



## IO4: eFollow-up guide

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## Introduction

This eFollow-up guide is part of the ERASMUS+ KA2 Strategic Partnerships project titled “ePassport” in the field of Vocational and Education Training (VET). The aim of the ePassport project is to strengthen the capacities of VET organisations and to improve the techniques and methods of preparation and follow-up of beneficiaries participating in a hybrid and virtual mobility project. The eFollow-up guide was created to be a user-friendly tool which provides step-by-step guidance to VET Professionals, regardless of their experience, enabling them to implement substantial support before, during and after international mobility.

The general objective of the guide is to facilitate the creation of virtual mobilities and foster the overall quality of in-person, hybrid and virtual mobilities. It is particularly addressed to VET professionals working in Sending and Hosting organisations who want to implement a follow-up system within their daily practice. It is made as a tool that can support the organisation of activities whether it is in-person, hybrid or virtual.

Providing follow-up to VET participants is a crucial aspect to consider for the organisation of effective and relevant international mobilities as it creates a suitable environment and enables participants to make the most out of their experience. Whether it is in-person or virtual, supporting participants before, during and after the international mobility is one of the conditions to develop high-quality and innovative mobilities.

A rigorous follow-up provides support to participants on multiple levels. It enables VET professionals to conduct effective emotional and mental or address any occurring problem to support participants to prevent and lessen cultural shocks, homesickness, or any other challenges. VET professionals can also take the opportunity to monitor the progress closely and provide any necessary feedback to the participant in order to support them in achievement of their objectives. With precise follow-up, the coordinator and mentor are also in the best position to provide effective monitoring and evaluation of the improvements of the VET participants through their feedback.

The eFollow-up guide has been constructed to encompass all of the benefits of regular follow-up with a specific focus on in-person or virtual mobilities. It defines respectively the roles and responsibilities of coordinators and mentors during international mobility, and provides methods and tools for the organisation of hybrid or virtual on-arrival meetings with the VET participants.

The guide will focus on which mistakes to avoid and what not to forget when it comes to preparation, regular check-ups, and final evaluation. It will also cover potential challenges, risks and misunderstandings and provide a set of measures to take to prevent conflict situations.

The eFollow-up guide has been constructed in close relation to the eNotebook developed for VET participants. Both can be used simultaneously to enable the implementation of impactful in-person, hybrid or virtual mobility opportunities.



**01**

**MENTOR AND  
COORDINATOR**

## Mentor and coordinator

To ensure optimal conditions for VET participants, the hosting organisation must define roles and formally designate the employees responsible for the monitoring of the VET participant. Effective follow-up can be done by involving a coordinator and mentor who will monitor both the activities and the well-being of VET participants all along the project while not necessarily having the same tasks and responsibilities.

### The coordinator

The coordinator supervises the overall project of the VET participants to ensure that the quality of the activities and the general support provided is of high-quality. Along with the mentor, the coordinator is also in charge of **monitoring the development of the skills and knowledge** of the VET participant throughout the project. As the main point of contact, s/he also has to make sure that VET participants can enjoy suitable working and living conditions. Finally, to ensure the global well-being of the participants, the coordinator must also carry out individual meetings at the beginning of the project, at mid-term and at the end of the project to evaluate the learning and achievement progress.

The coordinator's role and responsibilities are to:

Keep regular contact with the sending organisation	Arrange the logistic	Follow the VET participant's objectives
Carry out administrative work	<b>Coordinator</b>	Mediate
Organise on arrival training	Ensure the VET participant's security in the field	Supervise

#### Before the start of the VET mobility, the coordinator:

- Makes a link between the hosting organisation's objectives and the participant's needs
- Communicates with the sending organisation about the arrival conditions (date, special needs...)
- Selects a mentor for the VET participant

#### The coordinator is:

- the main contact person for the sending organisation, VET participant and the mentor
- in charge of administrative, pedagogical, financial and legal issues related to the mobility project
- planning and managing the activities of the VET participant (with the mentor)
- the main organiser of the on-arrival training (whether it is online or in the premises of the hosting organisation)
- aware of the details about sending and the hosting organisation, their inside rules and know the local environment

- aware of the expected role of the VET participant within the organisation, the cycle of the project and its expected results
- is conscious of the potential challenges and conflict situations
- is aware of the VET participants' expectations, motivation, competencies, responsibilities and their rights
- responsible for the monitoring of the achievement of VET participants' objectives and expectations
- providing access to digital tools to facilitate the virtual mobility period
- responsible for organising the online meetings

To make sure that the whole mobility process goes well for the participants, it is also best if the coordinator can demonstrate the following abilities and skills: being a good listener, empathetic, flexible, able to personalise and adapt the activities for VET participant.

### ***The mentor***

As a daily point of contact, the mentor is the stakeholder who facilitates the hosting and integration of the participants by providing advice prior to the arrival and routine support all along the mobility period. In the context of in-person, hybrid, or virtual mobility, the mentor is involved to provide personalised and daily support to the hosted participants and has to be considered as a complement to the coordinator's administrative and pedagogical support. Mentors are in the best position to build a strong relationship with the VET participants as they are also responsible for pedagogical and intercultural aspects of the project.

To facilitate the integration of the participants, the mentors should be chosen according to their past international mobility and intercultural experiences that participants can relate to. Whether it is for hosting or sending organisations, the mentors should be the first contacts of the VET participants and should remain available for any questions related to the project.

