



Co-funded by
the European Union



3LMindset
LifeLong Learning



Adapt your course guide

bit *schulungcenter*
member of bit group




eurospeak



 ANDRAGOŠKI ZAVOD
LJVSKA UNIVERZA VELENJE

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
1. Chapter Understanding the Needs of Low-Skilled Immigrant Learners.....	6
Key Challenge: Participation Gap.....	6
Engaging Low-Skilled Adults in Learning: Practical Tips.....	7
Importance of cultural sensitivity in education.....	8
Adapting Lessons for Different Learning Style.....	10
Tools: Practical Course Adaptation Checklist.....	11
Tools: Cultural Awareness Self-Assessment Quiz.....	12
2. Chapter Principles of Curriculum Adaptation.....	16
1. Creating Flexibility in Course Structure.....	16
2. Cultural Relevance in Course Structure.....	18
Conclusion.....	19
Best Practice Example: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in English.....	20
Tools: Principles Checklist.....	21
3. Chapter Adapting Course Curriculum.....	23
Step-by-step guide for curriculum modification:.....	23
Best Practice Examples of successfully adapted curricula:.....	27
4. Chapter Adapting Course Material.....	28
Language adaptation.....	28
Design adaptations.....	29
Recognising different cultural backgrounds.....	31
Best Practice Example: Respect for cultural norms and values.....	33
Tool: Checklist for adaptation.....	34
5. Chapter Coaching and Mentoring Opportunities.....	36
Coaching and mentoring opportunities.....	36
a. Integrating coaching and mentoring into the curriculum.....	37

b. Practical tips for effective coaching.....	38
c. Case studies on successful mentoring programs	39
Stories of good practices.....	41
a. Showcasing successful case studies from educational institutions and employers.....	41
b. Insights gained and lessons learned.....	41
Tool: GROW model.....	42
How to apply the GROW model.....	43
Sources	45
Conclusion	46



Introduction

Adult immigrant learners, especially those with lower skill levels, face significant barriers in accessing educational opportunities that are key to their social and economic integration. To address these challenges, the need for course adaptations becomes critical. Educational institutions must adjust their curricula and teaching methodologies to accommodate the unique needs of low-skilled immigrant learners, ensuring they gain equitable access to learning opportunities that foster their successful integration into new communities.

One of the primary challenges faced by low-skilled immigrants is their underrepresentation in formal education due to various barriers. These include linguistic challenges, unfamiliarity with formal educational systems, and cultural differences that can hinder effective learning. Many of these learners bring valuable life experiences and skills that are not reflected in traditional qualifications, making it essential for educators to recognize and build upon these strengths. Hence, the importance of adapting educational content to suit their unique circumstances cannot be overstated. This guide provides educators with strategies to tailor their teaching approaches, materials, and assessments to meet the specific needs of low-skilled immigrants.

The key objectives of this guide are threefold. First, it aims to offer educators a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by low-skilled immigrant learners, with particular attention to cultural sensitivity and inclusivity in the classroom. Secondly, it outlines principles for curriculum adaptation, providing practical strategies for creating flexible and engaging course structures that integrate real-life examples and culturally relevant content. Finally, the guide offers tools and templates to assist educators in modifying their course materials, ensuring they are accessible to all learners, including those with additional needs such as dyslexia.

Understanding the needs of low-skilled immigrant learners is crucial for creating effective educational programs. Many of these learners may have low literacy or numeracy skills but possess a range of other abilities and work experiences. Adapting courses to accommodate these skills, while addressing their educational gaps, is key to promoting their long-term success. This guide aims to empower educators to embrace cultural diversity, leverage experiential learning

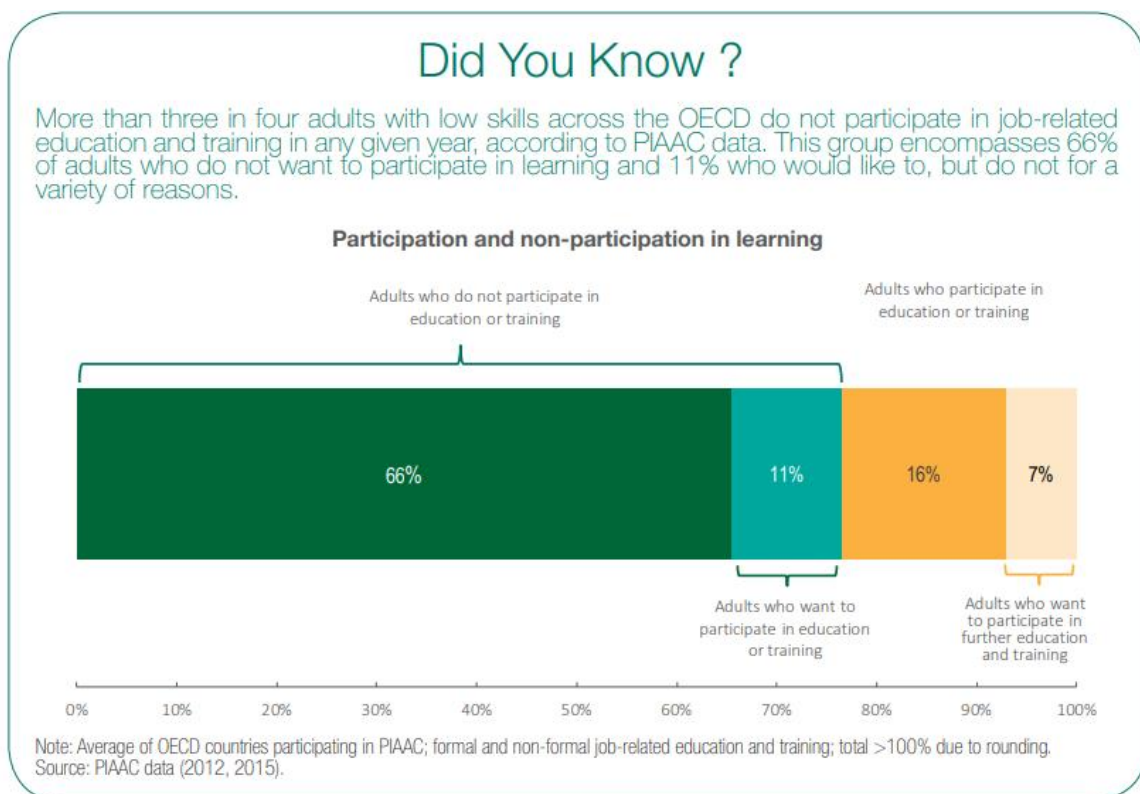
opportunities, and implement inclusive teaching methodologies that cater to different learning styles. By doing so, educators can create more engaging and supportive learning environments that help immigrant learners thrive both in the classroom and beyond.



