

Continuing Professional Development in Vocational Education and Training

Handcrafts

Inspiration for online teaching



In the COVET project, we have collected many great examples of teaching that have been transformed from the classic off-line version into a modern online learning method.

These sample lessons have been created by VET teachers from different EU countries. We present them to you as inspiration for your work.

The lessons are particularly suitable for vocational teachers, but can also serve as a training tool for teachers, trainers and lecturers in other educational settings.

All sample lessons, training materials as well as all information about the project are available at: <u>https://www.covet-project.eu/</u>

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Handcrafts (Rainbowloom)

Information and communication technology plays a significant role in accessibility of many courses, including craft lessons. Social media platforms are creating huge communities of crafters who are inspiring people to try out a craft for themselves. Online craft classes offer an innovative and enriching way to learn a new hobby or skill. They also represent an alternative when live craft courses cannot be held live.

This was the case of the past two years when many teachers and trainers were forced to turn their live lessons into virtual ones, using computers, various electronic devices and other means of communication.

This process is not always easy and smooth and many teachers struggle to prepare an engaging online craft lesson without any previous experience. This lesson example will provide an overview of things necessary to be considered by a craft tutor when preparing the online lesson.

Goal

Students will be able to design, make (produce) and display the handicraft product. They will need to follow the instructions, practice the crafting procedure, and perform the procedure. The process demonstration is usually live by the course tutor.

Teaching method

Live session in the workshop, theoretical explanation of the process, focus on difficult points, demonstration by the tutor, step-by-step guidance, practicing by learners, crafting, final exhibition/display.

Aids

All crafting tools for the respective crafting class, pc with the internet connection for reference tutorials.

Introduction to the Online Crafting

It would be lovely for students and tutors to meet face-to-face but sometimes it is not possible. On the other hand, there are some great benefits to providing, and undertaking, craft workshops and courses online and via distance learning.

There are basically two ways to provide distance learning with ICT/digital features as good alternatives to traditional workshops:

- live tuition
- online workshops

Although it is great to socialize and have interpersonal contact, sometimes that is just not practical and at this present time with many people self-isolating and reducing social contact these **remote learning options really do provide an important lifeline.**

Plus there are all these other benefits to consider for the longer-term too:

More accessible - for those who live far away or have restrictions associated with traveling

Lower impact - remote courses could reduce the environmental impact and be more cost effective (no travel)

Comfort of home - allows students to learn and practice at their own pace, in a space that they feel comfortable and in which they can continue to practice beyond the initial class.

Some simple options (when the instructions would be delivered to the learners in a form of a written text or simple graphics) where just a basic computer skills would be enough are as follows:

- A downloadable written guide or modules of instructions via pdf (e.g. converted from Office Word or Google docs)
- A downloadable presentation via pdf (e.g. converted from Office Powerpoint or Google docs)
- Visual guides you could demonstrate certain instructions using illustrations, create infographics to make your guide more easily digestible or more visual workbooks. A free tool such as Canva could be helpful in this.

However, for more professional and engaging lesson delivery there are some more complex options for which you will require to know about:

• Video instructions - you could create videos of certain processes or demonstrations to show close up detail and provide valuable real life detail, plus you could provide some of the information directly to the camera.

Although the well prepared video tutorial has just very small requirements on the learner (in terms of their ICT literacy or digital media usage skills), the requirements on the tutor (trainer, teacher) are rather high and broad.

The tutor needs to know how to deal with the following:

- Taking photos and recording videos:
 - For this it is necessary to know how to choose and use:
 - Camera
 - Lighting
 - Background
- Editing and processing photos:
 - For this it is necessary to know how to choose and use:
 - Photo editor
 - Image bank
- Editing and processing videos:

- For this it is necessary to know how to choose and use:
 - Videomaker
 - Image bank
 - Music/sound bank
 - Voiceover
- Sharing the results (images, tutorial video or video exhibition) with his/her learners on social media:
 - For this it is necessary to know:
 - How to choose the proper social media
 - How to create and manage an account
 - How to post, including timing, copywriting and targeting
 - How to communicate/moderate the discussion
- Sharing the results in a for of virtual exhibition with his/her learners:
 - For this it is necessary to know:
 - choose the proper platform
 - shoot the photo sequence
 - process images in the application.

