Newsletter **April 2016**

VALLEY at a glance

VALLEY stands for Validation System in Lifelong Learning Experiences of Youth Volunteering and is a 2-year project (01.03.2015 - 28.02.2017) funded by the ERASMUS+ Programme. The project seeks to provide new resources to identify and recognise skills and competences developed by young people during their volunteering experience.

The project will maximize the transferability of the learning to other dimensions of young people's life to help understand the global benefits of volunteering in terms of social integration

During the project lifetime, young people from the six partner countries (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Romania, UK) will take part in volunteering activities applying the validation system LEVEL5 – a flexible validation system developed specifically for validating learning outcomes in non-formal and informal learning settings. LEVEL5 has been successfully applied in numerous non-formal and informal learning projects and in the previous project RIVER (www.river-project.eu) that addressed senior volunteers. LEVEL5 has been developed by the network REVEAL aimed to promote, visualise and validate informal and non-formal learning.

VALLEY Training Course – Reveal it!

VALLEY seeks to develop and pilot a validation methodology and system for validating the competences gained in volunteering activities based on the LEVEL5 system. The results will complement existing EU validation systems currently used in the youth field e.g. Youthpass.

In order to enable our target groups to use the LEVEL5 system properly, the VALLEY team is preparing the 5-day training course that will take place in May 2016 in Timisoara, Romania. The course addresses staff and trainers from partner and volunteering organisations working with young volunteers that are interested in providing recognition and evidence of learning outcomes in terms of personal and social competences gained through volunteering to their target groups.

The course aims at creating understanding of and know-how on validating competence developments by means of the LEVEL5 system in youth volunteering, assessing and documenting volunteers' competences, and preparing a learning project within a volunteering activity.

Validation in VALLEY

"Validation is the process of identifying, assessing and recognising a wider range of skills and competences which people develop through their lives and in different contexts…" (CEDEFOP, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training and the number 1 for validation related matters at European level).

VALLEY makes use of the LEVEL5 system which is specifically designed to assess and validate personal, social and organisational competence developments in rather non- and informal learning settings. It is based on a 3-dimensional approach to validate cognitive, activity related and affective learning outcomes – the LEVEL5 cube.

How does it work?

We learn best when no one is forcing us to do so. When we learn we develop our competences, i.e. our capacities and potentials to meet challenges and solve concrete tasks. Meeting these challenges, we grow - we are constantly evolving and become more capable.

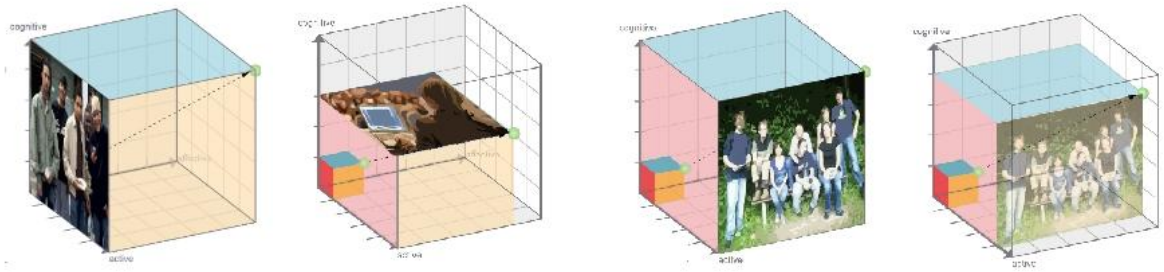
Since the age of the enlightenment we know by the works of the Swiss pedagogue Pestalozzi that learning happens with "head, heart and hand". In recent years neurobiological (brain) research has again clearly demonstrated that the non-cognitive dimensions are of special importance for learning.

The LEVEL5 methodology is based on these notions. In a three-dimensional model, the so-called LEVEL5 cube, developments of knowledge, skills and attitudes are assessed and finally visualised on five quality levels. These levels are defined through so called reference systems in which a competence is described on five levels in each competence dimension. These reference systems are adaptable to different target groups and learning contexts.

More concretely, this means that a competence, like teamwork, is described for each of the three dimensions on five ascending levels. The levels of development are derived from Bloom's revised taxonomomy[1] of learning objectives.

With such a reference system it is possible to assess and rate individual competence developments against a theory based framework. In the process the abstract levels are substantiated by individual reasoning, at the beginning and at the end of a learning experience.

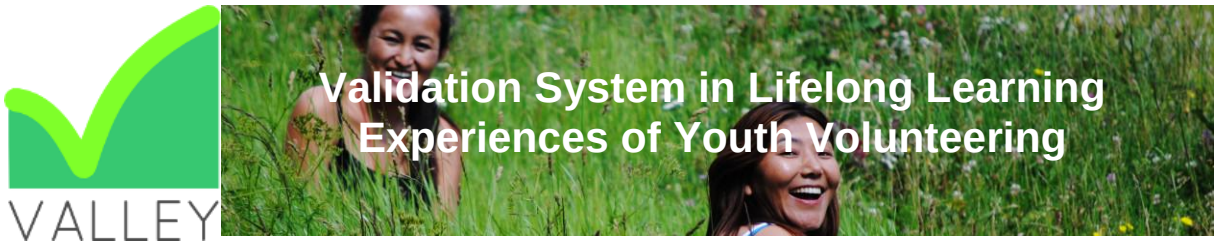
These results then are documented and visualised in a three dimensional cube.



