ViewSonic®

Blended Learning Adaptation Guide

ISCED 3

Content

Introduction

Blended learning bridges the gap between traditional teaching methods and the digital era. In order that educators are fully informed when planning to either adapt a curriculum to a blended learning model or create a blended learning program, it is important that every aspect of the ISCED 3 requirements are considered.

What is ISCED?

What is ISCED?

ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education) provides a detailed outline of how different categories of educational activities can be classified. A truly global institution, it organizes learning objectives and required outcomes into internationally acknowledged levels. Whether developing an entire curriculum or just creating singular lesson plans, educators should have an awareness of the relevant ISCED classifications and what the expectations should be in terms of learning outcomes and expected achievement levels.

In 2011, UNESCO released their revised ISCED. A framework for organizing education programs according to achievement benchmarks and learning objective expectations, the concepts were conceived with the intention of being recognized internationally, and the development of the classifications involved extensive consultation with experts from around the world.

What is ISCED 3?

ISCED 3 is the level of education that deals with upper secondary education. Students typically enter this phase of education between 14 and 16 years of age. ISCED 3 level education is more specialized than that which students receive at the lower secondary level, or ISCED 2. Indeed, it is designed to provide students with a greater degree of choice about which subjects they wish to focus on. That said, most programs include certain core subjects that students have no choice but to continue with. These usually include math and English, irrespective of any other jurisdiction-specific requirements. As well as more educational options, ISCED 3 is characterized by a greater diversity of educational pathways for completing secondary education, such as choosing to study for certain qualifications. Overall, ISCED 3 tends to be narrower in scope, albeit wider in focus.

Learning Objectives of ISCED 3

ISCED 3 is when many students will achieve their first set of academic results that will be seen by employers for the rest of their working lives. In the UK, this means sitting GCSE examinations in England and Wales, while Standard Grades are the norm in Scotland. In France, Brevet exams – or National Diplomas – are sat at the age of 15. This differs from the high school diploma system in use in Australia, Canada, and the US. However, ISCED 3 learning objectives are designed to be globally recognized. In general, upper secondary education is either aimed at providing skills that can be used in the workplace or in preparing students for tertiary education.

Learning Objectives of ISCED 3

Reading

At ISCED 3 level, students are expected to already have a good grasp of reading both fiction and non-fiction. Although reading aloud is not usually formally tested, it is a skill that will be expected. Students will need to show a deeper understanding of textual analysis, including a grasp of literary devices such as subtext and irony. Reading to a modest level in a foreign language is also expected. Some educational systems oblige students to study 'set texts' from which their reading skills will be tested. This will sometimes include classic pieces of fiction as well as a variety of literary forms, from stage plays to poetry.

Learning Objectives of ISCED 3

Writing

Although formal writing skills, such as essay writing, are often developed throughout the course of ISCED 3, there is still a heavy emphasis on creative writing in many curricula. Examinations that are made on written abilities will often involve showing students an image as a creative starting point and asking them to write about it. As foreign language skills are also developed in many ISCED 3 level programs, so writing skills in languages other than the mother tongue are expected, although these tend to be much more technical and less focused on creativity. By ISCED 3, most students will be completing assignments most commonly on computers, with less attention given to writing with pen and paper.

Learning Objectives of ISCED 3

Math

At the ISCED 3 level of learning, math education will progress to more complex subject matters such as basic trigonometry, although this is by no means universal. More widely, students will be expected to make more advanced use of scientific calculators, and there are many blended learning educational tools that support this. Topics like probability and statistics are often taught with less emphasis on basic functions and geometry. Math will also be applied in scientific studies, especially where data is collated and combined with IT education through the use of computer software systems.

Blended Learning Model for the ISCED 3 Level

At ISCED 3 level, blended learning will commonly carry on from the sort of foundation that students have already become familiar with at earlier stages of their education. In other words, having become familiar with using traditional teaching methods in the classroom in combination with online or computer-resourced learning outside of it, blended learning at ISCED 3 level is no different from ISCED 2 or before. That said, specific software systems that enable students to learn – and to revise – their chosen subjects at ISCED 3 level are commonplace, especially those which offer students almost instant feedback via in-built assessments. This also helps educators to know how best to focus their efforts where students need additional support. Depending on the ISCED 3 program in question, there are three blended learning models to choose from.

