Module #4

MODULE TITLE: Methods, techniques and tools for assessing and valorising adult learning

Partner's organization name: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Name and Surname of the Author/s: George K. Zarifis & Achilleas Papadimitriou

Module Title	METHODS, TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS FOR ASSESSING AND VALORISING ADULT LEARNING

Module relevance to EQF LEVEL	**EQF LEVEL 6**
	The module focuses on the place of assessment and evaluation in the context of curriculum design/development/delivery and adult learning. Learners will learn how to analyze and evaluate assessment and evaluation tools and strategies that allow them to meet the needs of various learners and stakeholders. They will also demonstrate their learning by designing an evaluation strategy appropriate for the curriculum used in their own workplace-learning context.

Module Description	**Module aims**	**Structure and content of the module**
	This module aims to the following: 1. To provide an advanced approach to authentic and self evaluation with the use of portfolios. Reflection and documentation of one's own learning biography and acquired competences with the help of a mind-map and a standardised evaluation sheet is explained. 2. To advocate for external evaluation, which is meant to increase the objectivity of the validation results: The external evaluator conducts an interview with the candidate and observes a total of three hours teaching practice. The results are documented in a standardised evaluation sheet and in a holistic appraisal in narrative form. 3. To promote the concept of consolidation in the assessment and valorisation process in adult learning. The results of the self-evaluation and the external evaluation are compared and discussed between the adult educator and the evaluator. Where there is disagreement concerning the assessment of individual competencies these should be further clarified and an agreement should be reached. The results of this consolidation process are documented in the final standardised validation sheet and signed by the candidate and the evaluator.	Assessment in programs and institutions where adult higher education is the primary mission must carefully select a set of strategies that are both appropriate to their students and comparable to approaches used with other student populations. While these programs can usefully draw on methods characteristic of adult higher education, such as prior learning assessment, they should not be limited to these approaches. The inclusion of methods used with younger students as well can provide a richer array of possible strategies and counteract tendencies to treat programs for adults as outside the mainstream of higher education. A program for adults might, for example, use principles of prior learning assessment to devise a qualitative assessment of performance in the major and combine that approach with a standardized test of achievement. This multi-method approach would permit conclusions both about accomplishment of specific program objectives and about student performance in relation to external expectations. The following section offers more specific advice about the selection of assessment strategies that are appropriate to adult students in various program contexts. Several general principles can be derived from a review of the characteristics of adult students and the programs that serve them. In this module, the following principles will be discussed: • choose methods that are involving and related to students' learning; • use instruments that can reflect the complex patterns of adult learning; • include self-assessment strategies; • recognize the special circumstances of adult students; • employ multiple methods. As assessment increasingly becomes a part of the normal business of institutions serving adult students, these principles can guide the planning of an appropriate assessment strategy.

Module Entry Level	Participants are normally expected to have a good grasp of aspects of assessment, evaluation and valorisation in adult education and learning. They are also expected to be active in their field with a minimum of 150 teaching hours in adult education programmes.

