
Moodle as a Platform for Promoting the Educational Offer to Prospective University Students

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Abstract:

Purpose: The aim of this article is to demonstrate that preparatory courses for the secondary school-leaving examination (matura) can serve as a tool for promoting educational offerings among prospective university students.

Sedigne/Methodology/Approche: When implementing promotional activities at a higher education institution, communication tools should be tailored to the target audience. The research hypothesis was formulated as follows: Preparatory courses for the secondary school-leaving examination can serve as a communication tool that helps build relationships with prospective university students. The following research methods were applied in the study: analysis of data from the Moodle and YouTube platforms, as well as the author's own survey conducted among first-year students of first- and second-cycle programmes in the academic years 2024-2025.

Findings: Without selecting communication tools appropriate to the target group and developing a suitable strategy for promoting activities across various communication channels, it will not be possible to attract the attention of prospective university students. Only the synchronization of all these elements enables the effective use of preparatory courses for the secondary school-leaving examination as a tool for promoting the activities of a higher education institution.

Practical implications: The actions described in this article may provide useful guidance for other higher education institutions.

Originality/value: This article has practical implications. The findings may be useful for other higher education institutions that regard preparatory courses for the secondary school-leaving examination as an important communication channel with prospective students and as a means of promoting their educational offer.

Keywords: Promotion of higher education institutions, communication tools, higher education institutions.

JEL classification: M30, M39.

Paper Type: Research work.

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1. Introduction

Higher education institutions compete for students, and therefore must seek new tools and initiatives that may help attract the attention of prospective applicants.

Changes in the higher education services market have occurred not only on the supply side but also on the demand side. The marketization of the higher education sector legitimizes the view of the student as a client and the university as a provider of educational services (Pabian, 2014).

The critical role of information and communication technologies (ICT) in shaping organizational and marketing strategies of universities is emphasized, highlighting their importance in institutional branding and the need to integrate technological progress in the context of global educational challenges (Kujawski and Szadziawska, 2024; Kiriakidis, Kefallonitis, and Kavoura, 2019; Purnendu and Siran, 2013).

The complexity and multidimensional nature of academic branding, analyzed from international to national levels, indicate that the dynamic changes in the higher education environment require intensified branding and marketing efforts by universities, particularly in the field of online communication (Nguyen, Melewar, and Hemsley-Brown, 2019; Papadimitriou and Blanco Ramírez, 2018).

The Moodle platform is used by universities for various purposes and is tailored to different target groups. The University of Szczecin (US) decided to utilize Moodle not only for educational purposes but also as a tool to promote the University and encourage prospective students to choose US as their place of study.

Currently, the most popular platforms in higher education institutions, including in Poland, are Moodle and MS Teams. Moodle is an open-source course management system (CMS) available under the GNU General Public License, which means it can be freely downloaded and used (Kujawski and Szadziawska, 2024).

2. Matura Preparation Courses at the University of Szczecin: A Quantitative Overview

Preparatory courses for the Polish Matura exam are not a new concept; however, due to ongoing technological developments, they must be adapted to the evolving expectations of participants. The market offers numerous commercial Matura prep courses, including those organized by private companies as well as some higher education institutions.

Many universities also provide free Matura preparation courses, although these are typically limited to one or two subjects—for instance, technical universities often focus on mathematics and physics.

The University of Szczecin has been offering free Matura courses for many years. Initially, they were conducted in person during weekdays and weekends to accommodate students living outside Szczecin. Subsequently, the courses were moved to the MS Teams platform.

