



The third CCeD session, 6th May 2011

(17 responses)

Executive summary

Adobe problems: The problems experienced with connection and audio in the last meeting inevitably diminished the experience for all participants in this third CCeD session. This directly affected 30% of us which is a high proportion. It was suggested that the new version should have been tested more before we used it and that we should revert back to Adobe Connect 7 if possible with Skype as a fallback option.

Study of Possibilities document for the Business Plan & VITAE are both positively rated but not at the highest level. What is missing from both documents which would lead everyone to rate them at the highest level? Freeform feedback includes a wish for generic models tailored for each institution as well as more detail of the VITAE product (eg. content).

Document availability Early availability of the working documents was welcomed and used by many though not all partners. At least one person wanted the documents to be available even earlier than two days prior to the meeting.

Preparation Most felt well prepared and appreciated the early availability of the documents. It was suggested that it would be a good idea to compile a list of unclear points before the meeting as well as a to-do list for tasks which must be completed before the meeting.

Process Everyone felt that the common session and VITAE sessions were productive. Most felt like this in the Business Plan session although there was at least one person who did not agree that this was case. At least one person felt that they did not make a useful contribution to the session. It may be worth finding out the reason to see if it can be remedied. Opinions expressed included:

- ✧ disagreeing with putting decisions in the document before they had been discussed, especially when technical problems made it even harder to discuss issues fully.
- ✧ would like the process to be speeded up, perhaps by having more homework between sessions
- ✧ the discussion lacked depth.
- ✧ not all partners complete their tasks
- ✧ suggestion for shorter but more frequent meetings
- ✧ more structured moderation

The Business Plan group tried a method to ensure everyone is looking at the same document at the same time and recommended this become standard practice.

Tools: Adobe Connect 8 did not perform adequately. Google spreadsheets have limitations compared to Excel. We are not used to the tools enough.

Virtual v F2F: Most appreciated the convenience. Preparation and structure is important to get the most benefit.

CCeD generally: Is it allowing us to take bold decisions?

VITAE pilot:

- ✧ Most thought it was a good idea to run the pilot and that it should have come earlier in the UnderstandIT project.
- ✧ The pace was too intense at first (AF will have to monitor if the pace is more acceptable now that the course has doubled in length but not content).
- ✧ Translating the course into other languages will present challenges.
- ✧ Attention should be paid to layout to raise motivation.

Conclusions:

- ✧ There is a tension between the pace of the meetings and the depth of the discussion
- ✧ Problems are only revealed in the free form text questions and hardly in the rating questions
- ✧ Although it is normal that not everyone participates equally in meetings, it is worth exploring if it could be made easier for some partners to contribute.



- ⤴ The technology needs to just work and be in the background so the process is not disrupted by technical problems. We have experienced both.

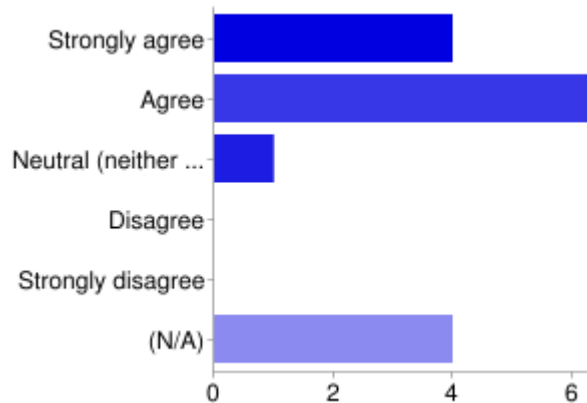
Recommendations:

- ⤴ Focus on process issues highlighted above and its effect on taking bold decisions
- ⤴ Iron out technical difficulties with Adobe Connect 8 (Skype as Plan B?)
- ⤴ Generic business model tailored for each partner institution
- ⤴ Describe the product in more detail (in this case VITAE)
- ⤴ Continue making documents available at least two days prior to CCeD meetings, if not earlier
- ⤴ Find out if the varying levels of contribution to the meetings can be evened out

