European Commission

European School Education Platform
Continuous Professional Development Framework

Erasmus+

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Continuous Professional Development Framework
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1 CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON THE EUROPEAN SCHOOL EDUCATION PLATFORM

Continuous professional development (CPD) is key in empowering European teachers, trainers, and educators to provide quality education to all. It can enhance job satisfaction, improve the school, and help teachers deal with rapid societal changes. The European School Education Platform offers a variety of online and on-site CPD activities, primarily for teachers, school leaders, and other school staff from early childhood education and care to upper secondary level, including initial vocational and educational training, and for anyone involved in school education.

This document provides an overview of how the CPD offer on the European School Education Platform is organised and conceptualised. It can be used by potential participants to understand the differences between the variety of CPD formats on offer and help them choose the right format for their purpose and context. For each CPD format on offer, the document outlines the approach used, the certification available, and the requirements for participation.

2 THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD

The European School Education Platform CPD activities are supported through a Professional Development Advisory Board which meets three times a year and is made up of key actors supporting the Platform activities. These include representatives from the National Support Organisations,

the eTwinning Ambassadors, and the Platform's Supportive Partners. The Board regularly discusses topics of relevance for the strategic direction and focus of the CPD activities which influence both the CPD design and the CPD programme each year.

3 TARGET AUDIENCE

The European School Education Platform CPD offer targets all the platform audiences . This includes all types of school education stakeholders from across Europe, from parents to teachers to researchers and policy makers. However, given that a large majority of European School Education

Platform users are practicing schoolteachers, in particular those involved in the eTwinning community, the European School Education Platform CPD offer is primarily designed with schoolteachers in mind.

4 EUROPEAN SCHOOL EDUCATION PLATFORM CPD GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles of the European School Education Platform's CPD offer are the following:

- **Diversity:** Our offer targets a diverse audience working in diverse contexts. This is reflected in the provision of a variety of formats, ensuring that there is something suited for everyone. This is also reflected in the design of content, activities, and assessments within the different formats.

- **Community:** Learning is a social process that happens through interaction among peers. Such interaction works best in environments that foster a sense of trust and responsibility – a community. Accordingly, most of our offer is designed with the aim of getting learners to interact with each other and to build communities of practice.

- **Inclusivity:** The starting point for the design of our offer is that it is designed with inclusivity in mind. Any design decisions that restrict access will have a clear pedagogical and/or strategic rationale. Universal Design for Learning principles guide the design and are followed whenever possible.

- **Flexibility:** Our target audiences are busy professionals, many without much flexibility in their daily calendars. Accordingly, our offer is built with flexibility in mind. Any design decisions that limit flexibility have a clear pedagogical and/or strategic rationale.

5 OVERVIEW OF EUROPEAN SCHOOL EDUCATION PLATFORM CPD FORMATS

	Teachers of Europe Podcast	Webinars	Webinar Series	Short Online Courses	Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)	Online/Onsite Workshops
Design	Audio conversations with experienced teachers and experts.	Expert presentation with some interactivity or Q&A for learners.	1 theory-focused webinar and 1 practice-focussed webinar on the same topic, with a learning activity in between.	Teacher-designed, activity-focussed online course. Teacher-moderated.	EUN-designed, content- and activity-focussed online course. Experts contribute to the course content. EUN-moderated.	EUN-designed, synchronous event with expert contributions, activities, and networking. EUN-moderated.
Learning Process	Learn from listening to the ideas and reflections of an experienced teacher & expert on a topic	Learn from an expert's input on a topic.	Learn from experts' and advanced practitioners' input as well as self- and shared reflections.	Learn from your peers from self- and shared reflections & by experimenting with and making your own resources.	Learn from a variety of experts, from your peers, from self- and shared reflections & by experimenting with and making your own resources.	Learn from a variety of experts, from your peers, from self- and shared reflections & by experimenting with and making your own resources. Establish a personal learning network by developing strong links with peers.
Learning hours	30 minutes – 1hr	1hr	3hrs	8-12hrs	12-25hrs	10-15hrs
Duration	30 minutes – 1hr	1hr	1 week	2 weeks	4-6 weeks	Onsite - 2 days (1 full day and 2 afternoons) Online – 3 afternoons
Flexibility for the learner	High	Low	Low	Medium	High	Low
Activeness required of learner	None	Low	Medium	High	High	High
Exchange between learners	None	Low	Medium	High	High	High

6 TEACHERS OF EUROPE PODCAST

The Teachers of Europe Podcast is the shortest form of CPD on the European School Education Platform. It offers the opportunity to listen to a conversation with an experienced teacher and a researcher on a given topic. The podcast focuses on exploring teacher stories and practical ideas that can facilitate teacher learning and experimentation.

