Guidelines for the recognition and validation of informal and non-formal learning

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Introduction

Over the past few years, the need to mobilise resources aimed at improving the relation between the education systems and the business world has become a truly unavoidable necessity even more than an opportunity to adapt and improve the processes by which the school system tends to adapt its training activity to the changing professional requirements.

For too many years, our country’s education system ignored or simply was unable to interpret what the labour market required, in terms of training, attitude, and professional culture. In fact, the very concept of outside requirements, new and different as compared with the canons of a traditional approach, expressed by new intermediaries in the relationship between school and business world, such as the chambers of commerce, the sector associations, the employment centres, was viewed by the school system as a form of interference.

The system was faced with the violation of one of the basic tenets on which the education system was built and rested since the Gentile reform, that is to say, the primacy of the education system in defining what is useful and necessary for the young to learn to allow our community to develop and grow.

However, the responsibility for what has happened cannot be assigned exclusively to the school system. In fact, the speed and frequency at which the paradigms underpinning the production and exchange of goods and services have evolved, globalisation in one word, have prevented our education system from grasping the novel elements (in terms of timing and content) on which to base a new, or better, ever renewing, education model.

Independently of what the responsibilities might be or have been, the fact remains that over the past twenty years, the effectiveness with which our country’s educational community has responded to the changing external needs has deteriorated gradually.

In other words, we could even say that our school system underwent a gradual self-referencing process: faced with unrelenting change in the outside world, and with the ensuing training needs that this world presented, the system has reacted by growing increasingly resistant and self-centred.

Recently, positively and unavoidably, the vicious circle just described has been interrupted and the education system, to a greater extent than the university system, has been able to orient the educational objectives in a way better aligned with the needs expressed by the business world; this has been made possible also by the reforms introduced in the organisation of the technical and professional secondary school.

This transition from a school knit tightly within itself to a school more focused on preparing young men and women capable of orienting themselves and navigating in a continuously changing labour market has been made possible by the adoption of a new conceptual paradigm identified as the goal of the education process. This new conceptual construct is the competence, that is “The proven capacity to utilise, in work or study situations, or in one’s professional and personal development, a structured whole of learning and skills acquired in formal, non-formal, and informal learning contexts” (art. 2 of Legislative Decree N. 13 of 16th January, 2013).

Here we do not want to delve deeply into the themes connected to the adoption of this new conceptual construct in our education system. However, it is important to pay attention to the fact that, by assigning to the concept of competence the role of objective of the education process, emphasising that this concept is related indirectly, or better, in a propaedeutic manner to knowledge, while the focus of learning is the doing in an operational context, we can affirm that our education system has effectively completed (at least from the viewpoint of the reference framework) the necessary modernisation process that society and the business world desired and requested since a long time.

In this new reference framework, all initiatives that are emerging, not only in our country, but throughout Europe, either spontaneously or in the context of the more structured
debate on the concept of competence, assume special importance. There are detailed studies and proposals that touch on the problems of didactics aimed at learning competences, on the concept of the workplace as learning context, and, above all, on the need to define procedures to assess learning.

The Confindustria [Federation of Italian Businesses], in the context of its institutional objectives linked to the dialogue with the education and professional training systems, has been working for several years to implement and spread (also borrowing from corporate experiences) a culture of assessment of competences; this culture would make it possible to address the formal requests of the new reference framework for the education systems and, in addition, to have these assessments recognised as valid to introduce the young into the work environment.

The main purpose of the Informedu project, promoted by the Grosseto Businessmen Association, is to contribute to the ongoing debate on the procedures for assessing the competences possessed by the individuals; special attention is paid to the possibility of assessing individual performance even in the absence of formal certifications (qualifications, diplomas, etc.) possessed by the candidates.

The assessment of the competences acquired through non-formal learning routes was the focus of the activities carried out during the two years of development of the project. The results obtained, the broad participation of institutional and professional partners, and the results of the assessment experiments performed on a large number of adults indicate to us that, despite the lack of an established experience in these assessment processes in our country, these activities can be implemented in terms of methods and are economically sustainable.

In this context, we express the wish that this work becomes a valid benchmark for the operators of the education and training systems and that it also provides a useful support for the political decision makers in defining, especially at the Regions level, the necessary regulations for the new systems for assessing and certifying competences.

Antonio Capone
Director Grosseto Businessmen Association
2.1 Reference models: The Netherlands and Lithuania

2.1.1 Accreditation of prior learning (APL) in the Netherlands

Accreditation of prior learning (APL) is the common name given to the process of the recognition of the competences an individual has gained through formal, informal or non-formal learning in various settings. This implies that competences acquired by learning on the job, in society or in voluntary work are in principle comparable to the competences acquired in formal education.

How does it work?

In general, a candidate wants to prove that he or she has the competences for a certain job. Therefore, an APL-procedure is focused on a certain qualification. The acquired competences, gained through informal and non-formal learning, are compared with the learning outcomes of a formal qualification.

A candidate has to collect the evidence that the acquired competences match the qualification. The candidate stores the evidence in a portfolio. Recognition means awarding certificates or diplomas of the proved competences against the learning outcomes of a qualification for vocational education or another standard relating to the labour market which employers and employees regard as relevant. External legitimacy is the key requirement for recognition.

As a result of the APL-procedure the candidate receives a certificate of proved experience. This certificate can be used for new job opportunities or accelerate formal learning programmes. But there is an important side-effect. The APL-procedure itself leads to a reflection of strengths, weaknesses, talents and goals for the candidate. Therefore, competences not only include professional competences but social and personal competences as well, which can result in a career switch or a better understanding of the career path a candidate needs to follow.

APL for volunteers

Scouting Gelderland, the Dutch partner in the InformEdu project, has expertise in recognition tools and procedures for volunteers. It is widely recognised that people learn a lot by volunteering, but the official procedure for recognition of non formal learning is not very accessible for volunteers; besides that, this procedure costs a lot of time, money, and paperwork.

Therefore, we train volunteering organizations to develop a policy to support their volunteers in the recognition process.

There is a lot that the organization can offer to support the volunteer to get his competences recognised, validated, and accredited:

* Training certificate
  A good training certificate mentions the contents of the training, how long the training lasted, the level (e.g. related to the European Qualifications Framework), and a reference to the (website of) the training institute.

* Testimonials
A good testimonial gives a description of the work the volunteer has done, his responsibilities, and the level of autonomy: did he/she work with support, independent, or in an executive position. It’s also important to mention the duration (1 year? 2 years?), the number of hours spend per day/week/month, and a contact person who can be called.

* Suggestions how to describe your voluntary work on your c.v.
  Things to consider: do you put your voluntary work under “hobby/free time” or under “work experience”. Can you describe the importance of your voluntary work for the job you are applying for?

* Competence profiles for the various positions of volunteers
  A competence profile is a list of competences that you can acquire by doing a certain voluntary job. It helps the volunteer to reflect on his own development. It also helps to “translate” the voluntary work to the labour market or to vocational education.

* Tools for self assessment
  Self assessment is done by the volunteer to get an impression of the competences he/she has acquired. It also helps him/her to explore how useful these competences are outside the voluntary work. Self assessment can be done in two ways. One way is to define on which level he/she has acquired the competence, the other way is to compare the competence with an external standard.