Concerning results achieved so far

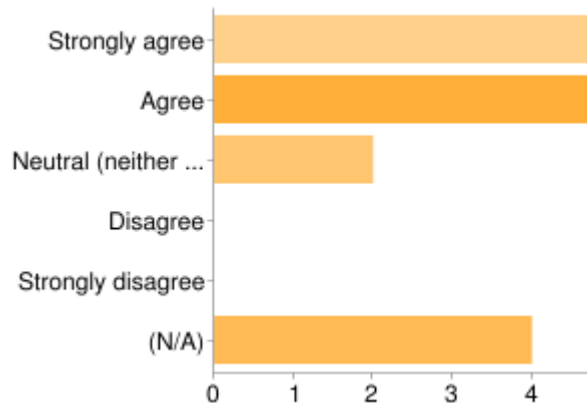
1. The current Study of Possibilities document for the Business Plan is of good quality

Strongly agree	4	24%
Agree	8	47%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	1	6%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
(N/A)	4	24,00 %



2. The current Study of Possibilities document for the Vitae Course is of good quality

Strongly agree	5	29%
Agree	6	35%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2	12%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
(N/A)	4	24%



3. Write down your views and your suggestions for improvements in relation to the results produced so far

The discussion was hampered by the audio-connection problems - so the final resulting document needs review by the full group.

The templates are ok. The challenge is however to find or develop a sound business model for the involved institutions, and later on a generic model that are relevant for each country when new institutions are going to implement the Vitae course as part of their portfolio.

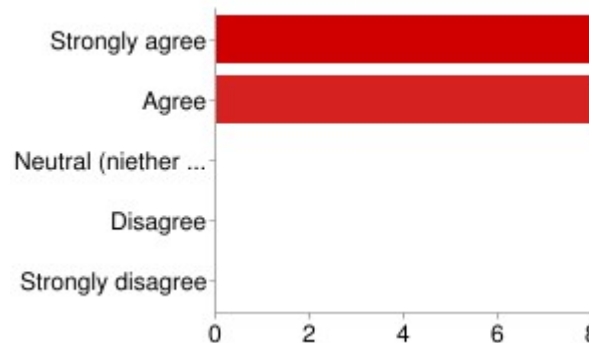
The end of the document may not be of such good quality as the beginning of the document! This is because we always run out of time in the sessions and don't reach the end of the document.

I think that we should focus even more on the final products, the business plan and the design document. If we are going to be able to use these final documents, in the selling and the making of the courses, we should be more accurate of what the course should contain, and the actual market situation in each country.

Concerning session preparation for the third session

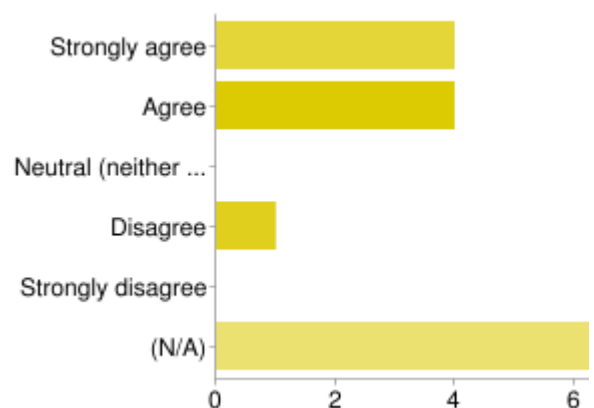
4. I feel I was well prepared for the third session

Strongly agree	9	53%
Agree	8	47%
Neutral (niether agree nor disagree)	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%



