-paper assignments. The learners learn mostly on the brick-and-mortar campus, except for homework assignments and exercised to be done in the next steps.

STEP 4: Online training courses: Self-Paced and Synchronic

This step will concentrated in the practical aspects of self-studies and to be done using different methods like collaborative learning and self-paced online materials. We propose to build a course that sits on an online platform, that learners can enrol in at any time they like, and progress through at their own speed without having to hit any deadlines of any kind.

It is important to remember that 'self-paced' means that a learner's enrolment does not have to occur at the same time as anyone else's. Eg, there are no 'cohorts' or 'intakes' of students on set start dates. Self-paced essentially means that anyone can start and finish at any time and you can do it a-synchronic.

To make more participative, some activities from the "Flex model" can be adapted. The exercises and discussion topics in which are part of the online learning, even if it directs learners to offline activities at times. Learners move on an individually customized, fluid schedule among learning modalities. The trainer should provide some online support on a flexible and adaptive as-needed basis through activities using video chat support. Instant messaging and chat applications offer the ability to communicate in real-time over the internet. Along with text chat, many popular IM apps also offer voice, video chat, and even screen sharing.

We suggest small-group instruction, group projects, and individual tutoring. Some implementations have substantial video chat support, whereas others have minimal support.

STEP 5: After you landed – end of FlipEduUp training course

This step is just the start of a new experience. The learner should be able to continue their educational trip with or without the support from FlipEduUp consortium. We call it “Long Life learning process. We are aware that one of the most powerful ways to engage and inspire adult learners is to incorporate real world activities. After you land from our”“FlipEduUp plane knowledge model”, the learner is equipped with the enough skills and competences to be able to continuo their own learning interest in a non-formal or informal way.

The learner has two possibilities:

- Enrol for a new learning experience - back to our “FlipEduUp plane knowledge model”
- Long life learning activities with support from our “FlipEduUp consortium”
- Self learning activities

The learners will have access to our learning materials, activities and syllabuses and continuo to participate in the forums and counselling from our online help-desk as is the case of an airline enterprise. “FlipEduUp consortium” will keep adult learners engaged by giving them continuous updates on social media and other online platforms. The key is to keep learners actively involved in the learning process in a non-formal way. Another option is to create group collaborative assignments that centre on realistic problems or situations for ex-participants to a determined course.

Design memorable eLearning courses that cater to the individual needs of adult learners and make the most of eLearning authoring tools is our objective.

4. Implementing the Educational/Training Programme

The implementation of an education or training programme in adult education literally presupposes that such an education or training programme already exists. And this sequence is also observable in the reality of adult education: teaching is always based on preparatory work and is never created ad hoc without preconditions. No instructor will enter a teaching/learning situation without having a plan and the necessary teaching materials at hand, no participant will have decided on a course offer without being roughly informed about the contents and methods via a course description and will have identified the course offer as suitable for him/her on the basis of his/her already existing knowledge and skills and ambitions. Both - instructor and participant - meet in adult education on a "contractual basis" that provides for intentional learning and is characterised by a shared intention, a division of roles and functions, and a certain degree of planning and control.

However, for implementation to succeed as optimally as is certainly desired by all, not only the educational product itself has to be well developed, but also the implementation should be carefully planned. This chapter focuses on this planning process.It shows which functions or staff members should be involved in these planning processes, which planning topics are on the table and which development results they should reasonably be able to follow up on. The planning topics relevant to implementation are presented in a way that takes into account the specificities of adult education institutions and allows instructors, developers and management of an educational institution to follow up seamlessly with their own reflections.

4.1 Developing and/or teaching in adult education

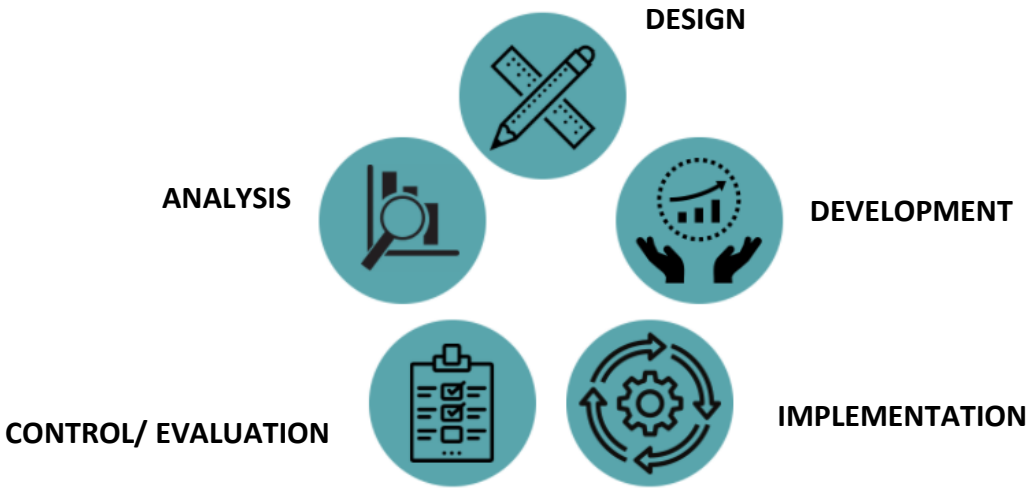
Depending on the institutional context (financial resources, personnel, organisational structure, educational programmes) and on the further embedding in the legal regulations and the cultural and habitual orientations of the given educational system, the development of innovative educational products can be a highly specialised task for which a number of models and procedures have been developed over the past decades.