1. Chapter Understanding the Needs of Low-Skilled Immigrant Learners

Classes are rarely homogenous, especially migrant classes. Learners come from different environments and have different cultural backgrounds. This often defines their learning needs. It is important to note that many adults with low skills are anything but 'low skilled': they may have low literacy and numeracy levels, but at the same time possess a range of other valuable skills such as the ability to drive different vehicles or care for customers. Equally, adults may have low qualification levels but may have gained skills through years of work-experience that are equivalent to those associated with formal qualifications.

Key Challenge: Participation Gap



Low-skilled adults are less likely to participate in education because they often struggle to recognize their learning needs. However, they need support to identify suitable training and overcome barriers like lack of time, finances, or access. Let's break down some practical strategies to help these learners engage more effectively.

Engaging Low-Skilled Adults in Learning: Practical Tips

Outreach:

- **Where:** Meet them in places they frequent, such as workplaces, markets, shops or community centres.
- **Who:** Identify people who already have connections with these learners (e.g., community leaders) and help them guide learners to training opportunities.

Example: Hold a learning information session at a local market or shop that many migrant workers visit. Offer flyers in their native language, explaining the available courses and benefits.

Motivation:

- Provide tailored advice and guidance services.
- Create partnerships with organizations that already serve low-skilled adults (e.g., shelters, job centres).

Example: Work with local employment centre that provides information on employment options during their regular meetings, provide information on educational offer and the potential benefits.

Lesson design and implementation:

- **Make Learning Practical:** Lessons should focus on real-life problems and be connected to their work or daily lives.
- **Blended Learning:** Offer both in-person and online options to suit their schedules.
-

Example: For a job-related math course, use real-world tasks like calculating grocery expenses or work hours to make the content more relevant. Or use their own recipes and encourage them to double the ingredients for twice as many guests!

Importance of cultural sensitivity in education

What is cultural sensitivity in education?

Cultural sensitivity in classroom refers to the awareness, understanding, and respect for different cultures, beliefs, and traditions. It involves creating an inclusive environment that values diversity, promotes empathy, and encourages open dialogue, fostering a sense of belonging and respect among learners from various cultural backgrounds.

Creating a culturally sensitive environment means acknowledging and respecting learners' diverse backgrounds. Here are some tips on how to do it:

Incorporate Cultural Elements:

- Include learners' traditions, languages, and experiences in your lessons.

Example: During a language class, ask students to teach each other simple greetings from their native languages to foster respect and curiosity.

Open Discussions:

- Create opportunities for learners to share their experiences and learn about each other's cultures.

Activity: Use the "Circular Exchange Circle" activity (annex 1) where learners share cultural practices, traditions, and experiences in a structured and supportive group discussion.

Promoting cultural sensitivity in the classroom is crucial for fostering a respectful and inclusive learning environment. Here are some practical activities how to do it:

Incorporate Diverse Perspectives into the Curriculum:

Proposed activity: In a history class, assign each learner a country or region to research and present how migration has influenced that area's culture, economy, and society. This encourages a broad, inclusive understanding of the topic.

Encourage Open Discussions About Cultures, Beliefs, and Traditions:

Proposed activity: During a lesson on world religions or festivals, organize small group discussions where learners can talk about how they celebrate major holidays or significant events in their own cultures. Have them compare similarities and differences in respectful ways.

Create Opportunities for Cross-Cultural Interactions:

Guest Speaker Activity: Invite speakers from different cultural backgrounds to share their experiences, whether it's about overcoming barriers, traditions in their country, or working across cultures. For instance, a local immigrant who has established a business could speak about cultural adaptation and the role their heritage plays in their work. Check 3L Mindset inspirational stories (videos) for reference.

Practicing cultural sensitivity in the classroom

Create a Supportive Environment:

Activity: Use a “feelings jar” where learners anonymously drop in notes about how they're feeling that day. The teacher can read some aloud (without names) and offer general words of encouragement to build a sense of support and solidarity.

Address Sensitive Topics:

Activity: Use role-playing exercises where learners enact scenarios related to sensitive topics. For example, learners could role-play a situation where someone experiences bullying, and then practice how to support the person or address the issue effectively.

Foster Social Skills:

Activity: Set up a group project where learners must work together to solve a real-world problem (e.g., proposing an initiative for translator being available in health centre) Monitor how they communicate and support each other, providing feedback on their social interactions.

Adapting Lessons for Different Learning Style

When designing educational courses for low-skilled immigrants, it is critical to be aware of the many learning styles and preferences of the learners. Understanding these characteristics can greatly improve the educational experience and ensure that teaching techniques are both inclusive and successful.

To ensure every learner can succeed, adapt your teaching style:

Visual Learners:

- Use diagrams, videos, and color-coded notes.

Example: For a budgeting course, show a simple pie chart to explain how income is divided among expenses.

Auditory Learners:

- Integrate discussions, podcasts, and verbal feedback.

Example: During a history lesson, use storytelling (listen to a podcast) or have students read loud some events for others to listen.

Kinaesthetic Learners:

- Encourage hands-on activities and role-playing exercises.

Example: In a language class, act out shopping scenarios, where students physically practice conversational skills. Each participant can select a few personal items for the »in-class store«. Decide on prices and use some fake money to shop!

Reading/Writing Learners:

- Provide structured notes and encourage written reflections.

Example: After a safety training session, ask learners to write a short summary of the key points. They can choose the form: from bullet points to mind maps!

Tools: Practical Course Adaptation Checklist

Language: Use simple words. Replace complex terms with common language.

- x **Before:** “You didn’t perform that badly.”
- ✓ **After:** “You did a good job!”

Design: Use readable fonts (like Arial), and ensure content is well-spaced and supported by relevant images.

- x **Before:** Long, unstructured paragraphs.
- ✓ **After:** Clear bullet points with space between lines.

Cultural Respect: Integrate learners’ experiences by allowing them to share their cultural stories or traditions in class.

- x **Before:** In a multicultural language class, the instructor teaches a lesson on greetings and uses only greetings from the local culture.
- ✓ **After:** In the same language class, the instructor begins the lesson by explaining the importance of greetings in different cultures.

Best Practice:

Between 2016 – 2018 LUV coordinated Erasmus+ project Flipping the classroom in Adult Education. The methodology was initially found very relevant for migrant as it allows learning at their own speed and when they have time but proved difficult to be implemented in the classroom as they were lacking digital skills and access to online learning environment at home. However, the teacher decided to implement it in another way – instead of migrants learning at home they used computer classroom as their “home environment”. This way they had access and support from the mentor during their home assignments.



Tools: Cultural Awareness Self-Assessment Quiz

Instructions: Please read each statement and choose the option that best describes how often you feel the statement applies to you.

I actively seek out information about cultures different from my own.

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

I am aware of my own cultural biases and prejudices.

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

I feel comfortable interacting with people from cultures different from my own.

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

I make an effort to learn basic phrases in the languages of the people I interact with from different cultures.

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

I adapt my communication style when interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds.

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

I consider the cultural backgrounds of others when making decisions in a group setting.

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

I reflect on how my cultural perspective influences my judgments about what is 'normal' or 'right'.

