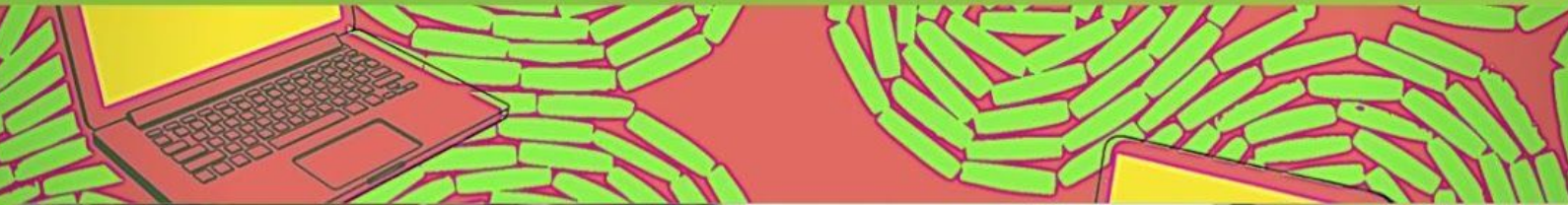


# EPICA

# Student Guide



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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 780435.

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# Introduction

Being able to articulate your employability skills is crucial to succeed in the workplace. Your qualifications alone, albeit important, are not the only credentials employers are looking for nowadays. Your ability to infer from self-reflection how your learning, work, and life experiences will contribute to your career is a life-long skill which will set you apart from the competition.

The micro-credential process you are about to enter is about proving and being able to articulate you already have employability skills for the credential. By assembling an ePortfolio you will be able to showcase and articulate your employability skills to both your teacher (phase one) and an employer (phase two). You will find further details about each stage of the process in the following pages.

## 1. Students' micro-credential process from start to end

### **Students will be required to:**

- start pilot and be given access to the platform and to the student guide
- be introduced to and talked through the credential process in class
- reflect on own experience thus far and jot down the experiences they recall may have contributed to their acquiring/developing employability skills
- choose the evidence which will showcase their skills and competences and write an introductory description to each piece of evidence selected
- write a reflective narrative demonstrating said acquisition of skills
- submit evidence and reflective narrative
- be awarded a badge
- record video testimony
- revisit, complete, (re-)design and customise their ePortfolio for a professional environment/purpose
- complete final submission for appraisal

Below is an overview of the *nine* stages involved in the micro-credential process.

## 2. Micro-credential process: Structure

### 2.1 Articulation one - Phase one

Phase one of this pilot study is aimed at finding valid sources of evidence which demonstrate your acquisition and development of employability skills, and articulating them in a reflective narrative for your teachers to assess. To be able to fulfill this task, you are required to engage in a process of inquiry, reflection, and integration which we have explained in detail below, and which your teacher will guide you through.

#### 2.1.1 Inquiry - Explore and identify

Learning takes place all over and we need to recognise and be able to articulate the importance and value that the academic curriculum, co-curricular activities, extracurricular pursuits, professional and work-related experiences have in developing the range of skills and attributes that are important for graduates.

Bearing this in mind, you need to start by identifying the myriad of assignments throughout your programme of study which have contributed to your acquiring and developing employability skills.

First of all, there are skills and competences you will have acquired and developed through your course of study in a series of learning activities, i.e. throughout your formal curricular endeavours.

In addition to these, there will be competences you may have developed whilst engaging in co-curricular activities, that is to say, activities which are an extension of the formal learning experiences of your course or academic programme; activities which happen alongside or with the curricular, rather than separate from it, be it sports, societies, part-time work, entrepreneurial schemes or volunteering.

Other competences may have emerged whilst partaking in extracurricular activities, not explicitly connected to your academic endeavours.

Finally, your professional experience, if any, may have contributed to your developing competences. This does not only have to be a job by or in itself, but any experience you may have had in the workplace.

Before you engage in this introspective and retrospective exercise, please make sure you understand what is meant by skill and how you will be assessed. Your teacher and the Handbook will provide you with all the information, examples, and assistance you require at this early stage.

Once the skill(s) and the parameters for assessment are clear, you will be able to start your **inquiry**. Think of this process as auditing your work throughout your programme, reviewing your involvement in co-curricular or extracurricular activities, but also identifying situations in your work or job-related experience where you may have developed the skill(s) at hand.

**Job-aid:** guiding questions for selection appropriate situations

**Table 1**

*Job-aid with Guiding Questions*

Situations and guiding questions for their identification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Curricular</li> <li>● Co-curricular</li> <li>● Extracurricular</li> <li>● Professional</li> <li>● Work-related</li> </ul>
<p><b>Curricular</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Which module has helped you acquire/develop the skill at hand?</li> <li>- Did you engage in any activity which proves acquisition or development of said skill?</li> <li>- Do you still have the product which resulted from said activity?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Co-curricular</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is there any activity linked to the curriculum but which does not take place in the classroom responsible for the development of the skill you are aiming to prove?</li> <li>- When and where did you engage in said activity?</li> <li>- How does it demonstrate skill acquisition/development?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Extracurricular</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do you partake in any activity outside of university which you believe contributes or has contributed to your developing the skill you are aiming to showcase?</li> <li>- How does this non-academic pursuit help you further develop the employability skill at hand?</li> <li>- Is there any product which has resulted from this activity which can prove the acquisition/development of the skill you aim to prove?</li> </ul>

### Professional and work-related

- Does your job (or any past job) allow/request/help you develop the skill at hand?
- Can you think of a given situation where you have had to display/prove the skill you are aiming to showcase?
- Did any product result from said situation, i.e. can you prove the skill you acquired in the workplace or by engaging in any work-related activity?

Please refer to the Handbook for more detailed information

In your submission, you will need to provide supporting evidence documents (a minimum of one piece of academic evidence and a maximum of four pieces of evidence), which demonstrate how you have met the micro-credential's criteria.

Each piece of evidence you choose can showcase more than one of the criteria in the rubric (see appendix), and all evidence combined needs to cover all the criteria.

