

OnlineHE project

A practical toolkit for integrating eLearning in Higher Education Curricula

Building the capacity of HE teaching staff, academics,
and learning designers in integrating eLearning into
their educational programmes



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Module [1]: State of Art – benefits and challenges

Module overview

In this module are described benefits and challenges of eLearning in higher education, what distinguishes eLearning from face to face learning and what are the advantages of eLearning compared to face to face learning.

Learning outcomes:

- *Recognize the characteristics of eLearning*
- *Understand the benefits and challenges of eLearning*
- *Compare and contrast the face-to-face learning with the eLearning*
- *Draw conclusions about Do's and Don'ts in integrating eLearning in the teaching activities*
- *Identify the level of added value for eLearning*
- *Integrate eLearning in the traditional teaching approach*

Module [1]: State of Art – benefits and challenges

Module overview

ELearning is an option that more and more Universities have started to embrace. With increasing advancements in technology, there's no way to avoid using it in the classroom altogether.

While it is not clear that one modality is superior to the other, what can be seen is that the best way to support academic outcomes is generating active learning communities both inside and outside the classroom.

Module [1]: State of Art – benefits and challenges

Units overview

- *Unit 1: Benefits and challenges of eLearning*
- *Unit 2: Face to face and eLearning*
- *Unit 3. Principles for engaging and successful eLearning*

Unit 1: Benefits and Challenges of eLearning

Benefits of eLearning

- **eLearning accommodates everyone's needs**
 - Digital revolution has led to changes in how the content is accessed, consumed, discussed, and shared
 - Depending on their availability and comfort, learners choose to learn at weekends or evenings
- **Lectures can be repeated**
 - content can be accessed an unlimited number of times
- **Quick Delivery**
 - Learners can define their own speed of learning instead of following the speed of the whole group
 - Saves time as a learner does not need to travel to the training venue
 - The learner can access information from anywhere, anytime. Distance is no longer an obstacle to learning. **For example**, learners can easily attend courses from prestigious universities like Oxford and Harvard via eLearning
 - All learner needs is a computer and an internet connection to attend classes.



Unit 1: Benefits and Challenges of eLearning

• Benefits of eLearning

- **Cost Effective**
 - No need to spend on travel or accommodation for trainers and learners, online content is reusable
 - No more fees to buy teaching equipment or materials.
 - Encourages learners with less opportunities to participate in training.
- **Adaptable**
 - Courses can be adapted by eLearning teachers to meet the needs of learners
 - Learning allows courses to adapt to different learning needs and type of learner: visual, auditory or kinesthetic
- **Immediate results**
 - Whether self-learning or with a teacher, eLearning offers a variety of ways to provide educational feedback to learners
 - Self-assessment is also possible and allows learners to monitor their progress and remediate weaknesses



Unit 1: Benefits and Challenges of eLearning

• Challenges of eLearning

- **Financial Challenges**
 - There are concerns that instructors are being hired on the basis of their eLearning experience rather than their other pedagogical qualifications.
 - Are instructors paid per student rather than per course?
- **Cultural Challenges**
 - eLearning is changing what it means to be a university instructor and provides a greater range of educational opportunities for students, but these opportunities are not without risks in terms of the skills learners bring to the online learning environment
 - learners accustomed to the classroom setting may perform differently online because of the changed relationship they perceive between themselves and instructors
 - learners may find that instructors are not sufficiently responsive because of the instructors' workload or unfamiliarity with new technology



Unit 1: Benefits and Challenges of Elearning

• Challenges of eLearning

- **Quantitative Challenges**
 - Opportunities for Big Data Tracking of Institutions, Faculty, Staff, and Students
 - Analytics can help recalculate the cost and value of education and specific programs
 - Analytics can be used to provide early interventions for at-risk students in response, for example, to students' low scores on quizzes or low interaction with the platforms
- **Qualitative Challenges**
 - Online courses may be designed and offered on demand rather than in the traditional sequential model.
 - The development of an online course requires more of an instructor's time. University scheduling cannot be expected to remain the same for an online course as for a face-to-face course.
 - Online courses and programs require 24/7 IT support
- **Accreditation Concerns**
 - Accrediting agencies exist to ensure that all education provided by higher education institutions meets acceptable quality standards

Unit 2: Face to face and eLearning

Face-to-face learning and eLearning: Advantages and Disadvantages

Face to face learning	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Direct contact with instructors and other learners	Time and place constraints
Immediate feedback from the trainer	Focused on teacher
Easier for instructors to conduct discussions	More expensive
Creating social bonds within the learner group	Study option limitations
Easier to motivate learners	Learning style accommodations are difficult
Less distractions	

