

STAR | Skills Training and Re-Skilling
for Carers of People with Dementia

Report on deliverable 3.2 Skills Test

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Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

Leonardo da Vinci

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1. Summary

The STAR platform uses two sorts of test to assess and monitor the progress of students through the training process, i.e. a skills test at the start of the course and a test after completing each module.

The primary 'Skills Test' is used to assess the student's abilities and state of knowledge at the point of registration. This makes it possible to suggest a particular combination of modules for the student to take, along with a suggested order (learning path). The purpose of this test is to direct the student to the resources that are most likely to be of use to him/her, and at the appropriate level. This skills test is the primary focus of the current report.

In addition, it is intended that at the end of each module there will be a short set of questions that will allow the student to check whether they have understood the content correctly. These shorter tests will be developed when the module content and delivery is finalised.

The current document comprises:

- An account of the purpose of the Skills Test, its place in the student learning experience and its educational philosophy;
- The structure of the Test and the means by which it achieves its purpose
- Summary of the content of the Test
- Screenshots of the Test as it appears in use on the STAR platform.

2. The purpose of the Skills Test

It is a widely accepted principle in educational theory that students are most likely to persist in learning when they consider the material relevant to their needs, offered at an appropriate level and presented in an engaging way. Since students will be accessing the material with a varying range of competencies, knowledge and understanding of dementia, there is a risk that they will be overwhelmed with material that they consider irrelevant to their needs. To avoid this, the registration process incorporates a 'Skills Test which assesses:

- the overall level of knowledge of the new student;
- the knowledge in relation to the core competences and therefore
- the modules they are most likely to find useful and relevant, at the appropriate level.

These suggestions are then offered to the student in the form of an individualized study programme (learning path). They may choose to accept or ignore this recommendation.

3. The structure of the Test and the means by which it achieves its purpose

The assessment of a student's knowledge and learning needs draws on two sorts of information that are elicited during the registration process.

3.1. Stage 1: overall assessment

First, an overall estimate of the level most appropriate to the student can be gathered from their answers to some of the generic registration questions. For example, in response to the following question:

Choose which of the options below best describes your experience of dementia:

I have no experience with people with dementia

I have some/ limited experience with people with dementia

I have a lot of experience with people with dementia

Students who choose option (1) may be assumed to be at Beginner or Intermediate level, whereas those who choose option (3) may be assumed to need modules at Intermediate or Advanced level. There are three questions of this type, and they can be 'scored' electronically as follows:

Table 1. Overall assessment of students

Choose one of the options below. I am:	A person living with a dementia	1
	The family carer of a person with dementia	2
	Unemployed but plan to work with people with dementia OR Employed to work with people who may have a dementia	3
Choose which of the options below best describes your experience of dementia:	I have no experience with a person with dementia	1
	I have some/ limited experience with a person with dementia	2
	I have a lot of experience with a person with dementia	3
If you are employed to work with people who may have a dementia choose	I am an untrained carer	1
	I have no professional qualification but have undertaken training on dementia before	2

which of the options below best describes your role:	I am professionally involved in the care for people with dementia	3
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The total figure then gives an initial estimate of ability. If 9-13, the student may be assumed to be at Beginner (modules 1-2), 14-20 at Intermediate level (modules 3-8) if more than 20 Advanced level. This provides the background for a detailed appraisal of their knowledge of the subject of particular modules.

3.2. Stage 2: assessment of ability at core competences

The core competences are distributed among the modules as outlined in the following table:

Table 2. Training Modules and Competence Areas

Goals/ core competences Modules/subjects	Knowledge/ awareness of dementia and dementia related issues	Understanding the behaviours of individuals with dementia	Enriching the life of individuals with dementia and their carers	Interaction with individuals with dementia	Interaction with carers/ families	Person centred care	Dementia worker personal development and self care	Promoting best practice
1. What is dementia	X	X						
2. Living with dementia	X	X				X		
3. Where to get a diagnosis and why is it important?	X							
4. Psychiatric and behavioural problems of dementia	X	X	X			X		X
5. Practical difficulties in daily life and how to help by best practice	X	X	X			X		X
6. The emotional impact of dementia and support strategies	X	X	X	X		X		X
7. Positive and empathic communication		X	X	X	X	X		
8. Emotional impact and looking after yourself (family and formal caregivers)			X		X		X	

This enables some broad assessments to be made about which modules provide an appropriate starting-point for a given student. For example:

1. If a student demonstrates confidence at competencies A and B, then they are unlikely to be stimulated by modules 1-3. Instead, they could usefully begin with module 4.
2. If a student demonstrates confidence at competencies A, B, C and F then they will most likely be stimulated by modules 6-8

The assessment of ability may then proceed as follows:

The student is asked to assess their own confidence and knowledge in relation to each of the core competences on a 4-point Likert scale as follows:

1. **Please put a cross (X) in the box that best shows how confident you are in each of the areas listed below:**

	I am not confident at all in this area	I am a little confident	I am very confident	This area does not apply to me
A. Knowledge and awareness of dementia and issues related to dementia	1	2	3	4
B. Understanding the behaviours of people with dementia	1	2	3	4
C. Enriching the life of people with dementia and their families	1	2	3	4
D. Relating to people with dementia	1	2	3	4
E. Relating to the carers and families of people with dementia	1	2	3	4
F. Person centred care	1	2	3	4
G. Looking after yourself as a carer or dementia worker	1	2	3	4
H. Promoting best practice in dementia care	1	2	3	4

The programme of modules is then determined as follows:

1. Assume that modules will be followed in order from 1 to 8 but
2. If student scores 1 or 2 for either of competencies A or B, then begin with modules 1 and 2
3. If student scores 3 or 4 for both competencies A and B, but 1 or 2 for any of competencies C, F or H, then begin with modules 4 and 5
4. If a student scores 3 or 4 for all of competencies A, B, C, F and H but 1 or 2 for modules D, E or G then begin with modules 7 and 8
5. Assign level as above

4. Summary of the content of the Skills Test

Stage 1:

Choose one of the options below. I am:

- A person living with a dementia
- The family carer of a person with dementia
- Unemployed but plan to work with people with dementia
- Employed to work with people who may have a dementia

Choose which of the options below best describes your experience of dementia:

- I have no experience with people with dementia
- I have some/ limited experience with people with dementia
- I have a lot of experience with people with dementia

If you are employed to work with people who may have a dementia choose which of the options below best describes your role:

- I am an untrained carer
- I have no professional qualification but have undertaken training on dementia before
- I am professionally involved in the care for people with dementia

Stage 2:

For each of the questions below, tick one of the boxes (I am not confident at all in this area; I am a little confident; I am very confident; this area does not apply to me):

- A. Knowledge and awareness of dementia and issues related to dementia**
- B. Understanding the behaviours of people with dementia**
- C. Enriching the life of people with dementia and their families**
- D. Relating to people with dementia**

- E. Relating to the carers and families of people with dementia
- F. Person centred care
- G. Looking after yourself as a carer or dementia worker
- H. Promoting best practice in dementia care

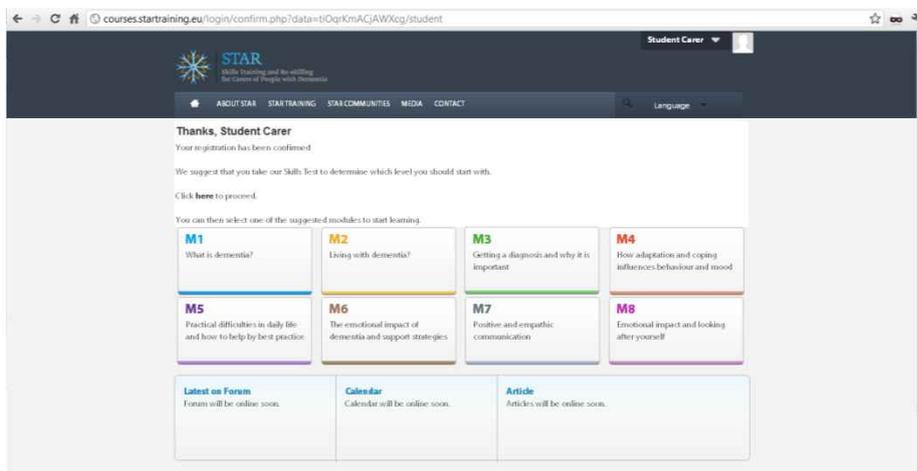
5. Screenshots of the Test as it appears on the STAR platform



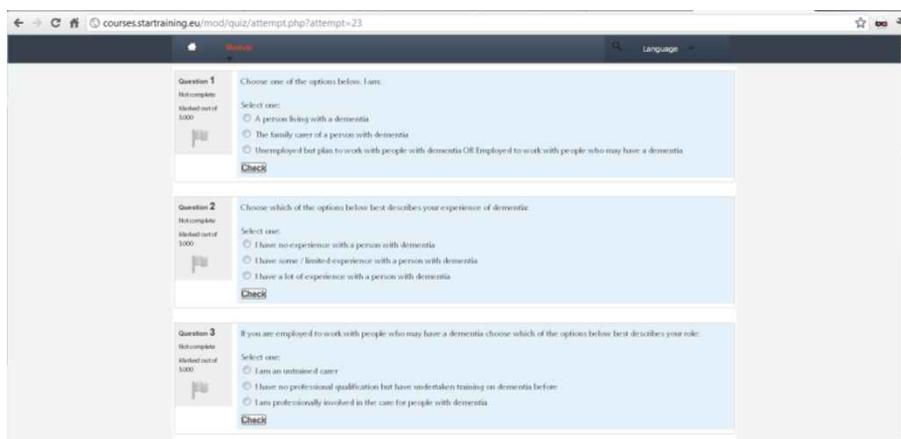
Landing page of <http://courses.startraining.eu>



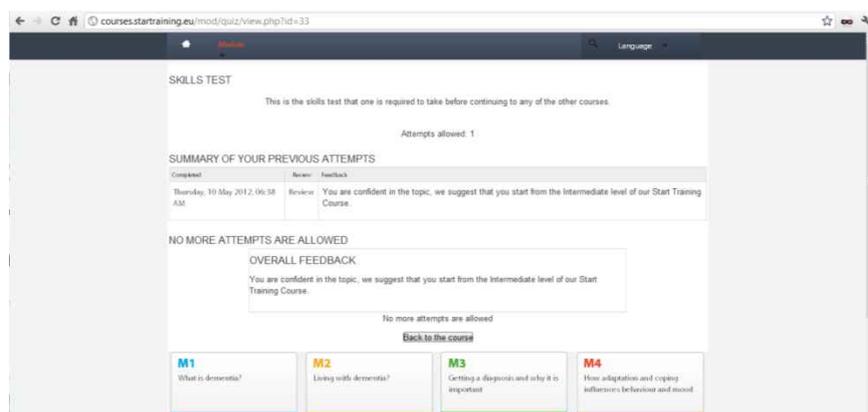
Registration Page



Registration confirmation with link to skills test



Preview of Stage 1 of the skills test



Review results after quiz