e-Service Learning for more digital and inclusive EU Higher Education systems (e-SL4EU)

e-Service-Learning Design Principles and Quality Elements

Definition of Design Principles

e-Service-Learning (e-SL) Design Principles (DP) are guidelines to inform the project design. They are articulated in a set of statements that put a clear focus on a specific mindset or the requirements which should guide the design activity. They are also useful to fasten and make easier decisions in the various project phases. As e-SL is a form of SL, some DP are the same of those in traditional Service-Learning, others are specifically related to the online dimension.

Definition of Quality Elements

e-Service-Learning Quality Elements (QE) are a set of criteria used to describe successful projects. They concern the outcomes of an e-SL project according to the relevant dimensions for this pedagogical approach. As e-SL is a form of SL some QE are the same as the QE of Traditional Service-Learning, others are specifically related to the online dimension.

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e-SL Design Framework

While e-SL certainly does have specific disciplinary pedagogical choices that influence design and facilitation, Lucas and Thomas (2021) argued for a generalized framework. Following the same line of thoughts, an e-SL Design Framework was developed to provide a comprehensive tool that could help teachers, university leaders, community partners, and other stakeholders to design effective and meaningful e-SL activities.

The framework incorporates three pillars of the 'new culture of learning' – places, people, and partnerships (Thomas & Brown, 2012) – that interconnect four clusters of design principles with the intention of promoting student engagement: (1) instructional design; (2) agency and inclusiveness; (3) availability of digital skills and resources; (4) impact.

The Pillars

The e-SL Design Framework is built on three pillars – **places**, **partnerships**, and **people** – that translate an ecosystem approach to learning in higher education. For successful implementation of e-SL, the three pillars could orient the process of curriculum design, course design, service design and, nevertheless, learning experience design. In other words, the pillars are structural directions of the design process having the potential to support the uptake of student engagement and achievement across the four clusters. **Widening ecosystem participation** relies on people and partnerships to provide a platform for student engagement. Complementarily, diversifying the **places** where learning takes place is an important strategy to support e-SL and remove geographical barriers with the aid of technology. Additionally, place-based learning connects knowledge with their context with the intention of promoting meaning making and identity building (Winthrop et al., 2018).

The Clusters

In the framework of e-SL Design Principles, the concept of cluster is central. A cluster is a family of principles and actions across pillars, intended to achieve meaning-making and effective e-SL experiences design. Four clusters have been identified: (1) Instructional design; (2) Agency and inclusiveness; (3) Availability of digital skills and resources; (4) Impact.

List of e-SL Design Principles (e-SL DPs)

*Please, read the Design Principles and assign to each item a score on a scale from 1 to 4, on the basis of three specific criteria – **clarity, relevance, consistency** – where:*
- *1 is "**not at all** clear/relevant/ consistent concerning the whole list";*
- *2 is "**not very** clear/relevant/ consistent concerning the whole list";*
- *3 is "**quite** clear/relevant/ consistent concerning the whole list";*
- *4 is "**very** clear/relevant/ consistent concerning the whole list";*

Then sum the scores given to the three criteria per item (during the focus group it will be useful to start the discussion from the lowest scoring design principles).

e-Service-Learning Design Principles	clarity	relevance	consistency	Total c+r+c
Instructional Design				
Combinations of pedagogies: design learning and service in order to purposefully combine well-established and innovative pedagogies.				
Learner centrality & engagement: teachers and other community representatives play the role of "learning activators". Therefore,				

design learning to foster independence and agency through pedagogical innovation.				
Constructive alignment: Learners are aware of the learning path and personalize it to adjust it to their needs and interests. Links each activity to specific learning outcomes.				
Horizontal integration: Learning and service foster connectedness to the community. Connect students from various fields of study or specializations. Embed horizontal transfer of knowledge and skills into the learning design.				
Vertical integration. Undergraduate and graduate students could engage in multidisciplinary teams. Promote long-term and large-scale projects.				
Agency and inclusiveness	*clarity*	*relevance*	*consistency*	*c+r+c*
Tackle equity, diversity & inclusion: implement flexible design in order to allow students to choose ways of working and grouping based on their personal preferences.				
Encompass all voices: enrich e-SL with other pedagogies to allow self-paced learning (e.g. flipped classroom), peer interaction, feedback and asynchronous learning. Micro-adaptations can be foreseen to provide additional support and guidance for students in need or at risk.				
Reciprocity: foster reciprocity among actors.				
Sensitive integration of learners' differences: student differences in terms of cognition, motivation, prior knowledge and experience are equally important.				
Partnering with communities: community representatives are 'learning catalysts' in e-SL. Establish the conditions for the community to co-create the learning path, shaping sometimes the nature of learning activities, their sequence, and the design of the service.				
Building communities of students. This principle builds upon the social nature of learning. Use technology to create flexible learning settings and to facilitate the production and transfer of knowledge.				
Availability of digital skills and resources	*clarity*	*relevance*	*consistency*	*c+r+c*
Develop digital skills for teachers, students & community partners.				
Use technology to create flexible learning settings and facilitate the production and transfer of knowledge.				