If the course is well prepared, the learner doesn't have to perform any bigger skills than the common digital media users skills they use in a daily life – mostly by watching the video and/or the presentation of the products on social media.

However, in case the learners intend to present the course outcomes too, they might require the same set of skills as the tutor.

Preparation of the course

Expect to spend an intensive amount of time developing your course even if you already teach it live on a regular basis. There will inevitably be differences between what you do in front of the camera and what you can do with your students gathered around. In the online course, you will probably want to provide far more instruction material than in the live classes. Making short video lessons (tutorials) for demonstrations is probably the best way to teach handicraft.

Live tutorials

This will be the easiest method to convert to for many course organizers.

In the simplest of cases you could post your students a kit with everything they will need, or provide them with a shopping list to order the tools and materials themselves (they may already have some items). If you are asking them to get the items themselves we would recommend providing them with online shopping links so they get the right things, and can have them delivered if they are not able to go to the shops.

You can arrange to provide live workshop tutorials at a time and date convenient to both parties. You could facilitate this using for example the Google Meet or set up a webinar, which allows students to type in questions - handy if there are any issues during the presentation. As an alternative you can use live streaming.

You don't have to limit these workshops to one-to-one sessions - you can arrange group tutorials. Some tutors are finding they can accommodate many more students online than they could ever manage in an in-person class.

To ensure that you deliver a high quality class you should follow this checklist:

- **Quiet surroundings** you want the students to be able to hear you as this is much trickier via video than in person. Ideally an external mic should be used for the best sound.
- **Great internet connection** there is nothing worse than frozen screens and missing important information (this works both ways as the student will also need a good connection to go with this option)
- Quality video it is getting much easier to create video content these days. We recommend using a webcam on a tripod as the ideal but most new mobile phones have great cameras these days too so you could test this out as an option. The tripod should have a tilt function to allow smooth transition between the angles needed for showing different aspects of the tutorial including close ups.

Online workshops

Online workshops can be delivered via one consistent channel or a combination depending on what suits the course content. You will need to decide how to provide students with these materials - will they have a unique login to an area on your site to access and view course content or will you send them direct links to download all the material after purchase, or you could even email it to them, but this will depend on how protected you want the course materials to be.

How to become an online craftsman?

In the following lesson we will show the entire process of developing all necessary ICT features to become a member of the online crafting community. Each section of the study provides a description of the minimum requirements and skillset to teach the craft and share the final artwork within the crafting community.

Rainbow Loom

Rainbow Loom is a plastic tool used to weave colorful <u>rubber and plastic bands</u> (called loom bands) into decorative items such as bracelets and charms. It was invented in 2010 by Cheong Choon Ng.





The Rainbow Loom is a plastic pegboard measuring 51 mm by 200 mm. It has <u>push pin</u>-type pegs over which small, colored rubber bands are looped and pulled by a rainbow loom crochet hook. The resulting looped knots, known as <u>Brunnian links</u>, can be assembled on the loom into bracelets and other shapes.

While crafting on the loom is popular mostly among the children, adult "loomers" invented special technique using only the crochet hook that is more demanding on fine motor skills and advanced designing.

This is how the final bracelets created entirely by the crochet hook look like:



The looming community developed certain strict designing rules among themselves, including very precise crediting of the ownership of the design. Each original design has its own name and designer.

The tutorials

The instruction for this kind of crafting cannot be efficiently delivered by description, the visual part of the lesson is important and cannot be replaced. Therefore the only option – apart from showing the technique live – is a video tutorial.

The list of competencies a tutor needs to possess in order to deliver a good video tutorial seems to be rather extensive, but the truth is that the competencies themselves and not overly hard to acquire and the tools are quite intuitive.

The following step-by-step process will lead you through all aspects of the video tutorial preparation and sharing.

Competencies of the teacher

To take a photo or a video the teacher needs to know how to choose and use the camera.



Get a camera. Depending on your reasons for wanting to shoot video, you may want to invest in a high-quality camera to create a professional-level project, or use any available camera for a cheaper option. Either way, the first step should be to get a camera to shoot video.

