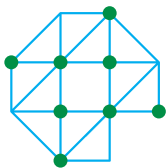


Blend your education

Tools for designing and implementing blended learning



Acceleration plan
Educational innovation
with ICT



Facilitating professional
development of lecturers



Blend your education

Tools for designing and implementing blended learning

Acceleration Plan Educational Innovation with IT
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with ICT

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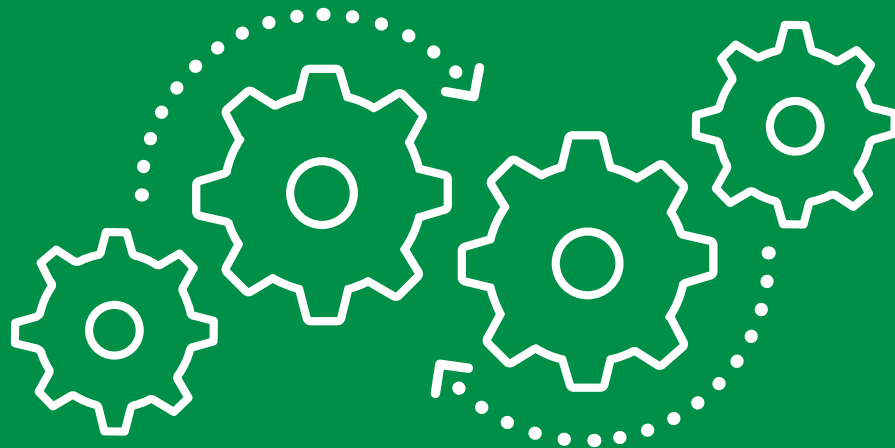


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Introduction



Introduction

Blended learning is high on the agenda of educational institutions in the Netherlands. Although there are many definitions of blended learning, the common denominator is the search for the best possible blend of learning activities. From a student-centred perspective, the focus is on enriching the learning experience. This enrichment is facilitated by a harmonious integration of different strategies and combining face-to-face interaction with information and communication technology (IT). This creates a carefully thought-out blend of learning activities that take place in different locations and also engage students outside classroom contact time – with each other, with the lecturer(s) and with the learning content.

However, designing and implementing blended learning is an extensive and complex task that requires action at different levels and from different target groups. First, it is the lecturers who design and facilitate blended learning, both at course and programme level. Consider, for example, redesigning a lecture, module or the entire curriculum. Furthermore, several organisational prerequisites need to be in place to support lecturers in facilitating blended learning. This relates to the broader implementation issue, where there are important tasks for an institution's support departments and managers. They are responsible for identifying and, where possible, consolidating these organisational preconditions.

To support those involved in this, a tool has been developed in aid of designing and implementing blended learning, both at lecturer level and at programme and organisational level. The result is a toolkit called 'Blend your teaching: Tools for designing and implementing blended learning'. In this publication, blended learning is construed as a design issue rather than a digitalisation issue. After all, the goal is to provide good education, and blended learning is the means to that end. And while digital technology plays an essential role in blended learning, a carefully considered design is the underlying premise. Once the design has been established, it is about finding the right support with technology, interwoven with didactics and the learning space.

This publication serves as a toolbox of various sub-products with tools, resources and inspiration for lecturers, support departments and managers. Each of these three target groups has its own route planner for navigating through the toolkit. The products in the toolkit, which feature many concrete tips, examples, tools and worksheets, will give you a running start in designing and implementing blended learning.

Good luck and enjoy using the toolkit!

Structure and features

Goal

The immediate purpose of the toolkit as a whole is to support the design and implementation of blended learning at different levels with evidence-informed¹ and practical tools, elaborated into sub-products. Its indirect – and ultimate – goal is to enhance the quality of education by creating the best possible learning experience within your own educational context. In practice, blended learning also has different sub-goals, such as activating students, intensifying contact time, personalising education by adding more flexibility and differentiation, and/or making it more authentic by adding more context.

Levels

The toolkit and products provide guidance at three levels:

- 1. Designing and implementing blended learning for individual lecturers or teaching teams**, such as finding an appropriate design methodology or selecting a suitable working form.
- 2. Designing and implementing blended learning at programme level**, such as strengthening connectedness between students or identifying available facilities.
- 3. Implementing blended learning at institution level**, such as establishing a vision, creating a shared language and identifying organisational prerequisites.