Practical experience shows that in some countries, such as the Netherlands oder the USA, a clear distinction is made, functionally and often also in terms of personnel, between lesson development and lesson delivery. There, it is common practice in the usually very large institutions to set up education or training programmes and have them prepared by selected adult education instructors or even by specially designated instructional designers and training developers.

The education or training programme is then implemented by instructors who deliver the lessons. This division of labour may be reflected in the staffing plan as a distinction between instructional designers and adult education instructors.

In German-speaking countries, on the other hand, a more integrated, holistic approach has traditionally prevailed, with adult education instructors developing their own educational product, although in some areas of adult education, e.g. language teaching, they are strongly guided by books and materials published by textbook publishers. This special type of adult education instructors takes care of everything, including implementation. Educational/training programmes in the narrow sense play a subordinate role, teaching in adult education is also meant to be a highly individualised affair from the instructors' perspective. However, it remains to be seen whether and to what extent this approach will change in the course of the digitalisation of educational resources and the growing importance of "finished products" such as MOOCs, explanatory films, e-learning modules, etc. in adult education institutions.

4.2 Implementation as a phase of the generic ISD process: the preceding phases



Either way, from the perspective of instructional developers, the implementation of an educational product as an ensemble of planned procedures and instructional tools and media into the everyday life of an educational institution requires its creation. The transition between the two can be represented in a generic process of instructional system development (ISD) that dates back to work in the 1970s and is divided into five phases, namely (1) analysis, (2) design, (3) development, (4) implementation, and (5) control/evaluation. A multitude of later ISD models have partly critically dealt with this generic process model as well as with the concern of ISD in general, nevertheless it is very suitable at this point to pragmatically contextualise and systematically unfold the subject of this chapter, namely implementation. As can be seen, implementation is one of the phases. It begins when the development of the education/training programme is largely complete. What is present at the transition between development and implementation, that will first be described as the starting point.

RESULTS OF PHASE 1 „ANALYSIS“

In the analysis phase, the teaching problem is first clarified and defined, and the already existing relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes of the addressees are estimated. Assumptions are made about the resources that the learners are able or willing to bring to the learning process. These are time resources, relevant for determining the workload, but also their learning environment and their learning strategies. Teaching objectives or teaching goals are then determined, and appropriate teaching strategies are selected. It is also taken into account whether and to what extent the educational institution can activate the time, financial and qualification resources at all to implement the teaching strategies considered. At the end of the analysis phase, two things are clear: (1) whether and to what extent a course, training or similar adult education product can solve a specific problem, and (2) with which andragogical strategies this can be achieved effectively and efficiently. Thus, the legitimation basis for further product development has been created, the cornerstones for further methodological-didactic development have been worked out.

RESULTS OF PHRASE 2 „DESIGN“

In the design phase, learning objectives are formulated, the relevant teaching material is collected, analysed and reduced in didactic terms. Lessons are planned and it is systematically decided what is to be taught and how. At the same time, instruments for observing and assessing learning progress are selected.

At the end of the design phase, the development work has already made great steps forward. Now the methodological-didactic strategy has been worked out, and in the case of blended-learning products media-pedagogical and technical aspects are considered. The material or content analysis is available, and the lesson plan has been prepared. Storyboards have been developed for any planned e-learning modules, explanatory videos, educasts, etc., the graphic design and the user interface have been defined and templates prepared.

RESULTS OF PHRASE 3 „DEVELOPMENT“

In the development phase, the developers process the content created in the design phase with more or less extensive technical support, depending on the e-learning formats chosen and the relevant software. During the development phase, the innovative educational product with all the materials created is tested according to a test plan and revised based on the given feedback.

At the end of the development phase, the education/training programme or the innovative educational product is ready to the point where the focus can be on implementation.

4.3 The implementation phase: tasks and staff

In the development of education and training programmes, i.e., large standardised educational products that are produced at considerable expense and later distributed many times, the development of the actual educational product is systematically followed by considerations of how the educational product can best be introduced into the educational institution and realised there. These considerations result in an implementation plan, which traditionally includes establishing the ability of the instructors to implement the educational product and preparing the learners for the educational product. In blended learning programmes, it is reasonable to extend this implementation plan by a technical plan.

It is obvious that the implementation plan should not be prepared alone by the developers working in phases 1 to 3. The pedagogical and commercial management, human resources development, marketing and technology should be involved in the development work at the necessary points. It is also important to involve stakeholders and potential participants to take up their comments when planning the implementation.

4.4 Preparing the instructors: the instructors' plan

Instructors play an extremely important role in adult education (as in other education sectors). When introducing a blended learning product, it is therefore extremely important to familiarise the instructors with the educational product in such a way that they can apply it and perform their andragogical tasks as usual. How this can be achieved is the subject of analysis and planning, the results are reflected in the instructor plan. The focus of this plan is traditionally the classical training of instructors, but in fact the methodological spectrum should be thought of in a much more variable way today. And: according to the motto "Practice what you preach!" it should come close to the innovative educational product in terms of methodology, media, tools, and material when designing and planning the measures. So, it is not wrong if elements of the blended learning product could be found again, as long it is effective and efficient.

The instructor's plan should already specify the tools and the content, as far as possible, in addition to the time frame, responsibilities and budget. The following sections are intended as a suggestion for the preparation of instructors as part of a larger education and training programme, but they are also suitable as a stimulus for the implementation of smaller educational products.

