



apprentline

*Capacity Building in the Organisation of Online
Apprenticeships*

**Guidebook of Best Practices in the field of Online
Apprenticeships**

December 2023

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Disclaimer

The material of the project reflects only the author's views. The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission or the Hellenic National Agency cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Note on the development of the guidebook

The present guidebook is developed within the framework of the APPRENTLINE project, which is coordinated by the Company of Research, Education, Innovation and Development of the North Aegean Region S.A. (ELORIS), with contributions from the rest of the partners – Action Synergy, the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Services and Shipping of Seville (CCSEV), the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) and the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI).



Contents

1. Introduction.....	5
2. Methodology.....	5
2.1. Desk research	6
2.2. Field research	6
2.3. Internal review.....	6
2.4. External review	6
2.5. Criteria for selection of best practices.....	7
3. Collection of best practices	7
3.1. Best practices in the field of IT	8
3.1.1. Online apprenticeship of ICF from the USA.....	8
3.1.2. Online apprenticeship of LinkedIn from the USA	10
3.1.3. Online internship in Computer Science of EUSA from Spain.....	12
3.1.4. Bootcamp and hybrid apprenticeship of Accenture from Latvia and Lithuania	15
3.1.5. Internship of Wunder.io from Latvia	17
3.2. Best practices in the field of (Digital) Marketing	19
3.2.1. Digital marketing apprenticeship of Big Creative Education from the UK.....	20
3.2.2. Digital Marketing Online Apprenticeship of IFATE from the UK	21
3.2.3. Online internship in Marketing and Advertising of EUSA from Spain	24
3.2.4. Apprenticeship for Marketers of Acadium Inc. from Canada	27
3.3. Best practices in the field of Tourism and Hospitality	29
3.3.1. Online apprenticeship of ELORIS S.A. from Greece.....	29
3.3.2. Apprenticeship in Hospitality of Hotel Brain Academy from Greece	31
3.3.3. CULTVET apprenticeship of ELORIS S.A. from Greece	32
3.4. Best practice in the field of Business and Finance	34
3.4.1. Apprenticeship of BA School of Business and Finance from Latvia.....	35
3.5. Best practice in the field of Advertising and Journalism	37
3.5.1. Apprenticeship in Journalism of BBC News from the UK	37
3.5.2. Online apprenticeship in Advertising and Journalism of EUSA from Spain.....	39
3.6. Best practice in the field of EU Studies.....	42
3.6.1. Online apprenticeship in EU Studies of University of Seville from Spain	42
3.7. Best practice in the field of Consulting.....	45
3.7.1. Apprenticeship of INCOMA from Spain	45

3.8. Best practice in the field of Languages and Culture	47
3.8.1. Apprenticeship of Hellenic Culture Centre from Greece.....	47
3.9. Best practices encompassing more than one sector	50
3.9.1. Apprenticeship of Arden University from the UK.....	50
3.9.2. Apprenticeship of e-Careers Education from the UK	52
3.9.3. Apprenticeship of Spain Internship from Spain.....	53
3.9.4. Virtual work experience program of Forage from the USA	55
3.9.5. Virtual internship experience of Bright Network from the UK.....	57
3.9.6. Nesternship of Nestle India from India	59
3.9.7. Online internship of Side Hustle from Nigeria.....	61
3.9.8. Free online internship with experience of ThinkNEXT Technologies Pvt. from India.....	63
3.9.9. Blended-learning apprenticeship of Mindful Education from the UK.....	65
3.9.10. Apprenticeship of RISEBA University of Applied Sciences from Latvia.....	67
3.9.11. Hybrid internship of Printful from Latvia.....	69
3.9.12. Online apprenticeship of Apprenti from the USA.....	72
4. Conclusion	74

1. Introduction

The present document features a collection of best practices of online apprenticeships, identified by partners within the scope of APPRENTLINE (Capacity Building in the Organisation of Online Apprenticeships) project, implemented within the framework of Erasmus+ Programme under Ref. № 2022-1-EL01-KA220-VET-000087186.

The main objective of the project is to build the capacity of VET actors (VET centres, companies, intermediary organisations) to use effectively digital tools in order to organise online apprenticeships.

The collection of best practices will serve as the basis for the implementation of the other foreseen project activities – the development of handbooks for each of the three target groups and organisation of training for the main stakeholders for improving their capacity to organise online apprenticeships.

The collection features a total of 30 best practices of online apprenticeships, successfully implemented by organisations from all over the world. The best practices are categorised according to the VET sector of their application, with the following sectors identified – IT, (Digital) Marketing, Tourism and Hospitality, Business and Finance, Advertising and Journalism, EU Studies, Consulting, Languages and Culture. The collection also features best practices encompassing more than one sector.

2. Methodology

The process of identifying and validating the best practices consisted of the following **4 stages – desk research, field research, internal review, external review**. The collection of data involved a **two-step qualitative research** with the use of templates for both the review of secondary sources and the field survey. This approach ensured the collection of identical information and significant level of trustworthy and reliable results. Similarly, the **assessment** of the collected data was held at **two levels** – internally by partners and externally by stakeholders. This double check led to improvement of the produced materials and ensured that the expertise and contribution of the organisations involved in the assessment is reflected in the final collection of best practices.



2.1. Desk research

Desk research involved the study of secondary sources, i.e. through searching information available on the Internet or in relevant literature. The most relevant results were carefully reviewed and additional information was collected about each best practice identified.

Once a best practice had been identified as fulfilling the criteria explained in Section 2.5, it was described in more detail by filling in the relevant template for desk research. Each project partner was responsible for the collection of 6 best practices, with the total number of best practices collected by the consortium being 30. Before proceeding to the field research, partners shared a list of the identified best practices to avoid repetition and overlap of best practices.

2.2. Field research

Field research involved the collection of data from primary sources, i.e. from the organisations responsible for the best practices. Each organisation identified during the desk research as responsible for providing a best practice was contacted by the respective project partner and requested to complete a questionnaire for field research. Different means of communication were used to conduct the interviews – exchange of emails, online meetings, phone conversations, etc. In cases when contact with the organisations could not be established, the templates for field research were completed on the basis of the information available in secondary sources. The information obtained from the field research was used to complement and expand the data that had been gathered during the desk research.

2.3. Internal review

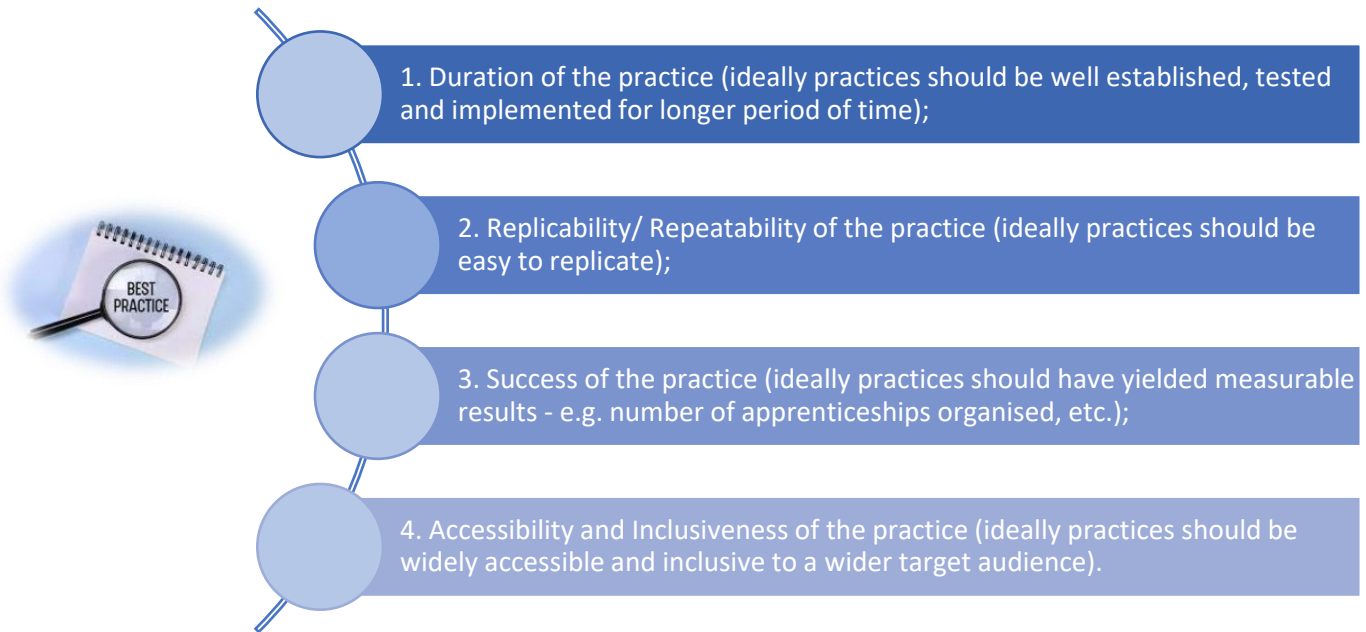
The draft collection of best practices was internally discussed and reviewed by project partners at the first transnational meeting, held in Mytilene, Lesbos on 5-6 June 2023. Partners provided feedback, comments and suggestions for improvement on the draft best practices collected during the desk research. This process of internal quality assessment benefitted from the different and complementary expertise of partners involved in the project which represent the three main target groups – a VET centre (ELORIS), a company (Action Synergy) and intermediary organisations (CCSEV, BCCI and LCCI).

2.4. External review

Each partner held consultation and validation of the draft guidebook with one external stakeholders from each of the three main target groups - VET organisations, intermediaries and employers (in total 3 interviewed stakeholders). Following the external quality assessment, the guidebook was finalised, published on the project's website and disseminated to stakeholders.

2.5. Criteria for selection of best practices

In order for a best practice to be considered suitable for inclusion in the present collection, it had to satisfy the following four main criteria:



To ensure that the collection is as comprehensive as possible, it had been decided that the best practices could cover any VET sector and geographical region. Apprenticeships delivered in a hybrid way had also been considered suitable for inclusion in the collection.

3. Collection of best practices

Each best practice is presented in 4 sections, based on the following key questions:

WHAT?

What is this best practice about and what is the scope of its application?

HOW?

How is the apprenticeship organised and how are the skills of the apprentices assessed?

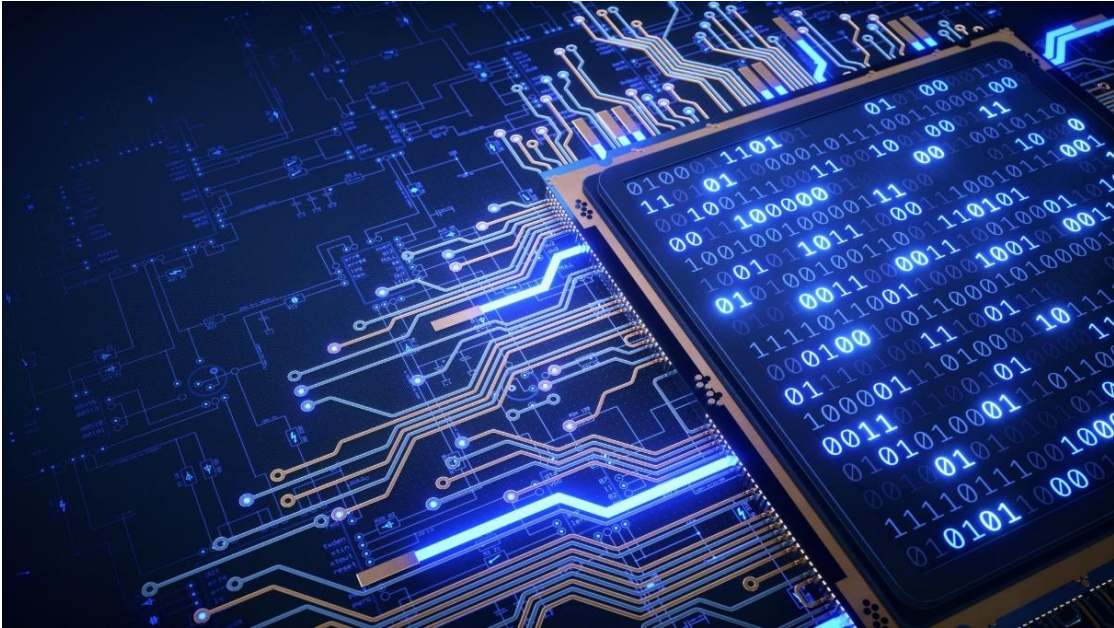
WHY?

Why is it important to study this best practice and why it can be considered as successful?

WHO?

Who are the main beneficiaries of this best practice?

3.1. Best practices in the field of IT



3.1.1. Online apprenticeship of ICF from the USA

A “high touch” mentoring approach sets the expectations upfront. Setting recurring check-in meetings helps to make sure apprentices have opportunities to get the guidance they need to do their work effectively and connect with their mentor.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The apprenticeship is organised in the field of Cybersecurity.

Objective

The objectives of the apprenticeship were to:

- Allow employers in the cybersecurity sector to reach beyond their local area to access talent;
- Allow people in remote areas to pursue a career in the cybersecurity sector;
- Allow educational institutions that offer cybersecurity training but have a limited network of local employers to connect better students to jobs.

Website

<https://www.apprenticeship.gov/sites/default/files/icf-remote-registered-apprenticeships.pdf>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

Typically, the duration of the apprenticeship is 18 months.