In order to gather the situations you recall may have contributed to your developing employability skills, you may want to complete the table below, where you jot down the situations you have identified together with the corresponding pieces of evidence. At this point, it is important to list as many situations as you can possibly think of as to have multiple sources from which to draw on later on.

**Job-aid:** table to list situations and evidence

**Table 2**

*Job-aid to List Situations and Evidence*

Skill: e.g. Communication and interpersonal skill			
*	Situation	Evidence	Comment
1 Curricular	- viva for my final year research project	- recording of my presentation - feedback by tribunal - grade	This viva demonstrates my ability to communicate efficiently within my field of study as it required me to ...
2 Professional	- pitch for new clients during internship at ...	- feedback from clients, - outcome of pitch	Being responsible for delivering the pitch ... to ...

		- feedback from supervisor/employer	allowed me to showcase ...
3			
4			

\*Note: in column one please identify the type of situation, i.e. curricular, co-curricular, extracurricular, professional, or work-related. Please see handbook for further information.

Here are some questions to help you choose your evidence:

- how do the situation and chosen evidence show your skill(s)?
- what was the context in which it took place?
- what did you set out to achieve?
- what was the outcome?
- what was your contribution?
- who were the stakeholders involved?

These documents will help your teachers validate your skills acquisition.

### 2.1.2 Reflection - Analyse

This is an opportunity to provide the detail to support your skill(s) by zooming in and selecting the situation(s) which best illustrate(s) your development of the skill to be showcased. This process will show assessors how your evidence demonstrates the credential's criteria.

When your first read the latter, allow yourself some time to process the requirements so that you can carefully consider the evidence you might use for your submission. It is difficult to remember every activity you have ever engaged in, and it is often the case that thoroughly analysing the criteria will help you remember (and/or narrow down) pieces of evidence that will be a great fit for your submission.

Do not rush this stage of the process. Spend time thinking about the evidence for your submission as this will make the writing process run smoothly later on.

To assist you in this reflective activity, here are some ideas to support you in making your final choice. Think of this activity as sieving through the extensive list of situations you put together in the previous stage. Do make sure you take the following into account:



- the situations you ultimately choose should meet the criteria of the skill as presented in the rubric;
- the situations should be chosen according to evidence available to you (i.e. you have to be able to support your claims);
- at least one piece of evidence must be curricular. If presenting more than one piece of evidence per skill (and a maximum of four), only one of these can be non-curricular.

**Job-aid:** Table for selecting most fitting situations and evidence

**Table 3**

*Job-aid for Selecting Situations and Evidence*

Skill: e.g. Communication and interpersonal skill				
	Situation	Mapping against the skill rubric	Evidence	Valuing evidence
1	Name of situation Description		Evidence 1: - type (direct, indirect) - description	
			Evidence 2: - type (direct, indirect) - description	
			Evidence 3: - type (direct, indirect) - description	
2	Name of situation Description			

\*Note: In the 3rd column “Mapping against the skill rubric”, reflect on your choice in terms of the skill assessment criteria, and the descriptors indicating levels of accomplishment. Take note of the identified criteria and level of accomplishment. This will support you in the next step, integration. In the last column “Valuing evidence”, explain the relevance of each piece of evidence in terms of its representativeness (i.e. whether it clearly illustrates the skill), credibility (i.e. whether it is reliable, believable, and there is no doubt of its authenticity), objectivity (i.e. whether it can be observed, is

tangible, and is not only relying on a subjective impression), and verifiability (i.e. whether there is something that supports, illustrates, and demonstrates it).

**Job-aid:** elements to consider when reflecting about the supporting evidence

**Table 4**

Job-aid to Reflect about the Supporting Evidence

<b>Types of evidence and examples for Communication and interpersonal skill</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Curricular</li> <li>- Co-curricular</li> <li>- Extracurricular</li> <li>- Professional</li> <li>- Work-related</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Direct</li> <li>- Indirect</li> </ul>
<b>Curricular</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- essays</li> <li>- oral presentations</li> <li>- moots</li> <li>- grades</li> <li>- teacher feedback</li> <li>- awards, certificates</li> </ul>
<b>Co-curricular</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- debates/moots</li> <li>- performances</li> <li>- speeches</li> <li>- feedback</li> <li>- moot outcome</li> <li>- satisfaction questionnaires</li> </ul>
<b>Extracurricular</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- volunteering</li> <li>- theatre</li> <li>- newspaper writing/editing</li> <li>- recommendations</li> <li>- reviews</li> <li>- references</li> </ul>
<b>Professional and work-related</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- pitches/presentations</li> <li>- reports</li> <li>- meeting interventions/minute taking</li> <li>- appraisals</li> <li>- commendations</li> <li>- probation period reports</li> </ul>

	- references
Please refer to the handbook for more detailed information.	
<b>Evidence suitability</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sufficient,</li> <li>- authentic,</li> <li>- credible,</li> <li>- objective,</li> <li>- relevant,</li> <li>- current, and</li> <li>- verifiable</li> </ul>	
Please refer to the handbook for more detailed information.	

### 2.1.3 Integration - Explain and justify

When presenting your case, you will carefully be matching your chosen evidence with the criteria it demonstrates, and proceed to explain thoroughly how each piece of evidence contributed to your development of the criteria at hand. You will find further below the structure you are required to follow in this reflective narrative.

### 2.1.4 Submit your work for assessment

This step simply consists of submitting your work for your teachers to assess. This will include uploading your reflective narrative and supporting evidence (which will include a brief justification as to why it has been chosen, and how it supports your submission). Please refer to ePortfolio guidelines for step-by-step instructions to upload your evidence onto the platform.

### 2.1.5 Be assessed

Once you have submitted your reflective narrative and evidence, your teacher will assess your work. If this is deserving of a micro-credential, i.e. you have achieved 80% or above, you will be given instructions for the next stage of the process.

## 2.2 Articulation two - Phase two

### 2.2.1 Record your video testimony - Articulate

If you have been awarded a grade of 80% or above, you will be invited to create a new story/evidence in your ePortfolio where you will be requested to record and upload a three-to-five minute long video testimony for an employer to appraise. You will find details about its content and structure further below. Please follow ePortfolio guidelines for step-by-step instructions to upload your recording. Do not leave this step until the very last minute in case you encounter any technical glitches.

