



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



D5 [WP 5]

TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

English version

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INTRODUCTION

Within the context of training identified in the Report on Project-Based Training (R8 of the RENOVA project), trainers are gradually changing their practice according to the new demands of the trainees and of the social & technological context, on one hand, as well as according to the support materials they have at their disposal within a particular education situation, on the other hand.

Project-based training is at the core of the training path proposed by RENOVA project, therefore, the materials developed and made available for trainers follow the main characteristics of a PBT approach. Circumscribing the training scenarios design and development, the projects: are complex tasks, which have as a starting point a problematic situation or challenge; give participants the opportunity to work relatively independently on long periods of time; end with concrete, realistic, applicable products or presentations. Main features of the projects used in training are: involvement and autonomy of the participants, applicability of knowledge, connections with the real world, focus on the development of key skills (usually, by favoring an applied and interdisciplinary approach).

Suggestions of stages for the design of the training using the PBT method:

- establish project objectives and deliverables / products expected;
- choose the theme and sub-themes;
- organize students - individually or in groups - and establish everyone's set of tasks;
- establish the sequences of the project, the duration and timing;
- identify necessary resources (information and materials);
- establish procedures for monitoring the activity of each student;
- establish of assessment methods (to evaluate the products or both, to evaluate individual students or the work group).

Roles of the trainer:

- coordinates activities of groups or individual students;
- supervises compliance with deadlines, assess tasks performed by students or by groups of students;
- evaluates, together with students, the project results and/ or products obtained and the value added by this project.

The present material is intended to set the main guidelines for training and assessment, being developed as a simple and fully usable guide for the trainers working within the blended-learning environment developed in RENOVA project (A knowledge transfer and framework construction for nursing staff across Europe to develop professional skills as managers) – the content for training and the online platform available at www.projectrenova.eu.



1. PREPARATION AND PLANNING

One of the most used and effective ways to design a training session is by using the objectives-oriented model, including one or all of the following components as the starting point of the curriculum planning: attainment targets, target setting, intended learning outcomes, desirable learning outcomes. It provides a good sense of direction to the development of the training.

The **preparation** phase includes answers to specific questions regarding the information on the audience and setting (context of education situation), such as:

- the size of the class (the number of students makes a difference to the organization and presentation of themes)
- the average age of the participants
- the band/ set of the class, pre-requisite or range of ability (in particular, the digital skills necessary to access and use the online learning platform)
- details of the training space – seating plan, number of computers (if they are available) access to the Internet, resources and functionalities on www.projectrenova.eu platform a.s.o.
- details of students with special needs (where relevant)
- use of ICT by students (including information about their availability to use Internet from home)
- what to do with students missing (some) courses
- details of other courses in the curriculum, which could be linked to your course.

The **planning** starts with the aim, objectives and/or educational outcomes. The *aim* or *scope* is a general expression of intent, with a large degree of generality. An *objective* or intended learning outcome, by contrast, is characterized by greater precision and specificity, being defined more like an achievable target. An aim is, in principle, infinite (e.g. to become educated in the medical domain, to have the competences necessary to act as a manager), whereas an objective tends to be more finite (e.g. to provide appropriate examples for three main characteristics of nurse-patient effective communication).

Objectives should be clear, precise, and to target knowledge, skills and attitudes in the domain of study, as well as transversal competences. They have to be designed to meet SMART requirements: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, and **T**ime-bound.

An example of objectives formulation for the theme *Fundamentals of Health Ethics - Essential concepts* could look like this:



Aim: A better understanding of ethical standards (specifically: autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice and fidelity) through identifying and describing the situations where they apply or should be applied.

Learning objectives associated to this aim:

Students will be able to:

- Reproduce the definition of the concepts such as: fidelity, autonomy, non-maleficence, justice
- Recognize situations where the concepts apply
- Give at least 1 example of situation (from their own experience) where each concepts should be or have been applied
- Create at least 2 new situations around the given concepts, inspired by the daily basis occurrences in their work.

These objectives used as examples are called *behavioral objectives*, because they clearly indicate what the learner will be doing when demonstrating that he/she has acquired information or skills that will contribute or lead to knowing, understanding, appreciation or grasping.