6.1 Pedagogical Framework

The Teachers of Europe Podcast is an audio recording of 30 – 60 minutes featuring a conversation between a podcast host, an experienced teacher coming from the eTwinning network, as well as a researcher with expertise on the topic of discussion. Learning happens primarily through the transmission of knowledge from the ideas shared by the podcast speakers, as well as the reflections generated by listening to the discussion between the speakers. Podcast episodes are highly accessible as they can be accessed whenever and wherever the user wants. The podcast format is therefore well suited to teachers' busy schedules and allows teachers to develop professionally in tandem with their daily lives.

6.2 Requirements for Participation

Users need to access podcast episodes on a device and app of their choosing (the podcast is currently available on Spotify, Google Podcasts, and Apple Podcasts, as well as via the EU Academy). Accordingly, there is a lot of flexibility in how a user accesses the podcast and accordingly only a low level of digital competence is required.

Unlike other CPD formats it is a lot more difficult to use assistive tools like translation apps to make the learning process more accessible for non-native English speakers. Furthermore, considering the lack of visual support, a good understanding of what is being said in the podcast is essential to benefit from it. Accordingly, a medium to high level of English language comprehension is required.

6.3 Certification

No certificate is offered to listeners of the Teachers of Europe Podcast.

7 WEBINARS

European School Education Platform webinars are the shortest and simplest form of synchronous CPD on offer on the platform, and are therefore (along with the Podcast) the most accessible for less experienced users. They are designed for stakeholders who wish to get quick expert input on a specific topic. The Webinars are also used in conjunction with other European School Education Platform CPD formats, in particular the European School Education Platform Short Online Courses and MOOCs.

7.1 Pedagogical Framework

A European School Education Platform webinar is a 1-hour synchronous[1] event featuring an expert presentation on a certain topic, followed by a question & answer session with the participants. Learning occurs primarily through the transmission of knowledge from the expert to the participants. Experts are encouraged to build interactive elements into their presentations, for example through polls, which can lead to learning effects through a process of self-reflection. Interaction among the webinar participants is limited to the chat but can nevertheless generate limited learning effects through the sharing of experiences, ideas and resources. Webinars require a simple registration procedure and can subsequently be accessed simply through a link. Webinars can cater to an unlimited number of participants (or the maximum number of participants allowed by the tool to be used).

7.2 Requirements for Participation

A low level of digital and English language competence.

To benefit from a webinar, participants are only required to access the online meeting room and listen to the expert presentation in English. Interactive elements of the presentation that ask for participants' input are not obligatory, so it is no problem to skip them if the participant does not feel confident to participate. Accordingly, participants need only a low level of digital and English language competence.

7.3 Certification

No certificate is offered to participants of European School Education Platform Webinars.

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1 - Synchronous learning refers to a learning event in which a group of participants is engaged in learning at the same time.

8 WEBINAR SERIES

European School Education Platform Webinar Series remain a fairly short and accessible format of CPD on the European School Education Platform. They offer participants the opportunity to go beyond the passive consumption of information in a normal webinar or podcast episode by allowing for some interaction with their peers, and in some cases even the production of a digital artefact. Webinar Series thereby offer a useful steppingstone towards the more complex and demanding participant involvement of the Short Online Courses, MOOCs, and Online Workshops.

8.1 PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK

A European School Education Platform Webinar Series consists of two webinars with an asynchronous[2] activity in between. The two webinars are offered a few days apart so that the participants can complete the asynchronous activity before joining the second webinar. The first webinar of the series is organised with an expert presentation followed by a question-and-answer session. This is then followed by an activity that asks the participants for some input, resources or reflections linked to the presentation in the first webinar. For example, the activity could ask participants to prepare a short learning activity for use in the classroom, which they then need to share via a forum or other collaborative online tool. The second webinar should build on the activity and take a more practical approach, for example through multiple presentations of practitioners talking through the design and implementation of a learning activity linked to the webinar series topic.