Requirements for the instructors implementing the education/training programme/product

When formulating the requirements, the results of the analysis phase are used, but the original assumptions must be checked in the light of the actual development results and revised if necessary. It is useful to distinguish between general and specific requirements. General requirements are requirements which the educational institution generally places on its instructors and which, in the case of instructors who are already in the service of the educational institution, should be regarded as fulfilled. Specific requirements result from the specific characteristics of the educational product. In principle, they can be of a content-related nature, but they can also show themselves in the methodology, in the selection of technical means or very fundamentally in the design of the instructor-participant relationship. The specific requirements can be formulated very simply in the dimensions of knowledge, skills and attitudes and are - formulated concretely enough - the basis for the assessment that follows.

Assessment to determine training needs

The catalogue of requirements, and here the catalogue of specific requirements, provides the basis for the assessment. The assessment should consist of two parts: a self-assessment questionnaire and a staff interview in which the self-assessments are validated communicatively. For the self-assessment sheet, items are derived from the catalogue of specific requirements, they are given a Likert scale and arranged in a meaningful way. If the educational product has a high degree of innovation, the specific requirements should all be transferred into a self-assessment form. If the innovation is only in parts of the educational product and it can be assumed that the instructors have the required competences in the other parts, the self-assessment sheet can also cover only the innovative parts. The results of the self-assessment are presented to the manager by the instructor in a staff meeting. The instructor can receive a feedback and, if necessary, to adjust his self-assessment.

Individual learning and development plans

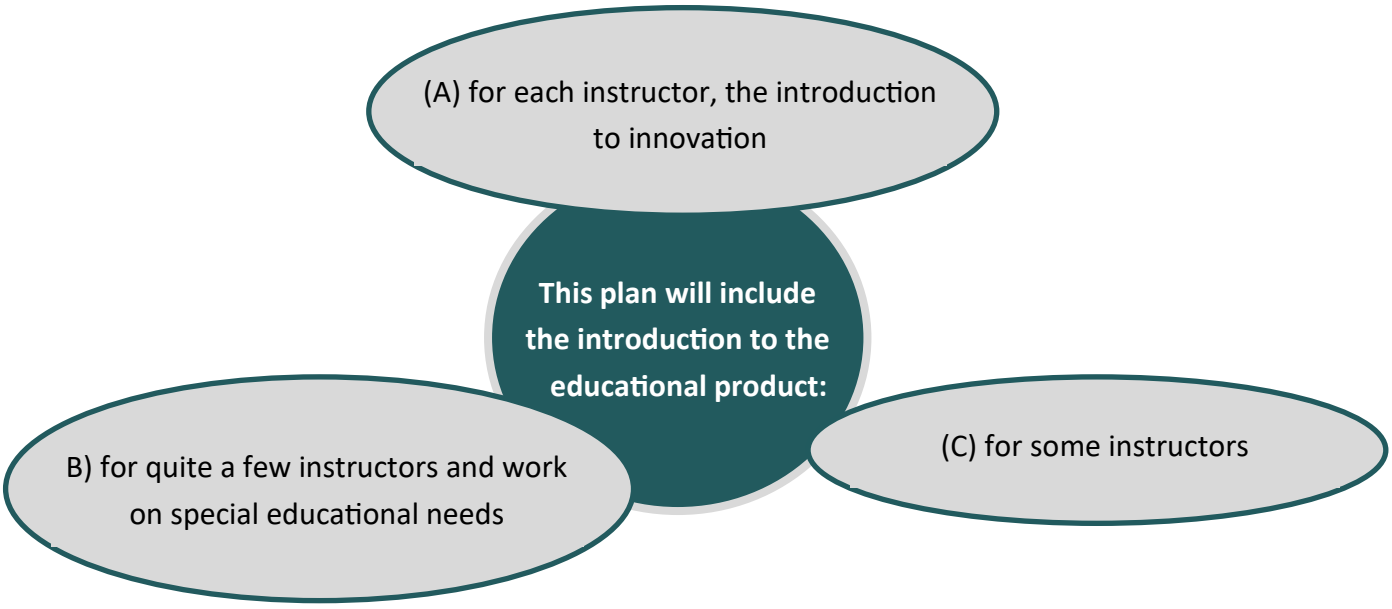
To save the resources of both the educational institution and the instructors, it is recommended to prepare the staff as precisely as possible. In the above-mentioned staff meeting, an individual learning and development plan is compiled based on the degree of fulfilment of the requirements. The guiding question is how the gap between requirements and existing knowledge, skills and attitudes can be closed in such a way that the instructor can implement the educational product at the intended moment. In preparation of the instructor plan, a categorisation into three training needs groups is useful, for which packages of measures are then put together:

A: All instructors have a knowledge gap: they all do not (yet) have an inside view of the educational product. The instructor plan should provide an outlook on a basic instructor manual that explains how to use the educational product in all its parts and describe a blended learning training that helps the instructors to familiarise themselves with the educational product.

B: A considerable part of the instructors have a common innovation gap. As shown above, it can be in the content area of the educational product, but also in the methodology, in the means, and so on. For this group, it is worthwhile to define a measure that is precisely tailored to them. If, for example, the educational product is about a particularly innovative approach to nutrition in old age, which many instructors in home economics have never heard of, then a set of books may already be the decisive step towards closing the knowledge gap. If the educational product is a new relaxation technique that the instructors in the health department are not yet familiar with, then specific training is needed, which can either be designed by the instructor or bought in from outside. At this point, the instructor plan should make plausible assumptions about the training needs and already give an outlook on how these training needs are to be met. It should also describe how it will be determined whether the training needs have been met and to what extent. The STARR analysis can be used for this purpose, as well as peer feedback.

