ANALYSE

Questions to start thinking about blended learning

Introduction

The following questionnaire can be used to decide whether blended learning is a suitable solution for your situation. It is designed to make you think about the different aspects and stakeholders involved in your specific circumstances. It can be used by lecturers and educational support staff. You can consider this questionnaire as a guideline and add your own questions to it. This questionnaire helps you decide on whether blended learning would fit your needs.

Questionnaire context analysis

Need analysis

A blended learning solution can be chosen for several reasons. In the following section we will introduce you to the most frequent ones.

Organisation, management and teacher's motivation

- Time gain (please note: designing and developing blended learning solutions is time consuming and time gain is not always realistic).
- Cost effectiveness
- Increased number of learners
- Reduced effort from the teacher's part
- Suitable for the organisation strategy

Educational/student motivation

- Increased positive learning outcomes
- Increased flexibility for the learner
- The learner is able to organise and manage his/her own study time
- Opportunity to experiment with new teaching methods
- Opportunity to enrich the study material
- Opportunity to engage remotely with the learning material
- Future proof

Please answer the following questions with regards to your situation:
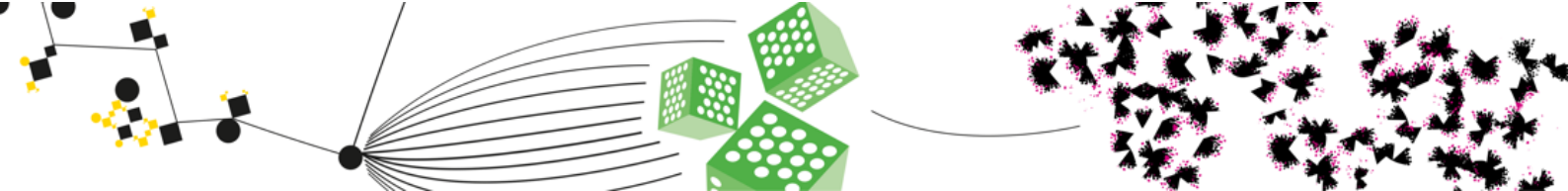
General

- Who wants to transfer to a blended learning environment? Is there enough support and willingness to change?
- What is the main reason to transfer to a blended learning environment?
- What additional value do you expect to gain from blended learning in your specific situation?

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In many cases blended learning did not prove to be the most suitable solution. Find out if in your working context there is a high enough level of motivation to transfer to a blended learning environment.

Context

During the context analysis you are going to decide if the right conditions are present in your organisation for the adoption of a blended learning solution. Different aspects play a role.

Organisation

Note: If it's your organisations / departments strategy to digitalize your education it might be easier to receive support and time for your blended course.

- What is the vision of your organisation on ICT and education?
- Does your organisation have strategic guidelines regarding ICT and education? If yes, what are these guidelines?
- Is there any support available for the design, development and implementation of a blended course?
- Are there courses or workshops available to help you in the design of a blended course?

Equipment / Facilities

Note: Most Universities offer some kind of facility to support the creation of online materials but it is not always clear on how you could use them.

- Is there a studio available to record videos? Are there any costs involved?
- Are there tools available to design and develop online learning materials?
- Are there software licences available? If so, list them.

Online learning environment

Note: An online learning environment (for example a Learning Management System) is used to organise your online learning materials. We would recommend to not select a new system but use an already existing system in your University. We highly recommend to avoid programming a new system for a specific course because of time constraints.

- Is there an online learning environment available within the organisation?
- What are the characteristics of this environment? Is it closed or open?
- Is there support staff available?
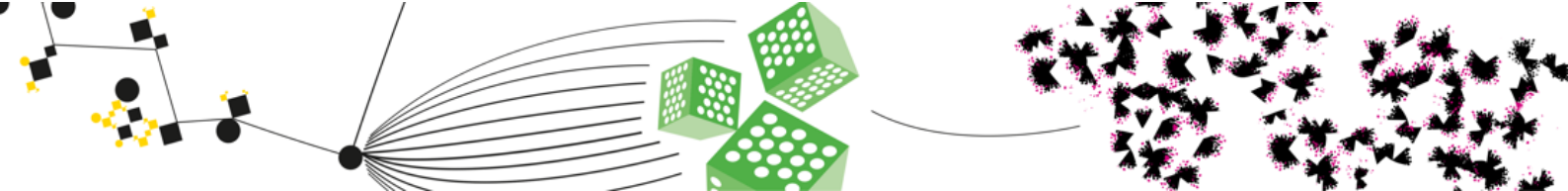- Are there some good templates you can (re)use?

