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Education



**YES4e-Learning – Tools and Strategies for Supporting the Adaptation to E-learning in
the HE Sector
Project No. 2023-1-LT01-KA220-HED-000166708**

Mastering E-learning for HEI Students – Strategies for Psychological Adaptation, Self- Engagement and Emotional Resilience (Yes4e-Learning)

Training Guidelines

2025

Authors:

Carme Prades Mullet
Neus Franco
Eloina Coll
Victoria Lerma
Isil Kurnaz, PhD
Pinar Mutlu, MSc
Mustafa Ginesar, MSc
Silvia Popovici, PhD
Irina-Elena Macovei, PhD
Daiva Stanelytė
Birutė Rataitė
Beatrice Del Nero
Viviana Mazzaggio

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Training Overview

Purpose

The training guidelines **Mastering e-learning for Students - Strategies for Psychological Adaptation, Self-Engagement, and Emotional Resilience (Yes4ELearning)** present an integrated course for higher education students facing the specific challenges of online learning. Through five pillars, students learn to navigate emotional distress, build resilience, strengthen self-engagement, and develop strategies that support motivation and well-being in an e-learning environment.

Intended Audience

This curriculum is designed for higher education (HE) students at undergraduate and graduate levels.

Development Process

The training package **Mastering e-learning for HEI Students - Strategies for Psychological Adaptation, Self-Engagement and Emotional Resilience (Yes4ELearning)** was developed during the Erasmus+ Cooperation Partnership in Higher Education project **YES4ELearning — Tools and Strategies for Supporting the Adaptation to e-learning in HE sector**, implemented 1 Oct 2023 – 30 Sep 2025. The project was coordinated by Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija/Higher Education Institution (KVK), Klaipėda, Lithuania in partnership with Gebze Teknik Üniversitesi, Gebze (Kocaeli), Türkiye; Universitat Politècnica de València (UPV), València, Spain; Institut Cal·lípolis, Tarragona, Spain; Asociația Demetrius, Iași, Romania; Falco & Associati SRL, Milan, Italy.

Before finalization, the package was piloted with 250 higher education students across the five participating countries.

Course Design

The course comprises five stand-alone workshops (3 h each).

Module 1: Introduction to e-learning and Emotional Adaptation (Week 1), 3 h



Module 2: Building Emotional Resilience and Coping Strategies (Week 2), 3 h

Module 3: Self-Engagement and Motivation Techniques (Week 3), 3 h

Module 4: Virtual Support Networks and Social Connection (Week 4), 3 h

Module 5: Designing a Balanced and Productive e-learning Environment (Week 5), 3 h

Learning Outcomes

- Understand the emotional challenges of e-learning and apply strategies to manage them.
- Increase self-engagement and motivation to stay focused in e-learning settings.
- Build resilience and coping mechanisms to thrive despite setbacks.
- Create strong connections with peers and instructors to reduce isolation.
- Design a balanced learning environment that supports mental health and well-being.

Implementation

The training comprises five stand-alone sections, each delivered in 3 h (total 15 h). Modules can be run over two full days, three half-days, or spread across several weeks. Recommended group size: 20–25 participants. Sessions include small-group activities and can be adapted to hybrid settings. Facilitators should have higher education teaching experience and be familiar with the five dimensions of Social Presence Theory (Whiteside, 2017). Strong group facilitation skills are required.

Equipment/Supplies

- Laptop/projector/speakers/screen (or room with built-in AV equipment)
- Internet access
- Easel or newsprint, markers, pens
- Handouts (binders optional)
- Name tags

Evaluation

A brief post-training self-assessment is recommended and included in the training package.

Training Structure



Module	Title (Week)	Hours	Lead
Module 1	Introduction to e-learning and Emotional Adaptation (Week 1)	3	Institut Cal·lípolis
	○ Overview of emotional/psychological challenges in online learning, critical thinking and openness to new information ○ Introductory activities: self-assessment and setting personal goals		
Module 2	Building Emotional Resilience and Coping Strategies (Week 2)	3	Asociația Demetrius
	○ Emotional regulation and resilience-building exercises ○ Stress management techniques		
Module 3	Self-Engagement and Motivation Techniques (Week 3)	3	Universitat Politècnica de València
	○ Practical tips for goal setting, habit building, self-discipline, time management and self-motivation		
Module 4	Virtual Support Networks and Social Connection (Week 4)	3	Falco & Associati SRL
	○ Creating peer groups and networks; self-expression and self-esteem ○ Effective communication in virtual environments		
Module 5	Designing a Balanced and Productive e-learning Environment (Week 5)	3	Gebze Teknik Üniversitesi, Gebze (Kocaeli), Klaipėdos valstybinė kolegija (KVK)
	○ Strategies for setting up optimal physical and mental learning spaces		

Theoretical Overview

With the unexpected COVID-19 pandemic the education sector was not only transformed but also faced major challenges, as the entire system was rapidly pushed toward online delivery without adequate preparation. While the idea of learning and teaching from home initially seemed attractive—offering flexibility, comfort, and learning at one’s own pace—significant challenges soon emerged.



Educators' perspective, (i) lack of technical knowhow (particularly in more senior teachers or lecturers), (ii) lack of digital content preparedness, (iii) engaging students' attention online, (iv) engaging educators' own motivation and attention, (v) keeping track of attendance and plagiarism in assignments, among many others, became among the most encountered problems.

From the students' perspective

- limited access to devices or stable internet connection (smartphones, computers, cameras)
- short attention span and frequent distractions
- limited communication and delayed feedback in asynchronous courses
- low motivation and self-discipline
- reduced academic/social interaction with instructors and peers
- low productivity and unclear study routines
- weak time-management skills
- resistance to a fully online format
- amplified barriers for students with special educational needs (e.g., visual/hearing impairments, autism spectrum)

This training material addresses these issues from the students' perspective and offers practical strategies for effective digital learning. Priority areas include time management, self-motivation and self-regulation, peer-support networks and collaboration, digital literacy, and progress monitoring with personalized feedback tailored to each learner's profile. For programs with a strong practical component (e.g., VET or undergraduate tracks requiring hands-on skill development), additional approaches are proposed to sustain motivation in online and blended formats.

Alongside institutional platforms, autonomous learning via mobile applications is increasingly common (e.g., Duolingo; see Loewen et al., 2019). In such approaches, progress is tracked through short quizzes and goal-oriented tasks set by the student and/or educator, often supported by app notifications that reinforce motivation. Where relevant, AR/VR-enhanced activities and discipline-specific tools can be integrated to support practical skill development in fields such as dentistry, neurosurgery, physics, or chemistry.

Main Pillars of the Training

1. Understanding the emotional impact in e-learning
2. Building emotional resilience for e-learning
3. Enhancing self-engagement and motivation



4. Fostering social connection and support networks
5. Designing a balanced learning environment that supports psychological well-being

Note. Physical and mental presence can be hindered by technical constraints (e.g., non-functional camera, suboptimal home setting) or low self-motivation. Prolonged screen exposure may reduce both instructors' motivation and students' learning capacity (Nourey & Al-Badi, 2023).

Main Pillars of the Training

Pillar 1. Understanding Emotional Impact in e-learning

Objective

Help students recognize and understand the emotional challenges of online learning.

Key Topics

- Signs of emotional distress (stress, burnout, isolation)
- Psychological impacts of distance learning
- Role of mindset in online education

Activities/Strategies

- Self-assessment tools to identify emotional challenges
- Guided reflections comparing in-person and e-learning contexts
- Journaling to track emotional well-being

Outcome

Students gain insight into their emotional experiences and can name triggers and coping options

Pillar 2. Building Emotional Resilience for e-learning

Objective

Equip students with coping strategies to handle stress and setbacks

Key Topics

- Growth mindset and adaptability
- Coping strategies for stress, anxiety, and frustration
- Time management as a tool for emotional regulation

Activities/Strategies



- Mindfulness and relaxation exercises (e.g., deep breathing, visualization)
- Time-blocking to reduce overwhelm and maintain balance
- Case studies of overcoming challenges in distance learning

Outcome

Students can apply at least two coping strategies and draft a personal stress-management plan

Pillar 3. Enhancing Self-Engagement and Motivation

Objective

Increase students' self-engagement and sustained motivation in e-learning

Key Topics

- Self-regulation and habit formation (habit stacking, implementation intentions)
- Goal setting (SMART) and time-blocking
- Attention management (Pomodoro, digital minimalism, notification hygiene)
- Intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation; light gamification elements

Activities/Strategies

- Personal engagement plan with weekly micro-goals and check-ins
- Habit tracker (paper or digital) for two behaviors (e.g., study start ritual, review block)
- Distraction audit and 7-day notification cleanup
- Optional reflective prompt on progress and barriers

Outcome

Students build a 2-week engagement plan and track at least one habit with daily entries

Pillar 4. Fostering Social Connection and Support Networks

Objective

Strengthen social presence and peer support in online learning

Key Topics

- Social Presence Theory; inclusive and supportive communication
- Peer-learning structures (buddy pairs, cohort groups)
- Channels for collaboration (LMS forums, Microsoft Teams/Slack/Discord/WhatsApp)
- Netiquette and feedback practices



Activities/Strategies

- Set up buddy pairs/trios and weekly peer check-ins
- Structured discussion protocols (think–pair–share, jigsaw, 1-2-4-All)
- Create a one-page communication charter for the class
- Peer-feedback rubric for assignments

Outcome

Students map two reliable support contacts and commit to weekly check-ins; the group produces a class communication charter

Supplementary tools

Autonomous learning apps (e.g., Duolingo) can reinforce motivation through micro-goals and streaks; for community building and course communication, use the institution’s LMS or agreed channels (e.g., Teams, Slack, Discord). (*Loewen et al., 2019; Freeman et al., 2023; Quesada-Pallares et al., 2019*)

Pillar 5. Designing a Balanced e-learning Environment for Psychological Well-Being

Objective

Help students establish a healthy and productive e-learning environment that supports well-being

Key Topics

- Ergonomic and distraction-free study space (lighting, chair, screen height, noise)
- Screen-time management and boundaries between study and personal life
- Physical health while learning online (exercise, breaks, sleep hygiene)

Activities/Strategies

- Personal workspace checklist (physical and digital)
- Daily routines that integrate breaks, exercise, and leisure
- Weekly “reflect and recharge” check-ins to adjust routines

Outcome

Students produce a one-page setup + weekly routine plan that reduces stress and supports overall well-being.



