



Blended Learning Adaptation Guide

ISCED 0

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Introduction

Blended learning bridges the gap between a physical and virtual classroom environment. 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 0 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 0?

ISCED 0 covers pre-primary level educational programs designed for children between 0 and approximately 5 years old. There are two categories within this framework: early education (0 to 2 years) and pre-primary education (3 to primary school attendance). So that programs can be compared internationally, ISCED 0 is also referred to as 'early childhood education'. Encompassing the needs of any pre-primary facility such as childcare centers, kindergartens, and preschools that include an intentional educational element, ISCED 0 programs are intended to prepare a child for entry into primary education by focusing on cognitive development and exploration and building their emotional, social, and physical skills.

At the ISCED 0 level, it is not expected that programs will be highly structured. The main goal is to provide activities with some degree of purpose and organization in an environment where children can interact with each other and learn through play and socialization rather than achieving specific academic learning outcomes.



Learning Objectives of ISCED 0

Most early childhood or pre-primary education places more of an emphasis on holistic learning rather than specific academic achievements. This means developing a child's cognitive abilities and social skills, building their confidence, and introducing some degree of recognizable organized instruction outside of the home.

Learning is done through interaction with classmates, under adult supervision, generally via play-based activities and exploration of creativity. The physical learning environment in ISCED 0 programs – no matter where it is based – should be vibrant, colorful, stimulating, and rich with plenty of language prompts. This educational space should encourage imagination and expression and should foster and develop language and communication skills. The main educational objects for any blended learning ISCED 0 program are:



Learning Objectives of ISCED 0

Language

There must be an intentional educational aspect to any ISCED 0 program, and language is arguably the most important. By learning songs, poems, and rhymes, and listening to stories, a student will improve their vocabulary, hone their ability to share ideas and opinions, and be able to ask and answer questions.

Learning Objectives of ISCED 0

Motor skills

Every student learns at a different pace, but in a blended learning environment, parents can practice with their children so that teachers can include the five motor skills linked to early development in their lesson plans. Motor skills include:

- Construction skills: Construction activities that require pushing and pulling include manipulating Lego blocks, puzzle pieces, and train tracks. This type of skill promotes muscle power for controlled movement, including hand and finger strength and overall dexterity.
- Pencil skills: A good way for teachers to recognize hand dominance, this type of skill involves object manipulation leading to controlled use of everyday devices such as hairbrushes and toothbrushes.
- Scissor skills: Excellent for hand-eye coordination, this type of skill enhances finger strength, as well as encouraging students to process information received from the eyes to control, guide, and direct the hands.
- IT skills: Encompassing fine motor methods, this type of skill covers mouse and stylus manipulation, encouraging a student to not only develop proficiency in typing skills but also utilize various forms of technology for future advancement.
- Self-care skills: Fine motor skills lead to the development of an age-appropriate mastery of self-care tasks. This includes tying shoelaces, fastening belts, using cutlery, and manipulating fasteners i.e. lunchbox clasps and food bags.

Learning Objectives of ISCED 0

Soft Skills in General Education

The 4 Cs of soft skills education are critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. By viewing critical thinking as the main skill and presenting it as a precept that influences the other core skills, an ISCED 0 program can create an environment that encourages creativity as an explicit achievement.

Blended Learning Model for the ISCED 0 Level

Blended learning is a modern approach to education and learning that combines traditional schooling methods with the use of technology and online resources. Conventional classroom attendance is often still required under this model, but students are given more control over how they learn, as well as the time that they spend on different activities. Face-to-face teaching is complemented by internet-based activities that introduce and reinforce learning topics and often contain an assessment element.

Web-based learning tools are becoming more commonly used at all levels of education, easily implemented via tablets, interactive touchscreen monitors, wall-mounted touchscreens, and interactive whiteboards. It has been widely acknowledged that 'active' learning is far more effective than simply sitting and listening – the more students participate in activities, the more likely they are to be engaged, retain knowledge, and experience positive learning outcomes. Depending on the ISCED 0 program in question, there are three blended learning models to choose from.



Blended Learning Model for the ISCED 0 Level

Hybrid Learning

In a hybrid learning model, the same lesson is taught simultaneously both online and in-person, so the learning experience is synchronized regardless of whether the student is in the room or remote. Teaching is usually via live videoconferencing and has a greater reach when students are not able to attend in person. The aim is to combine both the audio-visual demonstration of course materials and the environment itself, but students learning remotely do not have the same experience as those in the classroom. Although the lesson can be recorded for later viewing, it can be difficult to replicate the in-room experience for an ISCED 0 student. The best hybrid learning programs consider the activities best suited for face-to-face teaching and those where a virtual setting will be more appropriate to create an optimal learning environment.