	clarity	relevance	consistency	c+r+c
Use technology to allow for various combinations of pedagogies (i.e. flipped learning, narrative approaches and storytelling, gamification).				
Use technology to scaffold reflection and self-regulation.				
Use technology to collaborate and disseminate the learning outputs.				
Impact	*clarity*	*relevance*	*consistency*	*c+r+c*
Communities and community representatives are, by design, a part of the teaching and learning process.				
Support student motivation and engagement throughout the e-SL project.				
Co-design SL to address social needs.				
Design service around societal challenges.				
Connect learning to the service.				

List of e-SL Quality Elements (e-SL QEs)

When an e-SL project is well designed, it meets certain quality elements. These elements are outcome criteria that can be measured qualitatively or quantitatively. The e-SL quality elements can be grouped into seven macro-areas that correspond to the basic Service-Learning pedagogical dimensions: (1) relevant learning, (2) relevant service, (3), reciprocity, (4) student engagement, (5) systematic reflection, (6) Integrated technology, (7) Evaluation and dissemination.

*Please, read the Quality Elements and assign to each item a score on a scale from 1 to 4, on the basis of three specific criteria – **clarity, relevance, consistency** – where:*
- *1 is "**not at all** clear/relevant/ consistent concerning the whole list";*
- *2 is "**not very** clear/relevant/ consistent concerning the whole list";*
- *3 is "**quite** clear/relevant/ consistent concerning the whole list";*
- *4 is "**very** clear/relevant/ consistent concerning the whole list";*

Then sum the scores given to the three criteria per item (during the focus group it will be useful to start the discussion from the lowest scoring Quality Elements).

e-Service-Learning Quality Elements	clarity	relevance	consistency	Total c+r+c
Relevant learning				
The e-SL project is meaningful and relevant to people/institutions and offers opportunities to learn and deepen understanding for all participants (students, faculty and community partners)				
The e-SL project has clearly articulated learning, skill or value goals that arise from broader curriculum/study program goals and outcomes, so that they can easily recognized for all participants				
The e-SL project promotes the practice of a whole scope of global and/or soft skills (digital skills, critical thinking skills, creativity, intercultural communication…)				
The e-SL project integrates evidence-based and well-established instructional design strategies in all phases, depending on the nature and objectives of the projects				
Relevant service	clarity	relevance	consistency	c+r+c
The e-SL project pursues learning and service goals (reachable and measurable) that meet a real community need				
The e-SL project is designed and planned by students/student groups, actively collaborating with community partners.				
The e-SL project allows meaningful interaction with the community				
Reciprocity	clarity	relevance	consistency	c+r+c
The e-SL project is built on strong reciprocal university-community partnerships. The approach is that there are no recipients and receivers but all participants give and take a benefit				
The e-SL project is based on a university-community partnership accompanied by in-person and online interactions through forums, social media, and linking/blogging which fosters communication with the online and offline communities				
Student engagement	clarity	relevance	consistency	c+r+c
The e-SL project enhances the voice and the active participation of students that feel themselves part of a community that improves reality				
The e-SL project involves students in challenging tasks, promotes their assumption of responsibility and provides space for their engagement at each phase of the project;				

	clarity	relevance	consistency	c+r+c
The e-SL project offers adequate time frames – in terms of duration and intensity – for students to make experiences and learn in community settings/with community partners in an effective and sustainable way				
Systematic reflection	clarity	relevance	consistency	c+r+c
The e-SL project encourages systematic reflection on the learning processes and outcomes for all students to enable tacit knowledge to be made explicit. Through reflection students can link their experiences to the theoretical and methodological background of the subject.				
The e-SL project involves reflection on both personal and professional dimensions				
Integrated technology	clarity	relevance	consistency	c+r+c
The e-SL project is based on a humanistic, supportive and inclusive use of technology				
The e-SL project integrates online and face-to-face components into an articulated and coherent process				
The e-SL integrates suitable technologies with respect to the nature and objectives of the projects (different projects require different needs, e-SL is not one size fits all)				
The e-SL project offers learner orientation and continuous support to help students become familiar with the online environment. Orientation and support referred to both technical and conceptual issues				
The e-SL project is based on a learning design (selection of online platform, communication/interaction media and learning analytics) that is adaptive and motivating for learners				
Evaluation and dissemination	clarity	relevance	consistency	c+r+c
The e-SL project is assessed by community partners, students and university				
The e-SL project collects evaluation and documentation to enable a final student presentation of the results in a shared celebration with community partners				
The e-SL project provides authentic assessment of students' integral growth (personal and professional)				

The e-SL project is evaluated in its technical components				