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MENTORING PROGRAM, TOOLKIT AND GUIDE FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND MENTORS

Intellectual Output 5



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I. Introduction to the project

The Inn2Diversity project aims to create a mentoring scheme to support teachers in dealing with complex classroom realities and thus increase pupils' learning outcomes and teachers' satisfaction. The project foresees the creation of a profiling tool, mentoring programme, mentoring guide and teacher empowerment toolkit.

INN2DIVERSITY project focuses on:

Preparing teachers for diversity and strengthening healthy relationships by providing teachers with a new non-formal process that stimulates their active engagement in career-long competence development.

Diminishing the application of measures/policies as suspension because suspension rates are predictive of drop-out rates.

On the one hand, European classrooms are becoming more and more diverse, but on the other, the teacher profession remains homogenous mainly, and teachers lack experience in various schooling environments. Teachers have difficulties managing classrooms, and this is a fact. These difficulties have not only a direct impact on their level of satisfaction (and consequently negatively affect the quality of the education offered) but also impact pupils' educational achievement (that, in the long term, results in ESL, school-prison pipeline and society alienation).

This project wishes to reinforce the teachers' competencies to deal with complex classroom realities to manage diversity better and keep students with disruptive behaviour and disruptive academic engagement engaged during classroom time by empowering them with the necessary competencies - to improve positive relationships between them and their

students. Furthermore, a mentoring model is to be created to support schools to transfer and replicate the good practices of managing diversity and complex classrooms and, in doing so, offer them an additional tool to improve teachers' levels of satisfaction in the classroom and reduce disparities in learning.

INN2DIVERSITY project goals are:

- 1) To develop, transfer & implement innovative training curricula on diversity and disruptive classroom behaviours management through transnational cooperation.
- 2) To identify the suitable profile & personal skills to manage students with disruptive behaviour.
- 3) Increase teachers' motivation & satisfaction with students' daily work in school, thus increasing their teaching quality & introducing a virtuous cycle between students' school achievement & teachers' job satisfaction.
- 4) Design a mentoring model to empower teachers and schools with the suitable methods, knowledge & skills to deal with daily difficulties at work & to manage students with disruptive behaviours.
- 5) Evaluate peer-mentoring effectiveness as an in-service focused on professional development to promote positive relationships between teachers & disruptive students.

The Consortium of the Inn2Diversity project, composed of 9 organisations from 6 European countries, aware of the challenges teachers face in diverse classroom environments, aims to contribute to the implementation of a new methodology – based on mentoring – as a system-level approach to empower teachers with managing diversity in the classroom, to deal with disruptive behaviours, and to equip them with tools to engage students better and transform teaching in a health profession.

The INN2DIVERSITY project began in September 2019 and will end in August 2022.

II. Model generic description: theory background, assumptions, principles, integrity, and coherence: aim, objectives, target groups, expected results and outcomes.

There is a need for a new methodology – mentoring in our cases – as a system-level approach to empower teachers with managing diversity in the classroom. Considering the need for an updated methodology, tools and models for teaching in a diverse classroom environment, the Inn2Diversity project has established two primary goals. The first goal is to reinforce the competencies of teachers to deal with complex classroom realities to manage diversity better, and to keep students with disruptive behaviour and disruptive academic engagement engaged during classroom time by empowering them with the necessary competencies (based on the Framework of teacher competences for engaging with diversity promoted by the European Commission in 2017) to improve positive relationships between them and these students. It includes “areas such as subject and pedagogical knowledge, assessment skills, teamwork abilities, the social and interpersonal skills necessary for teaching, awareness of diversity issues, research skills, (...) as well as organisational and leadership skills.” (European Commission/EACEA/ Eurydice, 2013: 35). The second goal is to create a mentoring model to support schools to transfer and replicate the good practices of managing diversity and complex classrooms and doing so,

offering them an additional tool to improve teacher's levels of satisfaction in the classroom to reduce disparities in learning.

To tackle this challenge regarding the improvements for the need for an updated methodology, tools, and models for teaching in a diverse classroom environment, the Consortium of 9 organisations from 6 countries (United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Finland, Italy, Portugal, Romania) have joined forces for the implementation of the Inn2Diversity project. All partners work together to:

- increase awareness of schools on the need to put efforts into investing in the qualification of their teachers;
- adapt the teaching profession to a continuously changing educational environment;
- keep teachers more motivated and satisfied due to the investment on their needs;
- design a new and tailor-made tool that will allow teachers to self-evaluate themselves;
- generate awareness on needs of self-development, flexibility and adaptation to new realities;
- design a mentoring process that can be individually fine-tuning to mentors and mentees;
- engage pupils in the classroom environment with the sense of being valued by their diversity.

III. Minimum implementation requirements and Key Performance Indicators (for piloting and rollout)

The INN2DIVERSITY Mentoring Programme intends to include the data for mentoring process benefiting the mentees. Schools can replicate the mentoring process and embed it into their daily school routine. Mentees (teachers with difficulties in managing learning and teaching) will have the opportunity to share their challenges and have an experienced person giving them instructional excellence for teaching effectiveness, increase not only their job satisfaction but also improving disadvantaged pupils' school enrolment, education success and inclusive environment.

Key Performance Indicators: All countries involved in the partnership will have to perform pilots to test the mentoring model. For this pilot, KPI is established to monitor and assess the mentoring program's results and effects and provide robust data to ensure feasible conclusions. The KPIs are:

- Number of mentor coordinators in each country
- Number of mentors in each country
- Number of mentees in each country
- Number of Course for mentor coordinators delivered in each country
- Number of Train the mentors' course delivered in each country
- Number of mentoring processes in each country
- Overall satisfaction with the programme (mentees, mentors).

IV. Process and stages

The mentoring process starts from the identification of a need of an organisation to implement strategies to retain teachers using developing transversal skills. The first step is to appoint a process

coordinator responsible for managing the mentoring programme. The mentor's coordinator is also the person responsible for triggering the programme.

For this testing phase, mentoring coordinators will be trained to perform this role before deploying the training programme into their organisation. The first step of the process is for partners to participate as testers of the mentoring programme. Thus, the mentoring programme starts with a disclosure of the programme, i.e., the programme's launch to all stakeholders and interested parties, informing them that the programme is open. The further steps are:

- Recruitment can be done differently to get the most suitable mentors and mentees.
- The self-assessment is provided for mentor's coordinators, mentors and mentees; it's a mandatory step as it will provide evidence of the effects of the mentoring programme on competencies; it will take place at the initial, ongoing and final stages of the programme;
- Matching occurs after the mentor's training; it can be done a pre-matching to identify which pairs can work best, but the proper matching happens in a welcome meeting.
- Mentoring sessions are the core of the mentoring programme, and the programme provides some guidelines and strategies, namely the format of the programme and key successful activities (e.g., goal setting).
- Supervision is the 'mentoring for mentors, and it is the responsibility of the mentor's coordinator.

V. Actors and roles

Actors perform different tasks in the mentoring programme and have differentiated levels of responsibility. This working paper provides a basic description of these roles, but for the profile of each role, it should be considered “Intellectual Output 3 - Mentors' Coordinators and Mentors profile”.

The profiling tool is innovative since it will allow for the integration of the teaching competencies improvement process: set profiles, support mentoring processes recruitment, selection, and matching (between coordinators, mentors and mentees), establish competencies development needs and allow running tailor-made training programs, among other procedures. The impact can be felt on teachers' self-awareness, motivation, and self-confidence since it introduces sustainable self-improvement processes, usable at the school level, making available the peer schemes management tool to focus on a critical topic that increases teachers' satisfaction and pupils' success and enrolment.

The purpose of the profiles is to be a flexible tool for the director of the Institute/School to identify the appropriate competencies and indicators relevant for carrying out a mentoring programme for teachers returning to work after a long absence, 1st jobseekers or other teachers facing difficulties in retaining their job place.

- **Mentoring coordinator**

The mentoring coordinator is an individual who manages and supervises the mentoring process to ensure that it goes as planned and that those goals are achieved. The responsibilities of the mentoring coordinator are to recruit, develop and retain mentors and mentees, match appropriate mentees to mentors (“pairing off”), help mentors define the

mentoring purpose and supervise the whole process, giving organisational support for development and empowerment.

- **Mentor**

Mentors are responsible for engaging in the mentoring relationship to support a mentee (the person receiving support), and for preparing, conducting, and evaluating the mentoring sessions according to the scope and purpose of the programme. All steps ran in the mentoring process for sharing with the mentoring coordinator. A mentor should be experienced personnel with organisational knowledge, perceive mentoring as a means of job efficacy and be willing to commit time to others.

- **Mentee**

The mentee is the one who learns and is supported and guided in his path towards acquiring skills, knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for the role of teacher and, even more so, to be an effective teacher. The examination of the needs and objectives of the mentees can be of guidance in specifying the criteria for selecting mentors, at least in terms of skills, knowledge, and experience that future mentors must possess.

VI. Profile, recruitment, and matching

The Inn2diversity mentoring programme delivers a process of recruitment and matching based on the profile of coordinators, mentors and mentees. The overall concept is to have the right person in the right place.

- **Profile**

The criteria for mentor's coordinator, mentors and mentees selection are:

Coordinators: experienced teachers and mentors willing to step up in the mentoring process and manage the mentoring programme

Mentors: experienced teachers willing to share their own experience and knowledge, especially those who have experienced similar issues as mentees are experiencing

Mentees: teachers returning to work after a long absence, 1st jobseekers or other teachers facing difficulties in retaining their job place.

- **Recruitment**

The recruitment will be preceded by the Inn2diversity Mentoring Programme disclosure. This disclosure can be via email, meetings or a combination of both.

The recruitment occurs in cooperation with the responsibility for the referral of candidates, who will signal teachers who fill in the criteria and are available to participate in the programme. The candidates must fill in a form (mentor and mentee) to identify personal goals and motivations to participate in the programme and run a self-assessment of competencies to identify strengths and weaknesses. The recruitment process can be either just by application (form and self-assessment) or combined with an interview (especially for mentees) to assess candidates' predisposition to engage in a developmental process.

- **Matching**

The matching is a process to identify the proper mentor to address the mentee's needs. Appropriate mentors are those with the interest and availability to be involved in a relationship for the mentee's benefit.

Before the matching, the mentors' coordinator needs information about the available mentors. He/she has this information based on the prior collaboration (if there was one), from the Mentor form or from the self-assessment of competencies. This includes information about the domain of activity and professional experience, hobbies; personality characteristics and communication style; availability and schedule; geographic coverage; prejudices and avoidances, and personal motivation for the mentor role.

To make the "offer" relevant to the mentee, the mentoring coordinator also needs some information about the mentee and about his/her needs and expectations. He/she can collect this information from the self-assessment of competencies, including the domain of activity in which the mentee finds a professional interest; personality characteristics; level of autonomy; aspects regarding the life context of the mentee; availability and schedule; geographic coverage; prejudices and avoidances; hobbies; short- and long-term personal objectives.

The mentoring coordinator identifies the most appropriate mentor for each mentee based on all available information. The matching is done in the interest of the mentee, such that there are as many chances as possible that the mentor will maintain and optimise the individual motivation of the mentee to act independently to achieve his own goals.

Factors that can foster a positive relationship: similar interests, hobbies, particularities about culture, age, gender, and religion.

VII. Profiling tool

The profiling tool has the following structure: competencies framework, profile blueprint (tool user manual) and online profiling tool. The profiling tool will cover the previously stated components for three different target groups: mentoring coordinators (description of key competencies, correspondent indicators and descriptors to manage a mentoring program progression), mentors (description of key competencies, correspondent indicators and descriptors to deliver a mentoring process targeting mentees) and mentees (description of key competencies targeted in the mentoring process, and correspondent indicators to self-evaluate progress). 2 blueprints will be produced under the profiles developed. They will package step-by-step appraisal, recruit, match, train and self-improve the coordinators and mentors. At this stage, all the partners must select core and supplementary features to be introduced on the physical and online tools and deliver the blueprint (manual of web programmers - online). After this work of research and development of the competencies framework and blueprints, the online profiling tool will be set up. One online tool to evaluate the coordinators and mentors in terms of skills; experience, knowledge and potential (will adapt the training to the manager's and mentors' gaps|needs). The impact can be felt on teachers' self-awareness, motivation, and self-confidence since it introduces a sustainable self-improvement process, usable at the school level, making available the peer schemes management tool focus on a critical topic that increases teachers' satisfaction and pupils' success and enrolment. The online component boosts the transferability potential of the project and methodology.

VIII. Mentoring strategies

intend to create a more structured and goal-oriented programme and, at

the same time, increase motivation, regular attendance and programme outcomes. Mentoring strategies can be categorized into three areas following the mentoring relationship cycle: building relationships, intervention, and closure.

IX. Support, training, and supervision of mentors

Supervision is a moment for reflection and sharing, with the aims of broad support for all the mentoring process; triggering continuous learning and the development of the mentor's skills (peer or non-peer), and also the promotion of mentors' motivation. Supervision will create the opportunity to progress review and promote serious thought on difficulties while implementing the Mentoring Programme. Through this methodology, we intend to ensure the best possible guidance to mentors, promoting the sharing of experiences and combined learning.

