Blended Learning Essentials: Getting Started

Crib Sheet: Flipped Learning

What is Flipped Learning?

It is increasingly possible for teachers and trainers to create their own educational media resources (for example, using a screencasting tool or a lecture capture system) or use media created by others, such as videos on YouTube or resource banks like Khan Academy. As a result, much of the learning involved with 'acquisition' (watching or listening to a presentation, or reading an article) can be moved online, leaving more time for active learning in face-to-face sessions. This is the idea behind the 'flipped classroom' or 'flipped learning'. However, for this to be effective, it is essential to design teaching or training sessions carefully, involving discussion or collaboration activities, and providing opportunities for observation and feedback. This is undoubtedly more demanding for both teachers and learners, but may be much more rewarding.

Where can I find out how to use Flipped Learning?

Ufi has a primer on flipped learning for the vocational education and training sector which includes a video and links to further resources. The Flipped Learning Network also has a range of materials to guide educators using this approach, including a handout, a range of videos, and a review.

How can Flipped Learning be used in learning and teaching?

The Flipped Learning Network (FLN) has identified 'four pillars' of a flipped classroom approach that are necessary for success with this approach. Teachers or trainers need to create a flexible environment for study, so that learners can learn at a time that suits them. There needs to be a shift to a learning culture that promotes knowledge construction over more traditional approaches. Teachers or trainers need to select materials that enable learners to use their time outside the classroom most productively and use effective strategies for active learning during sessions. Finally, the teacher or trainer needs to adopt the role of Professional Educator, which may involve a less visibly prominent role during the sessions, but be highly reflexive, adaptive and open to change.

Within the Vocational Education and Training sector, flipped learning can enable learners to get to grips with theory online, and use valuable face-to-face time for practical applications. The teacher or trainer can then spend more time observing, coaching and providing personalized feedback to learners. Many of the approaches described within these crib sheets could be termed 'flipped learning', and you may already be engaging your learners in this way if you are using technology to extend learning beyond the classroom.

Possible uses of flipped learning that could be adapted to your own educational context are:

- Creating screencast tutorials (e.g. cake making) in advance of a session so learners come prepared to practice in class (e.g. icing a cake);
- Embedding a series of YouTube videos in Moodle on techniques (e.g. hair and beauty) so that learners are primed to experiment in their face-to-face session;
- Providing links to web pages for learners to explore individually (e.g. contextual studies for art and design) and designing collaborative activities in class for learners to share and build on what they have learnt;
- Linking to Khan Academy or Lynda.com tutorials (e.g. on statistics for Business and Finance learners) and creating peer teaching pairs in class, where one learner explains a concept or technique to another learner.

Using Flipped Learning in the Vocational Education and Training Sector

Level 2 Gas Installation

The teacher or trainer has selected an online PDF and video on procedures for checking the safe condition of hand and power tools used for the installation of system components and embedded links to the resources in Moodle, and designed a short quiz to check learning:

- Learners read/watch the resources before class and take a quiz in class to test their knowledge.
- Learners work in groups to create a checklist and schedule for care and maintenance tasks.
- Learners attend a face-to-face workshop session, where they demonstrate their ability to safely carry out required care and maintenance checks.

Level 2 Access to Education and Training

The teacher or trainer has selected a BBC news item and a variety of online resources on World Book Day and placed links to the resources on Moodle:

- Learners watch/read the resources before class.
- In class, learners work in small groups of 4, using their knowledge of year 1 children's literature to plan a day's activities for children to celebrate World Book Day.
- Learners present their plan of activities to the whole group, including a page of resources, referenced according Harvard Referencing System and receive tutor and peer feedback.

Level 2 IT Users

The teacher or trainer records a screen cast to demonstrate how to use a presentation software package:
- The teacher or trainer uploads the video to Moodle (or uploads to YouTube and then embeds the video in Moodle).
- The learners watch the tutorial before attending the workshop.
- At the workshop, the learners use the software to create a 3 minute presentation to showcase their setting (e.g. the college or training provider).