### 2.2.2 Customise your ePortfolio for the workplace

This is a time for you to reflect on your professional persona, i.e. how you would like to conduct yourself publicly in a professional setting, and the image you would like to project to co-workers and colleagues. In this light, you will be required to revisit your online profile (i.e. your ePortfolio) and adapt it for the workplace (see instructions further below).

### 2.2.3 Submit your work for appraisal

This step simply consists of submitting your revisited ePortfolio, including your video testimony and any chosen evidence, for employers to appraise. The latter may consist of a selection of previously submitted evidence, a customised version of said evidence, or brand new evidence altogether. Please refer to the Workflow, which you will find in the Appendix, for step-by-step instructions to customise your ePortfolio and contact the employer.

### 2.2.4 Be appraised

Once you have completed your professional ePortfolio, your submission will be appraised by an employer. Assessment by your teachers will have measured whether you have accrued the competences required to succeed in this credential process. Appraisal by an employer will award value to said competences in the workplace. If you have managed to stand out, you will receive a written commendation by the employer who will have appraised your work.



## 3. Articulation one - Phase one

In this first phase of the process your audience will be your teacher, who will be assessing your ability to demonstrate your skills acquisition and development. This will require you to know what is expected of you, which in turn will involve understanding the concept of employability skill and evidence. Being awarded your micro-credential will recognise the reliability, veracity, and relevance of the evidence provided before you progress onto phase two of the process. Below you will find further information as regards how to make good use of the criteria you must meet, how to gather the evidence you must provide, and the reflective narrative you must submit.

### 3.1 Criteria

You may find it helpful to think of criteria as similar to that present in job adverts, or in performance reviews. When applying for a job, you would need to provide examples as to how your past experiences meet the selection criteria. Equally, at an appraisal meeting, you would need to tell your manager what you have done during your probation period to meet your key performance indicators, and illustrate your claims with clear examples.

For credentials, you need to think of examples from your curricular activities, co-curricular experiences, extracurricular pursuits, and previous work experience and describe how they demonstrate what you have done and which criteria they relate to. For specific examples of criteria related to a particular employability skill, please see appendix.

### 3.2 Your evidence

Remember you need to provide at least one piece of evidence and a maximum of four to support each employability skill you aim to showcase. You will need to include a document of substance, such as a presentation, strategy, project plan, or report, along with supporting documents, such as emails, meeting minutes, or photos.

For each document, do not forget:

- you will need to provide a description including evidence title, date, role, and summary. This helps assessors understand how the document fits into your submission;

- for large files, refer to the specific parts of the document that support the criteria (e.g. page number or section);
- if a document is not all your own work, explain your contribution to it within the example the document relates to;
- you can provide a third-party reference as one of your evidence documents - your referee must be someone you currently or previously worked with and who can confirm your example or evidence.

The types of artefacts that may be presented as learning evidence in your ePortfolio are varied and may include samples of your writing, photographs, statements or certificates, teachers' or mentors' evaluations of your performance in a given area, among others. Artefacts should offer deep information as well as evident confirmation of the knowledge, skills and competences you have acquired. Your choice of artefacts should allow you to make meaningful connections among your curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular endeavors in order to successfully transition to the workforce upon completion of your studies.

In this light, you will find below examples of evidence you may include in your submission, always displaying relevance to the skill/competence at hand. Remember this is not an exercise of quantity of evidence but rather of quality. In the handbook, you will find other examples of evidence relevant to specific skills/competences, although you are not limited to these suggestions and can submit any piece of evidence you feel better embodies the knowledge you would like to showcase, and which you may have either acquired or developed in a formal or informal setting, as part of the curriculum or as a co- or extracurricular activity:

- internship assessment done by internship host;
- study abroad programmes of study;
- certificates, diplomas, transcripts;
- creation of blogs, web resources or interactive experiences on the web;
- letters, correspondence or written information exchanges over an extended duration displaying sustained, sophisticated written communications that are technically and grammatically correct;
- communications prepared for a wide audience that evidence the synthesis of a broad range of information or data on complex operational or professional issues;
- communications that synthesise and present conclusions in an easy to follow, logical fashion;
- personal testimony that demonstrates awareness of barriers that can limit people's participation and input, and examples of instances where you have taken effective action to remove such barriers;

- personal testimony providing detail into a real scenario where you have had to systematically prepare for a difficult conversation, including evidence of effective use of specific communication techniques;
- written communication that conveys meaning and displays a sophisticated understanding of the audience's specific needs and desired outcomes;
- independent preparation and provision of advice within broad parameters that demonstrates use of accepted communication conventions and accepted stylistic or language requirements;
- video recording or related evidence of making an oral presentation using visual aids;
- communication content that presents a clear, coherent and independent exposition of knowledge and ideas;
- awareness of new technologies that can improve communication and information flow between groups;
- other.

Spend a decent amount of time planning your submission. Map out the final artefacts you will use in your submission, and identify what you will want to explain about each and every piece of chosen evidence to best demonstrate your capabilities. Articulation of how and why each choice contributed to your current competence is key.

### 3.3 Reflective narrative - Integration

After having carefully reflected on your experience following inquiry-based learning (your teacher will guide you), and chosen your evidence through reflective practice, it is time to explain and justify (integrate) in writing your choice of evidence. Remember the purpose of this reflective narrative is to prove the acquisition/development of the employability skill(s) you have been asked to demonstrate.

Your story consists of a reflective narrative explaining how you have used the skill(s) you have chosen to showcase, and how the evidence you have provided meets the credential's criteria. It will also help you write your video testimony script at a later stage of the process.

Your reflective narrative is a written document that must be:

- written in first-person;
- clear, succinct, and accurate; and
- of a professional standard.



Stay focused. Match each piece of evidence against the assessment criteria and jot down, with clear examples, how you have met each item on the table. Do not forget to include what role you were performing at the time/activity you were partaking in, the context within which it was performed/took place, the date it was performed/happened, and its relationship to the criterion.