Preparation activities

When transitioning from in-person to virtual or remote apprenticeship training, the organisations that offer online apprenticeships should:

- Increase the number of activities. Add activities to keep the apprentices' attention in a virtual world;
- Adapt in-person instructor-led activities. Allocate the instructional time differently. Rethink the activities, particularly hands-on activities and interactions with guest speakers or among themselves, and how to use them to keep the audience engaged;
- Leverage the features of the virtual classroom platform;
- Prepare classroom, and organize materials for an instructor-led training, plan and test virtual training;
- Also, in this approach employers must be concerned about hackers who attack using that technology by applying regular security updates, reduce people's access to most documents and data.

Process of monitoring the tasks

The apprentice must be able to work independently. The apprentice is required to be proactive by "asking for feedback and reading and studying on your own time." The apprentice will need to be more disciplined and need to create the structure to their day-to-day life. This includes having a dedicated/schedule of working hours and daily work routines to maintain some consistency. These expectations can be reinforced by the mentor and company policies or practices about production and level of service needed from the apprentice during their periodic check-ins, but the apprentice will need to establish an appropriate pace that will allow them to be accessible and complete their work in a timely manner that is consistent with the needs of the employer.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

A "high touch" mentoring approach sets the expectations upfront. Setting recurring check-in meetings helps to make sure apprentices have opportunities to get the guidance they need to do their work effectively and connect with their mentor. The mentor should be prepared to review work conducted thus far and address key questions that the apprentice may have about the tasks they have been given. In addition, the just-in-time mentoring should be made available in which mentor and mentee can connect the moment a question arises.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

Videoconferencing platforms, cloud-based file-sharing and storage platforms, collaborative online workspaces, project management tools, instant messaging applications, and both informal and structured teambuilding.

Assessment

The assessment is done through measuring the performance of the apprentice on the job.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

The initiative was able to:

- find strong matches between the demand for cybersecurity skills and the supply of students on that career path;
- provide technical assistance to companies on designing online registered apprenticeship programs;
- offer apprenticeship opportunities to people living in remote areas in the cybersecurity field.

Success factors

- Cybersecurity is a field that allows online working;
- There is a great emphasis on the organization of the cooperation of the apprentices in online working environments.

Constraints

No particular constraints were identified.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The main target groups include people in remote areas wanting to work in the cybersecurity sector and VET organisations that want to expand their access to companies from different geographical areas.

Stakeholders

Companies that are working in the cybersecurity sector.

3.1.2. Online apprenticeship of LinkedIn from the USA

Apprentices are allowed designated time on a weekly basis for investing in their technical skills.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The apprenticeship is organized in the field of Software Engineering.

Objective

The objectives of the apprenticeship were to:

- bridge the opportunity gap for individuals with non-traditional backgrounds;
- give those with non-traditional backgrounds an opportunity to get their foot in the door in the tech industry and begin or continue their technical career.

Website

<https://careers.linkedin.com/reach>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The duration of the apprenticeship could be between 1 year (minimum) to 5 years (maximum).

Preparation activities

- **Essay Application:** The essay application process is designed to give individuals the opportunity to show a range of qualities the company believes will make them successful at LinkedIn. This includes their drive and ability to learn, tenacity and work ethic, unique perspective and passion for the role. As part of the essay application process, candidates are required to submit responses to all components of the three-four application essay questions. Responses will be reviewed for completeness as well as content.
- **Take-home Project:** A recruiter will contact applicants if they are selected for virtual interviews following initial application review. They will be asked to complete and submit an independent take-home project prior to the virtual interviews
- **Virtual Interview:** During the virtual interview, candidates will go through two interviews (one focused on technical skills and the other on soft skills) and a REACH Meet & Greet. In the technical interview, candidates will be expected to explain and extend their solution to the previously submitted take-home project. During the soft skill interview, a manager will get to know them beyond their technical skills
- **Offer:** Candidates who receive an offer will find out more details about their future team and the program.
- **Start date:** Apprentices will start with their cohort and go through a custom REACH onboarding experience together.

Process of monitoring the tasks

Apprentices are allowed designated time on a weekly basis for investing in their technical skills. The company provides potential resources, guidance, mentorship, and financial support but this time will look different for each apprentice and each apprentice is expected to drive their own learning. For some, this may consist of internal or external programs or classes, online courses, or side projects. For some, this may be a dedicated day for learning while others spread over the week.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

The program team will determine which team an individual joins, keeping in mind the apprentice's interests. Team assignments will be based on several factors in order to set the individual up for success. The communication with the team is continuous.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The LinkedIn platform is used for communication.

Assessment

The assessment is done through measuring the performance of the apprentice on the job.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

The apprentices in this program will be able to:

- Be a full-time employee with benefits and perks;
- Get 20% of your time allocated for your self-development;
- Be part of a cohort that will meet frequently to share information and grow together;
- Have a team and dedicated mentor that will support their growth;
- Own real business-need projects that will push their skills.

Success factors

- There is the opportunity to choose if one would like to do the apprenticeship face-to-face or online;
- There is an immediate inclusion in the work team and there is a prospect for long-term employment by distance.

Constraints

No particular constraints were identified.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The REACH program is aiming at those that:

- are wanting a career change;
- attended a bootcamp;
- are self-taught;
- don't have a traditional degree for the role;
- took a break from work, and trying to re-enter the workforce.

Stakeholders

External stakeholders are not involved.

3.1.3. Online internship in Computer Science of EUSA from Spain

The implementation of this apprenticeship has resulted in increased accessibility, flexibility, skill development and collaboration, benefiting the VET center, the company and the apprentices involved.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The apprenticeships are organised in the field of Computer Science.

Objective

The primary objective is to provide internship during the COVID pandemic and also to offer opportunities for those living in remote areas.

Website

<https://www.eusa.es/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration of the apprenticeship

The apprenticeship lasts for 300 hours.

Preparation activities

The preparation activities mainly involve the identification of the skills and knowledge required for the apprenticeship and training the instructors or facilitators who will be guiding the apprentices through the online program.

Type of support and guidance provided

Apprentices were assigned mentors who were experienced professionals in the respective fields where they were going to develop their internship. Mentors provide guidance, advice, and feedback on the apprentice's work, helping them develop their skills and knowledge. On the part of the vocational training school, students have a tutor who continuously monitors the progress of their tasks.

Process of monitoring the tasks

Apprentices usually had regular check-in sessions with their mentors or supervisors. These sessions were conducted through video calls. During these check-ins, apprentices discuss their progress, ask questions, and seek clarification on any aspects of their apprenticeship.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The digital tools used in the organisation of the apprenticeship are Rakuten and Séneca. In addition to those seen above related directly with the subject it can be also added the importance of Self-Directed Learning. Apprentices have the autonomy to navigate through the learning materials, engage in independent research, and seek additional resources to deepen their understanding. This promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-motivation skills.

Assessment

The students must develop a final report with the activities implemented during the internship. This report is a document provided by the VET school with the minimum task to be developed. This report should be filled weekly and signed by the three parties: student, mentor and tutor.

Impact, success factors and constrains

Impact

- **Flexibility and Convenience:** Online apprenticeship offers flexibility in terms of scheduling and learning pace. Apprentices can access the materials and coursework at their own convenience, allowing them to balance their apprenticeship with other commitments such as work or education, etc.
- **Continuous Progress Monitoring:** Online platforms enable continuous progress monitoring and feedback from mentors and instructors. This ensures that apprentices receive timely guidance and support, allowing them to track their development and address any areas that require improvement.

Success factors

Overall, the implementation of online apprenticeship in computer science has resulted in increased accessibility, flexibility, skill development, collaboration, and continuous monitoring of progress, benefiting both our organisation and the apprentices involved.

Constraints

Implementing an apprenticeship online can come with its own set of challenges. Here are some difficulties that were encountered during the implementation of the online apprenticeship:

1. **Lack of Hands-on Experience:** One of the primary challenges of online apprenticeships is the limited opportunity for hands-on experience. Certain industries, such as audiovisual communication and journalism, often require practical skills that may be challenging to develop fully in an online environment. Finding ways to provide meaningful hands-on experiences and practical training remotely can be a hurdle.
2. **Limited Personal Interaction:** Online apprenticeships may lack the same level of personal interaction as traditional in-person apprenticeships. This can impact the apprentices' ability to build strong relationships with mentors, peers, and industry professionals. It may also limit networking opportunities and hinder the development of soft skills, such as communication and teamwork.
3. **Technology Challenges:** Online apprenticeships heavily rely on technology, and technical issues can arise. Problems with internet connectivity, software compatibility, or access to necessary tools and equipment can disrupt the learning process.
4. **Self-Motivation and Time Management:** Online apprenticeships require a high level of self-motivation and discipline. Without the structure of a physical workspace or regular face-to-face interactions, apprentices may struggle with time management, staying focused, and meeting deadlines. Providing guidance and resources for effective time management and self-motivation can help mitigate these challenges.
5. **Limited Observation and Feedback:** In traditional apprenticeships, supervisors and mentors can closely observe an apprentice's work and provide immediate feedback. In an online setting, this observation may be more challenging, potentially leading to delays in feedback or a less comprehensive evaluation of the apprentice's performance. Establishing clear channels for regular communication and feedback is crucial to address this issue.
6. **Adaptation to Online Learning Platforms:** Apprentices who are new to online learning may face challenges adapting to the virtual learning platforms and tools used in the apprenticeship program. Familiarising apprentices with the online learning environment and providing technical support can help them navigate the platform effectively.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The main target audience are students of EUSA.

Stakeholders

Companies working in various areas of computer science, such as programming languages, software development, data analysis, TV platforms as well as the VET school.

3.1.4. Bootcamp and hybrid apprenticeship of Accenture from Latvia and Lithuania

Initial bootcamp helps to increase the quality of the participants, assess their skills as well as gives the opportunity to learn for those who are more motivated.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The apprenticeships are organised in IT, programming, cloud solutions and services, data science and other related fields.

Objective

The primary objective is to provide the opportunity for motivated people who see themselves in the IT field, also from remote areas and less fortunate. To develop professional technical skills and raise their qualification level.

Website

<https://bootcamp.lv/#bootcamps>

Methodology and assessment

Duration of the apprenticeship

Depending on the program, the programme usually lasts 3-6 months and a bootcamp of up to 1 week.

Preparation activities

The company uses its own platform - <https://bootcamp.lv/>, which has all the necessary information and they work closely with HEIs who promote it for students and media in general. The company's staff is always prepared and the information and program are updated to the current needs.

Type of support and guidance provided

All information is available from day one in the system. Participants receive access to their accounts. They also have individual mentors assigned to them.

Process of monitoring the tasks

Team leads follow assignments and completion of tasks.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

There are weekly meetings for reporting on progress.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The main digital tools used are MS Teams and Outlook, but also other platforms can be used. Apprentices receive a laptop with all the necessary tools. Basic digital skills are required and it is helpful to have previous experience with MS products. Technical knowledge about the selected field is recommended.

Assessment

The main assessment is done through the bootcamp phase, where the applicants have an intense 1-5 week training, with the assessment of their technical skills and knowledge. There are tests, courses, and exams. During the apprenticeship, there is less emphasis on assessment and more on practical work and results.

Impact, success factors and constrains

Impact

The impact and results are really good, as well as the interest from participants has increased. They see it as a great opportunity to improve their skills or acquire new qualifications and certificates, as well as to change their positions. There is also good feedback from participants. Accenture sees it as a great opportunity to attract motivated people.

Success factors

Mainly motivation from the participants and the opportunity to achieve their goals, either the qualifications and skills or the opportunity to prove themselves and get a new job. Important aspect is also the internal system that Accenture has developed and refined over the years. There are guidelines, information and courses, which help to guide the apprentices. They also get financial support which helps and motivates them. Initial bootcamp helps to increase the quality of the participants, assess their skills as well as gives the opportunity to learn for those who are more motivated. There are around 150 applicants for 20-30 positions. Around half of the participants are selected to continue the process.

Constraints

Traditionally the bootcamp was an offline event, which allowed the company to better assess and be involved in the learning process, show participants mistakes and help improve. With COVID it all changed, and the company had to adapt it to the online environment, which meant some other changes and adjustments from both sides. With face-to-face events there were different dynamics and opportunities for instant feedback. However, the company was able to switch it to fully online and the program has stayed online. The company also notes that fully remote work participants sometimes are

shyer, they don't get so involved and there are some challenges for the employees and the mentors. But apprentices are free to work completely remotely, and the company has adjusted to the environment.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

Everyone who is over 18 years old. Those, who want to learn, change qualifications or are searching for potential jobs, natives of Latvia and Lithuania and those who have permits.

Stakeholders

Higher educational institutes play an important role. There are also actors from the government and other partner institutions. Organisation-wise almost everyone is involved as there are programs for almost every field in which Accenture provides services.

3.1.5. Internship of Wunder.io from Latvia

Interns have daily meetings with their mentors in the morning, and separate daily 1 on 1 meeting, as well as weekly meetings, where the company has an overview and a retrospective with the team.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The internship is provided in the field of IT and programming.

Objective

The objectives of the internship are to:

- Provide opportunities for students/interns to develop new skills and gain real work experience.
- Provide the chance for employees to get involved in the mentoring process.
- Potentially recruit new and motivated employees.
- Potentially the company plans and hopes to involve non-profit organisations and develop socially responsible project for them during the internship.

Website

<https://wunder.io/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration of the apprenticeship

Depending on each case and the requirements, the internships usually last 2-5 months.

Preparation activities

The initial “screening/recruiting” is where the company assesses the skills and motivation, which is important for a successful project end results. The first kick-off meeting, where everyone is introduced to each other. Also, the final retrospective meeting, from which the company also learns and improves the internship process for next time.

Type of support and guidance provided

Initial kick-off meeting, dedicated mentor and daily updates with interns.