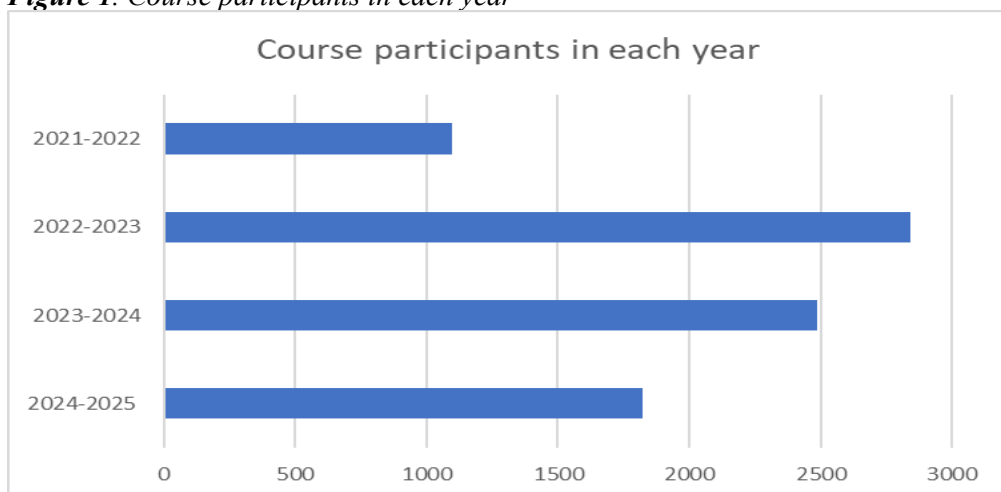
The advantage of this platform was the ability to hold live sessions on pre-scheduled dates, enabling participants to ask questions and engage in discussion. However, the drawback was the fixed schedule, which prevented some students from attending the sessions. These sessions were not recorded, which further limited access.

Another challenge with this format was the cancellation of classes, which required notifying all participants and arranging new dates. An additional complication was the constantly changing group of participants, as enrollment was open and ongoing. Many registered students could not attend sessions for various reasons, prompting frequent inquiries about the possibility of accessing recorded lessons.

In response to the high volume of such questions, the logistical challenges of scheduling and rescheduling sessions, and the significant staff workload involved in managing the courses, the University decided to change the course format. It was decided to transition to the Moodle platform and provide pre-recorded instructional materials.

Figure 1 presents the number of course participants over the past four years. The first two periods reflect courses conducted via MS Teams, while the latter two represent courses delivered through Moodle. The number of participants during the analyzed years ranges from 1,200 to 2,800. This variation may result from different promotional strategies or potentially the shift in course delivery format.

Figure 1. *Course participants in each year*

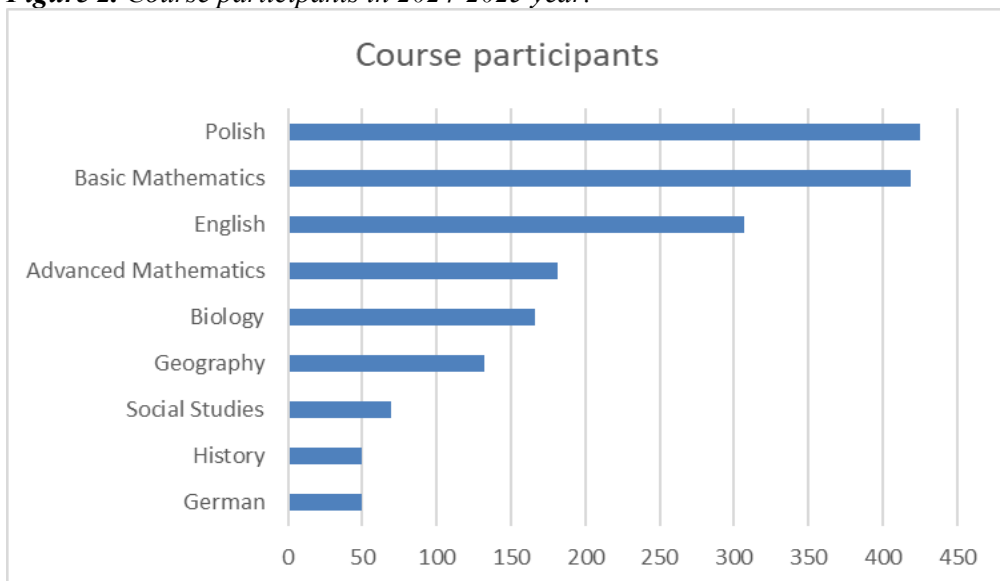


Source: *Own work.*

Figure 2 illustrates the number of participants enrolled in individual subject-specific courses during the 2024-2025 academic year (this article is being written during this period, prior to the Matura examinations). The highest attendance is observed in courses covering mandatory subjects such as Polish language, mathematics, and English—the latter being the most commonly chosen foreign language among Matura candidates.

