

Is e-Learning Sustainable ?



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Please consult our website

www.equality.unizh.ch

for detailed information on
our support services and our
formative evaluation concept

Summary of our first experiences

- In comparison to the first visits, eQuality has the impression that the quality of the courses has improved.
- Clues for an optimal usage of learning activities are hardly given. The students must cope with the activities in an explorative manner.
- The course usability is in part poorly designed.
- The time factor is usually not taken into account.

Summary of our first experiences

- In general, the students receive very precise clues regarding the system requirements to ensure an optimised usage of the learning environment.
- Content requirements are seldom specified.
- The adaptability of the virtual learning environment is supported only to a certain degree.
- Several project groups do not yet agree if they should produce a comic book environment or a virtual Springer textbook.

Summary of our first experiences

- In contrast to our initial experience, the integration of learning activities into the virtual learning environment has increased. These learning activities help students to implement and reflect upon what they have learned.
- In several projects, support possibilities by means of tutors are now being realised.

Summary of our first experiences

- We have the impression that advances have been made in regard to the integration of the learning environments with the ongoing curriculum.
- In terms of aesthetics, a wide variety can be found. Sometimes too much information is offered at once.

Further Considerations

Introduction

Further Considerations

Can the term 'sustainability'
be used in connection with
e-learning?

Further Considerations

**Can e-learning be
sustainable?**

Further Considerations

Are unintentional side effects taken into account ?

Further Considerations

Pedagogical promises

Further Considerations

Standardisation or levelling?

Further Considerations

Changes in user behaviour

Further Considerations

What is the optimal size of a virtual learning environment?

Please consult handout

Further Considerations

**Consequences for academic
freedom?**

Further Considerations

**Separation of education and
research?**

Conclusions & Recommendations

- Binding definition of the term “sustainability” as used in virtual learning environments in the tertiary educational sector.
- Continuous analysis of user behaviour and user action in order to optimise virtual learning environments.
- Ongoing assessment of the state-of-the-art in e-learning of the tertiary educational sector.

Conclusions & Recommendations

- Establishment of a pedagogical center which undertakes a continuous monitoring within and between projects. Qualitative and quantitative data will be acquired. The pedagogical center must operate independently of financial and strategic management.
- Training of personnel in project management.
- Systematic attention to side effects, for example standardising, feedback effects, dependency on the mood of the ICT market.

Conclusions

Virtual learning environments can be sustainable in the tertiary educational sector if:

- they are continuously and formatively evaluated within and between projects.
- the discourse is conducted with caution.
- a historical perspective is taken into account in the discourse. It is not the first time that technical innovations have lead to euphoria among instructors. We probably can learn from earlier experiences.

Thank You