* Assessment by others
  Assessment by others can support and strengthen, but also nuance and relativize, the outcomes of the self assessment. It can be done by other volunteers/team members he/she has worked with, the manager of the volunteer, the clients/members he/she has worked for.

* Documenting products/results of the work of the volunteer
  One of the most important steps in the recognition process is that you are able to show examples of the work you have done as a volunteer. Here you can think of reports of activities, minutes of meetings, pictures/movies of things you have made or of activities you have performed. Also signed declarations of your manager, “thank you”-letters of participants, and your own written reflections on the job you have done can be useful. Be sure that it’s clear what your role was: a general programme of a summer camp or a training course that you were responsible for is not enough.

* Gathering evidence
  Criteria for evidence are: authenticity (is it really about you), relevance (does it really say something about the work process and your level of control), topicality (how recent is it), quantity (how often have you done it, how many things have you made), and variety (have you done the voluntary work with different target groups and/or in different situations).

* Offering a portfolio for volunteers
  A portfolio is an organized collection of everything you have learned and all the (voluntary) work you have done. It can also contain personal information. The idea comes from the world of art, where artists use the portfolio to show examples of the work they have made. It can be digital, but also in the form of a case with everything on paper in it.
Making an agreement with institutes for formal recognition.
Institutes for formal recognition are different per country. Some countries have award systems, in some countries you have to get in touch with schools for vocational education and/or employers institutes.

Europass / European Skills Passport for volunteers
Since 2 years, we are testing Europass as a tool for volunteers to document their volunteering activities and the learning outcomes of these activities. We do this in cooperation with the Dutch National Europass Centre and with local volunteer centres. The results so far are positive and encouraging, more and more volunteering organizations are interested to use Europass for volunteers.

In the near future, Europass will be transformed into the European Skills Passport, with a special “Experience” part, which will be useful for volunteering organizations. In a new project, starting October 2013, we will develop trainings and other support tools for volunteering organizations that want to work with Europass. We will do this in close cooperation with the Dutch National Europass Centre and the European Volunteer Centre.

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2.1.2 Non-Formal and Informal Learning Assessment in Lithuania

European and national political documents on education pay particular attention to the development of systems in the European countries which integrate person’s non-formal and informal learning achievements assessment and recognition area.

**Context of non-formal and informal learning assessment and recognition system**

Framing of assessment system for non-formal and informal learning achievements is ambitious effort to integrate different frames including formal and informal learning. Speaking about processes of non-formal and informal learning assessments in various countries, it is important to consider not only individual and institutional level, but also to appraise economical, political and cultural context of every country.

The key elements for functioning system for recognition of non formal and informal learning

- **Legal basis.** Regulates processes of non-formal and informal learning in the country. Legal basis establishes assumptions for non-formal and informal learning assessment and recognition system function and integration into educational system of country.

- **Standards of vocational training.** Standards remount from the world of work and employ as significant digest of vocational competencies.

- **Social partners.** The engagement of social partners in the development of assessment and recognition systems of non-formal and informal learning is different in various countries;

- **Consultants.** Activity of consultant is very important in the first step of person’s competencies assessment process. Consultant helps candidate during preparation for assessment.

- **Assessors.** Function is to assess person’s competencies applying various methods of assessment. Assessor should have special preparation in the area of non-formal and informal learning assessment.

- **Assessing methodology.** Validation methods should be recognized and used in all the regions of a country choosing the one which suits the person best or which is indicated by an assessor. They can be as follows: portfolio, knowledge tests, and dialogue based assessment, test of practical skills, portfolio, self-evaluation, interview, and observation.

- **Official validation** of non-formal and informal learning. National non-formal learning recognition system will be validated on the job site only when the benefit of the methodology will be obvious both to employers and employees.

**Principles for recognition non-formal and informal learning**

Directing (not skipping) learning – assessment results are used for preparing personal study plan.
Voluntarism and consciousness - Recognition of non formal and informal learning is money and time consuming process, therefore to be treated as a choice.

Integral process approach – Recognition of non formal and informal learning procedures clearly defined and understood by candidate, consultant and assessor.

Stakeholder participation – Stakeholders are providing useful information on recognition of non formal and informal learning process and content.

Reliability and validity of assessment results.

Variety of assessment methods – triangulation of assessing knowledge and skills in various contexts.

Mutual trust - assured competence of assessors.

Periodic renewal - Recognition of non formal and informal learning procedure is context sensitive and open for development.

**Lithuanian experience**

The project of Leonardo da Vinci programme "Facilitating access to lifelong learning through the recognition procedure of non-formal and informal learning" (2003-2005) (implemented by Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas CCIC – main partners) gave big methodological background for Recognition of non formal and informal learning in Lithuania. It is important to mention that there was no procedure for non-formal and informal learning assessment being developed, as well as no requirements for documentation and criteria for assessment methods selection in Lithuania. The main project outcome was the procedure for non-formal and informal learning assessment. The procedure included steps of consultation and assessing. During the project competencies acquired through non-formal and informal learning were assessed. In order to identify competencies, the prepared portfolios were analyzed and the interview carried out. During the interview, the respondents were asked questions and provided with the problem situations seeking to specify the competencies indicated in the learning achievements portfolio. The interview with one person lasted for 40 minutes on average. During this period of time the members of the assessment commission were acquainted with the person being evaluated; they discussed his/her work experience and career perspectives all together and compared the information obtained during the interview with the data presented by the person in the learning achievements portfolio.

Lessons learned:

It is needed combination of methods to reveal for recognition person’s competences.

It should be noted that aiming at successful development of non-formal and informal learning achievements assessment methodology, it is necessary to consider not only assessment methods selection but their coherence aspects as well.
Non-formal and informal learning achievements process revealed the importance of time and internal resource distribution in analyzing learning achievements portfolio, planning the common activity in the assessment group and discussing the results of the interview with the candidate.

Subjective aspects are peculiar to non-formal and informal learning achievements assessment using interview and portfolio methods. Emotions, expectations and attitudes of the participants towards the assessment process can exert impact upon the process of the interview and the selections of the material for portfolio.

Thus, organizing non-formal and informal learning achievement assessment it is necessary to consider issues of psychological preparation of assessor and consultant.

Conclusions

Demand of assessment of competencies being acquired through non-formal and informal learning is growing up in all Europe. Employees, employers and vocational training institutions are the main initiators to start recognize non-formal competencies. The relevance of this initiative is also conditioned by the tendencies of European educational strategy. For the countries just being at the first stage of development systems for recognition of competences it is necessary to consider on the following priorities: revision of the existing laws, regulations and agreements; methodology for assessing non-formal learning; training of consultants and assessors; validation of non-formal and informal learning, including learning in workplace.

