

LESSONS FROM PROJECTS FUNDED BY NORWEGIAN AGENCY FOR DIGITAL LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION 2010-2014

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Norwegian Agency for Digital Learning in Higher Education funds development projects in the use of learning technology in Norwegian Higher Education. We are in the process of completing a report on the most important experience gained from projects we have funded in the period 2010-2014. We are keen to present some of this knowledge during EUNIS 2017.

Who are we?

Norwegian Agency for Digital Learning in Higher Education is a national agency, reporting to the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. It is intended to be a driving force for promoting the development of flexible education and pedagogic use of ICT, and working to enhance and develop cooperation between higher education and the work life.

The guidance for project funds in the period 2010-2014 emphasizes that the projects we funded should contribute to relevant, high-quality education being made available to students regardless of time, place and life circumstances. This should be done by developing flexible educational offers, supported by technology and open digital learning resources. The projects are also expected to share and disseminate knowledge gained through the projects with others in the university and university college sector and other relevant sectors. A key priority area was collaborative projects between higher education and the work life.

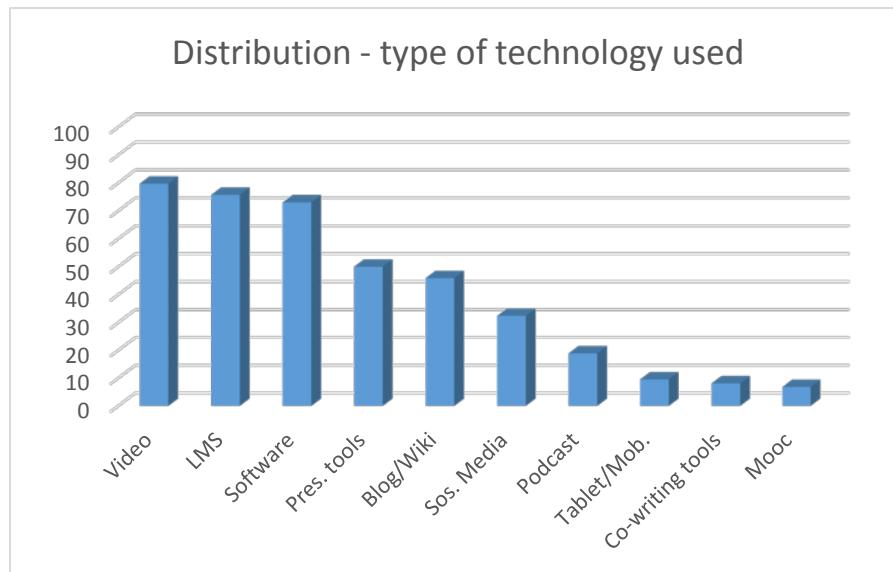
In the report we consider experience gained from the projects under the following topics:

- The educational offers developed or further developed by the projects (net-based, mixed or campus courses)
- Digital learning resources
- Are the digital learning resources shared with others and re-used?
- Pedagogic development work (including design of studies, student-active forms of learning, use of the workplace as learning arena).
- Are the projects contributing to better access to education for groups who traditionally do not take part in higher education?
- Collaboration between educational institutions.
- Collaboration between educational institutions and the work life.
- Criteria for success
- Challenges

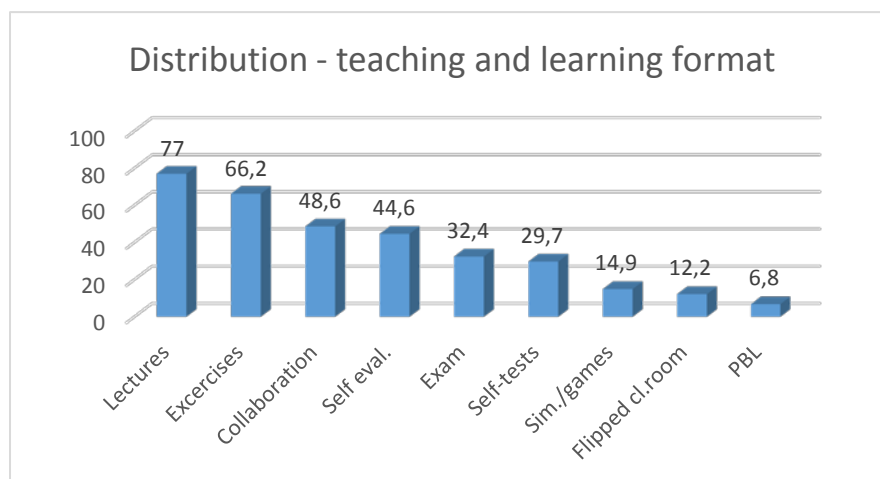
Norwegian Agency for Digital Learning in Higher Education summarize and analyse the reports in view of best possible knowledge development and dissemination of results. The goal is to find out what has been the learning outcome from the projects.

