COURSE FOR MENTORS

Textbook for Mentors

Module 1: Preparation for the Apprenticeship

APPRENTICE TRACK

Authors

Jan Beseda, Tea Gagro, Mojca Sendelbah

Contributors

Partner Consortium

Editors

Andreja Bizjak, Anthony F. Camilleri, Carmen L Padrón, Alicia-Leonor Sauli-Miklavčič

Layout

Tara Drev

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The Apprentice Track Consortium

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1 Introduction

About the project

Apprenticeships at Professional Higher Education (PHE) level provide students with opportunities to build up new skills and knowledge both on and off the job, while providing companies a reliable way to evaluate and shape potential future hires, as well as benefiting from new perspectives which can only be offered by students straight out of education. However, despite their clear advantages, apprenticeship systems are challenging to manage.

The ApprenticeTrack project partners aim to:

- Propose digital methods to strengthen the management of apprenticeships
- Create a prototype tool for the management of apprenticeships
- Develop and implement a course on apprenticeship-management
- Test and validate the tool in live environments

The **vision** of the project is that the digital tool for managing apprenticeships, developed during the project, will be

- recognised as a model to improve the quality of apprenticeships and will be adopted widely;
- updated and improved in the future by the users;
- and will serve as a basis for the development of formal international standards and guidelines.

The **mission** of the project is to develop a digital management tool that supports PHE institutions and employers to offer and direct high-quality apprenticeships.

Course for mentors

Apprenticeship-management isn't only about the tools, but also about the competences of the persons involved in the management of those apprenticeships. A custom-course for Small and Medium-Sizes Enterprises (SMEs) will be designed, covering the following themes: key features of apprenticeships, integrating placements into strategic workforce planning, gaining the support of colleagues and senior managers, drawing up an apprenticeship agreement and employment contract, managing, mentoring and supporting your apprentice, assessing performance, integrating apprentices into your workforce.

1.1 Course structure

The course for mentors (*expected are 5 mentors per 3 partner countries*) is divided into **3 modules**, each of which consists of **5 themes** (please see chapter 1.3)

Each of the 3 modules will last for **26 hours** in the time period of **14 days** (please see chapter 1.2). This means that the course altogether will last for 42 days (79 hours). The **first online hour** will be conducted as an introduction to the whole course and will be held only once before Module 1.

Regarding the content, **Module 1** refers to the preparation and planning of the apprenticeship by mentors, **Module 2** refers to the actual performance of the apprenticeship and its running and **Module 3** refers to the completion and evaluation processes after the apprenticeship is over.

	INTRODUCTION	PREPARATION	PRESENTATION	IMPROVEMENT	CONCLUSION
Type of training	ONLINE	WORK AT HOME	LIVE WORHSHOP	WORK AT HOME	ONLINE
Activities	Introduction to Module 1 Introduction of themes in Module 1 Distribution of practical examples / cases among mentors	Preparation of solutions for given practical cases based on mentor's experience Consultation with moderator as needed	Presentation of prepared solutions to practical cases (by mentors) Exchange of good practices (among mentors) Coaching the discussion and introduction of supporting materials (moderator)	Improvement of solutions of practical cases with feedback received during the discussions Finalization of practical cases by using the proposed supporting study materials and other relevant sources	Review of improved solutions Final questions Conclusion and Wrap up
Duration	1 hour	9 hours	6 hours	9 hours	1 hour

1.2 Timeline

Activities	Number of hours	Distribution by days
INTRODUCION: ONLINE	**1 hour**	**Day 1**
PREPARATION: WORK AT HOME	**9 hours**	**Days 2 to 5**
PRESENTATION: LIVE WORKSHOP	**6 hours**	**Day 6**
IMPROVEMENT: WORK AT HOME	**9 hours**	**Days 7-9** for improvement **Days 10-11** for feedback **Days 12-13** for finalization

CONCLUSION: ONLINE	1 hour	Day 14
Together (Module 1)	26 hours	14 days

1.3 Themes

Module 1: Preparation for the Apprenticeship

- Identifying and recruiting placements (*Examining the suitability of the host organisation for the training activity)* and identifying mentors
- Knowing the legislation on apprenticeships (including the legal requirements and school requirements, content of the agreement, financial plan ...)
- Designing the Mentoring Plan and the Apprenticeship Plan, establishing and meeting the requirements of the Training Agreement with the apprentice and the apprenticeship organiser, including the Evaluation Plan
- Participating in the selection of apprentices
- Finding the appropriate tools according to the Apprenticeship Plan (*including quality management requirements).*

Module 2: During the Apprenticeship

- Pre-training activities
- Integrating the apprentice in the host organisation
- Training at the workplace
- Monitoring the apprenticeship
- Conflict resolution: arising of potential problems during the Apprenticeships (*including risk management)*

Module 3: Completing the Apprenticeship

- Assessing apprentices: methodology
- Assessing apprentices: criteria and indicators
- Evaluating Apprenticeships: self-evaluation
- Evaluating Apprenticeships: student-mentor relationship
- Evaluating Apprenticeships: PHEI-host organisation relationship

2 Study materials

2.1 Theme 1

Identifying and recruiting placements (Examining the suitability of the host organisation for the training activity) and identifying mentors

- Gaining the support of colleagues and senior managers for the apprenticeship programme.
- Finding the right provider – how to collaborate with educational institutions.
- Ensuring apprenticeships that fit students' competences with defined goals, results of the apprenticeship, newly obtained skills, catalogue of knowledge and soft skills.