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

I respect and follow the cultural norms and practices of others even if they are different from my own.

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

I actively engage in discussions about cultural diversity and inclusion in my workplace or community.

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

I encourage others to share their cultural practices and views without judgment.

- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Scoring:

- Often (4 points)
- Sometimes (3 points)
- Rarely (2 points)
- Never (1 point)

Results:

34-40 points: You are highly culturally aware. You actively engage with diverse cultures and work towards inclusive practices.

25-33 points: You have a good level of cultural awareness, but there are still areas where you can improve and be more proactive.

16-24 points: You are somewhat aware of cultural differences, but you need to actively work on understanding and respecting diverse perspectives.

10-15 points: You have a low level of cultural awareness. Consider seeking resources and training to better understand and respect cultural diversity.



Sources

Dunn, R. S., & Dunn, K. J. (1978). *Teaching students through their individual learning styles: A practical approach*. Reston, VA: Reston Publishing.

European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2015), *Adult Education and Training in Europe: Widening Access to Learning Opportunities*. Eurydice Report, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.

Fouarge, D., T. Schils and A. de Grip (2013), "Why do low-educated workers invest less in further training?", *Applied Economics*, Vol. 45/18, pp. 2587-2601, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00036846.2012.671926>.

Honey, P., & Mumford, A. (1986). *Using your learning styles*. Maidenhead, UK: Peter Honey.

Knowles, M. (1984), *Andragogy in action. Applying Modern Principles of Adult Learning*, Jossey-Bass.

Learning Styles Online. (n.d.). *Overview of Learning Styles*. Retrieved September 4, 2024, from <https://www.learning-styles-online.com/overview/>

OECD (2017), *Educational Opportunity for All: Overcoming Inequality throughout the Life Course*, Educational Research and Innovation, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264287457-en>.

VARK Learn Limited. (n.d.). *The VARK Questionnaire*. Retrieved September 4, 2024, from <http://vark-learn.com/the-vark-questionnaire/>

Windisch, H. (2015), "Adults with low literacy and numeracy skills: A literature review on policy intervention", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 123, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jrxnjdd3r5k-en>.

2. Chapter Principles of Curriculum Adaptation

Curriculum adaptation is crucial for creating a learning environment where all students can thrive. It involves modifying course materials, instructional strategies, and learning activities to meet the diverse needs of learners. This chapter outlines three core principles: creating flexibility in course structure, incorporating culturally relevant real-life examples, and adopting inclusive teaching methodologies.

1. Creating Flexibility in Course Structure

Flexibility in course structure enables students to learn at their own pace and according to their individual needs. This approach supports learner autonomy and reduces barriers that may hinder engagement.

a. Modular Learning Paths

Organize content into smaller, stand-alone modules that allow students to navigate the course at their own pace.

Original: Coursework presented in a full book or lecture
Adapted: Separated self-paced modules

Provide alternative assessments to accommodate diverse learning styles.

Original: Timed quizzes and tests
Adapted: Written reports, video presentations, creative projects

Allow for multiple paths to learning by providing self-paced learning options.

Original: Core content is same for all students
Adapted: Maintain core content with extra support for those needing more time and extra material for those needing less time

Flexible Learning Example

In a digital marketing course, offer the option to complete an analysis project on either social media trends or email marketing. This allows students to explore the topic that aligns more with their career goals or interests.

b. Blended and Asynchronous Learning

Once you have adapted and created modular learning paths, you can offer blended and asynchronous learning options to make materials more accessible for students.

Adapt asynchronous materials to ensure materials are accessible.

Original: Lecturing with material only available during the course

Adapted: Provide asynchronous materials such as pre-recorded lectures, podcasts, or reading assignments that can be accessed at any time.

Create opportunities for collaboration without requiring everyone to be present at the same time.

Original: Seminar-style courses with required participation during class

Adapted: Use discussion forums or online group activities to allow async participation

Offer flexible deadlines when appropriate

Original: Single deadlines

Adapted: Allow students to submit assignments within a range of dates or encourage asking for extensions with due notice.

Incorporate blended learning when possible

Original: Mandatory in-person attendance

Adapted: Combine in-person and online sessions with the option to attend face-to-face or virtually

Asynchronous Learning Example

In a statistics course, provide instructional videos that students can watch before the live session. During the live session, they can engage in discussion and problem-solving activities related to the video content.

2. Cultural Relevance in Course Structure

Flexibility in course structure enables students to learn at their own pace and according to their individual needs. This approach supports learner autonomy and reduces barriers that may hinder engagement.

a. Culturally Relevant Learning

Tailor examples to students' cultural and social contexts

Example: Incorporate familiar events, objects, or phenomena in case studies and examples.

Use local examples for problem-solving scenarios or case studies, making concepts feel more applicable and real.

Example: Adapt course examples to locations and countries local to migrants

Encourage students to contribute their own experiences or culturally relevant examples to class discussions, highlighting the diversity of perspectives.

Example: Ask students whether cultural assumptions or practices are in line with their own cultural expectations

Culturally Relevant Example

In an economics course, instead of discussing only global financial systems, include a case study about local microfinance initiatives, helping students see how the principles of economics apply to their communities.

b. Inclusive Case Studies and Media

Select case studies from various cultures and ensure they are relevant to the course material

Example: Businesses from different countries, global scientific discoveries

Diversify media and resources

Example: Use documentaries, news articles, and research from different regions of the world.

Use culturally diverse visuals in presentations and materials

Example: Use visuals depicting diverse communities and regions to reflect the global context of the subject.

Highlight cross-cultural comparisons

Example: Demonstrate the universality of course concepts across different societies and regions.

Inclusive Case Study Example

In a public health course, examine healthcare systems in both developed and developing countries, showcasing different approaches to disease management and prevention.

Conclusion

By adapting curricula to be more flexible, culturally relevant, and inclusive, educators can meet the needs of diverse learners and create a more engaging and equitable learning environment. The strategies discussed—modular learning paths, culturally relevant examples, and inclusive methodologies—are vital tools in modern education, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed.

Best Practice Example: [Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in English](#)

Sam White, an educator with over 30 years of teaching experience, transitioned from running a private music business to teaching in a diverse learning environment. At Northern Adelaide Senior College, Sam teaches adult re-entry students from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds, specializing in engaging learners through a transformative approach to education. In this case, Sam's English class consisted of nine students from Vietnamese, Indonesian, Nepalese, Afghani, and Indian backgrounds.

Sam restructured her traditional approach of essay writing to a multimodal assignment. Students conducted research on the Stolen Generations and produced personal narratives, such as poems or songs, responding to the themes of **Rabbit-Proof Fence**. The planning process involved mind and concept mapping, encouraging the use of their first languages to express ideas.

A key activity was the yarning circle, a culturally significant practice in Indigenous communities. Through open dialogue, students shared stories of freedom, power, and survival, drawing connections to their own lives. The inclusion of Jarrad Cherster, an Indigenous staff member, further enriched the learning experience by providing firsthand knowledge of Aboriginal history and culture.