All in all, your reflective narrative should:

- provide some context for your evidence, i.e. describe the project, initiative, or activity; your role, the major stakeholders or interest groups involved, the organisation, the time it took place;
- describe the situation for your evidence, i.e. what was the opportunity, requirement, or challenge you were aiming to address/you were faced with? Describe its scope and complexity as well as what you hoped to achieve/had to do;
- describe what you did in response to the situation; i.e. explain the approach, process, or proposed solution. Why was it your preferred course of action? Did you need to try other approaches? What was your involvement and how did you influence others?;
- describe the outcome of your actions, i.e. the impact of your actions/performance. What did you learn? How has this helped you so far, and how do you think you will be able to apply this learning to the workplace?

A useful tip when writing your testimony is to have the criteria in clear view. You may want to print it out so you can make sure that you are answering the criteria and assigning the evidence to the right sections as you go along.

Be brief. Relevance is essential.

You may want to use the template below - or any other suggested by your teacher.

### 3.3.1 Reflective narrative - example

#### **Introduction**

#### **Setting the scene [80-120 words]**

- Describe situations you experienced or were involved in, and the task(s) you were working on. You can use examples from your current or previous job, education, personal experience or any relevant curricular, co-curricular or extra-curricular event. Always choose the most appropriate and business orientated examples you have, and that best fit the role for which you are being assessed/appraised. Choose examples that demonstrate the significance of your experience, the most difficult, complex, largest, and

successful problem(s), situation(s), or task(s) that you resolved. Briefly describe what you were tasked with, your responsibilities and assignments for the situation(s). Give enough detail for the assessor to understand what was involved but no more than three sentences.

- Identify the employability skill(s) you used in those situation(s).
- Identify an accompanying professional behaviour, and zero in on an even more specific moment during the situation(s) or task(s).

Note: the best reflections choose situation(s) and task(s) that were challenging to you in some way.

e.g. As part of my marketing assignment, I have been working on user interviews for an Instagram campaign, which will help to develop a user persona to direct the design process for the campaign. Over the past week, I demonstrated my critical thinking skills when I helped to conduct said user interviews. Specifically, before I did my interviews in class, I used my critical thinking skills by approaching the challenge of preparing for, and executing, the interviews in a systematic way.

Consider using the following sentence starters:

- On [specific date], at [specific place], I worked on ...
- As part of [project name], it was my responsibility to ...
- As a member of [team description], I was involved with the ...
- I demonstrated my ... skill when I ... [insert accompanying behaviour]

### **Presenting the actions taken [350-450 words]**

Before you begin writing this section, make a list of all the actions that you took in context to resolve the situation(s) or complete the task(s). Double check that these actions clearly provide evidence of, or demonstrate, the skill and behaviour that you identified in the previous section. Now use this list to write out exactly the steps you (and not your group or partner) took to resolve the specific situation(s) or to complete the specific task(s). Tell it as a story.

e.g. To successfully conduct the user interviews in class, I critically reflected on what I needed to do to prepare for the interviews. I decided that I needed to practise the interview questions beforehand. So at home, I developed cue cards for each main question. Then I practised both the primary and secondary questions until I only needed to glance down at the cue card to know what I had to say. At that point, I knew I could focus more of my attention on the content of the interviewee responses instead of solely focusing on what I would ask next. To successfully handle my turn as primary interviewer on the interview day, I paid close attention to the words chosen by interviewees when they answered my questions. Specifically, I ensured that I got all the required information by asking clarifying questions when any of their

responses were vague or unclear. For example, I had to handle one interviewee who responded to my question, “How does the thought of attending university make you feel?” by saying that he felt excited and nervous. However, he did not elaborate much further and it was clear that both of these terms were quite ambiguous without elaboration. I quickly recognised that this short response would not provide enough insightful information because it did not highlight why he might be feeling that way. After tactfully telling the interviewee that the brevity of his answer was an issue for me, I asked a brief probing question to get the interviewee to clarify and elaborate on what specifically made them feel excited and nervous.

Consider using the following sentence starters:

- To successfully complete this task, I [verb] ...
- To successfully handle this situation, I [verb] ...
- Specifically, I [verb] ...
- For example, I [verb] ...

### **Drawing conclusions [80-120 words]**

State what happened as a result of your actions and what new self-knowledge, learning, take-away thinking, or transfer to other situations you now have.

e.g. After I asked these clarifying questions, the interviewees began to realise that they weren't providing enough detail and my team-mates said they noticed participants were providing more detail for questions that followed. When I asked clarifying questions, I also signalled my interest in their answers which made them excited to share more. As well, because I was very familiar with the interview questions, I spent more time thinking about how to frame my probing questions to ensure that they were not leading. By taking the time to avoid any question pitfalls, I helped ensure that the answers I received were accurate reflections of my interviewees' lives, opinions, and feelings. Ultimately, my team and I developed a more representative user persona and, thus, a more engaging Instagram campaign because of the accurate information I got. I believe that this situation clearly demonstrates my ability to critically think through preparing for, and executing, thoughtful user interviews.

Consider using the following sentence starters:

- After I had done this, ...
- My ability to ..., ..., and ... caused ...
- Because I was able to ... and ..., the team/project/group/task ...
- Ultimately, I ...

[Adapted from WatCV, 2019]

## 4. Articulation two - Phase two

In this second phase of the process, your audience has shifted and is no longer your teacher but an employer who will be appraising whether your employability skills are fit for the workplace. This will involve recording and uploading a video testimony where you will be asked to articulate your employability skills, and thinking about your professional persona, and how you will want to be viewed in the profession. In practical terms this will require you to revisit and adapt your ePortfolio so that it is suitable for a professional environment. Should you stand from the crowd, you will receive a written commendation by said employer. Below you will find further information which will guide you through this second articulation.

### 4.1 Video testimony

In the three-to-five minute long video you will be required to record, you will need to put yourself in a situation where a potential employer may ask you, “tell me about a time when you felt you learned (the skill you are aiming to demonstrate)” or “describe a situation when you realised you had acquired/developed (the skill you are aiming to demonstrate)”. Your reflective narrative from phase one, and the evidence collected to support your claims are the main sources for your video. You should think, then, how to adapt your discourse to communicate your level of competence to a prospective employer or client. To help you structure your video testimony, you will be required to follow the STAR Method of interviewing explained below.