Module 1. Introduction to e-learning and Emotional Adaptation (Week 1), 3 h

Aim

Enable participants to understand core principles of effective e-learning and develop foundational emotional-adaptation skills (self-awareness, basic coping, initial self-assessment)

Learning Objectives

- Define key e-learning modalities and compare synchronous vs asynchronous formats
- Identify common emotional stressors in online learning and name at least three regulation strategies (e.g., breathing, cognitive reappraisal, grounding)
- Distinguish constructive (affiliative, self-enhancing) from inappropriate (aggressive, self-defeating) humor and apply the former ethically
- Design a short online activity that includes a check-in, clear instructions, and a low-stakes practice task
- Reflect on personal emotional triggers and commit to two actions that increase psychological safety in virtual classrooms

Methods

- Interactive mini-lecture
- Live platform demo
- Case study analysis in breakout rooms
- Whole-group debrief
- Microteaching/role-play (2–3 min)
- Individual reflection and peer feedback

Materials needed:

- Video-conferencing tool (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet)
- Breakout-room functionality enabled
- Slide deck or mini-lecture notes
- Shared whiteboard/doc (e.g., Google Docs, Miro)
- Timer (built-in or external) and polling tool (e.g., Mentimeter or in-app polls)
- Case study examples (2 short written descriptions or 1–2 brief video clips showing humor styles)
- Handouts: self-assessment form and Humor Styles Quadrant sheet
- Accessibility: live captions enabled where available



Shared online collaboration tools (Optional but helpful):

- Use Google Docs or Padlet for group notes and to record responses during the case-study analysis and brainstorming.

Chat or shared document for reflection:

Use the chat feature or a shared document for students' reflections on personal experiences with humour.

Suggested session plan (1 h 45 min):

- 0:00–0:10 Welcome, goals, norms (psychological safety; camera optional).
- 0:10–0:25 Mini-lecture: e-learning modalities, emotional load, humour types.
- 0:25–0:40 Platform demo; quick poll/check-in.
- 0:40–1:05 Breakout case study: analyse humour use (intent, inclusivity, timing).
- 1:05–1:25 Microteaching: 2–3 min activity with a planned moment of light, inclusive humour.
- 1:25–1:40 Debrief: what worked; guardrails for humour; personal triggers.
- 1:40–1:45 Exit ticket: two personal commitments in chat/document.

Evaluation of the module

- Active participation in all activities.
- Ability to critically reflect on one's skills.
- Quality of presentations and feedback.
- Perceived improvement in expressing emotions, showing confidence, and using humour appropriately during online teaching.

Psychological impacts of distance learning

Distance learning can significantly affect students' well-being, particularly in hands-on training where practical experience is key. Common effects include:

- Isolation and loneliness. One of the main drawbacks of distance learning is the lack of social interaction. Higher Education (HE) and Vocational Education and Training (VET) often rely on group work and hands-on experiences.
- Motivation and discipline. Fewer direct interactions can weaken structure and focus; without classroom routines, students may procrastinate or disengage, leading to frustration and lower learning outcomes.



- Stress and anxiety. Managing coursework independently, **time pressures**, and personal or work-related stressors can heighten anxiety. Many HE and VET students also juggle work, which can be overwhelming.
- Cognitive overload. Online learning can bombard students with information; limited real-time interaction can hinder processing and retention.
- Decreased self-esteem and confidence. Limited face-to-face feedback can prompt doubt about progress, reducing confidence—especially in hands-on training that requires practical skills.

The role of personal mindset in online learning

A student's mindset is crucial to success in online learning.

- Growth vs. fixed mindset. A growth mindset treats abilities as developable through effort and feedback—vital in self-regulated online learning. A fixed mindset views abilities as static and can prompt giving up when challenges arise.
- Self-motivation and discipline. A constructive mindset supports self-motivation—key in online learning that requires initiative to engage and stay on track.
- Resilience in facing challenges. Online learning presents technical and conceptual hurdles; a resilient mindset fosters persistence and optimism to overcome them.
- Adaptability: The ability to adapt to new tools, technologies, and modes of learning is crucial in online learning; an open mindset encourages experimentation and leads to more effective learning experiences.
- Time management. A well-developed mindset supports effective time management. For Higher Education (HE) and Vocational Education and Training (VET) students balancing work and study, strong time-management skills increase the likelihood of completing assignments and staying on schedule.



General activity

Duration: 30 min

Objective: Enable students to identify their emotional states and recognize signs of stress, burnout, or isolation through structured self-assessment.

Materials Needed:

- Printed or digital self-assessment questionnaire.
- Access to a free Emotional Fitness quiz:
<https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes>
<https://sciences.ucf.edu/psychology/myemotions-hxus/>
- Writing materials or digital devices for note-taking.

Common steps:

- 1. Introduction (10 min):** Discuss the importance of emotional self-awareness in online learning environments.
- 2. Self-Assessment Questionnaire (15 min):** Students complete a questionnaire assessing aspects like stress levels https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes/take_quiz/stress_and_anxiety, emotional reactivity <https://sciences.ucf.edu/psychology/myemotions-hxus/> and regulation https://ucf.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_00dVYroqp8ZFEbj?Q_JFE=qdg, feelings of isolation, and overall well-being https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes/take_quiz/awe.
- 3. Reflection and Discussion (15 min):** Students review results, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

Duration: 1 h 45 min

Objective: Help students compare in-person and e-learning environments, focusing on emotional experiences and identifying personal challenges and preferences.

Materials Needed:

- Comparison-chart template.
- Access to the video "The Pros and Cons of Online Learning"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06LoQ2Zg8Y8>
- Writing materials or digital devices.



Steps:

- 1. Introduction (15 min):** Discuss the emotional aspects of different learning environments.
- 2. Reading and Discussion (15 min):** Students watch the video and discuss key takeaways regarding emotional experiences in various learning settings.
- 3. Comparison Chart Completion (20 min):** Students fill out a chart comparing their emotional responses to in-person and e-learning across various factors (e.g., motivation, engagement, stress).
- 4. Group Discussion (30 min):** Students share insights from their charts, identifying common challenges and unique experiences.
- 5. Personal Reflection Essay (25 min):** Students write an essay reflecting on their preferred learning environment and strategies to enhance their emotional well-being in less preferred settings.

Annex. Comparison chart template for students

Aspect	In-person Learning	E-learning	Personal challenges/Preferences (In Your Case)
Social interaction			Describe your experience or preferences regarding social interaction.
Motivation			How do you stay motivated in an e-learning environment?
Cognitive load			Is the cognitive load different in e-learning? How?



Time management			How do you manage your time in both environments?
Self-esteem and confidence			What kind of feedback helps build your confidence?
Isolation			Do you feel isolated in e-learning? How do you cope with it?
Peer support			How important is peer support for you for learning? How do you seek it e-learning?
Feedback			How do you feel about receiving feedback in e-learning vs. in-person settings?
Flexibility			Do you prefer flexibility or a fixed schedule for learning?
Learning pace			How do you feel about pacing your learning? Do you prefer self-paced or instructor-led sessions?

Annex. Comparison chart template for teachers

Aspect	In-person learning	E-learning	Personal challenges/preferences (your case)



Social interaction	Direct interaction with peers and instructors. Immediate feedback and collaboration.	Limited interaction through digital platforms; may feel detached.	Describe your experience or preferences regarding social interaction.
Motivation	Motivated by the classroom environment, instructor guidance, and peer interaction.	Self-motivation is key, as the environment can feel less engaging.	How do you stay motivated in an e-learning environment?
Cognitive load	Lower cognitive load as information is often broken down and clarified immediately.	Higher cognitive load due to longer screen time and processing information independently.	Is the cognitive load different in e-learning? How?
Time management	Structured schedule and clear deadlines; time management is teacher-led.	Requires self-discipline and effective time management; deadlines are often more flexible.	How do you manage your time in both environments?
Self-esteem and confidence	Regular feedback boosts confidence; peer validation during activities.	Delayed feedback can reduce confidence; self-reflection is required.	What kind of feedback helps build your confidence?
Isolation	Lower isolation due to physical presence of classmates and instructors.	Higher isolation; lack of physical interaction with peers.	Do you feel isolated in e-learning? How do you cope with it?
Peer support	Support from peers and instructors during class activities and group work.	Peer support may be available in e-learning, but it's less immediate	How important is peer support for learning? How do you seek it in e-learning?



		and can be harder to access.	
Feedback	Frequent, immediate feedback during or after classes.	Delayed or less frequent feedback; often asynchronous.	How do you feel about receiving feedback in in e-learning vs. in-person settings?
Flexibility	Fixed schedule; less flexible but routine-driven.	Highly flexible; allows students to choose when and where to study.	Do you prefer flexibility or a fixed schedule for learning?
Learning Pace	Paced by the class; instructor leads the flow of lessons.	Paced by individual preferences; students often work at their own speed.	How do you feel about pacing learning? Do you prefer self-paced or instructor-led sessions?

Activity 2: Journaling Exercise – "Tracking my emotions"

Duration: 1 h 45 min

Objective: Encourage students to monitor and reflect on their emotional well-being through structured journaling, promoting self-awareness and coping strategies.

Materials needed:

- Journaling prompts handout.
- Access to journaling resources: <https://mindfulhealthsolutions.com/20-journaling-prompts-for-mental-health>
- Notebooks or digital journaling tools. ([Journaling Prompts For Mental Health - Mindful Health Solutions](#))

Order of activities:

1. Introduction (10 min):
 - Discuss the benefits of journaling for emotional health and self-awareness.



2. Journaling Session 1 (45 min):

- Students respond to prompts focusing on their current emotional state and recent experiences in e-learning.

Prompts:

- How would you spend your perfect day off? What makes that perfect for you?
- Describe yourself in ten words. Why do those words come to mind?
- What makes you feel the most inspired?
- What is your favorite form of self-care? Why?
- What can you do today to take better care of yourself?
- What comes to mind first when you think of what makes you feel safe?
- What are five things about yourself you want people to know?
- What's something that makes you feel warm inside?
- Explain what's hardest for you in as many words as it takes.
- If you were to improve something about your life, what would that be? Why?

3. Group sharing (10 min):

- Voluntary sharing of insights and experiences from the journaling session.