Process of monitoring the tasks

The daily process is set and fully structured. There are daily meetings in the morning, and separate daily 1 on 1 meeting with mentors, as well as weekly meetings, where the company has an overview and a retrospective with the team.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Daily communication, mostly online calls.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

Slack, Zoom or Google Meet. Email is not a standard communication tool. Depending on the situation and project, the company could use also other communication tools/specific work/project tools. Interns should possess basic digital skills and specific work-related skills with programming, designing and project management tools based on project needs.

Assessment

There is an initial screening and recruiting process, where the skills are assessed, and it is decided if the candidate is motivated and a good match. At the end of the internship, there is another assessment, where the project outcome is evaluated, and the intern development is analysed. Also, the internship process itself, for future improvements.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

The impact is visible. It has allowed the company to train new professionals, and also recruit new employees through the process. Around 50% of the interns have joined the company permanently. The hybrid, mostly online process has been important in the context of the development of the company because it also has offices in Estonia and Finland. Lativa, in a way, has been a testing ground for Finland and Estonia. As well as the mentoring process itself is an interesting aspect, which the senior employees have looked for and wanted to be involved with.

Success factors

There are different success factors which are worth emphasising.

The company initially looked for motivated and/or skilled candidates, who wanted to get real practical experience. It is important, because the interns are involved in a real project, and they also get the real work feeling. However, it is important to note that there are lead project managers with experience and mentors who help them individually.

The daily 1 on 1 meeting – because the company has seen that interns in most cases are shy, they do not ask questions in group meetings and that could be an issue because they try to solve the problem

by themselves and do not ask questions to which employees know the answers and therefore lose important time. And a focused meeting helps to solve problems and issues and it is also easier for employees/mentors, because there is a dedicated meeting time where they can discuss all the issues and at the other time can focus on other projects.

The company has already fairly developed the system for years and they have been using an online/hybrid format for a long time.

Also, the long-term partnership with Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, from which most of the interns come. Also, it helps that employees are lecturers there and the company can spot the most motivated interns.

Constraints

Resources in general are important because it is also an investment from the company's side, like technical support with equipment and time that employees spend on the internship process.

Sometimes it is harder to prepare for the internship because there are no suitable projects or there are unexpected changes which also can happen in the IT sector.

The Covid-19 pandemic was quite hard because Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences was not sure how to organise the internship on their part with all the restrictions and also, the company was hit during the period and had to adjust their business.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

Students and those who want to retrain and change their field of work (more common in the last years).

Stakeholders

Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences, students and Vidzeme city.

3.2. Best practices in the field of (Digital) Marketing



3.2.1. Digital marketing apprenticeship of Big Creative Education from the UK

Learn Digital Marketing from real experts in the field.

Brief summary, field of VET and objective

Brief summary

Big Creative Education (BCE) have created a unique Digital Marketing apprenticeship offer built around the principles of the level 3 'Digital Marketer' apprenticeship standard. Apprentices learn in real time the techniques and strategies relevant to today's fast paced industry, thus ensuring the ability to inaugurate apprentices into one's business faster and more efficiently.

Field of VET

The apprenticeships are organized in the following fields - Content Creator; Events Assistant; Digital Marketer; Music Assistant; 2D Visual Artist; Creative Marketing Assistant.

Objective

The main objective of the online apprenticeship is to provide the opportunity to people from all over the country to take part as physical appearance is not obligatory.

Website

<https://bigcreative.education>

Methodology and assessment

Duration of the apprenticeship

The duration of the apprenticeship is 18 months.

Preparation activities

The company has set up all the digital tools that are necessary for the apprenticeship and they have a process for selecting the appropriate trainers.

Type of support and guidance provided

BCI provides laptops, Chromebooks and Wi-Fi enabling equipment to apprentices who do not have access to this at home.

Process of monitoring the tasks

Course tutors will update each student's progress via the course trackers with grades input as they are marked and students causing concern denoted on the tracker.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Once per week through digital platforms or physical.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The main digital tools used include Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom. The apprentices do not need to have some special qualifications on digital tools or platforms, they just need to have passion for digital and social media.

Assessment

The assessment method includes 2 components - written project report and presentation with questioning. The written project report and any components must be assessed holistically by the independent assessor when they are deciding the grade for this assessment method.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

The rate of the learner's success all these years is the best way of advertisement for the company. Furthermore, each learner has the opportunity to develop his/her marketing and digital skills.

Success factors

The apprentices will normally report to a digital marketing manager, a marketing manager or an IT manager every week.

Constraints

Sometimes there are technical problems with the various digital platforms or with the internet connection.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

These apprenticeships will be taken up by employers, from all sectors, across the country.

Stakeholders

There are many organizations from diverse professional fields that are involved into BCE's apprenticeship program such as (Sadler's Wells Trust Limited – Digital & Content Apprentice, Strillobyte – Junior Digital Marketer Apprentice, Beautiful Digital Limited – Social Media – Music Account Manager Apprentice).

3.2.2. Digital Marketing Online Apprenticeship of IFATE from the UK

The learning outcomes were very clearly defined based on occupation standards with the use of competency standards and minimum requirements to pass them.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The internship is provided in the field of Digital Marketing.

Objective

The objectives of the apprenticeship are to:

- enable 10 employees to define, design, build and implement digital campaigns across a variety of online and social media platforms to drive customer acquisition, customer engagement and customer retention.
- enable apprentices to develop skills about digital marketing as well as soft skills that will increase their employability in the sector

Website

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/digital-marketer-v1-1>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The apprenticeship lasts for 18 months.

Preparation activities

The apprenticeship is accompanied with online learning modules, virtual workshops and webinars

- Introduction to Digital Marketing: The apprenticeship starts with an introductory module that covers the fundamentals of digital marketing, including its various channels, strategies, and tools.
- Online Learning Modules: Apprentices engage in a series of online learning modules that delve deeper into specific areas of digital marketing, such as search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing, content marketing, and analytics.
- Virtual Workshops and Webinars: Apprentices participate in virtual workshops and webinars facilitated by industry professionals. These interactive sessions provide practical insights, case studies, and opportunities for Q&A.

Process of monitoring the tasks

Apprentices apply their learning to real-world scenarios by completing workplace assignments. These assignments involve creating and executing digital marketing campaigns, analyzing data, and developing strategies. Apprentices receive also remote mentoring and support from experienced **professionals** who guide them throughout their apprenticeship journey. This involves regular virtual meetings, feedback sessions, and guidance on career development.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

The communication was daily or whenever needed via skype. Twice (at the beginning and at the end of the apprenticeship) it was required to have also presential meetings.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

Skype has been used as a communication tool and the communication was daily.

Assessment

The assessment method is highly elaborated and is based on Occupational Standards. A detailed document, available [here](#), describes the competency standards and the Minimum, expected, requirements for a “Pass” for the following dimensions:

- “What”- What the apprenticeship has shown they can do;
- “How”- The way in which the work has been done;
- “With whom”- The personal and interpersonal qualities the apprentice has brought to internal and external relationships.

These dimensions are assessed through:

- A portfolio – produced towards the end of the apprenticeship, containing evidence from real work projects which have been completed during the apprenticeship, usually towards the end, and which, taken together, cover the totality of the standard, and which is assessed as part of the end point assessment;
- a project - giving the apprentice the opportunity to undertake a business-related project over a one-week period away from the day-to-day workplace;
- an employer reference;
- a structured interview with an assessor - exploring what has been produced in the portfolio and the project as well as looking at how it has been produced. An independent assessor will assess each element of the end point assessment and will then decide whether to award successful apprentices with a pass, a merit or a distinction.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

This apprenticeship is recognised for entry on to the Register of IT Technicians and those completing their apprenticeships are eligible to apply for registration. Completion of the apprenticeship would also allow access to join as an Affiliate (Professional) member of the CIM (Chartered Institute of Marketing) and/or Associate membership of BCS.

Success factors

Individual employers set the selection criteria. The apprenticeship has a very solid assessment scheme with competency standards, minimum requirements and a very structured process. The assessment is made through a variety of different ways (portfolio, project, reference, interview).

Constraints

No particular constraint was identified.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

Individual employers set the selection criteria, but this might include GCSEs, A levels, a level 2 apprenticeship or other relevant qualifications, relevant experience and/or an aptitude test with a focus on functional maths. Employers are likely to be looking for a proven passion for digital and social media.

Stakeholders

The main stakeholders involved are the companies.

3.2.3. Online internship in Marketing and Advertising of EUSA from Spain

Due to its digital nature, this apprenticeship has proven to be beneficial for organizations by reducing costs, increasing productivity and accessing a wider talent pool.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The apprenticeship is provided in the field of Marketing and Promotion.

Objective

The primary objective is to provide internship during the COVID pandemic and also to offer opportunities for those living in remote areas.

Website

<https://www.eusa.es/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The duration of the apprenticeship is 350-400 hours.

Preparation activities

Mainly to identify the skills and knowledge required for the apprenticeship and train the instructors or facilitators who will be guiding the apprentices through the online program.

Type of support and guidance provided

Apprentices are assigned mentors who are experienced professionals in the respective fields where they are going to develop their internship. Mentors provide guidance, advice, and feedback on the apprentice's work, helping them develop their skills and knowledge. On the part of the vocational training school, students have a tutor who continuously monitors the progress of their tasks.

Process of monitoring the tasks

Apprentices usually have regular check-in sessions with their mentors or supervisors. These sessions are conducted through video calls. During these check-ins, apprentices discuss their progress, ask questions, and seek clarification on any aspects of their apprenticeship.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The main digital tools used include Wix, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, blogs, etc. The digital skills required for the online apprenticeship may include:

- **Digital Marketing Strategy:** Understanding the fundamentals of digital marketing, such as target audience analysis, market research, and campaign planning.
- **Social Media Management:** Proficiency in managing and optimizing social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc., including content creation, scheduling, engagement, and analytics.
- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):** Knowledge of optimizing websites and content to improve organic search engine rankings, including keyword research, on-page optimization, and link building strategies.
- **Pay-Per-Click Advertising (PPC):** Familiarity with running online advertising campaigns using platforms like Google Ads, Facebook Ads, or other PPC networks to drive targeted traffic and conversions.
- **Content Marketing:** Ability to create compelling and engaging content across various formats, including blog posts, articles, infographics, videos, and podcasts, to attract and retain an audience.
- **Email Marketing:** Understanding of email marketing best practices, including list building, segmentation, automation, and crafting effective email campaigns to drive customer engagement and conversions.
- **Web Analytics:** Proficiency in using tools like Google Analytics to track and analyse website traffic, user behavior, conversion rates, and other key metrics to measure campaign effectiveness and make data-driven decisions.
- **Graphic Design:** Basic design skills to create visually appealing graphics and marketing materials using tools like Adobe Photoshop, Canva, or similar software.
- **Copywriting:** Strong writing skills to create persuasive and engaging marketing copy for various digital channels, including websites, social media, ads, and email campaigns.
- **Digital Project Management:** Ability to manage marketing projects, set priorities, meet deadlines, and coordinate with team members using collaboration tools and project management software.

These are just some of the digital skills that may be required. The specific skills may vary depending on the exact program.

Assessment

The students must develop a final report with the activities implemented during the internship. This report is a document provided by the VET school with the minimum task to be developed. This report should be filled weekly and signed by the three parties: student, mentor and tutor.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

- Digital marketing proficiency: Apprentices gain practical knowledge and skills in various aspects of digital marketing, including social media marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), content creation, and online advertising.
- Data analysis and insights: Apprentices learn to analyze marketing data, interpret key metrics, and derive meaningful insights to drive decision-making and optimize marketing strategies.
- Technical proficiency: Engaging in online apprenticeship enhances apprentices' technical skills, such as proficiency in using marketing tools, analytics platforms, content management systems, and other relevant software.

Success factors

Overall, the implementation of online apprenticeship in Marketing and Publicity has proven to be beneficial for organizations by reducing costs, increasing productivity, and accessing a wider talent pool. Simultaneously, apprentices have the opportunity to develop valuable skills in digital marketing, data analysis, communication, adaptability, and technical proficiency, empowering them for successful careers in the field.

Constraints

Implementing an apprenticeship online can come with its own set of challenges. Here are some difficulties encountered during the implementation of the online apprenticeship:

1. Lack of Hands-on Experience: One of the primary challenges of online apprenticeships is the limited opportunity for hands-on experience. Certain industries, such as audiovisual communication and journalism, often require practical skills that may be challenging to develop fully in an online environment. Finding ways to provide meaningful hands-on experiences and practical training remotely can be a hurdle.

2. Limited Personal Interaction: Online apprenticeships may lack the same level of personal interaction as traditional in-person apprenticeships. This can impact the apprentices' ability to build strong relationships with mentors, peers, and industry professionals. It may also limit networking opportunities and hinder the development of soft skills, such as communication and teamwork.

3. Technology Challenges: Online apprenticeships heavily rely on technology, and technical issues can arise. Problems with internet connectivity, software compatibility, or access to necessary tools and equipment can disrupt the learning process.

4. Self-Motivation and Time Management: Online apprenticeships require a high level of self-motivation and discipline. Without the structure of a physical workspace or regular face-to-face interactions, apprentices may struggle with time management, staying focused, and meeting deadlines. Providing guidance and resources for effective time management and self-motivation can help mitigate these challenges.

5. Limited Observation and Feedback: In traditional apprenticeships, supervisors and mentors can closely observe an apprentice's work and provide immediate feedback. In an online setting, this observation may be more challenging, potentially leading to delays in feedback or a less comprehensive

evaluation of the apprentice's performance. Establishing clear channels for regular communication and feedback is crucial to address this issue.

