

SEA-VET.NET - GOOD PRACTICE

Home-Based Learning Playbook

Adaptive Strategies for Resilience in Education and Training

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OVERVIEW

Implementing institution(s)	TVET Institute of Higher Learning (IHLs) in Singapore: • Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) • Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) • Republic Polytechnic (RP) • Singapore Polytechnic (SP) • Temasek Polytechnic (TP) • Institute of Technical Education (ITE) The Poly-ITE (POLITE) EdTech Committee develops and drives the overall strategy for Educational Technology across the 6 IHLs, while ensuring alignment with broader shifts in the education landscape and industry trends. This HBL playbook was implemented in these 6 IHLs.
Country and / or localities where practice has been implemented	Singapore
Timeline (first year of implementation - last year of implementation)	Launch of Version 1 Playbook: October 2020 Launch of Version 2 Playbook: April 2021
Target group	Lecturers and students of the 6 IHLs

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered an unprecedented global shift to Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT), affecting over 1.6 billion students globally at its peak (United Nations, 2020), forcing many educational institutions to conduct ERT so that learning is continued.

In Singapore's polytechnics and Institute of Technical Education, the shift to Home-based Learning (HBL) on a mass scale within a short period of time resulted in a multitude of concerns and challenges for learners, parents, and educators.

Learners found it difficult to self-regulate their learning in the new environment, leading to potential decline in academic performance. The increased screen-time and reduced social interactions also raised concerns about their mental well-being. Parents faced their own set of challenges, including the struggle to maintain balance between work and family life, managing their own stress levels, and providing the necessary support and motivation to their children as they learn to navigate the virtual learning environment. Educators were tasked to adapt to a completely new style of online teaching, necessitating the management of learner engagement, the provision of individualized support, and troubleshooting technical issues that arose during the sudden transition.

THE PRACTICE

Aims

Recognizing the importance of addressing these concerns and challenges to enable meaningful and effective HBL experiences, the project aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- Assist educational institutions in enhancing HBL learner engagement, recognizing that HBL will continue to play a vital role in curriculum delivery in the future.
- Develop a comprehensive HBL learner engagement guide tailored specifically for Polytechnic and ITE lecturers, offering practical insights and strategies to facilitate effective virtual instruction.

Context

A home-based learning (HBL) playbook is critical because it transforms an ad-hoc, stressful, or disrupted situation into a structured, purposeful educational experience. It acts as a guide for parents, students and educators; ensuring continuity, maintaining academic standards, and supporting mental well-being during school closures.

Implementation of the Practice

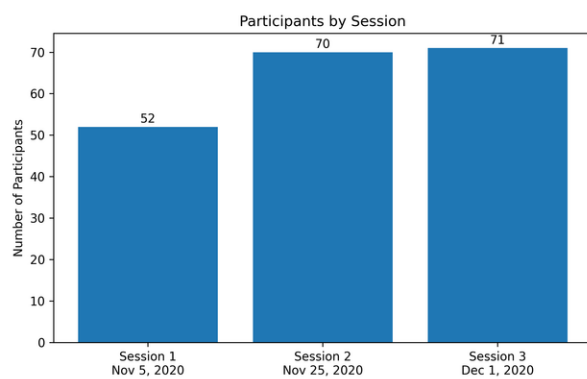
HBL Playbook Implementation Timeline

The project began in July 2020, featuring a team composed of representatives from the six IHLs, called the Poly-ITE (POLITE) EdTech Team. This team promptly embarked on the development of the initial version of the playbook. Subsequently, through a series of Communities of Practice (CoPs), valuable feedback was gathered along with additional exemplars. These insights were carefully integrated into the second version of the playbook launched in April 2021.

In order to ensure that lecturers could readily access this valuable information, an e-course was concurrently created. The team made progressive enhancements to the resources, generating 3 comprehensive resources over a period of sixteen months. Both the second version of the playbook and the e-course were completed in six months.

A series of Communities of Practice (CoPs) were organised to share HBL playbook strategies across IHLs.