There is a great variety and diversity in the lessons that can be extracted from the project experiences. Some of the reports emphasize the tool they have tested, others underlines the study design and others the organization of the project. We experience good cooperation within the project is particularly important. Including the gathering of necessary expertise in the project group. The use of digital tools gives good lessons, firstly in terms of being useful and raising the quality of the study, but also that it contributes to competence raising and innovation.

Some examples of areas of findings:



Distribution of projects by type of technology used. Percentage. (Credit Ida Grepperud)



Distribution of projects using various teaching and learning formats. Percentage. (Credit Ida Grepperud)

The need for learning activities to involve binding commitment is a topic raised by many of the projects. Many stress that the students have to be kept actively involved and urged to keep going. Many of the projects have experienced that the students do not participate as actively in e-learning activities as hoped for and anticipated if it`s voluntary. The students are often less active than expected when it comes to writing and sharing inputs (for example blogs) and taking part in discussion groups. Many of the projects have found that they need to hold regular on-line meetings and set frequent exercises in order to keep the students active.

ICT-supported learning

Digital learning resources often give students the opportunity to work more interactively. They receive more resources and several projects stress that digital learning resources give more freedom of choice of learning methods.

In one of the projects, the students produce short videos where they present subject matter. The project describes how video production influences the students' learning:

It involves the students themselves in having to plan and structure the subject matter within a tight, confined framework in the form of a video clip. This forces the students to think carefully through the subject matter involved.

MOOCs

Norwegian Agency for Digital Learning in Higher Education funded the first MOOC-project in 2013, but had MOOC-like projects as early as 2011. These projects have challenged the institutions administration related to student registration and examination and the projects have contributed to map and develop solutions to problems relating to the need for flexibility and the number of students that these kind of courses have to manage.

This has been the first attempt with MOOC at this institution, and we have succeeded in establishing this form of online study as a potential alternative at our institution. Through this project, a collaboration has been initiated to customize administrative systems for study information, admission and exams.

Ripple effects and changes

It can be difficult to say that single projects have caused ripple effects and changes in organizations. The projects are reporting increased digital competence in the involved academic communities and that knowledge from the projects has been transferred to other academic communities.

Some major ripple effects and changes described:

- Increased digital competence in the academic communities
- Proliferation of knowledge from projects to other professional environments
- Strengthened cooperation internally, between educational institutions and with working life
- Change of administrative procedures/routines

Biography



Hilde Gaard (born 1972)

Work experience

2012- Senior Adviser, Norwegian Agency for Digital Learning in Higher Education

2010-2012: Project Manager. Norwegian Centre for Integrated Care and Telemedicine. Tromsø, Norway.

1997-2010: Adviser, Troms County Council. Tromsø, Norway.

1995-1997: Librarian. University Library, UiT The Arctic University of Norway. Tromsø, Norway.

Education

2011. MA-courses in Project Management. BI Norwegian Business School

2003. BA-courses in pedagogy. Oslo University College

1995. BA, Librarian. Library and Information Science, UiT The Arctic University of Norway



Sofie Axelsen Osland (born 1977)

Work experience

2012 - Adviser, Norwegian Agency for Digital Learning in Higher Education

2006-2011: Adviser, Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, University of Tromsø

Education

2002-2003: Senior-intermediate History study, University of Tromsø

1996-2000: General Teacher Education, Tromsø University College