



COURSE DESCRIPTION

Transforming Learning Spaces for the Future of Education

Seven measurable things about a classroom — light, temperature, air quality, ownership, flexibility, complexity and colour — explain 16% of the variation in a year's learning progress. This week you score your own room against all seven, and cost the changes worth making.

DURATION 5 days · 25 hours	LANGUAGE English (B1+)	GROUP SIZE Max 20 participants
DAILY SCHEDULE 09:30–15:00 Monday to Friday, with a break for lunch	AUDIENCE All school levels No specific prerequisites — open to all teachers and school staff.	CERTIFICATE Attendance + Europass Mobility
COURSE CENTRES Antalya · İstanbul · İzmir · Mersin · Budapest · Bremen · Rome Dates and cities of the scheduled sessions are listed on the course page.		

01 Overview

The finding comes from the University of Salford's HEAD study, and this week scores your own room against the same seven parameters, twice.

- **Monday** — you learn the HEAD project's evidence and score your own classroom against its seven parameters as a baseline.
- **Tuesday** — you work naturalness — light, temperature and air quality — the principle carrying about half the measured effect.
- **Wednesday** — you work ownership and flexibility, and redesign your own room's layout inside your real budget.
- **Thursday** — you work stimulation — what to take down as much as what to put up — and the digital layer as physical objects.
- **Friday** — you score your redesign against the same seven parameters and present it beside your baseline.

You go home with a scored redesign of your own room and a costed plan sorted into what you can change alone, with one colleague, or with a budget and a signature. A few ordinary photographs of your own classroom are worth bringing; no design background is needed.

02 Course description

A fresh coat of paint and some beanbags read as a redesigned classroom. The research behind genuinely effective learning-space design measures something narrower and far more testable, and most of it is not what a redesign usually spends money on.

Peter Barrett's HEAD project at the University of Salford surveyed 153 classrooms in 27 primary schools and tracked the progress of 3,766 pupils aged five to eleven. Its finding, stated precisely, is that differences in the physical characteristics of classrooms explain 16 per cent of the variation in learning progress over a year. The report puts that in a more usable form: moving an average child from the least effective space to the most effective one is worth around 1.3 sub-levels — the unit England then used to measure pupil progress — in a year where pupils typically make two.

The study was carried out in primary schools, and it matters where that limit sits. Light, air quality and a sense of ownership behave much the same at any age. The findings on colour and visual complexity shift as pupils get older, and adapting them upward is part of the week's work rather than an afterthought.

What makes the study usable is that it names its variables: three principles — naturalness, individualisation and stimulation — with seven parameters underneath them, and a known weighting. Naturalness alone carries about half the measured effect, individualisation a little over a quarter, stimulation the rest. The week takes them in that order of importance.

Tuesday is light, temperature and air quality, and the report's own suggestions show that many of them can be improved at little or no cost. Wednesday is ownership and flexibility, and what they mean in a room of sixteen-year-olds rather than six-year-olds. Thursday is stimulation, where the finding is counter-intuitive and often misread. The relationship is curvilinear: a room can be too stimulating as easily as too dull, so the useful question is usually what to take down rather than what to put up.

One room, scored twice, is what the week produces. A baseline against the seven parameters on Monday, a redesign scored again on Friday, and a plan sorted into three: what you can change alone, what needs one colleague, and what needs a budget and a signature from someone above you. The first list is often longer than expected — worth checking before assuming a budget is needed.

03 Learning outcomes

- 01 Score your own classroom against the seven design parameters and record a baseline you can compare against later.
- 02 Diagnose the naturalness set — light, temperature and air quality — in your own room, and know what to ask for and who to ask.
- 03 Redesign ownership and flexibility within a real budget, adapted to the age group you actually teach.
- 04 Apply the curvilinear stimulation finding: decide what to remove from a room, not only what to add, and defend the decision with the evidence.

04 Methodology

Your Own Room Is the Project

Every session is run on the participant's actual classroom, worked from photographs (or one of the example rooms) and its real constraints — which windows open, who controls the heating, what furniture may be moved — rather than on an idealised space.

Scored, Not Admired

The seven parameters are used as a measure throughout, so a redesign can be compared with the room it replaced instead of being judged on how it looks in a photograph.

05 Daily programme

Day 1

What the Evidence Says, and What Your Room Scores

- **Icebreaker:** each participant shows one photo of their own room (or picks one of the example rooms) and guesses which single change a designer would make first; guesses are checked against the score at the end of the day
- **The HEAD project:** 153 classrooms, 27 primary schools, 3,766 pupils aged five to eleven — and what "explains 16% of the variation in learning progress" does and does not mean
- The SIN principles — naturalness, individualisation, stimulation — and the seven parameters underneath them, with the weight each principle carries
- Why the stimulation finding is curvilinear, and why "more colour" is the most common wrong conclusion drawn from this research
- **Practicum:** each participant scores their own classroom against the seven parameters — four from their photographs (or the example room you picked, whose card gives all seven readings), and light, temperature and air quality from memory as a first estimate, to be checked back at school with the audit routine built on Day 2 — and records the baseline they will design against

