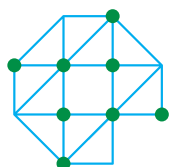


Blend your education

Discussion cards for the activating blend

Instruction



Acceleration plan

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Discussion cards for the activating blend

TARGET GROUP	Lecturers, support services and managers
FORM	Discussion cards and workshop
TIME NEEDED	90 minutes
LEVEL	Programme

Background

An activating blend in the curriculum aims to foster active student learning, ensures that we make better use of F2F contact time and allows for greater student choice: when, where and how do I learn? However, to transform an entire curriculum into an activating blend requires considerable effort. A good start, therefore, is to first have a constructive discussion within a team. This enables you to create shared language and, as a team, get a grip on the different facets involved in designing the activating blend. The discussion cards in these products facilitate that constructive discussion.

The purpose of these discussion cards is to initiate, within educational teams, a dialogue on how to create an activating blend in the curriculum. An activating blend is not an end in itself, but rather a way to activate students in their learning and development. The outcome of this discussion may be that colleagues in an educational team explore the 'why' of an activating blend, engage in dialogue about it and arrive at a common understanding (and actions). It is important to identify needs and bottlenecks on a team-by-team basis and to ensure that all voices are heard during the discussion.

Method

The workshop consists of a discussion of thought-provoking propositions and in-depth questions in a number of categories:

1. Vision and policy.
2. Leadership.
3. Professional development.
4. Infrastructure and learning spaces.

What you need for a session is about 90 minutes, a room with a large screen, a flipchart and post-its. Appoint a moderator who is responsible for the organisation, time, participation and progress of the session.

A total of 11 discussion cards are available; these are divided into four pillars, each of which has a number of indicators: Vision and policy (three cards), Leadership (three cards), Professional development (two cards) and Infrastructure and learning spaces (three cards).

The annex provides an overview of the pillars and which indicators, propositions and in-depth questions are associated with each pillar. It is best to provide the propositions through an online tool for submitting answers to questions, such as Mentimeter or Wooclap.

Preparation for the moderator

- Provide a pleasant space that is conducive to dialogue and send out invitations to the session on time so that everyone has the opportunity to participate.
- If there are more than six colleagues, it is better to divide the group into smaller groups. If you divide the group into smaller groups, you can ask a colleague in each subgroup to keep an eye on time and progress and then do plenary feedback.
- Decide in advance whether you want to have a discussion with the team about all the pillars or pick just a few. You can of course also poll team members in advance to find out which pillar they would prefer to have the discussion about. You can go through the pillars in any order.
- Provide one or more flipcharts, markers and post-its in the room and a screen on which to display team scores via the online answer submission tool.

How do you use the discussion cards?

Before the session

The moderator places all cards on the table with the pillar icon facing up. Put the same pillars together; the order does not matter. The team can decide the order of the pillars to be discussed. Once you've picked a pillar, discuss all the cards in that pillar (you can also choose the order for that).

Start of the session

The moderator introduces the game in plenary and outlines the concept of an activating blend in the curriculum. The terms and definitions set out in the brochure (annex) are appropriate to this task. The moderator presents these concepts and can provide further explanation if required. Allow time for this, but keep it to the point. Many topics of discussion will come up while using the discussion cards.

During the session

After the introduction, the moderator explains the game. Each discussion card starts with a proposition. The moderator can use the corresponding in-depth questions to moderate the discussion about the proposition. Each pillar and indicator can be explained using the definition given in this manual (see table). Engaging in dialogue and allowing all voices to be heard is the most important aspect. Record the key points of the discussion on a flip-chart. After discussing a proposition, team members can score the proposition individually by means of the online tool according to the following four-point scale:

0. Not or hardly (developed/ present).

1. Somewhat.

2. Largely.

3. Fully (developed/ present).

After individual scoring, move on to the next discussion card.

Winding up the session

When all propositions have been discussed, the moderator (and possibly colleagues from the subgroups) gives feedback for each pillar and indicator. The moderator shows the scores for each pillar in the online tool on a large screen. If there are several groups, the moderator makes a summary with the most common points that emerged in the discussions.

After the feedback, the moderator decides – together with the team – how the team should proceed. What is the result of the discussion? Write down a number of points and indicate the next steps. Consider formulating action points, such as making the educational vision concrete, understanding the learning spaces or designing appropriate professional development activities. Also think about who takes on which role. But make it as concrete as possible. It may be worth doing the same session again six months or a year later. Discuss, in the team, where everyone stands on this.

After the session

After the session, send all participants the most important findings, agreements and scores by email. Include the concrete list of action points. Make this a polished, comprehensive document that the team can revisit at a later time, because an activating blend in the curriculum is a continuous process.

Want to read more?

- [Blog explaining the starting point for a good discussion](#) (in Dutch)
- [Article presenting the original card game, available for download](#) (in Dutch)
- [A guide and tool for setting educational innovation in motion with the help of IT](#)
(Integral IT Motion Sensor)

Justification and sources

This product was used with permission from and was originally developed by Susan Duivenvoorden, Hans Smeele, Ria Jacobi, Veerle Desmedt from Inholland University of Applied Sciences. The discussion cards were derived from the Integral IT Motion Sensor.

Facilitating professional development for lecturers zone (2021). *De Integrale Bewegings-sensor*. Utrecht: Versnellingsplan Onderwijs-innovatie met ICT.

Duivenvoorden, S., Smeele, H., Jacobi, R. & Desmedt, V. (2022). *Gesprekskaarten Activerende blend in het curriculum*. Inholland.



The Acceleration Plan for Educational Innovation with ICT is a four-year programme focused on bringing initiatives, knowledge, and experiences for digitalisation together. The programme is an initiative of SURF, the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences, and the Association of Universities, and is organised in eight acceleration zones. In the zone Facilitating professional development for lecturers, 16 institutions are working on improving the professional development of lecturers in Dutch higher education.



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