Target group

The primary target group consists of lecturers or teaching teams who will design or redesign their education for blended learning. The secondary target group consists of support departments and managers who focus on organisational prerequisites and the broader implementation issue at institution level. All the products developed for blended learning are aimed at universities, but most of the resources are also suitable for other educational contexts (e.g. vocational or secondary education).

Basic principles

The main premise is to provide lecturers, support departments and managers with concrete and practical tools. Because so much material is available, you often can't see the wood for the trees. This toolkit brings together existing tools, models, methodologies and instruments.

In putting together the toolkit, the creators regularly sought cooperation with institutions and other working groups.

More specifically, the following supplementary principles guided these efforts:

- Deployable at all levels.
- Useful for different target groups.
- Evidenced-informed approach.
- Building on existing resources.
- Open source and easy to contextualise.
- Available in Dutch and English (except for some instruments).

Method

The products in this publication can be used separately. They have a similar structure, starting with a clear Reading Guide that provides an introduction, method and explanation of the content. Some products also have worksheets or accompanying tools in, for example, Excel or an external tool.

There are two approach routes for users to select the right products:

1. From the route planners for each target group: a route planner that suggests a more or less logical sequence of products has been created for all three target groups. Each product is briefly explained.

2. From the product overview: users are also free to directly select a product suited to their needs. This is best done using the handy product overview with concise descriptions of all products.

¹ In an evidence-informed approach, existing knowledge and research results are used as inspiration.



Route planner for the lecturer



SHARED LANGUAGE

Always start with the definition.
What are we actually talking about?
Use the poster or discussion cards separately, or do the entire workshop.

VISION ON EDUCATION

Discuss and analyse your own vision of education, or that of your institution.
What does it really say? What are the core values? And how do you translate these into practice?

EXAMPLES

Good examples are infectious. We have therefore created a handy guide containing many inspiring examples of blended learning in practice.

GETTING STARTED WITH BLENDED LEARNING

Plot your starting point with handy tools.
Do you want to begin with small steps or aim high from the start? And how is your current educational design set up?

ENGAGE IN DISCUSSIONS

The handy set of accompanying discussion cards facilitates constructive discussions with your colleagues about the what and why of blended learning.

ACTIVATING WORKING FORMS

You need to think carefully about the working forms you are going to use to achieve the right kind of activation.
How do you choose a suitable working form? And what inspirational examples are there?



DESIGN METHODS

Time to design the learning activities and assessment! Quickly find a suitable method with a handy overview. It might be useful to first read the [SLO curriculum](#) range (in Dutch).

SOCIALISATION

Good socialisation is essential in blended learning. It is related to study behaviour, wellbeing and feeling at home somewhere. Easy-to-use infographics help you quickly find concrete tools to shape this within your course or programme.



DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

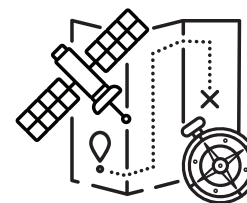
The digital learning environment requires a robust design. Think of clear communication channels, your visibility as a lecturer and a clear structure. *How do you set to work designing this? And what should you consider?* There is a handy guide with more information on this.

PHYSICAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Which facilities are available in terms of learning spaces? Are these appropriate to what you aim to teach? There is a selection tool to assist you with this. Make an overview of all the available spaces so that you can make a selection that allows you to implement your design in the available learning spaces.

TOOLS

Tools are a key element of blended learning. *But how do you choose the right tool to suit your purpose? And where can you draw inspiration about all the possibilities?* This product features a rubric and examples.



Plan your own optimal route

WHAT ELSE IS THERE?

This toolkit has many more products that can help you design and implement blended learning:

- A workshop designed to understand the organisational prerequisites
- An infographic with change strategies and tips to differentiate among lecturers.
- An identification tool to survey the entire campus in terms of layout.
- Design cards to develop a new and innovative learning space.



Route planner for the support department



SHARED LANGUAGE

Always start with the definition.
What are we actually talking about?
Use the poster or discussion cards separately, or do the entire workshop.

