



Lessons from hybrid education: Folkuniversitetet prioritizes simplicity and good sound

When the pandemic hit, Folkuniversitetet faced the *challenge of providing hybrid education that all the teachers would feel comfortable with.

“It was crucial to find a simple solution with low thresholds,” says Helene Gustafsson, Operations Manager for Folkuniversitetet District South.

User-friendliness is particularly important for an adult education provider such as Folkuniversitetet. The permanent teaching staff includes both experienced and inexperienced IT users. Guest lecturers also

come in without prior knowledge of the technical equipment on site. This was something that the supplier Innovationsteknik Sverige AB focused on when they entered into partnership with Folkuniversitetet:

“The video solution had to suit everyone, regardless of their level of knowledge, and be able to handle different collaboration platforms, such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Google Meet. It would also have to work in a mixed IT environment, since teachers and lecturers use both PCs and Macs,” explains Oscar Hanson, CEO of Innovationsteknik Sverige.

“In addition to all these requirements, the classrooms varied in size, so we wanted to be able to offer different sizes of both audio and video devices. After a lot of thought and testing, we concluded that Konftel was the best choice.”

ONE CABLE CONNECTION

Konftel provided Innovationsteknik with a simple solution: One Cable Connection. This means that the lecturer only needs to plug an orange USB cable into their own laptop to start up the room’s full video system, including displays, camera and audio.



*Helene Gustafsson,
Operations Manager
at Folkuniversitetet*

“A year ago, many of our teachers were only comfortable with a pen and paper, and IT skills vary greatly. We really liked the fact that a single orange cable is all you need to master, with the rest pre-installed and calibrated for the specific classroom. As such, teachers



don't have to expend any of their energy on the technology. Instead, they can remain fully focused on their teaching," says Helene Gustafsson, Operations Manager for Folkuniversitetet District South.

Innovationsteknik has also recorded a short introductory video for Folkuniversitetet, showing the various devices and explaining what teachers need to do the first time they enter a new classroom.

"We have pre-programmed the camera's remote control with five presets, which we also show in the instruction video. By pressing the numbers on the remote control, they can choose between showing the whole room, just showing the teacher, showing the whole whiteboard or zooming in more on the right or left part of the whiteboard. We wanted to make it as simple as possible for the teachers to choose what to show to the students taking part remotely," explains Oscar Hanson at Innovationsteknik.

The presets and the orange cable are the same in all the classrooms, although the equipment itself differs in order to cope with the different classroom sizes. The simplicity is a real confidence booster for users. Everything works the same way every time and in every classroom, regardless of size.

SOUND AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING

Folkuniversitetet has equipped its classrooms with either the Konftel Cam20 or the Konftel Cam50,

depending on the size of the room. All the classrooms are equipped with Konftel's unique OCC hub, which means that the teacher only needs to plug an orange USB cable into their laptop to start the remote lesson with full audio, displays and video. The solution works in any IT environment and on all collaborative platforms, such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc. When it comes to audio, Innovationsteknik and Folkuniversitetet have also chosen to install the award-winning Konftel 800 conference phone in most classrooms.

"The sound is, of course, very important in a learning situation," explains Helene Gustafsson from Folkuniversitetet.

"Our teachers shouldn't need to raise their voice to be heard by the students following the lesson from home, or worry about missing questions from the remote students during the lesson. In addition, all the other students attending in person should be fully able to hear everything that is going on. We have therefore chosen the most powerful audio solution that Konftel has to offer."

"When it comes to sound, I think Konftel is really in a class of its own, impressing with its proprietary OmniSound audio technology," says Oscar Hanson from Innovationsteknik Sverige.

"The Konftel 800 can handle large rooms and demanding situations, such as a teacher moving around the classroom who still needs to be heard by everyone remotely, while the powerful speakers mean that distance students can be heard clearly in the classroom. Overall, the breadth of Konftel's range makes it an obvious first choice for such solutions."

Equipment:

- Around 10 Konftel C20800, to be increased on a rolling basis
- Around 10 Konftel C50800, to be increased on a rolling basis

Important for Folkuniversitetet:

- Easy to start up and use for the large number of different teachers who teach at Folkuniversitetet across Sweden, the solution: Konftel OCC – One Cable Connection.
- Good audio is crucial for the lessons to work both for the teachers and students present in the classroom and for remote students.
- Teachers shouldn't need to expend any energy on the technology, they should be able to focus entirely on their teaching.
- Lessons should be able to be the same regardless of whether they take place remotely or in person in the classroom.
- The supplier has pre-programmed the camera's remote control with the five most commonly used presets.