Sam identified several challenges, including language barriers, managing emotional responses, and time constraints. However, she found that CRP resonated deeply with her teaching values and fostered a profound connection between students and the content. The success of the unit prompted Sam to continue integrating CRP into her practice, expanding her collaboration with Indigenous staff and other educators.

In conclusion, this case study demonstrates the power of culturally relevant pedagogy in fostering intellectual and emotional engagement, transforming both students and teachers in the process. By grounding lessons in shared human experiences, Sam's students left the course with a greater appreciation of Aboriginal history and a commitment to ongoing learning and advocacy for reconciliation.

Tools: Principles Checklist

1. Creating Flexibility in Course Structure

Aspect	Action
Modular Learning	Break content into smaller modules or units. <input type="checkbox"/> Allow students to choose the order of completion.
Alternative Assessments	Offer varied assignment types (essay, video, project).
Blended Learning	Combine in-person and online materials. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide asynchronous learning materials (e.g., pre-recorded lectures).
Flexible Deadlines	Provide a range of submission dates where possible.

2. Incorporating Culturally Relevant Real-Life Examples

Aspect	Action
Contextualized Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Use examples from students' daily lives and cultural contexts. <input type="checkbox"/> Tailor case studies to local or regional issues.
Inclusive Studies	Case <input type="checkbox"/> Select examples from diverse cultures and perspectives. <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid stereotypes; highlight cultural complexity.

Student Contributions Encourage students to share their experiences and cultural knowledge.

Sources

1. <https://theeducationhub.org.nz/what-is-culturally-responsive-teaching/>
2. <https://www.thinkific.com/blog/learning-path-design-and-examples/>
3. <https://culturallyresponsivepedagogy.com.au/case-studies-section/case-study-responding-to-history-through-narrative/>



3. Chapter Adapting Course Curriculum

In today's multicultural societies, adult immigrant learners represent a significant demographic within the education landscape. These individuals bring with them unique experiences, perspectives, and aspirations, yet they often face challenges in accessing and engaging with educational opportunities. As such, the adaptation of course curriculum becomes not only a pedagogical necessity but also a means of fostering social inclusion and empowerment for this diverse group.

The primary aim of adapting the course curriculum for adult immigrant learners is to provide them with equitable access to education and support their successful integration into their new communities. By customising curriculum content, instructional methods, and assessment strategies to meet the specific needs of adult immigrant learners, educators can create inclusive learning environments that promote engagement, confidence-building, and skill development.

In this guide, we will explore step-by-step approaches to modifying course curriculum to better serve adult immigrant learners. We will provide examples of successfully adapted curricula and offer templates to guide educators in the process of curriculum adaptation. Through these efforts, we aim to empower educators to create enriching and transformative learning experiences that empower adult immigrant learners to thrive in their educational journeys and beyond.

Step-by-step guide for curriculum modification:

Conduct a needs assessment:

To effectively adapt the curriculum for lower-skilled immigrant adults, the first step is conducting a needs assessment. This involves researching into the specific educational requirements, aspirations, and obstacles faced by this demographic.

- Conduct comprehensive needs assessments: Dive deep into understanding the educational needs, goals, and challenges of lower-skilled immigrant adults. This entails gathering data on language proficiency levels, cultural backgrounds, prior educational experiences, and barriers to accessing adult education.

- Engage with community stakeholders: Collaborate with immigrant support organisations, adult education centres, language instructors, policymakers, and other community stakeholders to gain valuable insights into the diverse needs of the target population. By involving key players, you can ensure that the curriculum modifications address the most pressing issues faced by adult immigrant learners.

Setting learning objectives:

With a clear understanding of the learners' needs, the next step is to develop learning objectives based on their specific circumstances.

- Develop clear and measurable learning objectives: Craft objectives that are aligned with the needs and goals identified in the needs assessment. Prioritise objectives that focus on language acquisition, cultural competency, basic literacy skills, vocational training, and integration into the workforce and community.

Adapting curriculum content:

With learning objectives in place, it's time to modify the curriculum content to meet the specific needs and preferences of adult immigrant learners.

- Incorporate culturally relevant materials: Adapt existing curriculum content to include materials, examples, and scenarios that resonate with the cultural backgrounds and experiences of lower-skilled immigrant adults. This helps learners feel more connected to the content and facilitates deeper engagement.
- Foster diversity and inclusion: Integrate themes of diversity, inclusion, and social justice throughout the curriculum to create a welcoming and supportive learning environment. By celebrating diversity and promoting cross-cultural understanding, you can cultivate a sense of belonging among learners.
- Provide experiential learning opportunities: Enhance the curriculum with experiential learning activities such as field trips, guest speakers, and community engagement projects. These hands-on experiences reinforce learning outcomes and allow learners to apply their skills in real-world contexts.

Implementing differentiated instruction:

To accommodate the diverse learning needs and preferences of adult immigrant learners, it's essential to employ differentiated instructional strategies.

- Offer a variety of instructional approaches: Use a mix of instructional methods, including lectures, group discussions, hands-on activities, and multimedia presentations, to cater to different learning styles and preferences.
- Provide flexible learning pathways: Offer flexible learning options such as self-paced modules, peer tutoring, and small group workshops to accommodate individual learning preferences and needs. This allows learners to progress at their own pace and focus on areas where they need additional support.
- Provide scaffolding and support: Offer scaffolding and support mechanisms such as language support services, academic counselling, and digital literacy training to facilitate access and retention for all learners. By providing the necessary support, you can ensure that every learner has the opportunity to succeed.

Assessment and evaluation:

Finally, assessment and evaluation play a crucial role in gauging learners' progress and refining the curriculum accordingly.

- Develop comprehensive assessment tools: Create formative and summative assessment tools that align with the learning objectives and measure progress towards the 3L Mindset goals. Use a combination of quantitative and qualitative assessment methods, including proficiency tests, portfolio reviews, self-assessments, and peer evaluations.
- Use assessment data for continuous improvement: Utilise assessment data to inform ongoing curriculum refinement, identify areas for improvement, and celebrate achievements and milestones of learners. By regularly reviewing assessment data, you can ensure that the curriculum remains relevant and effective in meeting the needs of adult immigrant learners.

By following this step-by-step guide, educators can adapt course curriculum to better serve the unique needs of lower-skilled immigrant adults, promoting their educational attainment, social inclusion, and overall well-being.

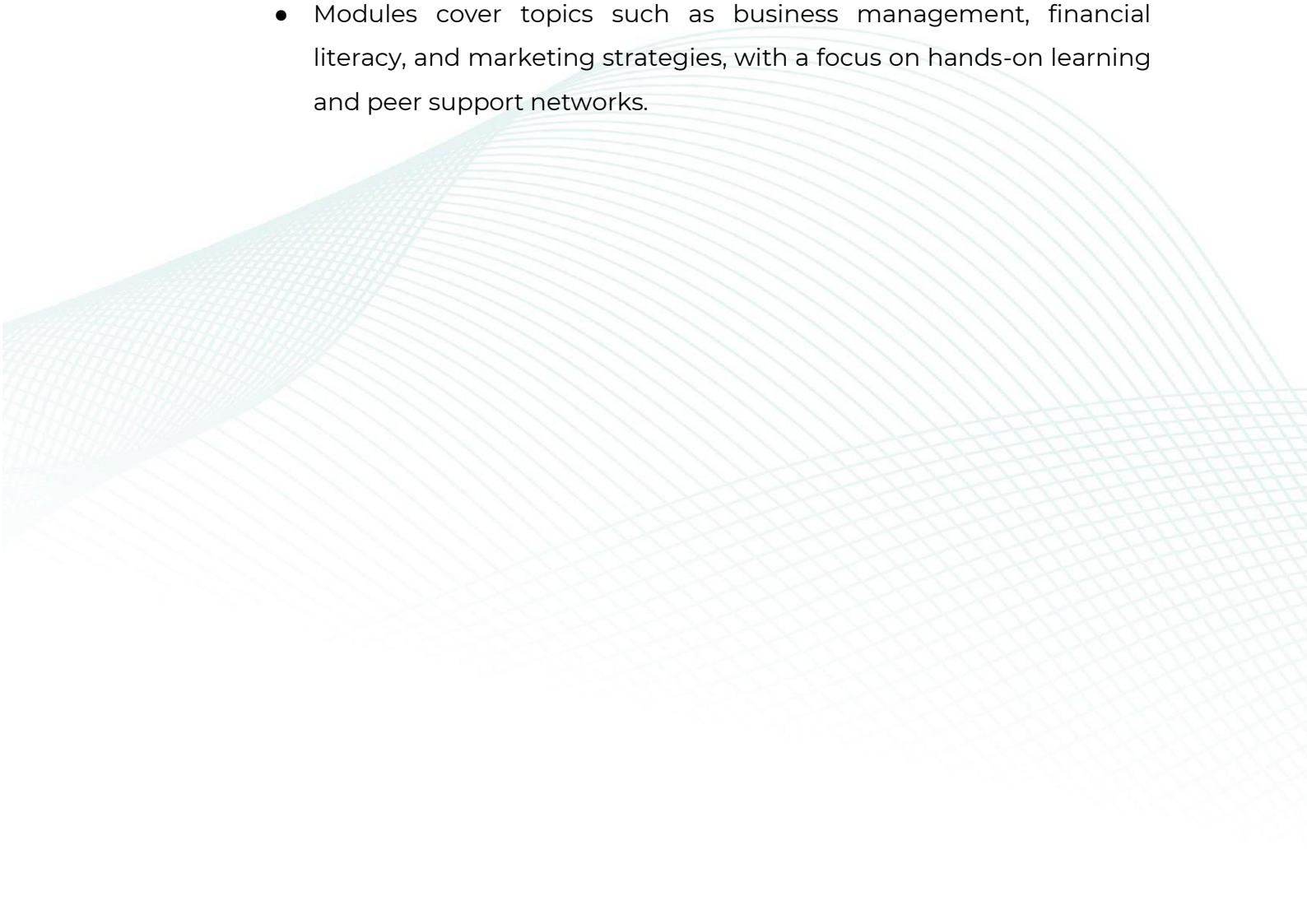


Best Practice Examples of successfully adapted curricula:

Language and literacy programme for newcomers:

- Developed in collaboration with immigrant community leaders, this programme combines language instruction with practical literacy skills training tailored to the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of participants.
- Curriculum content includes authentic materials, such as bilingual texts, audiovisual resources, and community-based projects, to enhance language proficiency and promote social integration.

Vocational skills training for refugee women:

- Designed to empower refugee women with vocational skills and entrepreneurship training, this curriculum incorporates culturally sensitive content and mentorship opportunities to support economic self-sufficiency.
 - Modules cover topics such as business management, financial literacy, and marketing strategies, with a focus on hands-on learning and peer support networks.
- 

4. Chapter Adapting Course Material

In the following chapter, we provide you with specific information, templates and recommended tools. You can use these to adapt existing learning materials to the needs of your learners, the low-skilled migrants.

Language adaptation

To improve the text, we should first focus on adapting the language. This means avoiding complex technical terms and using simple vocabulary that is accessible to a broad audience. If necessary, we can use pictures to help explain complicated terms or translate individual words into the native language of the participants. Many translation programs are available on the Internet. The following examples illustrate the importance of linguistic adaptation:

Avoid complicated words such as:

Complicated: Implement / Affordable

Simpler form: Make / Cheap

Use precise terms and avoid generalisations:

Complicated: Identity document

Simpler form: Passport

Make sure you always use the same words:

Complicated: You are explaining something about a German course. Once you use the word German course. Later you use the word language course.

Simpler form: Always use the word German course in class.

If it is not possible to put words into simple language, **explain the complicated words:**

Malik had an accident with a car. He now has problems with his back. He needs to practise how to move properly again. The complicated term for this is physiotherapy: Malik needs physiotherapy.

Use doing words in your sentences instead of making the sentence complicated:

Complicated: Tomorrow is the registration for the next German course.

Simple: Tomorrow, you register for the German course.

Try to use positive language. Avoid negative language with the word "not":

Complicated: You didn't do that badly!

Simple: You did a good job!

Design adaptations

Once you have adapted the words of the teaching materials, you can also change the layout. With the following suggested changes, you can design your documents so that they are accessible to many people:

Change the basic settings. To do this, adjust the font size:

Difficult: The font size 11 pt is too small.

Good: The font size from 14 pt is good.

Also, check the font you have selected. A distinction is made between fonts with serifs and those without serifs. A serif is a small or thin line at the end of a letter. It is best to use a font WITHOUT serifs:

Difficult: The Times New Roman font is difficult. (with serifs)

Good: The Arial or Verdana fonts are good fonts. (without serifs)

If you want to change an existing text, take a close look at the line spacing or paragraphs.

Difficult:

I take the bus to work every day. work. The bus leaves every day at 7.00 a.m. every day. I get a seat on the bus every day. Only a few people are travelling on the bus.

Good:

I take the bus to work every day.

The bus leaves every day at 7.00 a.m. every day.

I get a seat on the bus every day.

Only a few people are travelling on the bus.

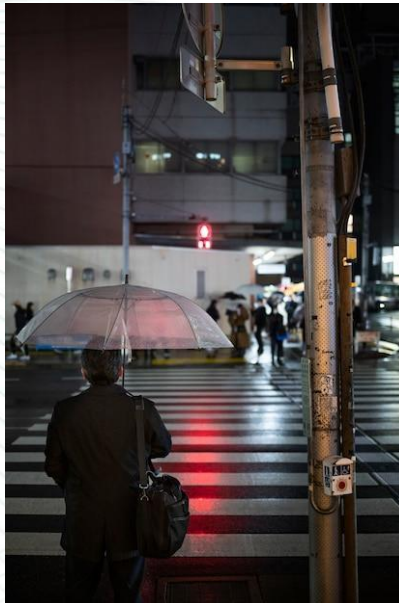
It is particularly advantageous if you use visual aids such as images or videos. Use images to better illustrate texts. You must make sure that the images fit in well with the topic and content to be conveyed.

