

TeacherAcademy

HOW TO SET UP SCHOOL-BASED STUDY GROUPS TO IMPROVE TEACHER LEARNING WITH MOOCS

This infosheet guides schools on how to organise school-based study groups alongside Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) for teachers.

WHY SET UP SCHOOL-BASED STUDY GROUPS ALONGSIDE MOOCS?

Teachers often lack access to relevant professional development opportunities. MOOCs can be a solution to this, but few teachers still make use of them.

The aim of a study group is to help colleagues get familiar with MOOCs, develop the skills required to benefit from them, and to facilitate the implementation of new ideas and practices gained in a MOOC.



TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS CAN MEET REGULARLY IN THESE STUDY GROUPS TO:



Support and motivate one another throughout the MOOC



Provide structure to their learning by offering a place and time to work on the MOOC



Discuss the MOOC's topics and ideas in the context of the schools' realities



Plan how to implement new ideas and practices after the MOOC

"During those sessions we would not only speak about the content of the course but also about mentoring a teacher or teacher trainer and about education in general. This has led to a more professional learning community with motivated teachers."

Lisanne Verwer, Teacher & Study Group Coordinator, Netherlands



"The most enriching experience for teachers in my school was the ability to have real-time support while doing a course in English language. They felt confident because they all knew they could ask for help at any point and this facilitated the process for them."

Mirela Radosevic, Teacher & Study Group Coordinator, Croatia



HOW TO SET UP A STUDY GROUP?



Getting started

1. Selecting a course:

- a. Choose a MOOC in appropriate language. As the coordinator you should feel comfortable in the language. The study group can help teachers who are not so confident in the language to nevertheless benefit from the MOOC.
- b. Consider if your school staff would prefer to exchange with teachers in other countries or only within your national education
- c. If possible, choose a MOOC that is aligned with school development priorities.
- d. Consider if colleagues would be better suited to a self-paced course that offers more flexibility (although it may not award a certificate).



Recruiting colleagues

2. Recruiting colleagues:

- a. Get active support from the school leadership
- b. Use a study group flyer or poster to advertise the opportunity, and share the information through staff emails or digital notice boards
- c. Use staff meetings to inform and answer questions about the concept
- d. Be ready to answer critical questions – taking a course online which might not be in the native language of your colleagues might seem peculiar to some



Planning study group sessions

3. Planning the sessions:

- a. Use scheduling tools like Doodle to find convenient times to meet
- b. Prepare for each meeting by taking the course modules in advance of the meeting
- c. Plan how you will communicate with colleagues in-between meetings (consider using social media for this)



Running study group sessions

4. Running the sessions:

- a. Start with the basics in your first meeting, introducing colleagues to the MOOC and technical platform
- b. Provide time during the meetings to go through the course together
- c. Keep things informal and friendly
- d. Take care not to overload colleagues with expectations and messages in between meetings
- e. In the last meeting of the study group, participants should share the results of their work on the course

MORE INFORMATION

For more details and further guidance take a look at the following resources:

- Report: [Using MOOCs in Schools](#)
- Video: [How to set up school-based learning communities to improve teacher learning on MOOCs](#)

You can also contact us at teacher-academy@schooleducationgateway.eu

www.schooleducationgateway.eu/teacheracademy



[EU Erasmus Plus Programme](#)



[#EUTeacherAcademy](#)



[schoolgateway](#)