Unit 2: Face to face and eLearning

Face-to-face learning and eLearning: Advantages and Disadvantages

eLearning	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Learner centered	More time for course preparation by the trainer
Flexible schedules	Not suitable for all types of learners
Flexible locations	Certain topics are hard to accommodate online
Cost effective for learners	Potentially more anxiety, confusion and online exhaustion
Possibly available to a global audience	Appreciation of the computer tool, reluctance to new technologies
Unlimited access to knowledge	Easy to plagiarize or cheat
Capacity for reuse and exchange of knowledge	

Unit 2: Face to face and eLearning

• Differences between face-to-face learning and eLearning

1. Social Interaction

- In a traditional classroom hands are raised, questions asked and answered, presentations given.
- In eLearning, this social interaction occurs through discussion boards, chat, forums and email.



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Tips:

Instructors must act as a monitor and participant. They should answer questions when needed and also be present to intervene if a discussion gets out of hand. They must also give clear instructions as to what must be done and discussed.



Unit 2: Face to face and eLearning

• Differences between face-to-face learning and eLearning

2. Where You Learn

- In a traditional classroom setting the biggest difference from eLearning is that there is a physical classroom.
- eLearning turns the world into a classroom. You can stop and start when you want to, replay/review material during the course and even after.



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Tips:

This ability to review information at the moment of need is a major advantage of eLearning. It allows learners to refresh themselves on information that would typically be forgotten immediately after a traditional class.

Unit 2: Face to face and eLearning

• Differences between face-to-face learning and eLearning

3. Instructional Materials



- Typically, when you take a course most of the material is presented verbally by an instructor, and sometimes complemented with a visual aid (Power Point Presentation).
- In eLearning the written and visual notes take the place of the traditional instructor standing in front of the classroom which means that the material is written entirely differently.

Keep these things in mind for writing effectively in eLearning:

- **Tone:** Since learners will learn what is written (or recorded) in the slide, the tone is critical.
- **Clear:** Because there won't be a teacher standing there to clarify things immediately the text must be as concise as possible to avoid the need of the learners to ask questions.
- **Short and to the Point:** Be as brief as possible while still explaining the material thoroughly. Avoid going off on unrelated content.

Unit 2: Face to face and eLearning

• Differences between face-to-face learning and eLearning

4. Audio, Visuals

- The most common method of teaching in a traditional classroom is lecture and the most common ways of lecture delivery include the lectures using PowerPoint presentations
- With eLearning you have a much greater range of media to use: simulations, interactions, scenarios, and visual storytelling.

Visual elements to be considered for a good eLearning course:

- **Font:** Styles, sizes, italics and bolding all make a difference.
- **Color:** Colors need to be complementary but also highlight specific elements.
- **Graphics and moving graphics:** symbols, photos, illustrations, animations and.
- **Order/Sequence:** Make sure the different elements appear in a sequence that makes sense. For instance, don't break up text with a photo.



Focus on making your message clear and enhancing it with your visuals. Use what is necessary but avoid mixing up too many online tools.

Unit 2: Face to face and eLearning

• Differences between face-to-face learning and eLearning

5. Level of Personalization

- In traditional teaching methods there is often a lot of info presented in a short period which makes it harder to retain or pay attention to for learners.
- Elearning courses automatically take away the time constraints on how quickly or slowly material is presented because learners get to decide how much they take in at one time.



Tips:

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Structure course with more and smaller segments that are easier to retain and also easier to work into a busy schedule. Learners can browse material they feel they already know and reread information that is more difficult.

Unit 3: Principles for engaging and successful eLearning

Do's and Don'ts in integrating eLearning

- **Don't** forget that learners are watching you

Do look presentable-as you would in a classroom

- **Don't** engage in lecture lessons as it is easy for learners to get distracted and stop paying attention

Do keep them constantly engaged, asking them questions, get them to do short quizzes, or engage them in interactive activities.

- **Don't** have the wifi/modem far away or have others use the internet.

Do sit as close to the modem/wifi source as possible. Certain students may experience connectivity issues. Not to worry - connectivity issues can be solved most of the times.

- **Don't** use tools you are unsure of for the first time in a session.