6. Adaptation to Online Learning Platforms: Apprentices who are new to online learning may face challenges adapting to the virtual learning platforms and tools used in the apprenticeship program. Familiarising apprentices with the online learning environment and providing technical support can help them navigate the platform effectively.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The main target audience are students of EUSA.

Stakeholders

Professional associations and industry organizations related to marketing and advertising as well as VET schools.

3.2.4. Apprenticeship for Marketers of Acadium Inc. from Canada

Work with a mentor for 3 months and gain the digital marketing work experience you need to get hired – 100 % remote and always free.

Brief summary, field of VET and objective

Brief summary

Acadium provides 3-month remote apprenticeships at digital marketing companies. Working with mentors, the apprentices have the opportunity to gain real-life experience and enhance their digital marketing skills. Upon successful completion of the programme, the participants are issued a certificate.

Field of VET

Acadium offers apprenticeships in the following fields: Digital Marketing; Social Media Marketing; Paid Advertising; SEO; Email Marketing; Content Marketing; Website Design; Marketing Analytics; Public Relations; Affiliate Marketing; Influencer Marketing; Creating Career Opportunities.

Objective

The programme aims to provide apprentices with relevant digital marketing experience and guidance needed to get hired in today's job market.

Website

<https://acadium.com>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The apprenticeship lasts for 3 months with apprentices working 10 hours per week.

Preparation activities

Before matching an apprentice with a hosting company, the applications are carefully reviewed and candidates are interviewed in order to ensure that they are matched with the most suitable business.

Type of support and guidance provided

During their first week, new apprentices are onboarded to their mentor's business. At the beginning, the apprentice and mentor set out specific goals which will be achieved during the apprenticeship and discuss how they can mutually benefit from each other. Then, during the apprenticeship the apprentice works under the close guidance of the mentor to fulfil these goals.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Mentors meet with apprentices for 1-2 hours a week which are dedicated to providing guidance, answering questions, giving tips and tricks, or even performing different work tasks through a screen share.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

Neither specific tools and platforms, nor specific requirements regarding digital skills have been mentioned.

Assessment

After an apprentice submits a task, the responsible mentor reviews it, provides feedback through arranging a call or online meeting and rates the performance of the apprentice. At the end of the apprenticeship, a certificate is issued to participants successfully completing the programme.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Apprentices improve their digital marketing skills, obtain real-life work experience and become prepared for the job market. Hosting companies have the opportunity to work with talented apprentices, can benefit from innovative ideas and can find their next employees.

Success factors

The apprenticeship is held remotely, the standard programme is free of charge to apprentices and the participants are issued certificates at the end of the programme. Regular online meetings are organised between apprentices and their mentors to monitor the progress achieved in the implementation of the assigned tasks, provide guidance, feedback and support to apprentices.

Constraints

As previous work experience is not required from apprentices and the majority of them have beginner level knowledge on digital marketing, the scope of the work tasks carried out by them can be rather limited. However, this lack of knowledge can serve as a motivation for them to further develop their skills by tackling new challenges.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The apprenticeship programme is targeting primarily apprentices and mentors from North America.

Stakeholders

The main actors involved are the apprentices and hosting companies specialised in digital marketing.

3.3. Best practices in the field of Tourism and Hospitality



3.3.1. Online apprenticeship of ELORIS S.A. from Greece

Research about the visitor's satisfaction from their visit in the North Aegean area.

Brief summary and field of VET

Brief summary

The Research, Education, Innovation and Development Company of the North Aegean Region is providing apprentices to students that will assist in the implementation of research, to be carried out at the airports and the ports of Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Lemnos and Ikaria. They will fill positions such as: Auxiliary staff, Market researcher, Research and Development.

The trainees will give a QR Code to all the tourists that will arrive and depart from those islands. They can scan this code and complete a questionnaire. The aim of these questionnaires is to learn more about their staying, the accommodations, the transportation, etc.

Field of VET

Research in the field of tourism.

Website

<https://eloris.gr>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The apprenticeship lasts about 2 months.

Type of support and guidance provided

There are in-person meetings in the company.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Communication with the apprentices takes place once per week.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The main digital tools used are Google Drive and Zoom.

Assessment

There are some assignments where the company gives to trainees and the assessment take place every week through the meetings. In the meantime, the company keeps in touch via daily emails with the trainees for further information.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

The impact achieved as a result of the implementation of the online apprenticeship is that the company has gained more experience in the field of research. It has also become more popular.

Success factors

Among the main factors contributing to the success of the apprenticeship are everyday emails and weekly meetings.

Constraints

The difficulties faced during the apprenticeship are that some tourists did not want to take part in the survey.

3.3.2. Apprenticeship in Hospitality of Hotel Brain Academy from Greece

Get a Diploma in Hospitality from the largest hotelier in Greece.

Brief summary, field of VET and objective

Brief summary

The Hotel Brain Group offers an Online Apprenticeship in the field of Hospitality. This program will give the opportunity to the trainees to learn about: Customer service; Arrivals – Departures; Guest Relations; Guest Loyalty Club; Allotment – Corporate Clients; Computer Applications – Pylon; HACCP (Consumer Safety Offer – Employee Safety); Menu & Wine List Creation; Financial Analysis – Pricing; Logistics – Inventory Management; Methods – Tactics to Increase Sales; Wine – Food Matching Rules.

Field of VET

The apprenticeships are organized in the following fields - Tourism and Hotel Management; Spa management; Hotel guest data management; Barista; Front office and reception management; Food and beverage management.

Objective

The online apprenticeships are providing the opportunity to people from remote areas to evolve and also they are the first academy in Greece who provides classes for deaf people.

Website

<https://academy.hotelbrain.com/portfolio/professional-diploma-in-hospitality/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The duration of the apprenticeship is 120 hours and lasts about 2,5 months.

Type of support and guidance provided

The company provides support by email and phone to every trainer.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

The apprentices have to do an every-day report via phone.

Digital tools/platforms used and skills required

The main digital tool used is Zoom. There are no requirements regarding any specific digital skills, only the basic knowledge of computer.

Assessment

The professors assign a project to the trainees at the end of the apprenticeship.

Impact and success factors

Impact

This type of apprenticeship increases the number of registrations as it is accessible to many people. This means more money for the company.

Success factors

The apprentices have to report to their mentor every week.

Target audience

Target audience

The main target group are people who want to evolve in their jobs, with most of them being people in the age group 40-40+ years old.

3.3.3. CULTVET apprenticeship of ELORIS S.A. from Greece

Become an expert in cultural tourism and get a globally acknowledged certification.

Brief summary, field of VET

Brief summary

The main aim of the course is to develop the skills of professionals in the field of cultural tourism and empower them to plan, promote, implement and evaluate events based on cultural tourism. The course is addressed to: students; professionals working in the field of hospitality and tourism, cultural tourism, culture, history and archaeology; tour guides; anyone interested in exercising entrepreneurial activity in the cultural tourism sector.

Field of VET

The apprenticeship is in the field of (cultural) tourism.

Website

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The duration of the course was 200 hours of synchronous online sessions as well as 300 hours of guaranteed practical training in an enterprise or organisation active in the field of cultural tourism.

Type of support and guidance provided

The hosting organisation contacted apprentices via emails and phone.

Process of monitoring the tasks

The hosting organisation sent to the participants a report to be completed by them.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Communication took place 4 times per week.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The main digital tool used was Zoom.

Assessment

Through an exam, which was not obligatory. A certification of “Experts in Cultural Tourism” was provided.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

The online apprenticeship program in cultural tourism yielded significant outcomes. The providing organisation experienced extended outreach via the online platform, fostering heightened apprentice engagement and fortified collaborations with cultural tourism enterprises. Apprentices gained practical skills, mastering event planning and execution, while cultivating an intricate grasp of the cultural tourism realm. Notably, the program amplified participants' networking prowess and furnished them with a globally acknowledged certification, fostering their professional journey and propelling advancements in the cultural tourism industry.

Success factors

1. There was a well-structured and engaging course content that covered a wide range of topics related to cultural tourism, ensuring that participants gain a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.
2. The creation of networking among participants, instructors, and professionals in the field, creating opportunities for collaborations and future partnerships.
3. Aligning the certification process with international standards (ELOT EN ISO / IEC 17024) and obtaining accreditation from recognized bodies (ESYD) to enhance the credibility and recognition of the certification.
4. Offering post-course support and resources to help participants apply their knowledge and skills in their careers, fostering long-term success.

Constraints

1. Participants have encountered technical issues while attending online synchronous sessions, such as connectivity problems, audio/video difficulties, or issues with the online platform itself.
2. Diversity background: Participants coming from diverse educational and professional backgrounds may have varying levels of familiarity with the subject matter, making it challenging to ensure a consistent learning experience for everyone.
3. Balancing Theory and Practice: Due to the Covid-19 outbreak it was difficult to find the right balance between theoretical knowledge and practical application, as participants had to become effective cultural tourism professionals.
4. Limited Interaction: Online sessions did not provide the same level of in-person interaction, which could affect participants' ability to form connections with instructors and peers.

3.4. Best practice in the field of Business and Finance



3.4.1. Apprenticeship of BA School of Business and Finance from Latvia

The attitude and own interest from apprentices also play an important role, because good results in many cases can lead to a new position.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The apprenticeships are organized in the fields of finance, management, accounting, human resources, and marketing.

Objective

The main objective is the development of skills and/or raising the qualification. Also, the opportunity for new positions / new employees.

Website

<https://www.ba.lv/lv/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The duration of the apprenticeship depends on the programme, with the maximum being up to 9 months.

Preparation activities

Consultations, development of guidelines and agreements between the parties. But it is also based on a long-term partnership.

Type of support and guidance provided

Guidance is provided from both sides, HEI and companies, depending on the field and requirements.

Process of monitoring the tasks

Reports according to the initial plan and based on apprentices' needs.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Depending on the partnership - online and in person.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The main digital tools used include MS Teams, Google Meet, Zoom and internal platforms. Apprentices should have basic digital skills, with specific software knowledge required in some cases.

Assessment

The employer signs a certificate, which assesses: 1) The attitude and performance of duties and assignments; 2) The initiative; 3) Analytical skills; 4) Communication skills; 5) Ability to make independent decisions; 6) Sales skills; 7) Computer skills; 8) Overall preparedness and requirements; 9) Foreign language skills; 10) Understanding of business needs.

The apprentice writes a report regarding the apprenticeship according to the guidelines which is also assessed by both parties.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

The impact was substantial by switching to an online/hybrid format and adapting. Online possibilities improved the accessibility of apprenticeships. It allowed the hosting organisation to modernise the processes and implement new technologies, therefore also increasing efficiency. Also, the development of new skills for the participants and blended format altogether for the workforce.

Success factors

Technological readiness played an important role as well as Covid-19 restrictions and requirements which led to the testing and implementation of new processes. Regular reporting, mentoring process and implementation of interactive and engaging tools helped to facilitate the apprentices. The attitude and own interest from apprentices also play an important role, because good results in many cases can lead to a new position.

Constraints

The apprentice plays an important role, as well as the readiness of the company. Covid-19 restrictions for the period were the main challenges faced during the organisation of the apprenticeship.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The target audience is a broad one.

Stakeholders

The main stakeholders are representatives of the government, apprentices and companies.

3.5. Best practice in the field of Advertising and Journalism



3.5.1. Apprenticeship in Journalism of BBC News from the UK

The apprentices were successfully integrated in the working team of BBC News, BBC Studios and sports teams and worked together in a flexible 35-hour work week over a 2-year span.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The internship is provided in the field of Journalism.

Objective

The objectives of the apprenticeship are to allow apprentices to:

- Work alongside BBC news, BBC Studios and sports teams to develop your journalistic skills, creating and delivering quality content for TV, online, digital, and radio.

- Get involved with all newsroom activities, such as sourcing and securing suitable guests or contributors, writing briefs for your team or shooting and editing films.
- Find and create stories for diverse audiences, including coming up with ideas, carrying out in-depth research and assisting with interviews.
- Learn from and work with experts in the field at the biggest broadcasting organisation in the world.

Website

<https://www.bbc.com/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The duration of the apprenticeship was 2 years.

Preparation activities

Introduction and integration of the apprentices to BBC News, BBC Studios and sports teams to develop journalistic skills, creating and delivering quality content for TV, web, digital and radio.

Process of monitoring the tasks

The tasks were constantly monitored through the interaction of the apprentices with the BBC News, BBC Studios and sports teams. The apprentices were:

- Involved in all newsroom activities such as finding and securing suitable guests or contributors, writing news bulletins for the team or filming and editing.
- Creating stories for a variety of audiences, including brainstorming ideas, conducting in-depth research and assisting with interviews.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

The communication was constant in the framework of a flexible 35-hour work week.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The digital skills were the following:

- Edit photos and videos;
- Using social media to spread journalistic content;
- Create and manage websites;
- Implement Search Engine Optimization (SEO);
- Mobile Journalism.

Assessment

There is a possibility to get accredited by the National Council for the Training of Journalists by the end of the programme. The end-point assessment for a journalist is completed in the final four months of the apprenticeship and is comprised of a journalism project, project report with questioning and a professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence. The apprentice chooses the topic for their journalism project with the approval of their employer and the NCTJ.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

The apprenticeship helped the participating employees to:

- Be intensely curious about people and what is happening in the world;
- Be overflowing with creative ideas and imaginative ways of telling stories;
- Love producing content on various platforms, including social media;
- Have a passion for writing;
- Be motivated to start on their own;
- Be flexible, adaptable and resilient.

Success factors

The main success factors were:

- The status of BBC as a world leader in information and news provision;
- The successful integration of the apprentices into the teams and their everyday activities.