**The mentor's role and responsibilities are to:**

Listen	Evaluate	Set goals
Advise	<b>Mentor</b>	Give feedback
Provide support	Help integration into local community	Assign tasks

**The mentor:**

- welcomes and supports the VET participants upon their arrival and all along their mobility;
- provides information about the hosting organisation, local community, cultural norms and values;
- facilitates the participant's integration into the local community through cultural activities or events;
- offers individual support and provides information, knowledge and advice from their own experience ;

- monitors the learning process of the VET participant and support them for the implementation of their activities;
- understands the expectations of the VET participants;
- assigns tasks related to the VET participant's skills and experience ;
- guarantees safe working conditions;
- maintains regular communication with the VET participants;
- builds a trustful relationship with the VET participant;
- evaluates the mobility experience along with the coordinator;

In addition to the daily support, the mentors must implement specific weekly or monthly meetings with the VET participants to review all the aspects related to the mobility projects (working conditions, activities carried out, integration, relationship, difficulties, ...).

Mentors have the responsibility to provide guidance and adapted support to the VET participants as they have to assess the personal and professional growth of the participants. Depending on the size of the organisation and the budget of the project, one person may have the double role of coordinator and mentor. Although it is recommended to divide the roles, when possible.





**02**

**ARRIVAL OF THE  
PARTICIPANTS**

### Steps to follow at the arrival of VET participants:

- Introduce the VET participants to the team, let them feel comfortable in their working place and explain the basic internal rules and procedures (schedules, materials, how to book spaces to work online, etc.).
- Organise their workspace before their arrival
- Organise a “welcome lunch” for their arrival or set up an online introductory meeting
- Set rules on how the team will work with the VET participants

## On-arrival training

Prior to the arrival, the coordinator and mentor have to make first contact and introduce themselves to the VET participants. It is also recommended to provide an “Info Pack”, a document presenting the mission, logistical requirements, culture, city, region and any important information that the participants can discover upon their arrival. It is also important not to forget to brief the staff about the VET participant’s arrival and their future role in the organisation.

For hybrid and online mobility, introductions have to be done through online meetings prior to the beginning of the mobility to ensure that the conditions of work, the tasks and responsibilities of the participant are clear.

### **Objective and content**

The integration of the participant should start with a special welcome introduction (on-arrival training) that will work as a preparation for the entire stay in the hosting country.

#### **The in-person on-arrival training has two main objectives:**

- to present how to behave in the hosting organisation and hosting country: hosting country’s habits and traditions, health and security, legislation of the country, necessary information about emergency contacts and addresses, general rules of the hosting organisation
- to know how to carry out a successful internship project: E.g. process and quality of the project (training, tasks, everyday life, etc.), roles, rights and duties, follow up and evaluation

#### **For hybrid and virtual mobilities:**

- organisation of work
- digital tools to use (See section “[How to maintain regular and effective communication?](#)”)

## **Practical information: When? Who? Where?**

### **When?**

The training should take place shortly after the arrival of the participant, typically within the first week.

## Who?

The hosting organisation is responsible for the training. Training facilitators need to be professionals in the processes of VET mobilities using informative and engaging procedures for the participants.

## Where?

The training should take place at the hosting organisation's premises or online. For online on-arrival training follow the eGuide (IO2) which can facilitate the online training.

## How?

The training should be informative and interactive, allowing participants to ask questions and get to know their teammates. It is also an opportunity for the host organisation to get familiar with the participant and their needs, ensuring a successful mobility experience for everyone involved.

## ***Preparation of on-arrival training***

Take time to prepare on-arrival training. Divide the tasks among teammates and prepare a checklist:

### Organisation of the on-arrival training:

- Define if the meeting will take place online or face-to-face
- Schedule a date and a structure
- Book the training room or setup a meeting link if the meeting will be online
- Define in advance the digital tools for the meeting
- Create/Update your handbook
- For in-person training, buy food and beverages for the participants

### Training content

- Prepare the time-table
- Assign facilitators
- Prepare the content (presentation and activities)
- Choose & test the tools in advance
- Check and prepare the materials
- Define the number of participants
- Prepare Attendance sheet
- Send out the invitation

## ***Realisation of on-arrival training***

### At the beginning of the meeting:

- Explain the goals and objectives of the meeting
- Explain the rules and boundaries
- Show openness and empathy towards the VET participants
- Enable the attendees to participate to the meeting
- Keep the control of the meeting, remain transparent and open to communication.

### During the meeting:

- Take notes
- Spare some time and space for participants to ask questions
- Sign the attendance sheet/take a screenshot of the online meeting
- Make sure to balance between presentations and interactives activities
- Set up and plan the next steps of the project and share the responsibilities among the VET participants involved
- Draw conclusions and close the meeting

### ***Evaluation of on-arrival training***

At the end of the meeting:

- Ask for feedback from VET participants.
- Remind the emergency contacts (mentor, sending organisation, hospital, doctor...)

At the end of the on-arrival training the VET participant must have a good understanding of:

- **the main activities** and tasks of the internship
- **the operational context** and expectations of the hosting organisation
- the rules, internal functioning and the beneficiaries/ customers of the hosting organisation
- how to deal with health, safety and logistical issues

If the mobility starts online, every aspect mentioned beforehand is relevant and can be completed by information on:

- **the local context**, including aspects of intercultural learning and appropriate behaviour/ in case of hybrid/virtual mobility: intercultural elements on the daily life at work in the country, especially in online meetings.
- an understanding about the online working tools and other criteria crucial during a remote VET traineeship



**03**

**REGULAR FOLLOW-UP  
MEETINGS**

## Regular follow-up meetings

### *Objective and content*

Monitoring participants throughout the international mobility period is crucial to ensure the achievement of the objectives set for the project. Keeping constant connections between the participants, coordinator and mentors facilitates the identification of any challenges or issues that may arise. It also enables supervisors to offer guidance to overcome these challenges, and ensure that the participants are making the most of the international mobility experience.

