Blended Learning

What can practitioners learn from MOOCs?

PROJECT GOALS

Information Technology (IT) is changing the delivery of education.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) present an extreme case regarding student cohort size and diversity.

These are also challenges that practitioners encounter in traditional learning environments; this project sought to examine the techniques and tools developed for MOOCs that could be applied to our teaching and learning practice.

WHAT ARE MOOCS?

MOOCs - Defining Characteristics

- Massive participation (5000-100,000 students)
- Open access
- Online delivery

Three Broad Types

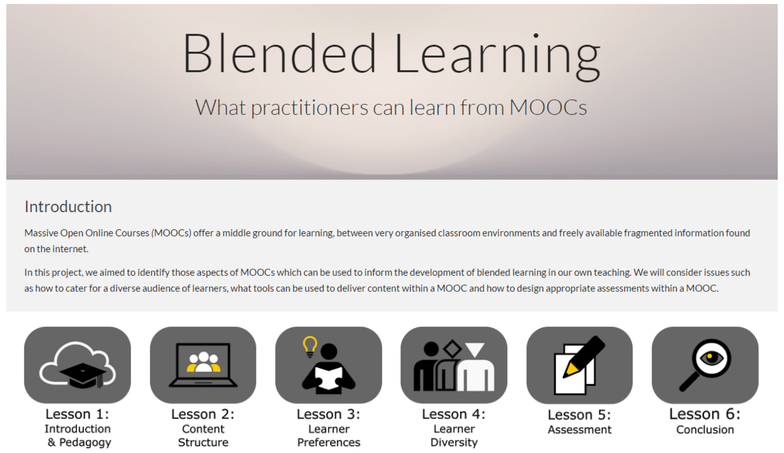
- **xMOOCs** - Rich interactive content to high numbers of students. Optimised for content delivery to mass audiences; limited feedback, automated testing and peer-assessment
- **cMOOCs** - cMOOCs utilise resources such as blogs, learning communities and social media platforms to connect self-directed learners in a connectivist pedagogical model
- **quasi-MOOCs** - Offer web-based tutorials as Open Educational Resources (OER) but lack course structures or examinations

EXAMPLES

Some Popular MOOC Providers

- **Khan Academy** - Primary & Second Level
- **EdX** - Higher Education (Non-Profit)
- **FutureLearn** - Higher Education (Non-Profit)
- **Coursera** - Higher Education (Commercial)

LEARNING FROM MOOCS



Modelled on some common elements of MOOCs, this website is built in Google Sites and is intended to:

- Be a "living document" of ideas derived from MOOCs
- Act as the hub for a google group on the subject
- Contain practical examples from other practitioners

Visit the MOOC Microsite

https://goo.gl/CKyydl

WHAT DO MOOCS OFFER US?

MOOCs show how we can adapt our blended learning approaches to create content that is:

- Based on strong pedagogical models
- Flexible (modular, non-linear, adaptive)
- Scalable and efficient

Pedagogical Approaches

Self-Directed Learning - Allow students to make decisions on what they study and how they are assessed.

Mastery Learning - Allow students to move at their own pace, and have access to previously reviewed content.

Peer Learning - Online forums, promote peer to peer learning.

Course Delivery & Structure

Short video Formats - MOOCs effectively use short videos to teach complex topics.

Open Educational Resources (OERs) - Free and openly licensed educational content for teaching & learning.

Highly Modularised - Platforms and content formats allow content to be easily reused and remixed.

Learner Diversity

Flexible Learning Environments - Catering for a variety of learner preferences: dynamic adaptive systems providing both linear and non-linear approaches to learning.

Increased Participation - Tools used in MOOCs support participation from many demographics who struggle to access traditional education: students with disabilities, non-English speakers & lifelong learners.

Assessment Strategies

Assessment as Learning - Short video followed by formative multiple choice quizzes (MCQs) support mastery learning.

Peer Assessment - MOOCs have developed approaches to peer grading as part of learning. Calibrating student peer marks to an instructors mark could result in higher accuracy.

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