



CURRICULUM PLANNER



Hilde Bastiaannet, May 2012



*This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. project nr: 2010-1-NL1-LEO05-02659.
This communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

Curriculum planner

Table of contents	PAGE
1. Introduction	3
2. Curriculum Planner – definitions and descriptions	4
3. Content Assignments	5
4. Curriculum Planner step-by-step	6
5. Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting	8
A. Assessment and Evaluation of Student Achievement	8
B. The Achievement Chart	8
C. Assessment and Evaluation of Assignments	9
APPENDICES:	
Strategies for Assessment of Student Achievement	10
Schedule for planning curriculum	12

1. Introduction

Skill development is playing a considerable role in strategies for the European Union to emerge from the economic crisis. Apart from upgrading occupation-specific skills, workers need to expand their key competences, including communication, self-management, team working, the capacity to be creative and take initiative, and the ability to keep on learning and manage change. Competences which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment. (Cedefop 2011: 99)¹ EU 2020, LifeLong Learning, New Skills for New Jobs Action Now, all formulate proposals for developing effective and sustainable strategies on work place learning changing competence requirements and professional development. These proposals focus on strengthening employability through the acquisition of competences that can be transferred across different working environments, enterprises and even sectors and occupations

One of the EU targets set for 2013 is that 80,000 (VET?) students will be going abroad for study or work placement. Statistics show that every EU country has problems in even getting close to its own percentage of the target. Often the step a student has to take to participate in (international) mobility – be it work placement or study - is too big. Many young people are interested in participating in mobility programmes and have recognized the importance of going abroad for instance by gaining language and intercultural competences. Nevertheless a significant percentage of students do not join programmes or break off their stay and return home because they are not able to cope with being in a foreign country.

Internationalisation of curricula and a tailored preparation programme need to be implemented to improve mobility rates. We need a programme that leads students and teachers to (international) work placements and so to mobility, step by step. The INtheMC project aims to increase both the number of students and teachers involved in internationalisation by offering them a ready to use methodology.

The summarized methodology is: addressing teachers, students and management as well, and all at the same time. This pedagogical strategy will be input for the project INtheMC.

The INtheMC partners aim to activate groups of teachers by sensibilising them to the topics of internationalisation and mobility and the difficulties students might encounter, by teaching and showing how internationalisation works.

Within the project, a step-by-step programme leading to (international) mobility will be created and disseminated. After the project more teachers will be able to use a structured internationalisation programme for preparing VET students to study or learn on the-job in a foreign country. Owing to this programme students will have the opportunity of developing skills and competences necessary to be competitive in the EU job market.

¹ Cedefop, *Learning while working, Success stories on workplace, learning in Europe, 2011*
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3060_en.pdf

2. Curriculum Planner – definitions and descriptions

The *curriculum* of a school is the formal and informal content and process by which learners gain knowledge and understanding, develop skills, and alter attitudes, appreciations, and values under the auspices of that school (Doll 1996: 15)². The curriculum has to be designed with the goal of ensuring that graduates are well prepared to lead satisfying and productive lives as both citizens and individuals, and to compete successfully in a global economy and a rapidly changing world.

Curriculum planning is a vital element of effective teaching. When planning a curriculum, teachers create a detailed outline of what they are going to do with the students throughout the school year. A curriculum planner is a tool to help organising various elements of a curriculum, such as the core objectives (e.g. competences to achieve), subject, unit definitions, activities, assessments, and resources.

Some educational programmes consist of classes that progress according to skill. For example, those who are interested in learning a foreign language might start in a beginner's class, then take an intermediate class, and finally an advanced class.

The *structure of the Planner* reflects the elements of effective performance based design and address the following questions:

- ✓ What do you want students to learn?
- ✓ What evidence would you accept of that learning?
- ✓ How can you design effective performance tasks or activities to provide evidence of that learning?
- ✓ What criteria will you use to assess and evaluate the learning?

The *Planner* highlights in the planning process:

Initial assessment determines student readiness to begin the work of a unit; the knowledge/skills needed to engage successfully in the work of a unit. Performing an initial assessment to determine the level of students' knowledge and skill may be appropriate only for the first unit of a programme or course.