Constraints

The apprenticeship was aimed at school leavers or career changers with potential rather than previous experience or training.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

For journalism school graduates or those looking for a career change.

Stakeholders

The whole training program was organized by BBC.

3.5.2. Online apprenticeship in Advertising and Journalism of EUSA from Spain

Online apprenticeships may facilitate opportunities for apprentices to connect with their peers through online discussion forums, group projects, or virtual networking events.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The apprenticeship is organized in the fields of Advertising, Audiovisual Communication and Journalism.

Objective

The primary objective is to provide internship during the COVID pandemic and also to offer opportunities for those living in remote areas.

Website

<https://www.eusa.es/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The duration of the apprenticeship is 150 hours.

Preparation activities

Mainly to identify the skills and knowledge required for the apprenticeship and train the instructors or facilitators who will be guiding the apprentices through the online program.

Type of support and guidance provided

Apprentices are assigned mentors who are experienced professionals in the respective fields of advertising, audiovisual communication, or journalism. Mentors provide guidance, advice, and feedback on the apprentice's work, helping them develop their skills and knowledge.

Process of monitoring the tasks

Apprentices usually had regular check-in sessions with their mentors or supervisors. These sessions were conducted through video calls. During these check-ins, apprentices discuss their progress, ask questions, and seek clarification on any aspects of their apprenticeship.

Digital skills required

The digital skills required for participation in the online apprenticeship are those that had already been acquired in the student's studies.

Assessment

Apprentices were given assignments and projects that simulate real-world scenarios in advertising, audiovisual communication, or journalism. These tasks allow apprentices to apply their knowledge and skills, and they receive feedback from their mentors to improve their work.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Online apprenticeships often provide apprentices with exposure to industry professionals and events. This can include guest lectures, webinars, panel discussions, or networking sessions with industry experts. Such interactions provide apprentices with valuable insights into the latest trends, practices, and challenges within the advertising, audiovisual communication, and journalism sectors.

Success factors

There were quite a few success factors related with the online method as monitoring through online meetings, regular reporting to mentor/supervisor, completion of logs by apprentices, and also as remarkable peer support.

Online apprenticeships may facilitate opportunities for apprentices to connect with their peers. This can be done through online discussion forums, group projects, or virtual networking events. Peer support allows apprentices to share experiences, exchange ideas, and collaborate on various aspects of their apprenticeship.

Constraints

Implementing an apprenticeship online can come with its own set of challenges. Here are some difficulties that were encountered during the implementation of the online apprenticeship:

1. **Lack of Hands-on Experience:** One of the primary challenges of online apprenticeships is the limited opportunity for hands-on experience. Certain industries, such as audiovisual communication and journalism, often require practical skills that may be challenging to develop fully in an online environment. Finding ways to provide meaningful hands-on experiences and practical training remotely can be a hurdle.
2. **Limited Personal Interaction:** Online apprenticeships may lack the same level of personal interaction as traditional in-person apprenticeships. This can impact the apprentices' ability to build strong relationships with mentors, peers, and industry professionals. It may also limit networking opportunities and hinder the development of soft skills, such as communication and teamwork.
3. **Technology Challenges:** Online apprenticeships heavily rely on technology, and technical issues can arise. Problems with internet connectivity, software compatibility, or access to necessary tools and equipment can disrupt the learning process.
4. **Self-Motivation and Time Management:** Online apprenticeships require a high level of self-motivation and discipline. Without the structure of a physical workspace or regular face-to-face interactions, apprentices may struggle with time management, staying focused, and meeting deadlines. Providing guidance and resources for effective time management and self-motivation can help mitigate these challenges.
5. **Limited Observation and Feedback:** In traditional apprenticeships, supervisors and mentors can closely observe an apprentice's work and provide immediate feedback. In an online setting, this observation may be more challenging, potentially leading to delays in feedback or a less comprehensive evaluation of the apprentice's performance. Establishing clear channels for regular communication and feedback is crucial to address this issue.
6. **Adaptation to Online Learning Platforms:** Apprentices who are new to online learning may face challenges adapting to the virtual learning platforms and tools used in the apprenticeship program. Familiarising apprentices with the online learning environment and providing technical support can help them navigate the platform effectively.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The main target group are students of EUSA.

Stakeholders

Companies offering the internship, the university, and the tutors.

3.6. Best practice in the field of EU Studies



3.6.1. Online apprenticeship in EU Studies of University of Seville from Spain

A period of on-site apprenticeship could be settled and considered as a training and adaptation period, during which the student acquires the necessary experience, skills and specific knowledge, in order to then be able to perform tasks and take responsibilities on one's own during the online period.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The apprenticeship is organized in the field of European Studies.

Objective

The primary objective is to provide internships during the COVID pandemic and also to offer opportunities for those living in remotes areas such as the case of students, living in different regions.

Website

<https://www.us.es/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The online apprenticeship has a duration of 250 hours after a period of 225 hours of on-site internship.

Preparation activities

For the specific case, the months of on-site internships could be considered as a training period, during which the student has acquired the necessary experience, skills and specific knowledge related to European projects, in order to then be able to perform tasks and take responsibilities on one's own.

Type of support and guidance provided

The apprentice was assigned the same mentors who had already worked and collaborated on-site with them on the field of European Projects, being therefore much easier for both parties communicating and understanding the way of working of each other.

Process of monitoring the tasks

Communication between the student and the mentors has been frequent and fluid, with emails and phone calls being the main means of contact, and using them to explain in detail the different tasks to be carried out, to raise doubts, to exchange opinions on the work in progress, or to set deadlines.

Digital skills required

Those already acquired in the student's studies and during the on-person internship period.

Assessment

The working method has been the same as the one used on-site, assigning to the student various tasks related to the management and development of European projects in which the Chamber is involved, facilitating always assistance and supervision if needed, and drawing on teamwork in order to achieve a better integration of the apprentice and to accelerate the learning process, even without personal contact.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

For the company, having a student on online internships can be used as an opportunity for improving and developing its CSR area, since this is creating more flexible employment opportunities and bringing youth people into the labour market. At the same time, an image of innovative and competitive company will be developed, by incorporating leading-edge ideas and by being committed to digitalisation.

On the other hand, for the apprentice this can bring several benefits regarding the location and timetable for working (always respecting the number of hours agreed. Apprentices from different cities did not have to pay rent for a flat in order to stay in Seville during the summer, which would have been an "unnecessary" expenditure, given that the internships could be followed in the same way at home.

Success factors

Online apprenticeships may facilitate opportunities for apprentices to connect with their peers; this can be done through online discussion forums, group projects, or virtual networking events. Peer support

allows apprentices to share experiences, exchange ideas, and collaborate on various aspects of their apprenticeship.

It is worth highlighting the fact that nowadays, like in the case of their company, many others carry out most of their work using computers and the Internet as their main tool, even storing all the data and documentation on platforms such as a Drive, which also allow remote working; that way, this new work methodology makes it much easier to carry out activities such as an online internship, being thus the only factor that changes whether working from the office or from home, as communication between employees is often done telematically even when they are in the same workplace.

Constraints

Implementing an apprenticeship online can come with its own set of challenges. Here are some difficulties that were encountered during the implementation of the online apprenticeship:

1. **Limited Personal Interaction:** Online apprenticeships may lack the same level of personal interaction as traditional in-person apprenticeships. This can impact the apprentices' ability to build strong relationships with mentors, peers, and industry professionals. It may also limit networking opportunities and hinder the development of soft skills, such as communication and teamwork.
2. **Technology Challenges:** Online apprenticeships heavily rely on technology, and technical issues can arise. Problems with internet connectivity, software compatibility, or access to necessary tools and equipment can disrupt the learning process.
3. **Self-Motivation and Time Management:** Online apprenticeships require a high level of self-motivation and discipline. Without the structure of a physical workspace or regular face-to-face interactions, apprentices may struggle with time management, staying focused, and meeting deadlines. Providing guidance and resources for effective time management and self-motivation can help mitigate these challenges.
4. **Declining productivity:** related to the previous point, the student's performance may deteriorate if he/she fails to create a suitable working environment at home, or does not adapt to it, thus, distraction and reduced concentration could easily appear.
5. **Limited Observation and Feedback:** In traditional apprenticeships, supervisors and mentors can closely observe an apprentice's work and provide immediate feedback. In an online setting, this observation may be more challenging, potentially leading to delays in feedback or a less comprehensive evaluation of the apprentice's performance. Establishing clear channels for regular communication and feedback is crucial to address this issue.
6. **Adaptation to Online Learning Platforms:** Apprentices who are new to online learning may face challenges adapting to the virtual learning platforms and tools used in the apprenticeship program. Familiarising apprentices with the online learning environment and providing technical support can help them navigate the platform effectively.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The primary target group are students from different universities in Seville.

Stakeholders

The main stakeholders involved are companies offering the internship, the university, and the tutors.

3.7. Best practice in the field of Consulting



3.7.1. Apprenticeship of INCOMA from Spain

This kind of apprenticeship allow the company to involve international staff avoiding mobilities if it were required in some cases such as impossibility of the apprentice to move to another country due to personal/familiar/economic circumstances.

Field of VET

Field of VET

The apprenticeship is organized in the field of Consulting.

Website

<https://incoma-projects.eu/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The apprenticeship lasts for 3 months.

Preparation activities

Definition of the tasks to be addressed by the intern and provision of handbook for the use of digital tools and internal procedures of the company.

Process of monitoring the tasks

The completion of tasks is monitored through video calls via Teams to follow the intern's work, solve doubts and assign tasks.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Online meetings are held once a week.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

Intern connected remotely via Teams (mostly using the features for office chat and video calls) and used Office 365 online cloud to work, with dedicated accounts created for the purpose. The use of varied online platforms led to improvement of digital skills of apprentices as they acquired more computing functions and abilities.

Assessment

No specific method in this case. The company just added difficulty to the tasks assigned only if they had seen the intern's efficiency in carrying out the previous ones.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Adaptation to personal necessities, due to flexibility in working venue.

Success factors

Regular meetings and clear, simple instructions (with examples). The hosting company is quite open to online apprenticeships as they value the international staff at their company, and this kind of apprenticeship allow the company to host international students avoiding mobilities if needed in some cases (impossibility of the student to move to another country due to personal/family/economic circumstances).

Constraints

None were identified.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The main target groups are students, graduates and unemployed people.

Stakeholders

The main stakeholders involved are the interns and the company.

3.8. Best practice in the field of Languages and Culture



3.8.1. Apprenticeship of Hellenic Culture Centre from Greece

The mentor and apprentice developed a good relation where the latter was not afraid to express anxiety, fears, hesitations, as the former knew how to relax and empower the apprentice.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The internship is provided in the field of Languages and Culture.

Objective

The objectives of the apprenticeship were to allow apprentices to:

- Approach in a modern way the modern Greek culture (and especially painting) in order to present it to (foreign) Greek language students;
- Use digital technology for this purpose.

Website

<https://hcc.edu.gr>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The duration of the apprenticeship was 4,5 months.

Preparation activities

- The mentor suggested some resources/ links/books and the draft structure of the presentation was made together with the apprentices.
- They also watched together a similar work by another tour guide more experienced and on a similar topic. This way the apprentice had the final product and a rough idea in her mind.

Process of monitoring the tasks

The intern created a series of original videos for adult foreign language students at the Centre for Greek Culture on the theme of (modern) Greek painting. The apprentice used to send to the mentor her work or/and questions. The mentor, who is also a Greek Language Tutor, could guide her and correct the language level of their presentation (usually making the vocabulary more simple). When, later they started sending some recorded parts, the mentor commented on the pace of speaking and the vocabulary again.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

They had meetings about once per week for 15-60 min.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The meetings were organized through Skype.

The digital skills were the following:

- Edit photos and videos;
- Online presentation skills.

Assessment

At the end, the whole process was evaluated orally. A form was completed which described the apprenticeship process and evidence of the work was provided (the videos) to the program coordinator.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

The apprentice learned a lot about Greek painting, she opened sources and learned to search on her own, to search according to the interests of the specific audience she will have each time, to evaluate her work and herself, to "feel" whether they understood or not. She also learned techniques for filming her work, technical issues such as sound, and how to stand in front of the camera. How to change images as she speaks, to show what she wants to show. She has loved the job of tour guide, and decided to study to be a tour guide.

Success factors

- The mentor/ supervisor was experienced and had done such a work before, knew the subject;
- They developed a good relation where the apprentice was not afraid to express her anxiety, fears, hesitations. The mentor knew how to relax her and empower her;
- There were regular online meetings;
- Her work was recognized as she added her name in the beginning and at the end of the video presentations and she was allowed to use the products in her personal portfolio;
- She had a recommendation letter from the mentor at the end. She said this would help her.

Constraints

The programme offered by the company was for one apprentice each time. This corresponds to the size of the host company (micro). The company and apprentice had a geographical distance but this did not influence the success of the scheme.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

For graduates of language/ culture faculties that want to become tourist guides and share modern Greek culture to foreign tourists.

Stakeholders

No stakeholders were involved except the company and the apprentice.

3.9. Best practices encompassing more than one sector



3.9.1. Apprenticeship of Arden University from the UK

Get a Management Degree and gain technical and academic skills.

Field of VET

Field of VET

The apprenticeships are organized in the following fields – Psychology, Business and Management, Computing and IT, Criminology and Law, Data Analytics, Engineering, Finance and Accounting, Graphic Design, Health and Social Care, Human Resource Management and Marketing.

Website

<https://arden.ac.uk/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

This is a 3.3 years apprenticeship including the final assessment with 10 weeks duration.