4. Journaling Session 2 (30 min):

- Students write about coping strategies and set personal goals for managing emotional challenges. Students can design their own strategies consulting websites such as <https://www.nih.gov/sites/default/files/health-info/wellness-toolkits/emotional-wellness-checklist-2022-7.pdf>

5. Reflection and discussion (10 min):

- Students reflect on the journaling process and discuss how it can be integrated into their daily routine.

Resource:

- Journaling prompts: [20 Journaling Prompts for Mental Health](#)

Activity 3: Case study reflection on in-person vs. e-learning environments with gaming elements

Duration: 1 h 45 min



Objective: Reflect on psychological challenges in e-learning and in-person learning environments through interactive gaming and guided journaling, focusing on isolation, motivation, cognitive load, and self-esteem.

Materials needed:

- Printed or digital copies of case studies
- Whiteboard or virtual collaboration tool (e.g., Padlet, Miro)
- Reflection sheet with journaling prompts
- Digital quiz or Kahoot! for a gaming activity
- Timer or stopwatch
- Scenario cards for guided reflection (in a game-like format)

Order of activities:

1. Introduction (15 min):
 - Briefly introduce the topics: isolation, motivation, cognitive load, and self-esteem in e-learning vs. in-person learning.
 - Explain the purpose of the activity: to use case studies and gaming to explore and reflect on the psychological impacts of these environments.
2. Interactive case study gaming (30 min):
 - Split the class into teams of 3-4 students.
 - Use a digital quiz tool (such as Kahoot!) or Jeopardy-style quiz competition (either virtual or in-person) where each case study is turned into a set of questions.
 - Example questions:
 - *In Alex's case, what was the main challenge she faced in an e-learning environment? (isolation, motivation, etc.)*
 - *How can Ben improve his engagement during in-person lessons?*
 - *What strategies can Carla use to manage cognitive load in an e-learning course?*
 - Points are awarded for correct answers, encouraging students to discuss the case studies and critically analyze the situations.

Tip: Make the quiz game fast-paced and interactive, giving students short amounts of time (20–30 seconds) to answer each question. This increases engagement and encourages critical thinking.



3. Group reflection and journaling (20 min):
 - After the game, have students individually journal their reflections on the case studies. Provide the following prompts:
 - *Which case study did you relate to the most? Why?*
 - *What psychological challenges (isolation, motivation, etc.) did you identify in the cases?*
 - *How do you think these challenges impact your own learning?*
 - Students should write their thoughts in a reflective journal (either physical or digital).
4. Group discussion and debrief (20 min):
 - After journaling, bring the class together for a group discussion.
 - Discuss the answers and reflections, prompting students to share their personal experiences related to the case studies.
 - Ask students to explain how gaming helped them understand the psychological challenges of both in-person and e-learning environments.
5. Wrap-up (15 min):
 - Finish by summarizing the psychological challenges discussed (isolation, motivation, cognitive load, and self-esteem).
 - Encourage students to share one strategy they plan to use to overcome these challenges in their own e-learning.

Activity 4: Enhancing group work, time management, and resilience through guided reflection and gaming

Duration: 1 h 45 min

Objective: Improve group work, time management, and resilience through a game-based approach that simulates real-life challenges in e-learning, followed by guided reflection.

Materials needed:

- Scenario cards with time management and resilience challenges (designed like game cards)
- Timer
- Digital tools (Trello for task management, Zoom for group communication)
- Reflection journals



- Escape-room or quest-style game for team challenges (virtual or in-person)

Order of activities:

1. Introduction (15 min):

- Start with a brief introduction to time management and resilience.
- Introduce the idea of the escape-room or quest-style game where each team has to solve challenges related to time management and resilience in the context of e-learning.

2. Game challenge (40 min):

- Divide the class into groups (3-4 students per group).
- Each group receives a set of scenario cards (physical or digital) that represent common challenges in e-learning (e.g., managing deadlines, staying motivated, overcoming setbacks).
- Teams must "solve" the challenges within a set time limit by discussing strategies and dividing tasks. For example:
 - *Scenario 1: You have three assignments due on the same day. How do you prioritize your time?*
 - *Scenario 2: You are feeling isolated in your e-learning course. How can you reach out for support or stay motivated?*
 - *Scenario 3: You've missed an e-learning class and feel behind. How can you bounce back and stay on track?*
- Time limit: Set a timer (10-15 min) for each scenario challenge. Teams write down their solutions and discuss them as they go.

3. Escape-room simulation (30 min):

- Game concept: Now, the groups must use their previous knowledge of time management and resilience to complete a virtual escape-room or quest.
 - Create a set of tasks (problem-solving, critical thinking, time-management tasks) that students must complete using online tools like Google Docs or Trello for collaboration.
 - Challenges might include:
 - Setting a study schedule to "escape" a tight deadline.
 - Solving a puzzle about building resilience (e.g., identifying steps to take after a failure).



- Each task completed by the group unlocks the next challenge, and they race against the clock to “escape” or complete the quest.
4. Guided reflection (15 min):
- After completing the game, ask students to reflect on their experiences in their journals. Provide the following prompts:
 - *How did you manage your time during the challenges? What strategies worked best?*
 - *How did you deal with setbacks or difficulties during the game?*
 - *What resilience techniques did you apply to finish the challenges?*
 - Students will also be asked to think about how they could apply these strategies in their own e-learning practices.
5. Group discussion and debrief (15 min):
- Bring the class back together and ask each group to share one key strategy they learned about managing time and staying resilient in e-learning.
 - Discuss how these strategies can be incorporated into their daily routines to improve their learning experience.
6. Wrap-up (15 min):
- End the activity by summarizing the key takeaways from the game.
 - Encourage students to commit to one new strategy they will apply to enhance their resilience and time management in e-learning.

Final assessment: Multiple-choice quiz

Duration: 5 min

Objective: Evaluate students' understanding of the emotional challenges associated with e-learning and the strategies to address them.

Sample questions:

1. Which of the following is a common sign of burnout in e-learning?
 - a) Increased motivation
 - **b) Persistent fatigue**
 - c) Enhanced focus
 - d) Improved social interaction
2. What is a primary emotional challenge unique to e-learning environments?



- a) Physical exhaustion
 - b) Lack of access to resources
 - **c) Feelings of isolation**
 - d) Overcrowded classrooms
3. How can journaling benefit students in e-learning?
- a) By improving typing speed
 - b) By tracking academic grades
 - c) By reducing screen time
 - **d) By enhancing emotional awareness**
4. What does a growth mindset encourage in students?
- a) Avoiding challenges
 - b) Believing abilities are fixed
 - **c) Embracing learning from failures**
 - d) Seeking constant approval
5. Which strategy is effective for managing emotional distress in e-learning?
- **a) Practicing self-reflection**
 - b) Ignoring feelings
 - c) Isolating oneself
 - d) Multitasking during classes

*Correct answers in bold

Open-ended journal reflection

Duration: 30 min

Objective: Provide students with an opportunity to reflect deeply on their emotional experiences and personal growth during the module.

Prompt:

"Reflect on your emotional journey during this module. What have you learned about yourself, and how will you apply these insights to your future e-learning experiences?"

Guidelines:

- Encourage honesty and self-compassion in responses.
- Assure students that reflections are confidential and aimed at personal growth.
- Provide feedback focusing on the depth of reflection and application of insights.



Module 2. Building emotional resilience and coping strategies

Aim

Equip students with emotional coping strategies to handle stress, develop a growth mindset, and manage time effectively as a tool for emotional regulation during e-learning.

Learning Objectives

- Identify common emotional triggers related to e-learning and apply mindfulness or relaxation techniques for stress reduction.
- Developing a personalized weekly time-blocking schedule that promotes balance and reduces emotional overload.
- Analyzing real-life case studies of student setbacks and formulating growth-mindset strategies to increase emotional resilience in e-learning contexts.

Methods:

- Mini-lectures (micro-teaching)
- Guided mindfulness practice
- Self-reflection & journaling
- Peer discussion (breakout rooms)
- Case-based learning
- Hands-on application / practice
- Group sharing & feedback
- Visual & digital tools

Duration: 3 h

Materials needed:

- Zoom or Teams with breakout rooms
- Mindfulness & relaxation practice script
- Background music (optional) for mindfulness and relaxation practice



- Time-blocking template (Google Doc or PDF) – include columns for days, color codes, and activity categories; or a digital calendar (Google Calendar, Notion, or similar tools)
- Slide deck (optional) to illustrate benefits of time-blocking and demonstrate structure
- Slide illustrating fixed mindset vs. growth mindset
- Five case studies worksheet
- Growth-mindset map worksheet
- Background instrumental music for reflection (optional)

Order of activities:

Activity 1- Interactive mindfulness and relaxation exercise

Duration: 50 min

Step1: Launch a live poll using a tool like Zoom Polls, Mentimeter, or Slido (10 min).

Ask 2–3 simple questions:

- *On a scale of 1–5, how stressed do you currently feel about e-learning?*
- *What's your go-to coping strategy when you feel overwhelmed? (e.g., scrolling, procrastinating, exercising, venting, etc.)*
- *Have you ever tried mindfulness or meditation before? (Yes / No / Not sure)*

Follow-up: Briefly reflect on results aloud. Emphasize that stress is common, but we're about to explore ways to manage it in healthy and empowering ways.

Step 2 (15 min): Using *mindfulness & relaxation practice script*, introduce students to simple, guided mindfulness exercises that they can practice anytime to manage anxiety, stress, and overwhelm.

Facilitation tips:

- Speak slowly, pause between lines, and allow students time to settle into each step. Encourage headphones or a quiet environment if possible.
- Invite students to turn off their cameras (optional) to feel more comfortable.

Step 3: Peer reflection in breakout rooms (15 min)



Send students into breakout rooms (3–5 people) with the following prompts:

- *How did you feel before vs. after the mindfulness practice?*
- *Was there a particular part (breathing, body scan, visualization) that stood out or helped you the most?*
- *Can you imagine using this technique in a real academic situation? When?*

Facilitator Tip: Provide these questions in the chat or as a Google Doc so students can refer to them.

Step 4: Group sharing & mini-debrief (10 min)

Invite 2–3 volunteers to share a brief takeaway or feeling they experienced.

Share key reflections, such as:

“Many students feel isolated or overwhelmed with e-learning, and simple practices like these can create grounding moments.”

“Mindfulness isn’t about ‘emptying the mind’—it’s about noticing, accepting, and returning to center.”

Suggestions: Show a recap slide with bullet points:

Mindfulness helps you respond, not react.

