

What is Skill Up?

The Skill Up project* – Matching graduates' skills and labour world demands through authentic learning scenarios – answers the urgent priority established by Europe 2020 policies of promoting graduates' employability skills by means of connecting higher education curricula with evolving real world work demands.

What are the objectives of Skill Up?

Map good practices in matching graduates' skills and labour market demands through authentic learning scenarios in partners' higher education settings.

Improve employability skills of undergraduates by means of designing, developing, applying and evaluating authentic learning scenarios in different higher education programmes and courses.

Enhance access to career counselling and guidance services for undergraduates by training tutors in Career Counselling with emphasis in e-Counselling by means of a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course).

Implement a virtual platform (Hub) to bring together employers representatives, academic staff, and career counsellors to better prepare students for work.

What do we understand for employability skills?

Skill Up takes a competence-centred approach to the concept of employability skills understood as a combination of personal qualities and beliefs, knowledge, skilful practices and the ability to reflect critically and productively on experience, and that need to be frequently renewed during a person's working life (Yorke, 2006).

What are the essential employability skills for graduates to acquire?

Cognitive

Analytical thinking

The ability to gather, analyse and articulate information from different sources and to use it in a discerning way to solve problems and make decisions.

Foreign language

The ability to perform in a language different from the mother tongue. Also include intercultural understanding.



Creative thinking

The ability to think outside the box in order to bring new ideas to solve problems or seek solutions to a particular situation.

Methodological

Learning to learn

The ability to effectively manage one's own learning process and needs, identifying available opportunities, and and overcoming obstacles in order to learn successfully.

Decision making

The ability to think of several possible choices when an important decision must be made, to find relevant information to make a good choice and to predict the consequences of the decisions taken on others.

Self-management

The ability to set goals and priorities by the selection and distribution of the tasks and resources. It also encompasses time management, organization, responsibility, and self-reliance.



Results orientation

The ability to make the organizational efforts profitable while having always in mind the goals pursued.

Problem-solving

The ability to identify needs and problems, to engage in the actions or thoughts necessary to find solutions to a difficult or complex question or situation and resolve conceptual problems.

Digital skills

Being digitally competent in 4 areas (Vuorikari et al, 2016):

- 1) Information and data literacy
- 2) Communication and collaboration
- 3) Digital content creation
- 4) Safety

Social

Communication and interpersonal skills

The ability to articulate, transmit and defence arguments, ideas, feelings or information effectively through verbal and non-verbal messages. Also of listening, understanding and being receptive to the messages sent by others.

Cross-cultural and diversity competence

The ability to get involved and work with people with different ethnicities, race, religion, cultural background, genders, ages, sexual orientations, disability, ways of life, etc. and in different sociocultural environments.

Conflict management

The ability to take control of a conflict between two or more parties in an assertive way, which means regulating or resolving conflict without alienating others.



Teamwork

The ability to work collaboratively with other people in both face to face and online environments.

Capability to cope with changes

The ability to deal with changes and uncertainty in the professional landscape and to adapt to new situations in the workplace.

Stress management

The ability to show endurance in complicated or stressful situations, workloads or a pace of working different from usual while maintaining the same quality level in the tasks accomplished. (Haselberger et al., 2012).

Subject-specific



The set of knowledge and abilities required to successfully perform a specific occupation (i.e. lawyer, accountant, teacher).

What do we understand for authentic learning scenarios?

Skill Up expands the understanding of authentic learning as an attribute of learning tasks and environments that reflect the way the knowledge will be used in real life and assume authentic learning as "a quality of educational processes that engage students in becoming more fully human" (Scanlon, 2011).

Elements of an authentic learning environment which reflects the manner the knowledge will be used in real-life contexts:



Authentic contexts.
Reflects how knowledge will be applied in real-life.



Authentic activities.
Ill-defined and with real-world relevance.



Access to expert performances and modelling of processes



Multiple roles and perspectives rather than the teacher's single perspective



Collaboration and reflection



Articulation to enable formation, awareness, development, and refinement of thought



Lecturers provide coaching and scaffolding



Authentic assessment of learning

References

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