To that end, a comprehensive follow-up process has to be implemented so that the coordinator and mentor can keep track of progress and operate detailed interviews tackling the participant's experience. The following process involves regular check-ins and assessments by the mentor and the coordinator to make sure that participants can rely on the monthly meetings to address any occurring challenges or to discuss any new initiative. The follow-up process is also designed to prepare for the evaluation of the project to enable VET participants to capitalise on their experience.

### *Practical information: When? Who? Where?*

#### When?

Monitoring typically occurs throughout the duration of the whole mobility project, with regular intervals set according to the specific needs of the project.

<b>Arrival</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> month	2 <sup>nd</sup> month	3 <sup>rd</sup> month	<b>4<sup>th</sup> month</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> month	6 <sup>th</sup> month	7 <sup>th</sup> month	<b>8<sup>th</sup> month, departure</b>
<b>Arrival meeting, welcome briefing</b>	Follow up	Follow up	Follow up	<b>Mid-term review</b>	Follow up	Follow up	Follow up	<b>Final evaluation</b>

#### Who?

All along the project, the monitoring of the VET participant must be supported by a mentor (for the everyday life and activities) and a coordinator who will globally supervise the project (performance, activities...) through regular face-to-face or online interviews.

The mentor is typically a knowledgeable and experienced individual within the organisation who can provide support and guidance to the participant. The coordinator is responsible for overseeing the participant's performance and ensuring that the project objectives are being met.

#### Where?

Monitoring can be done both in-person and remotely, depending on the location of the participant and the mentor/coordinator and whether the mobility is face-to-face, hybrid or virtual.

If the meetings take place face-to-face, then it needs to happen in a location where all parties feel comfortable, and can be free from interactions.

If the meetings takes place online, then make sure that all parties are familiar with the digital tools used and check the network connection to avoid unnecessary issues.

## ***Preparation of the follow-up meetings***

A **well-prepared meeting** is more likely to generate good results. Indeed, the more preparation mentor puts in the meeting, the better the VET participant feels welcomed, expected, needed, integrated, involved and understood.

The monthly meeting should be scheduled in advance, so that both the VET participant and the mentor can prepare accordingly.

A monthly follow-up meeting is not a casual task-related meeting to evaluate only one specific activity progress. Its aim is to evaluate the overall mobility **and to provide personalised support to the VET participant.**

1	2	3
<b>Schedule a date</b>	<b>Prepare for the interview</b> - review previous notes - set objectives for the meeting	<b>Find a suitable place/set up link for a meeting</b>

The mentor must make at least one official face-to-face or online mentoring meeting per month with the VET participant:

- **Fix the date**, time and place for the follow-up meeting
- Organise a **face-to-face** or online meeting, and do not limit the communication only with emails/other communication channels.
- Make sure to create a safe and empowering environment for the VET participant
- Prepare **an interview frame** or use the one found in the appendix

## ***Realisation of the follow-up meetings***

First of all, it is very important that the mentor shows interest and performs active listening. Let the VET participant finish and then reply by making comments or sharing new information, providing feedback regarding what the VET participants just said.

The meeting should follow these 4 steps:



### **Progress update**

- Be an active listener
- Remain attentive to avoid misunderstandings
- Focus on the experience of the VET participant

- Encourage them to go into details
- Try not to interrupt the VET participant – take notes
- Avoid judgements and try to understand the point of view of the VET participant
- Show interest by adopting a positive and open attitude.

### Suggested set of question:

- What were the tasks you were assigned this month?
- How is your integration into the host organisation going?
- How are your relations with the public in your host organisation?
- Do you work in a team? If yes, with whom?
- What is your relationship with your tutor/mentor? How often do you meet? Do you consider this sufficient?
- Do you have any responsibilities? If yes, what are they? Do you take initiatives? If yes, which ones?
- Have you acquired or developed technical skills? If yes, which ones?
- Have you acquired or developed language skills? If yes, which ones?
- Did you encounter any difficulties this month during your mission? If so, which ones and how did you overcome them?
- Do you consider that your mission corresponds to what was defined at the beginning?

### Provide feedback:

- Provide feedback on the participant's answers
- Iterate your view as mentor or coordinator regarding their daily involvement
- If necessary, hand over a set of improvements that the participant can follow for their future tasks and objectives
- Be supportive and stay positive to maintain momentum.

### Reflection on the experience

- Ask questions on what the participants have learned, the highs and lows of their overall experience, and what did they acquire from their stay so far
- Ask the participants to speak about their integration and their well-being in the host country, even if the traineeship takes place virtually
- Try to avoid judgements and remember to stay understanding.

### Suggested set of questions:

- How is your social and cultural integration in the country?
- What cultural/intercultural discovery did you make?
- Did you encounter any social or intercultural difficulties? If so, which ones, and how did you overcome them?
- Did you encounter any hardship this month in relation to accommodation, food, budget, etc.? If so, which ones and how did you overcome them?
- Do you feel comfortable in your new environment?
- Have you planned any holidays this month or in the next few months?
- Finally, do you have any comments or anecdotes to tell?