You are explaining to learners about the rules of the road. You want to use a picture to explain that it is important to stop at a red light.

Difficult to understand:



Good to understand:



Recognising different cultural backgrounds

Migration, refugee experiences and different cultures can be included in courses. This shows that you respect differences and creates a supportive learning environment. Allow participants to present their biographies. Don't exclude yourself; moving within your home country is also considered migration. This type of migration is called internal migration.

Instead of traditional icebreaker exercises at the beginning, you can include the following exercise in your method kit. You can also do this exercise in an online format.

Worldwide connections



Prepare a large world map. Print it out in a large format or share your screen in an online format. In the face-to-face format, the learners are given a pin and a rough thread. In the online format, assign the learners a colour of their choice. The learners should now place the pins on their personal locations on the world map and connect the locations with the thread. In the online format, mark the places with their colour. In the next step, have the learners report on their places of residence.

You can also ask questions to encourage discussion, such as:

- Were there certain traditions?
- What language was spoken there?
- What was your favourite food there?

The aim of this exercise is not to focus on their particular connection to a country of origin, but on the entire migration biography of all learners. The focus is on diversity and sharing one's own personal biography in order to establish a connection.



Best Practice Example: Respect for cultural norms and values

In every teaching format, strangers come together who bring different norms and values with them, even without having a migration biography. It is important to agree on common guidelines for behaviour in the classroom. A leaflet on respectful behaviour is available here. You will discuss organisational matters with your learners before your lesson. Include the information sheet at this time and hand it out to the learners.



3LMindset

LifeLong Learning

Guidelines for Behaviour



01

Respect each other.

Treat everyone in the room with courtesy and respect, regardless of their origin, language, or religion. Allow everyone to finish speaking before you start.



02

Listen carefully.

Listen carefully and try to understand when others are speaking. Try to understand what someone is saying, even if they speak a different language.



03

Share your thoughts.

Share your thoughts and ideas without hesitation. We can all learn from each other. If you want to speak, raise your hand.



04

Help each other.

Be prepared to assist fellow course participants with any difficulties or questions they may have. By working together, we can enhance our learning experience.



05

Respect the rules.

Stick to the agreed rules in the course so that everyone can learn safely and respectfully.

3LMindset

LifeLong Learning

Checklist



Language

- Replace complicated words with simple ones:
Implement -> Do
- Avoid generalisations.
- Try to use positive language.
Avoid negative language with the word "not":
- Always use the same terms.
- Explain more complicated terms using an example.

Design

- Adjust the font size to at least 14 pt.
- Use a font without serifs, for example Arial.
- Make sure you use wider line spacing and, in longer texts, it is best to use a paragraph for each new sentence.

Interpersonal

- Talk openly about misunderstandings or ambiguities.
- Conduct role plays or discussions on intercultural issues to encourage participants.
- Do the "Worldwide connections" exercise

Policies

- Be aware that cultural norms and values may vary.
- Set clear guidelines for respectful interaction.
- Use the suggested guidelines.



Sources

Language adaptation

Netzwerk Leichte Sprache e.V. (2022). Die Regeln für Leichte Sprache.
https://www.leichte-sprache.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Regelwerk_NLS_Neuauf12022_web.pdf

Design adaptations

Erster Österreichischer Dachverband Legasthenie gGmbH (2019, April 10).
SCHRIFTARTEN FÜR LEGASTHENE MENSCHEN.
https://www.legasthenie.at/Fonts_Broschuere.pdf

Netzwerk Leichte Sprache e.V. (2022). Die Regeln für Leichte Sprache.
https://www.leichte-sprache.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Regelwerk_NLS_Neuauf12022_web.pdf

Images

Freepik | Create great designs, faster. (o. D.). Freepik. <https://www.freepik.com/>

Recognising different cultural backgrounds

UNHCR/ÖIF (2020). AUFBRECHEN ANKOMMEN BLEIBEN.
https://www.integrationsfonds.at/fileadmin/user_upload/202009_UNHCR_OIE_F_Bildungsmaterial_final.pdf



5. Chapter Coaching and Mentoring Opportunities

In the following chapter, we provide you with specific information, templates and recommended tools. You can use these to adapt existing learning materials to the needs of your learners, the low-skilled migrants.

Coaching and mentoring opportunities

Coaching is a way of helping someone to achieve their goal. As you can see, there is a situation to be solved and a goal to be achieved in this process. As a result, we are talking about a specific period that extends from the present to the near future.

Coaching tends to be considered as being more about personal and professional development: the coach might support their coach by asking them questions that facilitate reflection and greater self-determination (Campbell & van Nieuwerburgh, 2017).

The benefits of this practice include:

- increasing the analytical capacity to identify goals and the reflective capacity to think about them.
- self-awareness and self-empowerment.
- progress in communication and socialisation skills.
- personal well-being: improving stress management, motivation, creativity and other aspects.

Mentoring is a method that also focuses on people and their development from a different perspective. The person who conducts the mentoring, also known as a mentor, is someone who has previous experience in the topic to be addressed, unlike a coach. In other words, in mentoring, the mentor provides an example from his or her own experiences and articulates his or her discourse around his or her emotions, feelings or knowledge gained throughout the coping process. Therefore, he or she is not merely an observer or expert but also plays an inspirational role for others.

The aim of mentoring is therefore not to achieve a specific goal, but to serve as a reference for coping in the future.

Most mentors have gained experience in the role that their mentee now occupies or is aspiring to, can offer clear advice, and will support target-setting against and often judge the achievement of standards established by an external agency (such as standards for qualified teacher status).

Key advantages for those who opt for mentoring include:

- The proliferation of networked networks.
- Considering other perspectives and solutions to problems.
- The promotion of a personal brand.
- Boosting success and confidence.

What both have in common is that they can create a productive space for professional conversations (Loftouse & Thomas, 2017), and that is where their potential lies in terms of teachers' engagement with the curriculum.

a. Integrating coaching and mentoring into the curriculum

In order to integrate coaching and mentoring into the curriculum, certain steps and decisions need to be taken.

Coaching and mentoring Checklist ✨



- Identify your goals and outcomes
- Select and train your coaches and mentors
- Match your coaches or mentors
- Define your coaching and mentoring model
- Implement your coaching and mentoring program
- Evaluate your program



b. Practical tips for effective coaching

Implementing coaching and mentoring programs for low-skilled migrants requires sensitivity, cultural awareness, and a structured yet flexible approach. Here are some practical tips:

1. Understand their context

Cultural sensitivity: Take time to understand their cultural background, language barriers, and personal challenges.