C: A small group of instructors will have very specific training needs that are unpredictable, require individual solutions and for which an organisation cannot prepare, even if it respects the principle of efficiency. In these cases, the manager, if necessary, with the support of HRM, should be able to point out a perspective very quickly. It is also very important to communicate the financial framework of such a solution transparently.

The staff meeting ends in each case with an individual learning and development plan, which shows the gaps to be closed and the measures agreed upon.



(If desired:) Assessment of qualification and certification

The question of whether and how fulfilment is determined and certified after the individual learning and development programme must be answered within the institutional context and with regard to the new educational product to be introduced. Some educational institutions record the work on the individual learning and development plans and performance on the formative and summative assessment moments provided therein and consider this sufficient. Some other educational institutions emphasise

a final proof of achievement and certification. There are also educational products where the introduction, preparation and acquisition by the instructors ends with a certificate that must be renewed at regular intervals. The instructor plan should also make clear statements about this and describe the relevant procedures.

(If desired:) Implementation support, e.g., through collegial consultation

Depending on the degree of innovation, it may make sense to include implementation support in the instructor's plan. Experience shows that nothing is as real as reality and some problems only arise in the implementation itself. A very suitable format for implementation support is collegial consultation. Here it is possible to look at one's own practice together with other instructors, to get collegial feedback and, under certain circumstances, to look at alternative solutions. Other terms are also largely used synonymously for this format: Intervision, collegial case discussion and sometimes also experience exchange groups.

These are the content areas described in detail in the instructor's plan. Whether all the work is described conclusively depends on the scope of the mandate that the development group has received from management. If the mandate includes the creation of operational materials such as self-assessment forms or instructor handouts in addition to the more conceptual statements in the Instructor Plan, this is seamlessly possible and makes a lot of sense, especially if it must be done quickly. It can be assumed that by expanding the developer group as suggested above, the necessary development capacity will be available.

In addition to the content areas, the instructor plan also makes statements about the time frame, the timeline, the resources required and responsibilities. These aspects fall within the core area of management to be involved in the extended development group. These will not be discussed further at this point.

4.5 Preparing the participants: the participant plan

Prepare the participants for the new educational product that has been developed? How is that supposed to work? The participants only become participants when they take part in the developed innovative educational product, course, training etc. Or?

Correct. Adult education institutions usually function in such a way that they offer courses, trainings, workshops, lectures, educational trips, etc. to a broad public with the help of a printed programme booklet, their website or via social media. The range of topics is huge: political education, cultural education, foreign language learning, health education, family education, digital education, basic education, etc. Interested people decide to participate based on the available preliminary information and sometimes also after educational counselling, then participate and then end their participation again. Their participation status ends after only a few hours in the case of a lecture, sometimes after 10 weeks in the case of a language course, perhaps after a year in the case of a literacy course. The organised educational processes at an adult education institution are small-scale, with the consequence that the participants lose their status as participants very quickly.

This fundamentally distinguishes adult education institutions from other educational institutions such as schools and universities, which lead their students to state qualifications with a curriculum lasting several years, or from the in-house continuing education of large companies. In contrast to adult education institutions, these education providers have a close, binding relationship with the young or adult learners. If they introduce an innovative educational product, it indeed makes sense to prepare the students, pupils, or participants for it. And it is also possible.

Nevertheless, adult education institutions must deal with some questions that typically arise when creating an innovative educational product. Let us take as an example an adult education institution in a rural area that has a large "foreign language learning" department. Before the Covid19 pandemic, the language courses always took place locally in a slightly larger town in the house of the educational institution or in nearby schools. During the pandemic, everything collapsed, but with the help of Zoom, some of the courses continued with a lot of commitment from individual instructors. The educational institution used the pandemic to thoroughly revise the language courses and implement a blended learning concept. The task now is to attract the necessary number of participants for this new educational format and to enable the adults to participate in this new format.

Marketing for the innovative educational product in adult education

Adult education institutions usually have a marketing plan in which the objectives and strategy have been defined based on the results of a SWOT analysis, a portfolio analysis or similar procedures, and decisions have already been made on the so-called marketing mix at the operational level. This marketing plan is now a very helpful and at the same time binding framework when it comes to placing this innovative educational product on the market.

In the case of the educational product mentioned above as an example, a new strategic analysis can be pragmatically dispensed with, since the regional market will hardly change, and the customer need to learn a foreign language together with other nice people will continue to be served. It is important to make decisions at the operational level. The marketing plan already gives clear guidelines at the operative level, most likely based on the concept of the marketing mix, an operative planning instrument, originally intended for the industrial goods sector with the **4 P's:**

and later extended with a view to the service sector and the growing importance of relationship marketing by the **3 P's:**

If the operative marketing mix is now applied to the introduction of an innovative blended-learning product, there are some special challenges to be considered, which are listed in relation to each of the 7 P's.

PRODUCT

The product or service policy is the core of the marketing mix. It deals with all decisions regarding the product or service programme of a company. The aim of the product or service policy is to create a real benefit or added value for the (potential) customer - and for the company to gain a sustainable competitive advantage. The innovative educational product was probably launched and created for this reason.

PRICE

Pricing policy is concerned with determining the type of compensation that customers must pay for using the company's services. In the case of continuing education products, these go beyond the actual participation fee: time spent travelling to the event location, money for travel, time spent during and after the event, etc. The price policy should also be considered in the case of our exemplary blended learning product. This should also be considered in our exemplary blended learning product. Typical instruments of pricing policy are prices, discounts, price surcharges, indirect price reductions such as free trial goods, etc.

