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# Curriculum - Executive Summary

Hybrid Learning Communities

Designing for learning in digital communities

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Erasmus+ project: 2020-1-DK01-KA226-SCH-094225



## Executive summary

The Hybrid Learning Communities (HLC) Curriculum describes the framework for understanding the project's intended teaching results for the participating learners – primarily the professional teachers. It also represents a framework for the learning and experiences the students should gain by participating in courses designed by teachers in the HLC project.

The curriculum describes the development of HLC in both learning objectives and activities and their context of practical teaching experiences, primary theoretical and principled considerations regarding the selection, sequencing, and dissemination of the learning content.

It is the intention that the curriculum can be the starting point for a common understanding of the direction of development in hybrid learning communities and specific action instructions. However, those who wish to develop HLC inspired by this curriculum must always consider local experiences, contexts, and needs.

Lack of possibilities for physical meetings is a significant constraint on teachers' team collaboration. Thus, online collaboration has the potential to mediate parts of the need for collaboration and learning together among teachers.

Based on the research and design principles from a master thesis (Master in ICT & Learning at Faculty of Humanities, University of Aalborg Denmark) by Erik Leschly, Thomas Kjelgaard & Anne Veiergang (2020), the HLC project generated a survey and an analysis of participants' needs for digital competencies. On this basis, the HLC project developed

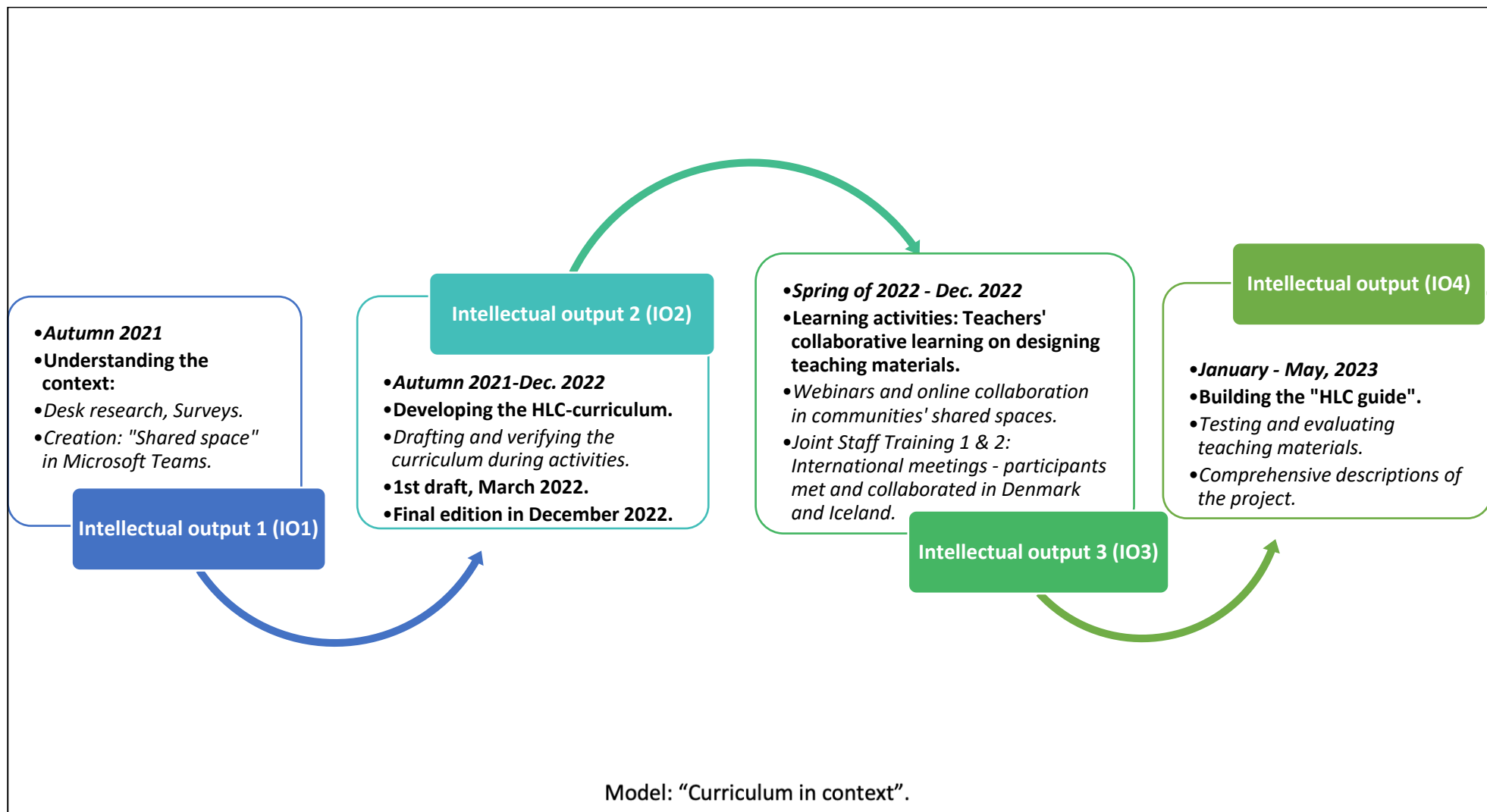
a curriculum concerning teachers' competencies to collaborate in hybrid learning communities.