Blended Learning Model for the ISCED 0 Level

Distance Learning

Rather than a synchronous in-room experience, the distance learning model is designed for remote learning only – the students are never physically in the classroom. Again, the teacher may present some lessons via videoconferencing, but the focus is solely on utilizing technological capabilities to deliver a well-rounded curriculum rather than the replication of a traditional classroom environment. The distance learning model, when applied to ISCED 0 programs, requires parental or in-person adult support in addition to any instruction delivered by the teacher. Nevertheless, as distance learning is not geographically restrained in any way, lessons can be accessed at any time – perfect for accommodating a preschool child's extracurricular routine, particularly if that child has additional emotional needs that may impact their ability to stick to a fixed learning schedule.

Blended Learning Model for the ISCED 0 Level

Flipped Classroom

The flipped classroom model is the opposite of a traditional classroom program: students access lesson material online and complete set tasks prior to it being presented in person. The benefit of this model is that less face-to-face time is wasted on the mundane in the classroom, and more time can be allocated to student-led discussions, online lectures, collaborative projects, and activities, with a focus on higher-level cognitive learning. Whilst this is not necessarily the most effective blended learning schedule for ISCED 0 programs in their infancy, it is worthwhile considering the benefits of a flipped classroom model under certain circumstances, i.e. creative activities such as art. For example, taking [Star in the Jar by Sam Hey](#) as inspiration, a parent could read to the child then guide them in creating their own 'star in the jar' for presentation during active learning time.

The Benefits of Blended Learning for ISCED 0 Programs

The Benefits of Blended Learning for ISCED 0 Programs

At all ISCED levels, whatever content is completed online, programs should be based on pedagogically sound, well-planned lessons with clearly defined learning goals and desired outcomes. When approaching the ISCED 0 program from a blended learning perspective, there is a multitude of benefits for educators, students, and parents. These include, but are not limited to:

- Greater level of student engagement as most activities encourage participation
- Access to a huge variety of online resources and ideas from experts in the field
- Any activity can be tailored to suit individual student needs
- More effective use of classroom time
- Parents feel more involved in their child's learning and are able to see first-hand their child's strengths/weaknesses
- Theoretically, learning can be done anytime and anywhere, more easily accommodating individual needs

Technology is only going to become more prevalent in the future of education, so children in a blended learning environment are going to be more familiar with technology and, therefore, at a significant advantage to those who have only experienced a traditional educational environment. With that in mind, a blended learning approach to ISCED 0 level education provides the perfect platform for facilitating the acquisition and development of these vital educational and personal milestones in a child's life.



How to Assess Learning Achievements for ISCED 0 Students

How to Assess Learning Achievements for ISCED 0 Students

Assessing a child's understanding of the concepts covered by a blended learning model lesson plan is no different from the traditional classroom procedure: observe, consider, evaluate, document. Depending on the specifics of the learning model itself, in-person observation may be possible, but even if a program is completely virtual, there are a multitude of online teaching resources available that include diagnostic and analytic tools. For example, when assessing a child's completion of activities and their associated understanding of lesson points, their navigation of the online technology is as much of a performance indicator as completion of the work itself.

In terms of documenting a student's progress, these built-in tools also provide storage of the 'evidence' of competency, automating data collation. Additionally, when checking each student's progress and determining how to further tailor learning activities based on individual strengths and weaknesses, this repository of information is an invaluable supplementary resource that can be pre-set to accommodate personalized performance indicators.



Adapting Curriculum to a Blended Learning Model

Adapting Curriculum to a Blended Learning Model

The current wealth of accessible online resources is virtually unlimited, and there has never been such an abundance of learning materials available to educators at all levels. Therefore, the challenge for teachers is to integrate the right mix of technology into their traditional lesson plans whilst adhering to the prescribed curriculum and ensuring that each student's learning is being maximized. If you consider the ever-growing prevalence of technology in our everyday lives, it makes sense that the natural progression of education programs is to incorporate smart tech and online learning as an additional source of learning material.

In terms of ISCED 0 programs, many traditional in-person activities can be re-imagined within a technological framework. Each lesson plan will not necessarily rely entirely on technology but will be incorporated within the framework to reinforce the intended learning points and to cover the key educational concepts. Depending on the resources available, interactivity and vocal communication can be encouraged through bright and engaging visuals.



Adapting Curriculum to a Blended Learning Model

Introduction of Learning Objectives

One activity that is popular with the ISCED 0 age group revolves around fruit names, colors, and shapes. It is designed to present educational concepts but can also support them – in particular, motor skills – when delivered through tech-based learning.

An example of this is the ABC game [Abby's Smoothie Maker](#). A fun, visually appealing, age-appropriate online tool, it introduces all the learning points while encouraging participation and interaction with others. Learners visually identify a variety of fruits, the corresponding colors of the fruits, the number of fruits that can be seen, and click on a touch screen to complete a requested action. For in-person instruction, they take turns at identifying and touching the correct fruit, and the other students are encouraged to 'help' so that social interaction is present; for remote learners, children can work through the activity on their own with their parent providing the social interaction element.