Type of support and guidance provided

Ilearn is an online virtual learning environment. Ilearn enhances the learning experience and helps apprentices through their studies. They will find clear guidance about the key functions of ilearn and how to use them during their induction and in their early modules, as well as their expectations on their engagement with the learning materials and activities online, and how these will integrate with and support their work-based learning.

To support their studies, apprentices have access to an extensive Digital Library, which contains more than 35,000 journal titles, 500,000 e-books and a range of academic and industry databases.

Process of monitoring the tasks

The tasks are monitored through: assignments, reports, practical exercises, projects, work-based projects, presentations, panel interviews.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

Whilst they can read their study materials on their smart phone or tablet, to make the most of their learning experience, apprentices will need access to a laptop or computer (recommending one running the latest version of Windows), and a good stable internet connection.

Assessment

They will complete a work-based project (End Point Assessment EPA). The theme will be agreed between the apprentice, the employer and the university, ensuring that support mechanisms are in place to help them complete it.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

As an apprentice, you can gain a qualification which provides you with both the technical and academic skills, such as critical thinking, required to operate more effectively within your organization and provides a viable alternative to a full-time degree program. Employers are also increasingly seeing the benefits of apprenticeships and the impact they can have on their organization, from both a performance and learning and development perspective.

Success factors

At the start of the program, Arden will assign apprentices to a Coach who will support them throughout the duration of their program. The Coach will support them with the Apprentice E-Portfolio, building evidence against the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviors for their program.

Apprentices will attend a tripartite meeting every 8-12 weeks, with their line manager/employer and their Coach. It is mandatory for all of them to attend these meetings.

Constraints

1. An apprentice who is at risk of failing to meet academic requirements, therefore being at risk of being unable to progress to the next part of the academic program

2. An apprentice who shows a lack of commitment, as recognized in tripartite meetings, having shown: low/non-attendance at masterclasses and assessment sessions, failure to attend/cancellation of review meetings.

3.9.2. Apprenticeship of e-Careers Education from the UK

Study Data and Business Analyst by paid employment.

Field of VET

Field of VET

The apprenticeships are organized in the following fields – Accounting, Bookkeeping, Business Analysis, Cloud Computing, Cyber Security, Digital Marketing, Health and Safety, Human Resources, IT and Networking, Mortgage Advice, Project Management.

Website

www.e-careers.com/

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The duration of the apprenticeship is 12 to 48 months depending on levels and progression.

Type of support and guidance provided

The company's Learning Management System offers learners a number of features including:

- Ability to seamlessly access via any internet enabled device;
- Clear modular structure to the learning;
- Access to real tutors for enhanced support;
- Clear progress tracking and reporting functionalities;
- In-built access to assessments and results.

Process of monitoring the tasks

The monitoring is carried out through online meetings.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Communication with apprentices takes place once a week.

Digital tools/platforms used

e-Careers offers a wide range of industry recognized professional qualifications which are delivered through their acclaimed Learning Management System.

Assessment

The assessment method is an exam at the end of the apprenticeship.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Apprentices will acquire the knowledge and expertise needed for a professional career. As well as gaining hands-on-experience, other benefits include formal training, personal development, and paid employment.

Success factors

More and more learners want to participate to an online apprenticeship. It is accessible for them and also many companies want their employees to work remotely. So, they are familiar with this kind of work.

Constraints

As the apprenticeship is held online, troubles of technological or educational nature can arise.

3.9.3. Apprenticeship of Spain Internship from Spain

The online apprenticeships provide opportunities worldwide on an easy-going, effective and cost-effective way.

Brief summary, field of VET and objective

Brief summary

Spain Internship is a students' placements company, connecting universities, students and companies.

Field of VET

The apprenticeships are organized in the following fields - tourism, marketing, graphic design, front desk and admin, human resources.

Objective

The main objective was to provide opportunities worldwide on an easy-going, effective and cost-effective way.

Website

www.spain-internship.com

Methodology and assessment

Type of support and guidance provided

The company has developed a remote internship quality guide as a guideline to better implement the online internships.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

At least one conference call per week with the remote interns in order to receive personal feedback from the student, and to check their progress with the assigned tasks.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The main digital tools used are Trello and Slack, Hangouts, Microsoft Teams and Zoom. Trello.com is a collaboration tool that organizes your tasks projects on boards. It allows users to know what tasks are carried out, who works on a certain task and what is the status of a process. Imagine a whiteboard, full of sticky note lists, with each note as a task for you and your team. Now imagine that each of those sticky notes has photos, attachments from other data sources like BitBucket or Salesforce, documents, and a place to comment and collaborate with your teammates. Now imagine that you can take that whiteboard anywhere you go on your smartphone, and you can access it from any computer via the web.

For fluent communication managements and subsequent monitoring, they use Slack, which is a collaboration tool that can replace email and help you and your team to work more easily. It has been created based on the way people collaborate in real life, so you can work online as efficiently as if you did it in person. It is divided in workspaces. A Slack workspace is made up of channels, where team members communicate and work together and allows you to have conversations organized by channel. In Slack, team members send messages and share files on channels, creating channels for teams, projects, offices or any other aspect that is relevant to your organization. You can have channels closed for private conversations that not all members should be able to access, or you can use shared channels to collaborate with an organization other than yours and check the history of messages. When messages and files are shared on open channels, information flows freely throughout Slack. You can search your team's conversation history in Slack to find relevant files, channels and messages, as well as people. With Slack's searchable history, your conversations become part of your organization's common knowledge. Ideally, you will have a channel where you can add your interns and communicate with them, when you can and control the flow of the conversations without being interrupted often.

Minimum digital skills and use of digital tools are required, but these can be also acquired during the implementation of the internship.

Assessment

As training of the intern is the most fundamental part of the internship, it has to be well-planned and well-executed. They developed a training plan for customer relations interns at the companies. They have one written action for each of the training activities that will be provided and also ask for feedback on each of the training points completed.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Companies already involved in online internships noted that the experiences were more than positive. In spite of working remotely they were able to guarantee a positive and effective experience. They also noted that it was an excellent opportunity to develop online education further.

Success factors

Along with the training and quality assessment plans, the company also uses an online tool. For the students, as they often lack professional experience at their first stages, it is needed to offer clear, concrete and concise tasks with deadlines.

Constraints

The main difficulties encountered before and during implementing the online apprenticeships were the lack of means to do so and the distrust and problems with digital mentality. Even with companies whose main products are sold through their own online store, they were reticent to host online internships as they considered necessary to be physically present and with face-to-face contact within the same office.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The main target groups are students and graduates.

Stakeholders

The stakeholders and partners involved are the universities, students and hosting companies, organized by Spain Internship who acts as an intermediary of the full online internship period.

3.9.4. Virtual work experience program of Forage from the USA

Explore careers and prepare for the job with hundreds of free job simulations designed by the world's top employers.

Brief summary, field of VET and objective

Brief summary

Virtual work experience programs replicate work at top companies (such as Walmart, J. P. Morgan, Red Bull, Bank of America, Accenture, Goldman Sachs, Citi, SAP, Visa, Tata, AIG, Bloomberg, BP, British Airways, Deloitte, HP, HSBC, KPMG, Mastercard, Pfizer) and connect students to the companies. The participants learn relevant tools and skills necessary to complete tasks that replicate an employee's work day.

Field of VET

Forge offers work experience programs in the following fields: Accounting, Banking & Financial Services, Client Services, Consulting, Data, Design, Education, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Government & Public Policy, Healthcare, HR, Insurance, Law, Life Sciences, Marketing, Project Management, Real Estate, Sales, Security, Software Engineering.

Objective

The virtual work experience programmes are designed first and foremost to help students better understand the diverse and exciting career pathways available to them and to build the skills and confidence which are needed for making a successful transition from the world of study to the world of work.

Website

www.theforage.com

Methodology and assessment

Duration

Each virtual work experience programme lasts for 5-6 hours.

Preparation activities

Forge works with leading companies to understand what skills they are looking for in a successful graduate and what an employee in their organisation does day-to-day. On the basis of this, online tasks and resources are developed which replicate a typical work day at the company.

Type of support and guidance provided

The participants in the virtual work experience are provided with video instructions from actual employees and have access to curated resources to help them in the implementation of the assigned tasks.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Before the implementation of a task, interns are provided with video instructions from actual employees at the hosting companies. After fulfilling a certain task, interns can compare their performance with real work samples, completed by employees from the company.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

No specific tools and platforms have been mentioned. No specific requirements regarding digital skills have been mentioned.

Assessment

After completing their tasks, the participants in the virtual work experience programme compare their performance to real work samples provided by the host companies, which show how an actual employee from the company would have approached each task. In this way, the interns perform self-assessment of their work and continue to develop their skills. Upon successful completion of a programme, participants are issued with a certificate.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Interns are provided with a risk-free opportunity to try out a career in a leading firm, develop their skills for free, prepare for the labour market and earn a certificate. Endorsing companies showcase the interesting work they do, present exciting career opportunities available for graduates and can find potential employees.

Success factors

The virtual internships are free of charge, open to all students, with no applications required from them. The internships are truly digital and can be completed in one's own time from anywhere in the world.

Constraints

Interns are not paid for participating in the virtual work experience programmes, but they obtain invaluable experience which will be useful for their future career developments.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The virtual internships are targeting primarily students, but non-students are also accepted in the programmes.

Stakeholders

The main actors involved are the interns and hosting companies endorsing the virtual work experience programmes.

3.9.5. Virtual internship experience of Bright Network from the UK

The UK's no. 1 virtual internship experience to fast track the career of your choice.

Brief summary, field of VET and objective

Brief summary

The virtual internship programme provides students and graduates with the opportunity to virtually meet with the world's top employers (such as Google, Nestle, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Lloyds Banking Group, Johnson & Johnson, etc.) and experience working in the chosen sector by completing work samples and get support with their career development. Upon successful completion of the internship experience, participants receive certificates. The virtual experience has four core parts: Core skills sessions - delivered by career experts; Sector focused upskilling sessions - delivered by leading

employers in that sector; Project work which simulates real work an intern would complete; Networking with your peers and meeting graduates across a range of different companies.

Field of VET

The 2023 edition of Internship Experience UK offers virtual internships in the following fields: Business, operations and marketing; Commercial law; Financial services and consulting; Investment banking and asset management; Public sector, policy and charity; Technology.

Objective

The virtual experience is designed to upskill participants, build their connections and boost their employability.

Website

<https://www.brightnetwork.co.uk/%2Finternship-experience-uk/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

One stream of Internship Experience UK takes place over four days.

Preparation activities

Applicants undergo a light pre-screening stage consisting of basic data capture and a short 100-word answer on why they want to take part in the programme.

Type of support and guidance provided

In the first lesson, introductory sessions are held for interns. For the work samples completed during the experience, interns attend a session giving them insights and a model answer for the task. From there, they will be asked to complete a self-reflection task and will be paired with their peers to discuss what can be done to improve.

Means and frequency of communication

During the second and third days, there are graduate office hours, where interns can type questions to graduates at each of the companies to answer.

Digital tools/platforms used and skills required

The virtual internship is held through the online platform Hopin. No specific requirements regarding digital skills have been mentioned.

Assessment

During the experience, there is no pass mark that one needs to achieve on the work sample, but interns need to submit everything and attend the sessions to receive their certificate.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Interns are provided with vital information regarding the key skills they should develop before entering the labour market in order to increase their chances of being employed. Employers share useful information on the exact skills they are looking for and can find potential employees.

Success factors

The virtual internships are open to everyone, are truly digital and are free of charge. Each year a completely new programme is designed, so interns can benefit from participating in more than one edition of the programme and in this way meet new companies and develop new skills.

Constraints

The virtual internship takes place live, which requires participants to be available online for its full duration. In case, they are not able to participate in the live sessions, they can join the On Demand experience which offers the same activities without the networking opportunities. The participants undertake the same tasks and watch the same sessions, but without the time constraint of a live engagement, which allows them do the course according to their schedule.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The internship experience is open to everyone aged 18 or over. The content of the experience is tailored best for incoming university students, current university students and recent university graduates from the UK. However, anyone from anywhere in the world can apply for the programme.

Stakeholders

The main actors involved are the interns, the representatives of leading companies and industry experts.

3.9.6. Nesternship of Nestle India from India

Get real-life work experience at one of the world's leading food and beverage organisations.

Brief summary, field of VET and objective

Brief summary

The virtual internship programme provides students with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience by working on projects within different departments of the company. Interns are assigned mentors from Nestlé to guide them during the course of their internship. The internships come with a guaranteed stipend of INR 10,000 (in form of Amazon vouchers) and an internship experience certificate from Nestlé.

Field of VET

The 2023 edition of the Nesternship programme offers specialized tracks in the following fields: Sales; Marketing; Nutrition business; Human resources; Legal; Finance; Sustainability; Corporate affairs; Business services; Technical; Food safety and quality; Production; Supply chain; Logistics; Engineering; Packaging.

Objective

The internship aims to provide participants with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience and develop critical competencies, helping them to excel in their future careers.

Website

<https://www.nestle.in/nesternship>
<https://internshala.com/nesternship-2023/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The duration of the internship is 10 weeks.

Preparation activities

Interested candidates have to complete a gamified assessment on Nestlé's Talent Games portal. On the basis of the submitted applications and the performance in the assessment, the participants in the internship are selected.

Type of support and guidance provided

The participants are assigned mentors and coaches from the company, who are specialists in their domain and guide the interns throughout the programme.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

The interns are assigned to work on projects with their mentors and have the option to complete their internship full-time or part-time.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

No specific digital tools/platforms have been mentioned. No specific requirements regarding digital skills have been mentioned.

