Apples or oranges?

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Apples or oranges: Comparing two approaches to online professional development for Flemish EdTech staff
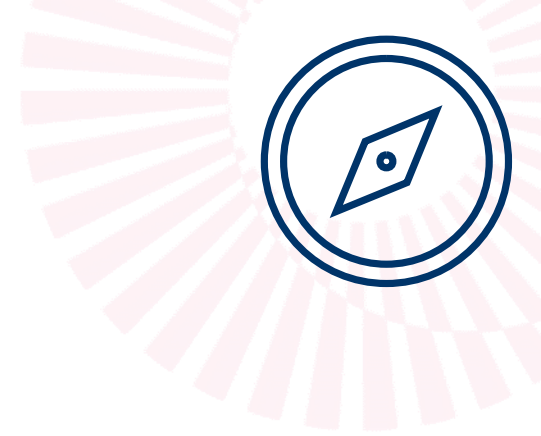
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ALTC 2023 – University of Warwick

IN THIS PRESENTATION

1. Context

2. Two postgraduate programmes
   o Technical ICT coordinator
   o Pedagogical ICT coordinator

3. Two distinct educational designs
   o Design characteristics
   o Compare and contrast
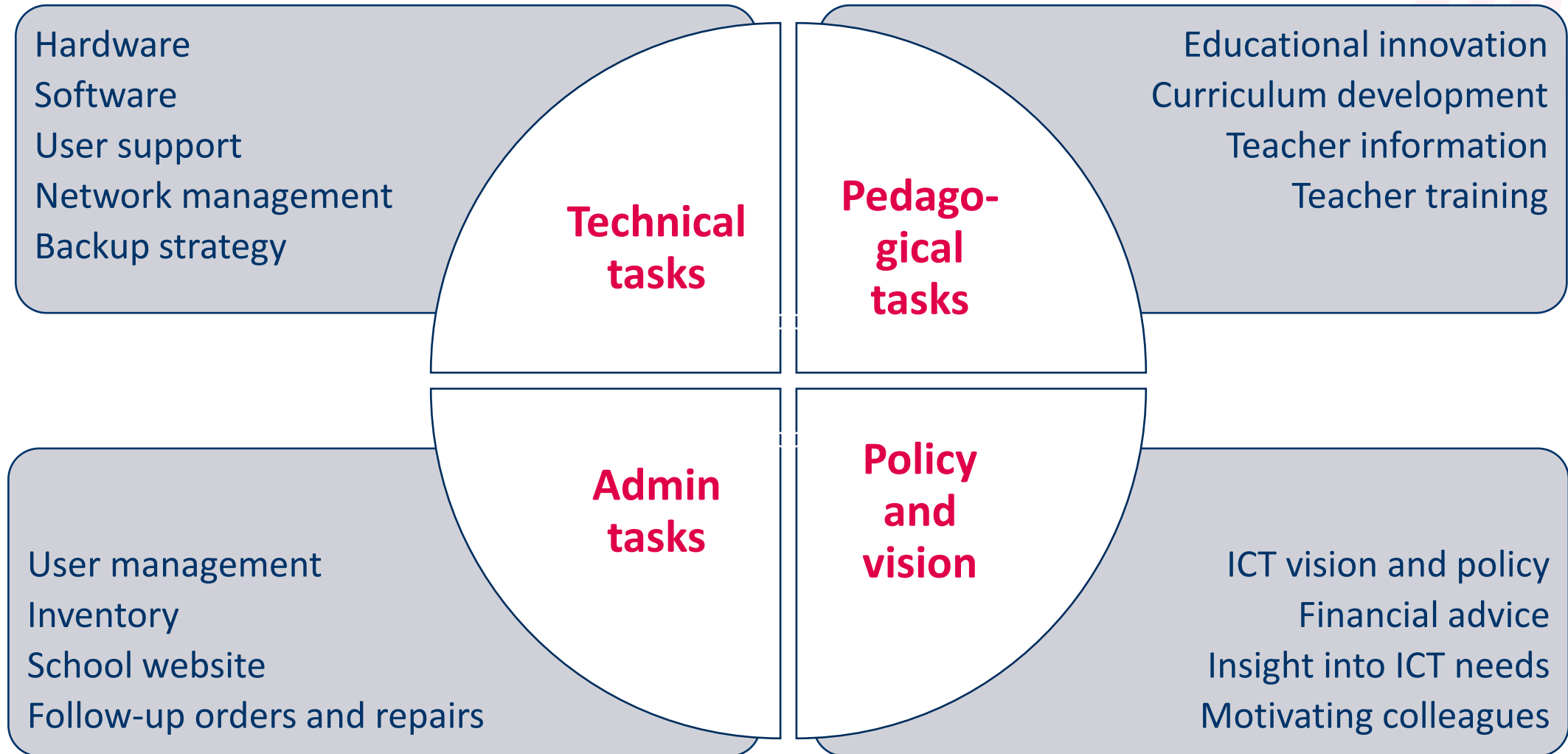
4. Student feedback & conclusion