Do use the tools you are comfortable with and are used to. You can practice using the tools before the session in order to get acquainted with them

- **Don't** sit in a room where others are laughing, watching television as that may disrupt your class

Do sit in a quiet room in the house and use headphones to drown out any background noise

Unit 3: Principles for engaging and successful eLearning

Do's and Don'ts in integrating eLearning

- **Don't** have the lighting source behind you by, for example, sitting in front of a window

Do sit with the lighting source in front of you. This way your students will be able to see you

- **Don't** start big

Break online learning into smaller units allows learners to complete sections when they have a 'spare 5 minutes', or to access chapters that are relevant to the moment.

- **Don't** just move the PowerPoint slides content into an eLearning environment

Do: Rethink and redesign the activities to fit the context, audience needs.

- **Don't** use only text explanations

Do Use multimedia and videos to enhance engagement. Choose a tool that lets you create games and include interactive activities that will liven up the course. Use visuals: graphics, animations, videos, infographics, to support the content and to demonstrate the application of concepts in real life context

Unit 3: Principles for engaging and successful eLearning

• Do's and Don'ts in integrating eLearning

- **Don't** present a unit without any interaction

Use checking for understanding questions and a chat

- **Don't** establish short deadlines for completing work

Give clear instruction and set an appropriate time for completion of the assignments.

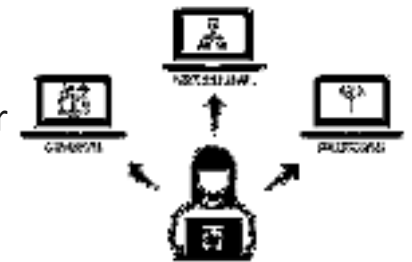
- **Don't** respond immediately at any time to every email

Establish a working program and be there for support

Unit 3: Principles for engaging and successful eLearning

Principles of eLearning

1. **Multimedia Principle** – a combination of visual, and auditory elements.
2. **Contiguity Principles** – words and corresponding graphics are in close proximity to one another
3. **Modality Principle** – words and information are presented in the form of audio narration
4. **Redundancy Principle** – visuals are explained with words in audio or text, but not both
5. **Coherence Principle** – any unnecessary visuals or sounds must be avoided in eLearning because distract the learner
6. **Personalization Principle** – incorporate an optional ‘virtual instructor’ to guide and support learners.
7. **Segmenting Principle** – break a course into smaller parts
8. **Signaling Principle** – learner study better when cues that highlight the organization of the essential material are added, encouraging organized learning content
9. **Voice Principle** – learner study better when the course is spoken in an informal friendly human voice rather than a robotic voice
10. **Pre-Training Principle** – at the beginning of the course present a list of frequently used—but relatively uncommon—terms and phrases



Summary

Key takeaways

E-learning training help learners and instructors in educational environment. Being able to reach participants, regardless of time or place, can significantly reduce costs. Such benefits make it an attractive delivery method for both universities and learners.

You cannot teach the same way online that you would in person: you need to innovate.

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Assessment

1. What is the biggest advantage of eLearning?

- Flexibility
- Time consuming
- Unorganized

Feedback: Flexibility - Learners are able to access courses at any time or any place and they can review the information as many times as necessary.

Assessment

2. What is one advantage of face-to-face learning?

- Direct contact with instructors and other learners
- Study option limitations
- Time and place constraints

Feedback: Connections and relationships can be a great resource and with face-to-face classes learners don't feel isolated. In person friendships and social interactions can reduce levels of stress and anxiety.

Assessment

3. Why eLearning is better than face-to-face learning?

- Learners are easily distracted
- Learners learn at their own pace
- Social interaction between learners

Feedback: Learners work and learn at different paces, and eLearning offers the ability for learners to follow their own schedules.

Assessment

4. What is the common mistake when integrating eLearning?

- Use multimedia and videos to enhance engagement
- Copying PowerPoint slides directly to an eLearning environment
- Rethink the activities to fit the context and the delivery platform

Feedback: One of the things you shouldn't do when integrate eLearning is just copying PowerPoint slides directly to an eLearning environment.

Assessment

5. Which principle explains visuals with words in audio or text, but not both?

- Multimedia Principle
- Modality Principle
- Redundancy Principle

Feedback: Redundancy principle explains visuals with words in audio or text, but not both and uses less-is-more approach.

Additional Resources

1. Wordwall

Wordwall.net allows teachers to create interactive games and printed materials for their students. Teachers simply enter the content they want and the platform automatically does the rest (<https://wordwall.net/>).

- **Features:**

- *Interactives and printables*
- *Create using templates (<https://wordwall.net/#templates>)*
- *Switching template*
- *Edit any activity*
- *Themes and options*
- *Student assignments*
- *Sharing with teachers*
- *Embedding on a website*

Additional Resources

2. Duolingo

Everyone learns in different ways. For the first time in history, we can analyze how millions of people learn at once to create the most effective educational system possible and tailor it to each student.