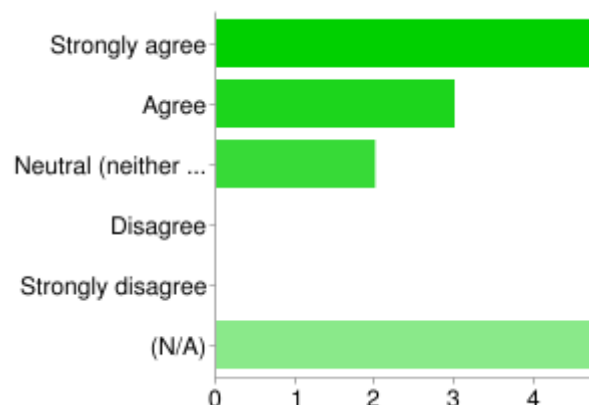
5. I started to work with the Vitae BusinessPlan document before the session

Strongly agree	4	24%
Agree	4	24%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	0	0%
Disagree	1	6%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
(N/A)	8	47%



6. I started to work with the Vitae Course Design Document before the session

Strongly agree	6	35%
Agree	3	18%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2	12%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
(N/A)	6	35%



7. Write down your views and your suggestions for improvements in relation to the session preparation phase

The previous work on this doc, started much time before the S3 happen, was very usefull to have a pre-discussion and to let each of us being much more prepared to S3.

"I would have liked to be ready with my stuff some days earlier than just 2 days before the session."

very good idea to tell everybody to work on the document before the meeting.
We should have pulled out some of the points in the business plan for discussion or challenged the other participants to come with questions from the business plan that were unclear.

"There must be enough time for preparation and it is important that there is a clear list of what to do before the next session."

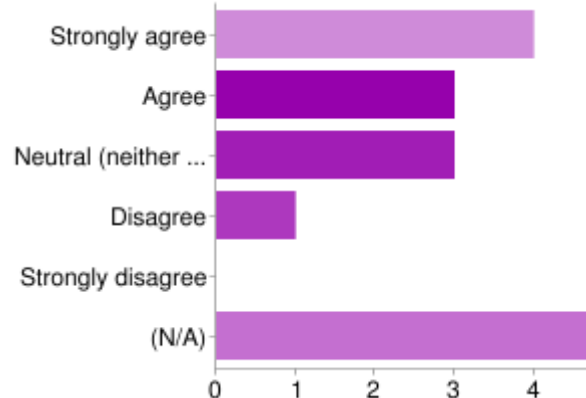
It is also important that all the partners are focused and set a side enough time for preparations, and work between the sessions."

I have had not enough personal time available for preparing really well ...

Concerning session execution

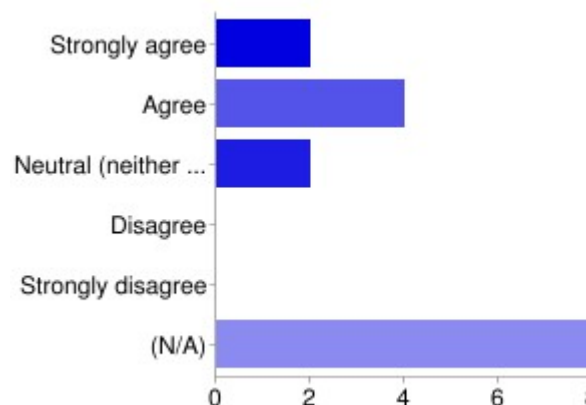
8. I think it was relevant to work with the Vitae Business Plan as we did

Strongly agree	4	24%
Agree	3	18%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	3	18%
Disagree	1	6%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
(N/A)	6	35%



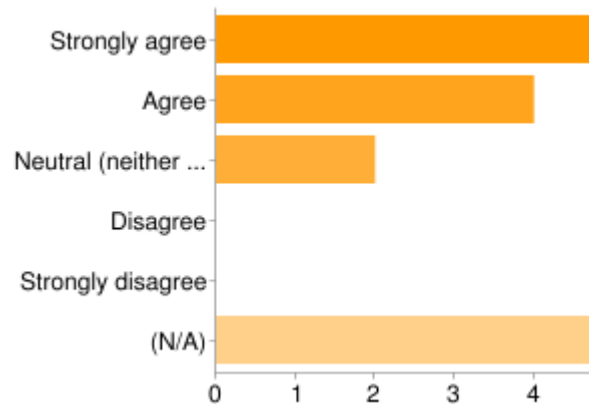
9. The discussions we had in the Business Plan Team breakout sessions were useful and worked well