Non-behavioral objectives are as well desirable learning outcomes, but they refer to more intangible qualities, are more open-ended, and do not specifically state the behavioral outcomes.

E.g.:

- To increase the class's appreciation of nursing care in accordance with the five health ethics-related concepts.

What to include in a plan

The following information could be part of the scheme of work:

1. Audience – particulars of the students in the target group, covering number, age, pre-requisites (knowledge, skills and experience)
2. A short rationale, with references to the context (e.g. reform or standards of the health system), usability of the training outcomes for students
3. Unit short description, including the extent and duration of the unit or project – an outline of the subject matter and content
4. Aim/ scope of the unit or project
5. Learning objectives (outcomes, at trainees' level)
6. Key instructional strategies (if appropriate)
7. Methods – means to conduct learning activities and to achieve the educational objectives set at trainees' level
8. Assessment – what and when instruments and methods will be employed to know the extent to which students achieved the proposed goals
9. Description of activity - some indication of organizational factors, such as: how are the students to learn? methods of training and learning to be employed and how will they be effectively put in practice – formal class teaching, self-direction under guidance etc.



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10. Effective practices/ processes – what would sustain an effective delivery in order to meet the intended objectives? are there any previous examples of similar training activities which were successful?

11. Integration/ sustainability – links to other content of study (within the same course or related to other courses), how content would be referred and reinforced in future learning settings etc.

12. Evaluation and amelioration (optional) – trainer’s plan to improve the design, for future group of students, based on the current delivery experience

(For concrete examples, please consult the scenarios developed within the RENOVA project.)



2. TRAINING

Successful training is a composite of skills, competencies, artistry and much more besides. Some is achieved by experience, some by preparation and reflection.

Following the principles of the Report on Project Framework (R9) and the Report on Project-Based Training (R8), the present chapter is providing concrete suggestions for delivering training using the blended-learning approach within the frame of RENOVA project.

The face-to-face courses and the online content should be complementary – therefore, a good idea is to explore in advance all the facilities and support materials provided on www.projectrenova.eu platform, available for students, in order to efficiently plan the learning path towards the intended objectives.

The screenshot displays the RENOVA website interface. At the top, the RENOVA logo is on the left, and the European Union flag and Education and Culture DG Lifelong Learning Programme logo are on the right. Below the logos is the tagline: "A Knowledge Transfer and Framework Construction for Nursing Staff across Europe to Develop Professional Skills as Managers".

The main content area is divided into three sections:

- MAIN MENU:** Includes "RENOVA Website" and "Site news".
- MY COURSES:** Lists several courses with their respective teachers:
 - Ethics:** Teachers: Beata Dobrowolska, Iwona Kochaniec, Monika Kowalska, Constanta Tieru Hatu.
 - Financial Management:** Teachers: Beata Dobrowolska, Iwona Kochaniec, Monika Kowalska, Constanta Tieru Hatu.
 - Legislatie:** Teachers: Daniel Popescu, Constanta Tieru Hatu.
 - Ustawodawstwo:** Teachers: Beata Dobrowolska, Iwona Kochaniec, Monika Kowalska, Marciel Majewski, Sebastian Panac.
- CALENDAR:** Shows a calendar for May 2012. The date "3" is highlighted in yellow.
- ONLINE USERS:** Shows "Olimpius Istrate" as an online user (last 5 minutes).
- RECENT ACTIVITY:** Shows "Activity since Tuesday, 1 May 2012 06:15 AM".



Online learning support is also needed in the process, and the trainer should keep continuous contact with students on the platform as well, to avoid drop-out, to sustain motivation, to guide knowledge acquisition, to coordinate learning in virtual setting.

A “course” on the platform corresponds to a set of contents, activities and exercises supporting a specific module from the curriculum. For instance, the Ethics module have the following structure: News forum, chapter “Cultural values, identification and positioning”, chapter “Fundamentals of health ethics - essential concepts”, wiki space “Ethics in Nursing”, chapter “Nursing ethics – managing specific situations”, Question and Answer forum “Personal approach”, chapter “Management of ethics and health related situations”, and a specific case study.

