

Is blended learning in a lifelong learning context effective?

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1. Introduction

Professional Learning & Development (PLD) is part of the University of Twente. They offer full master programs (parttime), masterclasses, incompany trajectories and short courses in the field of Public Management and Riskmanagement.

This redesign trajectory, was the first blended experience for PLD and is executed in cooperation with the TELT department from April 2016 till April 2017.

2. Analysis

The masterclass Riskmanagement in the public sector is a 10-week program for 5EC. Several years it has been a face to face program with meetings on each Friday. To meet the needs from professional part time learners and to make the masterclass sustainable for the upcoming years, the masterclass is redesigned to a blended format.

2. Analysis (evaluation)

We could improve the analysis phase next time by doing a more in depth analysis of the current situation and the multiple stakeholders who were involved in the design and development process. Also we would like to send a questionnaire to the potential participants to meet their expectations.

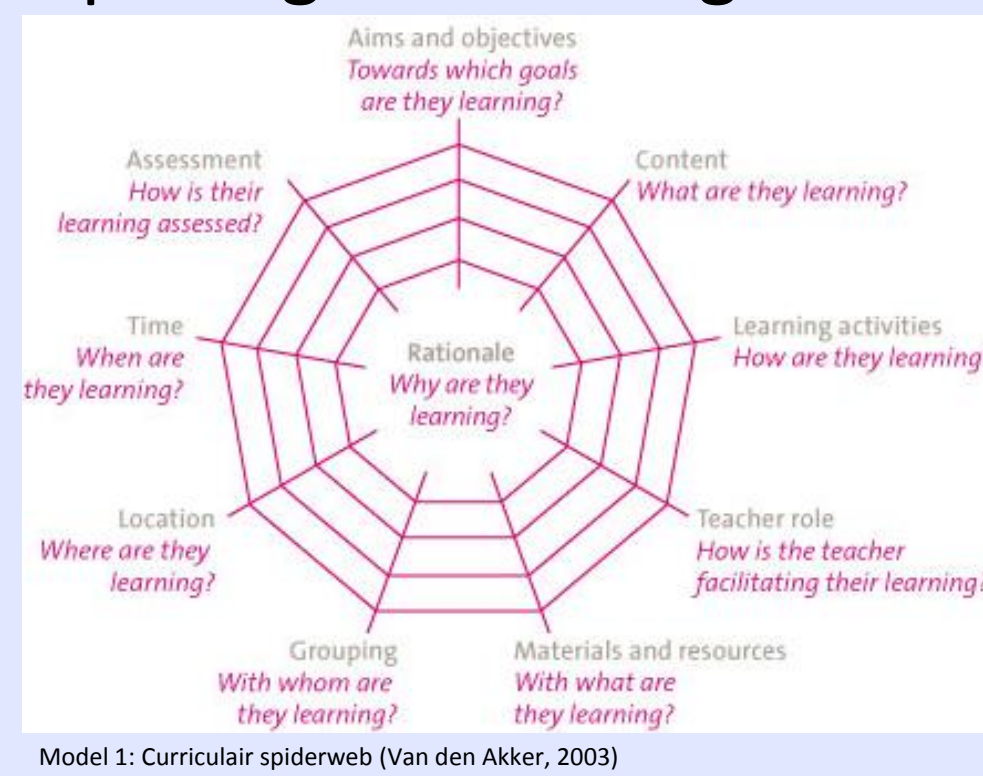
3. Design

Used principles:

- Mix of different didactical methods and different delivery formats (Kerres and De Witt, 2003)
- Variety in synchronous and a-synchronous (Piskurich, 2006) learning activities.
- Different delivery formats like face to face, video, text or images.
- Design in close collaboration with educational consultants and teacher
- Together with the management of PLD we set up the general design guidelines

Course level design:

- Rapid prototyping
- Based upon curricular spiderweb of Van den Akker (2003).
- Week structure and defined for each week the learning objectives.
- For each learning objective we described content, learning activities, resources, environment, grouping, time, assessment and role of the teacher.



Model 1: Curricular spiderweb (Van den Akker, 2003)

3. Design (evaluation)

Students and teachers were satisfied with the design of the course:

- The course met their expectations (av. 4.6 out of 5, n=11).
- The variety in learning activities was fine (av. 3.9 out of 5, n=11).

In Figure 2 is visible how each learning activity contributed tot the learning experience.