Strongly agree	2	12%
Agree	4	24%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2	12%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
(N/A)	9	53%



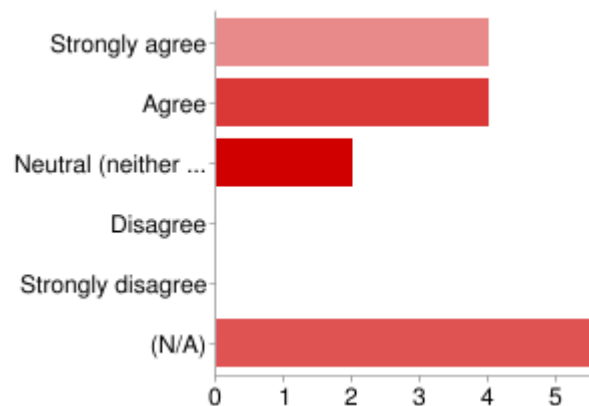
10. I think it was relevant to work with the Vitae Course Design Document as we did

Strongly agree	5	29%
Agree	4	24%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2	12%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
(N/A)	6	35%



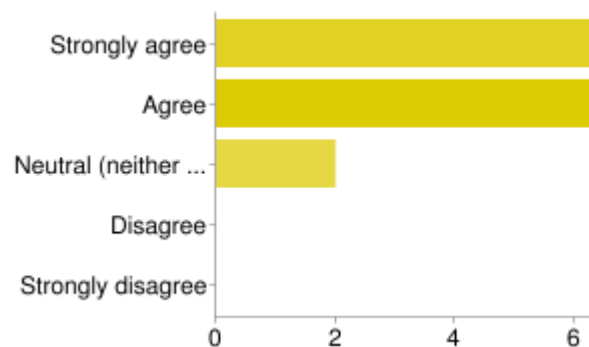
11. The discussions we had in the Vitae Course Team breakout sessions were useful and worked well

Strongly agree	4	24%
Agree	4	24%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2	12%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
(N/A)	7	41%



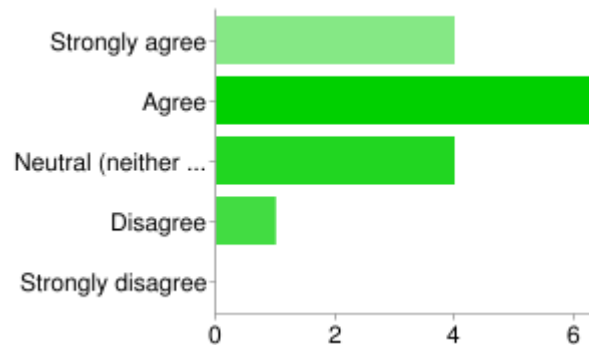
12. The discussions we had in the “common conference room” (where all participated) was useful and worked well

Strongly agree	7	41%
Agree	8	47%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2	12%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%



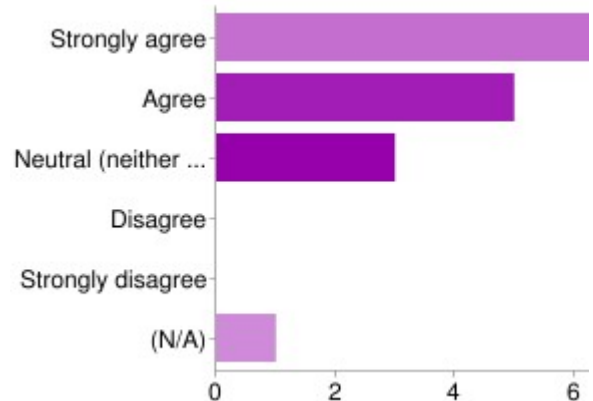
13. I feel I made a useful contribution in this session

