



LEAD Programs

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1. INTRODUCTION

The LEAD3.0 Programs report shall detail the key factors of that will shape the overall creation of the LEAD3.0 Virtual Academy. The report will take into account the findings of the WP3 Synthesis report to understand how each element of the design and deployment phase shall be shaped. Key areas discussed within this report include:

- Program target groups
- Learning objectives
- Activity Blocks
- Teaching Strategies
- Assessment & Certification Methods

2. PROGRAM TARGET GROUPS

LEAD3.0 Academy will focus on facilitators as “deliver partners” (primary target) of learning activities presented in the Academy. To be effective the Academy will be designed both for primary target group and secondary target group (managers and students).

Following the needs analysis, the manager target group has been sub divided to recognize the needs of those managers engaged in IT and those who are not. Concentrating the efforts of partners upon these groups allows the project to more effectively meet its objectives.

The first secondary target group are **IT managers**. By already attaining the position of an IT manager would suggest a comprehensive understanding of many of these E-Leadership skills, however on review of the research conducted within this project, many gaps in knowledge still remain. This section of the virtual academy therefore, will address scenarios within the management profile and focus the resources to an audience that already have experience in this field, yet require development opportunities in a selection, if not all of the Soft E-Leadership Skills.

The second secondary target group are **non-IT managers**. Given the technological era that currently dominates business operations, it is vital that even non-IT managers gain a comprehensive understanding of Soft E-Leadership skills. The non-IT managers also need to be supported in the use of digital tools where required. As can occur in the business world, different backgrounds and generations possess a knowledge gap that must be addressed prior to the effective use of the LEAD3.0 Academy tools.

The third secondary major target group are **students**. Within the current higher education field, students are being taught and study many principles related to their individual discipline specialities. However in many cases, this subject specific knowledge does not prepare the students for the challenges that they may face within the organisational environment. The LEAD3.0 virtual academy should therefore, address the e-challenges students are likely to face within their different subject disciplines. As a result, a differentiation should be made between the Soft E-Leadership skills required by business school students as opposed to those that may be required by engineering or other university students so that the offerings are tailored to individual discipline specialities.

3. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The creation of appropriate learning objectives is a crucial part of any pedagogically sound learning process, and the LEAD3.0 Virtual Academy is no different. The following sections break down each of the key activity blocks and highlight the learning objectives for each of the target groups based upon the needs analysis data:

Digital basic skills

Managers:

- To acquire the basic digital literacy skills to effectively engage with online learning materials and more efficiently interact within the virtual learning environment.
- To understand and apply the management tools and techniques within an organisational context
- To consider the implications of ICT solutions upon management tools
- If managers have extensive prior knowledge of a broad range of information technologies, then they should create associations between own IT knowledge and the effective usage to develop improved managerial decision making

Students:

- Assess digital literacy skills already in place and develop a plan to fill gaps in knowledge to support future managerial opportunities.
- Recognize digital tools to support the development of written and oral communication, such as virtual conferencing.

E-communication skills

Managers:

- To understand the application of effective communication techniques (oral, written and listening) and their potential effect upon the management process
- Apply the concepts of ICT and develop mechanisms for effective communication through digital means
- Understand the communication opportunities available to business through using social media and social networks

Students:

- To gain greater insight into the use of communication skills in managing internal and external teams.
- Develop knowledge of application towards using the digital skills already gained to communicate effectively in future working environments.
- Develop online professional communication skills (oral and written)

E-Team working skills

Managers:

- To understand the multiple variables (culture, social, language, etc) between team members in order to effectively engage a team effort to accomplish organisational tasks
- Consider the implications of ICT solutions upon the team working dynamic and apply solutions to improve efficiency.
- Evaluate the options available to manage internal and external teams through digital channels
- Understand opportunities for conflict resolution that develop through the team working environment

Students:

- Recognize the opportunities available for team working on an international basis through effective online communication
- Manage teams within education to develop skills and establish stronger development proposition

E-entrepreneurship and innovation

Managers:

- Recognize the entrepreneurial situational awareness that exists within scenarios allowing the development of innovations, risk awareness and business opportunities.
- Develop understanding of ICT innovations that impact entrepreneurial business developments
- Appreciate the development of social networks and their impact upon business operations and growth