The ultimate goal of the platform is to give everyone access to a private tutor experience through technology (<https://en.duolingo.com/>).

The basic principles of the platform are:

Effective and efficient

Stay motivated

Personalized learning

Have fun with it!

- **Feature**

- *Boost your learning with Super Duolingo* (<https://en.duolingo.com/super>)
- *Learn anytime, anywhere*
- *Duolingo for Schools* (<https://schools.duolingo.com/>)
- *The Duolingo English Test* (<https://englishtest.duolingo.com/applicants>)
- *Effective and efficient courses* (<https://en.duolingo.com/efficacy>)

Additional Resources

3. Timsoft

Timsoft Ltd Romania is a software firm specialized in **eLearning** and **Web Design**.

Timsoft offers over 20 **online courses** in IT, Counselling, Management/Marketing, and Training the eTrainers.

Timsoft is **partner** in educational European projects and publishes the [eLearningBlog](#) and the [eLearning eJournal](#).

The [eLearning portal](#) is [weekly](#) updated

(<http://www.timsoft.ro/indexen.php>).

Products

eLearn_{TS} – Virtual Learning Environment - with versions in Romanian and English, which is used for online courses, online communities, e-collaboration, online workshops

Intra_{TS} – Intranet application for information management, communication and collaboration

eTest_{TS} – a product for online testing – dynamic building of online modules and questionnaires

eCourses in Romanian

[C/C++](#)

[HTML/Javascript](#)

[PHP](#)

[UNIX/Linux](#)

[OOP](#)

[Multimedia - Univ I Slavici](#)

[Demo Course](#)

[Java](#)

[SQL](#)

[C#](#)

[Internet Tehnologies](#)

[HTML and Java - Credis](#)

[Training the eTrainers](#)

Additional Resources

4. Junior Achievement Romania

Junior Achievement Romania (<https://www.jaromania.org/>), non-profit organization, was founded in 1993 and is part of

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT EUROPA

- Established in 2000
- Present in 40 countries
- 3,000,000+ young people in programs
- 5,000+ business partners

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT WORLDWIDE

- Established in 1919
- Present in over 100 countries
- 3,000,000+ young people in programs
- 35,000+ business partners

- Junior Achievement is the largest international economic and entrepreneurial education organization, with programs being followed in 40 countries in Europe and over 100 in the world.
- In Romania, JA learning by doing and project based programs, projects and competitions are attended annually by over 200,000 pupils and students from over 1,700 educational institutions and are held locally in partnership with the Ministry of National Education, educational institutions and JA supporters in Romania.
- JA Romania offers, free of charge, to school institutions, teaching staff (<https://www.jaromania.org/profesori>), students (<https://www.jaromania.org/studenti>) and pupils (<https://www.jaromania.org/elevi>) national and international programs, projects and competitions of the learning by doing and project based type, adapted to the hybrid learning system and the Romanian educational environment. JA programs, projects and competitions are implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Education.

Additional Resources

5. C³VIP – CNIV

CNIV Project intends to explore and propose innovations in education in the perspective of the Knowledge Society (<http://c3.cniv.ro>).

General Objectives

Implementation of information society technologies (IST / FP6 / FP7 / Horizon 2020) at the level of the requirements of the European Union

- Implementation of the directives of the Bologna Conference (1999) in the educational system in Romania and of European strategies: the Lisbon strategy
- Realization of the framework for the manifestation of the professional and management initiatives of the university and pre-university community
- Carrying out concrete activities regarding the collaboration with profile companies for an adequate training of human resources for the labor market
- The promotion and implementation of modern ideas in initial education and continuous training, the promotion of teamwork/research spirit, the attraction and inclusion of young people in research and development programs, the promotion and implementation of IT&C technologies in education and continuous training

Specific Objectives

Development of research, projects and applications in the fields of E-Learning, Software and Educational Management

- Promotion and development of scientific research in the fields of e-Learning, Educational Software and Virtual Reality
- The launch of programs for the introduction of e-Learning techniques into the educational process
- Supporting teachers and specialists in the activity of introducing and using modern technologies
- Intensification of collaboration between pupils, students, teachers, pedagogues, psychologists and IT specialists in the activities of conception, design, development and testing of educational software applications
- Increasing the role and responsibility of teaching staff in the conception, elaboration and use of traditional methods in complementarity with modern IT technologies and methods, in the process of initial and continuous training