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### 2.2 Recognition of competences acquired in informal and non-formal settings in the Inform.Edu project

The Inform.Edu project stresses the recognition of informal and non-formal learning, however acquired, in a variety of contexts. The objective of the process is to focus on the individual and to recognise the learning’s outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills, and competences attainable through formal, non-formal, and informal activities. In fact re-qualifying one’s competences opens access to better and more diversified workplace options, and improves the opportunities for employment, active citizenship, and social inclusion. Certifying the competences acquired in non-formal and informal settings means advancing towards a greater individual autonomy and consciousness; it means certifying the competences acquired in contexts and at life’s moments not directly linked to education or through places and periods of learning lacking the formal characteristics of structured training courses as they are generally understood. These competences, developed by the individual in informal and non-formal learning contexts, can be recognised and validated by the assessment process conceived and developed in the Inform.Edu project, through a web platform called E-portfolio Inform.Edu, which supports the management of the entire process of evaluation and certification of the competences. It is an electronic portfolio into which the evidence of the competences, wherever acquired, of the candidate seeking the certification can be entered.

In order to be recognised and therefore certified with reference to the access to a formal course, the non-formal and informal competences need to be referred to the competences that characterise a professional position and/or a learning unit.

The members of the Scientific Working Group of the Inform.Edu project participated in the analysis of the Regional Register of Professional Positions of the Tuscany Region and in the identification of the Learning Units needed to perform the assessment and certification process. The process leading to the identification, first of the sector, then of the Professional Positions, and finally of the Areas of Activity, involved a wealth of national and international documents and regulations and a detailed reading of the Tuscany Register. This process was developed thanks to the contribution and involvement of educational institutions, businesses, and public administrations, which were crucial elements in this process of sensitisation and recognition of non-formal and informal learning. In fact, the participants in the information sessions were the main contributors to the analysis; the contribution of the experts of the various sectors made it possible to identify the learning units to be recognised and validated.

The choice fell on the competences in Management of the Front Office and Management of the Information Flow, as these represent knowledge and skills in high demand in the labour market. The two competences belong to level 2 of the EQF (European Qualifications Framework).

The competences (Ada, Areas of Activity) consist of an integrated combination of knowledge and skills that ensure an organisational performance adequate to delivering the results required for a specific work activity. The competences consist of a description (which illustrates the operating phases and the operations supervised) and of elements called knowledge and skills.
The *skills* are methods, techniques, procedures, software, instruments, and equipment that the individual applies, utilises, operates, or conducts. *Knowledge* is the learning, somehow formalised, that the individual recalls while performing his/her work tasks.

With regard to the Learning Units to be recognised, the performances to be achieved in terms of learning have been indicated:

- *being able to manage the incoming information flow needed to provide indications and information on services and accommodations, and to manage the internal administrative records;*

- *being able to acquire and record the incoming and outgoing correspondence; managing incoming and outgoing telephone communications.*

The performance is the index of acquisition of the competence; it also provides the criteria to which the assessors of the E-portfolio Inform.Edu process must refer when analysing the competences of the candidate in terms of learning outcomes.

The competences indicators will also allow the assessors to analyse the overall outcomes of the learning processes in which the person requesting the validation of his/her competences participated in formal and informal learning settings.

The Ada "Management of the Front Office" includes five knowledge items and seven skills; the learning outcome is achieved when it is ascertained that the individual can manage the incoming and outgoing information to provide indications and information. All *knowledge* described is focused towards communication, welcome, and retrieval of information. All *skills* of the Ada are focused on technical and professional tasks, such as the verification of information and the management of communications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADA</th>
<th>Management of the Front Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of performance</td>
<td>Manage the incoming information flow needed to provide indications and information on services and accommodations, and to manage the internal administrative records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC 234</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skill</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skill</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assist the interlocutor by presenting the information material, commenting the information collected, and providing the required clarifications.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Divulge social, cultural, and recreational opportunities and services depending on the expressed requirements and needs.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide all information concerning the organisation of the event, the available services, and the references for the technical and recreational assistance.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Efficiently manage communications in dispute situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intervene in a timely and effective manner and in accordance with the instructions provided by the organisation’s manager in problem and/or dispute situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interact with the users, also in foreign languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promptly respond to the requests for information by the participant/asker, with the aid of suitable information material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Organisational model of the Information Points to manage the situations and roles of the contact personnel in the reception/welcome structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Communication strategies to manage the interaction with differing categories.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Knowledge of users

Digital and telecommunication supports to manage the treatment and distribution of data and information

Communication techniques to effectively manage the first reception interaction

Techniques and methods to collect and retrieve the information to process and distribute the data and to activate the information systems

The Ada “Management of the Information Flow” includes seven knowledge items and four skills; the learning outcome is achieved when it is ascertained that the individual can acquire and record the incoming and outgoing correspondence.

All knowledge described is centred on describing the characteristics of the office equipment, software, privacy, work procedures, foreign language.

All skills of the Ada in question are centred on describing technical and professional skills, such as the utilisation of office equipment and monitoring procedures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADA</th>
<th>Management of the Information Flow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of performance</strong></td>
<td>Acquire and record the incoming and outgoing correspondence; manage incoming and outgoing telephone communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UC 1639</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>Adopt procedures to monitor and verify the compliance of the activities to support the continuous improvement of the standards of the outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>Distinguish the identifying features of the incoming communications for routing and apply these features to outgoing communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>Identify and apply the manual and digital filing, classification, and archiving procedures for office documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill</td>
<td>Utilise the tools to receive and transmit communications within and without the office: telephone, fax, email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Characteristics of the office equipment (fax, photocopier, scanner, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Functionalities of the office’s main application software (electronic spreadsheets, word processing software, relational databases, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Privacy regulation aimed at ensuring the confidentiality of the information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Principles of corporate organisation and communication to effectively process and transmit the information to the various positions in the organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Technical procedures to monitor, identify, and assess malfunctions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Processes and work cycles of the service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Specific technical terminology in one of the languages of the European Union</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3 Recognition procedure

The procedure to identify and validate non-formal and informal learning within the INFORM.EDU project, in accordance with the essential performance levels and minimum standards of service and recognition (Legislative Decree N. 13 of 16th January 2013), is based on a process subdivided into three basic phases:

1. Identification: this phase aims at identifying and clarifying the individual’s competences that can be related to one or more qualifications; in the case of non-formal and informal learning, this phase involves assisting the individual in analysing and documenting the learning experience and in correlating the outcomes to one or more qualifications.

2. Assessment: this phase aims at ascertaining the possession of competences that can be related to one or more qualifications; in the case of non-formal and informal learning, this phase involves adopting specific assessment methods and verifications and tests suitable to demonstrate the competences actually possessed.

3. Certification: this phase aims at issuing validation documents or certificates documenting the competences identified and validated or certified that can be related to one or more qualifications.

The process is preceded and complemented by information and orientation activities. The procedure and the related instructions follow.

2.3.1 Identification

In order to identify and clarify the individual’s competences that can be related to the two ADAs identified in the Register of the Tuscany Region (Management of the Front Office and Management of the Information Flow), an orientation activity will be carried out by the consultants (called facilitators) who will operate in the CTP [Permanent Area Centre], in the evening classes of educational institutions, and the employment centres. After receiving all information, the users of the service must be in a position to understand the competences identified and to compare them to their own experience.

First contact

The first contact with the user aims at informing him/her on the characteristics, value, and use of the assessment and at examining in detail the motivations, and the training and planning needs of the individual. The facilitator describes his/her function, explains the objectives of the meeting and provides an indication of the assessment timing and methods. This first meeting must be characterised by attention to the quality of the information provided and by the rapport with the individual users. At the end of the phase, during which the user is welcomed and the procedure is explained, the user could decide not to participate in the validation procedure.