All in all, your video testimony should:

- review the activities, experiences, and contexts you believe helped you acquire/develop a certain employability skill (or skills);
- describe how you engaged with it (them);
- explain the steps you took to actively make it (them) a part of your practice, and
- share how this skill (these skills) will help you contribute to the workplace, and how you believe it (they) will set you apart from other candidates applying for a job.

It is important you speak in specific rather than general terms and quantify your success (learning). This makes your story more engaging, and employers more able to gauge your capabilities. Nameless figures and undefined successes can make the answer feel less convincing. Also, keep your answers concise and aspire to convey

the maximum achievement in the minimum time (without leaving out any crucial information).

We encourage you to read over your reflective narrative and do a few practice videos until you feel comfortable enough to upload your final recording.

Remember you will need a desktop, laptop, phone or tablet with a camera and microphone, as well as a good internet connection. Do also consider your clothing and location.

Once you have completed and submitted your video testimony, it will be appraised and you will receive written feedback on the platform. Should your video be deemed outstanding, you will receive a personal commendation by the employer.

#### 4.1.1 The STAR Method

In the video testimony which completes your ePortfolio, you will be required to apply the STAR method of interviewing to the evidence you will have submitted prior to the platform, and reflected upon using the same method. The STAR method of interviewing is a structured manner of responding to a behavioural-based interview question by discussing the specific situation, task, action, and result of the situation you are describing. In the current study, you will be required to think of the employability skill(s) you are showcasing, and present a situation(s) where you believed you acquired or developed said skill(s) following the structure below:

Situation(s): Describe the situation(s) that you were in or the task(s) that you needed to accomplish which you feel showcased the employability skill(s) at hand. You must describe specific event(s) or situation(s), not a generalised description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. Situations can be from an academic endeavour, previous job, a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.

Task(s): What goal were you working towards?

Action(s): Describe the action(s) you took to address the situation(s) with an appropriate amount of detail and keep the focus on you. What specific steps did you take and what was your particular contribution? Be careful that you do not describe what the team or group did when talking about a project, but what you actually did. Use the word “I,” not “we” when describing actions. Keep in mind the employability skill(s) you are showcasing.

Result: Describe the outcome of your actions and do not be shy about taking credit for your behaviour. What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn? Make sure your answer contains multiple positive results and clearly showcases the employability skill(s) you have intended to demonstrate throughout.

You ought to make sure that you follow all parts of the STAR method in your video testimony. You should be as specific as possible at all times, without rambling or including too much information. Make sure you include your result. Also, you are encouraged to eliminate any examples that do not paint you in a positive light whilst keeping in mind that some examples that have a negative result (such as “lost the game”) can highlight your strengths in the face of adversity. Therefore, you are encouraged to choose your examples wisely so they clearly prove acquisition/development of employability skills.

For examples and suggested script to your video testimony, please see below.

#### 4.1.2 Video testimony - example

Employers want to hear a story, a real past event (or events), about how you resolved a challenge(s), and they expect to hear this laid out following the STAR format described above. Your reflective testimony also uses the STAR format so that you can practise, in writing, the script to your video testimony.

Take a look at this [YouTube video](#), produced by Randstad Canada, which talks about what an employer wants to hear.

This video outlines some important tips that will help you with your video testimony:

- describe situations and events and stick to the facts; avoid generalising about several, related events;
- be detailed and specific about your example: the details will be much easier to recall, and the interviewer will view them as genuine;
- focus on personal growth, not perfection.

The following [YouTube video](#), produced by Ohio State University, shows a recent graduate who is interviewing for a job, and who uses the STAR format to tell the interviewer about how he handled a situation in the past.

- At the beginning of the video, all the employers agree that they want you to answer using the STAR format: tell it as a story; tell me what you (not others) did; include names, dates, times, numbers, and places so that the employer

understands the depth and breadth of what you accomplished; outline what the problem was and the detailed actions that you took (even the options that you considered);

- In the sample interview debrief, the video lays out what was good about the answer: the student gave great detail; used the STAR technique; focused on a specific situation; made the story about himself and not about the team he was on.

Aim to do the same, in a three-to-five minute video, always bearing in mind your evidence must showcase the employability skill chosen for the task at hand.

[Adapted from WatCV, 2019<sup>1</sup>]

#### 4.1.3 Video testimony - script

Your video testimony should be between three to five minutes long and should follow the STAR method of interviewing (above). Below you will find some sentence starters for you to follow/as inspiration:

- Good morning/afternoon. My name is ... and I would like to thank you for this opportunity / ... and I am here as I believe that I have the profile you are looking for / I think I am the right choice for this job because I know how to...
- I am currently studying ... at the University of ...
- Upon graduation, I would be interested in pursuing a career in ...
- From what I have read, it appears employers want someone who has ... skills. This matches my skills completely as I...
- I can confidently say that my top skill(s) are...
- My (mention a set of skills relevant for the/a job) will allow me to...
- On [specific date], at [specific place], I worked on ...
- As part of [project name], it was my responsibility to ...
- As a member of [team description], I was involved with the ...
- I demonstrated my ... skill when I ... [insert accompanying behaviour]

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<sup>1</sup> University of Waterloo,  
<https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/support/integrative-learning/watcv/watcv-resources>

- To successfully complete this task, I ... / To successfully handle this situation, I ...
- Specifically, I ... / For example, I ...
  
- After I had done this, ...
- My ability to ..., ..., and ... caused ...
- Because I was able to ... and ..., the team/project/group/task ...
- Ultimately, I ...
  
- I believe this to be an example which clearly showcases ...
- I thank you again for this opportunity and shall be looking forward to hearing from you

## 4.2 How to customise your ePortfolio for the workplace

The purpose of your final submission is to be able to showcase your employability skills to an employer. This will require you to think of your professional persona and how you present yourself and your experience online.

At this point of the process, you need to think of the image you would like to portray, and (re-)design your online presence in a way which reflects your identity. Your ePortfolio now needs to be fit for a professional environment, and so it will need revisiting. Now that your work will be appraised by an employer, you are requested to upload:

- a professional photograph,
- a short professional bio, and
- your video testimony including an introductory paragraph which states its connection with the evidence presented thus far.

The latter ought to remain in your ePortfolio for the employer to appraise. You will, therefore, need to revisit your previous submission and make any necessary changes to acknowledge and account for the change of audience and purpose of this second stage of the process. In this regard, you may want to keep the evidence you submitted for assessment and/or make changes to it, or you may choose to upload new pieces of evidence which you feel may better contribute to showcasing your employability skills for the workplace.

Do make sure you consistently use a level of language that is appropriate to the professional purpose of the reflection.



## 5. References

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The Open University. (2019). *Putting together a portfolio of evidence*.

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Faculty Innovation Center, The University of Texas at Austin. (2017, October 26). *What is a rubric?*

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# Appendix I

## 1. Examples of rubrics

A rubric is a scoring guide used to assess your performance. It has three parts: performance criteria; a rating scale; and indicators. The examples of rubrics provided below define what is expected of students and what will be assessed. Whether for online or face-to-face courses, rubrics indicate that you will be assessed according to specified criteria, making grading and ranking simpler, more transparent, and fairer (The University of Texas at Austin, 2017). Your teacher will provide you with the specific rubric created for each employability skill you will be requested to showcase. Please make sure you check your work against it.

## 2. Criteria and dimensions

Your submission must address the criteria and dimensions of each skill. These will have been previously discussed with your teacher. Below are some examples of the skill definitions, criteria, and examples for creative thinking (as a cognitive skill), problem solving (as a methodological skill), and communication and interpersonal skills (as social skills). Bear in mind percentages and criteria may vary depending on many factors, including the nature of your subject, course delivery, and your teacher's perceptions, among others.

### 2.1 Creative thinking

Creative thinking is both the capacity to combine or synthesise existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative way characterised by a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2009).

**Figure 1**

*Example of rubric of Creative thinking*

Creative thinking*					
Thinking outside the box in order to bring solutions to problems.					
*Adapted from Greenstein 2012 and Association of American Colleges and Universities					
Note: percentages are discretionary dependent on context of application and programme characteristics.					
Assessment criteria	Beginning [score 1]	Developing [score 2]	Accomplished [score 3]	Exemplary [score 4]	TEACHER score
Fluency (%)	The student usually sees things from his/her own perspective.	If the student works with someone else, s/he can find other ways of looking at things.	The student can usually come up with some alternative ways of looking at things.	The student can look at things in various ways and describes multiple and diverse purposes for them.	
Innovative thinking (%)*	The student is not able to	The student likes to think	The student can create new things	The student shows flexibility and	

## 2.2 Problem solving

Problem solving is the process of designing, evaluating and implementing a strategy to answer an open-ended question or achieve a desired goal (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2009).

**Figure 2**

*Example of Rubric of Problem-solving*

Problem solving*					
Engaging to find solutions to problems, and to solve conceptual dilemmas.					
*Adapted from Greenstein 2012					
Note: percentages are discretionary dependent on context of application and programme characteristics.					
Assessment criteria	Beginning [score 1]	Developing [score 2]	Accomplished [score 3]	Exemplary [score 4]	TEACHER score
Problem identification (%)*	The student shows difficulties in defining the problem.	The student explains just a few parts of the problem.	The student describes the root of the problem with some supporting information.	The student clearly identifies the problem with supporting details in relation to the situation.	
Solutions identification (%)*	The student is unable to give any solutions.	The student describes one or two possible solutions.	The student offers two to three plausible solutions.	The student comes up with a list of feasible and clearly described solutions.	
Solutions assessment (%)*	The student picks one solution but is	The student is able to compare all the options	The student is able to make a reasoned	The student is able to thoughtfully	

### 2.3 Communication and interpersonal skill

Oral communication is a prepared, purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviours. Written communication is the development and expression of ideas in writing. Written communication involves learning to work in many genres and styles. It can involve working with many different writing technologies, and mixing texts, data, and images. Written communication abilities develop through iterative experiences across the curriculum (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2009).

**Figure 3**

*Example of a rubric of Communication and Interpersonal Skill*

Communication and Interpersonal Skill*					
Articulating, transmitting, and effectively defending arguments, ideas, feelings or information. Listening, understanding, and being receptive to others.					
*Adapted from Greenstein 2012					
Note: percentages are discretionary dependent on context of application and programme characteristics.					
Assessment criteria	Beginning [score 1]	Developing [score 2]	Accomplished [score 3]	Exemplary [score 4]	TEACHER score
Oral communication (%)*	The student makes it difficult to hear and follow his/her presentation.	The student may <u>compromise</u> one significant part of oral communication.	The student communicates with clarity, pace, and right volume.	The student communicates with clarity, pace and volume strengthening and improving his/her message.	
Receptive communication (%)	The student restates facts and partially	The student can identify and interpret	The student determines facts	The student distinguishes facts from opinions	

### 3. Employer Appraisal Form

Below is the form employers will be using to inform their appraisal of phase two of the pilot study, i.e. the customised ePortfolio for the workplace, which will include a video testimony and all supporting evidence.

The purpose of this appraisal form is twofold:

1. to help you become acquainted with the criteria students' work ought to meet before appraising it;
2. to inform the final questionnaire which will be made available to you by link to appraise students' EPICA ePortfolio at large using these criteria.

In the final questionnaire, you will be requested to respond following a likert scale asking you to strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree with the statements provided.

#### Overall ePortfolio

Is the ePortfolio fit for the workplace?

Did the student present enough information to showcase their professional persona?  
Did s/he do so in a professional manner?  
Was the language used suitable for the workplace?