Cell phone video cameras are very cheap and very easy to use. However, they can be a bit twitchy and the sound is usually not very good, but if you want to record video quickly and easily, a cell phone camera is a good option.

Digital cameras are often equipped with video recording, and some of them are fairly cheap and of fairly high quality. Cameras with SD cards are readily available and easy to use.

Stay as steady as possible. If you're using the camera on your cell phone, or any camera that isn't steadied with a tripod, try to hold it as steady as possible. Shakiness and blurriness from an unsteady hand can make important video footage frustrating and unwatchable. Sit down while shooting and steady your arms on your knees, if necessary, or invest in a tripod that'll keep the camera steady on the ground.

To take a photo or a video the teacher needs to know how to choose and use lighting



Use lots of light.

Lighting is critical to the quality of the finished professional video, so it should be one of your top priorities when shooting. If you don't use enough properly placed light, your video will look amateurish, even if it's good in every other respect.

If you're shooting indoors, choose your lighting type and placement more carefully. You should avoid overhead lighting - it can cast unflattering shadows on the filmed objects. Windows are a good source of natural light. You can also use one or two large lamps to create the type of lighting you want.

To take a photo or a video the teacher needs to know how to choose and use the background.



Use a clean background.

Think carefully about the background you are going to use for the image. Nothing looks as unprofessional as a messy or distracting background.

An easy way to get a professional look for your video is to use a monochromatic background. A wall, a sheet of fabric, or a large sheet of paper makes a good background.

Be careful not to film with a window or another reflective surface in the background of your shot. You could inadvertently catch the camera in the reflection.

To process and edit a photo the teacher needs to know where to find and how to use a photo editor.



Whether you are taking photos professionally or just for fun, the software you use to retouch, edit, and enhance your photos can affect the look of your photos more than your camera. While some software may provide users with a number of high-quality editing tools, the product may not have enough organizing features. On the other hand, a free application may have a clean and simplified interface, but this may limit access to advanced features such as object removal, background AI replacement, and other professional-level tools without the need for an expensive subscription.

When looking for the best free photo editing software, Windows users can't forget **BeFunky.** The free version of the photo editor offers many of the tools, features and functions that novice users need to enhance photos, adjust colors and lighting, and create customizable collages or graphics.

To process and edit a video the teacher needs to know where to find and how to use a video maker



Upload your footage onto your computer. Once you've taken the raw images and footages, download them to your computer and edit them. Most cameras can be connected using a USB cable or an SD card, which you can remove and place in a USB converter (usually). Follow the instructions for the camera you are using.

Save the raw footage in a separate document so you can edit and modify it freely. You can always go back to the original footage if you want, and you can be sure that nothing is lost. You can always start over.

Download the editing software. If you didn't capture everything perfectly and don't want to keep the video as is, it's best to use user-friendly editing software to trim, adjust, add music and clean up the raw video you captured. If you want to add subtitles or enhance the sound, open the footage with an editing application.

Popular free versions of editing software include:

- iMovie
- Avidemux

Professional editing software includes:

- Apple Final Cut Pro
- Corel VideoStudio Pro
- Adobe Premiere Elements
- Adobe Premiere Pro
- DaVinci 16 Resolve
- Adobe After Effects

Remove unnecessary or cluttered parts. Once the recording is loaded into the software, start cutting out anything you don't want in the final product. Cut out repetitive scenes or reduce things to

essentials and start organizing the best footage. Depending on the type of video you want to make, you may need more shaky and informal footage or clean and professional footage. Depending on the project, it's up to you.

Don't be afraid of rearranging. Move scenes around and rearrange them if it improves the video, create the best possible version of the video. You can also mix video footages with images. If you do not have your own images, you can use some of the free options (see further).

Add transitions to smooth out the final video. Most editing software has several options for smooth transitions between scenes, making it easy to move things around and change things. Avoid sudden or choppy transitions unless you want to include an effect in the video for some reason.

Add music and sound (see in the following chapters).

