

IO3 Online course: How to create interactive online teaching

This is a practical online course for all vocational teachers who are interested in analysing and developing their pedagogical strategies and practices in online environments. The goal of this course is to give you support and guidance in developing your online teaching skills.

Don't reinvent the wheel.

Discuss with colleagues, share ideas!

More information:

The material is intended for self-study, and you can complete any or all parts of it according to your needs. While it is perfectly possible to complete the course by yourself, you may also find it useful to collaborate with one or more of your colleagues.

The course material will guide you through the stages of initial planning of teaching, the actual implementation of teaching, and the work that takes place after teaching. The material is divided into six sections.

Enter online course

1. A plan and script

Task 1: Plan your online course and make a script

Planning

- i) Research on the topic.
- ii) Consider the time available for reaching the main and secondary goals of the course
 - (1) How much time is available for the course?
 - (2) Remember to inform the students about the time allocated for the course goals.
 - (3) Take students' existing knowledge and skills into account.
- iii) Choose the format
 - (1) Is the topic possible to teach in Teams, Zoom etc. or is it available online in learning environment
 - (2) Examples of digital learning platforms

Teams
Zoom
Sutori
Moodle
itslearning

- iv) Find a way to share knowledge and material with your colleagues, ask your colleagues for additional knowledge and materials for your lessons or course.
- v) Plan what output you expect from students: writing, speaking, products, presentations etc.
- vi) Give students a possibility to get to know each other, especially if they don't know you and other participants.

Scripting

- i) Set a realistic timetable for yourself to produce the course. What is your deadline?
- ii) Be aware of the story you want to tell.
- iii) Be aware of the different ways students learn and plan activities for different learners.
- iv) Set student activities in the timetable. Remember there must be a balance between active and passive activities.
- v) Write your script and make it visible for the students.

2. A course content and activating tasks

Task 2: Create course content and activating tasks

Course content

- i) Consider the content of your course and the format(s) for presenting your learning material. For example, text documents, video clips, games, podcasts, etc.
- ii) Structure: is the material organized logically? Visibility: is all related information visible, i.e. not hidden or behind many clicks?
- iii) Visual design
 - (1) What is the balance between text and visual elements?
 - (2) Do the visuals support learning?
 - (3) Could something be replaced by pictures, diagrams, videos or other visual elements?
- iv) Copyright: Before you use copyrighted material, ensure that you have permission.
- v) Accessibility
 - (1) Find out if your institution has an expert on accessibility whom you can consult when designing your materials.
 - (2) Is information on accessibility readily available to you?
 - (3) How to cater for students with, for example, visual impairments or dyslexia?
- vi) Protection of students' privacy: Consider student anonymity and follow the GDPR: tracking, sharing of content created by students, sharing content showing students (for example recordings of sessions or presentations).

Activating tasks

- i) To maintain good activity level, make sure that the students have activities to do. Avoid long lectures (live or recordings) with no interactivity. For example, are your videos divided into shorter parts with activities in between?
- ii) When students work on their own, include group work that requires communication between students. Divide long tasks into parts. Reserve time for letting students to get to know each other to make it easier for them to start working together.
- iii) Leave time for breaks and unofficial matters. Online studies may require many hours of sitting at the computer.

Tips for online lessons:

- ◆ To maintain attention when you present things: don't read from the slides, use your own words instead.
- ◆ Explain visuals, avoid walls of text.
- ◆ Make it interactive and break longer presentations into parts: activate between parts (questions, quizzes, tasks, coffee breaks, discussion, polling).
- ◆ Make yourself visible: keep your camera on at all times.
- ◆ Look at the camera every now and then to maintain eye contact.
- ◆ Ask students how they are doing – it is difficult to know without being in the same room.
- ◆ Be aware of screen fatigue in online teaching.
- ◆ Offer chances to take breaks when they need them. For example, during group work, tell them that they have X minutes for the task which includes a break that they can have at any point.
- ◆ Let students work on their own, in groups or individually – don't control every stage too much.

3. Technical equipment and software

Task 3: Choose technical equipment and software

Don't be afraid to experiment.

Test equipment and software.

Ask for help and offer it to colleagues and students.

Prepare clear instructions for new tool.

- i) What equipment and tools would support students' learning best?
For example, where can students study independently, interact in group or find recorded material?
- ii) What technical equipment and digital learning environments are available to you and your students in your organization?
- iii) What is your capability to use the available equipment and software? What is the students' capability?

4. Social interaction

Task 4: Plan how social interaction on the course will be implemented

- i) The basic rule in social interaction is that the learning environment for the students is safe!
- ii) Choose one channel where students can communicate. Follow your organisation's recommendations for the use of instant messaging apps for work.
- iii) Make rules with the students about communication during the course.

Social interaction tool examples:

- ◆ **Microsoft Teams** is a proprietary business communication platform developed by Microsoft, as part of the Microsoft 365 family of products. Teams primarily competes with the similar service Slack, offering workspace chat and videoconferencing, file storage, and application integration.
- ◆ **Google Classroom** is a free blended learning platform developed by Google for educational institutions that aims to simplify creating, distributing, and grading assignments. The primary purpose of Google Classroom is to streamline the process of sharing files between teachers and students.
- ◆ **itslearning** is a digital learning management system developed by the Norwegian company itslearning AS. It is designed for both K12 and higher education. The LMS allows teachers to deliver materials to students, including assessments, Office 365 documents, etc.
- ◆ **Moodle** is a free and open-source learning management system written in PHP and distributed under the GNU General Public License. Moodle is used for blended learning, distance education, flipped classroom and other online learning projects in schools, universities, workplaces and other sectors.

5. Feedback

Task 5: Choose ways you give and collect feedback

To give feedback

- i) Use reactions to give instant feedback during the course: stars, smilies, traffic lights etc. and let students interact.
- ii) When online, frequent feedback is especially important. Commenting on the students' work also promotes student engagement.

To collect feedback

- i) Ask students how they are experiencing the course.
 - (1) What did they learn, was it helpful?
 - (2) How did you feel during the classes?

- (3) Did you feel safe, accepted?
- (4) How would you describe the learning process? Could it be improved, how?
- (5) Did you learn what you expected, do you find it useful?
- (6) Was the learning environment adequate?
- (7) Was the teacher professional and skilled?

- ii) In Teams, Zoom etc. ask to put cameras on so that you can see the students' faces and reactions.

Choose the way you collect feedback: forms, polls, questionnaire, chat etc.

Mentimeter

Forms

Whiteboard

Be ready to change things during the course or for the next course to improve your teaching, within the original context.

6. Evaluation

Task 6: Plan the evaluation for your course

Teacher's evaluation of students

- i) The teacher should present the evaluation criteria to the students.
- ii) Choose the way students are evaluated
 - (1) Assignment (essay, mindmap, report, etc.)
 - (2) Test (multiple-choice, open-ended questions, correctly/incorrectly asserted etc.)
 - (3) Product (PDF magazine, PP presentation, object (wooden, etc.), interview, etc.)
- iii) Decide how often students will be evaluated.
- iv) Self-evaluation and self-reflection are also very important for students' own development.
- v) Peer review between students is a good way to deepen their understanding of the task at hand, and also their self-assessment skills. It can also give you a more in-depth view of how students see and understand the tasks.

Teacher's self-evaluation

- i) Compare the learning outcomes to the goals.
- ii) Was I able to implement online teaching successfully?
- iii) Were the technical tools selected correctly?
- iv) Do I have good feeling and am I satisfied with the lesson?