

FEBRUARY, 2024



NEWSLETTER #2

PREPARED BY THE eWBL-PROJECT



WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear Educators, Trainers, and Supervisors,

We are thrilled to present the latest edition of the eWBL (online work-based learning) newsletter, bringing you the most recent updates and outcomes from our project. This newsletter signifies an important milestone in our journey, as we proudly announce the publication of our research findings in the esteemed "Studies in Higher Education" journal.

In addition to this achievement, we are excited to share that we have completed the initial version of our eWBL Toolkit and recently conducted a "Train the Trainers" workshop.

The training workshop which was spearheaded by our partner Momentum Educate + Innovate, was designed to empower master trainers from each of the five partner institutions including Germany, the Netherlands, Ireland, Italy, and Slovenia, to effectively deliver capacity-building programs.

The capacity-building program which will be offered in a hybrid format targets educators and trainers who are tasked with the creation and implementation of online or hybrid work-based learning experiences for aspiring graduates within their respective institutions.

We trust that you will find this newsletter both informative and valuable.

Should you have any questions or feedback, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at [ewbl.project@gmail.com or hgaromssa@fh-muenster.de].

Warm regards,

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eWBL Project Coordinator

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01 | ABOUT THE PROJECT

Several EU-funded projects, such as HAPHE (2016), WBLIC (2016), and WEXHE (2020), have documented the importance of Work-Based Learning (WBL) in developing work-ready graduates. WBL is a powerful pedagogy that fosters graduate work readiness by embedding learning in authentic work environments. As work is increasingly delivered remotely, a new and digital form of WBL has emerged recently, which this project calls "eWBL".

The project aims to upskill educators in higher education (HE), including lecturers, trainers, and administrative staff, on designing and delivering high-quality eWBL to boost the work readiness and employability of graduates.

To achieve this goal, the project explored how 27 WBL providers across Europe have dealt with the pedagogical and technological challenges associated with the transition from WBL to eWBL and the solutions they have developed. The project then created an overarching framework to help guide eWBL trainers and supervisors. Further the project translated the framework into a toolkit and is currently in the process of creating open educational resources (OERs). Lastly, capacity-building activities, and multiplier events are planned to help train those involved in WBL provision in HE.

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

01 | ABOUT THE PROJECT

02 | PROJECT PARTNERS

03 | PROJECT NEWS

04 | UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

OUR SOCIALS



02 | PROJECT PARTNERS



FH MÜNSTER
University of Applied Sciences

FH MÜNSTER UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES (FH MÜNSTER)

FH Münster is the coordinating institution of the eWBL project. In this capacity, FH Münster oversees project management and quality assurance activities. In addition, FH Münster leads project result 3 (PR3) and actively participates in the remaining project results.



Fondazione
Giacomo Brodolini
Srl SB

FONDAZIONE GIACOMO BRODOLINI S.R.L. SB (FGB)

FGB was responsible for leading the project result 1 (PR1), which aimed to explore the challenges faced and alternatives found by work-based learning (WBL) providers across Europe in their shift from WBL to eWBL. In addition, FGB provides support in remaining work packages.



Università
Ca' Foscari
Venezia

UNIVERSITA CA' FOSCARI VENEZIA (UNIVE)

UNIVE was co-leading project result 1 (PR1) together with FGB. In addition, UNIVE actively participates in the remaining project results.



university of
 groningen

RIJKSUNIVERSITEIT GRONINGEN (RUG)

RUG is the leader of project result 2 (PR2), which produce general frameworks or replicable models on how to provide high-quality eWBL that are useful to a broader audience. Furthermore, RUG actively participates in the remaining project results.

University of Ljubljana



UNIVERZA V LJUBLJANI (UL)

UL is the co-leader of project result 2 (PR2) together with RUG. In addition, UL actively participates in the remaining project results.

momentum
[educate + innovate]

MOMENTUM MARKETING SERVICES LIMITED (MOMENTUM)

MOMENTUM leads project result 4 (PR4), which aims to train the project's target audience (HE lecturers, trainers, and administrative staff) on how to design and deliver high-quality eWBL. Furthermore, MOMENTUM actively participates in the remaining project results.