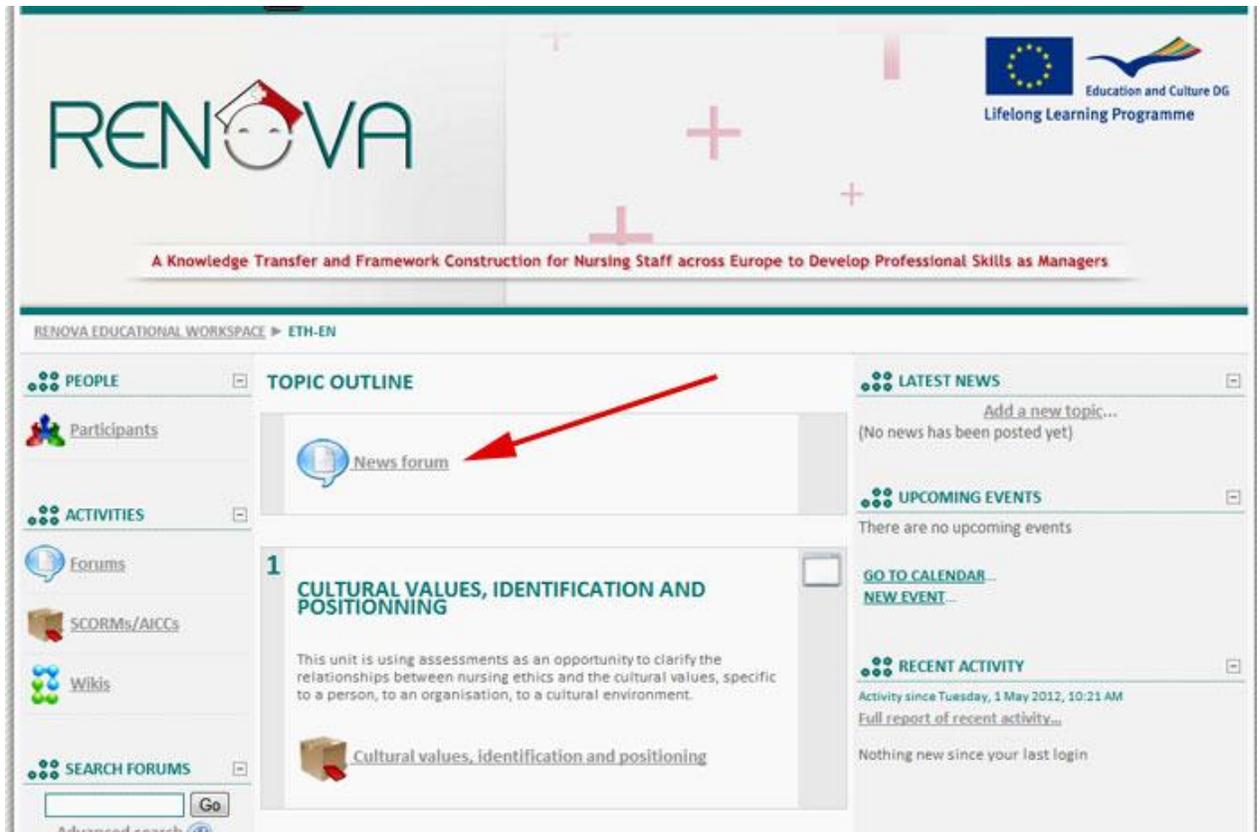


The first step is to create a proper (social) environment for learning, by inviting students to have a first input. Personal introduction is the best way to have participants on-board, successfully responding to a simple task which usually increases commitment to online learning path and confidence in using the technologies.

The welcome message and the invitation to participate will be posted in the *News forum*. The News forum is a special forum, where all the online participants are



automatically enrolled at the beginning of the course, the messages could be posted only by the trainer/tutor, and the posting is sent via email as well.