Students:

- Develop knowledge of entrepreneurial, innovation and creativity development.
- Appreciate the need for risk management techniques and develop digital opportunities to improve this process.
- Understand entrepreneurial developments in digital environments

E-Reputation skills

Managers:

- Understand the importance of relationship building within organisations and recognize the factors that influence these developments.
- Develop understanding of how to enhance relationship and reputation building using ICT solutions and social networking opportunities

Students:

- Develop a better understanding of what E-reputation is and how it will impact current education and future managerial work
- Utilise current social networking experience to build upon reputation prior to education completion.

E-lifelong learning skills

Managers:

- Recognize the need for continual personal development to ensure knowledge is kept current and up-to-date
- Utilise Web 3.0 opportunities such as MOOCs and OERs to ensure knowledge is kept up-to-date in the most effective manner.

Students:

- Recognize opportunities within current education institution to further develop knowledge and skills
- Investigate connections with other educational resources to establish a development plan that proceeds the current mode of study

4. ACTIVITY BLOCKS

Now the target audiences and learning objectives have been derived, the appropriate activity blocks will be discussed.

What is meant by the term Activity Block?

An activity block is a space within the LEAD3.0 Virtual Academy that will segregate each key topic and the activities enclosed within it. The use of the blocks will allow users to distinguish between the each key topic and focus the trainer's efforts upon each learning objective. The ability to move between activity block may be controlled by trainer to allow for either free movement between topics or more prescribed curriculum based approach.

Following a review of the WP3 synthesis report, clear themes have emerged that highlight potential modular blocks that would present the virtual academy in a concise manner. These blocks and their definition are shown below:

Digital Basic Skills

If we are to ensure that our future leaders and business executives have the skills they need to participate fully in the digital world, then it's important that we understand what we mean by the term Digital Basic Skills. In this modular block, we will create a framework of Digital Basic Skills, which can be used by individuals and organisations to help develop their digital skills. It is important to have a common measurement framework in order to ensure that everyone is judged according to the same, minimum standard of digital literacy.

The understanding of basic digital skills is an essential first step for both managers and students. Each group will have strengths and weaknesses; therefore this block is designed to ensure learners are on the same level.

- Communication tools (**highlighted as important to students**)
 - On completion of the activity block, all users should be competent in using the most diffuse digital tools for communicating, interacting, collaborating, sharing and connecting with others online.
- Management tools (**highlighted as important to both students and managers**)
 - All users should be confident in finding, managing and storing digital information and content on a device or in the cloud. This involves competency in using search engines, assessing the accuracy of sources of information; utilising security tools when browsing and regularly updating and running virus-checking software.

E-communication skills

- Written communication (**highlighted as important to students**)

- Users should be able to keep in touch using email, instant messaging, video calls (virtual meetings) and social media. They should be able to post on forums to connect with communities and communicate with organisations about their products and services.
- Verbal communication (**highlighted as important to students**)
 - Users in managerial positions should become adept at maintaining customer and client relationships. They should utilise social media to promote their business and connect with new customers and improve their customer service by providing accessible product information and answers to frequently asked questions.
 - Users should be able to engage effectively with online negotiation processes within the business sector.

E-Team working skills - (highlighted as important to both students and managers)

- Cultural issues
 - In this activity block, users will develop the ability to work in a virtual team on a series of projects. This will involve exercises such as, conference calling; arranging meeting times; and appointing group and leadership roles while considering time zones, cultural nuances and idiosyncratic working patterns.
 - Managing virtual teams will be unpacked to present users with effective tools in working online to deliver upon tasks and breaking down geographic boundaries.

