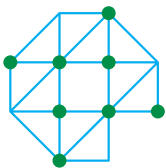


Blend your education

# Rating tool for learning spaces

Instruction



**Acceleration plan**  
Educational innovation  
with ICT



Facilitating professional  
development of lecturers



## Blend your education Rating tool for learning spaces

Instruction

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**Acceleration plan**  
Educational innovation  
with ICT



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## Rating tool for learning spaces

<b>TARGET GROUP</b>	Logistics services and lecturers
<b>FORM</b>	Framework + rating form
<b>TIME NEEDED</b>	Variable
<b>LEVEL</b>	Course, programme and institution

### Background

Does the design of the on-campus learning environment foster the type of active learning that you as a lecturer, team or institution aspire to achieve with blended learning? This question is often answered in the negative. It is therefore important to gain insight into which aspects of learning spaces do not sufficiently foster the desired behaviour. The purpose of doing so is to develop on-campus learning spaces in such a way that they reflect the institutional vision of education. But how do you gain insight into this? What factors should you pay attention to?

To support this, EDUCAUSE has developed the Learning Spaces Rating System (LSRS), a framework for identifying the potential performance of learning spaces. That is, to assess what learning activities are possible in the available on-campus learning spaces. The LSRS does not prescribe any particular didactics but analyses the possibilities of specific spaces from a broad perspective. The relationship to an institutional vision of education and learning plays a significant role here.

### Method

This product consists of two documents. The first is the framework itself, which contains descriptions of all the rating criteria. The framework also describes who is best placed to perform the rating, as well as a number of considerations and approaches to improve a particular aspect. A rating form in Excel is appended to this product. This form allows the user to enter all the rating scores, based on which the final score is automatically calculated.

The product is intended for logistics services, such as scheduling or facilities managers, but individual lecturers or, for instance, housing project managers can also use it.

The tool can serve to understand the potential of learning spaces in relation to educational design. For example, a lecturer can complete the worksheet for one specific classroom and use the score to determine suitability for the intended education. But the tool can also serve to establish a benchmark based on which learning spaces can be converted, if necessary. For example, a workgroup focused on innovative learning spaces can use the tool to identify which learning spaces deserve priority when it comes to innovation and improvement.

You use the product by rating all the criteria in the appended worksheet. Follow the instructions provided in the worksheet and fill in all the fields. You can also add an explanation of each rating. The rating scores are calculated automatically.

Once you finish rating your chosen learning spaces, you can use the result for various purposes. For example, consider drawing up an action plan for modifying learning spaces or understanding the possibilities or impossibilities of learning spaces, and make that information available to lecturers seeking learning spaces that match their design.

### Explanation

The LSRS is aimed only at formal learning spaces intended to facilitate F2F learning activities on campus. It provides a range of elements covering organisational aspects, such as planning and managing learning spaces, as well as the design of the spaces, such as colours and furniture. Part A comprises three sections, which deal mainly with the surrounding campus context, planning and ongoing development, management and support. Part B contains four sections which deal with specific features of the learning spaces themselves. Examples include furniture, fittings, technology and inclusion.

Many of the factors are complementary or mutually reinforcing. The tool can also be used in a modular way, for example by rating specific sections or aspects to suit one's own context or purpose.

### An example of application

Employee X is involved in a housing project at University Y. Three learning spaces are to be modified with the aim of facilitating blended and active learning. A meeting with key stakeholders, including the commissioning party, lecturers, facility services and educational experts, is scheduled to take place soon.

The staff member rates the three learning spaces using the LSRS and makes a printout for all meeting participants. During the meeting, the staff member explains which issues

require the most attention during the modification. The technology, in particular, is inadequate and the furniture is too static. Moreover, none of the windows can be opened, which leads to many complaints.

During the meeting, the participants discuss the relevant points based on the rating scores. The discussion focuses on how poor scores on specific points relate to the campus vision. The workgroup decides, on the basis of the outcome, that flexible furniture will be purchased. A pilot is also launched to try out new technology. The workgroup sees the value of using the LSRS and instructs the staff member to perform a scan of another building. Based on this scan, the workgroup formulates universal principles for housing projects.

### Want to read more?

- [Official publications website of the Learning Space Rating System](#)
- [7 things you should know about the Learning Space Rating System](#)
- [Article about the significance of the instrument](#)

## Justification and sources

This product was originally developed by EDUCAUSE and has been used with permission in this toolkit. Although the toolkit was designed for the US context, it also lends itself well to the Dutch context. Many criteria in the toolkit are based on insights from architecture, supplemented by educational insights.



*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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