Learning on a webinar series occurs through the transmission of knowledge and ideas to the participants from the expert in webinar 1 and the practitioners in webinar 2. Learning is also facilitated through the activity organised in between the webinars. This can involve a process of self-reflection, production or experimentation and thereby generate learning gains for the participants. The activity can also involve interactions with other participants, generating learning gains

through the sharing of experiences, ideas, resources, etc. Information and the access link to the 1st webinar will be shared with the registered participants and publicly, so that even unregistered participants can join the 1st webinar.

8.2 REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

A medium level of digital and English language competence.

To benefit from a webinar series, participants are required to access the online meeting room and listen to the presentations in English. Interactive elements of the presentations that ask for participants' input are not obligatory, so it is no problem to skip them if the participant does not feel confident to participate. However, to complete the activity, participants will need to contribute in a more active way, which could involve the preparation of a digital product in English. Accordingly, participants need a medium level of digital and English language competence.

8.3 CERTIFICATION

A certificate of participation is offered to registered participants who have attended both webinars and completed the activity.

9 SHORT ONLINE COURSES

European School Education Platform Short Online Courses are unique in the European School Education Platform CPD offer in that they are designed by advanced teachers . They are designed to focus solely on activity-based learning and unlike all other formats do not rely on the transmission of ideas and knowledge from a central expert to the participants. In this sense, they are the most advanced CPD format on offer on the European School Education Platform, as all learning originates from the course community and therefore relies on the active participation of all participants.

9.1 PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK

A European School Education Platform Short Online Course is a teacher-designed, activity-focused online course lasting about 2 weeks. The Short Online Courses offer participants an opportunity to engage with a topic by stimulating a process of reflection and interaction. This is achieved by raising a series of questions to the participants and encouraging debate and sharing of ideas through dedicated activities. Learning content, for example in the form of text or video-based materials, is kept to a minimum in a Short Online Course and should only be used for the purpose of triggering a learning activity. Accordingly, a Short Online Course does not offer an introduction to a topic by offering definitions,

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2 - In asynchronous learning the instructor, the learner, and the other participants engage in the learning process independently from each other. There is no real-time interaction with other people.

explanations or concepts to the participants. Rather, it offers participants the opportunity to learn by constructing their own understanding of the course topic through a process of self-reflection, interaction with peers, and practice.

- **Learning activities:** Learning activities are the most important element of a Short Online Course. Their purpose is to get participants to do something that generates a learning process. Learning activities can range from simply asking participants a question to more complex activities that require participants to debate with their peers or produce a learning resource for use in their daily practice. A Short Online Course aims to introduce participants to a topic thjrough these types of learning activities.

- **Learning content:** Learning content is secondary in a Short Online Course. Its primary function is to facilitate learning activities, and course designers will always question the integration of learning content with this in mind. This is important, as a Short Online Course should not be seen as a process where the course transmits an expert's answer on a question or topic to the participants. Rather, the Short Online Course offers the participants a framework to establish their own answers. Accordingly, learning content will be selected only if it serves a specific learning activity.

- **Assessment of learning:** Assessment of learning on Short Online Courses is important to ensure a fair process of awarding the course certificates. Short Online Courses usually focus on the peer or moderator assessment of participants' contributions to course activities and/or a substantive course product (e.g., a lesson plan) prepared by each participant. This assessment can be done automatically – to check for a minimum number of contributions – manually and qualitatively through peer or moderator assessment. Assessment of participants' course products

is done through a peer or moderator assessment process. This checks not only that the participant has reflected on the questions raised during the course, but also that they are ready to implement what they learned during the course in their classroom (or other place of work).

Short Online Courses can be run with a restricted and unrestricted registration, meaning that participation numbers can either be unlimited or limited to a pre-determined maximum. The type of registration selected impacts the way learning activities and assessments are organised.

9.2 REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

High level of digital and English language competence.

Considering the pedagogical framework of the Short Online Courses, successful participation in a Short Online Course is dependent on the participant being an active member of the course community. Learning on the course happens primarily through active participation and exchange with peers. Accordingly, participants need to feel comfortable to exchange and conduct a variety of activities in an online environment. This means that participants need to possess a high level of digital competence. Furthermore, given that all exchanges happen in English a high level of English language competence is also required.