PLACE

Sales or distribution policy deals with the placement of a product. It deals with all decisions aimed at ensuring that participants can obtain the services offered. An innovative educational product that has required significant resources should be put into the right distribution channels of an educational institution.

PROMOTION

Communication policy is concerned with promotion. It includes all decisions concerning the communication of products or services as well as of a company or organisation. At least three functions of communication can be distinguished: (1) information about the product or service and the company; (2) influencing the expectations, wishes and attitudes of the customer regarding the products and the company; (3) confirmation of a purchase decision that has already been made. Especially when introducing an innovative educational product, all three functions should be served with the whole range of communication instruments.

PEOPLE/PERSONNEL

Human resources policy is particularly important for service providers, as the product, in our case an educational service, is created directly at the customer and with the customer. Educational services have the character of a co-creation, the satisfying or even inspiring result depends decisively on the participant's binding commitment in the relationship with the instructor until the learning goals are achieved. It is obvious that especially when introducing an innovative educational product, the instructors are a key factor.

PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

The equipment policy determines whether a service provider is trusted to deliver a service reasonably without further knowledge of its processes or outcomes. With a blended learning product, the focus of this policy expands. Now it is also relevant whether and to what extent the technical equipment and the virtual learning environment can inspire the participants' confidence in the performance of the educational institution.

PROCESS

The process of service provision determines whether the customer is satisfied. Methods such as Critical Incident Analysis or Service Blueprinting help to consistently align the business processes - and here, from the customer's point of view, the core processes and support processes are particularly relevant - with the customer and to formulate quality characteristics. The existing process policy of an adult education institution has typically already regulated the processes in the front office, where information, registration, payment, cancellation, rebooking, etc. are concerned. With online and blended learning products, there is now a need for technical-administrative support in the event of difficulties in the digital learning environment, which needs to be regulated in terms of process policy.

It is obvious that discussions and clarifications are needed at every point. The results should be reflected in a small product marketing plan that makes statements on at least the following points: Marketing goals expressed in number of enquiries, number of registrations, number of participations, number of product implementations, etc.

7 P: Measures, quality characteristics, time planning, timetable, responsibilities, budget.

Such a small product marketing plan will help to implement the innovative educational product successfully in the market.

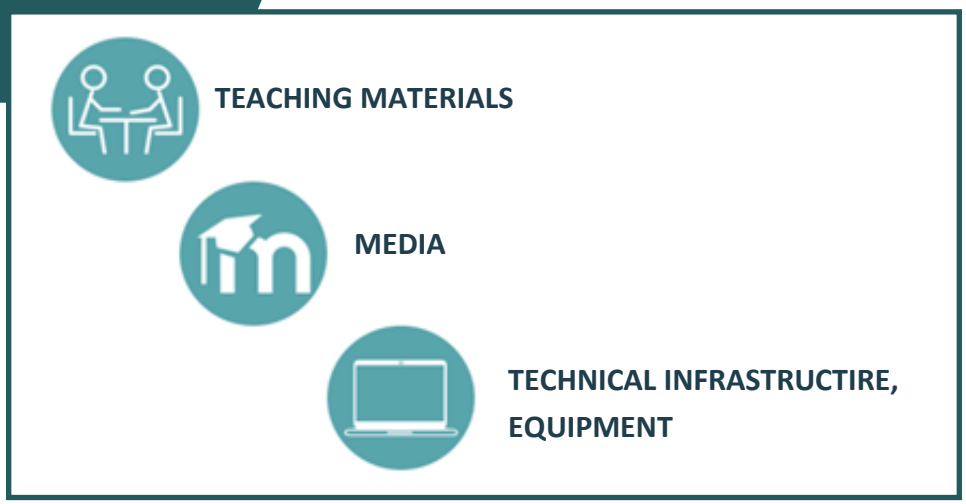
Familiarise participants with the innovation

Whenever digital elements are integrated into traditional teaching formats in adult education, a high degree of sensitivity to the reality of digital competence is required. The often-used figure of the digital native and the digital immigrant has long hidden the fact that digital wisdom is rare and often shows up where one would hardly have suspected it. As long as this is the case, it is highly recommended to be aware of this kind of digital obscurity in the phases of design and development. It is advisable to integrate an orientation and familiarisation phase into the blended learning educational products themselves at the beginning, focusing on the digital learning environment. This is the perfect way to introduce participants to the innovative way of working and to practice it. If the blended-learning product starts with one, two or even three on-site meetings, each participant can also bring his or her own device, they try it out together, they learn from each other, assistance can be provided by the instructor. Such an approach also leaves the instructor confident that he or she will not lose any participants in online phases.

4.6 Prepare the learning environment: the technical plan

The technical basis for a blended learning product was already created, at least in part, in the development phase, without which the development of the innovative educational product would not have been possible. However, what worked for the developers does not necessarily work for the participants. The introduction of a blended-learning product with its multimedia learning environment requires a great deal of attention in the run-up to the course, the training, etc. The participants must be able to follow the course. Realistic planning and testing of functionality may still reveal the need for investment to be able to implement the educational product satisfactorily at all. In this context, it is Important to consider which learning materials and which technical equipment the participants can provide themselves. Statements on this have already been made in the analysis phase and the design phase; they are to be consulted at this point, critically reviewed, revised if necessary and considered in the technology plan.

The analyses, planning and testing are reflected in the technical plan. It should contain statements on at least the following aspects:



Instructional material

In this context, instructional materials are understood as aids used by instructors in face-to-face lessons. These can be a blackboard, a whiteboard, a beamer, but also demonstration devices and objects or tools and machines (in craft lessons, for example). This also includes worksheets that are used in face-to-face teaching. Even though blended learning products may draw a lot of attention to the newly added digital learning environment, the didactic design of face-to-face teaching should not be neglected. Only in this way can the claim be fulfilled: The best of both worlds!

