LearnIT2teach

NEW LANGUAGE SOLUTIONS

Getting Up and Running on EduLINC during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Why EduLINC?

COVID-19 has forced LINC programs across Canada to deliver their classes online. Many of these programs are turning to EduLINC to help them through this shift. This document provides information and links to resources to help with this sudden transition.

What is EduLINC?

For teachers who are not familiar with EduLINC, it is the short name of https://edulinc.org. EduLINC is an IRCC-funded learning management system available free to all LINC programs in Canada. EduLINC offers 4-skill courseware aligned with the LINC Curriculum Guidelines (LINC 1-5 2002/ LINC 5-7 2007).

Courseware Facts

- The courseware was designed for blended learning to complement the LINC Classroom Activities books (LINC 1-4 2009 | LINC 5-7 2010).

- Multilevel courseware is available in whatever combination of CLB/LINC levels are required.
- The courseware was designed for blended delivery, so teachers will have to adapt the courseware for 100% online delivery.

Getting Your Learners Online for the First Time

If learners are using EduLINC for the first time during the pandemic, they will need to be oriented to the site in a web conference.Teachers can communicate with their students via email to set up an online orientation meeting. If these online meetings are less than 40 minutes, they can be held for free in ZOOM. ZOOM is a popular, simple to use web conferencing platform. Teachers first need to register with ZOOM, take the ZOOM training, set up a training session and email their learners the meeting link and access code. Learners do not need a ZOOM account to participate in the orientation. A ZOOM help file for learners should also be emailed to them. (See link to file below.) It explains the basics of using ZOOM. (Note: ZOOM is not used/needed after this initial orientation.)

During the ZOOM session teachers will need to explain to their learners:

- what EduLINC is
- what they need to use the site
- how to get to the site
- how to log in
- how to update their profiles**
- how to get to their course
- an orientation to the navigation around the course
- how to use the courseware help block
- how to use the Forum

** with lower level or technically-challenged students, teachers could streamline the log in process if they set up each profile for those learners

The above information is explained in the LearnIT2teach training (Stage 2). Teachers will need to consult the information in that course to prepare.

ZOOM Help

Teachers should go to **https://zoom.us/**, click the ***Sign up, for free*** button. After signing up, use the training **tutorials** to get ready for your orientation.

Here is a ZOOM **help file** for learners.

Initial Meeting Follow-up

After meeting with learners, teachers should email them the following links::

- Logging in to edulinc.org [YouTube video]: **https://youtu.be/CW3Oupj-_mo**
- Editing your profile [PDF file]: **https://www.edulinc.org/edulinc_help/HTMLfiles/profile.html**
- Editing your profile [YouTube video]: **https://youtu.be/xNAxYFc4XeA**
- Navigating a Course with Breadcrumb Links [YouTube video]: **https://youtu.be/ZpwWEnnetqI**

The above resources are found on the ***Courseware help*** block web page: **https://www.edulinc.org/edulinc_help/main.html**

It would be helpful to also email students access to the help file for any activity they will be doing during their first session. Direct them to the ***Courseware help*** block. To copy direct links to any item on this page, right-click on the link to get the correct web address.

Preparing Your Course

Before a teacher sends learners to an EduLINC course, they must first make the course content visible. Making a course is visible to learners is explained **here**. Showing course content is explained **here**. (This information is part of the Stage 2 training.) This **file** explains how to manage the accounts provided to them for their students.

Strategies for Your Course

Communication in an online course, especially a language course, is key to engage learners. EduLINC provides a number of different tools for engaging learners and building an online community. In fact, learners can practice all of their language skills while communicating with others in a course.

Discussion **forums** allow learners to practice their reading and writing skills while interacting with each other. Learners can also post audio messages to one another in forums. All courseware is pre-loaded with discussion forums. Teachers can also add additional forums to a course. Forums are a key community builder in most online courses and are a good activity for your learners to start with. Here is a link to a **help file** about managing discussion forums.

A **BigBlueButton** activity is a virtual classroom that enables teachers to meet with their students in real time. It is similar to ZOOM, but does not have a 40-minute limit and is not accessible unless someone is logged into EduLINC. This activity is a fantastic way to build community. It supports small group interaction, PowerPoint presentations and teachers can broadcast YouTube videos. Learners can participate in a BBB class on their mobile devices using the browser. BBB has not been added to a course. This **help file** explains how to add a BBB activity to an EduLINC course. It includes links to video tutorials at the end of that file. This **file** explains how to facilitate a BBB session. It also includes a related video at the end. This **file** provides some tips for hosting one of these sessions effectively. Help for learners to participate in a BBB session is in the Courseware Help block.