Finalize the project. When you're finished, finalize the project by exporting the finished video into a video file, like a .avi or a .mov. Open in a playback software like Windows Media Player or Quicktime and check out your work.

To process and edit a video the teacher needs to know where to find and how to use free images.



Erasmus+ project: Continuing professional development in digital education for VET, www.covet-project.eu



Where can you find free, high-quality, licensed images to use for blog posts or social media content?

Almost all images created in the last 30 years are still protected by copyright, which gives almost all authors the exclusive right to use or reproduce their work. Read the terms and conditions of any site you are trying to work on to find out exactly when and what kind of link is necessary.

What is Creative Commons?

Creative Commons is a nonprofit organization that enables the sharing and use of creativity and knowledge through free legal tools. There are various types of Creative Commons licenses that range from allowing any type of use with no attribution to allowing only certain uses and no changes.

What is public domain?

Works in the public domain are those whose copyrights have expired, have been forfeited, or are inapplicable. Finding something on the internet does not mean it is in the public domain.

What is royalty free?

Royalty-free images aren't necessarily free. In most cases, you'll have to pay a one-time fee to obtain the rights to use the image. Then you can use it as many times as you like. The "free" in "royaltyfree" only means that you do not have to pay royalties to the owner of the image every time you use it.

Websites to find free images for your tutorials

<u>Unsplash</u> has its own license, which essentially lets you use the images for free, in any way you like, except for using them to create a competing website

<u>Burst</u> is a free stock photo platform for entrepreneurs by Shopify. The images are both free and royalty-free.

<u>Pexels</u> also hasits own license, which states what you can and cannot do with the images. You can use and modify the images for free for both commercial and personal use without attribution.

Images on <u>Pixabay</u> are licensed under Creative Commons Zero (CCO), which means you can use the images without asking for permission or giving credit to the artist (though it's always appreciated). Pixabay provides a gentle reminder to check that the content depicted in the images doesn't infringe any rights.

<u>Free Images</u> provides over 300,000 free stock images under its own license. The license allows a very broad range of uses, though it does list several restricted use cases.



To process and edit a video the teacher needs to know where to find and how to use free sounds and music.

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Add sound effects or music. If it fits the video you want to make, upload music that's on your computer and use it in the background as a soundtrack to montage moments in your video, or take

the sound out entirely if it's not important, and use music in its place. This can be a good way to liven up camera phone videos that might not have audio as good as the quality of its video.

The options nowadays are vast as the market with these products is developing enormously quickly. Simply, search for the most recent options and choose one that suits you. You will certainly find some free sites with a sufficient supply of sound.

The world of music licensing is complex and difficult to navigate. However, it's important to understand your rights when downloading a piece of music to avoid legal trouble.

In general, it's best to proceed with caution. If you're not entirely sure if you can use a piece of music for your video, contact the artist and let them know what you're going to do. They will tell you if it's okay or if you need written permission.

Most of the music you'll find in the following list is licensed under a Creative Commons license, which means you can download and share it freely.

Free Music Archive

The FMA with artists, curators, radio stations, and Creative Commons enthusiasts to offer a huge selection of free stock music. It was founded by the non-commercial radio station WFMU, and is one of the driving forces behind free music on the internet.

dig.ccMixter

If you're interested in trying your hand at creating your own mixes, ccMixter is a great place to start. Musicians upload tracks, and vocalists upload acapellas. You're free to mix them how you choose (or use them individually).

FreeSound

While the interface isn't as modern or intuitive as other options, you can find a lot of music on Free Sound. But you can find other things too, like sound effects, noise, people talking, and natural sounds.

No matter what kind of sound you need, there's a good chance you can find it here.

SoundCloud

SoundCloud has one of the largest music libraries available online. Launched in 2008, SoundCloud was built to bring musicians together and connect them with listeners and creators around the world.

And many of the music tracks available on SoundCloud can be cleared and used for commercial purposes.

To process and edit a video the teacher needs to know how to record the voiceover and/or where to find and how to use voiceover software.

Voice-over (also known as off-camera or off-stage commentary) is a production technique where a voice—that is not part of the narrative is used in a radio, television production, filmmaking, theater, or other presentations. The voice-over is read from a script and may be spoken by someone who appears elsewhere in the production or by a specialist voice actor.

