

2023-2024 SYLLABUS

**INTRODUCTION TO  
VIRTUAL CO-DESIGNED  
INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION**

**VIRTUELE INTERNATIONALE  
SAMENWERKING IN HET  
HOGER ONDERWIJS**



# INTRODUCTION TO **VIRTUAL CO-DESIGNED INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION**

A VIRTUAL TRAINING FOR TEACHING STAFF IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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## INTRODUCTION

This virtual training for teaching staff in higher education is offered to support your virtual international collaboration, or *VIS*, project(s). This is part of the programme 'Virtuele Internationale Samenwerking in het Hoger Onderwijs', offering activities in support to higher education professionals who are developing *VIS* projects.

'Introduction to virtual co-designed international collaboration' consists of four online synchronous sessions, 2 per week, of four hours each. In addition, preparatory and follow-up asynchronous activities are available on the course Moodle learning platform. The synchronous sessions focus mainly on plenary discussions on the specific topic of the session, as well as hands-on activities which the participants engage with in small groups. The total training time is therefore estimated at 20 hours (16 hours for synchronous sessions and 4 hours for asynchronous work).

This training is designed for educators and support staff who have little or no experience of Virtual Exchange (*VIS*/*COIL* etc) and would benefit from a course that starts from scratch but still brings them to the point of discussing learning objectives, tools, challenges and milestones. It is essential that participants engage with the materials in the learning platform ahead of the synchronous sessions, in order to maximise the time together.

By the end of the training, participants will have a clear grasp of the pedagogical and technological principles underlying the practice of virtual international collaboration, and have a better awareness of the potential challenges such projects can present, and ways to pre-empt those challenges.

## TRAINING OBJECTIVES

- Gain knowledge of Virtual Exchange pedagogy and how it relates to *VIS*.
- Increase awareness of the role of *VIS* in supporting intercultural exchange and the development of transversal skills.
- Be able to identify the characteristics of Virtual Exchange and *VIS*, as opposed to other types of online learning.
- Understand the main features and components of co-designing virtual international collaborations and potential challenges to bear in mind when developing *VIS* projects.
- Increase awareness of issues involved in recognition.
- Enhance teamwork & digital competences.



## TASKS AND ASSIGNMENTS

### 1) Training materials (asynchronous, on Moodle)

The training materials available on the Moodle platform support the learning process, and consist of readings, short videos and case studies. Participants are expected to review the module's training materials in their own time, but ahead of the synchronous sessions.

### 2) Discussion points & activities (asynchronous, on Moodle)

The training content also includes discussions on fora, in which participants have to share reflections and possible solutions, and activities to be carried out individually (contributing to a Padlet, completing tasks online, etc). These activities are crucial to the learning process, and will be the focus of the online sessions.

### 3) Online group sessions (synchronous, ZOOM)

Participants meet online for a four-hour session with fellow practitioners and their trainer twice a week for two consecutive weeks. This training consists of four synchronous sessions in total over a period of two weeks. These virtual group meetings will take place on ZOOM. This is the time to deepen your understanding of the training content, learn from your colleagues, and put theory into practice through interactive exercises. Therefore, timely attendance and active participation using both video and audio is expected.

## PARTICIPATION AND ASSESSMENT

To successfully complete this training and receive a certificate of completion, participants are required to:

- Participate actively in **at least 3 out of 4 synchronous sessions**<sup>1</sup>;
- Complete **80% of the asynchronous tasks and assignments** detailed above; through contributing to the discussions, asynchronous exercises and the assignments.

## CONTACT

Questions about participation can be emailed to: [visinhetho@unicollaboration.org](mailto:visinhetho@unicollaboration.org)

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<sup>1</sup> Active participation includes joining the session with working video and audio, contributing to discussions, and attending the full meeting.



## MODULE BREAKDOWN

### **Welcome Module: Welcome to this training**

- Getting Started
- Finding your way around Moodle
- A welcome Padlet wall for introductions

### **Module 1: Introduction to the virtual exchange pedagogy**

#### *Objectives*

- Get to know the other participants
- Understand the concept of Virtual Exchange as an educational practice, describing what it is, and what it isn't.
- Be able to explain what VIS projects can bring to the students' learning experience
- Understand the different components of a successful VIS project
- Identify ways of developing digital literacies and online presence.

#### Asynchronous training content & tasks

- What is Virtual Exchange as an educational practice?
- Sample VIS/COIL projects
- Discussion forum: which sample projects do you find inspiring?

### **Module 2: Setting up a virtual co-designed international collaboration (VIS project)**

#### *Objectives*

- Understand the importance of ice-breakers as a means to encourage online intercultural collaboration
- Understand the concept of intercultural exchange
- Write suitable Learning Objectives for one's VIS project
- Design successful collaborative tasks and activities

#### Asynchronous training content & tasks

- Following the "backward design" process
- Establishing Learning objectives
- Crafting collaborative tasks and activities
- Writing up your Learning Objectives (Jamboard)



## Module 3: Matching pedagogy and technology

### Objectives

- Understand that technology needs to be at the service of pedagogy
- Design tasks that increase motivation to collaborate
- Reflect on important aspects when choosing technological tools.
- Be able to choose the most suitable tool for each task
- Understand that technological tools need to be selected in partnership
- Understand the use of micro-credentials in VIS projects

### Asynchronous training content & tasks

- Tools used in VIS projects - function and use of different types of tools
- Tools for recognition
- What tools do you know? And what can they be used for? (Padlet)

## Module 4: Common challenges with virtual international collaboration

### Objectives

- Be able to identify different challenges in real case scenarios
- Identify suitable solutions to those challenges
- Consider the milestones in developing and implementing a VIS project
- Identify important stakeholders in the development and implementation process
- Reflect on the main takeaways from the training

### Asynchronous training content & tasks

- 4 common challenges
- Milestones and stakeholders
- Pre-empting challenges: what could be done?

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This training is designed and implemented by UNICollaboration, one of the consortium members of 'Virtual International Collaboration in Higher Education'. UNICollaboration is a not-for-profit cross-disciplinary professional organisation promoting telecollaboration and virtual exchange in Higher Education. UNICollaboration has two main objectives:

- to promote the development and integration of research and practice in telecollaboration and virtual exchange across all disciplines and subject areas in higher education.
- to actively engage in awareness raising of telecollaboration and virtual exchange at institutional and policy making level.