Oher synchronous (realtime) communication tools in the courseware include:

- **SKYPE** – The courseware includes speaking tasks that students can complete using Skype, a phone or any other mode of talking. The **help file** provides teachers with insights to using these.
- **CHAT** – Teachers can host a live (text-based) chat. These can be shared with all students or kept private. This **help file** explains how to add a Chat activity to a course and tips for using it.
- **COMMENTS BLOCK** – This block enables participants to post a short comment to a block that is instantly shared with others viewing the same item. Teachers can delete posts if necessary. This **file** explains how to add one to a course.
- **MESSAGING** – This is both synchronous and asynchronous. Participants who are online at the same time can exchange messages and are instantly alerted when they receive a message. If they are offline, the message is sent by email. Teachers can use the tool to message individuals or groups of students. This **file** explains how to message learners and this **file** describes how to add and use the Messages block to a course.

Many students enjoy using the **SCORM** activities. These are interactive skill building activities that track the learners' scores in the grade book. Many SCORMs have other activities built into the SCORM, e.g. a writing task, a survey, a research task on the Internet, etc. Because these activities record scores in the gradebook, they hold learners accountable for their work. The gradebook scores also motivate learners. The SCORMs work on tablets and smartphones, so they are nice activities for learners who don't have laptops or desktop computers. This **help file** explains basic gradebook features. This learner **help file** demonstrates how to use SCORM activities. Additional help files for learners are available in the Courseware help block.

One important feature for using EduLINC to deliver an online course is its reporting features. Not only does the gradebook record learners' scores for some activities, but teachers can also check participation and other reports about learners. The Attendance module recently became available on EduLINC LMS. It provides teachers with an attendance report about learners while working within EduLINC. Please see **this file** for information about using the attendance module in an EduLINC course. It explains how to add it to a course.

PBLA Assessments

The EduLINC courseware does not provide ready-made assessments. The courseware was designed for blended learning and it was designed for teachers to assess students during the face-to-face class. Although there are no pre-made assessments, EduLINC provides the tools teachers need to develop their own assessments. The Assignment module is one such tool that can assess four skills. There are a number of help files available that explain **how to add an assignment** to a course, **how to mark assignment submissions**, **create a rubric** and **add** and **edit** the pre-made rubric templates (CLB 3-8) for productive skills. Assignments can also be used for speaking assessments. There are **PoodLL** assignments threaded throughout the courseware for skill building. Teachers can create their own PoodLL assignments using this **help file**.

The Quiz module is also a good option for assessing the receptive skills as it can automatically mark many question types. There are help files to show **how to add a quiz** to a course, and **how to give individualized action-oriented feedback** after a quiz attempt. Other teacher-created Moodle activities could also be used to assess learners or to collect artifacts for a portfolio.

Artifact Collection

EduLINC does not provide a ready-made, custom **ePortfolio** option. There is a PBLA Resource section in the EduLINC courseware. This section includes two suggestions for collecting digital artifacts.

The simplest solution for teachers would be using the blog space that each user gets with their EduLINC user account.The blog is a personal writing space. Students may find it useful for journal or reflective writing. It also offers users the option to record audio using the **PoodLL** microphone button in the text editor toolbar. Blogs can be accessed using the Blog menu block, the user's profile or through the Navigation block. Blog entries can be shared and others can comment on them, or they can be kept private. The **Export to Portfolio** function in some courseware activities, e.g. glossary, chat, database, forums, enables users to export some of their work directly to their blog. Using this function, the blog can easily collect samples of learners' work.

Teachers can also create a portfolio folder for each learner to store their artifacts in. This **Group of One Guide** explains how to set these up. This solution gives each learner a directory on EduLINC to which they can upload all types of digital files for their teacher to review. This solution requires teachers to set up a directory for each learner in the course, as explained in the guide.

The PBLA section in the EduLINC courseware also provides resources to help teachers introduce the Language Companion, survey learners, facilitate reflective writing, collect baseline information, etc. For more ideas about using EduLINC with PBLA, participants in the training can self-enroll in the **EduLINC PBLA Demo** course on the training site.

Learner Support

Once learners get started on EduLINC, there will be questions for their teachers about EduLINC. Teachers can provide this support using Moodle messaging, the phone or a phone app, such as Skype or WhatsApp.

Please remember that not every student's circumstances allow them to continue learning in an online way. Teachers should adjust their expectations accordingly (i.e. accept that some students can't participate in synchronous work). They may need to determine alternate formats for some students to continue learning.

Teacher Support

This document provides ideas to help teachers get their learners started on EduLINC, as well as how to adapt the courseware to online delivery. There are many ready-made activities in the courseware for learners that are not mentioned, and teachers can explore these during the Stage 1 training course and when they get their courseware.

The LearnIT2teach training provides a wide selection of training materials for teachers with various levels of technical skills. Each teacher in LearnIT2teach has a mentor for support, and Live Online help is available during the day (Monday to Friday) on the **project portal**. They can also reach out in the EduLINC Teachers-only Forum. Teachers in Stage 2 can access the **Stage 3 training materials** on the project portal if they want to start more complex course editing.

The project team looks forward to supporting teachers through these challenging times. Send an email to **admin@learnit2teach.ca** for information about getting access to EduLINC.