9.3 CERTIFICATION

Successful participation in a Short Online Course is recognised with a certificate of completion. The total number of hours identified on the certificate depends on the individual course but will be no less than 8 hours and no more than 12 hours.

10 MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES

European School Education Platform Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are the longest and most comprehensive CPD format on offer on the European School Education Platform. MOOCs follow similar principles to the Short Online Courses but add a layer of learning content developed by dedicated experts, thereby making them more accessible for less experienced participants. MOOCs are the most flexible of the European School Education Platform CPD formats, because they offer multiple ways to approach and learn about a topic, even though participants are also required to conduct more advanced activities together with their peers if they aim to receive a certificate.

10.1 PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK

A European School Education Platform MOOC is designed by the European School Education Platform team focusing on learning content and activities, with a duration of about 4-6 weeks. MOOCs feature an open registration so that an unlimited number of participants can join the course. The MOOCs offer participants an opportunity to learn about a topic by engaging in a variety of learning content and activities. In the first place, participants learn by consuming learning content, for example a video of an expert talking about the course topic. This learning content is then linked to a series of learning activities that stimulate a process of reflection and interaction among the participants and thereby generate learning.

In comparison to the Short Online Courses, the combination of learning content and activities makes the MOOCs more accessible to participants, as it balances passive and active participation. Participants can learn on an MOOC by simply browsing through the learning content. Active participation in the learning activities provides important added value but only becomes mandatory for the final assessment activity . Furthermore, by offering participants initial knowledge via the learning content, the MOOCs can encourage participaton in learning activities. Participants might feel more confident to engage in a learning activity if they have already developed a basic understanding of the subject matter.

- **Learning content:** Learning content on an MOOC has a dual purpose. On the one hand, its purpose is to transmit knowledge to the participants. This content would normally be the starting point in an MOOC's design. It will usually be developed or selected with the support of dedicated experts on the topic of the course. On the other hand, learning content is used to facilitate learning activities. This type of content would normally be used after the more transmissive use of content described above.

- **Learning activities:** While the starting point of an MOOC's design is usually the learning content, learning activities are of equal importance for the design of a MOOC. The true value of an MOOC is only offered to the participants if they manage to fully participate in the learning activities and engage with their course peers. The focus of the learning activities is therefore to generate shared reflections, exchanges, and discussions among the participants – in other words, activities that get participants to interact with each other. Such activities can range from simple activities like asking participants to share reflections to more complex activities that require participants to debate with their peers or even review each other's work. While activities focusing on peer interaction are preferred, MOOCs can also make use of more simple exercises that link to the course content.

A typical example of this type of activity would be a matching-information exercise, where the participants check their understanding of the learning content.

- **Assessment of learning:** Assessment of learning on MOOCs is important to ensure a fair process of awarding course certificates. Standardised assessment approaches, such as multiple-choice tests, are sometimes used throughout an MOOC to test participants' understanding of the topics covered. However, this type of assessment is never used in isolation to assess a participant's learning. Rather, the main form of assessment in an MOOC is conducted using peer assessment of a substantive course product (e.g., a lesson plan) prepared by each participant. This checks not only that a participant has understood the ideas and concepts on the course and has reflected about the questions raised, but also that they are ready to implement what they learned in their classroom (or other place of work).

10.2 Requirements for Participation

Medium level of digital and English language competence.

Considering the pedagogical framework of the MOOCs, successful participation in an MOOC is dependent on the participant being able to consume online learning content in English, as well as being able to prepare a digital course product in English. Active membership in the course community is of added value but not a requirement for completion. As such, participants must possess a medium level of digital and English language competence.

10.3 Certification

Successful participation in an MOOC is recognised with a certificate of completion

11 ONLINE WORKSHOPS

European School Education Platform Online Workshops are restricted to eTwinners and are the most intense and community focused CPD format on offer on the European School Education Platform. Through their focus on direct and synchronous interaction among a smaller cohort of participants, they can offer an intense and rich learning experience for participants in a way that the rest of the European School Education Platform CPD offer cannot. The workshops also provide an important moment for members of the eTwinning community to come together to network and learn.