Analyse the suitability of the host organisation for performing the apprenticeship:

- o apprenticeship systematization
- o human resources
- o availability
- o interest
- o willingness
- o equipment
- o adaptability/flexibility for developing an apprenticeship
- o contrasting the conditions required for mentorship with those existing in the host organisation

The mentor and the apprenticeship organiser identify and agree/accept the conditions, suitability and resources of the host organisation for the apprenticeship.

Identifying Mentors

- Selection procedure
- Technical competences
- Pedagogical competences
- Minimum work experience
- Training
- National legislation

Requirements

The mentor has enough previous experience in the job to be able to act as a mentor. He/she is aware of the importance of his/her role in the development of the mentoring and knows the host organisation's policy in reference to health and safety, environmental and recycling policy. The mentor has interpersonal communication skills, both oral and written.

Mentor

An apprentice may be entirely new to the workplace or taking on a new occupational area, and an apprenticeship can be a time of substantial change for an individual. It is **a learning process and should take place in a supportive workplace** and it is important that an apprentice has **coaching support and continuous assessment of progress through constructive feedback.**

Additionally, an apprentice should have an identified work 'buddy' who can offer support which is not just about their performance and is more about their holistic development – e.g. settling in, questions and concerns about the role and/or their career. The 'buddy' can help them by signposting them to sources of information or additional specialist support. This is the role of the apprenticeship mentor.

Mentoring is:

- Listening
- Acting as a sounding board for the mentee's ideas and fears
- Helping someone find their own solutions
- Sharing ideas and experience
- Giving advice and guidance
- Signposting where to find appropriate support
- Confidential
- One-to-one
- A role model
- A mentor should be someone from outside the apprentice's reporting hierarchy at work. It is also essential that issues between mentor and mentee are confidential. A mentor should be an experienced member of staff who has the following mentoring skills:
    - active listening
    - questioning
    - building rapport
    - offering constructive feedback
    - setting targets
    - offering support and guidance
    - signposting
    - acting as a role model

Mentoring is not:

- Telling the apprentice (mentee) what to do
- Taking responsibility for someone else's problem
- Having all the answers

Additional e-references

https://www.bu.edu/ctl/teaching-resources/using-case-studies-to-teach/

https://www.apprenticeships.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/apl5-guide_for_mentors.pdf

2.2 Theme 2

Knowing the legislation on apprenticeships (including the legal requirements and school requirements, content of the agreement, financial plan ...)

a. The host organisation and the mentor know the general legal framework for mentoring:

o   The mentor knows:

  ▪   The legally established dates for carrying out the work placement
  ▪   The minimum – maximum hours per day
  ▪   The minimum – maximum hours per week
  ▪   The minimum – maximum total hours
  ▪   Minimum attendance. Awareness of the regulations regarding absences of the apprentice.
  ▪   The apprenticeship organiser to follow up the apprentice.
  ▪   The possible exceptions (shifts, night work, weekends, dangerous jobs ...)

b. The mentor identifies the legal aspects concerning the agreement, if applicable:

o   There is no employment relationship with the host organisation.
o   Any eventuality or accident that may occur will be considered in terms of the education centre insurance.
o   Signature of the agreement by the two or three parties (*depending on the partner state*): education centre, host organisation and student

o   Possible bonuses:

  ▪   To the enterprise
  ▪   The student

o   Establishing the Agreement:

  ▪   Define approval workflow
  ▪   Who develops the contract?
  ▪   Who reviews it?
  ▪   Who approves the agreement at each stage?
  ▪   Who are the signatory stakeholders?

Content of the Agreement *(Provide mentors with a certified agreement template which can be found online to avoid overloading them with extra work. Please check section Additional e-references below).*

A list of student's current skills and skills s/he is expected to acquire during the apprenticeship should be included in the apprenticeship agreement to match students with employer's requirements. It is essential that mentors assure that student's activities during the apprenticeship correspond with the intended learning outcomes and competences. Gender and equal opportunities have to be assured.

The agreement should cover:

- duration,
- programme objectives and learning activities,
- legally binding obligations regarding the conditions of employment,
- working material provided
- identification of apprenticeship organisers and mentors,
- description of roles and responsibilities of apprenticeship organisers, mentors and students,
- modes of communication between all three parties,
- methods of assessment,
- monitoring arrangements,
- mechanisms for conflict resolution and
- forms of certification/recognition to be issued to the students, the PHEs and the SMEs.

c**. The mentor identifies the legal aspects concerning the agreement, if applicable:**

o Type of working contract
o Possible bonuses:

- Social Security /National Health Service
- In general

o Salaries
o Holiday period
o Contract signature

d. **Financial plan:** including resource allocation, possible social benefits, insurance.
The mentor knows the legal aspects related to health and safety regarding the apprenticeship in the host organisation.

