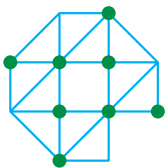


Blend your education

Blended learning

Examples guide



Acceleration plan

Educational innovation
with ICT



Facilitating professional
development of lecturers

Examples Guide blended learning

Blended learning comes in many forms. This can make it difficult to properly understand what blended learning actually means and when a 'blend' is successful. Examples of blended learning from practice can be enlightening and inspiring and give an idea of what is possible. At the same time, an example can also have a discouraging effect, for instance because it seems too complex to be reused, it is unclear what the underlying principle is, there is no description of what setbacks have been overcome, or simply because too little is known about the design's intent and effects (Bos, 2022).

The literature often refers to 'best' or 'good' practices'. The idea behind using such examples from practice is that they potentially lead to knowledge sharing, which in turn can lead to making better-informed decisions in one's own educational development (Jallow & Johansson, 2015). This is partly why it is important to clearly elaborate examples and to analyse and clarify both the positives and negatives, as well as what effective principles underpinned them.

Characterising good practices

Arendale (2010) characterises good practices as a wide range of individual activities, policies, and programmatic approaches to initiate positive changes in students' attitudes or behaviour. He breaks down good practices into three levels:

- A. Promising educational practice:** An example that provides a comprehensive explanation of blended design in practice, the choices made during the design process and the initial experiences. Aspects that are discussed include how the design came about, what dilemmas were encountered and what the next steps are. This could be a further development of 'the blend' or an evaluation process. The emphasis is on the word 'promising', since the example is not yet well researched (i.e. not yet 'evidence-informed').
- B. Validated educational practice:** A promising example that has undergone rigorous evaluation and for which positive results in terms of study success, motivation and/or connectedness have been measured. Or an example where other goals formulated beforehand have been achieved and demonstrated. The evaluation design may be experimental or quasi-experimental and, in terms of approach, be quantitative, qualitative or mix-method. A similar term used to describe such examples is an 'evidence-informed' practice.



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C. Exemplary educational practice A well-described and validated example of blended education that has been successfully replicated (i.e. with similar and positive results) in a different context. This may be, for example, with a different target group, teaching situation or teaching team.

Creating evidence-informed practices

To develop examples at Level B – validated educational practice – you can use the ‘Good practices of evidence-informed educational innovation with IT’ template developed by the Acceleration Plan in 2020. Although this template was not developed specifically for blended learning, it does provide a sound basis for thoroughly conceptualising an example within one’s own institution. [You can find more information about the template here.](#) Keep in mind that when describing the example, not only the success story is relevant, but also – and importantly – the context behind this story. How did the success come about? What failures preceded this? What principles mattered? By analysing and describing the context, it becomes clear why the example was a success, and whether it can be replicated successfully. Consider, therefore, describing the development time available, characteristics of the target group, characteristics of the end users (lecturers) and characteristics of the learning environment. It is also important to consider the rationale behind the teaching design and the knowledge gained by the teaching team during the design process (Bos, 2022).

Collecting good practices in your own organisation

It is clear from the above that collecting good (and not so good) examples has to be done carefully. Indeed, a good design for blended learning is not created arbitrarily and therefore cannot be replicated at random. In other words, blended learning is not a one-size-fits-all approach that you can copy-paste. Nevertheless, as humans we like to learn from each other and good practices are often inspirational, especially if they come from our own institution – or even better, within the same discipline. After all, the context is already familiar and it is more likely that the example can be replicated. It is also easier to get in touch with the designers of the example to better understand how its success came about.

Some tips for finding internal examples of blended learning and making them visible are given below.