Example of simple message of introduction for the News Forum:

Subject: Welcome to the course

Message:

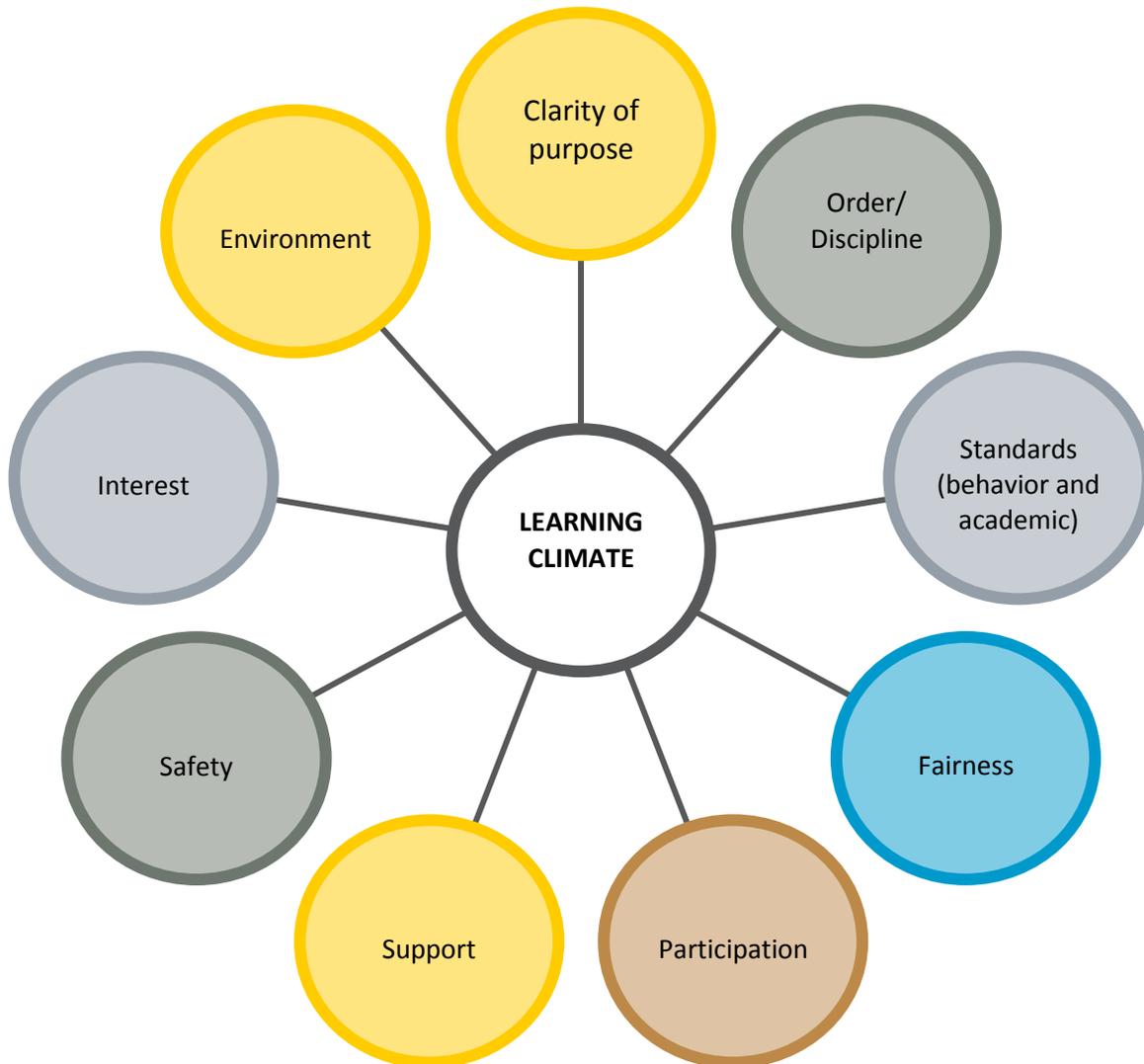
Dear participants,

Here we are, starting a training session on Ethics. Complementing the face-to-face presentations, this online platform provides support materials, as well as a number of applications such as scenarios and simulations related to ethical aspects of nursing. We will be spending around 3 hours per week exploring the online content and reflecting on the situations provided in this virtual space.

For the beginning please introduce yourself in the Social forum, presenting briefly your previous experience in nursing and your expectations from this course.

