

<b>Course title</b>	<b>Adventure Education for personal and group development</b>
<b>Course code</b>	025
<b>Course category</b>	Methodologies and practices
<b>Course purpose and overview</b>	<p>Outdoor Adventure Education is an innovative educational approach that promotes learning and development through adventure-centred experiences. Adventure means challenge, uncertainty, new experiences, nature immersion, involvement of head, heart and hand, and relationships with others. In a complex and uncertain social and cultural context, adventure education seems to be a great learning opportunity for both youth and adults. Adventure education differs from restorative or recreational outdoor activities in its crucial role of reflection and conceptualisation during the learning process.</p> <p>Based in an outdoor training centre located in a rural setting, the course provides an immersive and experiential programme. The main event of this course is a two-day outdoor expedition, a great learning experience to experiment directly in the experiential process. We will hike in a natural area (Colli Euganei) and we will spend a night outdoors, exploring personal and group resources outside of our comfort zones. After the outdoor experience, we will reflect on and discuss personal insights, ideas, theories, and methodology for developing outdoor adventure education in the school context. You will also receive some practical tools, participate in case histories discussion, and have the opportunity for sharing and networking with passionate colleagues.</p>
<b>Course structure and content</b>	<p><u>INTRODUCTION</u></p> <p>Grounded experiences and many studies show that outdoor education (outdoor learning, adventure education, nature-based education, etc.) is an innovative way for the development of many competencies, most of them nearly connected to the european key competencies (2006/962/CE):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- civic and social competencies that can be developed through a direct relation with the environment and who lives in it.</li> <li>- cultural awareness and expression, based on the possibility of living global learning experiences;</li> <li>- leadership and entrepreneurship that are challenged by facing new contexts and problem-solving situations;</li> <li>- creative thinking and imagination, fostered by a structured but meaningful settings;</li> <li>- cognitive and scientific competences, that are based on knowledge and exploration of natural world.</li> </ul> <p>This training course provide on opportunity of a deep introduction about outdoor education approach, gaining the fundamental knowledge and understanding from theories, methodologies, and practice. Outdoor education occurs when the natural context is intentionally taken as a learning setting. The learning process not only happens in nature but also with nature and for nature.</p> <p><i>In nature.</i> The outdoor learning process could be in a school garden, in a public space, in a farm or a wild area very far from the city. Nature is everywhere and as teacher we can see learning opportunities in different places and contexts, simple and extreme, urban and not urban, with short or long time at disposal.</p> <p><i>With nature.</i> We cannot deliver traditional and adult directed lessons in nature and call it outdoor education. We have to find tools and strategy to connect the real experience of learners with learning objectives and outcomes. The teacher's</p>

skills of observation, reflection and conceptualization are the most important in managing an experiential learning process. Nature can be the best co-trainer if we learn how to create the better conditions for outdoor learning within the groups of our participants.

*For nature.* Outdoor education is not directly connected to environmental issues. Outdoor we can teach and learn subjects as well as social and emotional skills. But, at the same time, meaningful experiences in nature provide a sense of connection, appreciation and responsibility for the natural world that are the inner conditions of an ecological awareness and a sustainable behaviour.

#### YESTERDAY AND TODAY

There is a long pedagogical tradition about outdoor education: from Froebel to Maria Montessori, from the experience of Kurt Hahn and Outward-Bound Schools to the Forest Schools Movement. There are lots of paths in outdoor education each of them connected with different focuses: learners ages, learning tasks, type of context, social and cultural condition and so on. Understanding our own professional context is crucial to try to integrate outdoor learning in our practice. Nowadays there are lots of experiences and studies about outdoor education, and many evidences of the value of connection to nature in education are growing. From the work of Richard Louv, we learn that children and you appear disconnected to natural world, both in term of quantity of time spent in nature that in term of quality of experience. An over-protective approach in families and school tends to increase the separation from a fundamental time and space for growing, in term of health and learning. This lack of experience tends not to facilitate the develop of specific competencies.

Outdoor education offers a great variety of possibilities in term of learning objectives. This course is not for specific target so we will explore them in general terms and then we will focus on the ones more connected with learners learning needs.

#### A QUALITY APPROACH IN OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Make outdoor learning possible is not simply related to specific or extreme natural settings. For providing quality outdoor learning processes the teachers competencies and a well-grounded methodological approach are crucial. We strongly focus on the understanding the inner structure of outdoor learning process, in connection with validated theory and practice. Experiential learning, combining practice and reflection, action and theory, personal and group focus, appears the better frame to understand and project outdoor learning experiences.

#### PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INSIGHTS

It is not possible make innovation, especially in teaching, without a deep personal involvement. Change is easier if we try something out of our comfort zone. The idea of transformational learning (Mezirow) is a key concept of this course and the training is balanced with personal and professional areas. Participant are invited to explore their personal relation with natural contexts in order to find their path in outdoor education and grow professionally.

Out of the classroom, the teaching experience deeply changes: teachers need to foster many non- technical skills as self and situation awareness, observation skills, flexibility, creativity, and a strong curiosity. In nature all human being are learners and, as teacher, we are called to turn our posture, discovering the world