E-entrepreneurship and innovation - (highlighted as important to both students and managers)

- Risk awareness
 - This activity block will examine the risks associated with the digital market place and equip users with the tools of e-risk management to safeguard against oversights and encourage calculated risk-taking.
- Opportunity recognition
 - Users will develop their ability to identify innovative opportunities for digital entrepreneurship and innovation. Identification of business opportunities by technology area, industry sector, business function as well as enterprise stage and size.
- Innovation application

- Users will be encouraged to commercialise innovative opportunities which entails the ability to extract value from digital networks; knowledge of digital marketing channels and a strategic thinking perspective.
- Business models and Digital enterprises
 - Digital technologies such as, social media, cloud computing, mobile and Big Data are transforming the ICT industry and the way companies operate across all vertical markets. They create new business opportunities for digital entrepreneurship both on the supply-side (to launch new services and/or establish new businesses) and on the demand-side (to optimize operations, reduce costs and improve services). This activity block will provide insight into business opportunities provided by technology (social media, cloud, mobile and big data) and case studies of digital enterprises.

E-Reputation skills (highlighted as important to managers)

- Networking
 - Key networking strategies for the online environment will be discussed and users will be invited to propose new strategies for fostering digital networks of collaboration and innovation.
- Social networking
 - The Internet has assumed a sense of permanence in our lives and in industry. As a result, E-reputation skills as they relate to social networking will encompass taking ownership of your digital footprint—all of the publicly available information about you and your organization online that you have control over, either directly or indirectly especially all social media platforms and networking sites.
- Rapport building
 - In this activity block, users will be invited to consider how trust can be established through digital channels to achieve organisational success. This will involve understanding the demands of fostering and developing ethical and professional morale in a virtual environment.

E-lifelong learning building skills (highlighted as important to both students and managers)

- Creativity

- On completion of this activity block, users should possess increased independence and confidence in solving problems and finding solutions using digital tools.
- Self-awareness
 - Users should be able to engage in self-directed learning using digital tools such as, MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses). They should be able to utilise a search engine to find the information they need, search for data on comparison websites, bookmark useful websites and services and store data on a device.
- Personal development
 - Users will have developed an understanding of how to protect their personal data on all online forums, networking and social media sites.
 - Users will be able to create a social media post, create a text document such as a CV, and create and share feedback about products and services
- Resource development
 - Users should be able to create basic digital content in order to engage with digital communities and organisations.
 - Users will be able to create an informational or e-commerce website, create content (pictures, logos, text) to promote their organisation and reach customers, utilise social media and create communities to engage with customers as well as create resources to improve employees' digital skills.

The six clusters have been further divided in some competency areas. Each activity block will refer to a specific competency area.

Cluster	Competency area
Digital basic skills	Use of digital tools
	Use of knowledge-management tools
	Digital privacy and security
E-communication skills	Active listening
	Oral communication through digital channels
	Written communication through digital channels
	Management of online meeting
	Digital negotiation

	Digital management of conflict
E-team working skills	Team management through digital channels
	Virtually management of multicultural teams
	Drive the change in multicultural and/or geographically distributed teams
	Management of internal and external teams and networks through digital channels
	Delegation within virtual teams
	Enhance of professional development of virtual teams
	Provide feedbacks through digital channels
E-entrepreneurial and innovation skill	Awareness of technologies' impact on business
	Awareness of business innovation arising from digitalization
	Anticipation of digital trends
	Use of Big Data for decision making
	Social Networks and Social Media for business
	Taking business risk in digital environments
	Analysis and management of business risk in digital environments
E-reputation skill	Ethic and moral harness in digital environments
	Importance of e-reputation for business
	Build of e-trust
E-lifelong learning building skills	Use of digital learning tools
	Offline and online learning
	Use of digital channels to facilitate knowledge and sharing as ways of learning
	Digital tools and source for problem solving

5. MAIN TRAINING NEEDS (PRIORITIES)

Over the project period, a limited amount of focus can be given to the development of individual activities blocks. Therefore it must be discussed as to which activity blocks form part of the core development stage of the Academy and which should be added to the long term development plan. Based upon the WP3 Needs Analysis the key target groups were evaluated to assess the most appropriate activity blocks to be provided.

