Impact of Distance Education on Adult Learning (IDEAL) Project

Glossary

Adult education:

"General or vocational education provided for adults after initial education and training for professional and/or personal purposes, and which aims to:

▸ provide general education for adults in topics of particular interest to them (e. g. in open universities);

▸ provide compensatory learning in basic skills which individuals may not have acquired earlier in their initial education or training (such as literacy, numeracy) and thus to;

▸ give access to qualifications not gained, for various reasons, in the initial education and training system;

▸ acquire, improve or update knowledge, skills or competences in a specific field: this is continuing education and training" (Cedefop 2008).

Adult learners:

Learners of any age returning to education after a period of work, unemployment, parental leave etc.

Blended education:

A course unit or programme that blends online and face-to-face delivery; a substantial proportion (30-79%) of the content is delivered online.

Course unit:

"A self-contained, formally structured learning experience. It should have a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes, expressed in terms of competences to be obtained, and appropriate assessment criteria. Course units can have different numbers of credits." (Tuning Educational Structures in Europe - Glossary of terms, http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/documents/glossary-of-terms.html)

Degree programme:

"A set of coherent educational components, based on learning outcomes, that are recognized for the award of a specific qualification through the accumulation of a specified number of credits and the development of specified competences." (Tuning Educational Structures in Europe - Glossary of terms, http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/documents/glossary-of-terms.html).

Distance education:

A generic term for modes of education in which the student and the teacher are separated in time and space. It includes online education (≥ 80% of the content delivered online) and blended education (30-79% of the content delivered online) as well as modes of education using printed material delivered by post and/or other tools for bridging the distance.

European higher education institutions:

For the purposes of this survey, only higher education institutions that are on IAU's List of Universities of the World (http://www.iau-aiu.net/content/list-heis) and that are based within the European Higher Education Area will be considered.

Online education: most or all of the content (≥ 80%) is delivered via the Internet only