Media

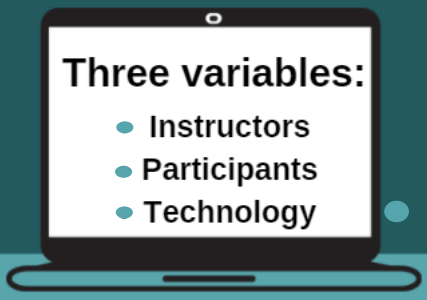
The use of media has been part of everyday teaching for decades, be it the picture projected on the wall, the sound recording or the film. These analogue media have been largely replaced by digital media in the classroom; pictures, films and sound recordings have been digitised, as have books and magazines. Web sites on the Internet, digital learning games and many other applications that can be used in the classroom have not only expanded the learning environment, but traditional face-to-face teaching itself is more multimedia than ever before. In the run-up to the implementation of the innovative educational product, access, and the rights of use of the different media must be clarified and ensured. The technology plan must make statements on this and ensure that the use of the selected digital media is possible and legally compliant. If the educational institution uses a digital learning environment such as Moodle or similar for the innovative educational product, the registration

Technical infrastructure/equipment

No electricity at every seat and no Wi-Fi in the classroom ... and half of the participants don't have a laptop. This is exactly the horror situation that throws many a lesson plan out of kilter and leaves the instructor as well as the participants perplexed. To prevent this from happening, the technology plan makes precise statements about what is required for implementation. If participants are to bring their own devices, procedures are described on how to clarify this in advance of the implementation and how to deal with deviations in the teaching situation.

4.7 Implementation - an (often) overlooked challenge

This chapter focused on the careful planning of the implementation of an innovative educational product in adult education. The preparation of the three relevant variables for the implementation of a blended learning product was dealt with in detail: Instructors, participants, and technology. This structured presentation is suitable as a starting and orientation point for one's own implementation planning, beginning with the definition of adapted procedures and ending with implementation plans, which in their planning depth serve the needs of the individual educational institution and can ensure the successful implementation of the innovative educational product.



This success cannot be taken for granted. In many areas of our society, there is a structural implementation gap, a gap between knowledge and behaviour, which is particularly evident regarding a healthy or ecological lifestyle. Even newly developed educational products in adult education do not speak for themselves; considerable resources and a planned approach are needed to place them successfully on the market.

5. Evaluation of the Educational/Training Programme

5.1 Puprose of evaluation

Educational evaluation is an ongoing process that collects and critically analyzes all available information about the student, teacher, educational program, and learning process. Evaluation help identify problems and find appropriate solution. Purpose of evaluation is to make judgments about a program, improve its effectiveness and inform about program decisions. The information gathered indicate whether the program serves its purpose and whether the teaching methods and approaches have been effective. Evaluation should include online and face-to-face classroom learning with an emphasis on combining the two to achieve the course objectives.

Effective guidance can only be done after proper evaluation. Teachers need to have the proper knowledge and information about students to be able to guide them. Students gain insight into the program through evaluation. They can express their opinion about the program, needs and expectations.

One of the purposes of evaluation is internal and external responsibility. Evaluation helps to understand the impact of the program on student learning, to determine whether there have been changes in student learning, and to determine whether the program has achieved the objectives and the needs of students. External accountability refers to reports on the effectiveness of the program to government organizations and funding agencies.

5.2 Who should be involved in evaluation?

Evaluation is less subjective and higher quality if there are several evaluators. It should involve:

LECTURER

TEACHING PEERS

COURSE LEADERS

STUDENTS

Students are not only receivers of knowledge but also active participants in the evaluation process. They should preform evaluation of teaching. Using students as evaluators should not mean replacing any other evaluation. Instead, it should be seen as an additional source of information and as part of a broader peer and self-assessment approach to the quality of teaching.

Student evaluation of teaching is usually done at the end of the semester. It can help teachers and course leaders improve the overall effectiveness of the course and determine if the course objectives have been met. Evaluation helps teachers to adapt their teaching methods and instructional approaches to students' needs. **Teachers** must constantly evaluate their teaching based on students' reactions, interest, motivation, willingness, participation, perseverance and achievement.

Student assessment data can be used as an evaluation. Evaluation assesses the quality of students' work on the basis of established criteria. Assesment can help identify change in knowledge and skills and their consistency with course objectives. Information can be gathered through a variety of products, observations and conversations that reflect how well the student is achieving the objectives. Gathered data can help teachers to point out which course objectives and content need aditional revision. Teachers provide students with feedback that leads them towards improvement.

Teachers should establish regular **peer evaluation** that provide additional insight into course design and teaching approaches. Peer evaluation consists of the review of teaching performance with purpose of assessing and improving the quality of teaching. It offers an opportunity for peers to observe one another's teaching strategies and provide feedback on course materials, teaching efforts and design. Discussion and reflection among observers and observed in crusial in peer review. Prior to the evaluation, the teacher should take into account the type and purpose of the peer evaluation, evaluator's knowledge of the assessment of the blended learning and the evaluation rubric.

5.3 How and when should evaluation take place?

Evaluation can be formative or summative. Each type has a unique role in the learning process. The use of different types of evaluation and instruments ensures objectivity and enables triangulation of data.