You can practice in just 2–3 min between study sessions or before a test.

No special equipment needed — just awareness and breath.

Activity 2 - Regaining control – time-blocking for emotional regulation

Duration: 1 h

Order of activities:

Step 1: Mini-lecture (5 min)

Topic: Why unstructured time feeds stress — and how time-blocking brings relief

Facilitator content:

Start with a relatable scenario:

“Have you ever stared at your to-do list for 20 min and then... scrolled TikTok for an hour instead?

That’s overwhelm in action.”

Key talking points:



- The mental weight of vague, open-ended tasks
- Lack of structure = decision fatigue = stress
- Time-blocking = putting intentions into time = clarity and control
- The brain loves completion and routine — structured time gives a sense of progress and relief

To emphasize:

- “Without structure → Scattered, anxious, guilty”
- “With structure → Focused, calm, in control”
- Quote: “You don’t need more time. You need more clarity about how to use it.”

Step 2: Live demo (10 min)

Tool: Share your screen and use Google Calendar, Notion, or a PDF time-blocking template

Model: A weekly schedule that includes

study/work blocks

breaks + meals

physical movement

social / personal time

sleep

buffer/flex time (key for reducing stress when things go off-schedule)

Facilitator tips:

- Use colors to code different activities.
- Stress the importance of short breaks between blocks.
- Emphasize realistic planning — avoid overloading a single day.
- Highlight how “break time” is not “lost time” — it fuels focus.
- Reassure them: “It’s not about perfection — it’s about direction.”

Step 3: Hands-on work (20 min)

Send students a template (Google Doc/PDF) or invite them to open their own calendar app.

“Choose a typical week (this one or next). Start blocking your major commitments first, then layer in breaks, classes, study blocks, and personal time.”

Encouragement during work time:

“Don’t worry about making it perfect. Just begin.”



“Include time for rest and fun — your brain needs recovery to work well.”

Optional support:

Keep a Q&A box open or stay available for individual support via chat.

Step 4: Peer exchange in breakout rooms (15 min)

Divide students into small breakout rooms (3–5 people).

Each student shares in small group using the following prompts:

- *What’s one thing you changed or added to your schedule that you usually don’t plan?*
- *How does seeing your time visually feel different from a to-do list?*
- *What’s one time-management habit you want to build this week?*

Step 5: Group Debrief + Q&A (10 min)

Invite students to discuss the following questions:

- *What felt tricky while doing this?*
- *Any ‘aha’ moments?*

You can conclude as follows:

“Time-blocking is not about being robotic — it’s about giving your brain structure and rhythm. Emotional resilience isn’t just about mindset — it’s also about setting up our environments to support success.”

Encourage:

- Experimentation: *“Your first draft doesn’t need to be your final one.”*
- Consistency over perfection.
- Using time-blocking to protect personal time as well as academic focus.

Activity 3 – Bouncing back – growth mindset and student stories

Duration: 1 h 10 min

Order of activities:

Step 1: Introduction: Fixed vs. growth mindset (10 min)

Begin with a relatable prompt:



“When you hit a setback in your studies, what’s your inner voice saying? Is it: ‘I’m not smart enough’ or ‘I need to try a new approach?’”

Brief definitions:

Fixed mindset: The belief that intelligence and ability are static; mistakes = failure.

Growth mindset: The belief that skills can be developed; mistakes = learning.

You can use the slide illustrating fixed mindset vs. growth mindset and explain it, highlighting the emotional benefits of the growth mindset.

Suggested conclusion:

“Growth mindset reduces anxiety because it removes the fear of failure — it tells your brain: ‘It’s okay to grow, step by step.’”

Step 2: Breakout group analysis of case studies (25 min)

Share the five case studies worksheet via chat (Google Doc or editable PDF) and ask students to read and discuss in small groups, using 3 guiding questions:

- What was the main emotional or academic challenge in this story?
- What helped the student overcome it?
- How could this strategy apply to your own experience?

Divide into small groups (3–4 people) in breakout rooms.

Share a Google Doc or slide with the three guiding questions.

Facilitator Tip: Encourage one student per group to share notes or highlights in the main room.

Step 3: Mindset mapping (25 min)

Share the growth-mindset map worksheet (Google Doc or editable PDF).

Students fill it out individually. Let them know this is private unless they choose to share. Give students 10 min to complete it quietly with calming music if possible.

Step 4: Wrap-up reflection (10 min)



Ask students to share their insights, e.g., with this question: “What is one fixed mindset belief you’re reframing after this session?”

Invite volunteers to post their reframe in the chat or unmute to share aloud.

If needed, add examples such as:

“I used to think I was just ‘bad at science,’ but now I realize I never really asked for help — and I can change that.”

“I saw breaks as laziness, but now I understand rest helps me focus.”

Facilitator’s closing remarks:

“You’re not alone in your struggles — and you are never stuck. Every challenge is part of the learning process. Growth mindset gives you permission to fail forward.”

Training Materials needed:

Mindfulness and relaxation practice script

Let’s begin by simply arriving at this moment.

Find a comfortable position — sitting upright or leaning back.

Let your hands fall gently on your lap or by your side.

And when you’re ready... slowly allow your eyes to close or lower your gaze to a soft point in front of you.

Now, notice your breath.

No need to change it yet—simply observe it.

Air moving in through your nose...

And out through your mouth.

The natural rhythm of your breath—always there, always steady.

Let’s take three intentional breaths together now.

Inhale deeply through your nose (3–4 seconds).

Hold gently at the top (2 seconds).

Exhale slowly through your mouth (5–6 seconds).



Again.

Inhale deeply...

Hold...

Exhale completely...

One more time:

Inhale...

Hold...

Exhale...

Now return to your natural breathing.

Feel the air entering and leaving.

Let your body begin to soften.

With each breath, imagine your body becoming more grounded.

Let each inhale remind you that you are safe and supported.

Let each exhale release tension from your shoulders, your neck, and your jaw.

No need to fix or force anything — just let your breath guide you gently into calm.

Now we'll take a few min to bring our awareness throughout the body.

Start by bringing your attention to the top of your head.

Notice any sensation or tension there— just observe.

Now move your focus to your forehead—gently smooth it out.

Soften the space between your eyebrows.

Bring your attention to your eyes—

Let them relax in their sockets...

Soften your cheeks... your jaw... your mouth.

Unclench your teeth. Let your tongue rest.

Now drop your awareness into your shoulders.

Notice if you're holding tension there—then let them drop a little.



Feel them get heavier... more supported.

Bring your focus to your arms... elbows... wrists... hands.
Let your fingers soften. Let gravity pull your arms into ease.

Now move to your chest.
Notice the rhythm of your breath here— rising and falling ...
Just observe, without changing anything.

Shift your attention down to your abdomen... your belly.
Let it be soft. Let your breath move freely.

Now scan down through your hips, thighs, knees...
Down to your calves, ankles, and feet.
Feel the connection between your feet and the floor.
Let yourself feel grounded... supported... steady.

Imagine a gentle light or warmth slowly flowing down from the top of your head to your feet,
softening every part of you as it passes.
This is your body at rest.
There is nothing to fix—just to feel, to notice, and to be.

Take one deep breath in...
And a long exhale.

Now, I invite you to recall a moment — recent or past — when you felt stuck or overwhelmed
with your studies or e-learning.
It could be a moment of panic before an exam, a tough assignment, or a time you felt you weren't
good enough.

Hold that image gently — not to dwell in it but to witness it.
Notice how it felt—physically, emotionally, and mentally.
Where did you feel it in your body?



Now... imagine yourself moving through that moment.
Slowly. Intentionally.

Visualize asking for help, or taking one small step forward.
Picture yourself organizing your thoughts, breaking things down, and slowly making progress.

Now see yourself on the other side—calm, grounded, and proud.
What does that version of you look like?
How are you sitting? How do you feel?

You faced the challenge.
You moved through the discomfort.
You didn't give up. You grew.

That version of you—strong, clear, and capable—already exists within you.
You are resilient. You are resourceful.
You are enough.

Take one final deep breath in...
Then gently exhale.

Bring your awareness back into the room.
Wiggle your fingers and toes.
Roll your shoulders, and when you're ready, slowly open your eyes.

Take a moment.
Notice how you feel now compared to when we started.
If you'd like, share one word in the chat that describes your current state—calm, focused, lighter, present—or anything else that comes to mind.

Thank you for taking this time to pause and reset.
Let's carry this sense of calm and clarity with us as we continue.

Slide illustrating fixed mindset vs. growth mindset



Fixed mindset	Growth mindset
“I can’t do this.”	“I can’t do this yet.”
“I’m bad at math.”	“I’m still learning how to do this.”
“I failed.”	“I found something I need to work on.”

Five case studies worksheet

Case study 1: “Elena’s Overloaded Evenings”

Elena was excited to start her e-learning master’s degree in education, but within a few weeks, she found herself overwhelmed. With no fixed class times and a full-time job, she kept putting off coursework during the day, telling herself she’d “catch up in the evening.” When evening came, she was mentally exhausted. Tasks piled up. Deadlines approached. She missed a discussion post and felt ashamed.

Initially, Elena told herself, *“I’m just bad at managing my time. I’ve always been this way.”* But after receiving feedback from her course advisor, she realized she needed structure, not shame. She experimented with time-blocking her week, starting with short, focused morning study sessions. She also began using the Pomodoro Technique to stay focused in bursts.

After two weeks, her stress eased. Elena learned to view her time as something she could shape — not something she was helpless inside of. Now she says, *“I still procrastinate sometimes, but I know how to reset and start small. That’s the real win.”*

Case Study 2: Robert’s silent semester

Robert moved to a new city and began an online business course hoping to grow his skills and build a professional network. But after several weeks, he realized he hadn’t spoken to a single



classmate beyond a few forum comments. The asynchronous format left him feeling invisible. He started doubting himself, asking, *“If I don’t feel connected, what’s the point of any of this?”*

At first, he hesitated to reach out. But when his instructor mentioned virtual study pods, Robert decided to join one. He and three others met weekly for 30 min on Zoom. They shared progress, asked questions, and offered encouragement.

The connection shifted his whole attitude. He no longer felt like he was struggling alone. He says now, *“That small circle helped me stay accountable, but more than that, it reminded me I belong here.”* Robert reframed e-learning as something he could shape through intentional connection.

