



# International eLearning Approach on Teaching Strategies for Inclusion of Students with Autism (SUCCESS-TEASD)

## CONTEXT

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that usually manifests its first symptoms in early childhood and is characterised by difficulties in communication and social interaction, as well as by repetitive behaviour, unusual stereotyped and sensory interests that affect the normal course of an individual's day-to-day life.

ASD is relatively common in childhood, with an estimated prevalence at age 2 of 0.8% (Nygren et al., 2012) and even higher at age 8, when it reaches values between 1 and 5% in developed countries (Lyall et al., 2017). This implies that, throughout their professional career, teachers are likely to have students with ASD, so it will be necessary for them to have sufficient knowledge about autism to understand the complexity of behaviour in the classroom and to be able to make appropriate adaptations in the teaching processes, as well as to modify the curriculum and the learning environment to facilitate social inclusion and participation (Ravet, 2017).

Teachers in the mainstream schools have so far been underprepared to help pupils affected by ASD because training programs directed at the unique needs of special needs pupils have not been required. Every person on the autism spectrum is unique and their needs will be reflected differently.

For pupils on the spectrum, school can be a particularly challenging hurdle, especially when teachers are unaware of how to work with them (Charman et al., 2011).

We must make it our priority to enable teachers around the world to learn to utilize different teaching styles that fit the strengths of children on all areas of the spectrum.

## AIMS OF THE PROJECT

1. To establish a platform for international peer learning on the ASD issues between LMU and USAL
2. To promote sharing of good practices in the field of educational intervention programs in inclusive settings for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

The project is a practical example of a comprehensive approach to include higher education as well as the transition to the workplace, and to cover different levels from strategy development throughout the teacher training, awareness raising activities and development of resources for school teachers. By focusing on these different levels, it is expected to reach a sustainable impact.

## CONTENT

1. Definition and manifestations of ASD
2. Behavioral issues and challenges in ASD
3. Special challenges in teaching practice and school life
4. Recommendations for intervention and structural measures
5. Emotional regulation - What should teachers know to create a good classroom climate?
6. Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)

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## METHODOLOGY

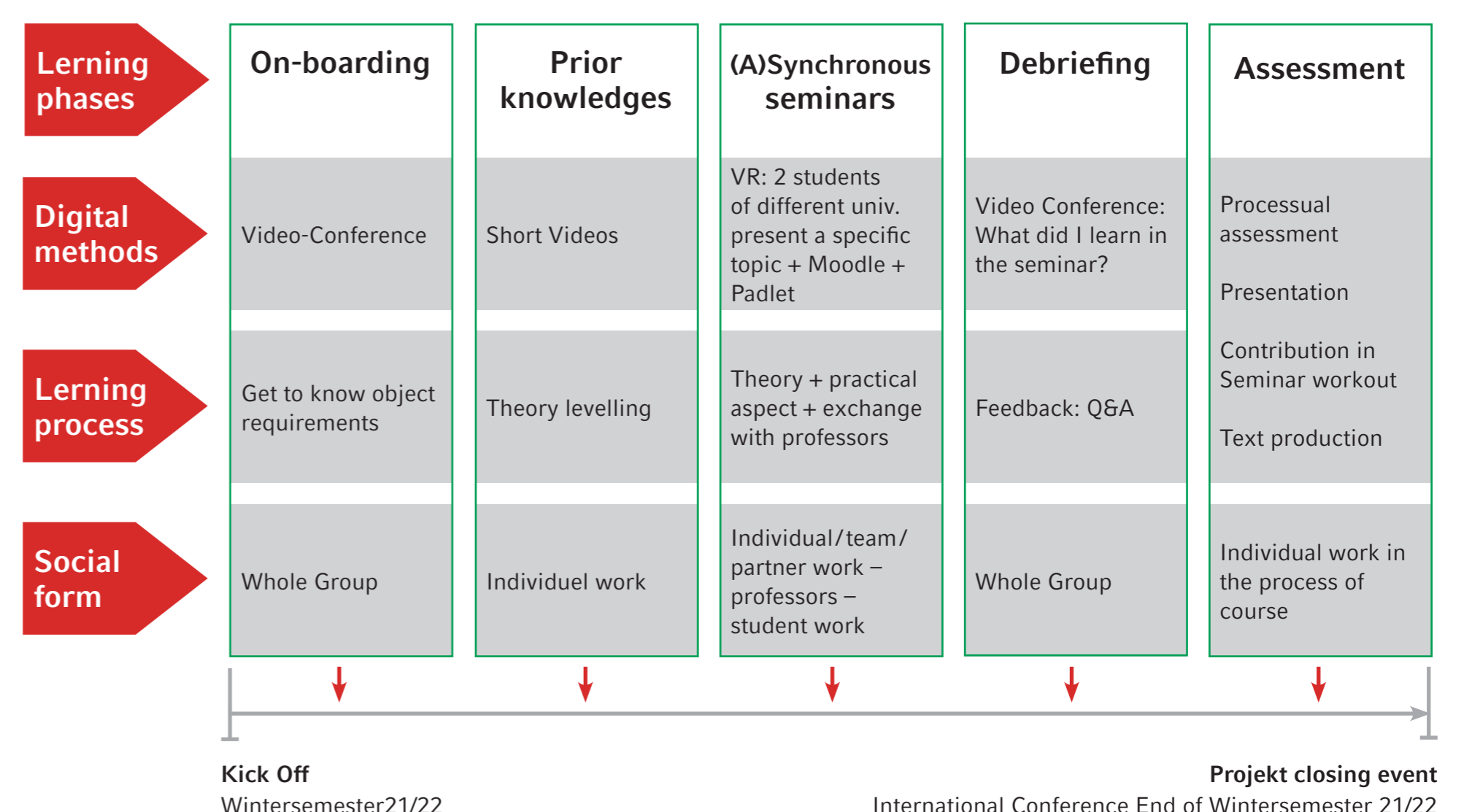
The course takes place in a virtual blended learning environment, that combines asynchronous self-learning phases with synchronous virtual moments of interaction.

The self-learning phases are utilized for the acquisition of the theoretical background in relation to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This can occur either individually, in intercultural learning tandems or in groups, and is accompanied by tutors via Internet in order to clarify questions or solve comprehension problems.

The synchronous moments of interaction are intended for introduction, adjustment and motivation as well as the final reflection and discussion of the outcomes (German and Spanish perspective). The outcome of the course is a joint presentation and seminar paper on the specific topic related to ASD. Every presentation will contain the point of view of a Spanish and a German student. So, students can compare how the topic of Autism is treated in different countries, here students will benefit from addressing similarities and differences between the countries, and what we can learn from one another.

Support from the tutors/professors is provided all the time.

Synchronous moments as well as working in intercultural tandems/teams are important, in order to enable real international exchange and not only offer more flexible online modules.



The aims of this Methodology are to expand and connect the existing strategies of digital exchange at LMU Munich. Department of Education and Rehabilitation intends to start an E-learning cooperation with our Partner Universities, for this will serve as a model for expansion to other fields of education.

Additionally, we wish to offer virtual exchange possibilities and enrich the learning experience of LMU students as well as students from partner universities through "international classrooms".

The focus will not only be on the transfer of knowledge, but especially on generating ideas for an effective inclusive educational system, closely supervised digital learning environments, which contribute to the development of the 21st century skills in students such as social innovation techniques; knowledge management among teachers; creative classrooms thanks to media devices; efficiency and sustainability of media education initiatives; and open educational contexts that help to enlarge the current roles of teachers in schools.

Please find more information here:

