Additional Materials About Blended Learning

An introduction to blended learning

Graham (2006) provides an introductory overview of blended learning available online. Sharma offers an introduction to some of the concepts underpinning a definition of blended.

Principles of blended learning

Cleveland-Innes and Wilton (2018) offer a set of principles for blended learning underpinning any implementation of blended:

1   Design for open communication and trust
2   Design for critical reflection and discourse
3   Create and sustain a sense of community
4   Support purposeful inquiry
5   Ensure learners sustain collaborative learning
6   Ensure inquiry move to resolution
7   Ensure assessment is aligned with intended learning outcomes.

The opportunities and risks of blended learning

Blended learning presents both opportunities and risks, especially as learners become more discerning, and less tolerant of poor educational offerings, while expecting more flexibility within, and accessibility to, programmes of study. A study by Muscanell for Educause (2023) examines educators' teaching preferences since the pandemic. This work indicates that although there was acknowledgment among educators that blended and online courses could offer more flexibility for themselves and their learners, there was still a strong belief that face-to-face promoted better outcomes than online or blended and that students learnt the most when taught face-to-face. This work in the United States (US) indicated that a small minority of educators usually felt more connected with face-to-face learners than those online or blended. Other studies support this work from the US including:

- Almahasees et al's study in Jordan in 2021 in which educators and learners, while agreeing online was useful during the pandemic, preferred face-to-face learning and teaching.

- Gaglani and colleagues (2021) in India when reviewing educator attitudes to online due to the pandemic, found that although they were accepting that online had many positives, felt it increased their burden and that not all lectures could be replaced by technology

- [Jisc's Beyond Blended](#) Guide includes findings from a review of post-pandemic curriculum and learning design: lessons from the UK higher education sector.

The importance of designing for blended learning

Following a comparative study of community college students in face-to-face classroom-based and blended courses, Ryan et al (2015) concluded that blended learning opportunities should be 'carefully designed to capitalise on both technological advances and multidisciplinary knowledge about academic content, as well as learning and instruction.'