Module Duration	The suggested duration of the module is **20 teaching hours** (1 teaching hour = 45 minutes). The suggested time frame can be organised as follows: − **5 hours session** will cover issues that relate to distinguishing assessment from evaluation and valorization techniques (plus **27 min.** of an optional ad-hoc activity) − **5 hours session** will cover issues that relate to authentic evaluation and assessment portfolios (plus **27 min.** of an optional ad-hoc activity) − **5 hours session** will cover the effect of direct evidence of skill acquisition (plus **27 min.** of an optional ad-hoc activity) − **5 hours session** will cover modes of reflection in assessment of adult learning with discussion on How do we assess adult learners without necessarily testing them (**plus 27 min.** of an optional ad-hoc activity) The time frame may be altered depending on the level of readiness by the participants as well as their previous knowledge of adult learning theories.
Module Optional Supplementary Information	• The module proposes that grade level equivalents reference the wrong performance indicators, report performance on a less relevant scale for adults, and don't tell you what you think they do. The main reason some people prefer grade level equivalents to IRT scale scores is they think grade level equivalents are more comprehensible to a lay audience. But even this is not true. With minimal explanation, scale scores linked to basic skill competencies can provide more meaningful information than grade level equivalents. • Scale scores developed through item response theory (IRT) report an individual's proficiency as a score along a fixed metric scale, with each score representing fixed gradations of difficulty in a person's proficiency at competencies or skills. IRT scales may use different ranges. Competencies or skills can be placed on this fixed scale with the easiest competencies on one end and the most difficult on the other. Individuals can be assessed and placed on the same scale, matching their skills and proficiencies to the skills and competencies on the scale. Individuals with the same scores on an assessment have the same proficiency, regardless of when or where they were tested. • Grade level equivalents, on the other hand, report test results in terms of a year and month in a school grade. The skills represented by grade level equivalent scores are those a child in that grade and month of school would have. These skills would vary with the skills of the children tested and used as the base of comparison, or the "norm group." IRT scale scores are based on ability alone, while grade level equivalent scores are based on assumptions about knowledge, ability, and skill development. In addition, where grade level equivalent scales are gross estimates of probable performance, IRT scales are more refined and less biased.
Module Learning Objective Title	**EVALUATIVE STRATEGIES IN ADULT EDUCATION**

Expected learning outcomes – Knowledge, Skills and Competences	**Knowledge**	**Skills**	**Competences**
	With the completion of this module participants will be in position to: 1. Distinguish the differences between formative and summative evaluation 2. Recognize the differences among additional classifications of assessments including traditional, alternative, and performance	With the completion of this module participants will be in position to: 3. Apply different strategies to assess adults' learning 4. Perform diagnostic assessments 5. Organise and evaluate an assessment portfolio 6. Carry out Learning Styles Inventories	With the completion of this module participants will be in position to: 7. Critically appreciate the value of the various assessment tools and techniques 8. Be in position to appreciate that to operate a workable assessment plan they must consider how to gain support from the adult learners

	Suggested learning and/or instructional material	Alignment to Expected Learning Outcomes
Suggested learning/instructional Material	1. Explaining authentic assessment available in the following You tube videos: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6w6kZ5BOrQ, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQPCk27tM4U and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOupbmSx27A	**Suggested material #1** is selected in order to facilitate learners to achieve the learning outcomes #1, #2 and #3. These short films contain elaborate information on Portfolio assessment. This is an assessment form that learners do together with their teachers, and is an alternative to the classic classroom test. The portfolio contains samples of the learner's work and shows growth over time. An important keyword is reflection: By reflection on their own work, learners begin to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their own work (self-assessment). The weaknesses then become improvement goals. In portfolio assessment it is the quality that counts, not the quantity. Another keyword is *learning objectives*. Each portfolio entry needs to be assessed with reference to its specific learning objectives or goals. Adult education literature is replete with discussions on characteristics of adult learners and adult learning and development. But how do we actually know if adults gained the knowledge they set out to learn? We know that there are several factors that should be taken into consideration when facilitating adult learning, but as adult educators and practitioners of the field, it is equally important that we learn and/or know how to deploy various approaches in assessing adult learning.
	2. Fenwick, Tara J. (1996) Assessing Adult Learning Using Portfolios; Paper presented at the Atlantic Teaching Showcase Conference. Available at: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED400462.pdf	**Suggested material #2** is selected in order to facilitate learners to achieve the learning outcomes #4, #5 and #6. This material is very useful as it provides adequate information on using portfolios for assessing adult learning. A portfolio is a folder assembled by the learner, containing samples of the learner's work collected over a period of time. The kinds of items reflect the nature of the course content. Each individual who decides to use a portfolio approach must develop unique expectations, guidelines for content, and assessment criteria suitable for the purpose of the course and the objective of student involvement in the portfolio activity. A suggested series of steps when beginning to use the portfolio is as follows: (1) decide what is to be collected, by whom, and when; (2) spend time introducing portfolios to learners; (3) hold periodic conferences with learners; (4) grade portfolios holistically; and (5) spend time responding to learners. Benefits of using portfolios include the following: portfolios show learner growth over time; they involve learners directly in their own learning and evaluation; they show the process of learning, not just the outcomes; they build learner confidence; they are holistic measures of learning; they are a learning experience in themselves; they are useful for learners seeking employment; they are useful indicators of gaps in the program; and they are an effective means of faculty development. Potential concerns are as follows: the uncertainty of their validity, learner choice of a work sample not being representative of the predetermined outcomes, additional time required of instructor for evaluation, ambiguous process of evaluation method, and student skepticism.
	3. Authentic Assessment Toolbox. Available at: http://jfmueller.faculty.noctrl.edu/toolbox/tasks.htm?utm_campaign=elearningindustry.com&utm_source=%2Fdesign-assessments-promote-learning-process&utm_medium=link	**Suggested material #3** is selected in order to facilitate learners to achieve the learning outcomes #3, #4, #5, #6, #7 and #8. This useful site explains that authentic assessment, in contrast to more traditional assessment, encourages the integration of teaching, learning and assessing. In the "traditional assessment" model, teaching and learning are often separated from assessment, i.e., a test is administered after knowledge or skills have (hopefully) been acquired. In the authentic assessment model, the same authentic task used to measure the students' ability to apply the knowledge or skills is used as a vehicle for student learning. For example, when presented with a real-world problem to solve, students are learning in the process of developing a solution, teachers are facilitating the process, and the students' solutions to the problem becomes an