It should also be noted that some participants enrolled in the platform specifically for one subject, while others may have accessed a course only once, possibly out of curiosity or to explore its format.

Figure 2. *Course participants in 2024-2025 year.*



Source: *Own work.*

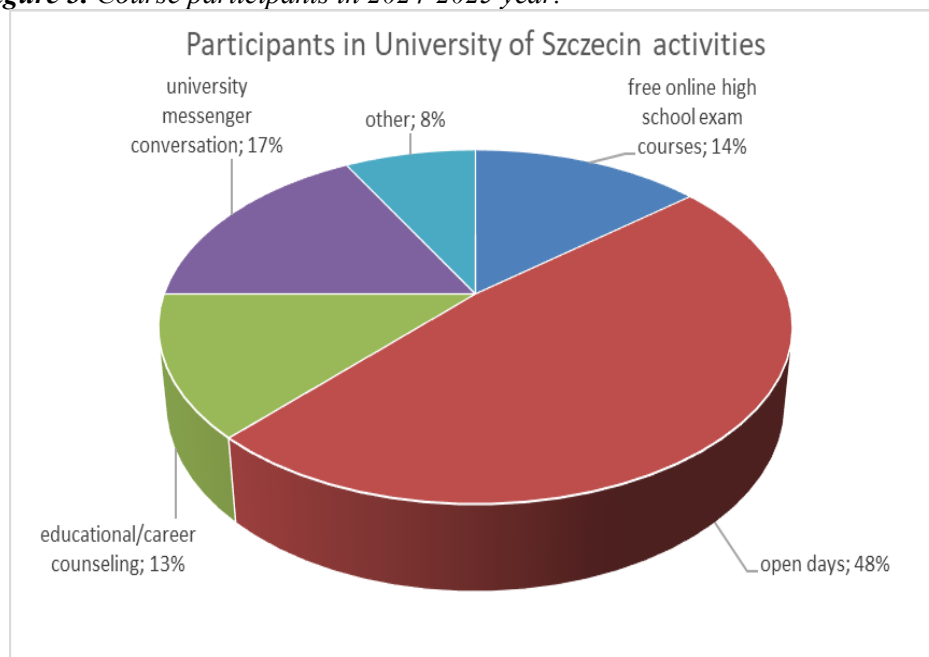
The data presented in Figure 3 originate from annual in-house research conducted at the beginning of each academic year among first-year students at the University of Szczecin. Respondents were asked which of the activities offered to prospective students they had participated in. Matura preparation courses constituted the third most frequently used activity, selected by 14% of the surveyed students. The above results clearly indicate that the implemented Matura preparation courses are a noticeable and impactful initiative for prospective students.

3. Matura Preparation Courses at the University of Szczecin on the Moodle Platform

Participants of the Matura preparation courses offered via the Moodle platform register using an online application form, where they provide personal information, an email address, and select the subjects they are interested in. A university staff

member, upon receiving the application, assigns the participant a login and password for the Moodle platform. As this process is not automated, the regulations allow up to three days for credentials to be issued.

Figure 3. Course participants in 2024-2025 year.



Source: Own work.

Enrollment for the courses begins in September and remains open until the end of August of the following calendar year. After this period, all accounts created during the enrollment window are deleted. This extended access period corresponds to the structure of the Polish academic year, which begins in September, with the Matura exam taking place in May and the opportunity for retakes occurring in August.