Strongly agree	4	24%
Agree	8	47%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	4	24%
Disagree	1	6%
Strongly disagree	0	0%



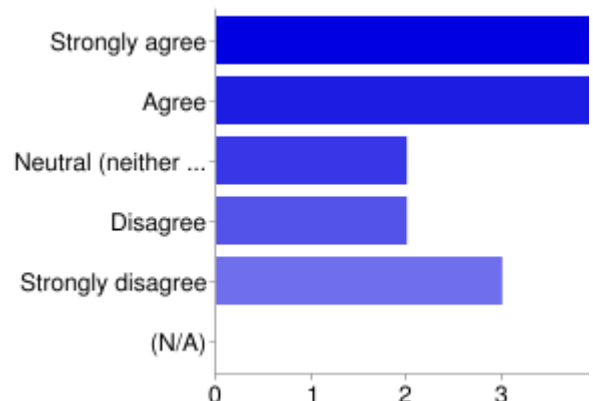
14. I feel that the contribution from the facilitators was good in this session

Strongly agree	8	47%
Agree	5	29%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	3	18%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
(N/A)	1	6%



15. I had no problems with the transition to Adobe Connect 8.0 and I think that version worked well

Strongly agree	5	29%
Agree	5	29%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2	12%
Disagree	2	12%
Strongly disagree	3	18%
(N/A)	0	0%



16. Write down your views and your suggestions for improvements in relation to the session execution phase. Consider both technical implementation, practical implementation, etc.



Some colleagues had problems with the new version of A.Connector so, when new versions arise, it could be useful to extend the test-phase timing before the start of the agenda meeting, maybe for 1hour instead of 30 minutes?

"It seems the new Adobe version is a step back - the old version worked more reliable in the last sessions. I tried my best to contribute despite of the technical problems - but this was a lot of stress.

Furthermore much time was wasted with technical ""can you hear me"" discussions.

I would also recommend not to put decisions beforehand in a document - this should be the result of the discussion and participants should not be forced to deal with a preformulated decision - especially when technical problems do not allow everybody to participate fully. "

again, is very important to have the documents previously completed by each partner, and it did not happen.

"I had several problems related to connection and network; several times I was frozen out of the discussion (or I felt like that)

I'm unsure whether to blame the new software or the network connection I was using; yet the network connection didn't seem to have a problem while using other software (for example the responsiveness of google docs was completely ok, while I always had to wait also dozens of seconds to see a reaction to a button I pushed, in adobe connect 8)

While those were more nuisances than catastrophes, I remember to have had better times in the previous sessions (from the software point of view)"

"Too much sound problems disturbed our work.

Too much disturbances by background noise.

Not enough structure in some of the discussions.

Not very substantial discussion from time to time.

It would be nice to have more ""speed"" in our sessions, quicker discussions, and faster conclusions, and may be also more ""homework"" to prepare the sessions.

May be shorter - and more - sessions."

"There were several challenges in my view:

1) A lot of time must be used to calibrate the system / our use of it before we could start the meeting.

2) In the breakout session I would like to have control over what documents that was visible for all at each time. I think that tis is importnat for having a good conversation about a subject in the group. We tried this a bit when we discussed the Budget, and I thought that this worked quite well."

"If too many project members can not access adobe connect because of technical reasons we should shift to skype / google docs as an alternative.

The structure and moderation of the online sessions should be a bit more structured / guided.

It would be great to have a moderator and a person who can be asked for technical problems in front, but also during the meeting."

I was hampered by my lack of audio but was satisfied that the text chat could convey my views. In fact it was more important to see the document we were working on and I panicked a little when I couldn't find it as I thought that decisions were being made about which I had no idea about. Calm returned when I found the document.

All the partners should be well prepared.

I was unable to connect and participate in the CCeD session, due to some technical problems.