Socioeconomic factors: Recognize the practical limitations (e.g., access to resources, legal status) that might impact their ability to engage in coaching.

2. Set clear, achievable goals

Focus on **small, attainable goals** that build confidence. Many low-skilled migrants may feel overwhelmed by their circumstances, so setting clear, realistic goals is essential.

Career guidance: Help them map a path to potential jobs or skill development that aligns with their interests.

3. Simplify communication

Use **simple, clear language** to communicate. Avoid jargon, and be prepared to explain concepts in multiple ways or with visual aids.

Offer **bilingual support** or ensure that materials are available in the migrant's native language.

4. Develop trust and rapport

Building trust takes time, especially with vulnerable populations. Demonstrate consistency, active listening, and empathy.

Provide a **safe and non-judgmental space** for them to share their experiences and challenges.

5. Celebrate small wins

Recognize and celebrate each milestone to help build self-esteem and motivation. Migrants may feel discouraged due to slow progress or setbacks.

Reinforce positive behaviors and improvements regularly to boost their sense of accomplishment.

6. Create pathways to further learning and employment

Connect them with opportunities for **vocational training, language learning, or further education**.

Build relationships with employers open to hiring and training migrants, emphasizing **on-the-job training** and internships.

c. Case studies on successful mentoring programs

Leadership development and knowledge sharing: The University of Leeds highlights the case of Jim Bird, who participated in a mentoring program as both a mentor and mentee. Jim emphasises the value of gaining fresh perspectives and insights from experienced mentors, ultimately contributing to his own leadership development.

- Source: University of Leeds: Mentoring Case Studies: <https://accelerate.ucsf.edu/training/mdp-cases>

Diversity and Inclusion: Together Platform, a company specialising in online mentoring solutions, provides examples of successful programs that prioritise diversity and inclusion. One such program, implemented by Avison Young, a commercial real estate services firm, strategically connects seasoned employees with members of various employee resource groups, fostering knowledge transfer and promoting a more inclusive work environment.

- Source: Together Platform: 10+ Examples of Successful Mentoring Programs: <https://www.togetherplatform.com/>



Stories of good practices

a. Showcasing successful case studies from educational institutions and employers

Case Study: Google & QuestBridge - Bridging the Gap for High-Achieving, Low-Income Students

Educational Institution: QuestBridge (non-profit college matching program)

Employer: Google (Technology Company)

Many high-achieving, low-income students miss out on opportunities at top universities due to financial constraints. Google aimed to increase diversity in its tech workforce and identified a talent pool in these under-represented groups.

Google partnered with QuestBridge, a program that connects high-achieving, low-income students with colleges for early admission and full scholarships. Google offered these students not only financial aid but also mentorship opportunities with Google employees. Mentees received career guidance, industry insights, and exposure to the tech world.

b. Insights gained and lessons learned

- **Early engagement:** by connecting with students early in their college search, Google fostered a strong connection and influenced career aspirations.
- **Mentorship matters:** mentorship provides invaluable support and guidance for students, helping them navigate college life and career goals.
- **Mutually beneficial partnerships:** this collaboration benefited both parties. Google gained access to a talented and diverse pool of future employees, while QuestBridge students received financial and career development support.

Outcomes:

- Increased diversity in Google's tech workforce.

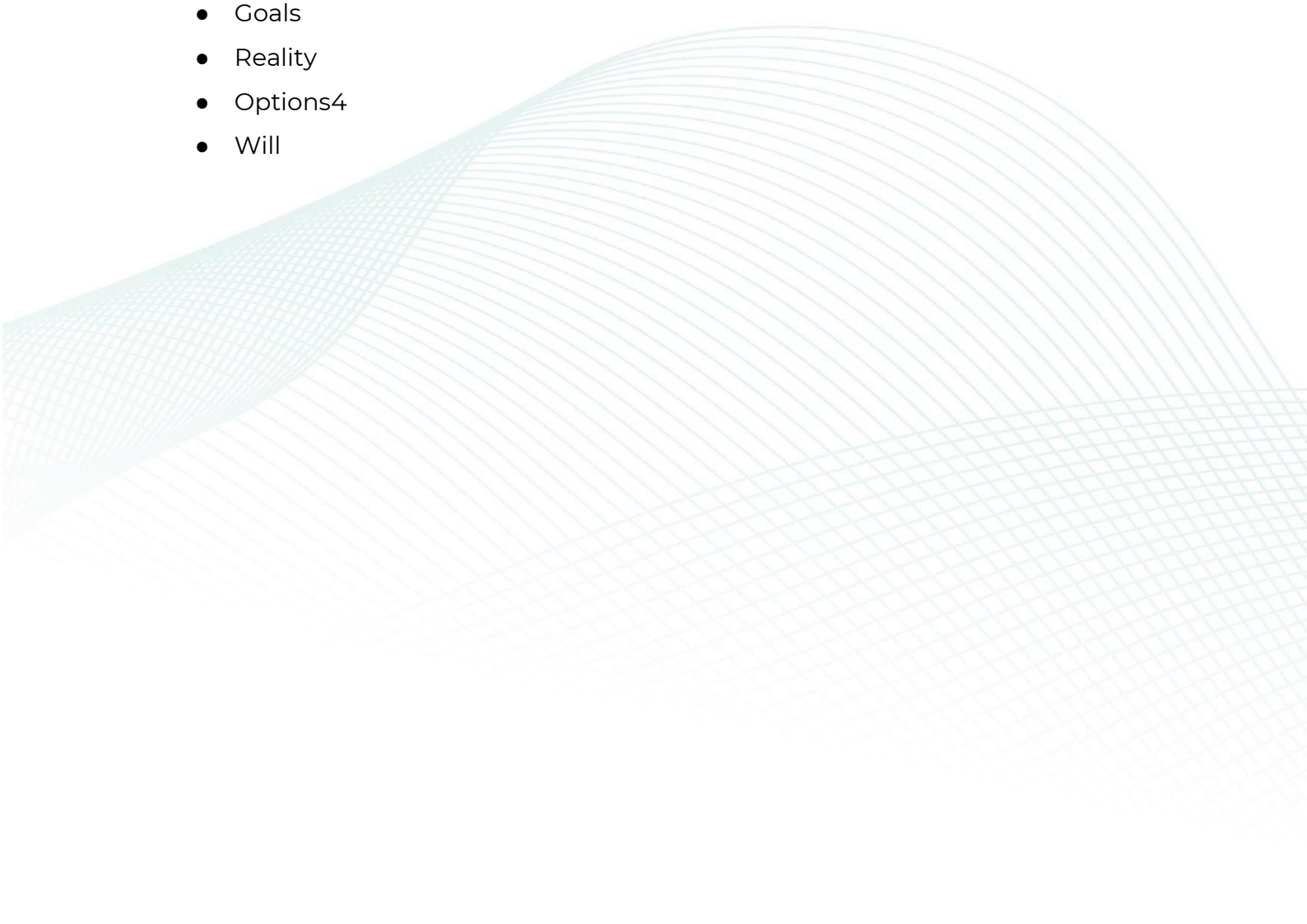
- Improved college access and career prospects for under-represented students.
- Established a successful model for employer-education partnerships focused on diversity and inclusion.