### Give advice and suggestions

- Share your knowledge and experience if necessary



- Provide support to find solutions should there be any inconvenience appearing during the project
- Do not forget to inform the VET participant and sending organisation if you suspect a security-related issue, the sending organisation can also provide support. It is very important to keep regular communication and work together to come up with the best solutions.
- Avoid doing something else during the meeting with the VET participant – they could get frustrated
- If the traineeship takes place online, it is recommended to set up more meetings to facilitate intensive communication between the mentor, coordinator and working team and thus get more involved in their daily activities.

### **VET participant's expectations:**

- To be listened to and to have feedback about the tasks and activities accomplished.
- Understand their role and measure the importance of their contribution to the organisation
- Capitalise on the experience and the competences developed for their future projects.

### ***Evaluation of the follow-up meeting***

- Ask for feedback about the format and content of the monthly follow-up meeting.
- Implement a digital monthly-follow up guide to include the notes of each meeting to track the evolution of the tasks of the VET participants throughout the mobility
- Set down a list of questions that can be sent to the VET participant in a written format each month



**04**

**FINAL  
EVALUATION**

## Final evaluation

### ***Objective and content***

By the end of the project, the mentor and coordinator have the responsibility to organise and implement the final assessment of the VET participant's project. It is the occasion for the participant, the hosting and sending organisation to assess the overall impact of the project and draw conclusions from the experience. The final evaluation should provide a detailed report on the activities carried out throughout the project, their overall results, and their expected impact on the hosting organisation and for the VET participant's future.

The final review should be prepared based on a recollection of the previous monthly follow-ups to assess overall progress, achievements, and outcomes. Results of the final evaluation can be used by the coordinator to plan for future hosting of VET participants, to make adjustments on the overall project design, to assess impact and to bring about any improvement suggested by the participant.

### ***Practical information: When? Why and what? Who? Where?***

#### **When?**

The final evaluation of a project should take place at the end of the project's implementation period.

#### **Why and what?**

This meeting has to be organised for both the hosting organisation as well as the participant to assess the overall success of the project in achieving its objectives and to determine its impact. The final evaluation helps to determine whether the project met its goals and objectives, and to identify any areas for improvement for future projects. The final evaluation is therefore a crucial step in ensuring accountability and continuous improvement in project implementation.

Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their experiences during the project and share their feedback with the mentors and coordinators.

The mentor will provide their perspectives on the participants' progress and offer suggestions for future development. The coordinator will also be present to hear the feedback and to ensure that the results of the projects are incorporated into future planning. The meeting will provide a platform for open and honest discussions, with the aim of promoting continuous improvement in the VET mobility projects.

#### **Who?**

The final evaluation meeting will take place between the participants, mentor and/or coordinator.

#### **Where?**

The meeting can be carried out either at a place chosen by the hosting organisation or online (in case of hybrid or virtual mobility). It is important that the place chosen feels comfortable to all the parties involved.

## Preparation of evaluation meeting

The mentor and the coordinator should organise at least one official face-to-face or online final evaluation meeting at the end of the internship with the VET participant:

- Set the date, time and place in advance for the final meeting
- Prepare the final framework of the interview based on the previous follow-up meetings
- Prepare a notebook / text editor to recollect feedback

Arrival	1 <sup>st</sup> month	2 <sup>nd</sup> month	3 <sup>rd</sup> month	4 <sup>th</sup> month	5 <sup>th</sup> month	6 <sup>th</sup> month	7 <sup>th</sup> month	8 <sup>th</sup> month, departure
Arrival meeting, welcome briefing	Follow up	Follow up	Follow up	Mid-term review	Follow up	Follow up	Follow up	Final evaluation

The final evaluation meeting should discuss the following subjects:

- Activities, outputs and results
- Assessment of the skills developed throughout the mobility period
- Impact of the project on the VET participant, hosting organisation and partners
- Feedback on the global integration of the participants into the local community and everyday conditions
- Measurement of the learning progress and achievements of the participant
- Self-reflection about the participant's achievements
- Future objectives and projects and how to reach them.

To understand if the project has been successful/reached the objectives, the coordinator and the mentor should also compare the expectations and objectives before departure with the achievements of the VET participant during the traineeship. The hosting organisation can rely on the evaluation of competencies and skills completed before the departure which will also allow them to identify gaps in skills and create a plan for enhancing the weak areas for future mobilities, either it is a physical or an online one.

## Realisation of evaluation meeting

Suggested outline for the final evaluation meeting:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Final progress update	Provide general feedback	Reflection on the overall experience	Give advice and suggestions	Future projects	Final logistical considerations

### Final progress update

- Be an active listener
- Remain attentive to avoid misunderstandings. Ask to rephrase if needed.
- Focus on the experience of the VET participants regarding their daily tasks, objectives and their general appreciation of their work

- Encourage them to go into details
- Try not to interrupt the VET participant – take notes
- Avoid judgements and try to understand the point of view of the VET participant
- Show interest by adopting a positive and open attitude

### Suggested set of questions:

- What are the tasks you were assigned throughout your whole mobility?
- How did you integrate into the host organisation?
- If any, how were your relations with the public in your host organisation?
- How did you work in your team? Did you manage to integrate well?
- What were your responsibilities? Did you manage to take initiatives?
- Have you acquired or developed technical skills? If yes, which ones?
- Have you acquired or developed linguistic skills? If yes, which ones?
- What were the difficulties you faced throughout your mission? How did you overcome them?
- Can you provide general feedback on mentorship and coordination within the hosting organisation?