The technical part was not working good enough this time. There where some disturbances and it worked better for the first two sessions.

Generally about Distributed Concurrent Design

17. Write down your views and your suggestions for improvements in relation to tools (Adobe Connect, Google Docs, etc.) used in this project



this CCeD, with the mixture of a videoconferencing tool and Google Docs are GREAT!

The way the last sessions worked (or not worked) is not a recommendable way for the future - versions changes should be avoided in the middle of a project - it is hard enough to work with a rather large group on-line - a smoothly running technical infrastructure is a must.

I think I cannot suggest to downgrade to adobe previous version?

"

i like both Adobe Connect and Google Docs!

"This is a difficult question.

I think that the possibilities in these tools in general are quite good.

But I think that the limitations also are several. For me one challenge is that I am not drilled enough to use them fluently. More use and experience would have helped here. I also discovered that the functionality in Google docs excel are quite different from the normal excel. This is a bigger challenge than the use of the text tool since advanced functionality is necessary to produce realistic models."

To many technical problems today.

I am dissatisfied that I don't know the reason for my audio not working in the new version of Adobe Connect. My set-up works fine in Skype for example and it is not the case that Skype has taken over my mic meaning that Adobe cannot use it.

The tools are working OK except for in the last session. Hopefully this will improve before before next time. The other tools are working properly.

18. Write down your views and your suggestions for improvements in relation to Distributed Concurrent Design in general

Maybe I am too frustrated about the last session - so I will answer this next time with more distance.

"I have the feeling that in several occasions we are not ready to take the bold and final decision that we would be supposed to state. I can't articulate this feeling in a bold and final way, though.

"

I guess the group should have been smaller - it is difficult to make effective sessions with 10-14 persons.

"Again a very difficult question.

My opinion here is that a well organised structure is needed. However sometimes I believe that the progress is a bit slow.

Another challenge is that people are very differently engaged in the discussions.

I don't know if that is caused by cultural differences or if it is caused by too little of preparations or if it is caused by the organisation of the meeting?"

We are on the right track but need to practice more

There should be more sessions, but with a shorter duration.

I am still not sure that both groups are sufficiently aware of what the other group is doing. This time round I think the summary comments were a little short. Is it because we are too habituated? Or is it because everything is going according to plan so there is nothing to report?

19. Compare your experience in taking part in Distributed CCeD sessions compared with taking part in traditional F-2-F meetings

"I don't have to move outside my office;

I can meet with less "organization" far away colleagues;

I can get the same result than in a f2f meeting, almost.

Sometimes a physical vicinity may help to cut the time of a decision.

Not everybody can get such advantages though: this kind of meeting need quite deep preparation and



organization from all the participants, meaning that each one should have read and considered things and should have them available in front of her/him (that is in the pc); a small part of illustration, briefing, explanation at the beginning of the meeting is possible in ccd but not as much as it often happens to be needed in f2f meetings.

In my experience many people come to a meeting lacking a big deal of information and expect to gain information during the meeting, in order to state a decision."

I have to say that I do not feel that online sessions are any different from face-to-face meetings. I have taken part in lots of online meetings and feel that it is very useful. Technical matters like sound problems is of course disturbing.

"a) Preparations - for me it is very important to prepare very much before each session

b) willingness to speak - To me, it is ok to make my points, but I would actually liked that all the members of the group were more active in the sessions.

c) I think that the relationships between the members og the team is quite good. But I also think that it could have been improved a lot by face to face meetings, which we will have more of during the project. Some researchers claim that about 50% of the conversation is done by our body language. Therefor it is interesting to observe that some of the participants choose to switch of the camera during the sessions."

Distributed meetings are a very good idea to keep the motivation, it gives more a feeling of working in a project team - more than just meet once or twice a year face - to face.

The work in the session works fine, but I think cultural differences are of importance for that collaboration is not functioning optimally.

