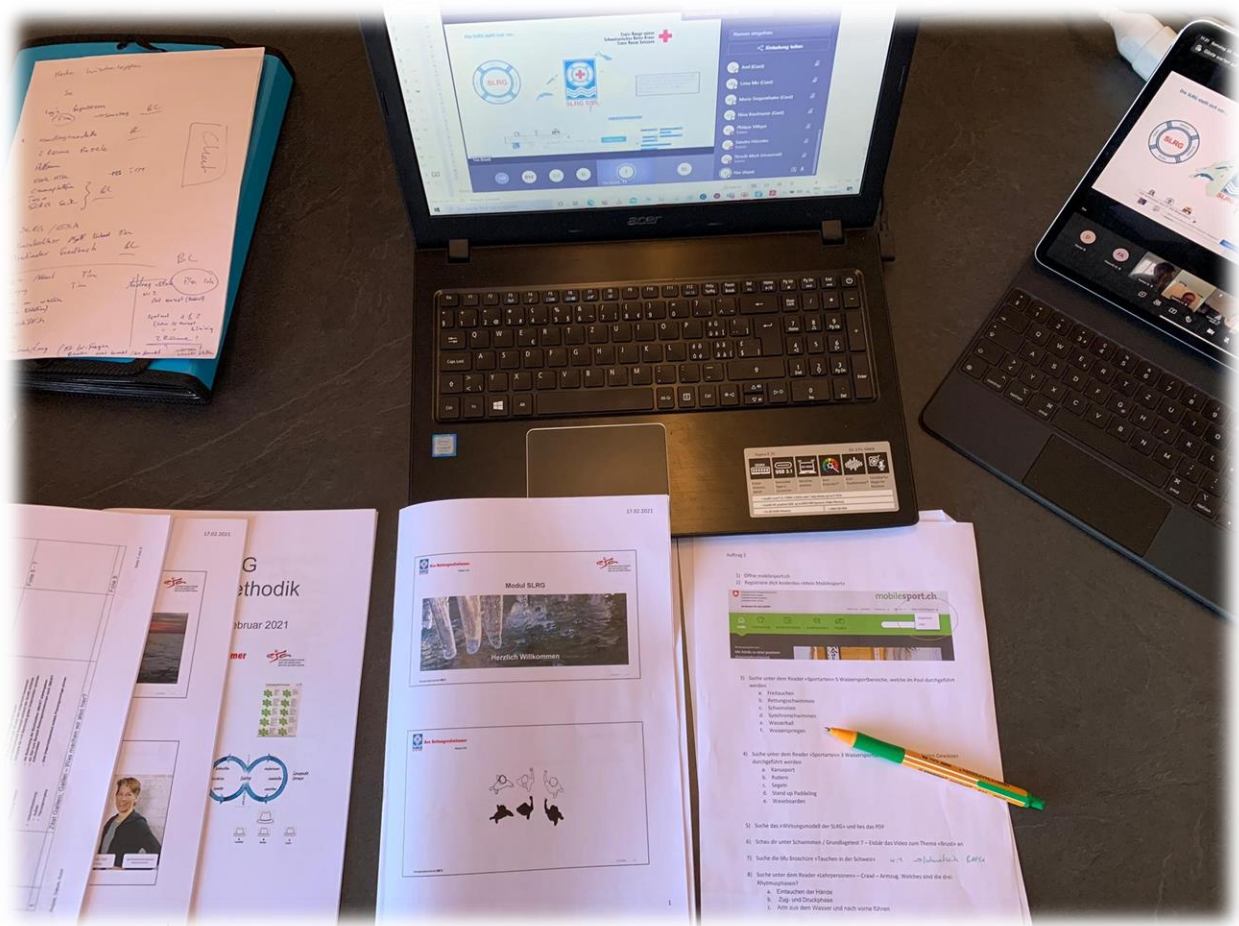




# Ihre Rettungsschwimmer

## With new ways of learning during the pandemic

Food-for-thought paper on blended learning and online learning in the Swiss Life-Saving-Society



Images: Modul Methodik, Region East



SLRG SSS

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In the current document, to make reading easier, the masculine form is used. The reduced linguistic form is exclusively for editorial reasons and intends no valuation.

The corresponding terms apply in the sense of equality of treatment basically for all sexes.

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## Introduction

Due to the strongly reduced volume of courses during 2020, demand for courses declined as regards the period. Limitations due to the pandemic and also the weather conditions in 2021 again resulted in reduced demand for courses during the first half-year of 2021. How will the pandemic turn out in the coming months? What does this mean for SLS courses? And how can demand for courses in the coming months and years be met? These thoughts led SLS Switzerland to draft a food-for-thought paper on alternative forms of learning to pure face-to-face teaching.