### **Video testimony - STAR method**

Has the student successfully showcased the development of the presented skills?  
Is the situation (S) presented by the student representative of the skill/s s/he was aiming to showcase?  
Is the task (T) described by the student representative of the skill/s s/he was aiming to showcase?  
Are the described actions (A) consistent with the task/s assumed?  
Has the articulation of the results (R) been clear and efficient, that is, do the conclusions reached by the student show a growth in skill/s?  
Has the student explained that s/he can transfer the skill/s to the workplace?  
Has the student been able to limit the video to the established time (3 to 5 minutes)?  
Is the information provided by the student objective?  
Is the student's presentation focused on personal achievements and not on shared achievement?  
Has the student presented himself / herself in a professional manner?

### **Evidence**

Was the evidence submitted relevant to the task at hand?  
Was the evidence presented representative of the skill/s it was aiming to showcase?  
Was the evidence sufficient to demonstrate the skill/s s/he aimed to showcase?  
Was the evidence reliable?  
Was the evidence objective, that is, not based on subjective personal experience alone?

### **Overall Appraisal**

Is the student's work worthy of a commendation on your part?

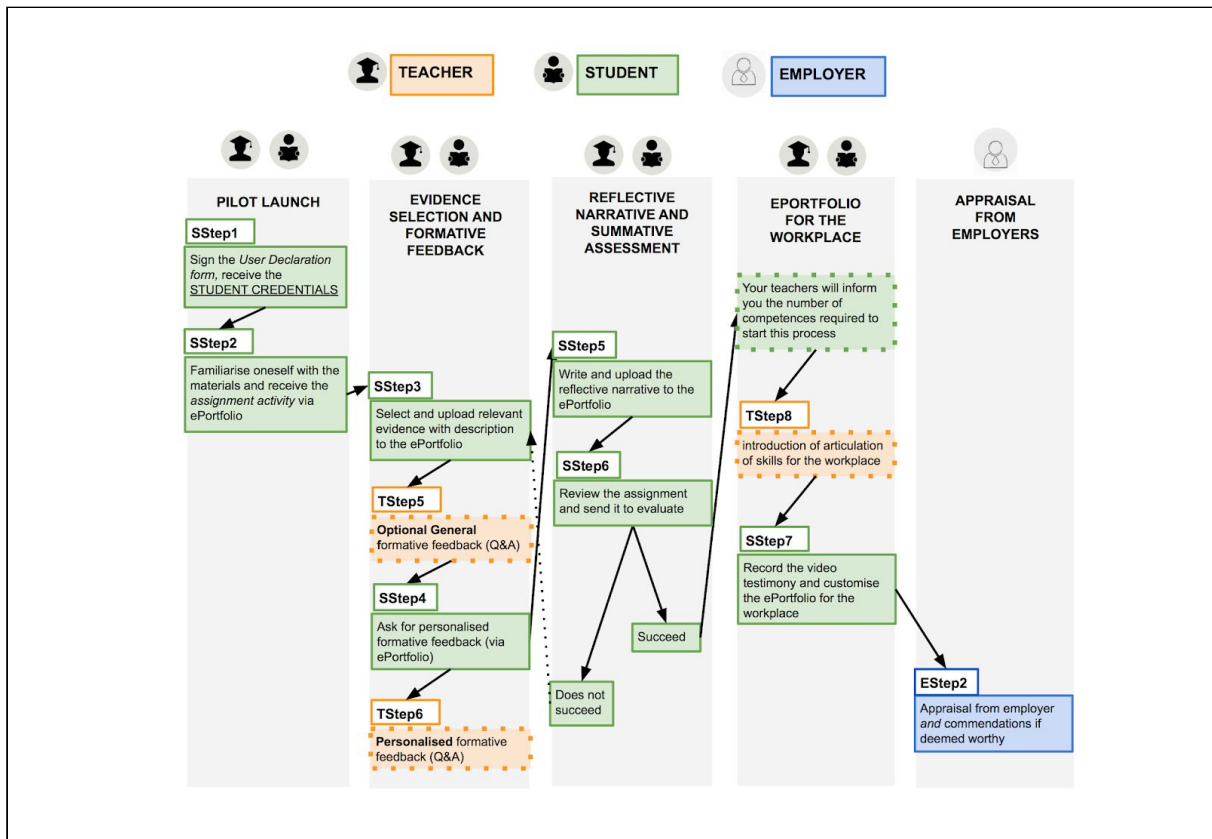
# Appendix II

## 1. Workflow

### 1.1 Workflow graphic

Figure 4

Workflow Graphic



## 1.2 Example of procedure

This example illustrates the procedure followed within the Epica framework.

### 1.2.1 Self-training and implementation

#### CStep1

- sign the *Pilot User agreement*
- receive the ADMINISTRATOR CREDENTIALS

#### CStep2

- introduce the list of skills to be piloted in the institution onto the system

#### TStep1

- sign the *Pilot User agreement*,
- receive the TEACHER CREDENTIALS (MyD)
- inform students of the need to sign the *Pilot User agreement*

#### TStep2

Take self-training on local Moodle.

During self-training, the teacher is encouraged to perform the following activities in order to be ready to start with the pilot right after the course:

- identify activities throughout the programme that may have driven to the acquisition of the skills to be piloted. This will enable the teacher to support students in the inquiry process (see the job-aids included on Section 2.1 'Inquiry - Explore and identify' of the Student Guide)
- design/adapt the content needed to perform the pilot (activities, rubrics, planning) and familiarise themselves with the ePortfolio.

#### SStep1

- sign the *Pilot User agreement*
- receive the STUDENT CREDENTIALS to access the EPICA ePortfolio (MyD)

#### TStep3

In case it was not done during self-training, the teacher should:

- create the assignment activity/ies in the ePortfolio taking the *ePortfolio Activity template* as a model and associate the skill to be piloted with the class group (an activity per skill should be created within the ePortfolio). The rubric which will be used to assess the student should be uploaded in PDF format in the field 'assessment criteria' together with the Student Guide and the ePortfolio Student Tutorial. A relevant image icon needs to be added to the assignment activity (see the *ePortfolio Assignment Activity Template in Appendix I of the Teacher Guide*),
- set up planning and assign the assignment activity/ies to the students of the class group.



