

CHARTER



TUTOR TRAINING FOR THE  
SELF-DETERMINATION  
OF LITERACY  
LEARNERS





EUR-ALPHA  
2009-2012

Literacy has been jointly defined by Eur-Alpha partners as:

The basic knowledge and key competences required for active participation in society by adults who have missed out on formal education and lack the skills to read or write and understand - in any language a simple text linked to their everyday lives.

## Foreword: The role and involvement of the Eur-Alpha Scientific Committee Tutors Training

The partners involved in the project agreed to work together for the improvement of training for literacy tutors throughout Europe.

To achieve this the project involved three stages: sharing, analysing and disseminating good practice related to tutor training. The aim was to develop training which enables tutors to support learners to become self-sufficient and actively involved in society.

The Scientific Committee Tutor Training has jointly drawn up this Charter, which has been validated unanimously by the partners.

Our methods and approaches are based on a reflective approach to and a constructivist understanding of teaching and learning.

According to the principles advocated by the Eur-Alpha network, the aims of the committee were:

- To study approaches to tutor training for literacy learning,
- To work using real-life examples and situations,
- To develop methods for:
  - Collecting examples of tools and approaches used by members of the network,
  - Defining what constitutes good practice (the purpose of this document),
  - Framing and presenting practices in a coherent way,
  - Enabling practices to be disseminated across Europe.

## EUR-ALPHA CHARTER 2012

## PROMOTING SELF-DETERMINATION AND RAISING AWARENESS

In this document, members of the Scientific Committee propose criteria which may help to define good practice.

### ROLE OF THE TUTOR: TO PROVIDE APPROPRIATE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

#### The Tutor

- Works within a given socio-cultural and economic context (which varies from country to country and which should be taken into account)
- Has to transmit knowledge and co-construct key skills (basic knowledge of oral and written communication, mathematics and logic, learning how to learn, new information and communication technologies) but also some general knowledge of the environment to enable the learner to get involved in social and working life
- Plans her work as far as possible in collaboration with the learner. She must facilitate learning which is contextualised, relevant, reflective and analytical.

#### VERSATILITY:

Preferably the tutor should work as part of a team. The tutor is at the same time a designer, facilitator, mediator, coach, assessor and organiser. The tutor should be able to work in a critically reflective way. Her role is not only to support learning but also to welcome, support and monitor progress. The tutor must know and understand the community in which she works and make use of the dynamics of local networks and partnerships.

Her expertise is based on the skills and knowledge to be transmitted, on transmission techniques, on skills associated with social and professional inclusion, on audience understanding (analysis of needs, positioning, co-construction of programmes, intercultural work, managing/using difference).



## TO DESIGN A LEARNING PROGRAMME THE TUTOR MUST:

- Promote empowerment/self-determination/active participation,
- Be attentive to learners, their progress, their learning objectives, the hopes and experience they bring to the training and to the group,
- Promote equality, diversity and integration amongst the learners, through the sharing of each individual's existing skills, knowledge and understanding,
- Reflect on and assess her own practices and ongoing professional development,
- Collaborate with other people, groups and/or organisations to open up the training to the wider community and to encourage exchanges,
- Be responsive to expectations and needs of learners,
- Be aware of institutional and professional demands surrounding learning,
- Consider the life experience of learners,
- Use context appropriate teaching methods, styles and techniques when working with adults,
- Support adult learners to become responsible for their own learning and to become lifelong learners and independent citizens,
- Be able to treat difference and diversity as an advantage within groups.

## WHEN WORKING WITH LEARNERS, THE TUTOR SHOULD:

- Explore the role of literacy in the learner's life, their existing skills, the nature and possible causes of their difficulties, their needs, expectations and motivations for attending training,
- Establish with learners their learning goals taking into account their own expectations and needs,
- Facilitate a critically reflective and participative approach to learning and the construction of knowledge,
- Support adults to communicate effectively and to engage actively in everyday life.

## ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR:

### The Tutor

- Is always considerate to others, shows understanding and empathy, listens carefully, demonstrates openness to other cultures and ways of thinking,
- Is humane, a seeker, a creative explorer nurturing the acquisition of knowledge in others,
- Works with learners with different points of view and mediates between these to resolve differences,
- Creates meaning, is able to create innovative pedagogical sequences which establish links between the learners,
- Manages the group dynamics,
- Challenges stereotypes,
- Distances herself from her own values and beliefs,
- Gets informed and develops a critical analysis about current events and research in the literacy field,
- Must be adaptable, creative and open to new ideas,
- Must continually develop the ability to reflect critically on her practice,
- Must participate in exchanges between trainers,
- Must be committed to and engage in lifelong learning,
- Must create, establish and develop projects with various stakeholders in the political, social, cultural and educational fields.

To achieve self-determination and raised awareness of learners involves the development of literacy practices which stimulate a critical analysis of society; the development of citizens' initiatives; and the exercise of social, cultural, economic and political rights.

# KEY STEPS

## THE WELCOME

- Conduct a welcome interview at the beginning of learning which encourages the learner to think about their situation, needs and plans,
- Enable the learner to choose from the learning options available according to their own needs,
- Encourage the learner to feel responsible for their own learning and to become actively involved,
- Encourage the learner to articulate their needs, desires and aspirations,
- Explain how the organisation works, and the place and role of each individual,
- Design with the learner their own evaluation methods,
- Organise learning sessions jointly with the learner,
- Use new communication and information technologies as appropriate and encourage reflection on their usefulness and practical applications,
- Base learning on real-life situations.

## THE ROLE

- To help the learner to formalise his/her social, cultural, professional, family and learning plans,
- To establish pertinent reference points (life history, personal strategy, etc.),
- To co-construct the learning plan involving learners in the design of their own learning project,
- To design the educational content of sessions, situations and individual learning plans.

## DESIGNING AND FACILITATING LEARNING

The tutor must always ask this question about the activity: why and for whom?

- The tutor must consider the individuals in their environment in a holistic way, enable them to be participants in the design of their learning and their project, and give meaning to their learning, while constantly encouraging collective work and co-construction of knowledge,

- Group differences (needs, profiles, pace) should not be suppressed but regarded as a strength,
- Learning should be developed in a critically reflective and systematic way,
- Formal practices for reflecting on and about learning should be agreed and carried out together,
- Implement systems and practices which allow consistent responses to a range of issues and problems,
- Develop the capacity to improvise and cope with the unexpected,
- Adapt quickly to diverse situations and to deal with emergencies,
- Put knowledge and theory into practice in an appropriate and timely manner,
- Enable inventive and creative interventions in the learning environment.

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment should be formative to support learning.

As necessary, the tutor will adapt tools and approaches according to learning objectives and needs.

## MONITORING

Supporting learners in their lives beyond the "classroom" is an integral part of learning.

The reflexivity of the tutor and learner should be constant and is achieved by:

- Establishing contacts between learners and networks,
- Working on motivation and re-engagement,
- Maintaining records of learning and progress,
- Assessment of the achievement of learning objectives,
- Communication with partners,
- Supporting individuals in the steps towards their goals.

## Conclusion

The tutor ensures that groups work effectively together by:

Establishing participative and reflective practices

Establishing a climate of trust and respect within the group, conducive to the strengthening of self-esteem and expression of all participants

Working in collaboration

Co-constructing shared rules in the group which are democratic and respectful of others.

These steps to be valid must be explained to and be accepted by the learners.



Citizenship  
Reflective analysis  
Self-determination  
Empowerment  
Critical thinking  
Creativity

# SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE TUTORS TRAINING

This Charter was written by some members of the Tutor Trainers' Committee with the contributions and support of other colleagues. The Charter is informed by several documents which are listed below.

## SOURCES

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