### Provide general feedback

- Provide feedback on the participant's answers
- Provide general feedback on the overall contribution of the VET participant
- Highlight a few improvements (only if needed) that the participant can rely on for their future projects
- Highlight qualities and skills that the VET participant was able to manifest throughout the mobility

### Reflection on the overall international mobility experience

- Assessment of the overall intercultural experience of the participant
- Discussion on the integration of the VET participants
- Ask for feedback on the accommodation and questions on daily life

### Suggested set of questions:

- Did you manage to adapt to the local context?
- What were your initial expectations? Have they changed throughout the mobility period?
- Did you face any cultural / linguistic challenge? How did you overcome them?
- What was the impact of the international environment on your mission? To what extent did it contribute to your personal development?
- Any anecdotes to share?
- Any advice for future VET participants?

### Give advice and suggestions

- Share your knowledge and experience if necessary
- Provide general feedback on the participant's overall integration in the new environment
- Assess points of improvements and take note for future participants

## Future projects

- Discussion on the participant's future projects

### Suggested set of questions:

- Did your future project plan change during the international mobility period ?
- Do you feel more capable of reaching your future objectives after this experience ?
- As far as your professional future is concerned, do you think you have a better chance of finding a stable job?
- Have you already found an opportunity on the labour market?
- Among what you achieved during your mobility project, what are you the most proud of?

### Final logistical considerations

- Final check with the VET participant on administrative and financial aspects of the project

### VET participants' expectations:

To be listened and to receive feedback from both the coordinator and the mentor about their overall contribution

Assess their contribution and integration within the organisation and the local community

Rely on the professional and personal skills acquired for their future job search

## ***Outcomes of evaluation meeting***

- Feedback about the final evaluation meeting format & content
- Ask the VET participants to make a last written/video testimony about their experience within the hosting organisation



**05**

**HOW TO MAINTAIN  
REGULAR AND EFFECTIVE  
COMMUNICATION?**

## How to maintain regular and effective communication?

This chapter focuses on how to keep the link between the VET participant, Sending Organisation (SO) and Hosting Organisation (HO) to maintain constant and effective communication. This section will focus on providing practical advice on how to keep communication between the three entities involved in the project through formal and non-formal interactions.

### *Communicating in formal ways*

Formal communication refers to the flow of official information through proper, predefined channels and routes. The flow of information is controlled and needs deliberate effort to be properly communicated.

As mentioned in the eNotebook for VET participants, every project is supposed to have a structure with details on schedule, timetable, responsibilities of each party and a preferred way of communication. Therefore, it is important to remain consistent in planning and schedule dates and online events ahead. Planning has a key role when it comes to achieving goals.

**It is strongly recommended to create a detailed schedule beforehand:**

- From the very beginning of the project, the overall timetable of the meetings should be clear for all parties, when should the main meetings be scheduled: on-arrival, monthly meetings and final evaluation.
- Each party will require various information throughout the whole project. There is a need to share the information according to its relevance and to evaluate which requires to be shared with whom before planning the meeting and inviting participants.
- Prioritise communication through email for formal communication and to transfer information related to the project.
- Set up online meetings to facilitate the exchange of information. Write reports of these meetings to keep track of the exchange of information.

### *Keep in touch in a non-formal way*

Non-formal communication is casual communication between co-workers in the workplace or online when it comes to virtual or online mobility. It is unofficial in nature, and it is based in the non-formal, social relationships that are formed in a workplace outside of the normal hierarchy of organisational structure. Here are few advice for how to make non-normal communication effective:

- Create a WhatsApp / Teams group or choose another way (Messenger, Viber, Google Chat) to facilitate daily non-formal communication. It is slightly different to mail communication, as it enables it to be more casual.
- Exchange phone numbers to facilitate communication. Sending, forwarding, and answering formal emails can be time-consuming and certain issues can be addressed operationally. Depending on your preferred practice, phone numbers can be exchanged for emergencies only, or can be used for daily communication.
- Create a friendly environment by including the VET participants in daily businesses of the organisation, even (and especially) if the participant is working online.



- Plan specific periods of time to spend quality time together whether it is in-person or online. The most commonly organised events are BYO (bring your own) team meetings, where everybody connects at the same time from their places with the drink or food of their choice. Many online games are also available one to one or also in teams.

**IMPORTANT: remember to always keep written track of your work-related exchanges in case any issue should arise.**

## ***Digital tools to follow-up participants online***

Whether the international mobility is done in-person or in a virtual context, follow-up may be done by the SO, HO and VET participants online. Here is a list of easily-accessible applications for daily online follow-up. Information on how to use them is also developed in the eNotebook.

### **Google Drive**

**Google Drive** is not only useful to stock any type of documents, it also has a wide variety of effective features.

#### ➤ **Description of the tool**

Google Drive is the internet data storage service provided by Google in its free version and includes a storage capacity of 15 GB. This service works like a Windows Office or OpenOffice package but online, allowing users to create folders to store and upload files of any type. Drive is also available for Android and iOS (mobile operating systems).

#### ➤ **Learning objectives**

This tool is user-friendly for students, researchers, administrative staff, and others because it allows users to create documents in a variety of formats, work online on the same file from any device simply by accessing the cloud through their email. It can also be shared with other users to enable them to edit, comment or download documents.