Blended Learning Model for the ISCED 3 Level

Hybrid Learning

Hybrid learning involves educators providing online teaching while classroom teaching is being offered. This is usually via a live video streaming service so that both in-person attendees and remote learners experience the lesson synchronously. Not only might larger numbers be taught simultaneously, but those who cannot attend due to either physical or health issues can complete their education remotely. However, at the ISCED 3 level of education, this type of blended learning is more than merely the accommodation of the basic educational needs of two sets of students. In fact, in upper secondary education, hybrid learning also allows educators to deal with more advanced or specialist teaching while they are focused on the needs of the class as a whole. The digital structures that are in place let them stretch their brightest students with additional learning material and with greater ease while still accommodating all student needs.

Blended Learning Model for the ISCED 3 Level

Distance Learning

Distance learning is most easily distinguished from hybrid learning because more of it is conducted through cloud-based services and remote software packages. Although educational professionals may still rely on streaming their lessons live, they are less likely to have in-person contact with their students than with a hybrid model. For students working in their upper secondary education, where the greater focus that is made on purely academic subjects places more demands on concentration, the lack of classroom distractions can be beneficial. Where students encounter problems or need clarification, they can still seek teaching input one-on-one even if it is delivered remotely. So, ISCED 3 students should continue to feel supported even if they no longer attend class in a conventional sense. At ISCED 3, this model is often employed as students approach their exam season and are spending more time away from school to revise.

Blended Learning Model for the ISCED 3 Level

Flipped Classroom

The flipped classroom model involves the reversal of traditional teaching methodologies. Students will do their learning online, usually on their own or in small groups, and then bring what they have produced to the classroom for peer-group and educator review. This teaching method is particularly beneficial at the ISCED 3 stage of education because it closely resembles the world of work where employees are assigned certain tasks, must research them, present them, and will then receive a critical assessment. It is also a good way for secondary schoolchildren to prepare themselves for the more vigorous academic processes that will be expected of them at ISCED 4 and ISCED 5 if they choose to continue their formal education. According to some educationalists, this model of teaching is especially effective because it promotes greater cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and emotional awareness among learners.

The Benefits of Blended Learning for ISCED 3 Programs

Teaching programs that are based on blended learning – no matter which particular model they employ – provide a fuller educational experience for students. By the time children reach ISCED 3, they will need to understand how much education is self-led and that working on their own – while still using the educator as a useful resource – can benefit their longer-term career and educational goals. Other key benefits include:

- Gaining a greater understanding of how to present learned material interactively
- Taking advantage of multiple sources of information, not just the 'set texts'
- The flexibility of utilizing classroom-learned knowledge and apply it in new contexts online
- The ability to make use of numerous online revision guides to prepare for exams
- Speedier responses to online assessments that do not have to wait for marked exercise books to be returned

In an ever-changing and increasingly connected world, ISCED 3 curricula will continue to incorporate more real-life experience in blended learning methodologies. With the world now more used to social distancing and exam seasons that can change at any time, the ability to utilize technology to overcome some of the challenge educators face is something to be welcomed. Few would suggest a total reliance on computerized teaching and assessment methods provides the most effective learning environment, but a blended learning model allows for the best of both worlds.

How to Assess Learning Achievements for ISCED 3 Students

How to Assess Learning Achievements for ISCED 3 Students

Making accurate assessments of students' progress in their learning with blended education methods is very similar to that which would go on in a conventional classroom situation. Put simply, educators still observe their students in the learning environment, evaluate their work, and produce documentation that supports their observations. The main difference is that much of it is done online. In fact, one of the big benefits of using technology to assess schoolwork at ISCED 3 level is that it can be more effective when automated. This is the case with math problems, for example, whereby an educator can set a particular set of problems for students who then work through them in the usual way. However, their answers can be immediately assessed using software so that it is much less time consuming to check or mark their work. Indeed, this does not merely save time for educators but also affords students a much quicker turnaround, thereby helping them to focus on the areas that need the most attention. When it comes to written work, students' essays and creative writing still need to be visually assessed by educators, but automation still takes place. For example, this might occur by ensuring that book reports or historical essays have not been plagiarized from online sources.