The activity of orientation and explanation of the competences starts as a result of the user’s decision to initiate the validation process. The user will indicate which competences he/she intends to submit to validation; if the user is unable to formulate them, the facilitator will assist him/her in identifying the competences/experiences deemed to be most significant and that it is possible and useful to identify and formalise. The competences identification process will make it possible to translate the competences identified by the individual in a personal and subjective way into a standardised language,
taking as a benchmark some specific standards or professional references (e.g., the Regional Register of Competences).

2.3.2 Assessment: the evidence file

The use of an e-portfolio is envisaged to generate a coherent file that illustrates the qualifications and competences acquired by the individual through the various documents attached (CV, employment contracts, certificates, reference letters, and other testimonials).

An e-portfolio or electronic portfolio is a structured collection of documents that show and verify the competences and knowledge acquired through experience. It is especially well suited to identify and assess non-formal and informal learning because it allows each candidate to actively contribute to the collection of the proofs.

Specifically, the purpose of the E-portfolio Inform.Edu is to:
- reconstruct, catalogue, and document the personal and professional (formal and informal, explicit and implied) assets and competences/resources acquired as a result of training and work experience, in extra-professional settings and in social contexts;
- acquire and/or develop consciousness of one’s background and personal and professional assets and resources;
- support one’s personal plans and the definition of the professional and training objectives to be pursued, focusing on the crucial stages and crossroads in one’s professional development, such as access to training, introduction to the working world, and career adjustments and developments.

After having decided which non-formal and informal competences are to be validated, the candidate must find, organise, and collect the evidence and proof that document his/her personal and professional development. The facilitator will support the user, indicating which types of documents can be classified as evidence and encouraging an active search for these documents.

The users who undergo the process will not all have the same level of computer skills; therefore, the facilitator will establish the candidate’s level of autonomy and what type of support the user needs to fill out his/her profile.

Once the e-portfolio has been generated, the interview phase begins; its purpose is to match the experiences and competences of the individual being assessed. This activity will verify that the competences that the candidate intends to submit for validation really match the non-formal and informal experiences accumulated in the area.

After this match is actually verified, the facilitator will send the client to the second assessment phase (test and video-recorded simulation).

During the validation procedure, the facilitator will be available to the user for possible clarifications and/or technical support requests.

The facilitator will meet the candidate again at the end of the process to deliver the results.

E-portfolio Inform.Edu (Mahara)
The client, after having been informed of the purpose and methods of the process and of the competences to be submitted for assessment, is given credentials to access the e-portfolio; these credentials will remain always in his/her possession.

The platform chosen to support the development of the Inform.Edu project is a custom version of the MAHARA Open Source software (https://mahara.org/), which makes it possible to:
- enter the personal information of the user who requests the validation of the learning;
- add the user's professional and educational experiences;
- attach documents in digital format (scans, pdf, etc.) needed to validate the competences;
- and, in addition, attach files that can help the examination committee to certify the proofs and to do so at separate times (for example, the video-recording of a technical-practical test).

-> INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE UTILISATION OF THE E-PORTFOLIO Inform.Edu

Assessment of the portfolio
The facilitator will record the final outcome of the phase on the e-portfolio. There are two cases:

a) admission to the second evaluation phase (assessment);

b) invitation to widen and deepen the experience or training in the sector with the aim of undergoing an assessment at a later time.

Admission to the assessment phase is subject to the candidate being able to demonstrate that he or she has performed at least one significant experience in the front office and/or reception activity and in the management of information.

In case a), the facilitator invites the client to register to a session of assessment of the competences indicated.

Il portfolio per l'identificazione degli apprendimenti

Compilazione dell'e-portfolio con indicazione delle competenze da validare

2.3.3 Evaluation: assessment

The non-formal and informal learning is evaluated through two additional tools, utilised by an assessor, in collaboration with a trainer experienced in simulations (trainer/actor) during a session that lasts about one hour.

The client after being welcomed by the assessor and informed about the precise procedure of the tests, their duration, and about the grading after the verifications, is invited to take the test.

The tests consists in 20 multiple choice questions (one single valid answer out of four possibilities, within a time limit of 20 minutes). The test, based on the Mahara platform is launched automatically by the system. The outcome of the test (mark expressed out of
twenty) appears at the end of the test and is recorded by the assessor on the client’s e-portfolio.

After having taken the test, the client is admitted to perform the simulation; this consists in placing the individual in a situation similar to a real life scenario. Specifically, in order to verify the performances envisaged by the ADA, the scenario reconstructs a front-office, where the client is asked to welcome a user (the trainer/actor) and to provide information or instructions. The simulated test is video-recorded in order to allow an e-assessor to evaluate it as well: the e-assessor is an expert from the business world identified by the coordinator of the validation process.

**Simulation**
The simulation lasts between 8 and 12 minutes and takes place along a pre-defined script (→ simulated script), shared by the assessor and by the trainer/actor. Before the simulation starts (and, therefore, before it is recorded) it is necessary that the client is able to orient himself/herself in the work environment and to take charge of his/her station and of the related equipment (the computer linked to the web and the possible material on paper provided by the assessor).

![La simulazione videoregistrata](image)

The assessor and e-assessor fill out an **evaluation grille** based on four competence indicators on a scale from 1 to 5. The final outcome is, therefore, expressed out of twenty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empathy during the first contact phase (smiles, seeks to make contact with the client...)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quickly finds the information requested by the client</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoroughly and clearly illustrates the information collected</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chooses the suitable instruments to find the information</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Evaluation of the tests**

The assessor grades the test as it proceeds. Once the test ends, the outcome is communicated to the candidate only if the sum of the marks of the test and of the grille does not allow passing the evaluation phase. In fact, it should be considered that, in order to validate the competences, it is necessary that the candidate obtains an average mark of 12/20 in the two tests (test and simulation), taking into account that the test and the simulation have weights of 30% and 70 %, respectively.

The candidate, who can access the video uploaded to the e-portfolio, will receive a feedback on the outcome of the evaluation within 15 days after the test.

After the end of the test, the trainer/actor downloads the file and uploads it on the client’s e-portfolio.

At the end of the examination session or of the day, the process coordinator sends the name of the client to be assessed to the e-assessor (who must have the credentials needed to access the platform). After completing the grille, the e-assessor communicates the outcome of the evaluation to the coordinator.

The coordinator managing the process enters the data of the three evaluations (test’s marks + grille’s marks from the assessor + grille’s marks from the e-assessor) into a calculation sheet and reports the final outcome.

Two outcomes are possible:

a) validation of the competences identified;

b) non-validation of the competences identified.