## 1.2.2 Pilot launch

### TStep4

#### Intervention 1:

- introduce the pilot study aims and requirements to students
- explain the activity and provide students with specific guidelines to perform it (see *Lesson plan [1] in Section 4.1 in the Teacher Guide*).

### SStep2

- attend **Intervention 1**
- familiarise oneself with the supporting materials
- log in to the ePortfolio and check the assignment activity/ies you should have received from your teacher. The rubric to check the assessment criteria that students' work should meet can be downloaded by clicking on the Teaching Notes related to the assignment activity, available in the left column.

## 1.2.3 Evidence selection and formative feedback

### SStep3

- engage in the inquiry process and select relevant evidence for each skill the student is asked to showcase following the guidelines provided in the student guide (see the job-aids included on Section 2.1 'Inquiry - Explore and identify' of the *Student Guide*)
- create a "Story/Evidence"<sup>2</sup> within the ePortfolio for each skill to be showcased and give it a meaningful title depending on the skill (e.g. My Communication and Interpersonal skill) (see the *Process Simulation within the Epica ePortfolio*).
- upload all the evidence selected in relation to a skill, with its description in the corresponding text box in its "Story/Evidence". Write down the skill tag for which you are providing evidence. These steps do not have to be performed at the same time for all the skills to be showcased. The planning made by the teacher within the ePortfolio establishes the calendar for each assignment activity.

### TStep5

#### Intervention 2 (optional):

- provide general formative feedback to students (Q&A session) highlighting good practice and providing action points (feedback can be provided through different modes depending on the delivery method of each university) (see *Lesson plan [2] in Section 4.2 of the Teacher Guide*).

### SStep4

- attend **Intervention 2** when performed
- ask for personalised formative feedback on the "Story/Evidence" created by sending the teacher a private message through the ePortfolio. This will enable the student to revisit the work on the basis of the feedback and to improve it.

### TStep6

- provide personalised formative feedback (via ePortfolio) and clear action points to

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<sup>2</sup> Story/Evidence is a feature of the EPICA ePortfolio which enables the student to create a story by uploading pieces of evidence in different file formats.

improve the submission. Once the submission ("Story/Evidence") has been sent for assessment, it will no longer be possible to edit it.

#### 1.2.4 Reflective narrative and summative assessment

##### SStep5

→ write the reflective narrative for each skill to be showcased and upload it onto the corresponding "Story/Evidence" already created in the ePortfolio (see *Section 3.3 'Reflective narrative - Integration' of the Student Guide*).

##### SStep6

→ submit it for assessment at once. The submission of the work ("Story/Evidence") should include the reflective narrative and all supporting evidence (including the corresponding introductory paragraph for each piece). Once the submission ("Story/Evidence") has been sent for assessment, it will no longer be possible to edit it. A submission for each skill is expected and final.

##### TStep7

→ go to the rubric previously prepared to assess the skill. The rubric will be used outside the ePortfolio and the final result of the summative assessment will be reported in the evaluation feature of the ePortfolio. If the student's submission is deserving of a micro-credential, i.e. it has achieved 80% or above, the student will be awarded a badge.

→ clearly explain the following actions required of the student in the open text field available in the evaluation feature. Students should be clearly informed on when they will be allowed to proceed onto the next phase, or on whether the process has finalised for them and they do not proceed on to phase two.

#### 1.2.5 ePortfolio for the workplace (only for the students who succeed in phase one)

##### TStep8

##### Intervention 3:

→ introduce the STAR method of interviewing and articulation of skills for the workplace (see *Lesson plan [3] in Section 4.3 of the Teacher Guide*).

##### SStep7

→ attend **Intervention 3**

→ create another "Story/Evidence" in the ePortfolio and give it a meaningful title (e.g. My employability skills for the workplace). This time the submission will be targeted to an employer who will appraise the work and should include all the skills which had been awarded a badge,

→ record the video testimony and upload it into the "Story/Evidence" created onto the ePortfolio. In the video testimony the student is invited to articulate all the employability skills which were awarded a micro-credential, however many these are (see *the Video testimony - script in Section 4.1.3 of the Student Guide*),

→ after uploading the video testimony, the student has 2 options:

- Option A

If the student chooses to showcase their employability skill(s) by using the same evidence already submitted for assessment, they must give public permission to

the “Story/Evidence” previously submitted for the employer to access.

- Option B

If the student, however, chooses to rethink the evidence which they feel better supports their video testimony, they must limit access to their previous “Story/Evidence” by setting its privacy to ‘private’, and upload their chosen pieces of evidence onto their new “Story/Evidence”. The student may choose to customise previously submitted evidence, present it as it was but in a smaller number, and/or upload additional evidence. Once uploaded the evidence, the student must also give public permission to the “Story/Evidence” to make it visible to the employer,

- customise the ePortfolio for the workplace (*see the guidelines to customise the ePortfolio to employers in Section 4.2 of the Student Guide*). Portability, the tool included in the ePortfolio, can be used to give an attractive appearance to the ePortfolio,
- send a private message to the employer asking him/her to provide feedback on the “Story/Evidence” created.

### 1.2.6 Appraisal by employers

#### EStep1

- sign the *Pilot User agreement*
- receive the EMPLOYER CREDENTIALS to access the EPICA platform (MyD)
- receive the Employer Guide and the link to the appraisal form
- familiarise oneself with the ePortfolio, the micro-credential process, and the relevant materials. Review in detail the employer appraisal form (*see Section 3 of the Employer Guide*) in order to acquaint yourself with the criteria set for the appraisal of students.

#### EStep2

- check notifications and read the message from the student,
- receive the link to the appraisal online form by email,
- review the “Story/Evidence” received from the student,
- review the video testimony
- review all evidence provided
- review the student profile
- appraise students by answering the appraisal online form received outside the platform.
- provide the student with qualitative feedback based on the appraisal form by answering the private message first sent by the student within the ePortfolio. The text written in the final text box of the appraisal form can be used as feedback by copying it into the private message,
- write a commendation if deemed worthy by writing a public message to the student in the text box available below the ‘Story/Evidence’ presented by the student (*see Process Simulation within the Epica ePortfolio*).