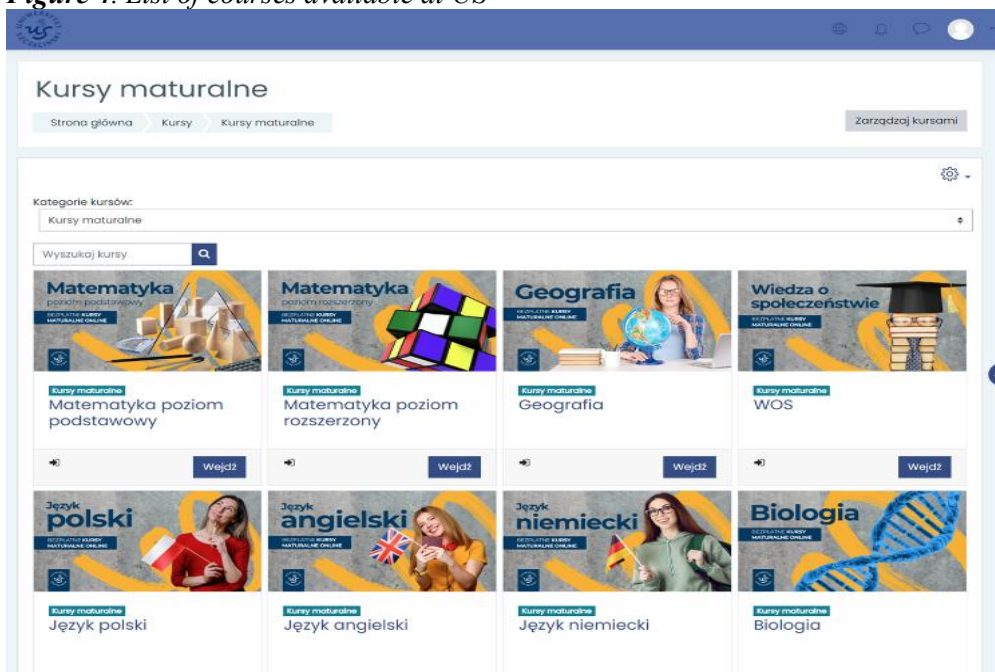
Once access to Moodle is granted, participants can freely use the available Matura preparation courses. These courses cover the most popular Matura subjects, including mathematics (at both basic and advanced levels), Polish language, English, German, biology, and geography. Each course includes twenty hours of recorded content explaining the key concepts relevant to the subject.

Upon logging into the Moodle platform, participants are presented with the following interface:

1. A general list of courses available at the University of Szczecin, from which they must select the Matura preparation courses.
2. Icons for individual Matura courses, categorized by subject (Figure 4).

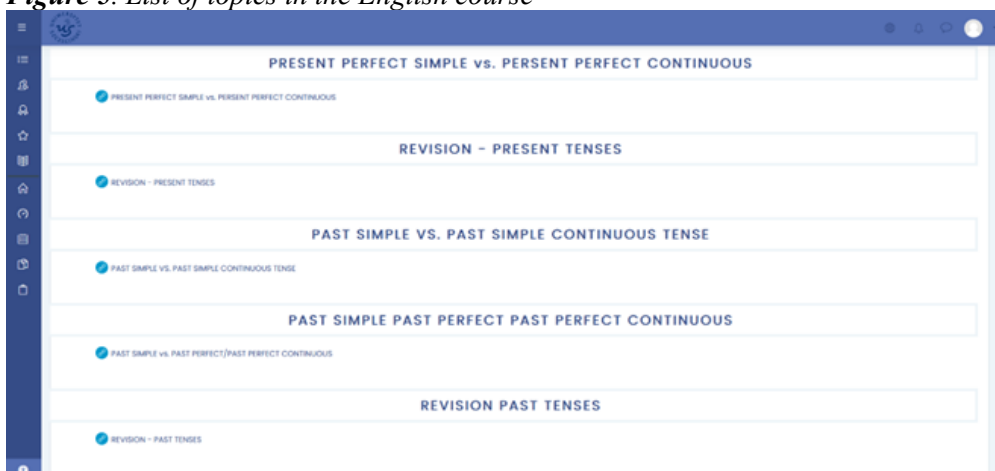
3. Upon entering a course, a list of topics for the selected subject is displayed (Figure 5).
4. Selecting a specific topic opens a video lecture (Figure 6).

Figure 4. List of courses available at US



Source: Moodle.

Figure 5. List of topics in the English course



Source: Moodle.

