



eWBL – Making work-based learning work in an online environment

National Case Studies – Italy (WP1)

28/02/2023

Exploring the challenges met and the alternatives found by WBL providers across Europe in their shift from WBL to eWBL.

Prepared by Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini e Università Ca'Foscari Venezia teams



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Name of the case	CASE STUDY 2
Country(-ies)	ITALY
Disciplinary sector	ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT
Case written by	ROBERTA BORGOTTI – Career Service
Executive summary <p>The student is currently enrolled on the Bachelor's Degree in Digital Management, completely held in English. His traineeship took place remotely, from 01/02/2022 to 01/04/2022 and in blended mode until its conclusion on 29/07/2022.</p> <p>The main activities concern accounting processes: he works in a team in charge of defining Budget Key Performance Indicators. He prepares reports, and gets familiar with the financial regulations in force and SAP tools. In this way, he will sharpen his IT and technical skills, but also analytical thinking, synthesis of ideas and accuracy.</p> <p>He will be in contact with other units of the company and will thus be able to have a comprehensive view of how a large enterprise is structured, its goals and its master plan.</p>	

Section	Answer
1) Organisation's background	<p>HEI: Ca' Foscari University of Venice</p> <p>Founded in 1868 as the first business school in Italy (and the second in Europe) Ca' Foscari University of Venice has remained faithful to its founding and original mission to promote research and education beyond our national borders. It offers a wide range of BA, MA and PhD programmes in 4 subject areas: foreign languages, economics, humanities, and sciences.</p> <p>Nowadays Ca' Foscari is renowned worldwide for its excellence within and across the disciplines of its tradition as well as for the international network of relationships it has developed. Students and recent graduates are able to take advantage of the University's multiple services not only whilst carrying out their education, but also once their studies come to an end. Among these services, in order to facilitate the placement of its students and graduates in the workplace, Ca' Foscari offers a wide range of on-the-job training, i.e. traineeships in Italy and abroad, recruiting events, seminars and workshops with Alumni and counsellors, etc.</p> <p>Following the pandemic, all the traineeships and initiatives have been moved online, to provide continuity and flexibility to obtain the degree and to facilitate job transitions. The positive feedback given by the trainees, the host partners and the academic staff has encouraged us to keep on arranging our projects in blended mode to provide high-quality reskilling and upskilling opportunities that can translate into sustainable employment opportunities for job seekers and productivity gains for firms and the economy more broadly.</p> <p>For further details, please visit https://www.unive.it/pag/17095/</p> <p>COURSE OF STUDY: BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN DIGITAL MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The Degree course is an innovative programme, the first of its kind in Italy in economics and business management. The course trains digital transformation specialists capable of creating innovative start-ups or providing support to private and public companies, in Italy or abroad, in the digital transformation and innovation of business models.</p> <p>Taught entirely in English, the course offers an immersive and interactive learning experience with an interdisciplinary pathway, problem- and</p>