The VALLEY team has created a number of such reference systems related to competences acquired in volunteering activities and has created a clear procedure on how to apply them.

Evidencing competence developments may serve different purposes, for instance to be documented in one’s personal portfolio (e.g. in connection with a curriculum vitae) or to organise the own learning (e.g. professional development) in a meaningful way. Last but not least applying the methodology fosters self-reflection and observation on one’s own development and thus stimulates the learning process itself.

[1] Benjamin Bloom edited the first volume of *Taxonomy of educational objectives: the classification of educational goals,* which outlined a classification of learning objectives that has come to be known as Bloom's Taxonomy and remains a foundational and essential element within the educational community.



LEVEL5 offers a web-based management system for learners and their competence developments, where meaningful learning proofs (certificates, learning tickets) can be customised as editable PDF files.

Learner-Certificate

EDUCCKATE

Participant
Wimonkhae Houmruk, 18.02.1984, Thailand

Informal learning project
EDUCCKATE Internship

Start date	07.01.14
End date	07.04.14
Institution	Barker Langham
Location	London

Description of the learning activity
In her internship she carried out the following tasks:
• Provided project support and research on a £20 million transformation project of Alexandra Palace, in developing interpretative plan and business plan, which feed into the lead architect's design brief (RIBA stage D) and HLF stage 2 submission for a grant toward construction phase of the project.
• Provided business comparator researches, demographic and audience research, as well as assisted in content research of the relevant items relating to Alexandra Palace from over 28 archives.
• Worked with in-house graphic designer to produce relevant supporting materials for the business plan.
• Shadowed the company directors to project meetings with the design team, project management team and client team.
• Managed and maintained project documents and reports.

Evaluated competences
Entrepreneurship

Assessment methods
Self-assessment in combination with statements with the mentor, accompanied by staff from UCL,

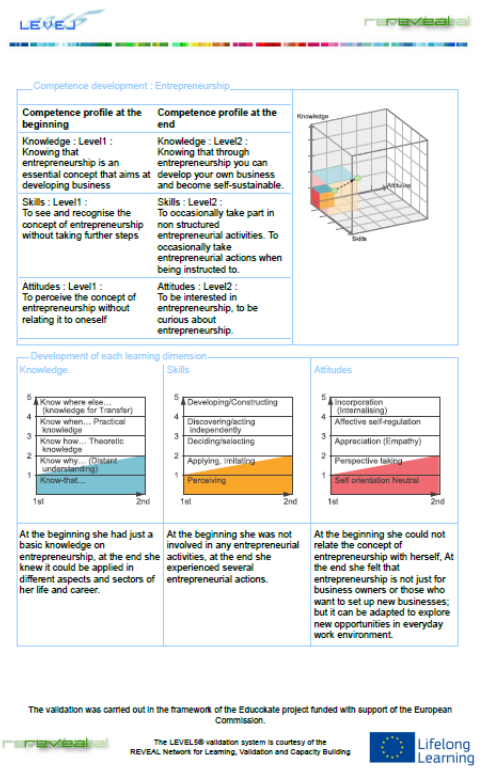
Evaluator
Barker Langham, UCL staff, REVEAL quality control

Evaluation summary
It has been a very insightful experience as I was exposed to the business process of a cultural consultant (for museums and cultural heritage sites) in the UK. This experience has offered me a great start for my career in the cultural industries.

The validation was carried out in the framework of the Educckate project funded with support of the European Commission.

The LEVEL5® validation system is courtesy of the REVEAL Network for Learning, Validation and Capacity Building

Lifelong Learning



Competence development : Entrepreneurship

Competence profile at the beginning	Competence profile at the end
Knowledge : Level1 : Knowing that entrepreneurship is an essential concept that aims at developing business	Knowledge : Level2 : Knowing that through entrepreneurship you can develop your own business and become self-sustainable.
Skills : Level1 : To see and recognise the concept of entrepreneurship without taking further steps	Skills : Level2 : To occasionally take part in non structured entrepreneurial activities. To occasionally take entrepreneurial actions when being instructed to.
Attitudes : Level1 : To perceive the concept of entrepreneurship without relating it to oneself	Attitudes : Level2 : To be interested in entrepreneurship, to be curious about entrepreneurship.

Development of each learning dimension

Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
At the beginning she had just a basic knowledge on entrepreneurship, at the end she knew it could be applied in different aspects and sectors of her life and career.	At the beginning she was not involved in any entrepreneurial activities, at the end she experienced several entrepreneurial actions.	At the beginning she could not relate the concept of entrepreneurship with herself, At the end she felt that entrepreneurship is not just for business owners or those who want to set up new businesses; but it can be adapted to explore new opportunities in everyday work environment.

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Learn more about LEVEL5

If you are interested to learn more about the LEVEL5 methodology and how you can use it for your own work please visit our website: **www.reveal-eu.org**

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APOWER
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Website **www.valley-eu.org**

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