#### ➤ **How to use it**

To access the Google Drive suite of resources, users will need a Gmail email account. This is the only requirement for anyone to be able to start enjoying the benefits offered by Drive. Access can be made both through the computer and through mobile devices, as long as they have the Drive application downloaded on these devices. It is available through any computer with a web browser. Internet connection and email accounts are required.

### **Google Calendar**

**Google Calendar** not only serves to create personal events, it also has a wide variety of useful tools for users.

#### ➤ **Description of the tool**

Google Calendar allows you to create and modify a virtual calendar with the advantage of being able to access it from any place and/or mobile device with internet access. It enables users to keep up to date with appointments, interviews, work to be delivered, special dates, holidays, etc. This tool replaces the well-known personal diary. Calendar is also designed to be shared with others and create multiple calendars that can be used together individually or in teams.

### ➤ Learning objectives

Google Calendar has a wide variety of options, some of which are: Create an event, add guests, add room, location and conferencing, add event description, add attachment, choose event color, calendar and default visibility, set up notifications, save events, update an existing event, check guest attendance list, delete an event, restore a deleted event.

### ➤ How to use it

Google Calendar is one of the many tools that Google makes available to its users, so it is only necessary to have a personal Google account to access this service. In addition, Google Calendar is an online application tool accessible through a browser, Android app or IOS app. If accessed through a browser, there is no need to download any software.

## Discord

**Discord** is a free voice, video, and text chat app that is used to talk and hang out with their communities and friends.

### ➤ Description of the tool

Discord is a free voice, video, and text chat app that's used by tens of millions of people ages 13+ to talk and hang out with their communities and friends. It provides a social environment in which people can easily engage as part of communities called "servers". It is much more informal compared to Slack, Telegram, or other tools.

### ➤ Learning objectives

Discord has a wide variety of advantages, such as the large number of users that can participate in the same live room, as well as the number of facilities that this tool offers, such as controlling the functions of the various administrators of a room, share your screen and enable easy voice and video chats.

### ➤ How to use it

To access the app, you need to go to Discord. There you will be prompted to either use the web-based app or to download the app to your device. To use Discord, it is necessary to create an account. After logging in you can either create your own server to which you will invite your friends, or you will join a server that is already created. To join the server, you must receive an invitation. It is also possible to create separate channels where you can discuss different topics with your friends/audience. You can use either the web version of the app or download the app directly to your Mac, Windows, Linux, or Android. It's free and you need an account to use it.

If you want more (detailed) information, read the ePassport and eGuide for functional tips on how to use these tools and discover others.



**06**

**POTENTIAL  
CHALLENGES AND  
CONFLICT SITUATIONS**

## Potential challenges and conflict situations

Supporting VET participants throughout their mobility also means that the mentor or coordinator needs to be prepared to face difficulties and challenges.

### *In everyday life*

Some difficulties cannot be predicted, whereas others can be anticipated. It is the duty of the hosting organisations to ensure the health and safety of the VET participant, as well as their well-being throughout the project. Do not forget that what is perceived as normal for the local organisations is not necessarily considered normal for the international participant and vice-versa.

**Problems that may arise during a VET project can be related to:**

#### Emotions

Missing family and friends, a sense of loneliness, disappointment, shyness, cultural shock on arrival...

**What can you do for the VET participants?**

- Take the VET participants for a **café or lunch**
- Have **regular meetings** to monitor their emotional well-being
- Introduce the VET participant to other people, local or international VET participants to create a **social life**
- Inform the VET participant about **cultural events**, places that they could visit, places where they could **practise sports**.
- Make sure the VET participant can be in touch with **family and friends**.
- Provide **books** so the VET participant can read more about the country and the cultural aspects to facilitate the integration.

#### Health

Depression, eating disorder (too much, not enough, bad food), stress, lack of sleep, accidents

**What can you do for the VET participants?**

- Provide the contact details of a doctor/psychologist.
- Take them to the doctor / hospital if needed
- Give some days off for the rest/holidays
- Take the VET participants for a coffee or organise an activity out, eventually with other colleagues or VET participants
- Receive specialised training, like seminars or workshops on well-being and mental health.

#### New environment

Integration difficulties within the local community, problems or lack of interest in making new contacts, poor infrastructure and lack of public transportation...

**What can you do for the VET participants?**

- Have a talk with the VET participants and ask **how you could help**
- Take the VET participants out and **show them around**

- **Introduce the VET participant** to all colleagues and other VET participants, and to the local community
- Organise team building activities with team and VET participants
- Propose visits of the surroundings
- **Show** how things work in the office and at home to the VET participants

## Financial issues

The VET participants may have difficulties in managing their budget or face financial difficulties

**What can you do for the VET participants? Inform the VET participants about:**

- the living costs in the country
- where to buy cheap food and essential goods
- where to get specific discounts for young people
- where to exchange money safely and with good rates
- how to use public transportation

## During the activities

**Difficulties and misunderstandings** can also occur during the planning or the implementation of the activities by the VET participants. These difficulties and misunderstandings have to be taken seriously as it can affect the smooth functioning of the project and the health of the VET participants.

## Activities and tasks assignments

In case the VET participants do not understand the tasks they were assigned and/or there is a lack of planning.