1. Introduce a reward for providing good practices and link this to an event, such as an education day. Give the reward professional appeal, with the intention of awarding it recurrently. Make sure you have in place a clear procedure, a judging panel and broad internal communication on the reward. Give lecturers (and students!) ample time to submit their nominations and actively canvass for examples among educational experts and ICTO staff. Make the nominations visible on an internal website and provide support for engaging and substantive contributions. A good practice of this is [the Blend Event of Avans University of Applied Sciences](#).
2. Develop your own template for describing and reviewing examples. Make it practical and easy to use. Share the template as widely as possible in the organisation and support lecturers and educational designers in developing their own examples. You can also choose not to distribute the template but use it as a questionnaire for intakes or interviews when collecting examples from lecturers. Use the elaboration of the example as an entry point to conduct academic research into the effect of the blended design and whether it is replicable.
3. Also organise a ‘best failure’ event, because you can learn a lot precisely from mistakes. You can make it a relaxed and approachable café-style event in which it is easy to create a safe atmosphere. Collect some best failures in advance that will be presented and which can break the ice. Ideally, you should ask people who are considered experts in blended learning for these best failures, because they too make mistakes. After the presentations, ask attendees to share their own best failures. You could even collect the examples and share them more widely, if possible, along with the good practices.
4. Put lecturers in the BDB/BKO (teaching qualifications) programme on the trail of good practices by integrating an assignment for this into the programme. In this assignment, encourage participants to collect examples from their own environment. This requires them to engage with colleagues and perhaps even observe during lectures and lessons. Discuss these examples at a future meeting. Make sure it is possible for the examples to be shared more widely at a later stage.
5. And don’t forget to network! Educational experts, ICTO advisers, DLO advisers and other experts at faculties have detailed knowledge of what is happening in ‘their’ environment. Use this network to collect good practices, share them and measure their impact.

Get inspired

In the last section of this guide, you will find an overview of online sources with useful examples, arranged according to the three levels of good practices (Arendale, 2010). The examples can be found on the universities' websites or on YouTube.

Level A: Promising educational practice:

While the examples below are promising, they have not yet been rigorously evaluated.

Institution	Study programme	Academic year	Brief description	Link
HAN University of Applied Sciences	N/A	N/A	Training Online <i>Binden en Boeien voor docenten</i> (how to connect and inspire, for lecturers), by students and lecturers. The example is a mix of the content of the course, which is relevant for blended learning and its conception, which is designed online.	Article and video
Avans	Commercial Economics	Full curriculum	This article explains the elements that make up the blend, with practical examples on knowledge clips and how the different learning environments are harmonised.	Web page

Avans	Nursing	Year 1	An article with a video of the designer in which they explain the example. The elaboration is based on the template 'Good practices of evidence-informed educational innovation with IT' and is therefore very clear. The focus is on using online feedback tools and making the students involved digitally proficient.	Web page
Radboud University	Accounting	Year 1	Practical explanation of using interactive learning resources with H5P.	Web page
Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (HvA)	Social Work	Year 1	Brief explanation of the blend with success stories and points for improvement. See more examples of the HvA in this playlist on YouTube .	YouTube
TU Delft	Technical Public Administration	Year 1	Using game didactics and peer feedback to develop a scalable programme where students work on each other's assignments.	Web page

Level B: Validated educational practice

The examples below, known as evidence-informed practice, are promising and have been rigorously evaluated.

Institution	Study programme	Academic year	Brief description	Link
Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences	Finance & Control	Year 1	Example of a blended design that focuses on improving study success, dealing with level differences and teachability.	YouTube video
Avans	Business Administration	Year 2	An article with video of the designer explaining the design. The elaboration is based on the 'Good practices of evidence-informed educational innovation with IT' template and therefore worked out very clearly. The focus is on effectively mixing online and offline learning with a variety of activating working forms.	Web page
Radboud University	Social Sciences	N/A	Research: Integrated maths education through the use of an online learning environment.	Web page
TU Delft	Master Design Theory and Methodology	N/A	Redesign of lectures held for 370 students to the transfer knowledge via podcasts and in-depth learning in groups of 25 students.	Web page

Level C: Exemplary educational practice

These examples involve validated educational practice that has been successfully replicated in multiple educational settings, with similar positive results.

Institution	Study programme	Academic year	Brief description	Link
Utrecht University	N/A	N/A	Article on classroom design that harmonises with blended and hybrid learning design. Started in 2016 and extensively tested.	Web page
TU Delft	Cross-faculty	45 courses	PRIME is an innovative maths programme that uses a model and method to teach 20,000 students the basics of maths	Website with case studies and research.



The Acceleration Plan for Educational Innovation with ICT is a four-year programme focused on bringing initiatives, knowledge, and experiences for digitalisation together. The programme is an initiative of SURF, the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences, and the Association of Universities, and is organised in eight acceleration zones. In the zone Facilitating professional development for lecturers, 16 institutions are working on improving the professional development of lecturers in Dutch higher education.



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