---

**2.3.4 Certification**

Pursuant to the requirements of Legislative Decree N. 13 of 16th January 2013, the certificate contains the following information:

1) personal data of the recipient;

2) the data of the organisations;

3) the competences acquired, indicating, for each one of them, at least the name, the register and the reference qualifications. The latter are described reporting the name, description, indication of the level in the European Scale of qualifications, and reference, where applicable, to the reference statistical codes of the economic activity (ATECO) and of the nomenclature and classification of the professional units (CP ISTAT), in accordance with the regulations of the national statistical system;

4) the data concerning the learning modes and the assessment of the competences, with the essential data concerning the experience obtained in informal settings.
2.4 Irene’s case

The main purpose of the E-portfolio Inform.Edu is to allow a person to collect, organise, and formalise, in a dedicated portfolio, the information, evidence, and documentation (both formal and informal) demonstrating his/her personal and professional development, in order to:

• reconstruct, “catalogue,” and document the personal and professional (formal and informal, explicit and implied) assets and competences/resources acquired as a result of training and work experience, in extra-professional settings, and in social contexts;
• acquire and/or develop an awareness of one’s background and personal and professional assets and resources;
• support one’s personal plans and the definition of the professional and training objectives to be pursued, focusing on the crucial stages and crossroads in one’s professional development, such as access to training, introduction to the working world, and career adjustments and developments.

Irene participated in the testing of the Inform.Edu project for the recognition of her competences in Management of the Front Office and Management of the Information Flow. She lives in an area (Argentario Coast in the province of Grosseto) highly centred on tourism and wishes to follow a 2nd level education course to obtain a diploma in Tourism Techniques and to secure better employment and professional growth opportunities. The candidate brought with her a vast background of experience-based knowledge, which made it possible to validate her competences (formal, informal, and non-formal).
Building the *E-portfolio Inform.Edu* focused on identifying, collecting, and verifying the volume and types of documents (certificates, testimonials, declarations, etc.) that the candidate was able to provide to support her request for certification of her informal and non-formal competences.

The documents collected were the proof of the informal and non-formal experiences acquired by the candidate and allowed reconstructing her educational, employment, and extra-professional background.

After having analysed and reconstructed the candidate’s experience and having thus obtained a coherent and organised collection of data, information, and competences, it was necessary to find the documents supporting the information collected.

The attached documents supported the competences described and demonstrated that the candidate possessed them.

The evidence useful to the recognition of the competences have been entered in the *Attachments* section; specifically, Irene delivered to the facilitator:
- her curriculum vitae;
- her secondary school diploma;
- certificates attesting attendance of training courses.
The Curriculum section of the E-portfolio Inform.Edu is subdivided into fields. The facilitator filled out the fields with Irene’s help, highlighting the educational and professional experiences and providing a brief introduction of the candidate.
The field *Education and Training* was filled out with the detailed description of the documentary evidence delivered to the facilitator. The candidate possesses
- a secondary school diploma, experimental modern languages option;
- a PET [Preliminary English Test] certificate;
- a certificate for a Professional Training Course for Airport Check-in Agents at the Ampugnano airport, in the province of Siena;
- a certificate for the professional training course “Adult Routes with Adults;”
- a certificate for the professional training course “Financing of European Union Projects within the 7PQ Programme.”
In this section, the facilitator entered Irene’s *outcomes* during her professional career:
- scholarship;
- publications.

The *personal and professional objectives* were essential elements to determine whether they matched the competences to be recognised. The facilitator was able to verify that Irene’s experiences and objectives contributed to the development of the competences identified and to be validated.

Personal objectives: “the candidate wants to enhance her competences and professionalism, by working towards the growth of the area’s tourism and economy.”

Professional objectives: “the candidate is motivated to grow professionally in the tourism sector, by producing and marketing brochures promoting tourism in the area.”

Career objectives: “the candidate is interested in developing her professional path both through her own initiative and through employment within a team of experts.”
Curriculum

Le mie competenze

Competenze non formali

Buona capacità di lavorare in gruppo e di interagire con il pubblico in lingua straniera (tedesco, francese, inglese).

Competenze inerenti l’Office Automation.

Ottima capacità di adeguamento a situazioni formali ed informali.

Competenze formali

Uso delle lingue straniere (tedesco, francese, inglese).

Capacità di sviluppo legate ai progetti comunitari.

Competenze tecniche-professionali

Realizzazione di prodotti commerciali per la promozione turistica territoriale, quali cataloghi, stampati.

Promozione e commercializzazione di spazi pubblicitari.
The \textit{Skills} section was filled in highlighting the non-formal and formal competences that emerged during the interview and from the analysis of the documents. The facilitator was thus able to synthesise and describe Irene’s competences profile. Non-formal competences: “good attitude for teamwork and ability to interact with the public in foreign languages (German, French, and English). Office automation skills. Excellent ability to adapt to formal and informal situations.”

Formal competences: “utilisation of foreign languages (German, French, and English). Aptitude to development linked to European Union projects.”

Technical-professional skills: “development of marketing products to promote the area’s tourism, such as printed brochures. Promotion and marketing of advertising spaces.”

The interview conducted by the facilitator made it possible to reveal Irene’s \textit{interests}: “she practices sports such as fitness activities and horse riding. She has a passion for and is interested in cuisine, travel, cultural events, cinema, and reading.”
The section Validation shows all results achieved by Irene in the experience-based learning recognition process. The assessment of the E-portfolio Inform.Edu was the first step that made it possible to proceed to the successive tests. In fact, the candidate was qualified to complete the test, which she passed brilliantly (100%).

The simulated test was video-recorded to allow the assessor (present at the test) and the e-assessor (an expert from the business world) to evaluate it. Following procedures, the video was uploaded to the “Attachments” section and assessed by the two persons involved in the process, utilising an evaluation grille containing competence indexes. Both assessors provided a positive assessment of the candidate examined.

The final results led to the Validation of the competences in Management of the Front Office and in Management of the Information Flow.

The outcomes of the three evaluations were entered under the supervision of the coordinator responsible for the assessment process.

A certificate of the competences in the Learning Units identified was issued to the candidate Irene at the conclusion of the procedure to identify and validate her non formal and informal learning achievements.
3. Training of the operators

3.1 Competences of the operators

The process of validating the non formal and informal competences involves five categories of operators; each category requires specific competences and addresses different aspects of the assessment process.

The categories of operators involved in the process are:
- Facilitator
- Trainer/actor
- Assessor
- E-Assessor
- Coordinator

One person can be trained for more than one role, but can perform only one role in an individual process of validation of non-formal and informal competences. In addition, the evaluator and the client must not know each other.

### Finding the operators for the Inform.Edu project

The facilitators, trainers/actors, and assessors were found among the teachers of the secondary schools, partners of the project, that offer evening courses; in the Permanent Area Centres; and among the operators of the Employment Centres in the Province of Grosseto who met specific requirements of accessibility.

The E-Assessors were found by the Grosseto Chamber of Commerce, which identified two experts in the tourism sector able to competently evaluate the video-recorded simulation.

3.1.1 Profile of the Facilitator

The facilitator is the operator with whom the candidate interacts from the very start of the validation process and who will support the candidate until the conclusion of the process. This operator will be more involved in the initial phases of the process; he or she will be the client's only interlocutor from the moment of first contact to the evaluation through the evidence file.