Case study 3: Ana’s anatomy wake-up call

Ana was passionate about health sciences and confident going into her first anatomy course. But the e-learning format made it hard to stay engaged, and she underestimated how much content she needed to absorb. When she opened her midterm results and saw 48%, she froze. Her first thought was, *“Maybe I’m not cut out for this.”*

But after a day of wallowing, she decided to speak with her professor. He didn’t scold her — instead, he helped her see where she went wrong and suggested small changes: watching shorter lectures daily instead of cramming, using digital flashcards, and forming a quiz group.

She started journaling her study progress to track what was working. Her final exam score jumped to 78%.

Now Ana says: *“That failure shook me, but it also woke me up. I learned to study smarter, not just harder.”* The experience helped her see failure as feedback, not proof of inadequacy.

Case Study 4: David’s camera-off Dilemma

David was a quiet student in his literature program. He never turned on his camera, rarely spoke during Zoom classes, and submitted assignments at the last minute. It wasn’t that he didn’t care — he just felt paralyzed by the thought of “sounding dumb” or “asking a stupid question.” He told himself, *“I should already know this. If I ask, I’ll look weak.”*

Midway through the semester, his grades slipped. His professor wrote a kind but honest email: *“You’re not invisible, David. I see your effort, but I also see you struggling. I’m here if you want to talk.”*



That email cracked something open. David scheduled a one-on-one Zoom call, and the professor helped him map out a clear study plan. Encouraged, David started asking questions in class, then slowly unmuted his mic. He even joined a literature circle.

“I thought needing help meant I wasn’t good enough,” David reflects. *“But I see now that asking is how I get better. And I’m not the only one who struggles.”* He shifted from silence out of fear to speaking up with courage.

Case Study 5: Lina redefines productivity

Lina was a straight-A student used to running at 110%. When her university moved fully to e-learning, she doubled down — staying up late, skipping breaks, and overloading her schedule to prove she was still to “stay on top of things.” But by the end of the second month, she felt detached, tired, and irritable. She stopped attending optional sessions and barely replied to messages.

One day, after missing an important group meeting, Lina broke down. A friend recommended she check out a workshop on academic burnout and emotional regulation. During the session, she realized she had equated rest with laziness — and that belief was costing her health.

She began using daily reflection prompts, inserted “pause breaks” in her calendar, and practiced short guided meditations before studying. Productivity stopped being about perfection—it became about balance.

“I was chasing a version of myself that didn’t even breathe,” she said. *“Now, I aim to show up with energy, not just effort.”* Lina reframed her identity: from a perfectionist performer to a sustainable learner.

Growth mindset map worksheet

Situation or setback	Fixed mindset thought	Growth mindset reframe	Action you can take
“I got a low grade on my essay.”	“I’m not a good writer.”	“Writing improves with feedback and practice.”	Book time with a writing tutor.





Evaluation of the module:

Trainer will propose five closed-ended self-evaluation questions:

1. What is one key benefit of time-blocking in e-learning?

- a) It ensures all assignments are completed early.
- b) It allows multitasking across subjects.
- c) It helps reduce stress by creating structure and predictability.
- d) It eliminates the need for breaks.

Correct answer: c.

2. Which of the following is an example of a growth mindset statement?

- a) "Some people are just born smart."
- b) "I'll never be good at math."
- c) "I failed, so I might as well give up."
- d) "This is hard, but I can improve with practice."

Correct answer: d.

3. What is a common emotional outcome of practicing mindfulness regularly?

- a) Improved emotional regulation and focus.
- b) Increased multitasking ability.
- c) Higher academic competitiveness.
- d) Better memory retention for exams only.

Correct answer: a.

4. What is the purpose of the growth-mindset map activity?

- a) To track academic grades over time.
- b) To create a weekly time-blocking schedule.
- c) To identify fixed mindset thoughts and reframe them into growth-oriented beliefs.
- d) To compare students' learning styles.



Correct answer: c.

Which of the following is a helpful strategy when feeling overwhelmed in e-learning?

- a) Ignoring deadlines to reduce pressure.
- b) Breaking tasks into smaller steps and taking short breaks.
- c) Waiting until you feel motivated to start.
- d) Working late into the night to catch up.

Correct answer: b.

Keeping learners safe:

1. Ensure that access to the activity is available to all.
2. Ensure the room is large enough to allow mobility for all learners.
3. Ensure sufficient resources and materials for everyone.

Module 3. Self-engagement and motivation techniques

Aim:

Strengthen students' skills to increase self-motivation and commitment to learning and personal development and promote effective strategies for maintaining motivation and active participation.

Learning objectives:

Identify their own sources of motivation and factors that influence personal commitment. Learn and apply self-motivation and self-management techniques.

Develop a personal plan to maintain and enhance motivation in different contexts.

Recognize the importance of commitment in achieving personal and professional goals.

Use self-assessment tools to monitor their motivation levels.

Methods:

Individual and group reflection activities.

Practical workshops with self-assessment exercises.

Use of examples and case studies.



Guided discussion and feedback.

Development of personalized action plans.

Duration: 3 h

Materials needed:

Presentation slides

Access to a virtual classroom platform

Downloadable worksheets and self-assessment quizzes

Supplementary video clips or motivational quotes

Order of activities:

Activity 1: SMART goal-setting workshop

Duration: 45 min

Objective: Teach students to set realistic, personal, and motivating learning goals using the SMART framework.

Order of activities:

1. Introduction (5 min):

Present the SMART goal concept (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound).

What is the SMART framework?

It is a technique for formulating objectives clearly and effectively. Each letter of the word SMART represents a criterion that a good goal must meet:

- S – Specific: the goal must be clearly defined, without ambiguity.
- M – Measurable: the goal must be measurable to track progress and determine achievement.
- A – Achievable: the goal must be attainable—neither too easy nor impossible.
- R – Relevant: it must make sense to the student, be related to their interests or needs.
- T – Time-bound: there must be a specific deadline for achieving it.

Example:

Instead of saying, “I want to be better at English,”



a SMART goal would be: “I will reach B2 level in the Cambridge exam in June by attending classes twice a week and studying one hour a day at home.”

2. Individual goal creation (15 min):

- Each student writes a short-term learning goal (for this week).
- Each student writes a long-term learning goal (for the course or module).

Both goals must follow the SMART structure.

3. Peer review (10 min):

Students pair up, exchange goals, and provide constructive feedback—for instance, is the goal specific enough?

4. Group discussion (10 min):

A few students share their refined goals with the group. The instructor highlights successful examples and common challenges.

5. Wrap-up (5 min):

Students upload their goals to a shared virtual board (e.g., Padlet, Jamboard) and commit to reviewing them weekly.

Activity 2: Personalized learning calendar and accountability partnerships

Duration: 40 min

Objective: Help students develop self-discipline by creating a study schedule and forming accountability partnerships.

Order of activities:

1. Warm-up (5 min):

Prompt students to think about their current study habits and organizational challenges. Use a quick poll or short discussion in the chat.

2. Create a study calendar (15 min):

- Using a provided template or preferred digital tools (Google Calendar, Trello, or a PDF template), each student outlines their study plan.
- This includes setting fixed study times, allocating breaks, and identifying specific tasks for each session.

3. Form accountability partnerships (5 min):

Students pair up or form small groups. They commit to checking in with each other once a week to review progress and provide mutual encouragement.

4. Share and discuss (10 min):



Students share snapshots or summaries of their calendars with their partners, ensuring everyone knows the next check-in date.

5. Wrap-up (5 min):

Encourage students to use reminder apps or tools (e.g., Habitica, Forest) to maintain their schedules and commitments.

Activity 3: 21-Day Habit Challenge

Duration: 45 min

Objective: Build consistent study habits and foster intrinsic motivation through a 21-day challenge.

Order of activities:

1. Introduction (5 min):

Explain the idea of a 21-day habit challenge. Share an example, like reviewing notes every evening or starting each study session with a mindfulness exercise.

The 21-day habit challenge is a simple and powerful way to help students build positive academic habits. The idea is based on the principle that if you repeat a behavior consistently for 21 days, it can become a habit—something you do naturally without needing extra motivation or reminders.

In this challenge, students choose one small, specific habit that supports their learning and commit to practicing it every day for 21 days. The habit should be:

- Easy to do in just a few min
- Connected to their study or school routine
- Aligned with their personal learning goals

Example habit ideas

- Review class notes for 10 min every evening before bed
- Start each study session with a 3-minute mindful breathing exercise to improve focus
- Write down one thing learned each day in a journal
- Turn off notifications before studying to stay focused
- Use a planner to list daily study tasks

How to track it

Students can use a simple habit tracker (like a calendar or checklist) to mark each day they complete their habit. Seeing their streak grow helps with motivation and accountability.



2. Choose a habit (10 min):

Students select one specific habit to focus on for the next three weeks. They record:

- The habit itself
- When and where they'll practice it
- Any obstacles they foresee and how they'll overcome them

3. Design a tracking system (10 min):

Students create a habit tracker—either on paper, in a simple spreadsheet, or using an app like Habitica or Loop. This helps them track their progress over 21 days.

4. Group support (15 min):

Students form small groups to share their chosen habits and discuss ways to support each other, such as sending weekly check-ins or motivational messages.

5. Wrap-up (5 min):

Students post their planned habit challenge and tracker in a shared space. The instructor sets a date for a group follow-up in three weeks.

Materials needed:

Personal motivation reflection sheet

Self-motivation techniques sheet (practical exercises)

Personal motivation plan template

List of motivational quotes and resources

HABIT

Tracker

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN
JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

WEEKLY HABITS

	W1	W2	W3	W4	W5
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

DAILY HABITS

MONTHLY HABITS

	☒
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐
	☐

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Evaluation of the module

Students will complete a short survey to assess the clarity, relevance, and applicability of the content.

Were students actively engaged in the activities? (Yes/No).

Were the objectives clearly communicated and achieved? (Yes/No).

Did participants demonstrate understanding through their reflections and plans?
(Yes/No).

Was the duration sufficient to cover all activities? (Yes/No).

Did you feel the materials contributed to effective learning? (Yes/No).

They will also present their personal action plans and reflect on their planned strategies.

Five closing self-assessment questions:



1. Do I feel more aware of the sources that motivate me?
 - ☐ Yes, I've identified key internal and external factors that drive me.
 - ☐ I'm starting to notice patterns in what energizes me and keeps me focused.
 - ☐ I now realize how much my environment influences my motivation.
 - ☐ I've become more mindful of what gives me purpose.
 - ☐ I'm clearer about what inspires me to act and why.