So, the mentoring coordinator will ensure supervision of mentors at least once a month, with 2 hours duration, for the overall period of the mentoring process. Additionally, the mentor's coordinator will be available for every question that mentors or mentees might have or to support any difficulties during the mentoring sessions. Additionally, the mentor's coordinator should organize meetings with mentees to know them and understand their goals and expectations. The coordinator should also be present in key sessions, such as empowering presentation, matching confirmation and closure. The mentor's coordinator will have to prepare a supervision plan to deliver to mentors to present what activities will take place in each session, regardless of the flexibility to address mentors' needs to share difficulties and work on different themes. Every supervision plan will be recorded, with an attendance list and topics addressed. It is important that mentors feel comfortable using other forms of support besides formal supervision.

Different approaches to reflect on the mentoring process should be practiced during the mentor's training course. They might include: intervision¹⁰/group meetings for reflection, personal reflection diary, adaptation of the feedback's requests, creative activities or meetings to reinforce the motivation.

X. Evaluation

The mentor's coordinator will gather information about mentoring meeting records, and mentors' and mentees' progress reports to monitor the INN2DIVERSITY Mentoring Programme's progress and to implement improvement actions where needed. Also, mentors and mentees will run the competencies self-assessment to verify the changes and the effects of the mentoring process (initial, ongoing, and final). At the end of the programme, the mentor's coordinator will produce a final report with final data about the mentoring programme.

XI. Mentoring tools: session plans and contents, necessary materials & activities

This model is meant to replicate the mentoring process and embed it into the school routine. The process brings a deep commitment that will impact teachers' satisfaction (coordinators, mentors and mentees) and pupils' behaviour, with pupils more engaged in their learning process. The implementation of the mentoring process can be structured into steps, as presented below. Each step covers different activities to accomplish the

whole structure of the mentoring and provides guidelines for the overall process and mentoring model.

The following section offers simple instructions to implement the I2D mentoring model and the main tools used in each step. Each school or mentoring peer can adapt all activities to their specific context.

PROGRAMME LAUNCH	
What to do?	What tools to use?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and train the mentor coordinators and mentors • Connect with schools and other community organizations to identify people who can perform the role of mentors • Connect with mentors' managers and other school professionals to identify potential mentees. • A direct communication can be launched to involve mentor volunteers and mentees in the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme presentation • Direct communication • Leaflets • Mentoring registration form (Annex 1-IO4)
TRAINING MENTORS	
What to do?	What tools to use?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise the necessary logistics (according to the format of the training – online or face-to-face) • <u>Pre-training</u>: self-assessment tool to get the profile of your mentors and support their self-reflection • <u>After the training</u> - identify who will work with which mentee (administrative matching) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project materials for mentors, including activities and group dynamics • Self-assessment Tool for Mentors, Mentees and Coordinators (Annex 2, 3 and 4)

MENTORING ROLL-OUT	
What to do?	What tools to use?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mentors' managers shall promote the first presentation and welcome mentors and mentees (separately with each pair or together with all participants) • It is the official start of the mentoring process and the 'get-to-know' stage (lasts for a couple of weeks as there needs to be confirmation that mentor and mentee work well with each other – matching confirmation) • Mentors shall complete the meeting log for each meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring Agreement (Annex 6-IO4) • Mentoring meeting record (Annex 5-IO4)
MENTORING PROCESS	
What to do?	What tools to use?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentors and mentees meet regularly. • The frequency of meetings depends on the intensiveness of the programme but also the needs and availability of the mentee and the mentor. • The most common frequency is one weekly meeting, though it can be less. • The duration of each meeting varies according to the mentee's needs, but the average is 1 to 2 hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring meeting record (Annex 5-IO4)
FOLLOW-UP & SUPPORT BY THE MENTOR'S MANAGER	
What to do?	What tools to use?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the first days: set up regular calls to each mentor to check in • During the entire process: schedule a fixed meeting with the group of mentors to discuss their processes, their cases, challenges and difficulties, and the strategies to use (meetings can be monthly or fortnightly) • The meetings can also be used to reinforce some training contents (recycling) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training materials • Case discussion • Group dynamics for team building • Mentoring Progress Report – to be completed both by mentor and mentee (Annex 7 and 8-IO4) • Mentoring meeting record (Annex 5-IO4)

- Half-way of the process, check the progress of the process.

MENTORING EVALUATION

What to do?

- Mentor manager, mentor and mentee need to create a moment of closure – like a group activity, a self-reflection
- Measure the results and outcomes of each mentoring process
- Build an analysis of general results of the programme implemented
- Identify areas for improvement for next group of mentees.

What tools to use?

- Self-assessment Tool for Mentors, Mentees and Coordinator (Annex 2, 3 and 4-IO4)
- Mentoring Final Report (Annex 10-IO4)

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