Financial

- What budget is available for a blended course (design, development, implementation and evaluation)?
- What budget is available for the design of learning materials? Try to find out at least the following aspects:
    o Are there any costs for licences?
    o Are there costs for the support by support staff (for example technical or didactical employees)?
    o Are there any costs for the use of a recording studio?

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o Are there costs for workshops/courses?
- What is the payback period of the course?
- Is there any central budget available to support ICT and Education?

Time
Note: Creating a blended course can be very time consuming. Especially video recordings. It is an investment for the upcoming years. Start as early as possible.

- How much time is available before the course starts?
- How much time is available from teachers?
- How much time is available from technical employees, and/or instructional designers and other support staff?
- How large is the course (e.g. amount of ECTS/hours for students)?

Teaching methods
How much experience does your organisation have with the following teaching methods?

- Video
- Webinar/virtual class
- Pen cast
- Digital assessment
- Discussion platforms

Even if you gave a "negative" answer to most of the above questions, you can carry on with the blended learning analysis phase, yet it is important to be aware of the actual situation of your organisation.

Target group
During the target group analysis phase you are going to explore the characteristics of the designated teachers and students for your intended blended learning course. A distinction is made between teachers and students. In this case the teacher is seen as the content expert while the student as the client. In a blended learning course, more actors are involved, for example those providing support and coordination. These roles are described as part of the following context analysis.

Teacher
What type of experience does the teacher have when it comes to online education?

- What is the experience of the teacher in terms of designing and developing videos / standing in front of a camera?
- What is the experience of the teacher with online environments?
- Does the teacher have any affinity with online learning?
- Is the teacher motivated to transition to a blended learning environment?
- Is there enough time available for the teacher to become acquainted with blended learning?

Student
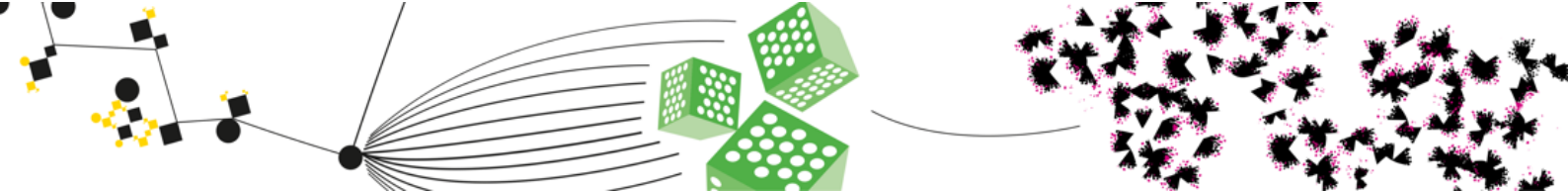What is the experience of the student with online education?

- Is there a need for self directed learning (independent time management)?

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- Is there a need for remote learning (e.g. travel time/expenses/multiple commitments)?
- Are the students capable of organising and managing their learning at their own pace?
- What is the curriculum outline of the students who are intended to follow the blended course? Do students follow traditional courses at the same time?
- Are the students intrinsically motivated to follow the intended course?
- What is the relationship among the students? Are they already familiar with each other?
- Is your student group geographically dispersed? Can they be on one physical location at all during the course?

Content analysis:

During the content analysis phase content related information is collected. Such process is guided by the following overarching question: What do you want your students to learn through the intended blended learning course? Please note this is not yet about the actual design of your course.

- What is the main learning objective of the course*?*
- Is there existing teaching material available that contribute to this objective?
- Is there existing online teaching material available that contribute to the main learning objective?
- Is there existing traditional teaching material available (assessment questions, reading materials, assignments, articles, etc.) that you want to re-use?

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