2. Do I know effective techniques for maintaining motivation?
 - ☐ Yes, I've learned several strategies like goal-setting and positive self-talk.
 - ☐ I'm aware of techniques, but I still need to practice them consistently.
 - ☐ I've found that visualizing success really helps me stay motivated.
 - ☐ I've learned to use breaks and rewards as motivational tools.
 - ☐ I now have a personal list of techniques I can rely on when I feel stuck.

3. Can I identify what obstacles affect my commitment?
 - ☐ Yes, I now see that procrastination and self-doubt often hold me back.
 - ☐ I've realized that distractions and unclear goals affect my motivation.
 - ☐ I know that fear of failure sometimes impacts my commitment.
 - ☐ I can now recognize emotional or mental blocks more easily.
 - ☐ I'm better at spotting patterns in behavior that reduce my drive.

4. Do I have a clear plan to increase my self-motivation?
 - ☐ Yes, I've developed a step-by-step plan with goals and timelines.
 - ☐ I'm in the process of shaping a plan and testing different strategies.
 - ☐ I have a plan that includes tracking progress and celebrating small wins.
 - ☐ My plan focuses on staying consistent and building good habits.
 - ☐ I've designed a flexible plan that I can adjust as I learn more about myself.

5. Do I feel more prepared to apply these techniques in my daily life?
 - ☐ Yes, I feel confident and ready to put them into practice.
 - ☐ I feel more equipped but now I'll need to stay consistent.
 - ☐ I'm motivated to try these techniques and see what works best for me.
 - ☐ I'm already starting to use some of them in my routines.
 - ☐ I feel more prepared, especially with tools that fit into my lifestyle.



Module 4. Virtual support networks and social connection

Aim:

Help students use virtual support networks to reduce isolation, build resilience, and sustain motivation in e-learning; promote proactive help-seeking and help-giving in a digital community.

Learning objectives:

1. Recognize the role of social support in e-learning, especially for preventing emotional fatigue and burnout.
2. Identify and evaluate digital platforms and communication tools for forming and maintaining virtual peer networks.
3. Develop skills to initiate meaningful conversations and sustain peer relationships in e-learning settings.
4. Recognize early signs of emotional distress in oneself and others, and know how to respond or where to refer for help.
5. Create a personal strategy to build a virtual network of allies, mentors, or study partners for ongoing academic and emotional support.

Methods:

The module applies a mix of pedagogical strategies aligned with active and experiential learning principles:

- Interactive presentations introduce the topic and theoretical framework.
- Group discussions and sharing circles help build trust and deepen understanding of personal and shared experiences.
- Role-playing and simulations allow students to practice peer support and digital communication in realistic scenarios.
- Guided self-reflection exercises prompt internal awareness and promote long-term behavioral change.
- Peer mapping and collaborative exercises encourage the practical application of learned concepts.



Duration: 3 h

Optionally, split across 2 sessions of 90 min or 3 sessions of 60 min to enhance reflection and participation.

Materials needed:

- Internet-enabled devices (laptop or tablet)
- Online conferencing platform (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.)
- Digital collaboration tools (e.g., Miro, Padlet, Google Docs)
- PowerPoint or Google Slides presentation
- Printable or digital worksheets
- Video testimonials or interviews on the topic (if available)
- List of institutional support services and national mental health helplines

Order of activities:

Activity 1 – Icebreaker + “Map your support network”

Duration: 30 min

Format: Individual work with group sharing (e-learning or in-person)

Objective: Foster an inclusive learning environment; help students map the people, platforms, and communities they rely on—or don’t—for emotional and academic support; build awareness of existing virtual or in-person networks and identify gaps to address later.

Part A – Icebreaker (5–10 min):

Begin the session with a short and light-hearted icebreaker to encourage participation, break initial awkwardness, and set the tone for openness and reflection.

Option 1: “Two Truths and a Lie”

Each participant shares two true statements and one false statement about themselves. The rest of the group guesses which one is the lie. This builds curiosity and human connection in a fun, low-pressure way.

Option 2: “Show and Tell: My Study Buddy”

Ask each participant to briefly introduce something or someone that supports them in their studies—this could be a pet, an app, a coffee mug, a roommate, or a favorite playlist. They can



show it on camera or describe it in a few sentences. This offers a personal entry point into the topic of support systems.

Facilitator tip: If time or group size is limited, use breakout rooms of 3–4 people to speed up the process and increase comfort with smaller group interactions.

Part B – Mapping the Support Network (20 min):

Step 1: Introduction (2–3 min)

Explain that everyone has a “support network,” whether they’re aware of it or not. These networks include people, digital platforms, and communities that offer us emotional encouragement, practical help, a sense of belonging, or motivation. In e-learning environments, these networks can be even more critical, as students may feel more isolated or disconnected.

Step 2: Community mapping exercise (10–15 min)

Distribute a community-mapping worksheet (or link to an online whiteboard tool, e.g., Miro, Jamboard, Canva).

Ask students to visually map out the people, groups, or tools they currently rely on for emotional, academic, or social support. Encourage them to use circles, lines, or lists to represent their network. Categories may include:

- Family and Friends: parents, siblings, partners, housemates
- Academic contacts: study groups, project teammates, professors, tutors
- Digital tools: WhatsApp groups, Discord channels, Slack workspaces, Reddit forums
- Institutional support: student counselling services, peer mentors, academic advisors
- Communities of interest: hobby forums, spiritual groups, social clubs

They should also indicate how frequent, trustworthy, or helpful each connection is by:

- Using thicker lines for stronger connections
- Adding emojis or colour codes to show positive, neutral, or negative feelings
- Labeling influencer or one-sided connections

Reflection Prompts:

Once the maps are complete or nearly finished, ask students to reflect (either in writing or silently) on:

- Which part of my support network is strongest?
- Is there a balance between emotional and academic support?
- Are most of my supports digital, in-person, or mixed?
- Do I feel like I have enough support for my current needs?

Step 3: Group sharing (5 min)



Invite 2–3 volunteers to briefly share one insight from their map. (If time allows, use breakout rooms for small group sharing where everyone can speak.) Possible insights include:

- “I realized I mostly rely on friends from high school, and I haven’t connected much with classmates this semester.”
- “Most of my support is emotional, but I don’t really have a study group yet.”
- “I’m part of several WhatsApp groups, but I don’t feel very connected in them.”

Facilitator tip: Normalize all types of maps, including those with very few connections. Emphasize that awareness is the first step toward building a stronger network.

Materials needed:

- Printed or digital community-mapping worksheet (space to draw or list connections)
- Digital whiteboard tool (optional)
- Sample map (provided by the trainer for inspiration)
- Colored pens, markers, or emoji icons (if working visually)
- Reflection prompts slide or handout

Expected outcomes:

- Increased self-awareness of who and what supports them in their learning journey
- Identified gaps or areas for improvement in their support system
- Felt more connected to the group through personal sharing and shared experiences
- Set the stage for deeper exploration of emotional resilience and social connection in later activities

Activity 2 – Digital tool show-and-tell and evaluation discussion

Duration: 45 min

Format: Mini-presentation, collaborative group work, plenary discussion

Objective:

Introduce students to a range of digital tools and platforms that can be used to build and maintain virtual support networks. The activity helps learners critically evaluate the strengths, limitations, and suitability of these tools for different types of social, emotional, and academic connection. It also empowers students to reflect on their digital habits and explore new possibilities for peer engagement.



Order of activities:

Part A – Trainer-led overview (10–15 min)

Begin with a brief, engaging presentation that introduces the concept of digital support tools — platforms or apps that enable communication, collaboration, encouragement, or mutual aid in e-learning environments.

You might open with a question to the group, such as:

“When you need help or motivation during your studies, where do you usually turn? Who or what helps you feel less alone?”

Then, present a curated selection of 5–6 tools, categorized by their function. For each tool, provide:

- Name and type (e.g., Discord – community chat)
- Typical users (e.g., students, gamers, study groups)
- Use-case example (e.g., “Used for live voice chats during group work or study marathons”).
- Pros & cons (e.g., high engagement but can be overwhelming with too many notifications)

Suggested tools to present:

1. Discord – customizable server-based communication (voice, text, threads)
2. WhatsApp or Telegram – fast, informal group chats
3. Reddit – Interest-based communities for discussion and advice
4. Microsoft Teams / Slack – structured collaboration environments
5. Study Stream or Focusmate – tools for virtual study together and productivity
6. University LMS (e.g., Moodle forums) – built-in academic discussion boards

Use slides, screenshots, or short demo to make the presentation visual and practical.

Facilitator tip: Emphasize how different platforms serve different needs — some are great for emotional support and informal interaction, while others are better for academic collaboration or accountability.

Part B – Small group tool exploration (20 min)

Step 1 – Form groups (5 min)

Divide participants into small groups of 3–4 students. Assign each group one or two tools from the presentation (or let them choose). Each group’s task is to explore the tool in depth and complete a digital tool evaluation sheet (provided by the trainer).

If working online, send groups to breakout rooms with access to:

- The shared slide or resource list



- The evaluation worksheet (Google Doc or fillable PDF)

Step 2 – Group discussion & evaluation (15 min)

Each group discusses their assigned tool(s), answering questions such as:

Digital tool evaluation questions:

- What kinds of support does this platform enable (e.g., emotional, academic, social)?
- How user-friendly is it? (Consider interface, setup time, accessibility)
- Can you customize it or create private spaces?
- How secure or safe do you feel using it? Are there moderation or privacy settings?
- What might make someone avoid this tool? (e.g., distractions, overload, unfamiliarity)
- Would you recommend this to peers in your course? Why or why not?

They can also share personal experiences, if applicable: “I used Discord in my Erasmus group, and it helped a lot.”

Each group documents its answers and prepares a short summary to present.

Facilitator tip: Encourage students to think critically—not just about features but about how these tools impact their mental well-being. A tool might be efficient but stressful or engaging but distracting.

Part C – Group presentations & collective discussion (10 min)

Bring everyone back to the main session. Each group briefly presents their findings (2–3 min each). Encourage them to highlight:

- Unique features or uses of their tool
- Surprising discoveries or concerns
- Their overall recommendation (thumbs-up/down)

Then, facilitate a short discussion using prompts such as:

- “Which tool would you try that you haven’t used before?”
- “What matters most to you in a digital support platform — privacy, speed, community size, ease of use?”
- “How can we keep online groups from becoming ‘dead chats or overwhelming spaces?’”