**What can be done?**

- Define the tasks for everybody
- Have **regular meetings** to evaluate progress
- **Set up deadlines** and inform what it is expected from them in terms of results
- **Keep yourself available** to answer questions and provide support
- **Adapt the tasks** to the VET participants' profile
- **Discuss** with the VET participants potential changes in the tasks and the objectives
- **Avoid asking** the VET participants to do ambitious projects, they are not employees
- **Give place** for personal project and encourage their creativity
- **Keep** the VET participant **motivated** and **provide** personal and professional **recognition**
- If a VET participant struggles with the implementation of a task, facilitate their collaboration **with other VET participants or other staff**
- In case of lack of activities, re-evaluate the need and discuss with the other staff what kind of activities can be done
- **Facilitate the communication** in the field by providing the translation by local VET participant or interpreter

## Lack of motivation

There are many reasons which could lead to losing interest and motivation throughout the VET participants' mobility. Poor preparation, lack of support, inadequate communication, repetitive tasks, lack of relevance in activities are some of the reasons among others which explains why VET

participants may start losing interest and lessen their involvement in their daily activities. Hybrid or online environments can also worsen the situation as participants can often find themselves isolated.

### What can you do for the VET participants ?

- Divide the VET participants' tasks and ask for more manageable sets.
- Ask them to write down each positive thing they experienced throughout the day
- Give daily feedback and state out credit for positive things they have accomplished
- Advise them to be kind to themselves and to take time for themselves
- Try to be available for them
- Receive specialised training, like seminars or workshops on wellbeing and mental health.
- Remind them that they can always ask for help

### Lack of communication

Misunderstandings can often come from a lack of communication between coordinator and the VET participants.

### What can you do for the VET participants?

- Organise **regular meetings** to discuss with the VET participants
- Plan meetings in advance
- **Give regular feedback** on the work done so the VET participants know that they are working in the right direction
- **Answer regularly** to the VET participants' email and messages
- **Facilitate the communication** between the VET participants and the other staff/stakeholders/community
- **Organise team building** to facilitate the communication between you and the VET participants, with the other staff, between the VET participants
- In case of travel, holiday, medical leave, inform the VET participants to whom they can **address their questions/ask for support during the mentor or coordinator's absence**

### Different workstyles

Some VET participants need more explanations and guidance to carry out the activities. Some VET participants like to work independently and do not need step by step guidance to complete the task.

### What can you do for the VET participants?

- Set the rules
- Allocate an observation period to understand how each person works before working together.
- Provide space for creativity and initiative so that the VET participants can contribute
- In case of an arisen problem, take time to discuss about it.

### Ambiguous situations

Difficulties may also result from uncertain/ambiguous situations. It is important to keep in mind that VET participants are not in their usual environment, nor did they grow up in this culture and country. It is not easy for them to understand every situation, nuances and cultural informal rules. A lack of framework, guidance or communication can lead to a wide interpretation range for the VET participants.

### What can you do for the VET participants?

- **Set the rules in advance** and ask the VET participants not to take decisions in the name of organisation, before consulting their coordinator
- Ask the VET participants to inform the coordinator before taking the initiative
- **Inform** the VET participants about **the internal procedures** of the organisation
- **Inform** the VET participants about **the local work culture**

### Unexpected situations

It is not easy to react nor adapt behaviour in an unexpected situation. It may often happen that the activities do not go as planned/need to change/be adapted to unexpected situations. This can lead to some misunderstandings and disappointment.

### What can you do for the VET participants?

- Propose different solutions related to the VET participants' **objectives and needs**
- **Inform the sending organisation** and the VET participants beforehand, when possible, and try to find joint solutions
- Propose to the VET participants to carry out alternative activities linked to their field of experience

### *Hybrid and virtual activities*

Hybrid and virtual activities may present extra difficulties and conflict situations that need to be addressed, although many of the difficulties can be similar to the ones described above.

Extra problems that may arise during a hybrid or virtual VET mobility project can be related to:

### Emotions

Working in an online environment can issue very diverse effects depending on the VET participant's profile: sense of isolation, lack of motivation, difficulty to understand the tasks, etc

### What can you do for the VET participants?

- Organise daily / weekly meetings to keep track of the participants' motivations
- **Provide clear guidelines** from the beginning that the participants can relate to in case of any doubt
- **Take time to discuss** with the participant in informal ways
- **Organise team events** to ensure that the participant is integrated with the staff professionally and personally.

### Lack of appropriate equipment, software

Hybrid and virtual mobilities are extremely reliant on the quality of the equipment and software available to the VET participants. As a sending or hosting organisation, it is crucial to consider these aspects prior and throughout the mobility period and take adapted measures for the participants.

### What can you do for the VET participants?

- Assess the needs of the VET participants prior to the beginning of the mobility period
- Ensure accessibility to the organisation's software and communication channels

- Choose easily accessible tools for VET participants for them to use regardless of their hardware
- Consider to implement alternative options that the VET participants be able to use a specific tool
- Collaborate with all the involved parties to find suitable alternatives or solutions to facilitate the online mobility period.

### Lack of necessary digital skills

Hybrid and virtual mobilities are also extremely reliant on the extent to which VET participants feel comfortable with working in a digital environment. As a sending or hosting organisation, it is crucial to assess the digital skills of the VET participants prior and throughout the mobility period and take adapted measures to support them.

#### What can you do for the VET participants?

- **Assess the digital skills** of the VET participants prior to the beginning of the mobility period
- **Ensure accessibility to guides and tutorials** to support VET participants to develop knowledge and skills on the tools used by the organisation.
- Choose **easily accessible tools** to facilitate adaptation
- Consider to **implement alternative** options that the VET participants be able to use a specific tool
- **Collaborate with all the involved parties** to find suitable alternatives or solutions to facilitate the online mobility period.