03 | PROJECT NEWS

THE SYNTHESIS REPORT IS PUBLISHED

10 JUNE 2023

The synthesis report summarises the findings of a large-scale study undertaken as part of the eWBL project. The study aimed to document the experiences of HEIs, companies and students who participated in online or hybrid WBL program. The idea was to explore the organisational, technological, and pedagogical aspects of transitioning from conventional work-based learning to a hybrid or fully online work-based learning (eWBL).

We started by analysing the WBL context in Europe. Where one of its striking features is that it essentially used to take place onsite. Before Covid-19, there were few cases of hybrid or remote internships, and no recognition was agreed upon, often due to institutional and technological barriers.

Results showed despite some challenges eWBL presents opportunities. Specifically our results show that it has strengthened digital skills, independence, flexibility, bringing a better work-life balance and cost-savings to companies and students.

However, eWBL can only be positively implemented if HEIs and companies negotiate a tailor-made training programme for each participant, agree on monitoring arrangements, and ensure skill validation and placement recognition.

The complete report can be downloaded via the QR code or the link on the left.

The infographic is titled "eWBL - Making work-based learning work in an online environment" and "Infographic synthesis report". It is divided into six numbered sections:

- 01 THE WBL PRE-COVID-19:** Includes points about few cases of hybrid/remote internships, different implementation modalities, and more opportunities to interact with staff.
- 02 THE eWBL IMPLEMENTATION:** Includes points about companies' digitalization level, HEI's services, and revising skills validation.
- 03 IMPACT ON LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Includes improved problem-solving, hindered social skills development, developed technology literacy, and improved flexibility.
- 04 DRIVERS AND CHALLENGES:** Includes flexibility, productivity, skills development, technology development, boundaryless geographic location, and difficulties in interacting and networking.
- 05 DEVELOPED SOLUTIONS:** Includes videoconferencing, info-desks, team-building, follow-up meetings, and onboarding sessions.
- 06 LONGTERM IMPLICATIONS:** Includes increasing flexibility and autonomy, and better work-life balance.

Logos at the bottom include: University of Applied Sciences, FGB, momentum, FH MÜNSTER, University of Applied Sciences, University of Groningen, and Co-funded by the European Union.



[Read the full eWBL Synthesis Report](#)



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ATTENDANCE TO THE 2023 TRIPLE HELIX AND ACEEU CONFERENCE

28 JUNE 2023



The results of the eWBL project were presented at the Triple Helix & ACEEU Conference 2023, which took place at La Salle – Ramon Llull University in Barcelona. The Conference, known for its commitment to fostering collaboration and innovation, has attracted professionals from various sectors. This year's conference theme, "Entrepreneurial and Engaged Universities for Sustainable Development," highlights the importance of linking university and industry to achieve the SDGs.

The eWBL project was represented in the conference by Habtamu Garomssa, Project coordinator of eWBL from the Science to Business Marketing Research Center (S2BMRC) of FH Münster University of Applied Sciences.

The presentation focused on the following central questions 1) How work-based learning was provided before COVID-19 across the 5 partner countries i.e., Germany, Netherlands, Italy, Ireland and Slovenia? 2) The challenges encountered in shifting to a hybrid or fully online work-based learning (eWBL)? 3) The implications of eWBL on learning outcomes 4) The solutions developed by students, supervisors, educators, and administrators to cope with the challenges? And 5) The long-term implications of the eWBL experience.

03 | PROJECT NEWS

eWBL FRAMEWORK DEBUTS AT ASET 2023 CONFERENCE

5-6 SEPTEMBER 2023

The 2023 ASET Conference, hosted by Bath Spa University in Bath, UK was held under the theme, "Developing Local to Global Citizens". It highlighted the importance of preparing students to engage with industry globally within the context of the accelerated digital developments we have seen in recent years.