The training needs are highlighted within the table below:

Soft Skills	Hard Skills
Managers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of virtual tools in conflict solving • E-trust building • Managing internal and external teams and networks through digital channels • Online negotiation • Driving the change in a multicultural and/or geographically distributed organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of big data for decision making • Analysing and managing business risk in digital environments • Business risk taking • Use of social networks or social media for business purposes • Anticipating potential digital trends' impact on business
Students	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting and enhancing professional development in virtual teams • Virtual management of multicultural team • Motivate and influence individuals and teams through digital channels • Delegation within virtual teams • Online negotiation • Managing internal and external teams and networks through digital channels • Management of online meetings • Oral communication through digital channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysing and managing business risk in digital environment • Business risk-taking in digital environment • Security and privacy issues related to digital tools • Anticipating potential digital trends' impacts on business • Use of big data for decision making • Innovative business potentialities arising from digitalisation for different business sectors • Use of digital tools (communication, networking, online collaboration,...) • Use of knowledge management tools
Trainers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-trust building • Active listening through digital channels • Online negotiation • Use of virtual tools in conflict solving • Motivate and influence individuals and teams through digital channels • Supporting and enhancing professional development in virtual teams • Driving the change in a multicultural and/or geographically distributed organisation • Virtual management of multicultural teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of how technologies can reshape life, business and value chains • Use of knowledge management tools • Business risk taking in digital environments • Analysing and managing business risk in digital environments • Innovative business potentialities arising from digitalisation for differing business sectors • Use of big data for decision making • Security and privacy issues related to digital tools

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing internal and external teams and networks through digital channels • Delegation within virtual teams • Role of e-reputation and identity for business in the digital era • Harness ethics and professional moral in virtual environments • Oral communication through digital channels • Management of online meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipating potential digital trends' impacts on business
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In a number of the training needs highlighted above, there are overlapping elements within each target group, therefore the table below has been generated to display the collapsed training needs and the target groups that suggested they were needed:

Soft Skills	Hard Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of virtual tools in conflict solving (Managers & Trainers) • E-trust building (Managers & Trainers) • Managing internal and external teams and networks through digital channels(Managers, Trainers & Students) • Online negotiation (Managers & Trainers) • Driving the change in a multicultural and/or geographically distributed organisations(Managers & Trainers) • Supporting and enhancing professional development in virtual teams (Students & Trainers) • Virtual management of multicultural teams (Students & Trainers) • Motivate and influence individuals and teams through digital channels(Students & Trainers) • Delegation within virtual teams(Students & Trainers) • Online negotiation (Students) • Management of online meetings (Students & Trainers) • Oral communication through digital channels (Students and Training) • Active listening through digital channels(Trainers) • Driving the change in a multicultural and/or geographically distributed organisation (Trainers) • Delegation within virtual teams (Trainers) • Role of e-reputation and identity for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of big data for decision making (Managers, Trainers & Students) • Analysing and managing business risk in digital environments (Managers, Students& Trainers) • Business risk taking in digital environments (Managers, Students & Trainers) • Use of social networks or social media for business purposes (Managers) • Anticipating potential digital trends' impact on business (Managers, Students & Trainers)

business in the digital era (Trainers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harness ethics and professional moral in virtual environments (Trainers) 	
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Following a collaborative analysis of the training needs highlighted within the tables above, as well as review of the synthesis report, the starting point for the LEAD3.0 Academy has been established. This decision took into account the perspectives of both academic and business partners involved within the project. The bullet points below highlight each training need that will be focused upon in the initial pilot phase of Work Package 4 and the learning outcomes within each activity block:

Effectively Manage Online Meeting

- Planning a meeting
 - Online meeting etiquette
 - Preparing meeting (agenda setting, time zones/scheduling, reminders)
 - Preparation of background material
- Managing meeting
 - Non-verbal communication
 - People engagement
 - Use of polls & quiz's
 - Facilitation and engagement
 - Remaining focused
- Debrief meeting outcomes
 - Virtual feedback
 - Minutes
 - Recordings
- Tips and Tricks

I can drive change in multi-cultural and geographically distributed organisations

- Understanding and managing cultural differences
 - Managing diversity
 - Cultural and corporate awareness
 - Anticipating issues
 - Understanding behaviours
 - Culturally correct decisions
- Goal setting
 - Leadership styles
 - Engaging and motivating people
 - Cultural drivers for change
- Decision making
 - Proactive engagement
- Team dynamics
 - Solve conflicts within multi-cultural groups/teams
- Tips & Tricks

6. TEACHING STRATEGIES

Identifying the most appropriate teaching strategies is essential for the program to move forward. Understanding the key target groups discussed in section 2, and their needs draws the LEAD3.0 Virtual Academy to taking advantage of a divergent approach.