5. Q&A

1. Context

CONTEXT

- Flemish community – Dutch-speaking region of Belgium (7 mln.)
- Compulsory education 5 to 18 year old: primary and secondary education - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Flanders - **bit.ly/44jXJDZ**
- Teaching and support staff wages in accredited schools paid by department of education. Since 2021, this has included educational technologists
- EdTech staffing levels are based on school size
- Two different EdTech functions - **bit.ly/3E7UBQZ**
  - o Pedagogical ICT coordinator
  - o Technical ICT coordinator

ICT COORDINATION IN SCHOOLS

Hardware
Software
User support
Network management
Backup strategy

Technical tasks

Pedago-gical tasks

Educational innovation
Curriculum development
Teacher information
Teacher training

Admin tasks

Policy and vision

User management
Inventory
School website
Follow-up orders and repairs

ICT vision and policy
Financial advice
Insight into ICT needs
Motivating colleagues

TWO DISTINCT FUNCTIONS

- Pedagogical ICT coordinator (PICT)
  is mainly pedagogically strong, with a strong technical basis, and also policy and administrative skills

- Technical ICT coordinator (TICT)
  combines very strong technical competences, with the necessary policy-making and administrative skills

UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCE
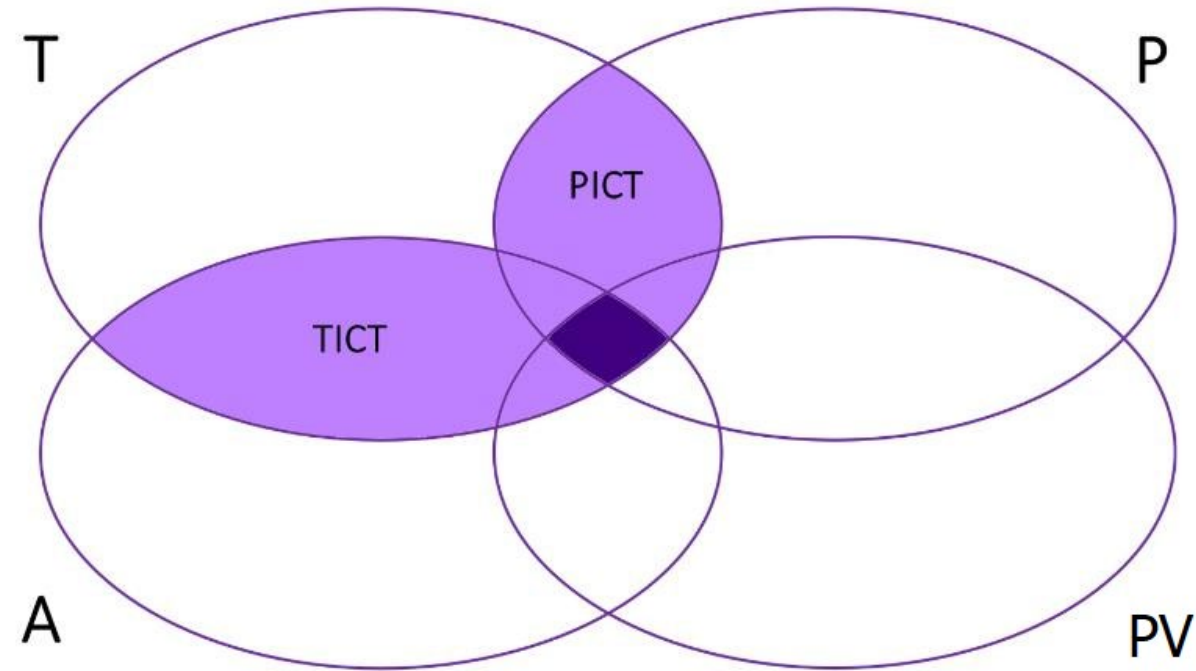
Postgraduate certificates

(20+ ECTS credits)

- Pedagogical ICT coordinator

  HOWEST – Bruges

  Online + 2 f2f moments

  PXL – Hasselt

  Fully online

  VIVES – Kortrijk

  Online + 7 f2f classes

  UC Leuven Limburg

  Fully online

- Technical ICT coordinator

  HOWEST – Bruges

  Fully online

  PXL – Hasselt

  Fully online

  UC Leuven Limburg

  Fully online

2. Two postgraduate programmes

UCLL
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COMMON GOALS

Professional development of EdTech staff – practice oriented

Flexible in time and place (learning and evaluation)

Autonomy and self-directed learning for participants

If possible, making use of existing course materials

TWO ONLINE PROGRAMMES AT UCLL

Onderwijstechnoloog

📍 Opleiding te volgen op: Campus Diepenbeek, Diepenbeek, Campus Hertogstraat, Heverlee