VISION ON EDUCATION

Discuss and analyse your own vision of education, or that of your institution.
What does it really say? What are the core values? And how do you translate these into practice?

CHANGE STRATEGIES

As a support department, you often face change processes and many differences between lecturers when implementing blended learning. *What strategies can you use in the process? And how can you take into account the differences between lecturers?* These infographics provide handy tips on how to do this.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementing blended learning also involves getting the organisational prerequisites right. Support departments have an important role to play in this. A self-scan gives you insight into those preconditions and allows you to work towards an action plan.

ENGAGE IN DISCUSSIONS

The handy set of accompanying discussion cards facilitates constructive discussions with your colleagues about the what and why of blended learning.

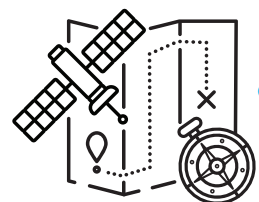


DESIGN METHODS

Time to design the learning activities and assessment! Quickly find a suitable method with a handy overview. It might be useful to first read the [SLO curriculum range](#) (in Dutch).

EXAMPLES

Good examples are infectious. This handy overview provides many inspiring examples of blended learning in practice. Discuss these examples with lecturers to get them inspired.



Plan your
own optimal
route



RATE THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Active learning is a key principle of blended learning. However, the physical learning environment is not always adequately equipped for this purpose. Consider, for instance, huge lecture halls that evoke lecturer-centred teaching. A rating tool allows you to look at the entire learning environment and identify aspects like didactics, acoustics, technology, etc. Use this rating tool as a starting point to determine which learning spaces should be reviewed.

DESIGNING SPACES

Designing learning spaces is considerably challenging. How do you come up with an innovative result? The design cards in this product will help you quickly create a workable prototype.



OVERVIEW OF SPACES

A clear overview of all learning spaces is convenient to help lecturers make a choice. You can create this overview with the tool in this product. Make it available online and discuss it with lecturers.

TOOLS

Tools are a key element of blended learning. *But how do you choose the right tool to suit your purpose? And where can you draw inspiration about all the possibilities?* This product features a rubric and examples.



DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The digital learning environment requires a robust design. Think of clear communication channels, your visibility as a lecturer and a clear structure. *How do you set to work designing this? And what should you consider?* There is a handy guide with more information on this.

WHAT ELSE IS THERE?

This toolkit has many more products that can help you design and implement blended learning:

- Tools to help lecturers quickly get started with blended learning.
- Tools for and examples of activating working forms.
- Inspiring infographics on socialisation.
- Tips for designing the digital learning environment.



Route planner for the manager



SHARED LANGUAGE

There is a lot of ambiguity about the meaning of blended learning. Therefore, always start with the definition and work towards a shared language. *What are we actually talking about?* Use the poster or discussion cards separately, or do the entire workshop.

ENGAGE IN DISCUSSIONS

Blended learning can raise many questions. A handy set of discussion cards facilitates constructive discussions with your colleagues about the what and why of blended learning.

CHANGE STRATEGIES

As a manager aiming to implement blended learning, you will be dealing with change processes and many differences between lecturers. *What strategies can you use in the process? And how can you take into account the differences between lecturers?* These infographics provide handy tips on how to do this.

IMPLEMENTATION

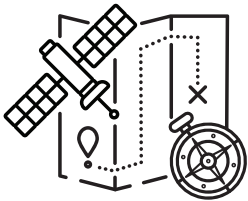
Implementing blended learning also involves getting the organisational prerequisites right. Managers have an important role to play in this. This product helps you gain insight into those prerequisites and develop an action plan for implementing blended learning at institution level.

EXAMPLES

Good examples can help to better understand exactly what blended learning means and what it looks like in practice. This handy overview provides with many inspiring examples of blended learning in practice. Discuss these examples with lecturers to get them inspired.

VISION ON EDUCATION

Discuss and analyse your vision on education with colleagues. *What does it really say? What are the core values? And how do you translate these into practice?* Having a shared vision is an important prerequisite for successful implementation of blended learning.



Plan your own optimal route

WHAT ELSE IS THERE?