With the LEAD 3.0 Virtual Academy should approach the education process from a Andragogy perspective that focuses upon the level of the target groups. Andragogy is discussed within the literature as focusing upon adult learning, which is driven by self awareness and self driven learning. The Canadian Literacy and Learning Network (2016) highlight 7 key rules of adult learning that the LEAD3.0 Academy should look to engage:

1. **Adults must want to learn** They learn effectively only when they have a strong inner motivation to develop a new skill or acquire a particular type of knowledge.
2. **Adults will learn only what they feel they need to learn** Adults are practical in their approach to learning; they want to know, “How is this going to help me right now?”
3. **Adults learn by doing** Children learn by doing, but active participation is more important among adults.
4. **Adult learning focuses on problems and the problems must be realistic** Children learn skills sequentially. Adults start with a problem and then work to find a solution.
5. **Experience affects adult learning** Adults have more experience than children. This can be an asset and a liability.
6. **Adults learn best in an informal situation** Children have to follow a curriculum. Often, adults learn only what they feel they need to know.
7. **Adults want guidance** Adults want information that will help them improve their situation or that of their children. They do not want to be told what to do. They want to choose options based on their individual needs.

Looking at the student target audience, we must understand their current method of learning. Academic endeavours (excluding PhD researchers) follow a more focused linear curriculum that is pre-set within early stage planning. The curriculum based focus is designed to take a student on a journey, from initially understanding the key concepts that will be outlined, to embracing a firmer understanding of each and their application. Within the LEAD3.0 Virtual Academy, this approach for student users will enable them to engage with content in a pre-determined process to follow this learning journey to completion. Despite this approach being used within educational institutions, the Academy should not be limited to this approach or pre-select for the target groups. Instead, with the position of the Academy as a learning

intermediary, the trainers and partner institutions should select the approach that best fits the learning style.

Whilst giving students the ability to be flexible with the resources and that will be followed, it has been found in previous experience that this leads to a disjointed learning pattern that can lead to gaps in knowledge and less effective learning, therefore a more curriculum system is often more effective. Managers however, given their broader experience in the work place, may be able to make more enhanced use of free flow activity approach, to fit around the daily pre-set tasks in these roles. This free flow process will put the onus upon the user to take responsibility of their own development, rather than the set curriculum that could be perceived as patronising. By adopting the set learning process for students and free flow learning for managers, gives each target group an academy that is designed around their learning style. In building the Academy to have both options available, the option can be given to the trainers who are leading the education to recognize the most appropriate method for the learning profile. It is therefore the overall consensus that the decision between free flow and curriculum based, should be left to the learner to make dependent on their requirements.

Although these divergent teaching strategies for each target group, have their advantages and disadvantages, designing the LEAD3.0 Virtual Academy around these principles shall enable feedback and improved understanding of how users best engage with the content. Following this gaining of feedback, more informed decisions can be made to further enhance the process for the end user.

Another key point that is important to understand in order to direct the Academy's design is the variations in learning styles. The diagram below presents the recognized learning styles that the Academy should look to support:



(Educataholic 2014)

By recognizing the diversity of students and managers, the LEAD3.0 Academy will address these learning styles through a blended learning process.

The use of a **Blended Learning** approach will enable the LEAD3.0 Virtual Academy to effectively deliver upon its learning objectives, in line with the mix of learning style present within the target groups. Garrison & Kanuka (2004) discuss blended learning as the process of creating synchronous learning through face-to-face learning and online materials. These online materials have evolved in recent years to further enhance the learning process and are discussed in more detail in the next section.

On evaluation of the current competition within the online learning market, two key approaches stand out as an approach that would enhance the learning strategy of the Academy. These are Competence Driven and Target Driven learning strategies. The competence driven approach is embraced by Udacity. The focus is based upon the skills an individual has that are broader in their ability to support career development across all potential job roles. On the flip side, Target driven strategies (headed by Knewton) allows for multiple stakeholders to engage with the learning process and have it adapt to their individual needs. BY using these methods as a directional approach to the design of the LEAD3.0 Virtual Academy, a unique approach will be presented to the market and will provide a competitive advantage.