		assessment of how well the students can meaningfully apply the concepts.
Suggested repertoire of teaching methods and techniques and suggested educational activities with timeframe	**Suggested teaching method or technique (to be utilised individually or in combinations)**	**Relevance to learning/instructional material and alignment to Expected Learning Outcomes**
	1. **Presentation through multimedia** is employed to highlight the most important theories and approaches to adult learning.	**Presentation through multimedia** is selected as it is compatible to learning material #1 in order to facilitate learners to achieve learning outcomes #1, #2 and #3. Multimedia methods of presentation include slide shows, movies, and PowerPoint presentations. When creating presentations, it's important to keep notes concise and to the point while including interesting and relevant images. If done well, a presentation can be very interesting and effective for learner learning. Movies present their own set of problems and concerns but can be extremely effective when teaching certain subjects.
	2. **Lecture** is employed to explain and analyse in more detail historical aspects on theories and approaches to adult learning.	**Lecture** is selected as it is compatible to learning material #2 in order to facilitate learners to achieve learning outcomes #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, and #6. Lectures are instructor-centered forms of instruction that often get a bad rap. However, it is important to realize that lectures come in many different forms, some more effective than others. The least effective form of lecture involves a educator reading from notes or the text. Learners quickly lose interest and typically little is learned from the experience. However, dynamic educators often lecture in a more free form manner, including learners and providing humorous or insightful information throughout. The third form of lecture includes multimedia. For example, an art history educator might show images and lecture on individual elements of paintings.
	3. **Group brainstorming** is employed to motivate learners respond to issues that relate to the structure and scope of adult learning theories and models as well as to extract ideas regarding critical views on certain adult learning theories and their implication to practice.	**Group brainstorming** is selected as it is compatible to learning material #2 in order to facilitate learners to achieve learning outcomes #4, #5 and #6. Brainstorming combines a relaxed, informal approach to problem solving with lateral thinking. It encourages people to come up with thoughts and ideas that can, at first, seem a bit crazy. Some of these ideas can be crafted into original, creative solutions to a problem, while others can spark even more ideas. This helps to get people unstuck by "jolting" them out of their normal ways of thinking. Therefore, during brainstorming sessions, people should avoid criticizing or rewarding ideas. You're trying to open up possibilities and break down incorrect assumptions about the problem's limits. Judgment and analysis at this stage stunts idea generation and limit creativity. Evaluate ideas at the end of the session – this is the time to explore solutions further, using conventional approaches. You can take advantage of the full experience and creativity of all team members. When one member gets stuck with an idea, another member's creativity and experience can take the idea to the next stage. You can develop ideas in greater depth with group brainstorming than you can with individual brainstorming. Another advantage of group brainstorming is that it helps everyone feel that they've contributed to the solution, and it reminds people that others have creative ideas to offer. It's also fun, so it can be great for team building. Group brainstorming can be risky for individuals. Unusual suggestions may appear to lack value at first sight – this is where you need to chair sessions tightly, so that the group doesn't crush these ideas and stifle creativity. Where possible, participants should come from a wide range of disciplines. This cross-section of experience can make the session more creative. However, don't make the group too big: as with other types of teamwork, groups of five to seven people are usually most effective.
	4. **Icebreaker** is employed to develop group dynamics in order to respond to issues that relate to the implication and	**Icebreaker** is selected as it is compatible to learning material #1 and #2, in order to facilitate learners to achieve learning outcomes #7 and #8. As interactive and often fun sessions run before the main proceedings, they help people get to know each other and buy into