Some may think that the audio part of a video is less important than the visual part, but this is not true. Most video viewers say they are more likely to stop watching a video with weak audio than a video with poorer quality. While the on-screen elements of a video make it a video, in many cases it is the voice behind the frame that helps people understand what is actually being shown. Audio that is blurred, muted or otherwise altered or unintelligible is frustrating for viewers.

An excellent voice-over video consists of several elements:

- Clarity and volume
- Pacing
- Voice intonation and pitch
- Accent

You can use an app for human-like voiceovers for your videos. There are plenty of free as well as paid options on the market. Some voices sound pretty real.

Find a quiet place to work

The most important thing is to find a place free from distracting noise, where no one will disturb you. Most good microphones also pick up faint ambient noise and this noise will eventually be incorporated into your recording.

Choose a good microphone

If possible, do not record your voice with the microphone on your laptop, you'll get much better results with a cheap external microphone or even with a smartphone headset.

Choose your audio software

TechSmith Audiate takes voice recording and editing to a whole new level by transcribing your voice in real time as you record. There are no unnecessary settings to understand, no confusing and complicated user interfaces. Click the record button and start speaking. It really is that simple. You can then edit the audio just like text in a document.

Write a script

Scripting is probably the most important thing you can do to ensure your speech sounds professional. The best scripts contain everything you intend to say. If you take the time to write a script before the recording, you can make sure that you cover everything you want to say without risking getting into unrelated topics.

Run a test

You don't need to record the whole script for a screen test, but a few paragraphs are enough to make sure that the audio is clear, at a reasonable level and free from noise or ambient sounds. When listening to the test recording, use headphones to check the sound quality. Your computer speakers are not good enough for this.

Voice recording

When recording a script, please follow these important tips for good synchronization:

- Speak slowly and clearly. Pronounce each word clearly, but don't concentrate so hard that you sound like a robot.
- Pay attention to the tone of your voice. You should sound pleasant, but not excited or overly enthusiastic. You can smile while reading the script to look more cheerful and natural.
- Don't stop if you make a mistake or express yourself badly. You don't have to start again! You can always correct a mistake while you are revising. In the script, go back one or two sentences and start again.
- If the script doesn't work or you find it too difficult to continue, stop recording and take a break. Rewrite the parts of the script that you find too difficult and try again.

Voice editing

When you've finished recording, it's time to edit. Even if you haven't made any mistakes, you'll probably need to fix some things. At the very least, the beginning and end of the track will need to be cut to remove dead space. Listen to the entire recording from start to finish before making any changes. Focus on the tempo and overall tone of the recording.

Go back to the beginning and start correcting your mistakes. Remove unusually long pauses between sentences or phrases and strange sounds that are out of place.

Importing sound into the video editor

Importing and editing audio is easy with just a few clicks.

Text-to-speech engines

Not all craftsmen have a comfortable radio voice, and others may complain about lack of a good microphone and other recording equipment, language barriers, and insecurity in their own voice. You can try to remedy this with voice-over software, such as Speechelo, which reproduces the human voice in three simple steps:

Paste text into an online editor

Once you have the text you want to convert to speech, paste it into a text editor. Once you have the text ready to be translated into speech, the editor will insert all punctuation and check the text to make it sound natural.

Select the language you want the text and voice to be translated into.

The artificial intelligence generator offers more than 30 voices to choose from. You can choose the default voice even if you need to make many adjustments. Use the buttons on the editing panel to add tags, pauses, and breath sounds to your text, or choose the voice you want your speech to read.

Generate and download your voiceover

Once you've finished converting your text and setting up your voiceover, it's time to download. However, you'll need to preview the voice-over to make sure it's the best choice. Once you are completely satisfied, you can download it and use it in your projects.

blaster Suite	()	Welcome Lucie Brzákováť ACCOUNT SUPPORT			
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To share the results on social media the teacher needs to know how to choose the proper one.

First, determine what you want to achieve by creating a social presence for your craft business. This way, you can choose the strategy that best suits your goals.

