

In 8 steps: online-seminars

In most cases it is not advised to merely copy an attendance lecture or course if you intend to host it online.

We would like to introduce you to 8 essential steps as well as valuable tips to facilitate your entry or switch to online activities. All you need is some creativity and courage to experiment. Set realistic expectations, keep calm if things turn out differently and adapt step by step.

If you get stuck or have any remaining questions, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

Step 1

It is important to be conscious about the course content and learning objectives.

Think about the main learning objectives and the competences that students are to gain on completion of your course. In lectures and seminars with a smaller audience subject-specific knowledge may be as relevant as cross-disciplinary competencies and soft skills. Try to identify these areas of competences that may be of relevance to your course.

Step 2

Collect teaching techniques and learning methods that are suitable to acquire the desired skills.

In attendance lectures or workshops you may already have implemented various methods to support your students' acquisition of competences. First of all, collect these methods and reflect on their suitability for online formats. Can you come up with additional methods that you can experiment with online? It is very important to provide a mix of methods online so that your audience stays attentive. This will contribute to a successful learning as well as teaching experience.

Step 3

Reflect on your options to implement your teaching techniques and learning methods.

Even if you have no or not much prior experience in digital higher education, you may come up with very interesting ideas. At this stage, it is not important what tool you may choose in the end. Be creative and think about all opportunities that the internet may provide. Do not forget to list tools and methods that you may already have encountered in various educational settings. Forums are suitable, for example, to coordinate group debates or roleplay games, wikis and other online editing software (e.g. etherpads) are suitable for collaborative writing. You may add online quizzes for knowledge tests or concept cards for brainstormings. You can also [provide material](#) and give feedback to e-assignments online, be it a task sheet, draft or presentation (see also [realize e-assignments](#)). Reflect on the ways in which you can leave choices to your students with regard to deadlines and the processing time of assignments. You will be surprised by their creativity. Leave it to them to choose the media format of submissions like text-based summaries, video/audio recordings or an ISIS course

activity (e.g. a *lesson*).

Be transparent in your definition of assignment criteria (extent, deadlines, evaluation criteria). Give feedback timely and in a constructive manner. You can try out the method of peer-feedback to allow students to give each other feedback, too.

Facilitate [communication](#) and [collaboration](#) as much as possible. Online learning experiences should invoke a sense of belonging and [inclusion](#). This will increase motivation and support students to stay on the ball. Add synchronous tools such as webconferences for student groups to collaborate on their assignments.

Be considerate with regard to your students' workload. It is wise to change methods over the course of a lecture but students may be intimidated or overburdened by an overload of material and assignments, too.

Step 4

Compile your material.

Great, you compiled your material. But how do you digitize it now (e.g. texts)? Can you share their URL instead? Keep in mind that you may not be allowed to republish a third party's work and need to [adhere to legal guidelines \(e.g. password protection, limited audience\)](#). If you provide material to a limited audience (use *enrolment keys* for your ISIS/moodle course) you can share material for scientific purposes as outlined in TU guidelines. Make sure to clarify if your resources are available at [TU library](#). You can also include material published under a [Creative Commons licence](#), please adhere to the according CC licence restrictions.

Step 5

Familiarize yourself with [ISIS/moodle](#) and upload your content to a course.

Implement a course on ISIS/moodle and synchronize it with your vision. Insert activities to structure your content and upload your material.

Step 6

Search for additional tools.

If you cannot implement each part of your vision on ISIS/moodle, explore additional tools online that may serve your purpose well. Make sure to only chose tools that adhere to [TUB specific data protection guidelines](#). Always double-check if and how a tool of your choice may already be readily available and/or part of already licensed tools at TUB (e.g. whiteboards in webconference tools and Microsoft Office 365, deck for project management and pinboard simulations in TUBcloud).

Step 7

Facilitate communication and collaboration.

In online education, clear communication and ease of access are crucial. Get in touch with your students early-on and give them a clear overview of the entire course. It is wise to communicate clearly when and how students may pose questions, if you expect them to reply within a given timeframe and if you expect them to take part in regular webconferences. Publish this information in a general announcements forum (standard forum). You can also post an introductory welcome note and regular reminders there (keep in mind that these posts are sent to all students unless they adjust their individual settings otherwise: if you need to make sure that they receive highly important text-based information, send it by direct-mail instead).

Offer your students platforms to ask questions. For example a forum that allows students to exchange information. Add your office hours and a regular webconference for consultation purposes. You can also establish regular online meetings for groups to motivate students to collaborate.

Step 8

Gather your students' feedback regularly.

If everything runs smoothly, great! Sometimes things do not go according to your plan. Don't worry! An entire online course may be new to you as much as to your students. It is important to regularly exchange views and take your students' experiences into consideration: Talk about what already runs smoothly and more importantly about what you still need to improve. Implement a brief survey or ask for feedback in a forum.

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