	effectiveness of adult learning theories.	the purpose of the event. If such a session is well-designed and well-facilitated, it can really help get things off to a great start. By getting to know each other, getting to know the facilitators, and learning about the objectives of the event, people can become more engaged in the proceedings and so contribute more effectively towards a successful outcome. But have you ever been to an event when the ice breaker session went badly? Just as a great session can smooth the way for a great event, so a bad session can be a recipe for disaster. A bad session is at best simply a waste of time, or worse an embarrassment for everyone involved. As a facilitator, the secret of a successful icebreaking session is to keep it simple: design the session with specific objectives in mind and make sure that the session is appropriate and comfortable for everyone involved.
	5. **Whole group discussion** is employed to assist learners with responding to possible challenges in implicating and applying certain learning theories and models into practice.	**Whole group discussion** is selected as it is compatible to learning material #1, #2, #3 in order to facilitate learners to achieve learning outcomes #3, #4, #5, #6, #7 and #8. In a whole group discussion, the instructor and the learners share the focus of the lesson. Typically a educator presents information through questions and answers, ensuring that the learners are involved in learning. Educators can retain control while checking on learner learning throughout the lesson.
	6. **Small group discussions** is employed to assist learners with responding to possible challenges in implicating and applying certain learning theories and models into practice.	**Small group discussions** is selected as it is compatible to learning material #1, #2, #3 in order to facilitate learners to achieve learning outcomes is selected as it is compatible to learning material #1, #2, #3 in order to facilitate learners to achieve learning outcomes #3, #4, #5, #6, #7 and #8. This is a more complicated form of discussion. The educator breaks the class up into small groups and provides them with talking points that they must discuss. The educator then walks around the room, checking on the information being shared and ensuring participation by all within the group. An example of when this method of discussion would work well would be when learners have read a novel and are sharing information based on questions posed by the instructor. However, the educator must have a good handle onclassroom management to ensure that the discussion groups stay on topic.

ACTIVITY #1→ Media Critique: an evaluative exercise (27 minutes)

Activity Objectives	1. Comprehend and analyse a critique of authentic assessment using a rubric	
Additional objectives		
Time	**Content Focus**	**Method/Task**
10 Minutes	**Overview** • Standards Addressed	− Students will evaluate the validity of evidence presented to support a claim. − Students will provide support for arguments in written form. − Students will locate and access information from a variety of media.
5 Minutes	**Instructions** • Explain the task	− Select an article found in a popular magazine that makes one or more claims. − Identify some claims presented in the article. − Briefly describe the evidence used by the author(s) to support each claim. − Evaluate the evidence: Is the evidence relevant to the claim? − Does the evidence effectively support the claim? Is there sufficient evidence to draw a conclusion?
10 Minutes	**Rubric** • Evaluate the authentic assessment (Media Critique).		Criterion	Poor (1 pt.)	Good (2 pts.)	Excellent (3 pts.)	

