INTERLOCALITY
INCREASED LOCAL EMPLOYABILITY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

User Guide for Online Courses

Introduction

This user guide has been developed as part of the project **INTERLOCALITY - Increased Local Employability of International Students**. The project was co-funded by EU under Erasmus+ KA2 partnership for cooperation 2022-2025.

Project partners include four universities of applied sciences and one non-profit organisation: UCN – University College of Northern Denmark (DK); Fontys (NL) ; FH Münster (DE); Arcada University of Applied Sciences (FI); SEND (IT).

The online courses, their aims and target groups, and advice for how to take the courses and offer them to others are explained in this user guide. The courses can be used online as such, downloaded into learning management platforms (LMS), downloaded as HTML files for your own web server or cloud storage, or downloaded as PDF-files.

Content Overview

1. Aims and target group

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3. Pedagogical guide

4. Promotion of the courses

5. Conclusions

Copyright

Appendices

1. Aims and target groups

The INTERLOCALITY project aims to increase local employability and retention among international higher education degree students within the fields of engineering and of business administration. The project goes beyond addressing the needs of the international students and extends to local labour market actors, including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), third sector organisations, and higher education institutions (HEIs).

This is a user guide for the three online training courses addressed to staff at HEIs, third sector organisations and SMEs. The courses cover 1) Intercultural Sensitivity, 2) Guidance and Counselling, and 3) Employer-Ability. The courses aim to enhance the relevant skills of the target groups in guiding and supporting international degree students in entering the local labour market and international alumni to move forward in their careers. The courses were developed by project partner staff with expertise on the topics and piloted by all three target groups in Denmark, Finland, Germany, and the Netherlands. You can find more information about the creators (Appendix 1) and the contents and structure of the three courses (Appendix 2) at the end of this guide.

This user guide has been developed with the primary objective of sharing insights and instructions on how to adapt these online open-source courses to meet the needs of target groups and align with local contexts, ensuring their sustainability and widespread dissemination throughout Europe beyond the project. The user guide is addressed to anyone who wants to use the INTERLOCALITY courses themselves or offer them to others. The guide includes three sections: 1) a technical guide, 2) a pedagogical guide, and 3) promotion of the courses.

2. Technical guide

Online learning

You can take the online courses as MOOCS directly on the INTERLOCALITY website:
- https://www.interlocality.eu/training-course-employer-ability
- https://www.interlocality.eu/training-course-guidance-and-counseling
- https://www.interlocality.eu/training-course-intercultural-sensitivity

Open source and adaptation to local needs

The courses are open source under a Creative Commons license CC BY-NC 4.0 DEED Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International, allowing them to be copied, redistributed, and adapted, provided appropriate credit is given to the INTERLOCALITY project, and that they are not utilised for commercial purposes. When referring to the courses, please use the following text: Original source: the ERASMUS+ INTERLOCALITY project co-funded by the EU.

Please note, that adapted versions of the courses and related documents should no longer contain the INTERLOCALITY visuals or logos, nor the EU logo and texts. You are welcome to make adaptions to the courses, but you need to do it with your own visuals and only attribute the original source to the INTERLOCALITY-project co-funded by the EU.

The **graphics** used have open licenses and can be recreated by attributing the original source and the licenses. The **images** (photos) are license-free and do not need attribution.

Exporting the INTERLOCALITY courses

The INTERLOCALITY online courses have been developed in the tool Articulate Rise. The courses can be exported from the INTERLOCALITY website (links above) as zip files in the following formats:

- **Web:** This format creates a folder of HTML files that you can upload to your web server or host on a cloud storage service.

- **Learning Management System (LMS):** This format creates a SCORM, AICC, or Tin Can API (xAPI) package that you can import into your LMS. You can choose the tracking and reporting options, as well as the completion criteria for your course.

- **PDF:** This format creates a PDF file that you can print or share with your learners. The PDF file includes the text and images from the INTEROCALITY courses, but not the interactive elements or multimedia.

Importing Courses into Learning Management Systems (LMS)

Members of higher education institutions (HEIs) might want to upload the INTERLOCALITY online courses into their learning management system (LMS) and offer it to their own staff, as well as to local SMEs and third sector organisations. In doing so, HEIs are allowed to tailor the contents to their need, within the Creative Commons licence. The benefits are that they can keep the courses for as long as they like, adapt them to their needs, and assign teachers to them. This allows for more interactivity and even assessment if they so wish. Offering the courses in an institutional LMS is a great opportunity to reach out to local stakeholders and invite them to join the HEI staff in completing the courses. This can be a starting point for further networking, collaboration, and stakeholder engagement around the employment of international students and graduates. It provides a common topic of interest and a shared language for discussing the different points of view, needs, and possible solutions.

It is possible that a HEI does not have an LMS system, or that it is restricted to internal staff and students only, and not accessible to external stakeholders. Before importing the courses into a HEI's LMS, we recommend checking the access options. If and LMS is not available or external access not permitted, the HTML folder can be uploaded onto a specific section of a HEI's website/MOOC platforms or shared as PDFs via hyperlinks, emails, newsletters, etc. to relevant stakeholders.

Using the SCORM Tool

A SCORM-object is a standardised package of digital learning materials that can be imported into a Learning Management System (LMS) and used in different courses. Importing a SCORM-object into a LMS allows you to reuse the INTERLOCALITY courses for your purpose.

The steps to import a SCORM-object into a LMS may vary depending on the specific platform and version you are using but the general procedure is as follows:

1. Download the SCORM-object from the source or create your own using a SCORM-authoring tool.

2. Login to your LMS and navigate to the course where you want to add the SCORM-object.

3. Find the option to add new content or activities and select SCORM from the list of available types.

4. Give a name and description to your SCORM-object and upload the file from your computer or cloud storage.

5. Configure the settings and preferences for your SCORM-object, such as grading, completion, tracking, display, etc.

6. Save and preview your SCORM-object and make any necessary adjustments.

7. Publish your SCORM-object and make it available to your learners.

Here is further information of how to import a SCORM-object into LMS platforms:

- *General:* https://www.linkedin.com/advice/0/how-can-you-customize-appearance-scorm-package-moodle-y0zfc
- *Moodle:* hhttps://docs.moodle.org/19/en/Adding/editing_a_SCORM
- *Canvas:* https://tips.universityofgalway.ie/m/canvas/l/1727868-how-to-add-scorm-content-in-canvas
- *Itslearning:* https://developer.itslearning.com/Scorm.html

Using the contents as MOOCs

A MOOC is a Massive Online Open Source, which is a type of online learning that allows anyone to access and participate in a course for free or at a low cost. However, please remember that the INTERLOCALITY courses are licensed only for non-commercial use. A MOOC can be created based on a learning object produced in Articulate Rise by following these steps:

1. Export the learning object as a web package from the INTERLOCALITY website:
   a. https://www.interlocality.eu/training-course-employer-ability
   b. https://www.interlocality.eu/training-course-guidance-and-counseling
   c. https://www.interlocality.eu/training-course-intercultural-sensitivity

2. Upload the web package to a hosting service such as Amazon S3, Dropbox, or Google Drive.

3. Create a MOOC platform account on a site such as edX, Coursera, or Udemy.

4. Create a new course and add a web link activity to link to the hosted learning object.

5. Publish the course and share it with your learners.

3. Pedagogical guide

This is a short pedagogical user guide for teaching a HEI online self-paced course. The purpose of online teaching and learning is not to copy or replace the traditional learning experience in a classroom. The guide is meant to help you use the INTERLOCALITY content in different kinds of contexts with different types of learners.

A good plan is a good start and very important, but please remember that learning is a very subjective experience for the learner and therefore a good teacher, or facilitator, needs to be able to adjust throughout if possible. Recognise that your target group may include learners with varying backgrounds, learning styles, and abilities. Adapt your teaching strategies accordingly.

Asynchronous vs synchronous modes of learning

Asynchronous learning

This course is planned for asynchronous learning that can take place at any place and at any time. Student-student and student-instructor, or learner-learner interactions can still take place but there may be a delay depending on the technology and the tools used. This type of learning is best suited to situations where learners are in different locations with different technological backgrounds and resources or may not all be available at a specific date and time. It is also perfect for self-paced learning and MOOCs where different types of learners will take the course for various reasons. This mode of learning can also take place with minimum facilitation. Planning of the content and introduction of the course, the content, and ways of working is still crucial for a good learning experience. The learner needs to know what to expect. Even if facilitation is at a minimum we recommend that you provide your learners with a possibility to give feedback and to get help with technical problems etc. If you provide the INTERLOCALITY courses as a part of your organisation's competence development it might e.g. be the HR team that can be contacted.

Synchronous learning

Synchronous learning is learning together at the same time and place (virtual or physical). It means working together in "real-time" and often with a facilitator or teacher supporting the learning. However, working with learners online is not spontaneous in the way face-to-face classes are. Given the physical distance and reduced communication possibilities between learners and facilitator, online learners can feel disconnected or isolated from the content and the learning outcomes when they do not interact regularly. Having some kind of facilitator presence and actively engaging with learners are sometimes important for learners enrolled in asynchronous online courses. It can be good to balance synchronous (real-time) sessions with the asynchronous INTERLOCALITY content and structure. Feel free to add real-time learning if needed and suitable for your target group. Remember that this will also require more facilitation and that you need to resource a facilitator for this. Read more about distance learning tips.

Self-paced online teaching, step by step

Course design and planning

- Define learning objectives: clearly articulate what students should learn by the end of the course.

- Chunk content: divide the course into manageable modules or units.

- Sequencing: arrange content logically, considering prerequisites and building complexity.

- Assessment strategy: decide on assessments (quizzes, assignments) aligned with learning objectives.

Content

The contents of these self-paced online courses are planned for mainly asynchronous learning. They are structured into three topics: Employer-ability, Guidance and Counselling, and Intercultural Sensitivity. Every course has three levels: Beginner, Developing, and Skilled.

We have included different types of material in the content:

- Videos and podcasts

- Text materials: articles and reports

- Interactive elements: polls, quizzes, and exercises

Since the material is created to be used by different facilitators it is important that each facilitator goes through the materials (all of them) before the launch of the course. It is also crucial to check that links are working and that all materials are accessible for the learners since this can vary in different contexts (see for example the technical guide). Add extra instructions for the learner if needed. You are also free to add or change according to your needs.

Assessment and grading

The assessment provided is meant for self-assessment (including self-correcting quizzes) and reflection. This is due to the self-paced and asynchronous course design. This means that the course can run as such without the active involvement of a facilitator or teacher.

If you implement the courses in your own organisation and have a group that takes the course at the same time, we encourage you to add peer-discussion as an assessment element. Read more about peer assessment possibilities at e.g. Cornell University Center for Teaching Innovation.

Communication

- Announcements: post regular announcements to keep learners informed.

- Email or messaging: be responsive to learner queries.

- Virtual office hours: schedule online office hours for personalised support.

Please read more about communication and marketing of the courses in the promotion section of this user guide.

Technology and tools

- Learning Management System (LMS): familiarise yourself with your particular LMS features.

- Multimedia tools: use video recording software, screen sharing, and interactive platforms.

- Accessibility: ensure that content is accessible to all students (closed captions, alt text).

Self-paced learning

- Flexibility: emphasise that learners can progress at their own pace.

- Deadlines and use of time: set reasonable deadlines for the learning. The individual learner will have to be self-directed.

If possible, assign a teacher/facilitator

Assigning a teacher/facilitator to the courses allows for:

*   **Discussion forums**: set up online forums and sites for student interaction and tasks where learners can connect with peers, ask questions, and share insights. Encourage participation and select your own tools. In the INTERLOCALITY course material we use Padlet. What you choose depends on what kind of access you have to tools and also how familiar you and your learners are with tools. Tools included have to be made accessible (without a cost) to the learners. Tools available will also be different depending on what LMS you work in.

*   **Peer learning**: foster collaboration among the learners through group projects or peer reviews. This can be added on top of the provided material for those who want more synchronous elements and peer learning. However, this will decrease the level of self-paced learning and it might require that students meet in real time.

*   **Feedback**: regularly provide feedback on assignments and discussions and make clear from the beginning how feedback is delivered, if it is delivered.

*   **Organise live webinars or virtual Q&A sessions** with instructors to deepen understanding and address any challenges.

*   **Enable networking**: encourage learners to stay actively involved in the course and leverage the professional networks made available to them.

*   **Engage stakeholders**: arrange meetings with key stakeholders on the different topics in the courses.

*   **Create an alumni group** for learners who have taken the courses and want to stay in touch.

*   **Stay in touch**: ask permission to include learners' contact details in your CRM system for future communication.

Recognition

Recognise and celebrate learner achievements to foster a sense of accomplishment. You can e.g. offer a certificate of completion (Appendix 3).

*   If possible, offer a digital badge upon finishing the course.

Remember, successful online teaching involves a blend of effective pedagogy and technical proficiency.

4. Promotion of the courses

In this section, we will outline strategies to recruit and motivate learners, to guide them through the process of accessing and benefiting from the online courses.

Co-funded by
the European Union

There are four ways of accessing the courses: 1) as directly accessible as MOOCs at the INTERLOCALITY website; 2) as an offering in a higher education institution's (HEI) learning management system (LMS); or 3) as downloadable HTML files, 4) as downloadable PDF files.

Reaching potential learners

Utilise multiple channels to reach potential learners you would like to take the courses.

- Social media platforms (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram).

- Emails targeting relevant companies, professionals, and organisations.

- Online forums and communities where you can find your target audience.

- Industry-specific websites and publications for advertising or guest blogging opportunities.

- Partnering with relevant organisations, associations, or influencers to reach their networks.

- Participate in relevant industry events, conferences, and trade shows to network with potential learners face-to-face.

- Host workshops or informational sessions to showcase your expertise and the value of your training offerings.

Tailor messaging to each target group

Craft tailored messaging that speaks directly to the needs, interests, and pain points of your target groups. Highlight how the training courses can address their specific challenges and contribute to their professional development.

- Use language and terminology that resonates with each group's industry or sector, demonstrating your understanding of their unique context and requirements.

- Demonstrate how the INTERLOCALITY courses align with the learner's professional objectives and can help them achieve their career goals.

Highlight the benefits

Start by emphasising the key benefits of taking the INTERLOCALITY online training courses.

- They provide professional development opportunities.

- They provide opportunities to facilitate the recruitment of international talents.

- The training courses are free.

- The online courses are flexible and accommodate busy workloads.

Personalised recommendations

Provide personalised recommendations for courses.

- Gather quotes, recommendations, and endorsements from your learners.

- Use the quotes from the INTERLOCALITY project pilot participants (Appendix 4).

Course descriptions

Offer descriptions of the courses and levels to give learners a taste of them

- Descriptions of course levels and contents provided by the INTERLOCALITY project (Appendix 2)
    - Remember to edit the course descriptions if you modify them in your LMS.

Clear enrolment process

Provide a clear and user-friendly enrolment process.

- Provide instructions for how to access the INTERLOCALITY website.

- Provide instructions for how to access the courses in your LMS.

- Provide step-by-step instructions guiding learners to the courses

5. Conclusions

The aim of the INTERLOCALITY online training courses is to inspire and empower SMEs, higher education staff, and third sector organisations to develop their knowledge and understanding of key elements of increasing the local employment of international students and graduates. The courses are designed to show the learners the different perspectives of the SMEs, higher education institutions, and third sector organisations. This increases the potential for understanding and collaboration within common challenges and enables a holistic and sustainable approach to supporting the local employment of international students and graduates.

Together, let's unlock the full potential of the international students and graduates for our organisations and societies!

Appendix 1

Creators of the INTERLOCALITY Online Courses

The creation of the INTERLOCALITY online training courses was a collaboration between members of the five project partner institutions. The team was cross-disciplinary and consisted of pedagogical -, intercultural -, counselling-, educational-, and employment experts.

In alphabetical order:

Sarah Kathrine Norre Andersen, UCN

Judith van den Boogaard, Fontys

Vincenzo Catania, SEND

Sara Di Rosa, SEND

Ousman Drammeh, SEND

Mia Ekström, Arcada

Susanna Fabricius, Arcada

Mihaela Frederiksen, UCN

Mia Halmén, Arcada

Luc Hameleers, Fontys

Anna Hammershøy, UCN

Meggi Hedengren, Arcada

Anna Hölscher, FH Münster

Olivia Lindström, Arcada

Maria Jurvelius, Arcada

Nadine Pantel, FH Münster

Sara Paolazzo, SEND

Sarah Schönfelder, FH Münster

Sandra Slotte, Arcada (contact person)

Christa Tigerstedt, Arcada

Tue Werner Mikkelsen, UCN

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Appendix 2

Course Descriptions

These courses have been developed in the framework of the Erasmus+ project INTERLOCALITY co-funded by EU with the **aim to increase local employability among international higher education degree students.**

Lack of local employment of international students and graduates is a growing problem in many countries. Especially countries with an ageing and/or diminishing population are often in need of work-based immigration and of international student and graduate retention. This issue touches many different stakeholders in local employment. **The courses have three main target groups: local small- and medium sized enterprises (SMEs); higher education institutions (HEIs); and third sector organisations.** By third sector organisations we mean government and non-government organisations, municipalities, associations, labour market organisation, private actors etc.

The courses consist of three levels: Beginner, Developing and Skilled. Each level takes approximately 4 hours to complete, including text, videos, and learning activities. At the end of each level, you will check your learning through a short quiz and self-reflection questions.

Intercultural Sensitivity

This course will take you on a journey of self-reflection, knowledge acquisition, and skills development. You will explore the foundations of intercultural sensitivity, learn about cultural dimensions, and examine your own cultural assumptions and biases. Through engaging exercises and discussions, **you will gain insights into the impact of culture on communication styles, values, and behaviours**. You will learn effective strategies for bridging cultural gaps, resolving conflicts, and fostering inclusive environments.