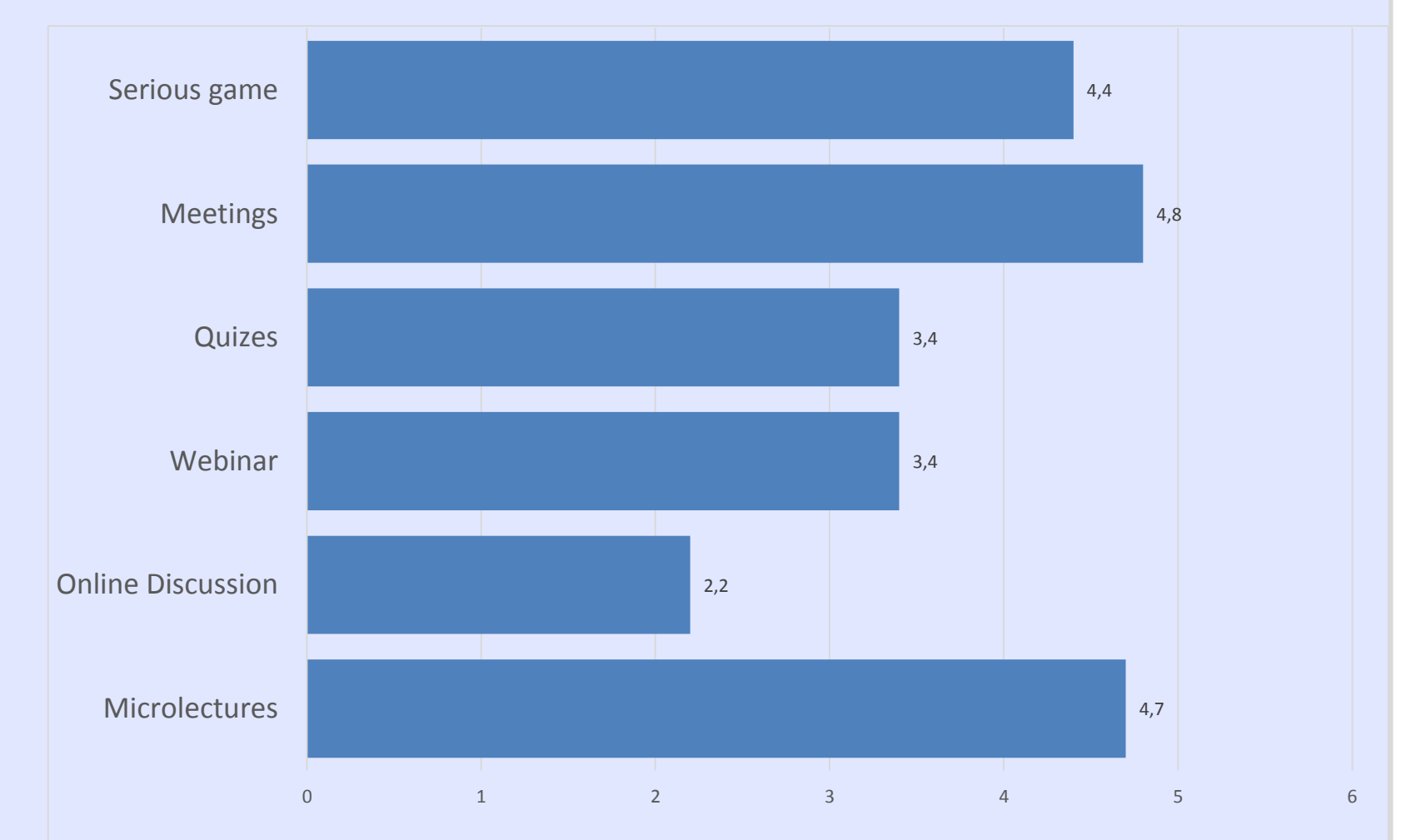


Figure 2: Contribution of the learning activity to the learning experience

Points of improvement:

- Redesign webinars
- Improve the interactivity in the course
- Improve the cohesion between online learning and the face to face meetings. So that the online component becomes a natural extension of traditional classroom learning as described by Collis and Moonen (2001).

Teacher: "I'm not a digital expert, I could easily work with the environment"

Code	Leerdoelen	Inhoud	Leeractiviteiten	Bronnen/materiaal	Leeromgeving	Groepering	Tijd	Toetsing	Doelcontrol
	Digitale cursus	Video	Lezen	Trainer	Eurodoc	Individueel	Flexibel - (15)		
	Uitleg cursus	Lezen	Lezen	Leeractiviteit module 4	Eurodoc	Individueel	Flexibel - (15)		
	Uitleg cursus	Lezen	Lezen	Deelvensterlijst	Eurodoc	Individueel	Flexibel - (15)		
	Uitleg cursus	Lezen	Lezen	Studiegids	Eurodoc	Individueel	Flexibel - (30)		
	Uitleg cursus	Lezen	Lezen	Uitleg systemen	Eurodoc	Individueel	Flexibel - (30)		

Figure 1: Course design Week structure based upon Van den Akker (2003)

4. Development

In the development phase we developed the learning activities. The video-activities were developed in close collaboration. The other learning activities were mainly executed by the lead teacher and guest speakers. In the development phase we also set up the learning environment. The educational consultants set up the course.

After a workshop, the teacher(s) and secretary were able to fill in the environment.

4. Development (evaluation)

- It is important that one person has the end-supervision, before publishing the learning activities online.
- To prevent mistakes and improve the cohesion between the different modules we advice a feedback round. This asks for a clear planning and preparation for all involved teachers and guest speakers.
- Because the fact that we worked with a new system, we had to deal with several time-consuming activities, which distracted the attention of the quality of the learning activities. Teachers and supported staff were satisfied with the system.

5. Implement

The course runs from December 2016 till April 2017 for 13 participants. During the running time of the course PLD was in the lead. The educational consultants were still available for questions and (functional) support.

5. Implement (evaluation)

During the implementation we had to deal with illness of people. Also there occurred some technical problems with the webinar system. It stays hard to prevent these kind of issues, but a clear division of roles and tasks will be helpful for future trajectories.

6. Lessons learned

- A high variety of learning activities is appreciated by participants.
- Make clear arrangements with the stakeholders about the planning, the responsibilities and the way of communication. Define backups for the most important stakeholders.
- Choose a webinar-activity only when it's suitable for the learning objective and prepare them well.
- Take care of cohesion between online learning and face to face meetings.
- Spend attention (by coaching, workshops, etc.) to all involved teachers, especially when the teacher isn't familiar with blended learning.
- Do a testrun with all roles on different devices

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