Some ways in which social media can benefit your courses

- Selling your classes/courses directly as a result of social activity
- Raise awareness of your trade or business
- Establish long-term relationships and deepen relationships with your trainees
- Establish contacts with potential new apprentices and customers
- Establish relationships with potential business partners
- Attract visitors to your website
- Become an expert or personality in your crafting area

The following simple image explains the difference among several kinds of social media. You can choose the proper one according to the intended purpose of the content you are going to share.

SOCIAL MEDIA EXPLAINED

Facebook and Google+	11	I like donuts.
Twitter	11	Im cating a #donut.
LinkedIn	1	My skills include donut eating,
YouTube	II	Watch me eating a donut.
Instagram	F	Here's a vintage photo of my donut
Pinterest	=	Here's a donut recipe
Four Square	11	This is where I eat donuts

Social media for handcrafts:

The most convenient social media for sharing handcrafts are:

Instagram – mainly for sharing images of your products

YouTube - for sharing video content, tutorial, exhibitions

Facebook – for sharing more content, events and interlinking communities

Instagram is almost entirely visual, so it can be useful for crafters. You can share pictures of your work, work in progress, your studio, or addresses for sale.



Instagram is primarily a mobile version, and it's not designed to bring readers from Instagram to your own site. You can't include active links in Instagram descriptions, but there's room for a link in the bio.

But even if Instagram doesn't have as many people going directly to your site or your online store, it's a great place to connect with potential customers and future participants to your lessons. Followers can repeatedly interact with your work, which can lead to more sales. Most marketing experts will tell you that a customer has to see your product several times before they buy it. Instagram can help you create that familiarity with potential customers.

Facebook can be a surprisingly good and easy way to share your craft business, especially if you already use the site personally and focus on local sales. Invite your friends to follow your Facebook business page and grow by making your posts so good that they want to share and like them. If your students are constantly amazed by your talent when they see pictures of your latest creations, they will want to share them and help you grow your business on Facebook.



It is possible to develop a good following community also on **YouTube**, which can be useful for the right kind of craft.

Erasmus+ project: Continuing professional development in digital education for VET, www.covet-project.eu

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Watch the video of our rainbowloom tutorial lesson

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Watch our video exhibition of our best designs

There are other social sites that you can consider, but these are the main ones that most people start on. You also need to take into account your personal preferences.

You really need to understand a social platform as a regular, personal user before you plunge into using it for business purposes. The more personal your connection to a social site is and the better you understand users' preferences, the more likely you are to use it to promote your business.

DO IT WELL OR NOT AT ALL

If you're going to use social media for your crafting lessons, do it well or don't do it.

A poorly done social media presence can lower your people's view of your company, and, if you have a website, it's possible that a spammy social media campaign could hurt your site's search engine rankings.

To share the results using the virtual exhibition application the teacher needs to know how to choose the proper one.

Apart from sharing your art on social media you can add some fancy features to the presentation of your work. One of the tools is a 360-degree viewer Sirv that provides also some free options.

Sive	Sirv	Features + Pricing Der	nos + Integration + Help + Blog		Login Register
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Visit Sirv to see how it works on the webpage in real time

Watch this short video showing all possibilities of Sirv.

You can find a number of video tutorials showing how this kind of product presentation can be embedded in the web pages or shared on social media.

Ultimate advice

Never Stop Learning: Why True Masters Are Lifelong Students

Successful professionals are always committed to learning their craft. Lifelong learning is what separates those who continue to rise in their field from those who are content to float.

Whatever stage you are at in your career, it is crucial to your success that you have a thirst to keep learning - seeking more inspiration, more knowledge, more mastery. Here are three suggestions.

- PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

- RESEARCH WITH TEACHERS

- BROADEN YOUR PERSPECTIVE

In Zen Buddhism, there is a concept called shoshin, or "beginner's mind", which means openness to learning more no matter what level of success you have achieved. It allows you to approach your work with renewed enthusiasm and energy, knowing that there is always something new to learn.

Sometimes, when we are immersed in the daily grind of our busy working lives, it can be daunting to think about adding 'education' to the list. But when you are passionate about what you do, learning new techniques and applying new strategies starts to feel more like play than work.



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