Subtasks/assignments - the building blocks of the unit. A subtask describes a series of closely related lessons or activities in which students learn and practice new skills and knowledge which are generally applied in the culminating task of the unit.

The **culminating task** is the summative assessment by which students can demonstrate the achievement of the skills and knowledge related to the expectations that they have practised and learned throughout the work of a unit. The culminating task is often an authentic, complex, and purposeful performance task that may take the form of a portfolio, performance demonstration, test, or exam (*please see appendix*).

Activities throughout the unit may be evaluated at any time, so there may not be a need for summative evaluation in the form of a culminating task for a particular unit.

² Ronald C. Doll, *Curriculum Improvement: Decision Making and Process*, 1996, Allyn and Bacon Boston

3. Content Assignments

In the January 2011 INtheMC-meeting all partners agreed on the following to be included in the assignments:

- A. General background. Internationalisation in your own country (2 assignments)
The following topics can each be an assignment (in each assignment 4 or 5 levels)
- geography
 - demographics
 - own culture and other cultures
 - social etiquette
 - intercultural tolerance
 - history and politics
 - currency
 - time zones
 - language (simple travel words)
 - interview person from other culture/country
 - foreign pen pal
- B. Internationalisation (1 assignment) - attention to students afraid to go abroad
- speed date meetings for students and each table represents a country
 - import and export in your own country
 - language learning by yourself (tv/read/books from library)
 - mail with other students
- C. Internationalisation abroad (general)
- neighboring countries (use internet – Google)
- D. Introduction to the working field / work placement
Vocational assignment / compare vocations (VET)
- pay/salary
 - conditions of work
 - qualifications required
 - registration
 - practice/methods
 - business language (most used 10 vocational words, depending level)
 - business etiquette. How to behave in a professional environment.
 - exporting of national product
 - competences and qualifications needed in another country (your certificate)
- E. Planning a trip/Mobility experience (excursion or individual) (2 assignments)
- logistics
 - costs/pocket money
 - accommodation
 - getting about
 - contact person
 - invite parents for a information meeting and inform them
- Include:
- fear for going abroad.
 - opening up the conversation.
 - talk with students who have been on mobility/work placement.

4. Curriculum Planner step-by-step

Short summary:

A Curriculum Planner is intended to help plan, develop, implement, and evaluate curriculum units that:

- meet the needs of all students in the classroom/group;
- provide a balance in the range of learning experiences;
- recognise the interrelated disciplines involved in the learning process;
- recognise the interrelated phases involved in the learning process;
- provide consistent terminology to support effective teaching and learning;
- are designed towards learning outcomes (curriculum expectations);
- incorporate effective instructional strategies and assessment strategies;

1st step: **Gather all papers** for Internationalisation worked out by the INtheMC group per subject:

- teacher manual
- teacher supporting material (books, DVDs/videos, internet-sources, etc)
- advices for method of teaching, strategies and references to support effective instruction
- student assignments/tasks
- (advices for) student assessment
- student material (books, sources, etc)
- and so on.....

2nd step: Get experienced colleagues/teachers together and **form a group** (perhaps the very persons who took part in teacher-courses?), that will make the planner(s) **together**.

Note: *Create commitment and cooperation, and remember: Internationalisation is fun!*

3rd step: **Group assignments** (or subtasks) “Internationalisation” with existing (vocational) disciplines; interrelate them to a unit (or building block of a unit)

4th step: a. describe **initial assessment criteria** (*if wished*)
b. describe **learning outcomes** per unit (building block) including **the level** (EQF / group / year ??).

Note: *Make sure that there will be a balance in the range of learning experiences for the student*

5th step: Decide together at what intervals (dates) you will **assess/evaluate** the student; clearly state:

- curriculum expectations and achievement criteria per (sub) unit
- form of assessment per (sub) unit
- or follow given advice in this

Note: *Make sure that the assessment and evaluation strategies per (sub)unit are communicated clearly at the beginning of the course and at other appropriate times throughout the course to students*

6th step: Put all this information in a schedule/planner over time:

At your choice:

- per level of the assignments/tasks;
- per subject 'Internationalisation';
- per existing discipline to which you interrelated (sub)tasks
Internationalisation

You can make it as complicated or as simple as you wish.