Adapting Curriculum to a Blended Learning Model

Adapting Curriculum to a Blended Learning Model

For educational professionals who are transitioning to a blended model from a traditional teaching environment, there will be a degree of adaptation required in order that the curricula remain effective. That said, there are already many supportive software systems available that are specifically aimed at ISCED 3 students. With so much material – including age-appropriate online lessons and lectures – the process of adapting a curriculum need not be onerous. In most cases, curricula just need to be assessed for the suitability of digitization to allow for greater use of blended learning techniques.

Adapting Curriculum to a Blended Learning Model

Introduction of Learning Objectives

The learning objectives of the majority of students working at ISCED 3 level are focused on formal examinations. Revolving around the revision of core topics will tend to make use of applied learning that is derived from students' real-world fieldwork. In other words, it will blend 'real' student learning with 'virtual' revision to enable better performances during examinations. Traditionally, this sort of education is delivered by educators in physical classrooms with physical teaching resources. The only difference between this and blended learning models is that students will access both teaching and resources through an online streaming service. The key point is that learning objectives at ISCED 3 level remain the same whether the teaching is delivered through an app, via a browser, or in person.

Adapting Curriculum to a Blended Learning Model

Activity Engagement

Where online revision is conducted in a group with several students collectively accessing an online educator as a resource, the educator remains responsible for engaging students just as they would in a classroom environment. However, one benefit of students accessing such a resource online is that there is very little classroom distraction to put them off. Using appropriate software, educators can mute individual students so that their questions cannot disrupt others or apply privacy settings when additional assistance is needed. Furthermore, math programs that emphasize fun and adventure provide students with an engaging game they can play even when they are doing so to hone the algebraic skills. Algebra Meltdown is just one example of this sort of app that is widely used at the ISCED 3 level to promote greater confidence with math and to help students to be better prepared for the sort of questions they will be asked when they sit their examinations.

Adapting Curriculum to a Blended Learning Model

Competency Assessment

One of the challenges for educators working with students in their upper secondary period of education is that their assessments will only really be made under the pressure of exam conditions. It is common, therefore, for students to undertake a round of 'mock' exams so that they can get used to the pressure. This also means that educators can assess each student – or a class as a whole – to identify areas that may need further attention and implement remedial teaching to better prepare for the rigors of the exam room. Although it is common to do this within classroom settings, mock exams and assessments are increasingly carried out online. This means more can be arranged and at more flexible times, thereby making assessments more accurate. Indeed, promoting a better understanding of what and how to revise can make all the difference in achieving better results. This is why there are so many online videos available to assist students revising within a blended learning environment.
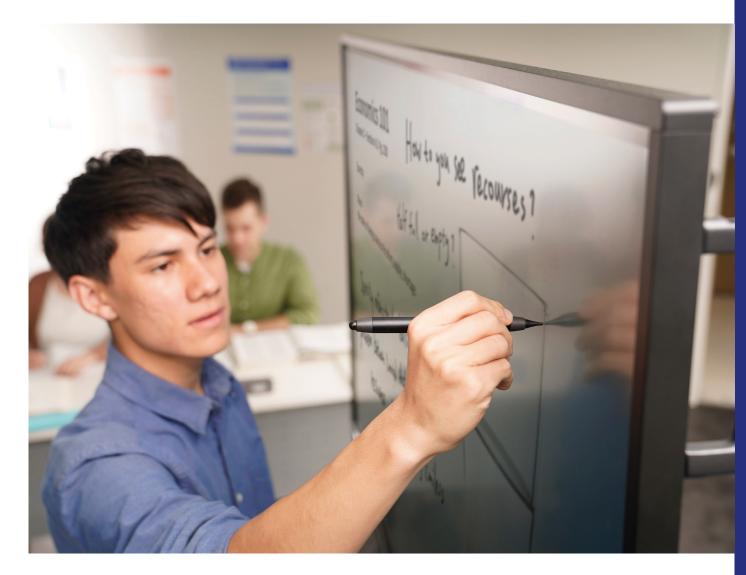
Adapting Curriculum to a Blended Learning Model

