Flexible Learning

2014

SMS Code	LT702001		
Level	7	Credits	10
Total Learning Hours	100	Contact Hours	40
Directed Hours	30	Self Directed Hours	30

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Introduction

Welcome to Flexible Learning. This course is offered in a blended format through a mix of onsite workshops, online computer conferencing, directed online learning and self-directed learning. Access to the online resources is through the wiki website: http://wikieducator.org/Flexible_Learning - The online discussions can be accessed on http://moodle.op.ac.nz. The timetable for the course topics plus the on-site and initial online workshops is on the next page.

Aim

To enhance the understanding of flexible teaching and learning principles and processes, and their application to the design of flexible learning practices.

Learning Outcomes

At the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explore and discuss principles and processes of flexible learning and teaching to facilitate culture sensitive adult learning and learner centred pedagogy;

2. Critique the design and application of existing flexible learning and teaching options in relation to the literature and work-based examples;

3. Identify and evaluate the multiple dimensions of flexible learning taking into account cultural diversity, sustainability and current educational trends;

4. Explore, design and justify strategies to enhance flexible learning and teaching in a practice context.

Assessment

There are two assessments.

1. **Develop a Digital Learning Portfolio**: Use this to demonstrate your knowledge about the principles and processes of flexible learning. **Due date:** 27 June 2014.

2. **Design Blended Learning Strategies:** They can be used to offer blended learning opportunities in your classroom. **Due date:** 4 July 2014.

Please note: you must request an extension before the due dates.

To pass this course: You must successfully complete both assessments to be awarded a *pass* in the course. Marks are not allocated for the assessments, only a pass or not passed. One re-submission is possible if a pass is not obtained the first time.

Structure

Five main topics are covered and several sub-topics. The topics are listed in the order that they are covered on the course website. Due dates for activities (for formative feedback) and summative assessments are shown in Table 1. All the activities are designed to guide you with your summative assessments. It is beneficial if you complete the activities regularly so that the facilitator (and your peers) can give you feedback on your ideas and your work.

Table 1: Schedule of topics and assessments.

Weeks	Topics	Workshops	Activities & Assessments
1 – 2 24 Feb to 7 March	Getting Started. What is Flexible Learning?	**Onsite:** Friday 28 February – venue G104 Online Adobe session to be negotiated.	Activities 1, 2 & 3.
3 - 4 10 to 21 March	Diversity		Activity 4
5 - 6 24 March to 4 April	Trends	Online session to be negotiated	Activity 5
7 - 8 7 to 18 April	Study course material and work on activities.		
Semester Break 21 April to 2 May			
9 - 11 5 to 23 May	Sustainable Education	Online session to be negotiated.	Activities 6 & 7
11 – 13 26 May to 13 June	Strategies		Activity 8 – formative for Assessment 2.
14 – 16 – Final weeks 16 June to 4 July	Finalise assessment tasks	Online session to be negotiated.	Summative Assessments 1. Due 27 June. 2. Due 4 July.

Instructions for Assessment 1: Develop a Digital Learning Portfolio (ePortfolio). Due date: 27 June, 2014.

Create a digital Learning Portfolio to record your responses for **eight activities**. It is particularly valuable if you make this portfolio available to others in the class. This gives you the opportunity to communicate, collaborate and share ideas and also to receive peer feedback. You can discuss your preferences with the facilitator and negotiate other options.

Instructions for setting up your portfolio and activities for each of the course topics are located on the course website (WikiEducator). Formative feedback is given as you complete the activities and develop the portfolio. Once you are satisfied it is complete and ready for marking, please email the facilitator.

Instructions for Assessment 2: Design Blended Learning Strategies. Due date: 4 July, 2014.

Activity 8 will assist with this assessment. Please submit the *draft* of this assessment, before the due date, for feedback.

1. Describe the current design of the learning environment, in brief. (300 words.)

    a. Course structure - content and resources, communication methods, learning activities and assessments. Include your measure of flexibility on the continuum prepared for Activity 8. (Refer to Casey & Wilson, 2005.)

2. Describe the learners – demographics, diversity, learning styles and preferences, abilities etc. What engages them? (300 words.)

3. Identify barriers that may impede your learners' access to the learning environment, and explain *why* they are problematic. (300 words.)

4. Outline some solutions, using one or two of the dimensions of flexibility[1], that you believe may enhance access for your students to the learning environment. (300 words.)

5. Design two new blended learning strategies (600 words).

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[1] Dimensions of ;flexibility - time, delivery and logistics, entry requirements, content and instructional approaches and resources (Casey & Wilson, 2005).

  a. Describe the design of two strategies, within the chosen dimensions of flexibility, to include at least two of the following aspects:

   i. Content

   ii. Activities

   iii. Communication/interactions and

   iv. Assessment.

6. Discuss how the strategies are expected to enhance the learning experience, with justification of your choice (using evidence from the literature). (Use at least three sources and include one research article.)

Referencing and Academic Writing

Please use APA referencing 6th edition when citing and listing evidence from the literature in your reference list. Details about how to do this are on the course website. Structure your writing so that it is academically appropriate, well structured and professionally formatted. Guidelines for academic writing and study skills information can also be found on the course website in the **Resources** section.

Table 2: Rubric for marking Assessment 1 - Develop a Digital Learning Portfolio (ePortfolio).

Criteria	Met	Feedback
1. Design of the Learning Portfolio effective – easy to follow, well-structured and professional in appearance. An appropriate digital platform is selected (or alternative negotiated).		
2. Interaction with others occurs – shares ideas and resources. Responds to feedback and comments on others' work.		
3. Activities are completed on all topics. Original ideas and discussion of flexible learning principles and their application to practice are included. – a mix of media is used.		
4. Writing demonstrates critical analysis and reflection. Own perspective is supported by literature.		
Referencing Correct APA referencing is used when citing in body of text and in reference list.		
Structure of the writing ▪ Writing is well structured. ▪ Appropriate headings are used. ▪ Discussion is coherent and clear, explanations and terms are understandable. ▪ Correct grammar and punctuation is used. ▪ Formatting is professional.		

Table 3: Rubric for marking Assessment 2 - Design Blended Learning Strategies.

Criteria	Met	Feedback
1. Description of the current learning environment and analysis of the learners covering: • Course structure - content and resources, communication methods, learning activities and assessments, a measure of flexibility on the continuum. • Learners – aspects of diversity, learning styles and preferences, abilities etc., engagement.		
2. Identifies barriers that may impede learners' access to the learning environment, and explains why they are problematic.		
3. Outlines some appropriate solutions, using one or two of the dimensions of flexibility that may enhance access for students to the learning environment.		
4. Describes the design of *two* new blended learning strategies, within the stated dimensions. Consideration given to at least two aspects of: content, activities, communication/interactions and assessment. Discusses how the design is expected to enhance the learning experience, with justification of the choice - using evidence from the literature. (Uses at least three sources.)		
Referencing Correct APA referencing is used when citing in body of text and in reference list.		
Structure of the writing ▪ Writing is well structured. ▪ Appropriate headings are used. ▪ Discussion is coherent and clear, explanations and terms are understandable. ▪ Correct grammar and punctuation is used. ▪ Formatting is professional.		