These alternative forms of learning such as online or blended learning offer the possibility to carry out theoretical forms of content for courses independent of location. It seems to us important in this connection to point out that it should be possible to acquire and confirm practical competences in water just as before.

Have you in fact ever set up or thought of organising an offer of blended learning?

In that case the following document may just give you a nudge in that direction. The aim is to give brave activists a source of inspiration for new courses using alternative forms of learning. The document gives additional addresses of contact persons available for an exchange of views or to support the preparatory work for such courses.

We wish you enjoyable reading and fun when trying out new forms of learning!

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## Concerning SLS's Strategy 2025

The following food-for-thought paper provides a knock-on effect regarding various aspects of Strategy 2025:

- **«Allow diversity within the unit»**  
The challenges vary with the section and the region. That's why brave activists are welcome, who take on responsibility and promote SLS at the local, regional and national level.
- **«Expand competences»**  
To sensitise and encourage SLS organisers on the themes of blended and online learning to try out new forms of learning.
- **«To improve the flow of learning and strengthen links»**  
Examples of good practice by the Sections provide starting-points and inspiration to carry out theoretical sequences of courses in distance learning in their own Section and/or region. To learn from existing experiences, to collect new experiences and share these with others. Working together!

## Terminology

### E-learning

- «Electronic learning or e-learning is often used as a designation for all forms of learning that are based on electronic devices, both online and offline. E-learning can be computer- or mobile-based. It doesn't necessarily involve the internet.» (Mead Richardson, 2019, p.6)

### Online learning

- «Online learning is a very similar concept to e-learning. It uses the communication functions of the Internet for interactive learning, but in contrast to e-learning, it does require internet access.» (Mead Richardson, 2019, p.7)
- «Online learning concerns self-operated, interactive modes of learning or via a presenter, which is accessible through digital devices such as tablets, smartphones or computers. The approaches include digital educational programs, mobile apps, online games and multimedia. Online learning is suitable for a multiplicity of target groups due to its accessibility and flexibility.» Global First Aid Reference Centre, 2021)

### Blended learning

- «Blended learning is a suitable mixture of face-to-face and technologically supported learning activities, using traditional teaching, learning support and independent learning. It includes the use of digital technology and is systematically organised using strong pedagogical and andragogic principles, in order to support the involvement and success of the learners. It is characterised by reduced teaching time and a wider choice of possibilities and flexibility for the learners, and often allows reduced teaching costs, and offers advantages as to class sizes. » (Mead Richardson, 2019. p.6)
- Blended learning is a formal mode of teaching, whereby a person learns partly:
  - by self-activated or independent learning, whereby he has some control over the time, place, mode and tempo;
  - by participating in a monitored learning environment which is led by a presenter.



«The modules within a blended learning course are interlinked, in order to offer a unified learning experience.» (Global First Aid Reference Centre, 2021)

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## Good-practice-example: Winterthur Section

### Brevet Plus Pool

In October 2020, the Winterthur Section carried out a Brevet plus Pool. The course was on three evenings from 19.00 – 22.00. The first evening took place as per programme. Shortly before the second evening of the course measures were communicated from the Federal Council on account of the coronavirus. This had the consequence that the third and final evening of the course could not be face-to-face due to closure of the swimming pools, nor take place in the water. The Winterthur Section had doubts about this and considered an alternative.

#### Challenge

Shortly before the start of the second evening, notice reached the Section that the third evening of the course would fall literally into the water. The programme had consequently to be reorganised at short notice. This short notice required flexibility and good communication between the course organising team and the participants. All the participants expressed their agreement to extend the time somewhat, so that all test elements could be completed. Hence, on the third evening of the course only theory was imparted. The challenge was, to make this part informative and attractive. This required planning time.

#### Blended learning concept

The first two evenings of the course took place in the water locally. Specially made videos concerning the different modes of rescuing and life-saving served as modes of instruction for the participants. The course leaders did not need to carry out demonstrations by means of bodily contact. With the aid of this method the requisite social distancing to prevent the virus spreading could be maintained without any problems. On the second evening of the course all the test items took place in the water. The test elements were deliberately chosen, since on the last evening of the course the swimming pools had to be closed by official decree. Instead of at the swimming pool the participants carried out the third and final evening of the course at home. They received a reading task in the participants' documentation. They remained in contact with the course leaders by e-mail and had to answer questions, and solve an online quiz.

