

**Preliminary findings from the study:
How can MOOCs be used to support outbreak
response? An Action Research approach**

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Background

Aim: to support efforts to counteract the spread of misinformation on the novel coronavirus

Target audience: Those working in or around health, or anyone interested in how we should respond to the outbreak

COVID-19: Tackling the Novel Coronavirus

What is COVID-19 and how might the outbreak affect you? Find out more about coronavirus and explore its worldwide implications.

[Edit course run](#)

[View course run](#)



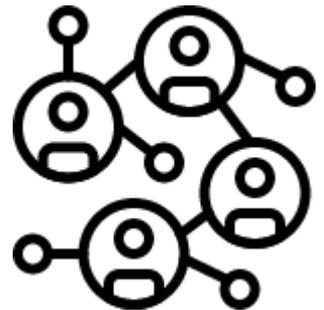
Development process: Run 1

- Collaborative effort
- 6 weeks from concept to launch
- Course content – developed with social constructivist principles
 - Video interviews with leading experts
 - Audio and video lectures
 - Articles
 - Discussions
 - Quizzes
 - Additional resources for further reading
- Responding to changing context



Facilitation process

- Team of academic mentors and hosts (LSHTM and external)
- Aim was to:
 - Respond to all technical issues/platform queries
 - Report any inappropriate comments
 - Respond to as many content queries as possible
- Importance of managing comments - over 200k enrolments



Facilitation process

- First run of course had over 80,000 comments
- Divided steps between team
- Developed shared spreadsheet to manage comments
- Learners had opportunity to interact with high-profile experts
- Facilitated on a week-by-week basis
- Comments function turned off at end of course



Development process: Run 2

- Strengthened learning objectives
- All steps were updated - audio and video recorded remotely
- Additional steps created: situation in Europe, fragile contexts, policy implications, social & economic impacts
- Animation aimed at secondary school age children
- FAQ documents produced
- Additional language translations



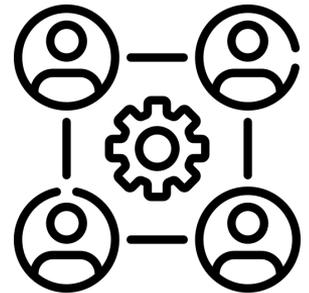
Study aims

- To share experience and learning from planning, delivering, observing and reflecting on the MOOC, COVID-19: Tackling the Novel Coronavirus
- To develop a framework to support use of MOOCs as a tool in outbreak response



Study methods

- Action research cycle used as a conceptual framework
- Focus group discussions with course moderators
- Semi-structured interviews with key informants
- Review course matrix, comments and pre- and post-course survey
- Review of tools used



Demographics

Enrolments by Gender:

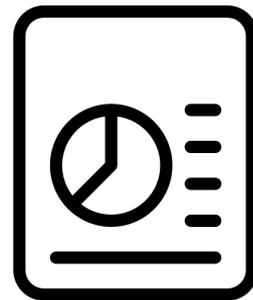
50.1% Female, 49.6% Male, 0.3% Non-binary

Enrolments by Age Group:

Age Group	<18	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	>65
% of Enrolments	1.1	22.8	27.3	14.3	10.6	11.2	12.5

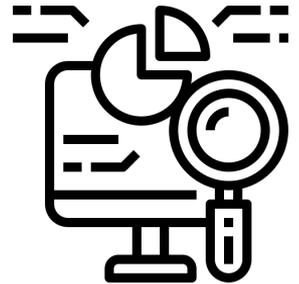
Enrolments by Country: 184/195 countries

217 countries when defined by learners IP address



Post course survey

- 99% reported that the course either met or exceeded their expectations (n = 50,741)
- 98% reported gaining new knowledge or skills by taking the course (n = 50,607)
- 84% reported having applied what they had learned on the course (n = 50,525)
- 90% reported having shared what they had learned with other people (n = 50,419)



Preliminary findings - Focus group discussions

- Systematic approach needed to facilitate discussions with large cohort of learners
- Sense of community facilitated by use of a shared platform
- New objectives developed as the MOOC evolved



Preliminary findings - Focus group discussions

- Role of education in communicating uncertainty and complexity behind health policy
- Needs for communication of the learning approach with all on the course team and with learners
- Need to align learning approach with expectations communicated with the course team



Next steps

- Semi-structured interviews with course educators, developers and contributors
- Thematic analysis of course comments and comparison of discussions in the first course and second course
- Review of tools used
- Develop a framework to support use of MOOCs as a tool in outbreak response



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