See you "in class" :)

Post to forum



Regarding the learning content, the links between activities are the most important issue to be taken into consideration. The blended-learning path has the advantage of addressing multiple learning styles and of providing students with the opportunity to asynchronously cover all the course themes. Obviously, the trainer have the most important role in pondering tasks and supplement/ combine online and offline activities.

Some forum topics and meaningful posts could be brought into the face-to-face sessions, in order to strengthen the bond between online and offline sessions and to challenge “quiet” online students to enter the “game”. Equally, almost every conventional session should be ended with an invitation for students to further explore a specific aspect on the online platform, in a dedicated space where the trainer could follow the thread and summarize at the end, capitalizing on the students’ contributions.



The screenshot displays the RENOVA Educational Workspace interface. At the top, the breadcrumb trail reads: RENOVA EDUCATIONAL WORKSPACE > ETH-EN > SCORMS/AICCS > NURSING ETHICS – MANAGING SPECIFIC SITUATIONS (2). There is an 'Exit activity' link in the top right corner. Below the breadcrumb, there are 'Previous' and 'Continue' buttons. A sidebar on the left lists 'Nursing Ethics – Managing specific situations' with sub-items: 'Managing Ethical Situations', 'Exercise 1', 'Exercise 2', and three numbered 'Managing Ethical Situations' items. The main content area has a header 'Nursing Ethics Managing specific situations' and 'Managing Ethical Situations - Exercise 1'. It features a question: 'What are your objectives in terms of care giving, how do you approach this situation?' with a '1/1' indicator. Below the question, there is a photo of a smiling nurse in a blue uniform. A list of two options is shown, both with green checkmarks indicating they are correct. The first option is: 'You base your approach on the other nurses recommendations and provide your care at a different standard in accordance with the patient's attitude. Your purpose is to help discharge the person as soon as possible, without affecting the hospital and independency of the patient's decision regarding the treatment.' The second option is: 'Professionally, you are obligated to provide the same standard of care to each patient. Your current focus should be on getting her to trust the staff and the situation enough to accept the treatment being offered. The scenario has personal judgment from the previous shift and you do not let that stand over professional rules.' At the bottom left of the main area, it says 'You have finished.' and 'Ethics' is written at the very bottom.

To get acquainted with the virtual learning space and with the Moodle functionalities, please consult the file “RENOVA_Moodle_User_Manual_EN.ppsx”, available on the www.projectrenova.eu website.



3. ASSESSMENT

Two assessment strategies are supported by the online learning environment set up at www.projectrenova.eu: norm-referenced and criterion-referenced. Both should be used by the trainer, in order to employ as well formative assessment to guide learning and summative assessment to close activities.

For criterion-based assessment, several multiple-choice tests are available and could be used for both formative and summative students' performance evaluation. In addition, normative assessment is supported on the RENOVA virtual environment through activities such as case-studies, collaborative exercises, open tasks for team-work, allowing the participant to develop a "personal portfolio".

The screenshot displays the RENOVA Educational Workspace interface. At the top, the breadcrumb trail reads: RENOVA EDUCATIONAL WORKSPACE > ETH-EN > SCORMS/AICCS > NURSING ETHICS – MANAGING SPECIFIC SITUATIONS (2). A 'Previous' button is visible on the left. The main content area is titled 'Review Mode' and 'Managing Ethical Situations - 3'. It features a central panel with a question: 'Personal approach make notes of your opinions based on the following questions. Explain your choices and answers.' Below this is a photo of a person's hands typing on a laptop. To the right, three questions are listed: 1. What are your personal ethics on noncompliant patients? 2. What are your personal ethics on patients who may be contagious and are requiring extra attention? 3. Were you ever confronted to such situation in your professional life? How did you handle it? A 'Note down your ideas in a word document and upload it in the indicated area on the platform!' instruction is at the bottom left. The interface includes a '1/1' indicator and a 'Previous' button.