• Specifically, focus on the task and rubric. • Don't evaluate the standards, but you can ask: Are the task and rubric aligned with the standards? Is the task well designed? Is the rubric well designed? Is it aligned with the task? • Fix the task and rubric. • If you find anything in either one that is not well-designed, describe how it might be changed.	Used complete sentences	Not at all	■	Usually
	Correct spelling and punctuation	Many errors	Few errors	No errors
	Clear thesis statement	Not clear	■	Clear
	Well organized	Not at all	■	Very organized
	Provides support for arguments	Little or no support provided	Support did not address argument	Well supported arguments
	Evaluated evidence effectively	Not at all	Sometimes	Usually

Time	Content Focus	Method/Task
2 Minutes	**Summary and Evaluation** − Complete session evaluation	− Evaluation form distributed and filled by participants

ACTIVITY #2→ Individual or Group Evaluation (27 minutes)

Activity Objectives	1. Understanding and analysing the basic assumptions on how to evaluate individually and within a group
Additional objectives	

Time	Content Focus	Method/Task
5 Minutes	**Overview** • Rationale and purpose of the activity	− Each member of the group is responsible for their own learning but the main function of the group is to help each other learn. If you can work as a group to understand material, be willing to ask for help when you need it as well as teach others what you know you will come away from this class with a much greater set of skills than you came in with. This will also vastly improve the grade you would have obtained without the group. Name: _____ Total: 1. Participated in group discussion without prompting 0 1 2 2. Did his or her fair share of the work (white boarding & problem solving) 0 1 2 3. Participated but did not dominate the group, interrupted others, spoke too much 0 1 2 4. Paid attention, listened to what was being said and done during discussions or group work 0 1 2 5. Stayed on the topic and did not try to get others off topic 0 1 2 6. Was considerate by making positive, encouraging remarks about group members and their ideas 0 1 2 7. Tried to involve others 0 1 2 8. Helped others learn within the group 0 1 2 9. Worked to make the group work an enjoyable experience 0 1 2 10. Was always prepared and had homework completed 0 1 2
15 Minutes	**Instructions** • Explain the content of the form provided and relevant task	− On the back of the sheet provided you will find the rubric that you will be using to evaluate yourself. After you are done evaluating your own performance within the group, evaluate your fellow group members below using the same rubric you used for yourself.

Time	Content Focus	Method/Task
7 Minutes	**Summary and Evaluation** − Complete session evaluation	− Evaluation form distributed and filled by participants

ACTIVITY #3→ Select an Authentic Task (27 minutes)

Activity Objectives	1. Familiarise with the process of choosing authentic tasks to evaluate
Additional objectives	

Time	Content Focus	Method/Task
5 Minutes	**Overview** • Rationale and purpose of the activity • Worksheet	− Identify your standards successfully, then the remaining three steps will be much easier. With each step it is helpful to return to your goals and standards for direction.
10 Minutes	**Participation in a team exercise** • First, authentic assessment does not compete with traditional assessments like tests. Rather, they complement each other. Each typically serves different assessment needs, so a combination of the two is often appropriate. Second, if you read the material on **Authentic Tasks** then you will recall that essay questions fall near the border between traditional and authentic assessments. Specifically, essay questions are constructed-response items. That is, in response to a prompt, students construct an answer out of old and new knowledge. Since there is no one exact answer to these prompts, students are constructing new knowledge that likely differs slightly or significantly from that constructed by other students. Typically, constructed response prompts are narrowly conceived, delivered at or near the same time a response is expected and are limited in length. However, the fact that students must construct new knowledge means that at least some of their thinking must be	− In this exercise you want to find a way students can demonstrate that they are fully capable of meeting the standard. The language of a well-written standard can spell out what a task should ask students to do to demonstrate their mastery of it. That might take the form of an analytic paper you assign, a multimedia presentation students develop (individually or collaboratively), a debate they participate in or even an essay question on a test.