Assessment

Upon successful completion of the assignments, the interns are issued with a certificate from Nestlé.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Interns are provided with the opportunity to experience working at a multinational company and to prepare themselves for successfully entering the labour market upon graduation from university. The

company has the opportunity to present the activities done by different departments and can find and train potential employees.

Success factors

The virtual internships are free of charge and are held in a hybrid format, with the internship taking place mostly online, but also featuring some offline activities. This allows participants the flexibility to complete their internship at their own pace and in accordance with their other commitments and engagements. The interns receive a stipend in the form of an Amazon voucher worth 10 000 Indian rupees. No previous work experience is required from the interns. The candidates can apply for more than one internship, so they have the opportunity to experience working at different departments of the company.

Constraints

Some of the candidates might be reluctant to complete their application, given that most companies often have lengthy and tiresome selection procedures. Nestlé has solved this problem by turning the application process for the internship into an entertaining interactive online game. This innovative approach allows applicants to showcase their skills, creativity, and problem-solving abilities in a fun and engaging way. By playing the game, applicants can discover the various career paths available at Nestlé and determine which opportunities align with their interests and goals.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The internship programme is targeting students at Indian universities, pursuing Bachelor's or Master's degrees in any discipline.

Stakeholders

The main actors involved are the interns and representatives of different departments of Nestlé India.

3.9.7. Online internship of Side Hustle from Nigeria

This free online internship allows to gain in-demand skills and get the hands-on experience needed to take on entry-level and junior positions in just 8 weeks.

Brief summary, field of VET and objective

Brief summary

During the online internships, the interns get the opportunity to learn and get experience, working on projects and team assignments under the guidance of mentors and lead instructors. The internship combines instructor-led learning with hands-on bootcamp experience.

Field of VET

Side Hustle offers online internships in the following fields: Frontend and Backend Web Development; Cloud Computing; WordPress Development; Data Analytics; Graphics Design; Product Management; Digital Marketing & Content Creation; Mobile Application Development; Quality Assurance; Product Design; Video Animation; MS Office; Customer Relationship Management.

Objective

The internship aims to provide youths with the necessary skills and hands-on experience in order to prepare them successfully for entering the labour market.

Website

<https://lms.terrahq.co/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The total duration of the internship is 8 weeks, with four weeks of instructor-led training and four weeks of hands-on bootcamp experience.

Preparation activities

Candidates have to complete a baseline test, which is used to assess all applicants' general abilities prior to participation in the internship. If a candidate fails the baseline test, there is an option to re-take it.

Type of support and guidance provided

The participants are assigned mentors and lead instructors, who provide guidance and support to the interns.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

The internship combines self-paced and instructor-led training with lots of hands-on experience.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The internship is carried out through the Slack platform. No specific requirements regarding digital skills have been mentioned.

Assessment

All participants will be issued with a paid certificate of completion at the end of the internship, which involves working on projects and team assignments.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Participants in the internship acquire hands-on experience, build their portfolio, improve their teamwork, and develop their communication skills.

Success factors

The internships are held entirely online. The internship itself is free, but interns are expected to pay for their certificate. The internship includes an optional bootcamp which provides participants with the opportunity to experience working in a fast-paced start-up. Participants in the bootcamp also receive access to a talent pool through which they can be informed about job openings in their respective fields.

Constraints

Some of the candidates might be reluctant to apply for the internship as they will have to pay for the certificate. However, they can choose from three packages – basic, standard and premium, so in case someone can not afford the more expensive options, an alternative exists. The certificate does not expire and its holder can benefit from increased marketability, professional credibility and competitive advantage over peers.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The internship is targeting African youths interested to pursue a career in the fields of Marketing, Engineering, Product and Design.

Stakeholders

The main actors involved are the interns, their mentors and instructors during the training as well as start-ups who host the participants in the bootcamps.

3.9.8. Free online internship with experience of ThinkNEXT Technologies Pvt. from India

This is a great opportunity for aspiring candidates who don't have any access to reputed companies where they can start their career as interns and get acquainted with the challenging corporate world.

Brief summary, field of VET and objective

Brief summary

ThinkNEXT provides free online internship with certificate opportunities to Engineering, Polytechnic and Management students as well as to graduates and job seekers. Interns gain hands-on experience while working in a remote professional setting, having the opportunity to get International Certifications from Microsoft, SAP, Apple, Adobe, Autodesk, EC-Council, IC3, W3, Unity, QuickBooks etc.

Field of VET

ThinkNEXT offers apprenticeships in the following fields: Computer Science; IT; Electronics; Mechanical Engineering; Civil Engineering; Electrical Engineering; Management.

Objective

The internship is designed to give all students the opportunity to begin their career exploration journey while developing work experience and a professional network.

Website

<https://www.thinknexttraining.com/free-online-internship-with-certificate.aspx>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The company offers full-time and part-time internships, depending on the availability of the participants.

Preparation activities

The online recruitment process commences with an initial resume screening as positions become available. Depending on available positions, interns may receive a follow-up survey. This information is then sent to the recruiting team for evaluation, and if positions match with a candidate's specialised skills, the recruiting team will reach out to him/her directly to schedule phone interviews.

Type of support and guidance provided

The participants are assigned supervisors, who provide guidance and support to the interns in the implementation of the tasks.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Interns work on assignments and their performance is monitored by supervisors, who also provide feedback to them.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

Communication between the interns and their supervisors is done through online applications, such as Skype, WhatsApp, instant messaging platforms, project management tools, etc. Other means for communication include SMS messaging, organisation of online meetings and phone conversations.

Assessment

Upon successful completion of the internship, participants are issued with a certificate, which is internationally recognised and accepted. No specific requirements regarding digital skills have been mentioned.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Participants in the internship develop and refine their skills, gain valuable work experience, explore a career path, network with professionals in the field and might be offered an employment contract at the end of the programme. Through holding internships, the hosting company increases its recruitment efforts.

Success factors

The internships are free of charge, are held online and a certificate is issued upon successful completion. No previous work experience is required from candidates and they can apply for more than one internship at a time.

Constraints

It is not clearly stated whether the interns are paid or compensated in some form for their work. If there is no remuneration in some form, then some interns might be reluctant to apply for the internship. However, the company tries to provide numerous other benefits, which will be useful for the development of the interns' future careers. These include free classes in Spoken English, Personality Development and Interview Preparation (HR + Technical). The participants can also benefit from the company's own job portal and mobile app for better communication, access to study materials and community support.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The internship is targeting Undergraduate, Graduate, Master's students as well as job seekers.

Stakeholders

The main actors involved are the interns and their supervisors from the hosting company.

3.9.9. Blended-learning apprenticeship of Mindful Education from the UK

The impact is substantial as Mindful Education's platform improves the learning process and provides better results, in a shorter time and with fewer resources.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The apprenticeships are organized in the field of accounting, management, law and human resources.

Objective

The apprenticeship aims to:

- Develop or improve certain skills;
- Provide opportunities for the disadvantaged. The accessibility of the platform helps to improve and facilitate the learning process;
- Use of government policies.

Website

<https://mindful-education.co.uk/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The duration of the apprenticeship is up to 30 months, depending on the apprenticeship and level, as well as the apprentice.

Preparation activities

Research of the field and technical possibilities. Continuous improvement of the platform based on statistics and platform data.

Type of support and guidance provided

The apprenticeship programs are blended - online and on campus and they provide a dynamic learning experience. On the platform, there are extensive materials which are always updated and there is direct support from the lecturers who provide it if it is necessary. Also additional help of learning buddies.

Process of monitoring the tasks

The platform provides full monitoring of the learning process as well as exercises. The monitoring is done for apprentices and lecturers.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Depending on the apprentices' needs. Through the platform or in person, on campus.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

Mindful Education's platform provides all the necessary features like content/learning material distribution, communication, exercises, tests and monitoring. It is designed for a smooth learning experience and is constantly updated and improved. The platform is developed by Mindful Education. Apprentices should have basic digital skills. If they can use a mobile device, they will be able to use the platform.

Assessment

Apprentices are being constantly monitored and there are tests and exercises which they complete. The testing is closely integrated into the learning process, and it aids with a better learning process, experience. The final assessment of apprentices for receiving the qualification is regulated by the government.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Mindful Education as a platform helps to facilitate apprenticeships. The impact is substantial as the platform improves the learning process and provides better results (retention and pass rate), in a shorter time and with fewer resources. Meanwhile, companies benefit as apprentices receive better training, which is more tailored to their needs as well companies can more effectively use government policy. Mindful Education has approximately 30% market share in the country.

Success factors

- The platform with its technical features and monitoring capabilities;
- Government policy regarding apprenticeship funding rules;

- The blended approach, the timing and digitalisation;
- Recognition and good reputation of the Mindful Education brand;
- Partner network of colleges.
-

Constraints

There are still shifting mindsets from training providers, and a lack of trust. Tutors are afraid of their positions, etc.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

Broad audience as the programme is relevant to individuals seeking to obtain qualifications or switch career fields, as well as companies interested in utilizing government policies to enhance the skills of their staff.

Stakeholders

The main stakeholders are representatives of the government, companies (small and medium), apprentices, colleges.

3.9.10. Apprenticeship of RISEBA University of Applied Sciences from Latvia

Automatisation and digitalisation are crucial, because one must keep in mind that companies are busy and do not have time to spare.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The apprenticeships are organized in the fields of Management, Architecture, Visual media, Data analytics.

Objective

Development of skills, providing the opportunity to learn in a real environment and also get a feeling of the work.

Website

<https://www.riseba.lv/index.php/en>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The duration of the apprenticeship is 3-6 months, depending on the program and company.

Preparation activities

There are specific lectures and lessons for students, where the requirements and the process of the internship are explained. For the students, all the information is provided beforehand so that they are well prepared and can focus on the tasks. There are also talks and discussions with the companies and regular communication about their needs.

Type of support and guidance provided

There are basic guidelines, the most important aspects are specified and clarified in the agreement. The company provides all the necessary information, and it is agreed before the signing.

Process of monitoring the tasks

The monitoring aspect is the hardest part and there is a lack of guidelines and tools. Companies themselves communicate with the apprentices and discuss the tasks and progress, but there is no strict or unified approach, which sometimes can complicate the process.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Depending on the involved parties the communications are based on the situations and necessity.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

Basic conference tools and business-specific tools. Basic knowledge of digital skills and tools. Specific work-related tools, and software depending on the company.

Assessment

There are different kinds of assessments for the apprentices. First of all, there is an important self-assessment which helps to evaluate what apprentices think about their skills and knowledge.

Companies mostly evaluate the results and outputs from the apprentices as well as their skills and compliance with the labour market.

There are no specific tests, because of the different areas which are covered. It would be hard to fully unify it, but automatization and digitalisation are crucial, because one must keep in mind that companies are busy and do not have time to spare.

There is also an assessment before and after the apprenticeship, which shows the progress, and gives valuable insights.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Students, especially the newer generation appreciate the online or hybrid format. This is also partly related to the labour market and the current specificities of the remote and hybrid format, which is also the story of competitiveness in the labour market. This also means that certain processes needed to be modernised and, of course, adapted to digital technology, which overall was beneficial. It required some investments, but it is a long-term gain.

Success factors

The overall readiness level was fairly high before Covid-19. Of course, the restrictions put additional pressure and the company had to adapt to the new regulations, but there was motivation from all involved parties, which was the most crucial part for success. Also, the newer generation is really interested in online opportunities and work (as well as international opportunities and environment) and considering the needs of international companies or those companies, which work more on a project basis, they are really open and it is a win-win situation for all involved parties.

Constraints

The monitoring aspect was the hardest one to implement to see the progress and development of skills. Policy-wise it could have been more regulated and clearer with guidelines and clear requirements from the government. Companies were very open, and it was not an issue and the technology was also quite ready. But of course, at the same time, the hosting company was not fully ready for the online environment. If one is talking about short-term changes, then yes, that is not a problem. But now the company is not fully sure about the future, how will the work environment change, on what should they focus, because with the changes they must adjust.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

Students and those who are wanting or planning to change their qualifications, or are developing their careers.

Stakeholders

Business sector. The government was not as involved as it could have been, but of course, they are also a stakeholder in this case.

3.9.11. Hybrid internship of Printful from Latvia

From day one, the intern is just like an employee and they have basically full access.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

The apprenticeships are organized in the fields of marketing, IT, customer service, legal, management.

Objective

The main objective is to share knowledge and help to develop new skills for students. Potentially also acquire new talent.

Website

<https://www.printful.com/uk>
<https://www.printful.com/uk/sponsorships>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

Depending on the internship, the duration is between 3-6 months.

Preparation activities

Successful internship requirements planning beforehand on the company side. Deciding which positions, mentors and tasks will be assigned to the new intern. Otherwise, the company has a large amount of learning materials and tools which help the onboarding process.

Type of support and guidance provided

There are dedicated mentors for every intern and also other employees who get involved and share their knowledge. There are a lot of guidelines, tutorials and learning materials.

Process of monitoring the tasks

The company uses DeskTime, which also monitors interns. There are also other project/process management tools which are used depending on the specific area of work, which helps to monitor daily tasks. As well as regular meetings with mentors and team leads.

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

There is daily communication, depending on the necessity, but there are also weekly online or in person meetings, as well as instant messaging.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

Mostly Google products, but also specific tools like Slack, sometimes Zoom, Excel, Jira depending on the internship needs. Apprentices should have basic knowledge of digital tools, preferably Google products, Excel. Specific knowledge in the case of internship in the IT field. The company looks more at soft skills, ability and motivation to learn plan time, and initiative.

Assessment

Initially, the company tries to screen and choose the most motivated interns, expecting from them valuable input because they are investing in them. The company tries to find them the most suitable positions and mentors from whom they could learn, but there are no specific tests, it could be that they do not have a background in the field.