RP CoPs on HBL Playbook 2020:



HBL-ITE Guest Speaker Series: "HBL Made Easy" 2021:

- Held on Friday, February 26, 2021, with an estimated 300 participants.

HBL Webinar as Part of POLITE Professional Development (PD) Series on Technology Enhanced Learning 2022:

- Conducted in February 2022 and attended by over 60 participants across various polytechnics, receiving positive feedback.
- These events and sessions have played a significant role in advancing our understanding and practices in HBL.

Overview of HBL Playbook Journey

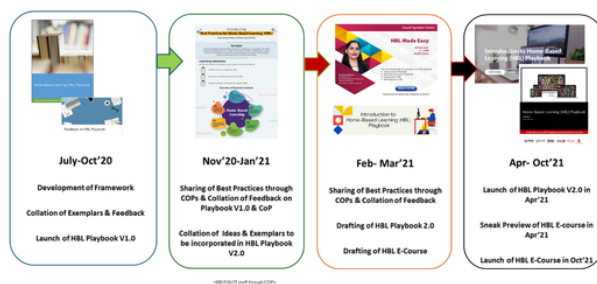


Figure 1. Implementation of Playbook, Community of Practice and E-Course

HBL Playbook Framework

Based on best practices gathered from POLITE, a framework for HBL (Figure 2), encompassing vital elements essential for achieving success in HBL is drawn up, with the hope to guide learners, teachers and parents with action-oriented strategies for home-based learning.



Figure 2. Framework for Home-based Learning

The main goal is for teachers, students and parents work together to help students stay committed and resilient in learning, helping them to 'SCORE' through contingency plans with Social Interactions and Collaboration, Clear Understanding, Operational Guidance, Relevant Resources, Emotional Support.

Table 1. Responsibilities and Accountability Roles

Teachers (6Cs)	Students (STRATEGIES)	Parents (SOS)
Communicate expectations clearly Create evaluation opportunities Co-ordinate collaborative learning Construct conducive environment Craft a contingency plan Chunk cognitive load	Set aside conducive space Test Tech & Tools, Refer to lesson flow to establish a routine Avoid distractions Track your own progress, Exercise Self-care Get involved in discussions Invite feedback on your work Engage in Self-study, Seek support from buddies	Structure a routine in discussion with learners Organise designated study space with supporting infrastructure. Support as a willing listener

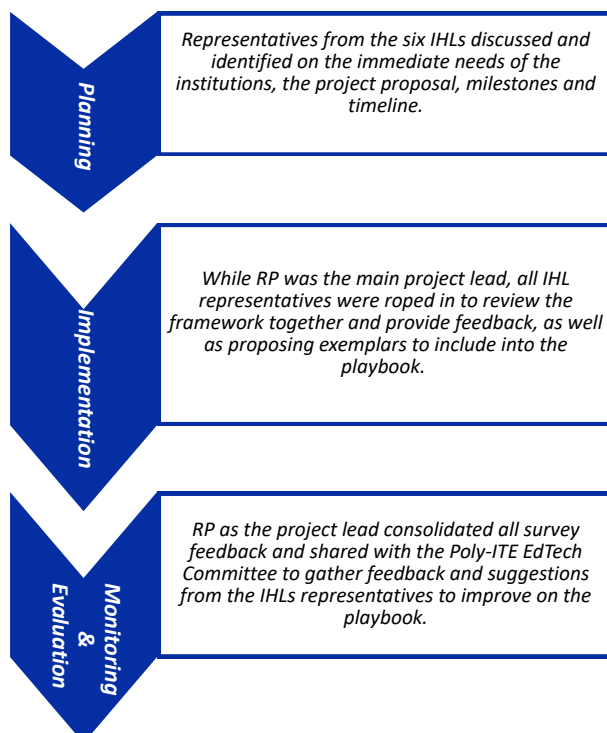
IMPACT

Feedback collected at various milestones of the implementation revealed the HBL playbook to be relevant and useful for teachers, students and parents. The sharing of examples, tools and tips in the community of practice helped teachers conduct better HBL lessons that meets the needs of stakeholders, inculcates self-directed learning and self-care, instils collaboration and interaction, promotes flexibility in learning anywhere anytime, leverages use of technology and tools and practising suitable synchronous and asynchronous learning and assessment.