I am comfortable in the online environment in spite of technical problems. I think that it was expected in the VITAE group that I would have a lot to say in this session because I am running the current VITAE pilot but actually I think it was fine that my ability to communicate was reduced as it was more important to get contributions from the rest of the group. Seeing the video stream of the others compensates a little for the usual lack of body language in such meetings (so actually I think freezing the image should be limited to when someone has left for a break).

It is a bit more demanding with CCeD-sessions, but it improves as we get more experienced in using the different tools. Technical problems can easy disturb the session so it is vital that everything is working properly. This means we have to do some tests before the session

Generally about research

20. Write down your comments on this survey, suggestions for questions that should be asked, ideas about how research can be performed, etc.

I think it is good when the survey is adapted to each session. I also like the opportunity to give free text comments.

"There is something that came to your mind only during a discussion?

There is some argument that changed in your mind during a discussion?

There is some argument that changed in your mind while you were trying to explain it?"

"I think that the questions were good.

The quality of the results will of cause to a large extent depend on the quality of the feedback.

"

21. Do you have something that is not written yet, but you would like to convey? Then write it down here.

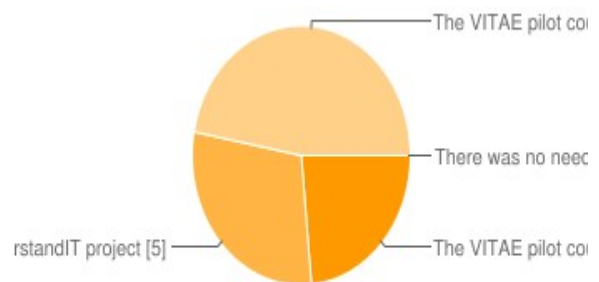
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About the VITAE pilot course

This question relates to the VITAE pilot course currently in its first week in a VITAE Moodle. There will be an evaluation process once the pilot is over but for now I would be interested to know your view about the timing of the pilot.

Please choose the option which most closely matches your opinion about the timing of the VITAE course pilot

The VITAE pilot course was run too early in the UnderstandIT project	4	24%
The VITAE pilot course was run at about the right time in the UnderstandIT project	5	29%
The VITAE pilot course was run too late in the UnderstandIT project	8	47%
There was no need to run a VITAE pilot course	0	0%



Any additional observations about the current pilot VITAE course?

"since all the Project goals run about the VITAE course, it would be interesting if we could had this pilot course experience let say just after the M1, we all have a cristal understanding of what is the VITAE course (and mostly what is the VITAE approach) much sooner with strong benefits to the project progress.

But it is ok the timing of this pilot course, since it will, for sure, to contribute positively to the project decisions, that we are about to take during/after S3 and before M2."

I had to leave in the middle of the discussion about the pilot course. I like the structure and content of tasks very much. But still the number of tasks have been overwhelming - even when I take my late start into account. I still have to look up the final decision about the final length of the course but I appreciate "that we get more time to breath" ;-)

"(Absolutely: this is not early; and this is needed and highly useful).

After the first week I find myself gasping my way through the course.

I think that the course content and the experience it offers are simply great, yet I have the clear perception of doing things only for having them done, with no actual possibilities to appreciate what I'm doing, nor to reflect on that.

OK, I'm a bit dramatic, yet I have the impression that everything would be fine having a more relaxed pace.

"Running of the Vitae course for the members of the Understand IT group was not originally planned for. My view not is that this is crucial for those members of the team that din't take part in the Vitae project!!

Many thanks to Anne for this very good and aproprate initiative :-)"

As far as I understand, the course should be used as a template for the four national courses. For this aim I would suggest to overwork the course after the run and put some more work in the "layout", "user-friendliness", - in all aspects which can raise the motivation of the participants. This should not be



exaggerated, but we should put some work in it.

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It is very useful for our understanding of what the course is about. We learn a lot as we go along and we are able to see how the course works from a students perspective. It is also very helpful to consider what must be done and how much work it is to give the course in other languages than English.