By completing this course, **you will become a more culturally competent individual ready to thrive in diverse environments and lead multicultural teams**. You will gain a competitive edge in today's globalised world and contribute to building inclusive societies.

Guidance and counselling

Whether you're a CEO, a manager, or an employee in a local SME or work in a HEI as teacher or administrative staff, or part of a third sector organisation, this course will enhance your ability to identify, understand, and analyse international students' expectations, interests, ambitions, and the external influences and resources to support them in their career development.

By completing this course, you will learn how to actively guide and support international students in the different phases of their journey to the local labour market, with the aim to increase their retention and employability. You will be able to analyse their personal ambitions and expectations, as well as external factors and local career perspectives that may impact their personal and professional choices in the host country. Lastly, you will learn to apply tools and strategies to provide a holistic and coordinated guidance system in collaboration with local actors and stakeholders and to develop a career action plan according to international students' needs and expectations and the opportunities offered at local level.

Employer-ability

By completing this course, you will learn to understand the societal need for employment of international talents and the roles of different stakeholders. You will also **understand the difference between employability and employer-ability**, as well as the basic concepts of employer-branding, recruitment, onboarding, and retention. You will be able to apply tools and strategies related to inclusive leadership, diversity management, and diversity recruitment in practical situations, as well as provide support and improvements to internships for international students. Lastly, you will gain an understanding of how to actively contribute to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion within your organisation.

The levels Beginner and Developing are designed for all target groups of this course (SMEs, HEIs and third sector organisations). The Beginner level is an introduction to the concepts of employability and employer-ability, and explains the different roles each of the stakeholders have in them. The Developing level is an introduction to recruitment, onboarding, and retention of international talents for those who would like to know more about the employer-perspective or find new insights within these topics. The Skilled level of the Employer-ability course is targeted only to those who are actively involved in recruitment and onboarding and provides **hands-on tools for more inclusive recruitment and retention processes, as well as internships** for international students.

Appendix 3

Certificate of Completion

Certificate of Completion

This certificate is awarded to >> name of learner<< for successful completion of the Erasmus+

project **Interlocality** online training course >> course name and level(s) <<.

>> Place and date<<

>> Name<<

Appendix 4

Quotes from the INTERLOCALITY pilot participants

Finnish HEI staff member: "Excellent quality of materials! Inspiring and got me motivated to learn even more. Very well explained in the texts and well-chosen video materials."

Danish third sector organisation staff member: "A very good mix of data from research, videos, small exercises and self-reflection tasks. Especially the videos give a nice understanding of the concepts. I really liked the "self-reflect" sections as it sparked a lot of thought on different aspects."

Finnish SME: "As a small company, these topics can be daunting as there are most likely no people lead or HR. I would recommend this to every business owner! Going through all levels would benefit the bottom line of an SME as many topics that are hindering growth are covered here in the employer-ability online course. I think this is definitely needed in Finland and it is super relevant right now as there is a talent shortage but at the same time global talent struggles to find work that suits their skillset."

Finnish SME: "What I liked most about the structure and the delivery of the level was how different materials were utilised and incorporated. I will use what I've learned in my daily life by being more aware of language inclusivity and diversity."

Finnish third sector organisation staff member: "The course is easily navigable, breaking down complex concepts into easily digestible language. It's particularly inspiring for newcomers or those unfamiliar with the discussed concepts, nudging them toward deeper studies or additional reading to expand their knowledge in the field. My own experience echoes this: even with prior familiarity with certain concepts, the course allowed me for a deeper understanding and distinction between intricate meanings."

German "other type of organisation" staff member: "I realised once again how little I still know about cultural differences. It was important for me to realise that most cultural conflicts arise between people from seemingly similar cultural backgrounds. I was aware of this before, but couldn't explain it to myself. I will pay more attention to this in my work."

German HEI staff member: "What I liked most about the structure and delivery of the level was the use different resources ranging from articles to audio and video files. Overall, the instructions were very clear. The workload is appropriate."

German SME: "I really enjoyed the variety of information. It provides me with a good overview on all the different subjects that matter. I will use what I have learned in our daily work. You gain a deeper understanding and sensibility on the topics of all 3 courses and rate them as more important than maybe before."

Finnish third sector organisation staff member: "I have little experience with guidance and counselling for International Talents and while doing this (Beginner!) level I realised how much more I needed to understand and know in order to perform well at this work."

Discover more about Interlocality and follow us on LinkedIn