This case study highlights the power of collaboration between educational institutions and employers. By working together, they can bridge the gap for talented students from disadvantaged backgrounds and build a more diverse and qualified future workforce.

Tool: GROW model

The GROW model is a coaching strategy that encourages the use of open-ended questions and active listening to identify key goals, analyse the current situation and draw up general action plans based on the information obtained.

The method was developed by John Whitmore in the acclaimed book *Coaching for Performance* (1988), and its acronyms stand for the following concepts:

- Goals
 - Reality
 - Options4
 - Will
- 

How to apply the GROW model

Its pillars are open-ended questions, which allow the client to express their values and desires without being conditioned by the language used, and active listening, which reduces biases that have the potential to distort the message.

1. Identify and define goals: the aim is to make the low-skilled migrant forget for a moment about the means and think only about the end. This is not the time to set small objectives; what we are looking for is to determine the why, the fundamental purpose.

Possible questions:

- What is the most important thing?
- What is the purpose?
- What makes you happy?
- What problems do you want to solve?
- Why did you decide to embark on this project?
- What is your idea of success?

2. Reality analysis: the aim is to foster an atmosphere that is conducive to the low-skilled migrant being able to express himself in all sincerity, as this is a prerequisite for being as true to the circumstances as possible. The conversation should be redirected to those aspects that are relevant in the present, without unnecessarily dwelling on the past or worrying about the future without any basis for doing so.

Possible questions:

- How do you feel?
- What is the current situation?
- What are the main obstacles you are facing?
- Have you taken action?
- What results have you achieved so far?
- What feedback have you received?

3. Search of options: open exploration of any type of advantage, opportunity or resource that could be useful on the way to achieving the goals.

Possible questions:

- What would be the first step to take?
- What resources and means are available to you?
- Have you investigated opportunities outside your environment?
- What other options have you not yet considered?
- How would you help someone else with the same problem?
- What has worked in the past?

4. Commitment and planning: in the final phase, the client is provided with the necessary tools to establish a realistic and concrete action plan and to help him/her feel involved in it and to implement it with the necessary constancy and discipline.

Possible questions:

- What will be your level of daily commitment?
- What availability will you have?
- What concrete goals will you use for the evaluation of progress?
- Do you feel motivated?
- How important is perseverance to you?

Sources

Coaching and mentoring opportunities

CIPD. "Coaching and mentoring."

<https://www.cipd.org/en/knowledge/factsheets/coaching-mentoring-factsheet/>

LinkedIn. "What are best practices for integrating coaching and mentoring?"

<https://www.linkedin.com/advice/1/what-best-practices-integrating-coaching-hjrge?lang=en>

Leeds Beckett University. "Using mentoring and coaching to focus on the curriculum in action."

<https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/blogs/carnegie-education/2019/07/using-mentoring-and-coaching-to-focus-on-the-curriculum-in-action/>

Santander. "¿Qué es el 'coaching'? ¿Qué es el 'mentoring'? ¿Son lo mismo?"

<https://www.santander.com/es/stories/coaching-vs-mentoring>

Integrating coaching and mentoring into the curriculum

University of Southampton. "Top tips for coaching."

<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/~assets/doc/hr/Top%20tips%20for%20coaching.pdf>

Case studies on successful mentoring programs

UCSF Clinical & Translational Science Institute. "Mentoring Development Program Cases." <https://accelerate.ucsf.edu/training/mdp-cases>

Together. "The Ultimate Mentoring Software." <https://www.togetherplatform.com/>

Conclusion

In conclusion, adapting courses for low-skilled immigrant learners is not just about modifying content but about fostering a learning environment that values diversity, inclusivity, and flexibility. The guide highlights the need for educators to understand the unique challenges these learners face and offers practical strategies for overcoming them. Cultural sensitivity, flexible course structures, and the use of real-life, culturally relevant examples are essential components of this adaptation process.

Throughout the guide, we emphasised the importance of conducting thorough needs assessments to tailor curricula to the specific needs of learners. By doing so, educators can create measurable learning objectives that address key areas such as language acquisition, cultural competency, and vocational skills. Equally important is the adaptation of course materials, ensuring that they are accessible to all learners through the use of simple language, appropriate design, and tools that accommodate various learning preferences.

This guide also highlights the significance of coaching and mentoring, which provide additional support to learners outside the classroom. Successful case studies from various partners demonstrate how mentoring programs can positively impact learners by offering them the guidance and encouragement needed to succeed.

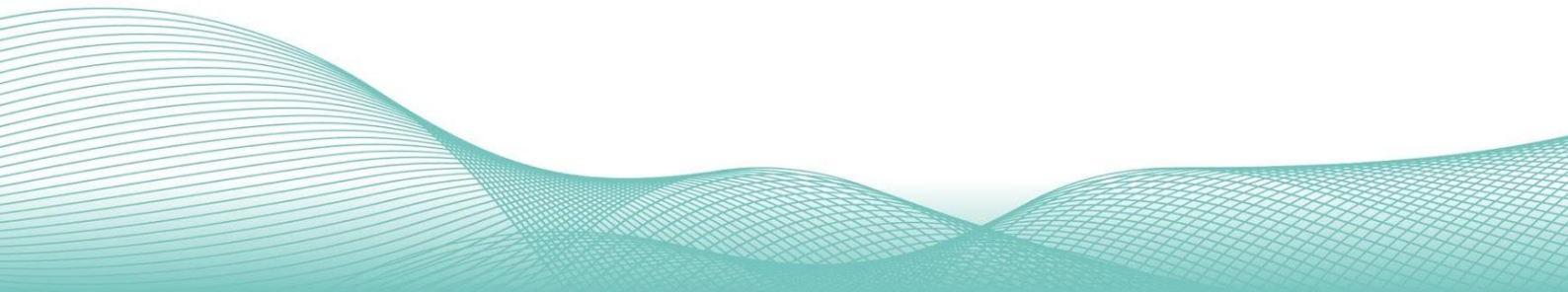
By implementing the recommendations and utilising the tools provided, educators can create transformative learning experiences that empower low-skilled immigrant learners to overcome barriers, achieve their educational goals, and fully integrate into their new communities. The importance of this work cannot be overstated, as it directly contributes to social cohesion and the economic well-being of both the learners and the societies they are becoming a part of. It is our hope that this guide serves as a valuable resource for educators, helping them create more inclusive and effective educational programs for the learners who need them most.



Co-funded by
the European Union



3LMindset
LifeLong Learning



www.3lmindset.com



www.facebook.com/3LMindset

bit *schulungcenter*
member of *bit* group




eurospeak



 ANDRAGOŠKI ZAVOD
LJUDSKA UNIVERZA VELENJE