The HBL playbook empowered parents to support their children and facilitate learning at home together with teachers; strengthening home-school bonds, ensuring everyone is working towards the same goal of learning. It also clarifies expectations for parents so they are 'CLEAR' about their role to assure support and engage their children's continuous learning through HBL lesson schedules, prioritizing academic growth together with emotional well-being.

LESSON LEARNT

The synergistic collaboration from the six IHLs, each with defined roles in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation played a crucial role in the successful project implementation.



The successful execution of the project can be attributed, in part, to the presence of a dedicated main project lead. This lead not only oversaw the process but also ensured the timely achievement of milestones and adherence to established timelines. Additionally, regular updates on the project's progress further contributed to its overall success (see Figure 3)

S/N	Description of Tasks	Resources	Timeline											
			Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20	Oct-20	Nov-20	Dec-20	Jan-21	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21		
Planning														
1	Identification of Project	All IHLs, Reps												
2	Discussion on Project Proposal and Timeline	All IHLs, Reps												
Implementation														
3	Discussion on Implementation	All IHLs, Reps												
4	Development of Framework	RP												
5	Gather Poly-ITE feedback on Framework	All IHLs, Reps												
6	Collation of Exemplars & Feedback	All IHLs, Reps												
7	Launch of Version 1	All IHLs, Reps												
8	Sharing through CoPs	RP												
9	Development of Version 2	RP												
10	Launch of Version 2	RP												
Monitoring & Evaluation														
11	Web-Made Easy Webinar	RP												
12	Collection and Analysis of Feedback	RP												
13	Close Monitoring of Project Implementation	All IHLs, Reps												

Figure.3 HBL Playbook Progress Milestones

A major challenge faced in HBL Playbook implementation was amidst ongoing transition to a new learning management system (LMS) by the IHLs and conversion of HBL playbook version 2 to e-course. Many of the exemplars initially shared with reference to old technology tools and LMS had to be updated for the new version playbook and contexts.

Industry involvement such as DBS involvement in Financial Literacy Programme via Home-Based Learning, ensured that mandatory Lifeskills curriculum are delivered as adapted modules with web-based exercise, also leveraging NAV Planner, DBS' new digital advisory tool, as emerging digital payments and digital financial planning skills are requisite.

REPLICABILITY AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

Strengthening resilience in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is essential for navigating disruptions—from armed conflict and forced displacement to economic instability, digital disruption, climate-related disasters and in this case, public health emergency.

HBL playbook, among other adaptive strategies, could be a vital tool to strengthen institutional adaptability, embed inclusive strategies and prepare TVET systems to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world (Palmer, 2025).

With rapid, coordinated readiness and action, institutions can react quickly and systematically to unexpected events, reducing downtime in training delivery amid school closures. Inclusivity could also be fostered, ensuring vulnerable and disadvantaged learners would not be left behind with transition to remote, flexible home-based learning.

CONCLUSION

HBL Playbook implementation in Institute of Technical Education and Polytechnics is an example of resilient crisis response in Singapore, which has provided measures of adaptive strategies for teachers, students and parents to adapt, recover and thrive beyond the crisis of COVID-19.

Since then, HBL has evolved from an emergency measure into a deliberate and structured part of curriculum delivery in the IHLs. The focus has shifted towards improving learner engagement and equipping educators with practical strategies for effective blended instruction, as part of a sustainable technology integrated teaching and learning.

REFERENCES

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ABOUT GOOD PRACTICES

“Good Practices” are chosen according to selection criteria that have been created by a working group. They aim to serve as benchmarks for transformation towards quality TVET. However, they reflect on the individual circumstances of the submitting country and may only be adopted with context specific modifications.

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