#### Result

With the support of blended learning the final evening of the course was able to take place despite the lack of water. The participants welcomed this procedure and were pleased that they would be able to be active at pool side as life guards.

#### Learning

It also helped that the Winterthur Section had been able to gain experience already in the spring of 2020 on the short-notice replanning of courses. In addition, the course leadership detected considerable support within the section when reorganising the course programme. This support provided motivation and gave the necessary ability to reach speedy decisions.

The course management was impressed by the elan with which the participants, given the nature of the task, entered into the self-learning episode. They were delighted over the differentiated replies which they received by e-mail. The course management were positively surprised and were convinced that the participants were able to benefit from the new forms of learning.

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## Good-practice-example: University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW)

### Online further training pool for teachers

In 2020, because of the Corona virus, none of the courses prescribed by the further training department as found in the guidance instructions at FHNW could be carried out. It soon became clear that in the spring of 2021 such courses could also not be carried out face-to-face. What the future would bring was still uncertain.

#### Challenge

Swimming instruction has taken place in the schools in many places despite Corona virus. The question then arises as to how safety during swimming instruction can be guaranteed when for two years no refresher courses have been laid on. Kathrin Heitz, the person responsible for life-saving training and further training at FHNW, had the idea of developing an online offer for the pool further training course. She developed an online course in collaboration with SLS Switzerland.

#### Blended learning concept

The participants were sent the new set of water safety cards in the post "For the Perfect Water Passport". In addition, they received two tasks which they had to process in advance, namely:

##### Task 1:

- To study the set of water safety cards in preparation for the online course. It contained central information for water safety of significance for your activities at, in and on the water.
- To solve the enclosed crossword puzzle as a self-test.

##### Task 2:

- In Curriculum 21, the area of competence "Moving in Water" is divided into three areas: swimming, jumping and diving into the water, and safety. Produce a sensible learning task on the theme of **Safety** for Cycle 1, 2 or 3. (rough planning), how you can develop ability and knowledge (plus attitude) of your pupils. Perhaps you already have a good example from your own teaching which has proved its worth. We will examine and further develop such ideas in stage groups (Cycle 1, 2 or 3).

On the course we repeated the knowledge playfully with a Kahoot learning game, Uncertainties and queries from participants were taken up directly and discussed. Learning tasks were exchanged in stage groups. Difficulties which learners come across at site were tackled jointly and solutions were sought jointly.

The following tools were used on the course to make things more rhythmic and more relaxed:

- Breakout sessions
- Padlet as whiteboard
- Kahoot Game as a playful conclusion

These modes of approach were much appreciated by the participants.



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## Result

Due to the well-directed preparation before the course with concrete assignments the participants were right on target from the start. No introduction was necessary. In the stage groups concrete problems, topics and possibilities could be discussed, which was much appreciated.

## Learning

According to Curriculum 21, teachers who teach swimming must have competence in life-saving. It is their duty to undergo further training regularly in water safety.

SLS Switzerland and the primary school departments of the four cantons of FHNW are well disposed towards online courses as further training for teachers in the time of the corona pandemic. This was a basic precondition for carrying out these further training courses.

The feedback from participants for the four fully-booked online courses, was very positive throughout. It proved to be the case that it is perfectly possible to process specific topics concerning the area of water safety in online form. The next further training course for these participants will again be carried out face-to-face with practice in the water. This has been agreed in the locations mentioned.



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## Contact

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- In case of questions on the topic blended learning, Alexandra Ruchti, [a.ruchti@slrg.ch](mailto:a.ruchti@slrg.ch) and Christoph Meier, [c.meier@slrg.ch](mailto:c.meier@slrg.ch) will be pleased to provide more information.

Could we please hear and publish your experiences with blended learning?

We are always on the lookout for further stories on the issue of blended and online learning in all linguistic regions of Switzerland. So we offer you a hearty invitation to send us your experiences at [info@slrg.ch](mailto:info@slrg.ch).

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## Links

[Tools für digitale Zusammenarbeit - Outils pour la collaboration numérique - Strumenti per le collaborazione digitale - Questions & Answers - Corona SLRG SSS \(forumbee.com\)](#)

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## Bibliography

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Mead Richardson, A. (2019). *Effective Blended Learning for First Aid Training*. Global Disaster Preparedness Center. [https://preparecenter.org/wp-content/sites/default/files/bl\\_guide\\_august\\_2019.pdf](https://preparecenter.org/wp-content/sites/default/files/bl_guide_august_2019.pdf) (visited on 11.07.2021)

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## Imprint

The following participated in this food-for-thought paper:



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