Note: *Include in the planner regular meetings to inform each other and evaluate the planner; if necessary adapt planner.*

7th step: Inform everybody concerned

The *Planner* can accommodate other ways to develop learning tasks.

For every course offered at a level, the new curriculum outlines clear and detailed *curriculum expectations/ learning outcomes* – that is, the particular knowledge, skills and attitudes that students are expected to demonstrate by the end of each course.

5. Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting

A well-designed system of assessment, evaluation, and reporting based on clearly stated curriculum expectations and achievement criteria allows teachers to focus on high standards of achievement for all students and promotes consistency in these practices across the European INtheMC partners

5.A. Assessment and Evaluation of Student Achievement

The primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to improve student learning. This information also serves to guide teachers in adapting curriculum and instructional approaches to students' needs and in assessing the overall effectiveness of programmes and classroom practices.

Assessment is the process of gathering information from a variety of sources (*please see appendix*) that accurately reflects how well a student is achieving the curriculum expectations/learning outcomes.

Evaluation refers to the process of judging the quality of student work on the basis of established criteria, and assigning a value to represent that quality.

Assessment and evaluation will be based on the curriculum expectations and the achievement levels outlined in the Curriculum Planner (assessment document) per (sub)task/assignment/unit.

In order to ensure that assessment and evaluation are valid and reliable, and lead to the improvement of student learning, teachers must use assessment and evaluation strategies that:

- address both what students learn and how well they learn;
- are based on the categories of knowledge, skills and attitudes, and on the achievement level descriptions given;
- are varied in nature, administered over a period of time, and designed to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the full range of their learning;
- are appropriate for the learning activities used, the purposes of instruction, and the needs and experiences of the students;
- are fair to all students;
- ensure that each student is given clear directions for improvement;
- promote students' ability to assess their own learning and to set specific goals;
- include the use of samples of students' work that provide evidence of their achievement;
- are communicated clearly at the beginning of the course and at other appropriate times throughout the course.

5.B. The Achievement Chart

The achievement chart for each discipline is included in the Curriculum Planner. The chart provides a reference point for all assessment practice and a framework within which to assess and evaluate student achievement. The achievement chart also describes the levels of achievement in learning outcomes of the curriculum expectations within each category. The descriptions associated with each level serve as a guide for gathering assessment information and enable teachers to make consistent judgements about the quality of student work and to provide clear and specific feedback to students and parents.

5.C. Assessment and Evaluation of Assignments

Assessment and evaluation of student achievement provide teachers with an opportunity to think critically about their methods of instruction and the overall effectiveness of their programme. Teachers and principals should systematically review content, instructional strategies, and assessment procedures and make the programme changes needed to improve their students' achievement.

Analysis of the results of project-wide assessments provides additional information on student achievement and programme effectiveness, complementing the programme assessments conducted by teachers and principals.

The Assignments / Tasks

The performance tasks are based directly on curriculum expectations selected from courses in the relevant Curriculum Planners. The tasks encompass competences, requiring students to integrate their knowledge, skills and attitudes in meaningful learning experiences, of course taking into consideration the level of the assignments. The tasks give students an opportunity to demonstrate not only how well they will learn to use the required competences in one context, but how well they can use their competences in another context.

Teachers are required to explain the scoring criteria and descriptions of the levels of achievement (i.e. learning outcomes) to the students before they begin the assignment.

Students are asked to participate in performance assessments in all curriculum areas.

When students are given clear expectations for learning, clear criteria for assessment, and immediate and helpful feedback, their performance improves.

Students' performance improves as they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own achievement and to reflect on their own progress and "next steps".

APPENDIX:

Strategies for Assessment of Student Achievement³

Classroom Presentation

The classroom/group presentation is an assessment that requires students to verbalise their knowledge, select and present samples of finished work, and organise their thoughts in order to present a summary of learning about a topic.