The company does also regular assessments and see if the apprentices are motivated because they also had a case where the intern did not come and did not perform so the internship was declined after a short period.

During the internship the company follows how the apprentices are doing their designated tasks and how they are performing and learning, as well as how they fit in the team.

After the internship period, the company assesses the apprentices according to the university requirements, also evaluate them and from time to time offer permanent work or provide recommendations to their HR in case they would want to join Printful.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

The company made impressive progress regarding digitalization and implemented many processes and moved forward very quickly (mostly during Covid-19, but also before that). The biggest impact was the many guidelines and tools implemented to help improve the process and also onboard new employees. Originally most of the work was done on-site, but during Covid-19, they switched to remote and hybrid work, which has stayed.

For interns, it helped them to learn more quickly and develop their own digital skills, as well as be more accessible and flexible, considering their studies and maybe remote location.

It should be also kept in mind that there are different persons, some are more introvert, some extravert and some of them can benefit more from the remote environment. At the same time, there are also drawbacks.

Success factors

There are some key factors like the extensive guidelines and tools that are accessible for the employees and interns. Also, the learning materials, which are in digital format can easily be accessed and interns can learn at their own pace.

Mentoring also was a crucial part, and the company also has an extensive mentoring program that goes beyond internship and is available for other companies. Sharing the company's knowledge is important. From day one, the intern is just like an employee and they have basically full access. The company also uses Desktime, which helps to monitor their progress and see if they are stuck on some tasks, which is also helpful for them, to monitor their own progress and plan their work, be more productive.

Constraints

The biggest issue that the company faced is the same as with remote work – how to show the company culture, how to show them the informal environment.

The company wants team leaders, and mentors to get the interns to be involved in team-building events and participate in face-to-face events because that is the best way how to show real values. Of course, it is possible to introduce them to the company culture, but it takes a longer time and for an intern that is more complicated. That is why the company recommends for those who can come to the office come and work in a hybrid format, to see it in person.

Technology was not a problem, because the company experimented with remote options, the only requirement for a remote, hybrid internship is a good internet connection. Otherwise, it is impossible to work.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The main target audience are students, with retraining and changing careers being rare.

Stakeholders

Printful cooperates with universities to attract students for internships.

3.9.12. Online apprenticeship of Apprenti from the USA

Very important is the preparation of the management and staff of the company as well as of the apprentice, before the start of the apprenticeship, on the specificities of teleworking.

Field of VET and objective

Field of VET

Apprenti is an intermediary organization that provides apprenticeship opportunities in a variety of fields in the USA.

Objective

The objectives of the organization are to:

- support employers as they seek to implement more inclusive practices in the field of online work and apprenticeship;
- provide management training for employees with an interest in managing apprentices;
- support apprentices to work effectively in the framework of an online apprenticeship.

Website

<https://inclusiveapprenticeship.org/resources/creating-inclusive-virtual-hybrid-apprenticeships/>

Methodology and assessment

Duration

The apprenticeships offered by Apprenti can have varied durations.

Preparation activities

Apprenti has developed resources in order to support companies on shifting to virtual apprenticeship structures. This includes the following:

- [“Perspectives on Apprenticeship: Shifting to Virtual Apprenticeship Structures”](#) – Highlights how inclusive apprenticeship programs can bring key advantages to propel businesses forward;
- [“Designing Inclusive Apprenticeships: A Guide for Recruiting & Training Apprentices with Disabilities”](#) – Helps employers to build inclusive apprenticeship programs that can support diverse job seekers from under-represented population groups;
- [Staff training resources on online apprenticeships with a specific focus on disability](#) ;
- [Tips provided to apprentices on how they can be an “effective teleworker”](#).

Process of monitoring the tasks

The employers meet with an apprentice for 15 minutes each day as a check-in. It is important to integrate time for team-building into core schedules to build mentors’ rapport with apprentices. It is

also recommended as monitoring technique to share screens to walk through difficult problems together. Specific guidelines have been developed in order to organize and monitor apprenticeships with people with disabilities, which can be found [here](#).

Means and frequency of communication with apprentices

Daily meetings of 15 minutes.

Digital tools/platforms used and required skills

The meetings are organized through Zoom.

Assessment

The assessment practices include the option for apprentices to record virtual meetings. This will give them the opportunity to re-examine concepts and skills taught to them, allowing them to review subjects they may not have comprehended or refresh their memory about a topic or a request.

Impact, success factors and constraints

Impact

Through the resources and the guidance that it provides, Apprenti is able to:

- Support effectively companies in the transition to online apprenticeships;
- Improve the opportunities to attract and retain talent with disabilities who may work more effectively from home and/or have better access to accommodations from a remote space;
- Develop the skills of the staff of the company to create online inclusive working environments;
- Increase the ability of apprentices to work remotely.

Success factors

- There are specific and concrete guidelines, tips and suggestions addressed to different categories of people involved in apprenticeships;
- There is a big emphasis on the preparation of the people that are involved in the apprenticeship.

Constraints

The programme is general and does not provide specific guidelines that could be applicable in specific industries.

Target audience and stakeholders

Target audience

The resources are addressing mainly the management and staff of companies that are willing to create an inclusive online working environment.

Stakeholders

There are actively involved organisations that are working with people with disabilities.

4. Conclusion

The identified best practices show the growing importance and wider application of online apprenticeships, especially during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Before this, online apprenticeships existed, but on a limited scale, with face-to-face being the traditional method of delivery. Their development expanded with the outbreak of the pandemic and the corresponding transition to remote work and online study. Digitalisation has played an important role in this respect, as numerous digital tools, applications and platforms had already been developed when it became necessary to switch to virtual apprenticeships. Nevertheless, the main actors (VET centres, companies and intermediary organisations) faced several challenges in the organisation of online apprenticeships due to lack of skills and capacity. Despite the difficulties, online apprenticeships have brought important benefits with them, so it is important to continue the efforts of promoting this innovative approach, while at the same time addressing the shortcomings identified during the implementation.

In terms of **benefits**, the main ones, which can be summarised from the identified best practices, are:

- **Flexibility** – the apprentice does not need to travel to the company, while the employer does not need to provide a dedicated office space for carrying out the apprenticeship and can host more apprentices. In this way, a more flexible schedule can be arranged which is suitable for both the apprentice and the mentor at the hosting organisation.
- **Accessibility/inclusivity** – the online delivery allows for a wider number of apprentices to participate, especially for people from geographically distant and isolated areas (such as mountains or island regions), people with disabilities, pregnant women and people on parental leave.
- **Time and cost-saving** – the apprentice saves time and costs related with travel to the company, while the employer has less expenses related with the physical hosting of an apprentice.
- **Sustainability** – in case of extraordinary situations arising in the future, the main VET actors will be better prepared and able to respond faster. The sustainability is further proven by the fact that some companies and organisations had implemented online apprenticeships prior to the pandemic and continue to do so until the present day. It is true that most VET actors turned to online apprenticeships only during the pandemic, but some of them have chosen to continue providing the option for fully remote or hybrid apprenticeships in the long term.

As regards the **shortcomings**, the main ones, identified from the best practices, are:

- **Limited scope of application** - online apprenticeships can be applied to a limited range of professions and economic sectors. These are mainly more technically-oriented occupations with limited face-to-face interaction. Some of the sectors which are well suited for the organization of online apprenticeships include ICT, Telecommunications, Customer and Technical Support, Digital marketing, E-commerce, Online media, etc. However, in some other sectors, especially those relying on manual labour and physical interaction, such as Construction, Manufacturing, Agri-food, Health, Transport, the options for online apprenticeships are limited or non-existent.
- **Lack of digital skills** – as it turned out during the pandemic, many VET actors did not have the necessary capacity to organise online apprenticeships. Since then, this gap has been addressed through various capacity-building activities, such as exchange of good practices, the development of step-by-step handbooks and the training of VET actors to organise online apprenticeships.

- **Lack of established methodology and short-lived experience** – the application of online apprenticeships has not been thoroughly tested and proven in time. This coupled with the non-existent or partly developed methodology in most cases might be the reason behind the reluctance of some organisations to implement the innovative approach. Now, as most of the restrictions related to the pandemic have been lifted, many organisations are returning to the traditional and established method of face-to-face delivery of apprenticeships.
- **Dependency on technology** - both the hosting organisation and the apprentice should have the necessary equipment, software and network connectivity. Outdated equipment, problems with the Internet connection and power cuts may all hamper the successful implementation of online apprenticeships.

On the basis of the best practices identified in the present guidebook, the following **main lessons** related to the organisation of online apprenticeships can be learned:

DO's

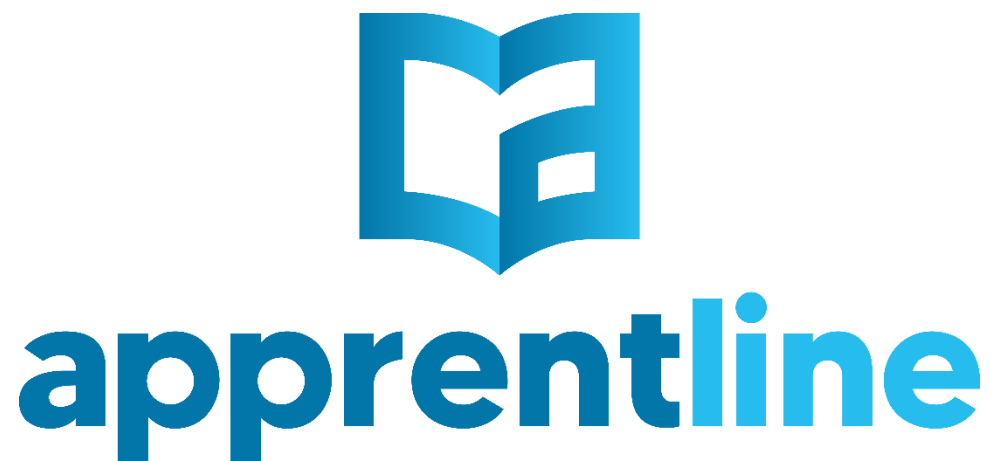
- ✓ Ensure that there is a regular communication between apprentices and their mentors/supervisors (if possible, on a daily basis);
- ✓ Ensure that the mentors/supervisors closely monitor, provide the necessary support, feedback and follow up on the activities implemented by apprentices;
- ✓ Ensure that the apprenticeships are aligned with the applicable national legislation;
- ✓ If possible, provide some form of remuneration or other compensation (such as providing vouchers or covering bills related to electricity, Internet, software, etc.) to apprentices;
- ✓ Ensure that the participants successfully completing the apprenticeship are issued with a certificate;
- ✓ If possible, provide successful apprentices with opportunities for their future professional development (e.g. career consultation, advice on CV and interview preparation, job offer, etc.);
- ✓ If possible, organize periodic physical meetings with the apprentices, so they can get to know the company culture better;
- ✓ Ensure that all the necessary digital tools needed for the smooth implementation of the apprenticeship are provided and the users undergo the necessary training in working with them;
- ✓ Provide guidance and resources for effective time management and self-motivation as without the structure of a physical workspace or regular face-to-face interactions, apprentices may struggle with time management, staying focused, and meeting deadlines;
- ✓ If possible, implement a hybrid format of apprenticeship with an initial face-to-face period for adaptation and training, followed by remote work for the remainder of the apprenticeship;
- ✓ Develop a communication strategy with schedule of the daily/weekly meetings, commitment to regularly fill in logbook with the tasks done/skills acquired;
- ✓ If possible, develop an internship quality guide as a guideline to better implement the online internships;
- ✓ Define clear learning objectives by using competency standards and minimum requirements and clearly articulate the goals and expectations of the program. This includes defining the skills and knowledge that participants are expected to have prior to the program and after its participation;
- ✓ Review the performance of mentors and supervisors by conducting regular reviews to assess teaching effectiveness, support, and engagement. This includes feedback from participants, peer

reviews, and self-assessment to evaluate teaching methods, communication, and motivational skills;

- ✓ Use a portfolio in order to gather evidences for the assessment;
- ✓ Invest effort and resources to achieve the successful integration of the apprentice in the work group of the company employees;
- ✓ Build human relationships that are very important to keep motivation especially in an online environment;
- ✓ Prepare (both the company and the apprentice) for the specificities that are involved in working as an apprentice remotely.

DON'Ts

- ✗ Avoid organisation of online apprenticeships in professions relying on manual labour and physical interaction;
- ✗ Avoid organisation of online apprenticeships if the hosting organisation is lacking the necessary expertise for its proper implementation;
- ✗ Avoid organisation of online apprenticeships if the hosting organisation is lacking capacity and tools for holding regular communication with apprentices, monitoring the completion of their tasks, providing them with the necessary guidance and support;
- ✗ Avoid organisation of online apprenticeships in tasks which are not suitable for conducting in a remote setting;
- ✗ Avoid replicating online apprenticeships which might not be suitable to a particular sector or are not in alignment with the relevant national setting, including the legislative framework;
- ✗ Avoid organisation of apprenticeships which are of very long duration;
- ✗ Avoid skipping the introductory orientation/onboarding process which familiarises participants with the tools, processes, and expectations of the program;
- ✗ Do not underestimate the technological challenges that might occur, such as access to reliable Internet and suitable devices;
- ✗ Do not underestimate the cultural differences that might impact communication and work styles in an international environment;
- ✗ Do not stop improving and adapting the apprenticeship programme to meet evolving needs and challenges;
- ✗ Leave a lot of time without communication between the in-company mentor and the apprentice.



***Capacity Building in the Organisation of Online
Apprenticeships***

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