On the online platform, there are a number of case studies, where students are invited to submit their personal opinion:

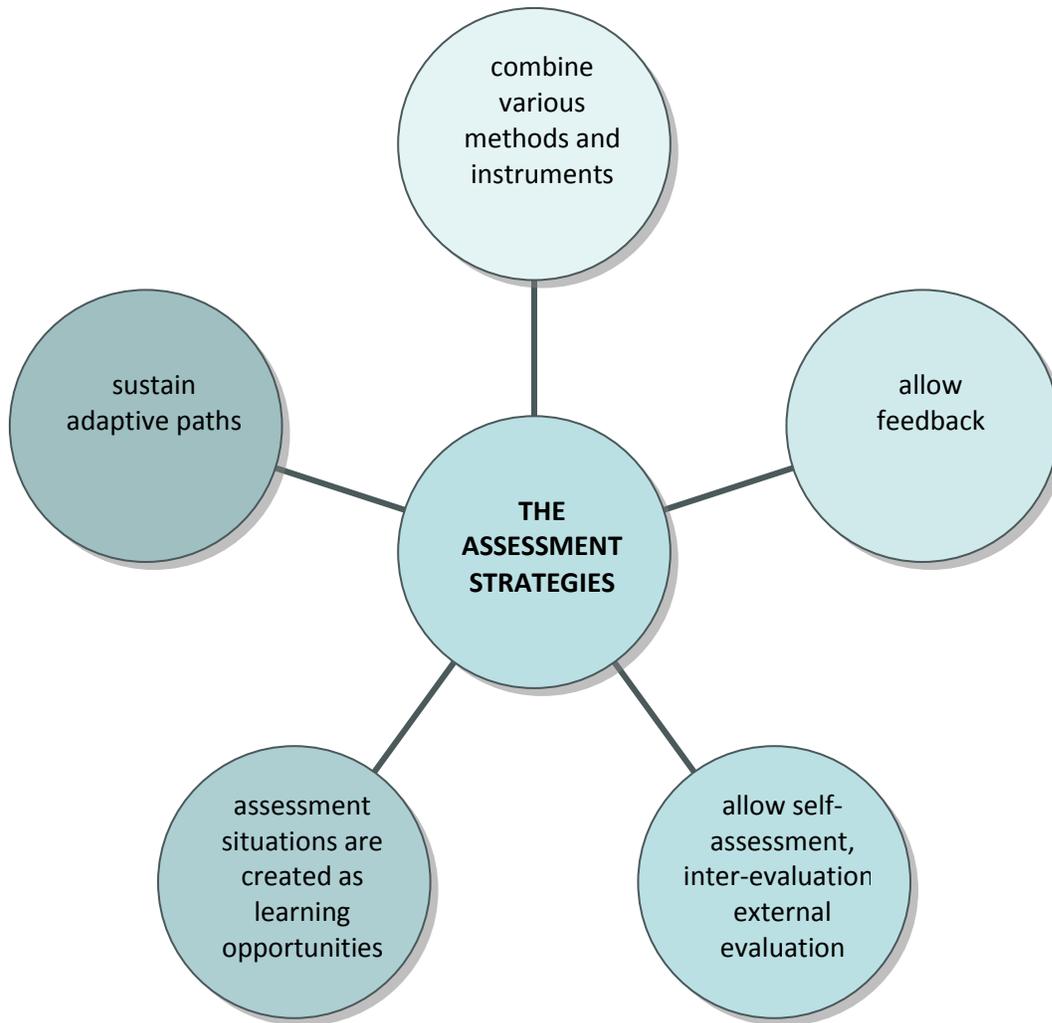
CASE STUDY

Mrs. A is a cancer patient which refuses chemotherapy treatment and notices a decrease in the care giving staff's activities concerning her. This team does not seem to respect the notion of loyalty, ethics and health component and it is non-compliant with the patient's wishes regarding her future (re-installment and palliative treatment at home) and decision making regardless of her lifestyle and personality.

Write down your personal opinions about the situations and propose a new approach for solving ethically the situation by starting a new discussion topic or replying to an existing one.

The input from participants could be assessed and the grade could contribute to the final mark. However, periodic check of the forum contributions on behalf of trainer should be equally a way to assess participants as they develop their skills and knowledge, and a way to control the flow of the discussion, to (re)direct the subjects approached, to set up new opportunities for deep learning and holistic understanding of the themes proposed.