1.1 E-tivities

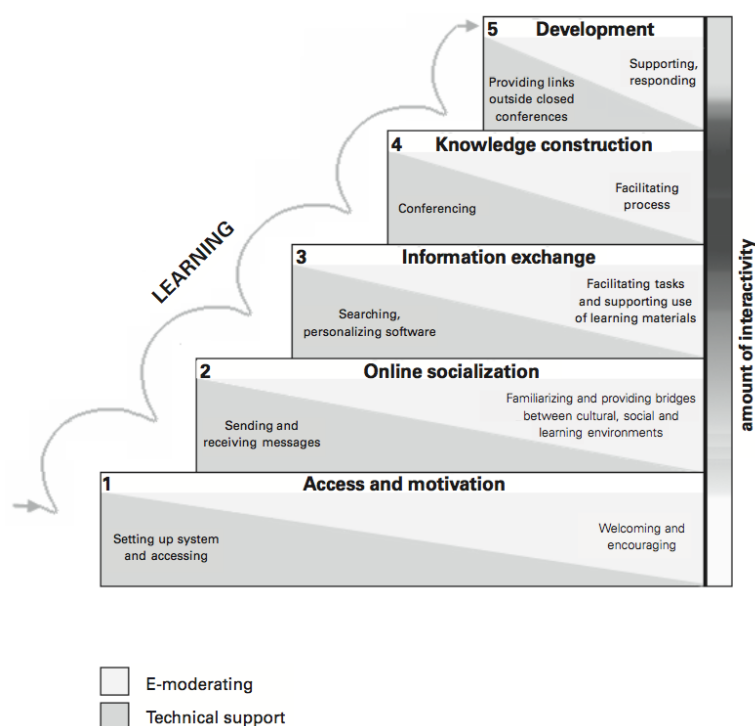
The project contains some indications on how OERs must be integrated with e-tivities in order to activate and enhance the secondary target learning. E-tivities are: “frameworks for enabling active and participative online learning by individuals and groups. E-tivities are important for the online teaching and learning world because they deploy useful, well-rehearsed principles and pedagogies for learning as well as your choice of networked technologies. They focus on the learners- the people I call the participants, who are contributing, providing, reworking, interpreting, combining most of the knowledge. They overturn the idea that learning depends on one big expert and his/her conveying of knowledge. They are based on the strong idea that knowledge is constructed by learners through and with others.” (Gilly Salmon, 2002).

E-tivities are online tasks involving two or more persons aiming to support learning. They are cheap to create, easy to run, reusable, changeable, customizable. Their main purposes are to:

- enable academics, designers, curriculum developers and teachers to design for online participation by their students
- provide learners with an effective scaffold to support them in achieving the learning outcomes
- enable learners and e-moderators to work together on key learning resources
- promote a learner-centred, task or problem-based approach to online learning (moving away from content-centric design)
- challenge and motivate participants to critique, contribute, review and consolidate ideas in a focused way
- increase learner engagement
- save staff time

- make the course productive and fun
- deploy easily the newer technologies such as social media
- find easily purposeful ways of using freely available, topical and/or fun resources within the learning design
- incorporate sound pedagogical principles quickly into teaching and learning, including into large scale online approaches such as MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)

Gilly Salmon described also a five-stage model of how participants can benefit from increasing skill and comfort in working, networking and learning online, and what trainers need to do at each stage to help them to achieve this success. The model shows how to motivate online participants, to build learning through appropriate e-tivities and to pace e-learners through programmes of training and development.



1.2 Class based training

Whilst the rise in online learning has increased over recent years, for the most part it has grown to work in conjunction with class based training. Learning that is solely online does indeed exist and does have success stories, the combination of the two teaching strategies enables a great achievement rate of those learning. The Academy will look to embrace this combination of learning approaches and provide trainers with online teaching resources to focus upon the learning outcomes discussed in chapter 3.

7. ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION

Completion of the learning process in most cases includes the process of assessment, in order to measure the level of understanding of the materials. Yet for the two separate target groups, managers and students, a measured approach is required to prepare effectively for both.

Assessment is an essential factor for both target groups as it allows for an effective measure of the understanding demonstrated by the user. Assessment methodologies within the best practice case studies have highlighted the use of peer review, multiple choice tests and open ended forum discussions as effective assessment tools. With the support of trainers, the Academy will provide a basic automated assessment method with multiple choice questions and pre-determined answers, given instant feedback to the learners. By working collaboratively with trainers, the assessment process will be focused upon the often unique requirements of individual learning communities. Beyond this basic assessment method, a more time intensive method should look to be employed to get learners to assess each other's work, which is then moderated by the overseeing trainer.

With working with multiple educational training partners, the LEAD3.0 Virtual Academy will look to work collaboratively to certificate the successful completion of the learning process. Whilst there are benefits to all three, it is essential for all activity blocks to take considered approach to the most effective assessment technique for the content being covered. Dependent on the time commitment available from the trainers, could determine the level of interaction and review time needed from these assessment methods, as multiple choice test can be set to automatically be marked, whilst peer review and open ended forum discussions requires a more time consuming approach.

The navigation of the academy will be critical to support the learners educational needs. Whilst the activity blocks and individual skills will be clearly interconnected to encourage succession from one to another, an assessment tool may also be a beneficial tool. By encouraging users to participate in a self assessment tool, similar to the structure of the needs analysis it will be possible to establish the gaps for each individual. This will allow users to consider what areas they need to focus upon, and then clearly present these activity blocks to the user to step into the academies learning environment.

Following the successful completion of the assessment, comes the certification. For both user group, certification yields a symbol of success and achievement. Yet for managers that are clearly already in work, this may not be as important a factor, as it would be to the student users. The delivery of the certification process is one that requires careful consideration. Whilst engagement with universities (and business schools within them) is important, the process of gaining certification from them, may be a complex one. If the certificates are non-accredited and essentially show the successful completion of the online learning, then this would be straight forward.

In whichever direction the development of assessment and certification takes, the LEAD 3.0 Virtual Academy should be prepared to be flexible in its approach, as despite the consideration

and expertise held amongst the project partners, the end user may show an alignment with another thought process discussed within this current strategy document.

8. LEAD3.0 ACADEMY FEATURES FOR ADMINISTRATORS, TRAINERS AND USERS

Whilst the educational benefit of the LEAD3.0 Virtual Academy is paramount to its effectiveness, so are the features built in for administrators, trainers and users. One of the key features discussed within the best practice analysis is the tracking functionality. By understanding the usage patterns of users the trainers and administrators will be able to evolve the pedagogies presented to the users. One of the key issues faced by current MOOC's is the high dropout rate of their users. By tracking progress of users on an individual basis, it would be possible for reactive reminders to be used to reengage users.

As mentioned previously within this document, it is essential for trainers to have opportunities to guide the users in the manner most appropriate to them. Therefore navigation and flexibility options should look to feature with the Academy's design.

In the future development of the Academy, a method evaluating learners needs will be established to better personalize the learning experience. The technology to achieve this is available, however time is limited and therefore this will be implemented as part of the long term strategy of the Academy.

The academy seeks to be user centric in its approach, which requires the option for students and managers to effectively use the academy. The managers will have a user centric navigation, in order to effectively target the key areas for their development. Whilst the student centred approach will focus upon key competencies in the navigation, enabling students to perceive the areas for growth.

As the trainers will hold three key roles within the Academy, there will therefore be specific functionalities to support the trainers in completing these tasks. As a creator of content, the trainers must be able to effectively create new materials to the Academy. Whilst as a curator, the trainer must ensure the content within the Academy remains relevant and academically sound. The other role of the curator is to ensure the OER's remain as effective learning tools that continue to operate throughout the Academy's life cycle. Finally, whilst learning alone is possible, it is not as effective as engaging within a learning community, the trainer therefore will be the facilitator within the Academy and will engage learners, and ensure the learning process remains problem free. As seen from the best practices, friction within an online learning environment can quickly translate into participant disengagement.

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