The facilitator will participate in the following phases of the process:
- Welcoming and information;
- Identification;

The facilitator performs specific tasks in each of these phases; the main objective of these tasks is to verify whether the conditions exist to allow the candidate to proceed to the later phases of the process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACILITATOR’S TASKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Welcomes and gets to know the client</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Introduces/explains the procedure
• Provides the orientation aimed at identifying the competences to be validated
• Generates the credentials that allow the client to access the e-portfolio
• Supports the candidate in collecting the evidence and in building his or her e-portfolio on the Mahara platform
• Conducts the interview to assess the evidence file, in order to match the candidate’s experience and competences
• Decides whether the client can be admitted to the second assessment phase
• Remains available to the candidate until the end of the assessment process
• Communicates the results

Persons that meet specific requirements will be selected for the training process, in order to ensure that, by the end of the training, the facilitators possess the competences required to fulfil their role.

### PREREQUISITES TO ACCESS THE TRAINING FOR THE ROLE OF FACILITATOR

| Basic computer skills
| Relationship skills
| Orientation skills |

### COMPETENCES ACQUIRED DURING TRAINING

#### Knowledge
- E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform
- Building an e-portfolio
- Interview/talk procedures
- Competence units
- Observation techniques
- Methods of assessment and of communication of the results

#### Skills
- Being able to utilise the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform
- Being able to generate and manage digital files
- Being able to observe
- Being able to conduct an orientation interview/talk
- Being able to conduct an evaluation interview/talk

The training activity will last 12 hours and will be subdivided among the following topics:
- Introduction to the procedure for assessing non-formal and informal learning (2 hours);
- Introduction to the competence units (2 hours);
- Introduction to the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform (1 hour);
- Simulation/Workshop on the utilisation of the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform (1 hour);
- Observation techniques (1 hour);
- Techniques to conduct an interview/talk (1 hour);
- Orientation techniques (2 hours);
- Methods of assessment and of communication of the results (2 hours).

The teaching methods will be theoretical and practical (on the job training).

3.1.2 Profile of the Trainer/Actor

The trainer/actor will participate only in the simulation within the evaluation-assessment phase. The client will meet him/her for the first and only time when the simulation takes place, within the process of validation of the non-formal and informal learning.

The tasks of this operator are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASKS OF THE TRAINER/ACTOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Arranges the setting for the simulation (location and equipment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Plays the role of the user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Loads the video of the simulation to the platform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Persons that meet specific requirements will be selected for the training process, in order to ensure that, by the end of the training, the trainer/actors possess the competences required to fulfil their role.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREREQUISITES TO ACCESS THE TRAINING FOR THE ROLE OF TRAINER/ACTOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic computer skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship skills (ability to interpret and play a role)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETENCES ACQUIRED DURING TRAINING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The training activity will last 12 hours and will be subdivided among the following topics:
- Introduction to the procedure for assessing non-formal and informal learning (2 hours);
- Introduction to the competence units (2 hours);
- Introduction to the E-Portfolio Inform.Edu platform (1 hour);
- Simulation/Workshop on the utilisation of the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform (1 hour);
- Observation techniques (1 hour);
- Techniques to conduct an interview/talk (1 hour);
- Elements for constructing a simulation setting (1 hour);
- Computer skills to generate and upload videos (1 hour);
- Techniques to conduct a simulation (1 hour).

The teaching methods will be theoretical and practical (on the job training).

3.1.3 Profile of the Assessor

The assessor plays a central role in the evaluation phase of the process of validation of the informal and non-formal learning; he/she operates exclusively during the evaluation/assessment phase.

He or she will perform specific tasks within this phase of the procedure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSESSOR’S TASKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Welcomes the client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explains the methods and time limits for completing the test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enters the test results in the client’s e-portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explains the methods, timeframe, and tools of the simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Observes and assesses the simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enters the result of the simulation in the client’s e-portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In case of negative outcome, immediately communicates the results of the assessment to the candidate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Persons that meet specific requirements will be selected for the training process, in order to ensure that, by the end of the training, the assessors possess the competences required to fulfil their role.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREREQUISITES TO ACCESS THE TRAINING FOR THE ROLE OF ASSESSOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic computer skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing the certification and competences systems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETENCES ACQUIRED DURING TRAINING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The training activity will last 12 hours and will be subdivided among the following topics:

- Introduction to the procedure for assessing non-formal and informal learning (2 hours);
- Introduction to the competence units (2 hours);
- Introduction to the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform and simulation/workshop on the utilisation of the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform (1 hour);
- Observation techniques (2 hours);
- Methods for constructing an evaluation sheet regarding the competences to be validated (3 hours);
- Methods of assessment and of communication of the results (2 hours).

The teaching methods will be theoretical and practical (on the job training).

3.1.4 Profile of the E-Assessor

The e-assessor will be an expert from the professional sector, familiar with the competences for which the client requires assessment. This operator will participate in the evaluation-assessment phase.

He/she will perform specific tasks within this phase of the procedure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E-ASSESSOR’S TASKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Observes and assesses the video-recorded simulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enters the result of the simulation in the client’s e-portfolio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Persons that meet specific requirements will be selected for the training process, in order to ensure that, by the end of the training, the e-assessors possess the competences required to fulfil their role.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREREQUISITES TO ACCESS THE TRAINING FOR THE ROLE OF ASSESSOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic computer skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert in the business world</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETENCES ACQUIRED DURING TRAINING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to utilise the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Being able to observe and evaluate objectively
Being able to put the assessment processes into practice
Setting up a grille to evaluate the reference competences

The training activity will last 12 hours and will be subdivided among the following topics:
- Introduction to the procedure for assessing non-formal and informal learning (2 hours);
- Introduction to the competence units (2 hours);
- Introduction to the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform and simulation/workshop on the utilisation of the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform (1 hour);
- Observation techniques (2 hours);
- Methods for constructing an evaluation sheet regarding the competences to be validated (3 hours);
- Methods of assessment and of communication of the results (2 hours).

The teaching methods will be theoretical and practical (on the job training).

3.1.5 Profile of the Coordinator

The coordinator is the operator who knows, coordinates and supervises the entire process of validation of the informal and non-formal learning. The coordinator needs to be present starting with the process design phase, because he/she will select the operators and assess the tools that the operators intend to utilise during the validation process. He/she will participate indirectly throughout the process, to coordinate the process identification, evaluation, and validation phases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PREREQUISITES TO ACCESS THE TRAINING FOR THE ROLE OF COORDINATOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic computer skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing the certification and competences systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team coordination and management skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPETENCES ACQUIRED DURING TRAINING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building an e-portfolio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview/talk procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of assessment and of communication of the results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skills</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to utilise the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being able to utilise data processing and management tools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The training activity will last 20 hours and will be subdivided among the following topics:
- Introduction to the procedure for assessing non-formal and informal learning (2 hours);
- Introduction to the competence units (2 hours);
- Introduction to the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform (1 hour);
- Simulation/Workshop on the utilisation of the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform (1 hour);
- Methods of assessment and of communication of the results (2 hours);
- Methods for developing the evaluation tools (test, simulation script, and evaluation grille for the assessors and e-assessors) related to the competences to be validated (3 hours);
- Techniques and tools for data processing and management (2 hours);
- Simulation of the setting up and performance of the entire validation process for the informal and non-formal learning (5 hours).