Formative evaluation

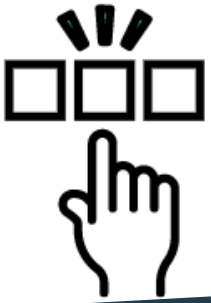
is preformed during program and is more diagnostic. It provides feedback on course content, teaching methods, learning activities and achievement of objectives. This form of evaluation has the advantage of being able to improve teaching and learning immediately. Theachers gain insight into what students have learned, have problems with or may need more help.

Formative evaluation can be done throug classroom polls, exit tickets, quizzes, check-ins, stoplight approach, rating, etc. Exit tickets are quick written resposes that show students understanding of the lesson. Check-ins include informal questions, that require little to no planning and can be inserted into any part of the lesson.

With stoplight approach students display color according to their understanding of lessons. The green light indicates that they understand the lesson, the yellow light they still have questions and red color they don't understand the lesson and need more time or help. Another strategy is rating, where students show a number from one to five to show their understaning of the lesson.

Summative evaluation

is conducted at the end of a semester, term or unit. Its purpose is to provide information on the achievement of program objectives and student specific learning outcomes. Students show the acquired knowledge and achieved standards. Teachers can preform summative evaluation with test, project, portfolio, etc.



5.4 What should be evaluated?

The main categories of evaluation are teaching, learning, course outcomes, learning resources and quality of assessment.

The teaching category includes the following criteria: relevance of the proposed activities, quality of teaching materials, communication tools, organization of curricular units. In the sub-category, lecturers, we evaluate scientific or pedagogical slills, dynamism and monitoring in the implementation of face-to-face and online activities, skills to motivate students, the quality of feedback to students, etc.

The learning category includes interactions within and between groups, assessment strategies, development of curricular competencies, type and relavance of assessment tools, etc.

Evaluation of **course outcome** should reflect learning goals of the course. Learning outcomes indentify the specific knowledge and skills that student should be able to do at the end of the course. They can be graded or ungraded. Students can demonstrate skills through writing, successfully accomplishing tasks, creation of a product or presentation, etc.

The evaluation of **learning resources** evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning resouces in achieving the goals and objectives of teaching. Teachers are responsible for evaluating the learning resouces they use in their classroom. Evaluation can be preformed pre-use, in-use, or post-use. Pre-use evaluation measures the potential of learning resorses, what teachers and students can do with them in the classroom. In-use and post-use evaluations determine how successful learning materials are.

The **evaluation criteria** represent different lenses or perspective through which the evaluation can be viewed. They play a normative role and should be used as a basis for developing evaluative questions. The following criteria should be considered in the evaluation:

COHERENCE

should be a priority in blended learning. It is based on how well the classroom fits together, how the different parts are unified, whether students acquire standards of knowledge, whether teachers integrate content form different subjects, etc.

TRANSFERENCE

is crucial element of blended learning. It addresses the questions how well can students transfer their newly acquired knowledge from one subject to another.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLE

teacher should tailor their instruction to the needs of each student, their abilities and learning style. Blended learning should take into account student's individuality, allow them to grow and learn at their own pace.

ACTIVE STUDENT PARTICIPATION

is very important for successful learning. Students should not be passive observers, but should be actively involved in the learning process.

CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING

blended learning should provide well-rounded education that encourage creative thinking.

CONTENT DELIVERY

different methods and didactic aid should be used to keep students engaged.

BLENDED LEARNING COMMUNITY

aim of blended learning is for students to work together to achieve a common goal.

CLASSROOM ENVIROMENT

should be an environment in which students and teachers look forward to spending time in. They should feel that they are making progress towards their goals.

TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP AND STUDENT-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

the relationship between teacher and students and among students is another criteria of evaluation. Strog bonds allow for more creativity and increase productivity. Working together increases the quality of the learning process.

UNDERSTANDING THE EVALUATION CRITERIA

6. The bigger picture

6.1 Blended learning in the context of unpredictable future

The spread of the coronavirus epidemic has and will have a significant impact not only on the economy but also on the education sector. The situation has highlighted the challenges that we face in our adult learning systems and showed us the possibilities and ways to develop and overcome those challenges.

Adult education institutions in all EU reported that they had faced challenges related to organising their education activities online. The main challenges faced relating to transforming face-to-face courses into online courses, establishing online relationships with learners, and securing the required equipment and infrastructure.

Even though countries are reopening at this stage of the COVID-19 crisis, the persisting health system challenges and restrictions may remain in place in upcoming years, providing uncertainty and impacting the ability of adult education organisations to continue operating. To continue with the activities, adult education organisations have to start planning forward and offer more flexibility.

One question that we could ask ourselves is a blended approach to delivering adult education the best way forward in a situation of unforeseen closures in the future of adult education centres?

While online learning is an option in many situations, including physical distancing in a pandemic, we must consider that it may not be the desired permanent option for most learners and educators, but rather an additional opportunity to complement, supplement and in some cases, replace. This is where blended learning comes in place – allowing one to experience and benefit from both "worlds": online and in-classroom learning while fostering communication and personal relationships.

Considering the uncertainty, it is clear that it is necessary to urgently adapt the pedagogical approach to a current situation that would also be flexible enough to be implemented in the unpredictable future as well. In a recent report prepared by ET 2020 Working Groups, it is suggested that adult learning system will have to be reformed to offer their training more through blended and online delivery modes as opposed to face-to-face environments, while at the same time emphasising the importance of face-to-face learning and ensuring a blended or online delivery of high quality.