Conference

The conference is a formal or an informal meeting between the teacher and a student and/or parent for a variety of educational purposes

Essay

The essay is a writing sample used to assess student understanding and/or ability to analyse and synthesise information. An essay is a pencil and paper assessment in which a student constructs a response, with supporting details or arguments, to a question, topic, or brief statement.

Exhibition/Demonstration

The exhibition/demonstration is a performance in which a student explains and applies a process, procedure, etc., in concrete ways to show individual achievement of specific skills, knowledge and attitudes.

Interview

The interview is a face-to-face conversation in which all parties (teacher, student, and parent) use inquiry to share their knowledge and understanding about an issue, topic, or problem of mutual interest.

Learning Log

The learning log is an on-going, visible record made by a student of what he or she does or thinks while working on a particular task or assignment.

Observation

Observation is a process of systematically viewing and recording student behaviour for the purpose of making programming decisions. Observation can take place anytime or in any setting, to assist the teacher in making the decisions required for effective teaching.

Performance Task

The performance task is an assessment strategy in which students create, produce, perform, or present, in ways that engage “real world”, meaningful, and substantive issues or problems, in order to demonstrate a skill or proficiency.

Portfolios

The portfolio is a purposeful collection of samples of a student’s work that is selective, reflective, and collaborative. The portfolio is a visual demonstration of the range, depth, and progress of a student’s achievement, capabilities, strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills over time and across a variety of contexts.

³ Gronlund, Norman E. *University of Illinois, Emeritus*, C. Keith Waugh, *Southern Illinois University of Carbondale*, Assessment of Student Achievement, 9/E 2009, Allyn & Bacon

Question and Answer (Oral)

Question and answer is a strategy whereby the teacher poses a question and the student answers it by speaking rather than by writing. Question and answer helps to determine whether students understand what is being or has been presented, or to extend thinking, generate ideas, or solve problems.

Quiz, Test, Examination

The quiz, test, or examination is an assessment strategy that requires students to respond to prompts in order to demonstrate their knowledge (orally or in writing) or their skills (e.g., through performance). Quizzes are usually short, examinations usually longer.

Response Journal

The response journal is a student's personal record of frequently written reflective responses to material he or she is reading, viewing, listening to, or discussing.

Select Response

The select response is a pencil-and-paper assessment found in quizzes, tests, and examinations, in which the student is to identify the one correct answer. The select response is a commonly used formal procedure for gathering objective evidence about student learning, specifically in memory, recall, and comprehension.

Self-Assessment

Self-assessment is the process by which the student gathers information about and reflects on his or her own learning. Self-assessment is the student's own assessment of personal progress in knowledge, skills, processes, or attitudes. Self-assessment leads a student to a greater awareness and understanding of himself or herself as a learner.

Anecdotal Record

The anecdotal record is a short narrative describing both a student behaviour and the context in which the behaviour occurred. An anecdotal record should objectively report specific and observed behaviours and may describe student performance in detail in writing. An anecdotal record provides rich portraits of an individual student's achievement and includes observations that have special significance and cannot be obtained from other classroom assessment strategies.

Checklist

The checklist is a list of actions, descriptions, skills, concepts, behaviours, processes, and/or attitudes that a teacher checks off as he or she observes them. A checklist includes a written list of performance criteria that are used to assess student performance through observation, or to assess written work or other product forms such as oral presentations, art and media works, and models. A checklist is a diagnostic, reusable tool that can be helpful in charting student progress.

Rating Scale

The rating scale is a simple tool for assessing the extent to which specific facts, skills, attitudes, and/or behaviours are observed in a student's work or performance. A rating scale assesses performance on a several-point range from low to high and is based on a set of criteria that allows the teacher to judge the quality of a performance, product, attitude, and/or behaviour along a continuum.

APPENDIX TO CURRICULUM PLANNER

(horizontal: time ... semester 1, semester 2,...; vertical: assignments)

SCHEDULE

	Semester 1					
Assignment ...						