The eWBL Framework was showcased by Habtamu Garomssa, the eWBL Project Manager from the Science to Business Marketing Research Center (S2BMRC) and Samantha Carty, EU project specialist from Momentum Consulting.

The eWBL framework is designed to help educators and supervisors from higher education institutions (HEIs) and companies design effective online or hybrid work-based learning programs for students. In line with that, the ASET conference which brought together key stakeholders working at the intersection of work and learning, served as an excellent platform to validate the framework and collect feedback.

The eWBL presentation focused on the five phases of the eWBL implementation process (design, preparation, onboarding, delivery, assessment and evaluation) with quality assurance as a continuous cross-cutting dimension.



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MASTER TRAINING IN IRELAND

29 NOV-01 DECEMBER 2023

Following the 3rd eWBL project partner meeting, consortium partner Momentum Educate + Innovate facilitated a comprehensive 3-day workshop. Six Master Trainers from Germany, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands and Slovenia engaged in role-play exercises and other hands-on activities to pilot test the new eWBL Toolkit. The immersive experience aimed to familiarise the Master Trainers with the Toolkit and Training programme in time for the scheduled program that they will undertake in their respective countries in 2024.

The eWBL Toolkit, based on and aligned with the eWBL Framework guides users through five phases of work-based learning, incorporating digital elements and learning points for conducting online WBL. The capacity-building training offered ideas and learning points for master classes, lesson plans and activities to effectively transfer this knowledge to the Master Trainer's national participants. The Master Trainer's valuable insights, experience and feedback are vital for enriching the Toolkit for the next phase of training.

As the eWBL project continues to evolve, the Master Training workshop sets the stage for a broader dissemination of knowledge and skills of eWBL. Equipped with the eWBL Toolkit, the expectation is that higher education institutions will be better equipped to navigate the challenges and embrace the opportunities presented by work-based learning in the digital age.



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PUBLICATION OF THE eWBL FRAMEWORK

21 DECEMBER 2023



[Read the full eWBL Framework](#)
[Read the article format](#)

We are thrilled to announce the release of the eWBL (electronic work-based learning) Framework, available for download in both its original report format targeting practitioners and a version tailored for the academic audience, published as an open-source article in the "Studies in Higher Education" journal.

Jointly led by our partners the University of Groningen and the University of Ljubljana, the eWBL framework constitutes the second work package of our project, building upon a thorough needs analysis conducted in the initial work package through interviews with 86 key stakeholders from higher education institutions, companies, and students. The framework combines insights from these interviews with an extensive literature review and expert feedback.

The primary target audience for the framework is work-based learning (WBL) trainers in HEIs and in companies who are currently or will (inevitably) face challenges associated with transitioning several internship positions from face-to-face to virtual settings.

This comprehensive eWBL Framework is a valuable resource for navigating the challenges and intricacies of transitioning work-based learning experiences to virtual or hybrid settings.



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04 | UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

The eWBL Capacity Building Program (Netherlands)

- Host: University of Groningen
- Location: Groningen, Netherlands
- Expected date: 15 February 2024

The eWBL Capacity Building Program (Germany)

- Host: FH Münster University of Applied Sciences
- Location: Münster, Germany
- Expected date: 19 March 2024 – 09 April 2024

The eWBL Capacity Building Program (Ireland)

- Host: Momentum and Ulster University
- Location: Ireland
- Expected date: To be announced

The eWBL Capacity Building Program (Italy)

- Host: Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini S.r.l. SB (FGB) and University of Venice
- Location: Italy
- Expected date: To be announced

The eWBL Capacity Building Program (Slovenia)

- Host: University of Ljubljana
- Location: Ljubljana, Slovenia
- Expected date: To be announced

The eWBL Toolkit and OERS (final version)

- Expected date: September 2024

The Fourth Transnational Project Meeting

- Host: FGB/UNIVE
- Location: Italy
- Expected date: September 2024

The eWBL Multiplier Event

- Expected date: between October 2024 to November 2024



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