The teaching methods will be theoretical and practical (on the job training).
4. Equipment

4.1 Brief operating manual for the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform

The platform chosen to support the development of the Inform.Edu project is a custom version of the MAHARA Open Source software (https://mahara.org/). What is Mahara?

Mahara is an Open Source software (under the General Public GNU licence) developed in 2006 in New Zealand; the word Mahara means “thinking”/“to think” in the Maori language. Mahara is a complete system conceived to create and manage e-Portfolios, blogs, and social networking systems to connect users and create on-line communities. Mahara is designed to provide the users with the tools to develop an electronic portfolio intended as a personal development and learning environment.

Why Mahara?

Because the system makes it possible to:

- enter the personal information of the user who requests the validation of the learning;
- add the user’s professional and educational experiences;
- attach documents in digital format (scans, pdf, etc.) needed to validate the competences;
- and, in addition, attach files that can help the examination panel to certify the proofs at separate times (for example the video-recording of a technical-practical test).

Roles

What can the user do in Mahara?

The user can register at the site www.diplomarsionline.it/mahara and request the validation at the institutions in the area (it is possible to request validations at more than one institution by asking the authorisation of the platform’s administrator).

In addition, the user can, in full autonomy, enter and update his/her personal information and his/her work and/or training experience in order to enrich the on-line profile.

It is important to recall that the user must meet the institution’s contact persons in order to proceed with the activities envisaged by the project and for which the development of the E-portfolio Inform-Edu platform was conceived.

What can the Institution’s administrator do?

Each institution shall have one or more members, who will fill the role of administrator in www.diplomarsionline.it/mahara.

The administrator's job is to record and enter into the platform (together with the user during the interviews) all information needed to validate the applicant’s learning, in order to facilitate and
streamline the work of the examination panels (the administrator can also manage the requests coming independently from users).

Each administrator manages the validation requests at his/her Institution; he/she cannot view the applications at other schools (except in the cases in which these activations are necessary).

**Access to the E-Portofolio**

In order to gain access to the E-portfolio Inform.Edu platform, after receiving the one's credentials it is necessary to connect to the site [www.diplomarsionline.it/mahara](http://www.diplomarsionline.it/mahara), enter one's credentials, and access the menu item on the top right of the screen "Reception and validation." If the access information is lost, it is necessary to contact the platform's administrator.

It is possible, in the screen that follows, to choose whether to work with a user already entered or with a new user to be added; in the former case, it is sufficient to click on the name of the user that one wants to modify or update; in the latter case, it is sufficient to click on the menu item **Add User**.
After clicking on the item **Add User**, a new user can be added to the platform by, first of all, entering the personal data and email address and by assigning a username and password; this allows the user to enter his/her data independently, in addition to being registered on Mahara. Once all data have been entered, it is sufficient to click on **Create User**.

After reaching the screen that confirms the creation of the user and shows the newly-created profile (as in the screenshot below), in order to enter the data to request the validation of each profile, it is necessary to access the site with the user's credentials; this can be done simply by clicking on the button on the left "**Enter User's Data**."

After accessing this section, the data and information in our possession for each individual user can be entered by simply clicking on the item "**Data for Reception and Evaluation**."
The main section in which one can enter or update the information for the user’s profile is then accessed. The main items concerning the project are:

- **Curriculum**: all information concerning formal and non formal education, to provide all needed information to the assessor.
- **Attachments**: to allow the Institution’s administrators to upload all the files deemed to be useful to validate the competences under examinations and, above all, to upload the video of the simulation to allow and facilitate an effective assessment.

The section on the far right called “Validation to be scheduled and results” is used to enter the outcome of the validation of the competences object of the Informedu project; therefore, it shall be used only by the assessor to explain what he/she has read and observed.
I leave it to you, administrators of the institutions, to discover other functions useful to the project. I remind you that you can reach me at the email address orientamento@laltracitta.it to clarify any doubts.

Best regards and happy working.
4.2 Test

**Knowledge area: Specific technical terminology in one of the languages of the European Union (English)**

**Question 1)** Imagine that you dial the phone number of the company IS International Sales in London; what could be the first greeting that you will hear?
   a) IS International Sales, hello! How are you?
   b) IS international Sales, how can I help you?
   c) IS International Sales, would you like to help me?
   d) IS International Sales, please, help me.

**Question 2)** Imagine that you have to contact Fox International, and that you wish to speak to Mr. Brown. What formula should you use on the phone?
   a) Good afternoon, I'm Chiara Momi from Maremma Live, are you Mr. Brown?
   b) Hello, I'm Chiara Momi from Maremma Live, I want to speak to Mr. Brown.
   c) Good morning, it's Chiara Momi from Maremma Live, can I speak to Mr. Brown, please?
   d) Hi, Chiara Momi speaking, Mr. Brown?

**Question 3)** You receive a call from IS International Sales in London and the caller asks to be connected to the sales office of the organisation for which you work; how do you reply?
   a) One moment, I'll put you through to Mr. Rossi, our Sales Director.
   b) One moment, I put you through to Mr. Rossi, our Sales Director.
   c) One moment, I'll call my colleague
   d) One moment, I'll put you through to my boss.

**Question 4)** You must write to Radio X in London on behalf of the company for which you work, but you do not know the name of the manager and you ignore whether it is a man or a woman. What form of greeting do you use at the start of the letter?
   a) Dear Sir or Ms.
   b) Dear Mister or Mrs.
   c) Dear Sir or Madam
   d) Dear Mr. or Ms.

**Question 5)** You must write, on behalf of the company for which you work, to the manager of Radio X in London, whose name you ignore. What form of salutation do you use at the end of the letter?
   a) Yours faithfully
   b) Love
   c) Yours sincerely
   d) Yours
Knowledge area: Privacy regulation aimed at ensuring the confidentiality of the information

Question 1) A video camera is installed in the hotel’s lobby. It is necessary to:
   a) Inform the police headquarters
   b) Send a communication to the local police station
   c) Communicate orally the presence of the video camera to each guest
   d) Post a sign that warns of the presence of the video camera

Question 2) In a hotel, processing of the guest’s personal data means:
   a) Collecting the guest’s personal data upon arrival to the hotel
   b) Collecting the guest’s personal data at the time of the on-line booking
   c) All operations that might involve the guest’s personal data
   d) Communicating the guest’s personal data to other companies

Question 3) The personal data protection authority is an administrative body that:
   a) Has the power to apply penalties to customers who refuse consent to the treatment of their personal data
   b) Has the power to apply penalties to companies that utilise the customers’ data inappropriately
   c) Stores all databanks at the national level
   d) Stores all databanks at the national and international level

Question 4) The hotel invites the guest to fill out an anonymous service satisfaction questionnaire. It is necessary to:
   a) Ask the guest to give verbal consent to the treatment of the data
   b) Ask the guest to give written consent to the treatment of the data
   c) No consent needs to be requested
   d) Send the results of the questionnaire to the privacy protection authority

Question 5) The following are considered “personal data“:
   a) Given name and surname
   b) Given name, surname, and tax number
   c) Given name, surname, tax number, and photograph
   d) Given name, surname, tax number, photograph, and voice recording