Adapting Curriculum to a Blended Learning Model

Activity Engagement

With game-playing/reward built-into an online activity, many of the educational concepts that would usually be covered in-person are present – language, motor skills, critical thinking, and communication. As long as the activity is fun and visually appealing, learning points are introduced in an assessable way. The next activity could then reinforce competency by expanding on the vocabulary by introducing language challenges in the form of repetitive sentence structures i.e. I am a fruit. I am red. I am round. The children then guess the fruit based on these clues. Again, in-person learning environments mean that there is peer-to-peer social interaction, while remote learning is supported by a supervising adult.

Adapting Curriculum to a Blended Learning Model

Competency Assessment

To conclude a lesson, a final quiz should be undertaken so that a true evaluation of the student's ability to understand and retain the educational concepts can be made. Additionally, assessment should include technological competency, viewed against specific ISCED 0 level criteria. By using an existing curriculum as a conceptual framework, educators can use their original in-person assessment criteria to design a remote process for competency consideration. Particularly in ISCED 0 programs, observation is key to understanding a student's competencies. This means that educators must ensure that some degree of visual interaction – via live videoconferencing if necessary – is part of any assessment criteria to be able to provide an optimal experience.

Adapting Curriculum to a Blended Learning Model

Physical vs Virtual Delivery

When adapting an existing curriculum to a blended learning environment, it is important that an educator considers the program. In fact, by incorporating an existing lesson plan into a technological framework, utilizing available software for the delivery of the educational concepts, an educator can use the same tools for both the physical and virtual classrooms. Although the in-person instruction will obviously be more closely tailored to the needs of those physically present, it does mean that the interactive element of the activities and overall delivery of the educational concepts will be uniform, allowing for standardization of assessment criteria.

Accommodating Additional Needs Through Blended Learning

Accommodating Additional Needs Through Blended Learning

Blended learning is designed to be adapted and amended to suit the needs of both the specific educational program and its individual participants. The fact that you can incorporate so many different learning methods and draw on so many learning resources is one of the real strengths of this educational model. As students are not demographically homogeneous, some of the circumstances that can also be more easily accommodated by blended learning are:

Students with special needs, students who lack resources, and students who have fallen behind.



Accommodating Additional Needs Through Blended Learning

Students with Special Needs

Students that have impairments, disabilities, or other special needs can be more easily accommodated through a blended learning model. Through a hybrid or distance learning model, with the oversight of a parent or third-party educator, the class material can be reviewed and reinforced at home, and a close eye can be kept on the child's progress. Any conceptual difficulties that they may be encountering can therefore be more efficiently and effectively accommodated with specialized technology. Additionally, physical impairments that might otherwise impact a child's learning experience can be ameliorated through an at-home classroom environment.

Accommodating Additional Needs Through Blended Learning

Students with a Lack of Resources

Faced with poverty or lack of resources, children can often suffer educationally. A well-implemented blended learning program, however, can often more easily make concessions for children in this situation. By designing an ISCED 0 program in a blended learning model, accommodations can be more easily made for inequities in both the educational environment and physical access to equipment. Indeed, many schools and early learning centers have resources such as tablets and laptops that children can use when in-home resources are lacking, ensuring that their educational needs are still met even if economic considerations would otherwise impact their attendance.

Accommodating Additional Needs Through Blended Learning

Students who Have Fallen Behind

If a child joins the program late, appears to be falling behind in their comprehension of key learning points, or struggles with their grasp of the technology being used, activities can be adapted to meet individual needs. Through dedicated communication, an educator can collaborate with the student's parents to assist them in completing activities via online resources or dedicated apps. This will help to reinforce key concepts and will make the child feel more confident in their ability to understand and complete tasks in the classroom. Not only that, but a blended learning model is inherently more flexible when tailoring a lesson to the individual, without impacting the learning of other students.

Technologies to Support ISCED 0 Blended Learning Programs

Technologies to Support ISCED 0 Blended Learning Programs

Completing activities online is a key component to a successful blended learning program; both educators and students should, therefore, have access to a reliable laptop or PC with a fast and secure internet connection. There are countless applications and software that can be utilized by a blended learning program, but a well-thought-out lesson plan that complies with the curriculum is key to delivering an optimal learning environment.

The possible methods of online lesson delivery for ISCED 0 are vast and could include, but are not limited to:

- Live videoconferencing
- Pre-recorded video content
- Webinars
- VLE or LMS course modules
- YouTube videos
- Online educational games

The method of delivery requires, at the very least:

- A stable and/or predictable internet connection
- Videoconferencing and recording facilities
- A reliable laptop or PC for both teacher and student
- A large touch screen or interactive monitor for the host classroom
- An interactive whiteboard
- Tablets and/or a receptive computer



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