	<p>around us with our learners more than simple transferring our previous knowledge.</p> <p><b>EXPERIMENT AND DISCOVER: COURSE METHODOLOGY</b> The training course puts a strong emphasis on first hand experiment and learning out of the comfort zone. Participant are involved in a discovery process, both individually and in group with the other participants, through challenging activity in natural context and in the classroom. The methodology of this training course is highly experiential. The main ingredients of our learning approach are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Starting from direct experience, with holistic approach.</b> We believe that learning is better and deeper when are involved the three H: hands, head, and heart.</li> <li>• <b>The group as learning resource.</b> We invest in sharing, discussion, and feedback. We start from group resources and needs in order to better orient the program.</li> <li>• <b>Group and personal reflection on experience.</b> We allow time for introspection and dialogue for give opportunity for generation of insights and new ideas.</li> <li>• <b>Cooperative learning process, discussion, and personal study for export theoretical aspects.</b> We do not love very much frontal lessons and we prefer learning with interactions in a participate process.</li> <li>• <b>Opportunity for experimentation, simulation, and project works.</b> Challenge ourselves designing and delivering short outdoor activity in the group or for local participants is a great way to make learning real and create impact.</li> <li>• <b>Learn from feedback and mentoring.</b> The learning process include moment of review and feedback between participants and with the trainer. Feedback is a great resource for fix success and identify development points. The trainer can offer his experience as a mentor, coaching and listen for special learning needs.</li> </ul> <p><u>LIVING IN AN OUTDOOR CENTRE: VISIT, OBSERVE, INTERACT, PARTICIPATE</u> Outdoor education is mostly focused on the power of context and holistic experience for generate learning and transformation. Living an immersive experience in an outdoor learning centre could be a great add value of this training course. Depending on the group composition and needs and the activity of the centre, we can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. involve participants in visiting the centre, understanding also some organizational aspect as management and community relationship,</li> <li>2. observe different groups during outdoor education programs,</li> <li>3. interact with our staff, discovering specific competencies and sharing time together and, if possible,</li> <li>4. participate directly in some activity, working with groups or individuals of the local community.</li> </ol>
<b>Duration</b>	One week
<b>Daily programme example</b>	<p>Here is an example of the programme:</p> <p><i>Day 0</i> (usually Sunday) Arrival date <i>Day 1</i> Course introduction Letting know each other. Adventure Education Competences assessment.</p>

	<p>Intro: course learning approach, individual and group objectives, expectations and needs.</p> <p>Group and personal experience: team building activities.</p> <p>My nature in nature. Personal and professional storytelling.</p> <p>Cultural and social activities</p> <p>Feedback day 1</p> <p><i>Day 2</i></p> <p>Group adventure experience: the group of participants is involved in two days (one night outdoor) of learning activities in natural context including hiking, exploring, cooperative games, reflection moments.</p> <p><b>NB The group will pass the night camping in nature in Colli Euganei Area.</b></p> <p><i>Day 3</i></p> <p>Group adventure experience: the group of participants is involved in two days of learning activities in natural context including hiking, exploring, cooperative games, reflection moments.</p> <p>Late in the afternoon, the group comes back to the residential location.</p> <p>Cultural and social activities</p> <p><i>Day 4</i></p> <p>Reflection on experience. Personal and group learning process.</p> <p>Feedback and journaling.</p> <p>Visit and observation to the learning activities of the outdoor education centre</p> <p>Cultural and social activities</p> <p><i>Day 5</i></p> <p>Learning assessment and personal/professional project.</p> <p>Feedback, reflection, and discussion about the course experience.</p> <p>Discussion of future cooperation and planning follow-up activities / Brainstorming dissemination ideas</p> <p>Final feedback</p> <p>Validation of learning outcomes and a certification ceremony</p> <p>Cultural and social activities</p> <p><i>Day 6</i></p> <p>Social, cultural, and professional interactions between participants</p> <p>Sociocultural activities</p> <p>Exchanges of contacts and discussion of future cooperation</p> <p><i>Day 7</i></p> <p>Departure date</p> <p>Programme details may be subject to amendment based on trainer, participant needs and other factors such public holidays. Changes might be needed to make up for time lost due to unforeseen or changing circumstances which might be out of the reasonable control of the hosting organisation.</p>
<p><b>Learning objectives</b></p>	<p>The main objective of this training course is to provide a deep view on adventure education as resources for schools and communities. More specifically, the learning objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the different learning opportunities offered by adventure education for personal and group development in school context.</li> <li>• Learn how to plan experience and facilitate reflection through adventure education programs.</li> <li>• Know most relevant theoretical aspect in Adventure Education as group dynamics and experiential learning.</li> <li>• Explore and discover your personal inclinations and resources connected to teaching outdoors.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain confidence in adventure outdoor education.</li> <li>• Create a learning community during and after the course.</li> </ul>
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	<p>After this training course we expect you develop your competencies as an adventure educator, and reflect how to integrate this approach in school context. More specifically you will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know the fundamental aspect of theory and method of adventure education.</li> <li>• Discuss how to integrate outdoor adventure activities and processes in your own professional practice and community.</li> <li>• Understand different models of using outdoor learning for students and groups development.</li> <li>• Be able to plan specific activities connected with your context and objectives.</li> <li>• Rise awareness about your personal relationship with nature and adventure education.</li> <li>• Gain tools and strategies for provide learning experience and reflection on experience.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment and validation of learning outcomes</b>	<p>In this course we will use two main assessment strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Self-assessment test before and after the training about the competence of an outdoor educator. It is an assessment tool and, at same time, a learning and reflection tool.</li> <li>2. Qualitative evaluation, made through final reflection and sharing about the personal and professional learning outcomes. This validation can be written but also it can be expressed using creative methods for example drawing. Individual evaluation will be combined with group final feedback and learning assessment.</li> </ol>
<b>Target audience</b>	Teachers of any subject, educators, and school administrative staff
<b>Admission requirements for participants</b>	No specific requirements
<b>Language of delivery</b>	English
<b>Language level requirements for participants</b>	B1 or more
<b>Maximum number of participants</b>	14

Please note that the course outlined is intended as an example only and may not necessarily be fully executed in accordance with all its details. Our need analysis is primarily based on enrolment information, information shared at kick-off meetings, and pre-evaluation of competencies. As such, it is possible that the programme may be adjusted to better accommodate the diverse needs of participants.