Physical vs Virtual Delivery

Adapting a curriculum to enable students to enjoy a successful exam season should consider all of a student's needs. Of course, academic learning and the ability to fully understand exam questions without misinterpretation are crucial and can be successfully taught online. However, students in their mid-teens will still often need peer group approval to make the progress they should. As such, one-on-one teacher-student sessions are not the only way forward. Students will usually be more willing to apply themselves and to revise if they know others in their group are also doing so. Setting work in groups or getting students to review each other's work is often beneficial for maintaining a culture of learning, particularly when online methods are used alongside physical ones. Where one-on-one education occurs, it should be tailored to individual requirements while class-wide teaching should remain standardized for the curriculum, whether it is delivered in person or online.

Accommodating Additional Needs Through Blended Learning

Accommodating Additional Needs Through Blended Learning

Because blended learning is a highly adaptable method of educational delivery, even if the curriculum it is being used to relay is reasonably strict in its structure, it is suitable for accommodating many additional educational needs. Blended learning methods can be tailored to students' individual circumstances and altered to suit particular class needs, for example, by assisting an entire year group to catch up where they might have fallen behind. Additional needs tend to fall into the following categories, and blended learning will function seamlessly within them all:

Accommodating Additional Needs Through Blended Learning

Students with Special Needs

Special educational needs fall into many categories, from conditions such as dyslexia and ADHD (Attention Deficit Disorder) to physical accessibility issues. With a blended learning model in operation, ISCED 3 students of all competencies can expect a bespoke package of learning that will meet their individual requirements. Educators can adapt their lessons when streaming them, for example, to better meet the needs of specific students without impacting the experience of all. Additionally, supportive online revision aids and games that are designed to accommodate certain requirements can be implemented synchronously to ensure an optimal learning environment.

Accommodating Additional Needs Through Blended Learning

Students with a Lack of Resources

In primary learning, students who come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds will often find their situation ameliorated in a traditional classroom environment. By the time students reach the ISCED 3 level, however, a lack of additional specialist textbooks or equipment will inevitably hold them back. Schools that can assist students with the acquisition of physical resources can also bridge the gap with blended learning. In short, this will mean providing them with hardware and online tools so that resource-specific hardships do not unduly impact learning outcomes.

Accommodating Additional Needs Through Blended Learning

Students who Have Fallen Behind

Students may fall behind because they have become ill or suffered a personal trauma or have entered an educational program from a different curriculum in another jurisdiction. Given the strictures of the ISCED 3 level of education, there is often very little time available to catch up. However, blended learning models offer the best use of what time there is to focus students' attention on the topics that will offer the most benefit. By utilizing an educational program that can be tailored to a student's particular circumstances, lost time can be made up, and the preferred learning outcomes still achieved.

Technologies to Support ISCED 3 Blended Learning Programs

It is the ability of blended learning programs to function with multiple devices using different operating systems that make them so flexible. At the ISCED 3 level – and indeed, the upper secondary level in particular – the accessibility of online revision aids is vital. If students cannot access them at home because they do not have the right hardware, there will be a big impact on their learning outcomes. Therefore, the adaptability of blended learning technologies will allow perfect functionality in educational terms while accommodating all individual circumstances.

The possible methods of online lesson delivery for ISCED 3 programs could include, but are not limited to:

• Audio-visual conferencing
• Webinars
• Educational videos
• Online revision guides and self-assessment tests
• VLE or LMS course modules
• Student-teacher email correspondence and live chat applications

The method of delivery requires some, if not all, of the following equipment:

• A stable and/or predictable internet connection
• Videoconferencing and recording facilities
• A reliable laptop or desktop PC for both teacher and student
• Tablets or smartphones running a compatible operating system
• Interactive classroom equipment, such as smart whiteboards

Website

Contact

ViewSonic®

ISCED 3