



InComm
Feel at Home

Communicating with the new generation of Master and PhD students

A half-day workshop

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union





Objective of the workshop:

Postgraduate students enter the university world with different perspectives and needs than undergraduate students. Many universities do not offer sufficient ways to communicate information and create dialogue with their postgraduates, leaving them feeling like ‘satellites’, revolving around the university world, not being able to always participate fully in the university community.

During onboarding there are many opportunities to improve this situation. This half day workshop aimed to bring to participants awareness some of the specific communication challenges and needs faced by Master and PhD students when embarking on their new academic life in the first semester. It also gives participants the chance to explore how they will adapt their communication process in both educational and support areas back in their home universities.

Outline

Here you will find the topics we worked on and the activities we chose to do so in chronological order. Breaks should be included individually.

Introduction and discussion with participants

- **Introduction to the topic** and introduction of the trainers
- **Full round of discussion** with participants of the climate for postgraduate students at their home university
- **Context and definitions:** Clarify key terms such as: What do we mean by community and communication?
- **Case examples** of different experiences of postgraduate students taken from a range of PhD students and Masters students, all in first person, and showing the particular challenges faced by students in terms of :
 - Specific living and educational needs
 - Specific challenges faced as a post grad student compared to an undergraduate student
 - Specific communication platforms relevant to postgraduate students
- **Short group exercise:** Data collection. Each participant writes on post-it notes specific answers in relation to the following questions around typical communication weaknesses, strengths and opportunities

Duration: 90 mins

Number of participants: all

Tools: presentation with workshop content and discussion, 3 boards, coloured post-it notes



Input on how to improve postgrad communication processes.

Here the input focuses on material which will support the participants in a later exercise.

- Learning environments for post graduate students
- Learning styles and communication
- Intercultural aspects specific to the postgraduate community
- How social media tools are particularly utilized by Postgrad students
- Examples from other universities

Duration: 60 min

Number of participants:

All participants

Tools: Presentation, flipcharts, pens

Workshop: The ideal communication process for new Master and PhD students

Ask participants to choose one of three different scenarios (teaching and supervision, support and students own community – if you have students in the group then encourage them to work together on this option). Each group then works on the following:

- Consider what needs to be done to ensure a better communication process overall
- Choose a particular communication process to improve
- Ideas for redesigning that communication process
- What to start putting on the list to action back at home

Duration: 60 min

Number of participants:

All participants

Tools: Group work (small groups of up to 6)

Each table presents back to the group, discussion etc.



Lessons Learned

Having postgraduates attend is an absolute must so that their voices are heard.

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