### Communication challenges

The hybrid and virtual context can amplify the communicational difficulties faced by VET participants because of different time zones, language barriers, or technical difficulties.

#### What can you do for the VET participants?

- Establish clear and efficient communication guidelines prior to the beginning of the mobility
- **Multiply online meetings** to keep steady communication
- As mentor / coordinator, **take on your role as main point of contact** and keep ensure constant communication
- **Provide translation tools** to the VET participant that the language barrier is not hindering communication
- **Collaborate with all involved parties** to provide extra pedagogical resources to the VET participants





**07**

**CONFLICT  
MANAGEMENT**

## Conflict management

Lack of understanding, misunderstandings, disputes and conflicts can arise during a mobility project. Such situations may arise without any reprehensible intentions. It is important to anticipate and to know how to deal with these situations, how to handle them, to make the most out of them and develop more productive relations.

### *Why do conflicts arise?*

There are a lot of reasons for conflicts in a diverse environment. First of all, given the international nature of the experience, conflicts may arise due to different **expectations, culture, age, gender, stereotypes, habits, values, beliefs**.

There is a wide variety of **elements** that can influence behaviour and reactions when dealing with conflicts. These can be **internal** (feelings, needs, emotions, physical condition, etc.) and **external** (barriers, living conditions, weather, culture, time pressure). International mobility projects involve a wide variety of stakeholders (participant, coordinator, mentor etc.) and each one of them can contribute or resolve the conflict in their own way.

Conflicts highlight discomfort and produce positive consequences. They may:

- Bring change
- Reveal issues
- Be a vector to mark personal boundaries
- Contribute to the formation of identity
- Create connections

Conflict is a challenge that can be tackled and settled to get maximum benefits and minimum loss out of it. It is a collision that if deescalated can lead to constructive and sustainable solutions for both parties.

### *Types of potential issues*

This typology is suited for in-person, hybrid or virtual international mobilities. It points out the conflicts that arise most often and focuses on sources that may cause the issue.

**Relationship or interpersonal conflict** - is arising when we tend to perceive the other person in a negative way based on our bad experience, prejudice, stereotypes, negative attitude. In the conflict we deny to accept other personal differences and different behaviour, caused very often by lack of communication or no communication. In the case of online communication this problem can be increased due to the formal nature of online communication and the difficulties of interpretation that may arise.

**Intercultural conflict** – VET participants come to their service from diverse cultures and with different values that they gained throughout their life. These values seem to be the right recipe for them and may collide with other peoples' conceptions and values.

**Structural conflict** – Such conflict arises when communication is not clear enough regarding to tasks, roles and expectations in the structure or system of work. Structural conflicts can occur due to uncertainties in terms of expectations and requirements, internal practice in methods and tools used,

language and cultural barriers, or differences in work conditions (especially for online mobilities). Structural conflicts can make it challenging for VET participants to adjust to their new working system and may require additional support and guidance to avoid any further complication.

**Conflict of information** – This situation may occur naturally because the parties involved have different ideas made out of having various information sources, beliefs, values, experience. Each party may understand information in different ways resulting in misunderstandings.

**Conflict of interest** – Incompatible situations, opinions, or practice which concerns two different parties. It may grow out of the natural difference between people's mindset, culture, expectations, etc. To solve it we have to communicate out the way how to make both of them satisfied with the situation.

## ***How to prevent conflicts***

Conflicts can be prevented by following a set of common rules.

### **The participant agreement:**

- Thoroughly prepared by the SO and HO, read and signed by the participant, sending and hosting and coordinating organisations representatives.
- Clear division of tasks and responsibilities
- review of the articles dealing with the consequences should one party fail to fulfil its responsibilities
- Financial rules – that the mobility is free of charge, and deadlines for payments of pocket money, travel costs, etc.
- Articles on risk and conflict management procedures
- Data of representatives of each party together with contact details and declaration which channels will be used
- Mobility quality standards provided in Infopack (Welcome letter, what to expect from the mobility experience, insurance plan and Youthpass guide)

### **Background conditions:**

- Professionalism of all involved parties
- Responsible parties agreed on terms beforehand and entertain a comprehensive professional relationship
- Thorough preparation and transparency of all conditions
- Decided deadlines for meetings, reports, actions.

### **Good practices:**

- Integration period for participants – to give chances to adapt to new conditions – with training, then working
- Establish personal relations with all relevant people (e.g., common tip, strategic meeting out of town)
- Establishing informal and emergency communication channels
- Style of communication – non – violent communication



**08**

**CONCLUSION**

## Conclusion

The eFollow-up guide is meant to be a supporting tool for VET professionals, such as Sending and Hosting Organisations, to improve remote monitoring of the participants during hybrid or virtual VET mobility. It is made as a tool that can support the organisation of the activity in such a way, so that, if needed, the participants will be able to start their mobility in the origin country or to continue it from home in case the mobility is interrupted for any reason.

The IO4 eFollow-up guide supports through the definition of who mentors and coordinators are and in the process of e-monitoring of international mobility participants. Simultaneously, it gives advice on how to kick off the arrival meeting in a way that eases the follow-up process for sending and hosting organisations along the VET mobility to set rules and boundaries related to communication with VET participants in online follow-up processes of their activities.

This tool aims to guide VET professionals through practical information of the on-arrival training, squeezes the practical information of preparation, realisation and evaluation of the training into one chapter, so it provides step-by-step guidance on how to set up regular follow-up meetings and eventually, also final evaluation meetings.

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