11.1 Pedagogical Framework

A European School Education Platform Online Workshop is an online event with a variety of sessions spread out over 2-3 days. These sessions include keynote presentations, panel discussions, networking activities, and practical sessions involving group work and discussions. Learning in an online workshop occurs through networking, discussion, and active collaboration with peers during the various sessions as well as the transmission of knowledge from experts presenting during a workshop.

Participation in an Online Workshop is only upon invitation by the National Support Organisations. The maximum number of participants for online workshops is 150. No assessment of learning is conducted in an online workshop.

11.2 Requirements for Participation

A medium level of digital and English language competence.

To benefit from an online workshop, participants are required to access the online meeting room. Depending on the networking and practical sessions, the use of external tools for shared brainstorming, note-taking, or other activities might also be required. Participants also need to be able to understand the presentations in English. Beyond this, it is essential for participants to engage in the practical and networking sessions in clear oral or written English. Accordingly, participants need a medium level of digital and English language competence.

11.3 Certification

A certificate of participation is offered to participants who have attended at least 75% of all workshop sessions.

12 ONSITE COURSES

European School Education Platform Onsite Courses are restricted to eTwinners and are the most intense and community focused CPD format on offer on European School Education Platform, along with the Online Workshops. Through their focus on direct and timely interaction between a smaller group of participants, they can offer an intense and rich learning experience for participants. The Onsite Courses also provide an important moment for members of the eTwinning community to come together face-to-face to network and learn.

12.1 Pedagogical Framework

A European School Education Platform Onsite Course is a face-to-face event with a variety of sessions spread out over 2-3 days. These sessions include keynote presentations, panel discussions, networking activities, and practical sessions involving group work and discussions. Learning in an onsite course occurs through networking, discussion, and active collaboration with peers during the various sessions as well as the transmission of knowledge from experts presenting during a keynote presentation. A key element of the onsite courses are the cultural programmes and networking activities organised by the hosting countries. These elements are crucial for the community building and connecting participating teachers.

Participation in a European School Education Platform Onsite course is only upon invitation by the National Support Organisations. The recommended number of participants is 100. No assessment of learning is conducted in an online workshop.

12.2 Requirements for Participation

A medium level of digital and English language competence.

Participants need to be able to understand the presentations in English language. Beyond this, it is essential for participants to engage in the practical and networking sessions in clear spoken English.

It is also important that participants match the defined target audience for a specific course. There should be a good spread in terms of participating countries and participants should be able to attend all days of the course.

12.3 Certification

A certificate of participation is offered to participants who have attended all workshop sessions.

Contact us

For more information about European School Education Platform please consult our website:
https://school-education.ec.europa.eu/

Launched in 2022, the European School Education Platform is the meeting point for all school staff (from early childhood education and care to primary and secondary education, including initial vocational education and training), researchers, policymakers and other stakeholders in the school education field.

The European School Education Platform is a single platform that integrates the former platforms and services of eTwinning, School Education Gateway and Teacher Academy. As of 2022, the eTwinning community has been hosted in a restricted area within the European School Education Platform. This area is only accessible to school staff validated by the National Support Organisations. Since its launch in 2005, eTwinning has grown from a grassroots initiative into an active school community and has involved more than 1 053 000 school staff working in more than 233 000 schools, across more than 40 countries. eTwinning provides a safe digital platform where teachers are engaged in various activities from designing and implementing European collaborative projects to networking, and from participating in virtual groups to professional development and peer learning. Through its platform, which is available in more than 30 languages, eTwinning provides a range of resources and learning opportunities for teachers. The topics of these resources include the benefits of engaging with eTwinning, 21st-century skills, the use of ICT in education and project kits for inspiration and guidance. Registered teachers have access to the restricted area of the platform, called eTwinning Area.

The European School Education Platform and the eTwinning community are funded by Erasmus+, the European programme for education, training, youth and sport. They are initiatives of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture. The platform is operated by European Schoolnet (providing coordination, content and services) and Tremend Software Consulting SRL (providing technical infrastructure), both under service contracts with the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). The eTwinning community also exists thanks to the support of the National Support Organisations, funded by Erasmus+ under grant agreements with the European Education and Culture Executive Agency, and the Supportive Partners.