Capture insights on a shared Padlet or digital board for the group to revisit later.

Materials needed:

- Slides or handouts describing the tools with links or screenshots
- Digital tool evaluation sheet (printable or fillable form)
- Google Docs or shared folders for group collaboration



- Timer to manage group work
- Optional: live demo or video walkthrough of a selected tool

Expected outcomes:

- Have been exposed to a variety of digital platforms beyond the ones they typically use
- Understand which platforms are best suited for emotional support, academic help, or casual socializing
- Reflect critically on digital safety, usability, and sustainability
- Gain ideas for initiating or improving their own peer networks using the tools discussed
- Begin to shift from passive tool users to intentional community-builders

Activity 3 – Scenario role-play: “How would you respond?”

Duration: 45 min

Format: Small-group role-play and reflective debrief

Objective: Develop students’ empathy, active-listening skills, and emotional intelligence by practicing real-life peer-support situations; prepare students to recognize emotional distress in themselves or others and respond with appropriate boundaries, resources, and sensitive communication in e-learning environments.

Order of activities:

Part A – Setting the Context (5 min)

Begin by reminding students that emotional struggles in e-learning are common and often go unnoticed, especially when interaction is limited to screens and chats. Social withdrawal, irritability, or a drop in participation can signal that a peer is struggling — but it’s not always easy to know how to respond.

Tell students:

“Today we’ll practice how to respond to sensitive situations in a safe, supportive way. There’s no perfect script — just curiosity, empathy, and care.”

Review key principles of empathetic peer communication:

- Ask open-ended questions
- Listen without interrupting
- Validate emotions without “fixing” the problem



- Encourage connection to professional help when needed
- Set boundaries where necessary

Share the basic structure of a peer-support conversation:

1. Notice something is off
2. Gently reach out
3. Listen without judgment
4. Offer support or refer
5. Follow up when appropriate

Distribute (or display) a quick peer support tips sheet.

Part B – Role-play activity (25 min)

Step 1 – Grouping (2 min)

Split students into small groups of 3 students (or 2 if limited). Assign roles:

- Supporter – the person trying to help
- Peer in distress – the student showing signs of struggle
- Observer – the person giving feedback

Each group receives a role play scenario card describing a short real-life e-learning situation.

Example scenarios include:

1. *“Mia used to be active in your e-learning course, but she hasn’t posted in weeks and stopped replying to messages in your study group. You want to check in.”*
2. *“Jon says he’s overwhelmed and hasn’t been sleeping due to deadlines. He’s sarcastic and avoids questions during your Zoom group work.”*
3. *“A peer confides in you that they feel lonely and unmotivated. You’re not sure what to say, but you want to be supportive.”*
4. *“Someone in your class shares a cryptic message in a group chat that sounds like a cry for help. You don’t know them well but feel concerned.”*

Facilitator tip: Scenarios should reflect diverse challenges — burnout, isolation, anxiety, overcommitment, or subtle withdrawal — to provide variety in practice.

Step 2 – Practice (15 min)

Each group completes 2–3 rounds of role-play, rotating roles each time.

- The supporter initiates a conversation based on the scenario.
- The peer in distress responds authentically, adding realism.



- The observer uses a feedback checklist to note:
 - Was the tone empathetic?
 - Did the supporter ask open-ended questions?
 - Was the peer encouraged without pressure?
 - Was support or follow-up suggested?

Groups may pause, retry parts of the conversation, or adapt the scenario.

Step 3 – Debrief (8 min)

Once all rounds are complete, students discuss as a group:

- What felt natural or awkward?
- What would you do differently next time?
- Was it harder to offer support or receive it?
- How can we make peer support feel more comfortable in real life?

Encourage honest reflection without judgment. The observer can share helpful feedback using the debrief and reflection sheet.

Part C – Group reflection (5 min)

Back in the main room, ask the full group:

- “What surprised you during the role-play?”
- “What are some useful phrases you heard or used?”
- “How can we keep communication open and safe in our e-learning courses?”

You may write useful peer-support phrases on a shared whiteboard or chat, e.g.,

- “I noticed you’ve been quiet lately — how are you doing?”
- “I care about you and just wanted to check in.”
- “You don’t have to go through this alone — would you feel okay talking to someone about it?”

Materials needed:

- Role-play scenario cards (digital or printed)
- Quick Peer Support Tips Sheet (e.g. Do’s & Don’ts, helpful phrases)
- Debrief and Reflection Worksheet (with observer checklist and open questions)
- Timer or bell to signal rotation
- Optional: shared Google Docs or Jamboard for post-activity insights



Psychological safety considerations:

- Make it clear that students may opt out of acting as the distressed peer if they feel uncomfortable.
- Reassure participants that this is a practice activity, not a test — there are no wrong answers.
- Encourage respectful communication, active listening, and confidentiality.
- Ensure support contact information (e.g. student counseling services) is visible throughout the activity and mentioned at the end.
- If a student seems emotionally affected, check in privately and offer to pause their participation.

Expected outcomes:

By the end of the activity, students will:

- Gain practical experience **in initiating** supportive conversations with peers
- Develop skills in active listening, validation, and referral
- Learn to navigate common emotional challenges in online peer settings
- Feel more confident offering help or reaching out for it themselves
- Reflect on their communication habits and identify personal growth areas in empathy and boundary-setting

Activity 4 – guided reflection and building your action plan

Duration: 30 min

Format: Individual reflection and optional group sharing

Objective: To help students internalize what they have learned in the module by reflecting on their current virtual support habits, identifying emotional or social needs, and creating a practical, personalized plan to strengthen their support network in digital learning environments. This activity reinforces self-awareness, personal agency, and intention-setting to support emotional resilience and engagement.

Order of activities:

Part A – setting the scene (5 min)



Introduce the activity by highlighting that reflection is a key step in personal growth. Many people are surrounded by resources and connections but don't use them intentionally. This session is designed to help students identify both what's working and what could be improved in their approach to connection and support.

You might say:

“Throughout this module, we've looked at how support networks can boost your motivation, mental health, and sense of belonging in online education. Now it's time to turn that learning inward. What is your current reality, and how can you take steps—small or big—to improve it?”

Remind students that this is a private reflection — they only have to share if they want to.

Part B – Personal reflection (15 min)

Distribute the Reflection and Action Plan Worksheet, either in print or via Google Docs (editable). It should be structured into two sections:

Section 1: personal reflection

Prompt students to think honestly and write responses to questions like:

1. How connected do I feel in my current learning environment?
(Scale of 1–5 or short written reflection)
2. Who do I reach out to when I feel...
 - Overwhelmed
 - Isolated
 - Motivated and want to share something
3. Which platforms or spaces help me feel most supported and safe?
(e.g., class WhatsApp group, personal Discord channel, peer study forum)
4. Have I ignored or avoided social interaction online? Why?
(e.g., fear of rejection, overwhelm, past negative experiences)
5. What signs in myself indicate that I might need support or connection?
(e.g., procrastination, emotional numbness, irritability)

Facilitator tip: Allow students to write, draw, or use a mind map format—whatever helps them express themselves.

Section 2: action plan for strengthening my support network



Encourage students to think about what they want to improve, not what they "should" do.

Examples of action steps include:

- Social goals:
 - Reach out to one peer from my course this week and invite them to co-study
 - Reactivate a dormant WhatsApp study group
 - Introduce myself on the university online forum
- Emotional support strategies:
 - Bookmark the student counseling page and contact information
 - Set a weekly 30-minute “self-check-in” time
 - Join a mental health or interest-based community (e.g., well-being Discord channel)
- Boundaries and habits:
 - Set app limits to avoid digital fatigue
 - Unfollow or unsubscribe from draining or unhelpful chat groups
 - Prioritize quality over quantity in online interactions

The worksheet might end with:

One small step I will take in the next 7 days: _____

One person I will talk to more intentionally this month is: _____

If I need help, I will reach out to: _____

Part C – optional sharing and group closure (10 min)

Bring students back to a plenary discussion (or keep in the main session, if e-learning. Invite volunteers to share 1 insight or 1 action they feel comfortable talking about. You can offer sentence starters:

- “One thing I realized...”
- “One habit I want to change...”
- “A digital space I want to use differently is...”

Capture highlights anonymously (if e-learning) using a Padlet, Mentimeter, or shared Google Slide titled:

“My First Step Toward Better Support”

Conclude by acknowledging that:

- Everyone’s social needs are different
- No plan is too small
- Taking one step today can lead to big changes tomorrow



Encourage them to revisit their plan in 1–2 weeks and adjust it as needed.

Materials needed:

- Reflection and Action Plan Worksheet (printable or editable PDF/Google Docs)
- Pens, notebooks, or digital devices for note-taking
- Optional: sample completed worksheet to guide students
- Optional: background instrumental music for a calming atmosphere
- Padlet, Mentimeter, or Google Jamboard for optional sharing
- Slide with encouraging quote (e.g., “Connection is why we’re here.” – Brené Brown)

Psychological safety considerations:

- Make sharing optional and voluntary
- Clarify that there are no “right” answers or expectations
- Use inclusive language that acknowledges different needs and experiences
- Offer a quiet breakout room or private space for those who prefer solo reflection
- Reiterate support services, helplines, and contact information at the end of the session

Expected outcomes:

By the end of this activity, students will:

- Reflect meaningfully on their emotional and social engagement
- Gain self-awareness of their connection habits and needs
- Identify concrete, personalized actions to improve their virtual support ecosystem
- Leave the session with a clear first step toward greater emotional resilience and peer connection

Evaluation of the module:

- 1. I am more aware of the people and platforms that currently form my emotional and academic support network.**

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 *Strongly agree*



- 2. I feel more confident identifying and using digital tools that support social connection and peer collaboration in online learning.**

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 *Strongly agree*

- 3. I am better prepared to recognize when a peer or I might be struggling emotionally, and I know how to respond with empathy and appropriate support.**

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 *Strongly agree*

- 4. I have developed a realistic, personal action plan to strengthen my virtual support network.**

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 *Strongly agree*

- 5. This module helped me feel more confident and capable of creating meaningful social connections in digital learning environments.**

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 *Strongly agree*

Keeping learners safe:

1. Ensure that access to the activity available for all.
2. Ensure the room is large enough to allow mobility for all learners.
3. Ensure enough resources and materials for everyone.