"*To ensure continuity of learning, the future of adult learning is in blended and online learning.*"

However, lots of work still needs to be done to implement and successfully use the blended learning model and remove all barriers to online learning for all learners and ensure equal access. As mentioned earlier, blended learning is not only using digital devices and digital tools for learning purposes. It is a fundamental change in the way we approach the whole learning experience; thus, learners, educators, and organisations have to prepare for it. Here are some actions to consider when implementing blended learning:

TRAINING EDUCATORS AND LEARNERS

To be able to implement a blended learning approach to adult education, all actors (educators and learners) need to have access to technology and a certain level of digital skills. Otherwise, only some of them benefit from this approach. This also means that very likely it will not be the ones with the lowest qualifications. Thus, it is essential to implement strategic programmes to continue to facilitate the acquisition of needed digital skills. It is also equally important to teach educators digital tools available and how to use their digital skills and tool available when implementing blended learning.

REDEFINING THE ROLE OF EDUCATOR

The move to blended learning has inspired educators to redefine traditional teaching roles. The word "facilitator" has emerged as an alternative to "teachers," bringing a different focus. While in traditional learning, teacher/educator plays the central role, it is not the case in blended learning. In blended learning, teachers are no longer the primary source of information. Thus, teachers in this context become "facilitators". The facilitator emphasises empowering students with the skills and knowledge required to make the most of the online material and independent study time, guiding students toward the most meaningful experience possible.

SUPPORTING EDUCATORS

As organising blended learning requires constant adaptation of teaching, educators' different attitudes towards education and willingness to change become relevant. It is unrealistic to expect all educators to be suddenly highly experienced and competent in blended learning approaches in a few months. Therefore, educators should have the opportunity, collaborative support, and willingness to take risks and innovate to adapt their pedagogical practices in a way that is effective for their learners.

PROVIDING ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

The blended learning model strongly depends on technical resources. However, it is essential to consider that these tools/devices might not be available to all learners. Thus, ensuring their availability and reliable infrastructure (including broadband and Wi-Fi) to all learners is paramount to creating an equal opportunity learning environment.

NO ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL MODEL

Finding the right blend demands careful consideration of pedagogical approach by requiring decisions about how and when to best use the different environments for independent study, collaborative enquiry, social interaction, and practical application. Educators can choose from 12 main blended learning models depending on the environment, tools available, their learners, learning content, etc.

BLENDED LEARNING MAY NOT BE FOR EVERYONE

Although blended learning does work for most audiences, it is important to emphasise that there can be cases where the type of course and audience will be better off taught through the traditional teaching model. Therefore, it is essential to analyse both the course content and the learners' background to figure out whether blended learning will be the right fit at all.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER EXTERNAL STAKEHODERS

Different stakeholders can bring diverse and complementary perspectives in understanding learning barriers and offer solutions tailored to each earner's specific needs. Cooperation with professionals and services in different areas (such as social workers, intercultural mediators, NGOs and other community-based organisations from sport, cultural environment and active citizenship sectors, local authorities, and others) can be very beneficial to support the earners and support adult education organisations also in the design and the implementation of blended learning.

Even though the pandemic has highlighted the vulnerabilities in our adult education systems and caused a lot of disruption in adult education activities in general, it has also encouraged organisations to experiment, innovate and look for more flexibility in terms of learning. So now, it is the time to ask ourselves - can we afford to look at the pandemic as it will be over within a year and then go back to normal? Or should we use the opportunity to finally jumpstart transformations we have long been talking about and be ready for any other force majeure situations that will come?

Implementing blended learning – taking inspiration from existing European tools and projects.

ERASMUS+ SUPPORTING BLENDED MOBILITY AND CAPACITY BUILDING

The previous Erasmus+ programme (2014 - 2020) has offered many opportunities to support the development of learners, educators and organisations themselves. These opportunities are continuing to be provided in the new programme (2021 - 2027) through:

- Partnerships for cooperation for adult education organisations to exchange good practices, experiences and design innovative teaching methodologies and products with partners from other European countries.
- Educators professional development through staff mobility activities. Such mobility activities aim to address dividual training needs in specific areas such as digital skills and tools necessary for organising blended learning. The activities range from training courses, job shadowing to teaching assignments abroad.
- Blended mobility makes an additional contribution to improving digital competence due to the online element. Therefore, the new programme strengthens and further encourages the use of virtual cooperation to complement physical mobility.

EPALE PLATFORM

EPALE is a European, multilingual, open membership community of adult learning professionals, including adult educators and trainers, guidance and support staff, researchers and academics, and policymakers. EPALE is funded by the Erasmus+ programme. It is part of the European Union's strategy to promote more and better learning opportunities for all adults. It provides a wealth of high-quality, accurate information relevant for adult learning practitioners. In EPALE, you can find articles and resources shared by adult educators from all over the EU in various areas, including blended learning.

ERASMUS + PROJECTS

Besides the "Flip Edu Up" project, here are the following examples of other projects supported by the Erasmus+ programme that may provide inspiration for planning a blended learning approach.

Boosting Educators' Competences to do Quality Blended Learning

The project promotes the development of a comprehensive training material delivered through an interactive cross-platform online resource that supports the knowledge required for the design and the implementation of blended-learning courses. This material includes a blend-it-well handbook and a training activity specially designed for educators involved in adult education aiming at identifying the gaps in their knowledge, providing them with the skills required for developing high-quality blended learning activities.

FLIP-IDEAL - Flipped Learning in Adult Education

The project aimed to promote flipped classroom methodologies in adult education and create engaging and accessible content for adult learners with low digital competencies and basic skills. In the project, we produced open learning material for adult educators on flipped learning.

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