	revealed. As opposed to selected response items, the teachers gets to look inside the head a little with constructed response answers. Furthermore, explaining or analyzing as one might do in an essay answer replicates a real-world skill one frequently uses.				

| 10 Minutes | **Reflection**
• A good strategy for evaluating a task is to imagine possible student performance on the task and see if you can really determine whether the standard was met or not. Imagine a student scored himself a 5 (correctly used all parts of a letter) for the "parts of a letter" criterion, a 5 for number of sentences, a 3 for sentence structure, and a 5 for voice on his draft. When you look at the student's draft, you score him a 3, 5, 3, 3. What have you learned about how well this student can evaluate his own work? |

Criteria	5	3	1
Parts of a letter	Correctly used all parts of a letter	Omitted one part of a letter	Omitted more than one part of a letter
Number of sentences	At least five sentences	Used four sentences	Used fewer than four sentences
Sentence structure	Complete sentences with correct mechanics	Sentences are incomplete **or** mechanics errors	Sentences are incomplete **and** mechanics errors
Voice	Used character voice throughout entire letter	Used character voice throughout most of the letter	Used character voice throughout little of the letter

2 Minutes	**Summary and Evaluation** – Complete session evaluation	− Evaluation form distributed and filled by participants

	Suggested evidence requirement	**Alignment to Expected Learning Outcomes**
Evidence requirements	1. **Reflection essay:** All participants will produce a reflection essay (max. 1000 words or 3 pages) in order to review individual learning. The theme of the essay could be "What have I learned in this module?" The essay can be handed to the educator at the final meeting or sent by e-mail after the module is completed.	**Reflection essay** is aligned to all expected learning outcomes of this module. It can engage learners by having them think about their own learning. It also allows the educator to better assess what and how they are learning.

	Suggested assessment and/or evaluation method/s	**Alignment to Expected Learning Outcomes**
Suggested Assessment or Evaluation method/s	1. **Classroom response system** (**Polls/Surveys**): Data on learners' opinions, attitudes, behaviors or confidence in understanding can be gathered either during class (e.g., with a classroom response system) or outside of class. This can illustrate student engagement with the material as well as prior knowledge, misconceptions, and comprehension. 2. **Checks for Understanding**. Pausing every few minutes to see whether learners are following along with the module activity or presentation not only identifies gaps in comprehension, but helps break up lectures (e.g, with Clicker questions) or online lessons (e.g., with embedded quiz questions) into more digestible bites.	**A classroom response system** is selected because it is better aligned with learning outcomes #1, #2 and #3. This is because it has the potential to engage students in active learning, promote learner-to-learner discussion, uncover misconceptions, provide positive and immediate feedback, and encourage critical thinking. Research shows that learner engagement enabled by response systems contributes to higher-order thinking. **Checks for Understanding** is selected here because it is better aligned with all learning outcomes. A quick method of assessing learning is the one-sentence summary. This method allows determining if learners can summarize a large amount of information in one sentence about a given topic. Ask them to consider the following questions: "Who does what to whom, when, where, how and why?" Learners can use their answers to these questions to create a single sentence. This exercise assists educators in determining learners' understanding of information presented during instruction and also helps learners develop the ability to synthesize information.

	3. **Wrappers**. "Wrapping" activities, using a set of reflective questions, can help learners develop skills to monitor their own learning and adapt as necessary.	**Wrappers** is selected here because it is better aligned with learning all outcomes. Questions at the beginning of the module regarding what learners anticipate getting out of the module and/or at the end of it about its key points. Having learners compare their key points to the educator's can help them develop skills in active listening and important information.