	<p>project-based teaching, a rich programme of extra-curricular activities (for example workshops on soft skills and on wide-ranging topics such as geopolitics, presentation design, public speaking and interaction design).</p> <p>HOST PARTNER:</p> <p>The company is part of one of the most significant players in the global insurance and financial products market. Characterised from the very outset by a strong international outlook and now present in more than 60 Countries, the company has consolidated its position among the world's leading insurance operators, with significant market shares in western Europe - its main area of activity - and particularly in Germany, France, Austria, Spain, Switzerland and Central and Eastern Europe. The Group has - over the last decade - set up offices in the main markets of the Far East, among which are India and China; just after a few years of operation, It has become the leader among the insurance companies with foreign equity interests. The specific BU is the Group's company that provides IT services, Administrative and Claims Management. Its mission is to contribute to the success of our Company Clients and networks by simplifying the redesign, the standardisation and consolidation of systems and administrative processes, information technology and claims management, to improve productivity, generate economies of scale, and reduce costs, following predefined and high levels of quality and service.</p>
2) Design, delivery and management.	<p>After the spread of the pandemic, the University Career Service moved all its projects and events online. Several training seminars and an online "info-desk" were scheduled to support the trainees who had to carry out their placement remotely: the staff underlined the importance of updating the attendance register, the netiquette, and the IT tools at their disposal to communicate with tperties, etc. The traineeship guidelines were thus updated taking into consideration this sudden working methodology and the regional and national rules and regulations established during the pandemic.</p> <p>The Company tutors were actively involved in (re) arranging the tasks and objectives of the traineeships and helping the academic staff evaluate and recognise the activities and the learning outcomes. The Career Service staff played a significant role in implementing the shift from WBL to eWBL.</p> <p>The Company provided its staff and trainees with a laptop in order to work from home. Additionally, they could access the "Company's Learning Platform", which offers a number of training courses in different fields (foreign languages, HR, administration, insurance, etc.) to train staff. Virtual coffee breaks were organised to break the ice and monitor the trainees more informally.</p> <p>The trainee spent the first two months working from home, from the beginning of April 2022 he spent 3 days a week at the office. From the very beginning, the trainee and the tutor have developed a monitoring plan to assess the tasks and the trainee's training progress. When working remotely, they use TEAMS to communicate. At the office, the interaction with the other colleagues is smoother, although the trainee has pointed out that he feels supported in any case.</p>

3) Differences and similarities	<p>The trainee is dealing with a multisectoral project, in which he has to check international accountancy regulations. In the beginning he had to read a lot of books and guides about international laws and insurance policies: working from home did not affect this part of his traineeship, as it was basically theoretical. The blended mode which started in April 2022 is useful to share the data and knowledge he gathered with other departments/units and to get acquainted with specific software such as SAP, Outlook, etc.</p> <p>The Company tutor has pointed out that the trainee is really proactive and his academic background helps him implement the activities with accuracy and precision. It emerges that much depends on the person you work with: if you are reliable and eager to learn, the tasks and the objectives at stake will be easily implemented and the office staff will surely benefit from the presence of a junior profile.</p>
4) Learning outcomes	<p>As already pointed out, the blended mode is helpful to develop a set of soft skills: independence, time management and problem-solving while working remotely, and teamwork, technical and practical knowledge while at the office.</p> <p>The Parties agree on the fact that it is easier to interact when you are at the office because you live and perceive the company culture in full, you create your own network, share know how, etc.</p>
5) Pedagogical innovations	<p>An important tool for the staff and the trainees is the Company's Learning Platform, which allows them to access training courses and seminars in several professional areas.</p> <p>Another significant tool is the company newsletter, which informs staff about ongoing and future projects, alliances, etc.</p> <p>Also, the company organises team-building activities remotely and in presence, for example, mock interviews about the jobs of the future, paintball matches, virtual coffee breaks, etc.</p>
6) Technological innovations	<p>The main IT platforms used are TEAMS (for meetings), SAP (for financial and insurance issues), and Outlook (to manage emails).</p> <p>The Company invests a lot of financial and human resources in remote training and IT tools, and this has added value for its employees.</p>
7) Drivers and barriers to eWBL	<p>The blended mode turns out to be the best solution to undergo a traineeship because it helps the trainee develop specific skills and competencies and prepare him for the labour market efficiently.</p> <p>The parties underlined the importance of defining the tasks and a weekly or monthly monitoring plan to transfer know-how and company culture.</p> <p>It is also important to have a clear schedule to manage time.</p> <p>In the beginning, it was difficult for the Career Service staff to convince the professors to validate placements remotely: a change of mentality, together with several meetings with the University governing bodies,</p>

	<p>was thus necessary for them to reduce prejudice about virtual traineeships.</p> <p>For this purpose, the Career Service staff work closely with its corporate partners to organise online events (recruiting days, company presentations, etc.) to better explain the pros and cons of remote working and prepare trainees .</p>
8) Long-term impacts of eWBL	<p>Training seminars and workshops can be easily organised remotely. Working from home reduces pollution and helps you save money (for transport, clothes) and is an added value for a better work-life balance.</p>