Question 6) The following are considered “sensitive data“:
   a) Given name, surname, and tax number
   b) Given name, surname, tax number, and photograph
   c) Given name, surname, and political party affiliation
   d) Given name, surname, and address
**Knowledge area: Characteristics of the office equipment**

**Question 1)** If you have to reproduce a document to send it by email, which piece of equipment do you use?
   a) Scanner  
   b) Photocopier  
   c) Fax machine  
   d) Telephone

**Question 2)** Which is the correct sequence of operations to send a fax?
   a) insert the sheet – dial the number – press the send button – await confirmation  
   b) dial the number – await confirmation – insert the sheet – press the send button  
   c) insert the sheet – press the send button – dial the number – await confirmation  
   d) await confirmation – dial the number – press the send button – insert the sheet

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**Knowledge area: Functionalities of the main application software (Office)**

**Question 1)** Suppose that you have to manage a list of hundreds of names with an electronic spreadsheet; what is the fastest way to search all information concerning the customer “Rossi”?
   a) Arranging the list alphabetically by last name  
   b) Search with the “Find” button  
   c) Filter on the “Surname” column  
   d) Scan down the list until Mr. Rossi is identified

**Question 2)** Suppose that you have to send a presentation to a recipient by email; to ensure that the recipient can access the contents of your presentation:
   a) You save the presentation in the Power Point “Standard presentation” format and attach it to the email  
   b) You save the presentation in the odf format and attach it to the email  
   c) You save the presentation in the pdf format and attach it to the email  
   d) You save the presentation in the Power Point 97-2003 “Standard presentation” format and attach it to the email

**Question 3)** Suppose that you have to print the Catalogue of the products contained in an access Database; which object do you have to utilise?
   a) Table  
   b) Mask  
   c) Query  
   d) Report
Knowledge area: Principles of corporate organisation and communication to effectively process and transmit the information to the various positions within the organisation

**Question 1)** Imagine that you work at the reception desk. If a guest informs you of a malfunction in the air conditioning system, whom do you contact?

a) The manager  
   b) The guest  
   c) The custodian  
   d) The maintenance person

**Question 2)** Imagine that you work at the reception desk. If a hotel guest asks for information on the ferryboat schedule, what tools do you use to find the information?

a) Internet  
   b) Fax  
   c) Email  
   d) Direct contact

Knowledge area: Technical procedures to monitor, identify, and assess malfunctions

**Question 1)** What is the main objective of managing a complaint?

a) Satisfying the customer  
   b) Repairing the fault  
   c) Satisfying the manager  
   d) Personal gratification

Knowledge area: Processes and work and service cycles

**Question 1)** Imagine that you fill the role of receptionist. What is the correct work process sequence when welcoming a guest?

a) greeting formula – verification of the booking – collection of the data and documents – handing of the keys  
   b) handing of the keys – greeting formula – verification of the booking – collection of the data and documents  
   c) verification of the booking – greeting formula – handing of the keys – collection of the data and documents  
   d) verification of the booking – handing of the keys – collection of the data and documents – greeting formula
4.3 Simulations

Simulation 1 – Welcome and search for information

**Setting:** a room must be set up, containing at least a counter and two chairs, so that the client and the trainer/actor will face each other. The trainer/actor shall position the video camera sideways, no more than two metres from the counter, so as to frame the interaction between the individuals and the candidate’s behaviour.

**Equipment:** video camera, tripod, PC, internet connection, material on paper support (local buses’ timetable, a map of the office’s location on which the assessor has highlighted the available services).

**Trainer/actor:** a tourist travelling with three other persons. The group is in Grosseto and wishes to visit Florence; it needs to compare the cost of the train fare, of the bus fare, and of a hired car.

Having received the schedules and costs of the three options, he requests information on hotels and/or bed & breakfasts in which they could stay.

In addition, the tourist asks how to reach a service (ATM, pharmacy, station, shopping centre, etc.) in the vicinity of the information office.

Before the tourist takes his leave, the operator records on an Excel file some data on the client that he or she has just welcomed, by asking for information on nationality, on whether the client is travelling as a tourist or on business, on sex, means of travel, etc.

**Candidate:** is a front-office agent at a tourist office.

**Indicators:**

ADA 1 - Management of the Front Office
- Empathy during the first contact phase (the candidate smiles, seeks to make contact with the client...)
- Retrieves the information requested
- Thoroughly and clearly illustrates to the client the information collected
- Utilises a suitable and correct language
- Is able to utilise the information found in the available material on paper support

ADA 2 - Management of the Information Flow
- Utilises the appropriate tools (internet and paper documents)
Simulation 2 – Welcome and search for information

**Setting:** a room must be set up, containing at least a counter and two chairs, so that the client and the trainer/actor will face each other. The trainer/actor shall position the video camera sideways, no more than two metres from the counter, so as to frame the interaction between the individuals and the candidate’s behaviour.

**Equipment:** video camera, tripod, PC, internet connection, material on paper support (local buses’ schedule, a map of the office’s location on which the assessor has highlighted the available services).

**Trainer/actor:** is a user who is travelling alone on business. He is in Follonica and would like to visit the city of Grosseto; he therefore requests information on the cost of the train fare, of the bus fare, and of a hired car.

After having obtained the schedules and the costs for the three options, he requests information on any points of cultural and tourist interest in the city of Grosseto.

In addition, the client asks how to reach a service (ATM, pharmacy, station, shopping centre, etc.) in the vicinity of the information office.

Before the client takes his leave, the operator records on an Excel file some data on the client that he or she has just welcomed, by asking for information on nationality, on whether the client is travelling as a tourist or on business, on sex, means of travel, etc.

**Candidate:** is a front-office agent at a tourist office.

**Indicators:**

**ADA 1 - Management of the Front Office**
- Empathy during the first contact phase (the candidate smiles, seeks to make contact with the client...)
- Retrieves the information requested
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- Is able to utilise the information found in the available material on paper support

**ADA 2 - Management of the Information Flow**
- Utilises the appropriate tools (internet and paper documents)
### 4.4 Evaluation grille

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<th>3</th>
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<tr>
<td>Empathy during the first contact phase (smiles, seeks to make</td>
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<td>contact with the client...)</td>
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<td>Quickly finds the information requested by the client</td>
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<td>Thoroughly and clearly illustrates the information collected</td>
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<td>Chooses the suitable instruments to find the information</td>
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4.5 Certificate of experience

CERTIFICATE OF EXPERIENCE

issued to

________________________________________________________

Born ____________________________ in ____________________________

relating to the Units of Skills needed to preside the Areas of Activities named

1) __________________________________________________________

2) __________________________________________________________

after an examination held on

________________________________________________________

naming structure / organization issuing the certification

________________________________________________________
# 1. Acquired competences

**Technical and professional competences (Areas of Activities)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADA Appellation</th>
<th>Description of performance</th>
<th>Skill</th>
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<tr>
<th>Unit of Competence Cod.</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
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**Professional figure belonging to ADA**

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<th>Figure appellation</th>
<th>Sector of the figure</th>
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How the competences have been verified (the typology of final examinations incurred)

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Path of validation (non-formal / informal context)

developed at

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
during the period

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

validated Units of Competences (UC)

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Any additional notes

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________