This toolkit has many more products that can help you design and implement blended learning:

- Tools to help lecturers quickly get started with blended learning.
- Tools for and examples of activating working forms.
- Inspiring infographics on socialisation.
- Tips for designing the digital learning environment.
- Tools for support departments, e.g. for adapting the physical learning environment.

Product overview

1 Shared language

This product is intended for creating shared language on blended learning with lecturers/teaching teams. It consists of a poster, several discussion cards and a workshop. The poster is a standalone product and can be displayed in a team room, for example. The discussion cards are part of the workshop.

Target group: Lecturers, support departments and managers
Form: Poster, discussion cards and workshop
Time: 90 min. (workshop)
Level: Course, programme and institution

2 Developing a vision

This product contains concrete working forms to develop a vision for education. These working forms focus on making explicit the underlying core values and how they translate into practice.

Target group: Lecturers/teams, support departments and managers
Form: Working forms
Time: Variable
Level: Programme and institution

3 Getting started with blended learning

This publication is designed to help lecturers or teaching teams to get started quickly. It includes three worksheets that help lecturers determine the best approach, prioritising particular course or curriculum components and making sure all contextual factors have been considered. Two PowerPoint presentations are also available to help you get started on designing or redesigning your course.

Target group: Lecturers/teaching teams
Form: Information + work sheets + PowerPoint presentations
Time: 10-30 minutes
Level: Course and programme

4 Design methods

Designing blended learning is challenging. To support lecturers/teams, different design methods have been developed over time. This product consists of a convenient infographic that is structured as a table. The table provides an overview of the most common methods and their characteristics.

Target group: Lecturers
Form: Infographic
Time: Variable
Level: Course, programme

5 Discussion cards for the activating blend

Using the discussion cards in this product, lecturers, managers and support staff can engage in constructive dialogue about an activating blend in the curriculum. The topics of discussion include vision & policy, leadership, professional development and facilities.

Target group: Lecturers, support departments and managers
Form: Discussion cards and workshop
Time: 90 minutes
Level: Programme

6 Socialisation in blended learning

Socialisation is essential in blended learning. It correlates with study behaviour, well-being and feeling at home. This product describes different route planners with specific tools to give shape to socialisation in your course or programme.

Target group: Lecturers
Form: Infographic
Time: Variable
Level: Course and programme

7 Getting started with working forms

As a lecturer, you need to think carefully about the working forms you are going to use to achieve the right kind of activation. But how do you choose a suitable working form? And what inspirational examples are there? This product contains a roadmap for devising your own working form, or choosing a suitable one, as well as an overview with inspiring examples.

Target group: Lecturers
Form: Roadmaps and examples
Time: Variable
Level: Course and programme

8 Ontwerpen van innovatieve onderwijsruimtes

The result of a blended redesign often leads to a greater need for innovative learning spaces. Using the cards in this product, you can quickly create a workable prototype. It works best in pairs, and preferably in collaboration between lecturers, students and support departments (logistics and/or facilities).

Target group: Lecturers, educational consultants, housing managers, interior architects
Form: Design cards
Time: 30-120 minutes
Level: Institution

9 Identification and selection tool for learning spaces

To quickly find the right space to suit the intended educational design, it is important to have a clear idea and overview of available learning spaces. The tool in this product helps facilitate this. It can be used by support departments, such as schedule managers, as well as lecturers.

Target group: Logistics services and lecturers
Form: Tool
Time: 30-60 minutes
Level: Course, programme and institution

10 Rating tool for learning spaces

The tool in this product is designed to rate specific learning spaces according to various criteria, such as furnishings, use of colour, alignment with the educational vision and more. The tool is very suitable as the basis for a campus-wide vision of the physical learning environment and to what extent this is feasible in the available learning spaces at that point in time. It gives rapid insight into which aspects need to be improved.

Target group: Logistics services and lecturers
Form: Framework + rating form
Time: Variable
Level: Course, programme and institution

11 Digital learning environment

The digital learning environment, especially its design, plays a key role in implementing blended learning. However, the digital learning environment is not always used to full potential. This product therefore contains concrete tools to achieve a fully-fledged design that incentivises learning.