Module 5. Designing a balanced and productive e-learning environment

Aim:

To equip higher education students and educators with a practical understanding of how to design effective physical and virtual e-learning environments, including the role of generative AI, so as to foster inclusive and effective learning.



Learning objectives:

1. Explain core principles behind the design of effective physical and virtual e-learning environments.
2. Explain the limitations of face-to-face, hybrid, and remote learning setups, and customize an individualized e-learning environment.
3. Demonstrate the use of AI tools to support self-assessment, feedback, and collaboration.
4. Propose AI-enabled strategies to enhance e-learning environments for diverse student populations (including students with disabilities).
5. Design (using online tools) physical learning spaces for various scenarios, considering ergonomic and motivational factors.

Methods:

- Training materials and worksheets
- Presentations
- Discussion prompts
- Quizzes
- Collaborative learning tasks
- Interior design tasks
- Peer-review and feedback round

Duration: 3 h

Materials needed:

- Stable internet connection; laptops or tablets for participants
- Reading materials (references in this module and other resources)
- Generative AI and digital learning platforms (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Zoom, ChatGPT, Bing AI, Google Gemini)
- Collaborative tools and AI-assisted visual design (Google Docs, Miro, Canva)
- Interior Design tools (HomeDesignAI)
- Feedback tools (for peer- and AI-generated forms)

Order of activities:

Activity 1 - theoretical background on designing learning spaces



Duration: 1 h

Objective: Provide participants with core theoretical principles for designing effective learning spaces in hybrid and online settings.

Order of activities:

1. Introduce the aims and structure of the module.
2. Deliver a short theoretical input on fundamentals of learning space design for hybrid and online learning.
3. Facilitate a guided discussion on participants' experiences and challenges in their own institutions.
4. Summarise key principles to be used in later activities.

Activity 2 – use of AI in progress monitoring and collaborative learning

Duration: 1 h

Objective: Explore how generative AI tools can support progress monitoring, feedback and collaborative learning.

Order of activities:

1. Briefly present selected generative AI tools and their main functions.
2. In small groups, design AI-supported writing assignments and short quizzes to monitor students' progress.
3. Ask groups to share their examples and discuss benefits and potential risks of using AI for feedback.
4. Conclude with practical tips for ethical and effective use of AI in assessment.

Activity 3 – use of AI to design a physical e-learning space for students with disabilities

Duration: 1 h

Objective: Apply design principles and AI tools to plan inclusive physical learning spaces for diverse learner profiles.

Order of activities:

1. Present three learner profiles:
 - a student with visual impairment living in a dormitory;
 - a student with five siblings and no personal room at home;
 - a young professional attending evening distance-learning courses while working.
2. In groups, use online interior-design tools to design a physical learning environment for each profile.
3. Ask groups to present their designs focusing on accessibility, comfort and motivation.



4. Provide feedback and highlight key inclusive-design principles.

Training materials/worksheets:

1. General background

An effective learning environment must pay attention to different parameters, including the psychology of the student and the lecturer, social and cultural expectations and traditions, and infrastructure and physical constraints, across elementary, secondary, and higher education (Rusticus et al., 2023). Face-to-face learning environments have several limitations, such as inflexible student seating, outdated audiovisual equipment, poor acoustics, or inappropriate physical conditions for students with disabilities. In contrast, e-learning and hybrid learning environments may be affected by technical infrastructure requirements and lack of technical support, feelings of isolation and limited interpersonal communication, cognitive overload, or demanding tasks and assignments (Papaioannou et al., 2023). To be effective, the design of the online learning environment should focus on three aspects: (1) learners' goals and motivation, (2) the relationship between the learner and the lecturer, and (3) maintenance of the physical infrastructure aligned with the parameters discussed above. A suitable and comfortable physical learning environment has been found to have a positive effect on students' motivation, well-being, and learning outcomes, including for those who participate in online learning (Aschenberger et al., 2023). Therefore, this module focuses on designing and improving these aspects of the learning environment.

2. Optimum design of physical and virtual space in alignment with personal goals and motivation

E-learning has several advantages over face-to-face learning. In face-to-face classrooms, students taking the same course may have different motivations, learning styles, technical backgrounds, or cognitive strengths (e.g., linguistic, logical-mathematical, kinesthetic, spatial, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal) (Meylani et al., 2015). It is difficult to monitor and address these differences within the constraints of accreditation requirements and fixed syllabi. In online learning environments, course material can be individualised to each student's pace and profile. The language-learning app Duolingo illustrates this approach by personalising content, sustaining motivation, and providing continuous feedback and support (Freeman et al., 2023).

Time management is a crucial skill and should be incorporated early in each course. Setting small, achievable goals (e.g., short tasks, assignments, or quizzes) helps monitor progress and



sustain motivation. From the student's perspective, establishing study routines and rewarding oneself when a goal is achieved is important and encouraging.

Another key skill that can be addressed in teaching materials, regardless of the particular course or lecture, is maintaining a healthy work–life balance. This is especially relevant for many students who prefer to learn online while working during the day and may therefore experience overload.

3. Interactive nature of the learning environment

Interaction is important in face-to-face teaching, facilitating open communication between students and lecturers and enabling teamwork among students (Rusticus et al., 2023). It is even more critical in online learning environments, which are inherently individual. The e-learning platform must support such interactions among course participants and, where relevant, with an AI learning or teaching partner. Equally important is the physical environment in which the student attends class—at home, at work, in a café, or elsewhere.

For optimal interaction, learning spaces should be as quiet and distraction-free as possible. Where this is not feasible, measures such as noise-cancelling headphones can help reduce distractions. These measures support both student concentration and the ability to interact with others. Because sessions may last several hours, it is also important to ensure good lighting, ergonomic seating, and easy access to essential study materials (e.g., notebooks).

Progress monitoring and feedback are also essential in e-learning. Since it is not possible to monitor and reflect on students' progress in real time as in face-to-face classrooms, lecturers need to rely on digital tools, analytics dashboards, and structured self-assessment tasks to gain insight into learners' progress.

Artificial intelligence (AI) can personalise teaching and assessment to each student's capabilities, increase engagement, monitor progress, and facilitate collaborative learning among peers (Kovari, 2025; Lee et al., 2024). AI has also been explored to support learner–instructor interaction—for example, facial-analytics-based avatars that allow students who prefer to keep cameras off to convey basic non-verbal feedback to the instructor (Seo et al., 2021). Beyond learning analytics, personalisation of learning and assessment materials, and the professional development of lecturers, AI has also been implicated in the ethical and social dimensions of higher education. These include not only issues of plagiarism and academic integrity, but also human-centred social and cultural values such as inclusivity, transparency and accountability (Al-Zahrani and Alasmari, 2024).

4. Design and maintenance of the physical and virtual infrastructure



Virtual infrastructure is essential for any online learning. Laptops with cameras, high-speed internet, and other essential equipment must be available and well maintained throughout the teaching period. When students attend from home, responsibility typically falls on caregivers, with support from universities or NGOs where available. When students connect from dorms, cafés, or empty classrooms on campus, responsibility lies with the higher education institution.

From the physical perspective, the design of buildings, laboratories, and other learning and teaching facilities is critical in face-to-face learning for comfort, usability, and stimulation. Parameters such as lighting, colour, temperature, air quality, and other factors can impact learning success (Barrett et al., 2015). Physical space is equally important for online learning: the individual learning space is a key factor in all settings of online learning, whether at home, in a library, a café, or a dormitory (Ng, 2021). Key design factors should support student motivation and improve learning behaviour and efficiency. Four basic requirements of the physical environment are: (1) lighting that avoids eye strain; (2) minimal noise and distractions (e.g., silencing phones and informing family members of the class schedule); (3) ergonomic seating suitable for extended screen time; and (4) organised supplies within reach.

Creating a dedicated space for online learning is ideal. However, students may also study from dormitories, shared living spaces, or classrooms and cafés on campus, so these environments should be appropriately equipped. When studying from home, students should be encouraged to select a quiet, comfortable space with minimal distractions and to avoid using beds or sofas as study places.

For disciplines that require hands-on laboratory work, AI-enabled virtual laboratories can motivate students to practise until they “get it right” (Kovari, 2025). Such platforms can minimize the need for physical teaching-lab infrastructure.

Evaluation of the module:

The trainer will propose five closed-ended self-evaluation questions:

1. Which of the following elements is most important for an ergonomically sound physical learning space?
 - a) Studying in bed with a laptop on the knees.
 - b) A chair and screen adjusted so that the screen is at eye level.
 - c) Working on the floor with no back support.
 - d) Using only the light from the screen in a dark room.

Correct answer: b.



2. Which statement best describes how AI tools can support progress monitoring in e-learning?
- a) AI replaces the need for human feedback entirely.
 - b) AI can automatically write students' assignments so that they have more free time.
 - c) AI can generate quizzes and feedback summaries that help students track their own learning.
 - d) AI is mainly useful for entertainment and has no role in learning.

Correct answer: c.

3. Which option shows an inclusive design choice for a student with visual impairment?
- a) Using small, dense text and low-contrast colours.
 - b) Providing only printed materials.
 - c) Offering high-contrast materials and compatibility with screen readers.
 - d) Expecting the student to bring their own assistive technology without support.

Correct answer: c.

4. What is the main purpose of aligning the study space with a student's personal goals and motivation?
- a) To make the room look aesthetically pleasing on social media.
 - b) To reduce the amount of time spent studying.
 - c) To create a space that supports focus, persistence, and meaningful progress.
 - d) To ensure that all students' rooms look the same.

Correct answer: c.

5. Which strategy best helps maintain a healthy boundary between study time and rest when learning from home?
6. a) Studying wherever there is free space, including in bed.
- b) Keeping the laptop open at all times to respond to messages immediately.
 - c) Designating a specific study area and setting clear start and end times for online work.
 - d) Doing all studying late at night to avoid daytime distractions.

Correct answer: c.

Keeping learners safe:

- 1. Ensure that access to the activity is available to all.
- 2. Ensure the room is large enough to allow mobility for all learners.
- 3. Ensure enough resources and materials for everyone.



Evaluation of training

- Formative assessment: study journals, quizzes, self-reflection prompts, and blog posts or video testimonials to track personal growth (GDPR consent should be obtained when collecting blog posts or video testimonials).
- Final project: develop a personalized “e-learning well-being plan” that includes self-care strategies, motivation techniques, and a study schedule.
- Peer review: students share their plans and provide feedback to others in a collaborative learning environment.

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