Providing timely feedback is a good strategy to direct students to further explore the topics, to provoke other participants to express their perspective on the theme, and to keep the platform alive.

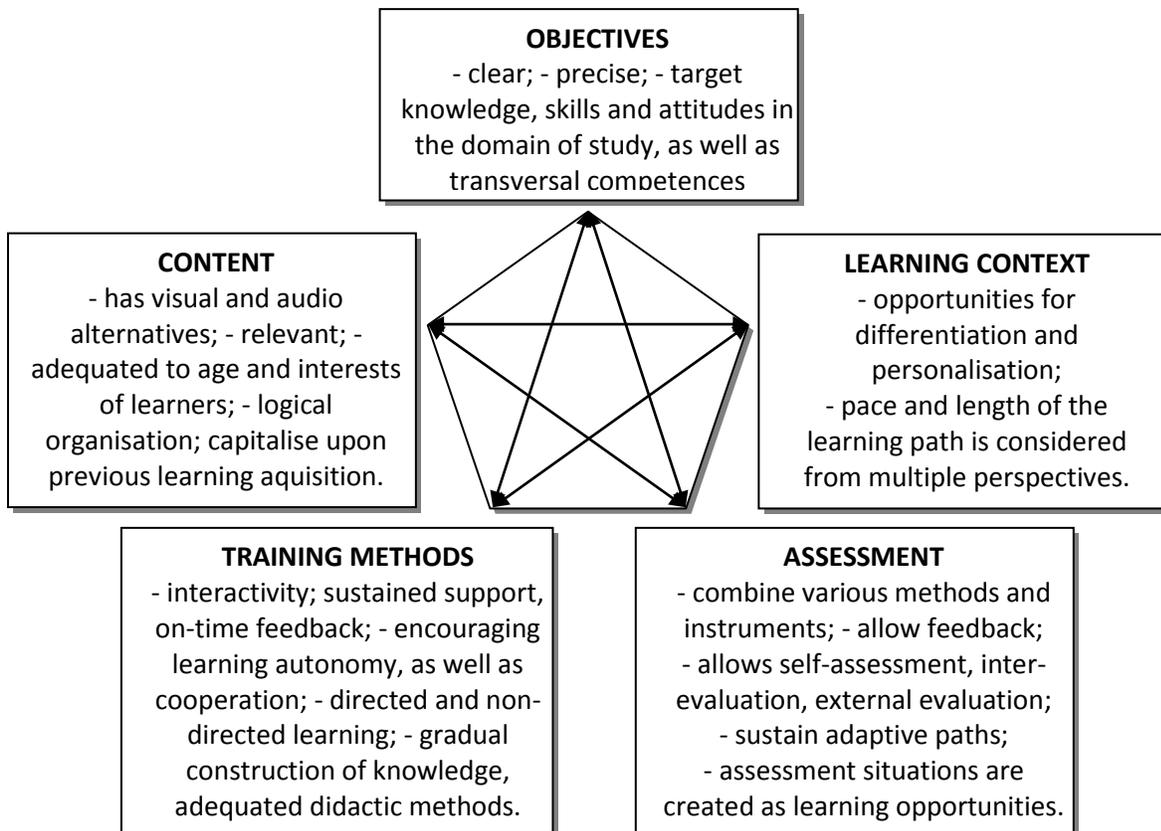


Please keep in mind that assessment is, first of all, an opportunity for learning, in the evaluation process students being open to reconsider what they have learned recently, to remember and to better anchor information, to build and to strengthen conceptual maps in the nursing management domain.



FINAL REMARKS

A good training methodology is considering all five components of a learning path – aims, assessment, context, content, and instructional methodology. In a **blended learning** environment, the training design should once more take into account the potential of the new learning setting to boost the participants’ interest, motivation and performance, as well as the danger of losing track when the curriculum is not carefully design and conducted.



Therefore, our **main recommendations** for trainers are:

- Plan ahead, starting from the training objectives.
- Explore the content (and the scenarios on the RENOVA platform).
- Design assessment strategies.
- Put it in the context – audience, time available, training room, resources.
- Develop the training methodology, using project-based training approach.

Good luck!