Target group: Lecturers
Form: Guide
Time: Variable
Level: Course and programme

12 From goal to tool

The landscape of available tools is vast. Often lecturers can't see the wood for the trees. Moreover, it is sometimes difficult to assess whether a tool is exactly right for your needs. This product therefore features a handy rubric to score tools on usability. Links to useful sources are also included.

Target group: Lecturers and support departments
Form: List of sources and rubric
Time: Variable
Level: Course, programme and institution

13 Examples of blended learning

Good examples are infectious. This handy overview therefore features many inspiring examples of blended learning in practice. An explanation is also provided on how to collect good examples from your own institution.

Target group: All
Form: Guide
Time: Variable
Level: Course and programme

14 Implementation: Initiating an action plan

What should you consider when implementing blended learning at the institution level? This workshop, aimed primarily at managers and support staff, offers rapid insight into the prerequisites that play a role in the implementation of blended learning. The workshop was designed as a discussion session using a concrete self-scan to take stock of the situation at your institution.

Target group: Management layer and support departments
Form: Interactive workshop with self-scan
Time: 2 - 3 hours
Level: Institution

15 Change and implementation strategies

There are different strategies to approach a change and/or implementation project. These prompting boards provide an overview of approaches to encourage lecturers to implement blended learning. These approaches are supplemented by real-life examples.

Target group: Managers and support departments
Form: Prompting boards
Time: Variable
Level: Institution

In closing

This publication describes the toolkit: *'Blend your education: Tools for designing and implementing blended learning'*, which educational institutions can use to get started immediately on the implementation of blended learning. The strength of the toolkit is that each product stands alone, but can also be combined and integrated with the others. In creating this toolkit, we worked closely with practitioners and gave multiple separately published resources a shared place.

One side note on the toolkit is that it is not complete, and essentially never will be. This can be both a disadvantage and an advantage. Especially with the toolkit being published for the first time, there will be users who miss certain aspects. This is only logical. But a toolbox in the shed does not always come complete either and also needs tool replacements at times. The advantage of the toolkit is that it can be continuously added to and refined in due course. It is up to practitioners to give substance to this, which could involve new products proposed by institutions or perhaps developed (or further developed) by, for instance, SURF Communities.

Blended learning is here to stay. It requires an integral and broad view on education and places a burden on lecturers (teaching teams) as well as support departments and managers. The purpose of this toolkit is to ease the burden and thereby boost creative and innovative solutions for education.

Justification and sources

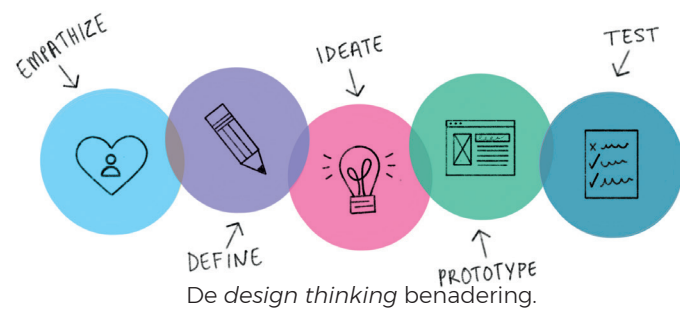
Many of the products are based on existing tools and insights from the literature. We used an evidence-informed approach, translated to the Dutch higher education context and supplemented by our own insights and experiences. Each product has its own sources, which are listed in the products themselves.

Annex

How the product came about

This publication came about through phased development, in which we used different work packages with a multidisciplinary core and workgroup and had regular consultations with the target group in a cyclical process. The three substantive work packages were structured according to three levels: course, programme and institution. There were also three peripheral work packages for communication and dissemination, evaluation and impact measurement, and project management.

In outline, an approach centred on design thinking was applied (see figure). Empathising was done in several (recurring) brainstorming sessions with the working group as well as an external sounding board group of volunteers from the field. In these sessions, exchanges took place on the needs that exist at different levels. This resulted in increasingly robust definition and concreteness of content. Using the work packages, we then set to work on further developing ideas, developing semi-finished products and testing the results with experts. Again, experts were consulted so that the approach was as evidence-informed as possible. After final delivery, the product was edited, translated and formatted, after which it was published. To ensure coherence, regular exchanges between experts and developers of the different content work packages were held. We also worked iteratively with sounding board groups of specialists in the field.





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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