The learning activities were developed, targeting first the development of digital competencies among the participating teachers. The target group of the curriculum is educational professionals (participating teacher teaches students the age of 12 to 16 years).

The ideas and didactic designs of the curriculum are an extension of the concept of “teaching as a design science” (Laurillard, 2012), where didactics and teaching are considered as “malleable” areas rather than the science of humanities: Learning activities must be continuously designed and re-designed to fit the learners and their context.

To concretize design knowledge into functional theory, the curriculum is using "design principles" (Bell & Baumgartner, 2002 - "generalized frameworks for design") that can "inform and form the basis for design efforts." This approach – formulating “design principles” is a *method* for driving the participant’s actions in a common direction, all the while the evaluation of learning experiences during the project’s activities changed, validated, and further developed the design principles – finishing the curriculum. A main result of the project activities are the different frameworks/ design principles in the appendixes of the curriculum presenting different steps and aspects concerning the development of hybrid learning communities.

Different concepts of activities are used, which might not be immediately familiar to the reader. The model on the following page is an overview of the most important concepts in their context.



The main goal of the project's learning activities is for the teachers to develop their individual and collaborative digital competencies to be leading participants in a hybrid learning community: They will (as a community/team) be able to cooperate and learn collaboratively in a shared virtual space<sup>1</sup> to develop and produce teaching courses for their students.

The competency descriptions and learning objectives of the curriculum are based on the "European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators" (DigCompEdu) by Christine Redecker & Yves Punie (2017).

The framework distinguishes six areas in which educators' Digital Competences are expressed with 22 competencies.

In the project extra focus is given within the area of the teacher's *"professional engagement"*: *"...educators' use of digital technologies in professional interactions with colleagues, learners, parents, and other interested parties, for their individual professional development and the collective good of the organization."* (Redecker & Punie, 2017).

The HLC-project activities focused on the following areas and competencies:

#### **Key learning objectives in teacher's learning activities:**

**Area 1: Professional Engagement:** *"Organizational communication", "Professional collaboration" and "Reflective practice"*

**Area 2: Digital Resources:** *"Selecting digital resources"*

**Area 3: Teaching and Learning:** *"Teaching" and "Collaborative learning"*

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<sup>1</sup> Using the features of the Microsoft Teams platform.

Primary focus in the HLC curriculum is first on the teachers' competences in using digital technologies for communication, collaboration, and professional development. The teachers thereby also develop their digital competencies in the classroom, even with possible common approaches that can support common practice.

#### **Key learning objectives in student's learning activities:**

**Area 5: Empowering Learners:** Using digital technologies to enhance learners' active engagement.

**Area 6: Facilitating Learners' Digital Competence:** Enabling learners to use digital technologies creatively and responsibly for information, communication, content creation, wellbeing, and problem-solving.

The curriculum presents basic pedagogical and didactic theories for the teachers to be applied in learning activities for students and participating teachers. Learning theory (e.g. Online Collaborative Learning) is applied to describe perspectives on digital technologies' role in learning.

The curriculum presents theoretical considerations concerning "Digital technologies in education": How the teacher's common use of few common technologies can constitute a "shared space" for collaboration (technologies as habitats for communities of practice rather than as tools). The project's perspectives on these issues however have important caveats: The project has been focusing on learning and organizing the collaborative learning of teachers and students. It has not dealt with many of extensive and complex tasks

that would follow from implementing common principles of hybrid collaboration in an entire educational organization.

The curriculum defines terms of didactic design and presents common approaches and design principles to the participating teacher's didactic designs (based on Levinsen & Sørensen, 2014).