🏷 Opleidingstype: Postgraduaat
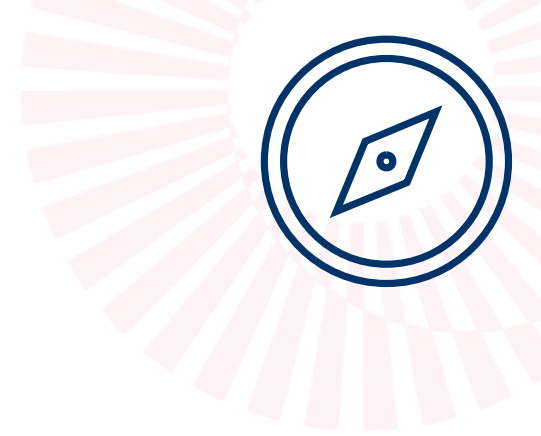
Educational technologist = Pedagogical ICT coordinator

ICT-Coördinator

📍 Opleiding te volgen op: Campus Diepenbeek, Diepenbeek, Campus Hertogstraat, Heverlee

🏷 Opleidingstype: Postgraduaat

Technical ICT coordinator

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PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

- Part-time programme
  - 22 to 24 ECTS for the full one-year course
  - Study load for full course = 550 – 700 study hours
  - Approx. half of participants take some modules and not the whole course
  - Enrollment fees: approx. 1200-1500 EUR

- Combination with job / family
  - Expected workload: 15 to 20 hours per week
  - Assignments close to or part of regular job tasks

TWO CURRICULA

Educational technologist

- Policy issues
- Supporting teaching with ICT
- Coaching stakeholders
- Supporting learning with ICT
- Ethical and legal issues

Technical ICT coordinator

- Policy issues
- Computer systems
- Networking
- Internship – part 1
- System management & security
- Web design and scripting
- Ethical and legal issues
- Internship – part 2

3. Two distinct educational designs

UCLL

UNIVERSITY OF
APPLIED SCIENCES

Educational technologist

- Starting position: new design specifically directed towards expert learners

- Learning guide: Tuesday evening online instruction and discussion sessions – live or recorded

- Learning principle: networked learning – sharing of expertise and cases

Technical ICT coordinator

- Starting position: existing ICT campus classes made available to online participants – synchronous & asynchronous

- Learning guide: VLE with class recordings, learning materials, exercises and assignments

- Learning principle: individual learning – asynchronous support by coach

Educational technologist

- Learning environment: VLE with session recordings, learning materials, assignments + Teams for group learning & sharing

- Assessment: tutor marked assignments: theory & practice, flexible deadlines

- Synchronous classes: instruction by (guest) lecturer, feedback & intervision sessions

Technical ICT coordinator

- Learning environment: VLE with class recordings, learning materials, exercises, tests and labs

- Assessment: labs, tests, online participation, flexible deadlines

- Synchronous classes: pre-scheduled 'office hours' for Q&A

Educational technologist

- Asynchronous tutoring:
  - Feedback and Q&A sessions
  - MS Teams channels: learning network & lecturers
  - E-mail

- Teacher mindset:
  - E-coach & network catalyst
  - Learning DJ?
  - Balance instruction, coaching, feedback & assessment

Technical ICT coordinator

- Asynchronous tutoring:
  - Pre-planned Q&A sessions
  - Individual MS Teams chats and calls
  - E-mail

- Teacher mindset:
  - Coach / tutor / motivator
  - Inspire collaboration
  - Direct towards flexible problem solving

Educational technologist

- Quality assurance
  - o Continuous improvement of teaching approach during and after module
  - o Based on participant input
  - o Online survey
  - o Focus group interviews
  - o Actualisation of topics / cases

Technical ICT coordinator

- Quality assurance
  - o Continuous content updates
  - o Individual participant feedback
  - o Tutor experience leads to changes in support / coaching practices
  - o Continuous improvement of materials on VLE

4. Student feedback & conclusion

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PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK – 1/2

- Past two years – (21-22 and 22-23)
  - Annually approximately 40 participants: 25 EdTech + 15 ICT coordinator
  - Study success in 21-22 = 70% - Fairly high dropout rate

- ICT coordinator: unfortunately no replies to invitation to participate in focus group or survey
  - Informal feedback from participants is positive, but may not be representative

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK 2/2

- EdTech focus group (n=7) & survey (n= 11)
  - Approved of online course design
  - Content and assignments were very close to participant needs and work context
  - Theoretical models were of immediate practical value
  - High level of satisfaction with coaches: adapting to feedback, fast replies, high level of flexibility concerning deadlines
  - Highly social experience, even if purely online.
  - Participants would be interested in refresher sessions / webinars about current topics, such as Generative AI
  - Annual networking event (face-to-face) would be appreciated

CONCLUSION 1/2

- Both approaches
  - o Fairly high dropout rate, due to combination with work/family
  - o Successful in terms of success rate for those who persevere

- Comparing satisfaction and effect of both approaches
  - o Participant satisfaction for EdTech is high, for ICT coordinator unknown
  - o Effect of distinct designs on participant learning impossible to compare

- Sustainable and financially viable?
  - o Number of institutions that offer these courses in 23-24 has decreased by 25% in comparison to last year

CONCLUSION 2/2

- Time will tell if one or both approaches will continue to be successful in terms of enrollment

  (Minimal enrollment of 15 is necessary to be financially viable)

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5. Q&A