Figure 6. *View the course as a video*



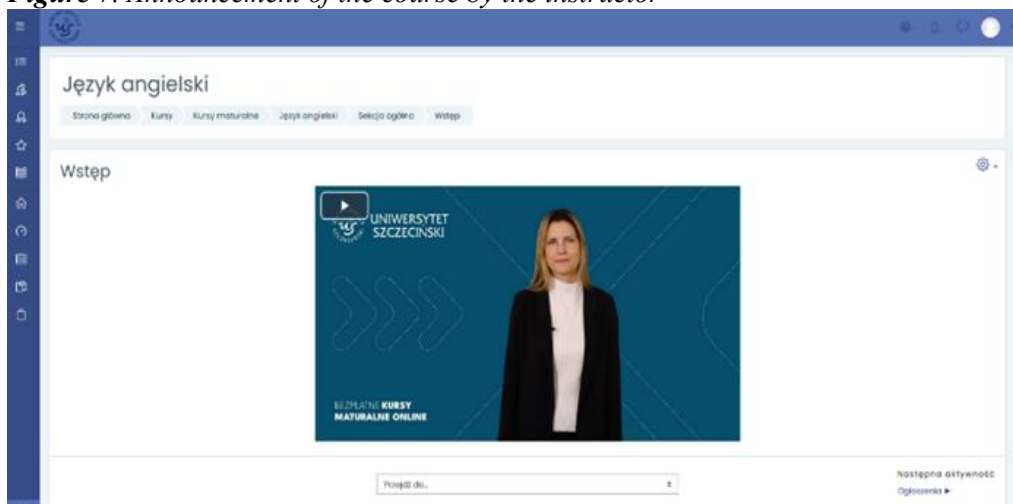
Source: Moodle.

After selecting a topic of interest within a course, the user is directed to a page displaying a pre-recorded video lecture. The videos are hosted on YouTube but are unlisted, making them inaccessible through direct search.

Each subject-specific course begins with an introductory video featuring the course instructor. In this video, the instructor introduces themselves, states their affiliation with the University of Szczecin, and outlines the content and objectives of the Matura preparation course for that subject.

An example frame from an introductory video is shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7. *Announcement of the course by the instructor*



Source: Moodle.

4. AI in Education

AI can be applied to the topic discussed above in several key areas.

Firstly, data obtained from analyzing Moodle and YouTube systems can be used to train AI models to generate effective educational materials.

By examining data such as specific episode selections, viewing duration, and which parts of episodes are most frequently watched, it is possible to identify which topics are most engaging. This information can be used to generate further training materials tailored to students' interests and needs.

Secondly, AI can be fed with literary texts in PDF format for summarization purposes. Incorporating the requirements of the national high school graduation exam (matura), along with sample exam sheets, would allow AI to learn how to interpret specific texts in line with exam questions.

Based on a large set of exam papers, AI could analyze recurring themes and determine what types of answers and interpretations are typically expected by examiners.

Depending on the subject of the matura exam, the application of AI may differ slightly, but its potential benefits remain substantial across disciplines.

5. Conclusions

An analysis of the results from several internal studies clearly indicates that Matura preparation courses are a tool actively used by prospective university students. However, it should also be acknowledged that participation in such courses does not guarantee that a given individual will ultimately choose to enroll at the hosting institution.

Undeniable advantages of the described courses include their free access, online availability, and flexibility in terms of use at any time. Additional strengths lie in the variety of subjects covered and the substantial number of instructional hours provided for each subject.

From an administrative perspective, the registration process could be improved by introducing automation—allowing access immediately after registration, without the need for staff intervention. In such a case, a support system would be necessary to provide assistance and answer user inquiries.

Another challenge is the lack of return visits from some participants, who register for the courses but do not continue to engage with the platform. It may be beneficial to improve the reminder system to prompt users about their

enrollment and encourage them to revisit the materials. It must also be recognized that the chosen format may not be suitable for all users.

Undoubtedly, the use of AI could yield the most significant results and elevate high school graduation courses to a much higher level of alignment with exam requirements. Based on the presented data and visual analyses, the research hypothesis can be confirmed: the use of the Moodle platform as a tool to promote a university's educational offer increases the likelihood of attracting future students.

In conclusion, the use of Moodle to deliver Matura preparation courses organized by higher education institutions proves to be an effective tool, as evidenced by the participation data from prospective students.

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