Day 2

Naturalness: Light, Temperature and Air Quality

- **Warm-up in pairs:** name the one physical thing about your own classroom that bothers you most, then the room sorts the answers into light, temperature, air and noise — regrouping the group and building today's agenda from it
- Why naturalness carries about half of the whole measured effect, and which of its fixes cost little or nothing
- **Light:** daylight, glare and orientation — and what can be done in a room whose windows cannot be moved
- **Temperature and air quality:** how to tell whether your room actually has a problem rather than assuming it does
- **Working session:** building a simple audit routine a teacher can run in their own room over one week, using observation and a timetable, with a simple thermometer or CO2 meter if the school has one
- **Who to ask and what to ask for:** the caretaker, the head teacher, and whoever owns the building (a local authority, a municipality or a ministry, depending on your system)

Day 3

Individualisation: Ownership and Flexibility

- **Warm-up:** in pairs, physically rearrange two chairs and a table into a new layout in under two minutes, then say what made it fast or slow
- **Ownership:** what makes a room feel like the pupils', and why displaying their own work is not decoration
- **Flexibility:** the difference between furniture that is movable and a room that is genuinely reconfigurable by a class in two minutes

- **Adapting upward:** how ownership and flexibility change between a class of six-year-olds and a class of sixteen-year-olds, where the primary-school evidence needs translating
- **Working session:** redesigning your own room's ownership and flexibility on paper, inside your real budget, then reviewed in pairs

Day 4

Stimulation, Inclusion and the Digital Layer

- **Warm-up:** each participant picks one of two photos (busier vs calmer wall display) and votes which one they would find harder to concentrate in, then the room compares votes before the day's content
- **Complexity and colour in practice:** displays, walls and ceilings, and the point at which a room tips from stimulating into noisy
- **The quiet audit:** a structured pass over your own photographs deciding what to take down
- **Inclusion and sensory needs:** where the seven parameters and inclusive design agree, and the cases where they pull in opposite directions
- **The digital layer as physical objects:** screens, devices, cabling and charging — what they do to sightlines, glare and the flexibility built on Day 3, and the sustainable choices that cost nothing

Day 5

Your Room, Scored Again

- Each participant presents their redesign scored against the seven parameters, with the baseline from Day 1 beside it
- **Critique in small groups:** which single parameter would give this specific room the largest gain for the least money, and what the group would cut from the plan
- **Revision time:** participants amend their own plan and costings before taking them home
- Course evaluation and reflection on learning
- Certification ceremony

PLEASE NOTE

Sessions run from 09:30 to 15:00, Monday to Friday, with a break for lunch. Timings can shift a little to suit the venue and the group.

Course activities and content may vary depending on participants' needs and the trainer leading the session; any changes are at the trainer's discretion. If there is a specific topic you would like included, please let us know — content-related requests must reach us at least 3 weeks before the course start date so we can confirm them in time.

06 Materials

- Barrett and colleagues, *Clever Classrooms: Summary Report of the HEAD Project* (University of Salford, 2015) — the study the week is built on, published free of charge and worked with directly from Day 1
- A seven-parameter scoring sheet for your own classroom, built on Day 1 and completed again on Day 5
- A costed redesign plan sorted into three: alone, with one colleague, budget and signature
- Your own classroom photographs, or one of the example rooms, used as the working material of every session

07 How to prepare

- It helps to have a few photographs of your own classroom, several angles, taken on an ordinary day rather than a tidied one — please leave pupils out of the frame. If you do not have your own classroom (or would rather not photograph it), the course supplies a set of example rooms to work from.
- If you know them, it helps to have a rough sense of your room's constraints: which windows open, who controls the heating, what furniture may be moved. If you do not know yet, that is itself useful to find out during the week.
- No design background is needed. The seven parameters are introduced on Day 1 and used as a checklist from then on.

08 After the course

- Participants will receive their Certificate of Attendance and the co-signed Europass Mobility document.
- Participants will complete a general course evaluation and event survey.
- Participants will receive course materials, videos, photos, and PDF documents in both digital and print formats.
- Follow-up support: self-evaluation materials are provided. Depending on the group, an email group may be set up so that participants can keep exchanging ideas.

09 Why this is Erasmus+ eligible

This mobility supports the Key Action 1 school education objectives of “supporting professional development of teachers, school leaders and other school staff” and “supporting the sharing and transfer of best practices in teaching and school development” (Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2026, Key Action 1 – Mobility for pupils and staff in school education, Objectives of the action, p. 103). The week brings a published evidence base into that school development work: the University of Salford's HEAD project, which found that the physical characteristics of classrooms explain 16 per cent of the variation in pupils' learning progress over a year. Each participant scores their own classroom against the study's seven parameters, redesigns it within a real budget, scores it again, and leaves with a costed plan sorted into what they can change alone, with one colleague, or only with a budget decision from school leadership — a concrete proposal to share with colleagues on return. The study was carried out in primary schools; adapting its findings to older pupils is part of the week's work.

10 What the course fee covers

INCLUDED IN THE COURSE FEE

- 25 hours of training and course materials
- Certificate of Attendance + Europass support
- On-site local support throughout the week

ARRANGED SEPARATELY BY THE PARTICIPANT

- Travel to the host city — invitation letter on request
- Accommodation — we share recommended options
- Travel & health insurance

ISSUED BY

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COURSE PAGE

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ABOUT ERASMUS MOBILITY ACADEMY

Erasmus Mobility Academy (OID: E10304561) is an Erasmus+ training provider offering professional development courses for educators, school staff and youth workers across Europe. Our courses are designed for international mobility — open to participants travelling from a country other than the host country — and support schools in building lasting institutional capacity. We provide structured learning, logistical guidance and certification with Europass.