The mentor knows the specific documentation required by the different parties involved in the apprenticeship (*Apprenticeship records, Mentor's records, Monitoring records, Performance records*).

Additional e-references

Good example of AP agreement

http://ka107.splet.arnes.si/results/

2.3 Theme 3

Designing the Mentoring Plan and the Apprenticeship Plan, establishing and meeting the requirements of the Training Agreement with the apprentice and the apprenticeship organiser, including the Evaluation Plan

The mentor and the supervisor complete the three above-mentioned documents based on the learning outcomes of the specific cycle studied by the apprentice. It includes information such as:

- o The education centre identification: Name / address / web page / contact
- o The supervisor: Name and Surname / position and email / phone contact
- o The apprentice identification: Name and Surname / area of studies / email / phone contact
- o The host organisation identification: Name / Address / Activity / web page
- o The mentor identification: Name and Surname / position / email / phone contact
- o The activities to be performed by the apprentice
- o The work schedule (work calendar, working hours, clock in, clock out...) within the current regulations
- o The insurance policy for the apprentice
- o The follow up calendar (face-to-face visits, virtual interviews) establishing the communication tools to be used by the three parties
- o The activities to be carried out based on the specific learning outcomes
- o The evaluation plan including assessment criteria, dates, documents to be filled in, certifications (attendance certificate)

Additional e-references

Example of Harmonogram

http://ka107.splet.arnes.si/results/

2.4 Theme 4

Participating in the selection of apprentices

Example of a selection day of apprentices:

Tuesday, January 19th

8:00 a.m.	Apprenticeship overview
9:30 a.m.	Community college onsite presentations
11:00 a.m.	Tools and books overview
12:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Department assignments and department manager introductions
2:00 p.m.	Department visits with buddy
4:30 p.m.	Second day wrap-up

Whilst not always the most reliable, interviews remain the most widely used assessment and selection tool. The key to making interviews a success for you is by asking the right questions, keeping the process consistent for all applicants and remaining impartial throughout the process. Throughout the interview, the evaluation of the candidate can be done by a test, based on a checklist of qualifying factors and technical skills required for the placement. This test can be designed and carried out by the host organisation.

Additional e-references

2.5 Theme 5

Finding the appropriate tools according to the Apprenticeship Plan (including quality management requirements)

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- At the beginning of the apprenticeship, the mentor accompanies the apprentice and instructs about the activities to be performed.
- The apprentice interacts with the co-workers as much as possible in order to obtain a more global vision of how the host organisation works.
- The mentor and mates motivate the apprentice with empathy and patience.

Assign the tasks related to the learning outcomes following the PBL methodology

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- The mentor provides a list of selected tasks in relation to the learning outcomes and the training plan.
- The mentor matches the appropriate tasks for the apprentice according to their skills and abilities.
- The mentor fosters leadership/negotiation skills.
- Autonomy and responsibilities of the apprentice increase as the apprenticeship develops.

Guide on the personal and social evolution providing solutions that improve the mentorship

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The mentor follows the training plan and guides the apprentice on the following aspects:

- o Entrusting and delegating to the apprentice.
- o Assigning more difficult tasks as they progress in the acquisition of skills.
- o Fostering autonomy in the performance of the assigned tasks to the apprentice.
- o Helping the apprentice integrating in the host organisation.
- o Managing possible crisis moments: identifying the cause(s) of a current problem together with the apprentice; identifying where the problem is.
- o Being aware of the apprentice's age and personal situation.
- o Being able to provide career and professional development.
- o Helping with advice and guidelines that positively influence their evolution.
- o Objective guiding based on the personal experience of the mentor.
- o Working on interpersonal relationship skills such as conflict management and negotiation.

o The success of any Apprenticeship Program relies on clear metrics and a system for monitoring program performance over time. It requires companies to continuously assess how well the skills are being developed and deployed against requirements, how effectively gaps are being bridged, and how readily pipelines are being filled with competent, skilled workers. This enables companies to ensure an effective apprenticeship experience that measurably benefits their bottom line." Johanna Soderstrom, Vice President Human Resources, The Dow Chemical Company

Additional e-references

https://www.eurashe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/ApprenticeshipQualityToolkit.pdf

https://bit.ly/2JxIWPb

http://ka107.splet.arnes.si/results/

About the Apprentice Track Project and this publication

Apprenticeships allow students to build up skills and knowledge, while providing companies with a reliable way to evaluate potential future hires and benefit from fresh perspectives offered by academia. Despite their advantages, apprenticeships are challenging to manage, as the needs of students and of specific enterprises are difficult to match, particularly when organisations need to deal with massive amounts of students and, consequently, data. Structured communication channels between enterprises and students, robust management systems and clear evaluation protocols are necessary to manage such a complex system and to enable the launch of valuable, steady and sustainable Apprenticeship Programmes.