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Capacity building
programme on UBC and
holistic career services

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Project Summary

Innovative Curricula for Lifelong Learning of Sustainable Tourism Workforce /INNO4Tourism (Project ID: 101129247 — INNO4TOURISM — ERASMUS-EDU-2023-CBHE) is a Capacity Building for Higher Education Project, funded under the ERASMUS-EDU-2023-CBHE Call. The general objective of the INNO4Tourism project is to contribute to the alignment of HEIs in Thailand and Lao PDR with the rapidly changing hospitality and tourism labour market, so that the employability of students and recent graduates is enhanced, along with the skills and knowledge of current employees. Through cooperation with universities and relevant organizations from Europe, it will enable their expertise and European good practices and policies to be transferred and adapted, benefitting the Asian higher education institutions (HEIs) and systems in general. It proposes an international cooperation mechanism in order to update, modernize and improve higher education in Asia, aiming at the partner countries' socio-economic recovery, growth and prosperity in the context of the current economic globalization, decline in human development, fragility and rising socio-economic and environmental inequalities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project proposes effective solutions for global challenges, externalizing relevant EU policies and initiatives that promote inclusive sustainable growth and a green economy, thus demonstrating the EU added value. In view of the above, the project aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Improve the academic offer of HEIs and students' access to innovative curricula on sustainable tourism in the form of online, non-degree courses (sustainable tourism - inclusive and accessible tourism-, tourism entrepreneurship and management, digital skills, soft skills, e.g., problem-solving, time management, teamwork).
2. Improve the skills of current and future students of hospitality and tourism programmes according to the labour market needs.
3. Upskill/reskill the hospitality and tourism workforce and recent graduates, addressing market gaps/needs to boost their employability.

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4. Strengthen the skills of HEIs' academic/ teaching staff on developing innovative curricula and introducing innovative elements in existing curricula on sustainable tourism.
 5. Enhance teaching skills of academic/ teaching staff in hospitality and tourism programmes (including learner centred and problem-based teaching and learning).
 6. Increase the capacities of HEIs' administrative staff on active cooperation with the hospitality and tourism sector and/or other relevant stakeholders and provision of holistic career services to hospitality and tourism students and graduates.
 7. Enhance students' and graduates' students access to modern and holistic career services.
 8. Enhance the active engagement of HEIs with the business world to address mismatches between the requirements of employers and the offer of HEIs in the hospitality and tourism sector.

Contents

Project Summary	4
List of abbreviations	7
Executive summary.....	7
MODULE 1 - UBC Mechanisms.....	10
Unit 1.1 Understanding UBC.....	10
Unit 1.2 Importance of UBC.....	12
Unit 1.3 European UBC-related policy.....	15
Unit 1.4 Development of UBC activities	17
Unit 1.5 Factors that influence UBC (facilitators and barriers)	19
Unit 1.6 UBC supporting mechanisms	23
MODULE 2 – Holistic career services	28
Unit 2.1 HEIs and Tourism Industry Demand for Labour and Related Skills.....	29
2.1.1. The tourism businesses and the career services of the HEIs	34
Unit 2.2 The importance of holistic career services.....	38
2.2.1. Key components of holistic career services.....	39
2.2.2. Case Study: University of Macedonia's Career Office	47
Unit 2.3 Career services of HEIs and professional development in Tourism.....	51
Unit 2.4 Best practices in collaboration between the business sector and HEIs; some evidence from European countries.....	57
MODULE 3: Establishing UBC and Holistic Career Services: A Guide for HEIs.....	67
Unit 3.1 Implementing a whole-institution approach to establish UBC & holistic career services mechanisms	68
Unit 3.2 An action-based checklist audit for organising the HEI career offices	69
Unit 3.3 A framework for a HEI's plan for the establishment of the UBC mechanism & holistic career services.....	94
Conclusion.....	98
Appendix – Modules syllabus	105
A.1 UBC Mechanisms	105
A.2 Holistic Career Services.....	106
A.3 Establishing UBC and Holistic Career Services: A Guide for HEIs.....	108

List of abbreviations

Acronym	Description
COM	Commercialization of R&D
EIT	European Institute of Innovation & Technology
ENT	Entrepreneurship
EUI	European Universities Initiative
HEI	Higher Education Institution
KICs	Knowledge and Innovation Communities
LLL	Lifelong Learning
PM	Professional Mobility
R&D	Research and Development
SM	Student Mobility
SMEs	Small-Medium Enterprises
UBC	University-Business Cooperation

Executive summary

This training program is an integral part of Work Package 3: Capacity building of staff in HEIs, of Inno4Tourism Project. The goal of the training program is to provide valuable insights into the benefits of the UBC and step-by-step guidance on how to establish effective UBC mechanisms and holistic career services to students and alumni.

This program is divided in three parts (modules):

- MODULE 1 - UBC Mechanisms



This part covers the importance of UBC and presents some European UBC-related policies. It discusses the development of UBC activities (in the fields of education, research, valorization, management) as well as the factors (facilitators and barriers) that influence UBC. It also introduces the UBC supporting mechanisms (policy, strategic, structural, operational).

- MODULE 2 – Holistic career services

This part provides an in-depth exploration of holistic career services to students, recent graduates, and alumni, with a particular focus on the needs of the tourism industry. It outlines the key components of holistic career services (including career counselling and guidance, job search strategies, identification of labour market skills through annual forums and/or surveys, alumni networking, involvement of business and/or other relevant stakeholders, work-based learning opportunities/placements, employability assessment mechanisms) and presents a detailed case-study of University of Macedonia's Career Office. Also, this part presents best practices from across Europe in collaboration between the business sector and HEIs.

- MODULE 3 - Establishing UBC and Holistic Career Services: A Guide for HEIs

This part offers practical implementation guidance to help HEI's plan the establishment of the UBC mechanism and holistic career services. It gives emphasis on a whole-institution approach and suggests actionable steps and tools with the view to assisting HEIs to integrate UBC mechanisms and holistic career services frameworks more efficiently. Specifically, a detailed action-based checklist audit designed to help HEIs organize and optimize their career office is presented. Also, a structured framework for developing HEI-specific plans to establish UBC mechanisms and holistic career services, including guidance on the pilot implementation and on the monitoring & evaluation (M&E) process, is presented.

The key objectives of this program include:

- Help participants understand and set up UBC mechanisms.
- Provide participants with the skills to design holistic career services for students, graduates and alumni.

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- Equip HEI staff with practical tools to develop and implement UBC and career services frameworks, tailored to the needs of their university.

This programme will utilise a variety of teaching methods that will enable participants to meet the learning outcomes of each module, such as lectures, case studies, and group discussions relating to each one of the units.

MODULE 1 - UBC Mechanisms

Introduction	This first module introduces the fundamental concepts of UBC mechanisms. It highlights the importance of UBC for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and presents policies that support UBC at the European level. This part also explores the development of UBC activities, the factors that influence UBC as well as the mechanisms that support these efforts. After each unit, several activities are proposed, designed to help participants get familiar with these concepts and apply them in their institutional context.
Learning outcomes	By the end of this module, participants will be able to: ✓ Understand the concept of UBC and its benefits for universities and businesses ✓ Become familiar with European UBC-related policies and best practices ✓ Analyse facilitators and barriers to UBC ✓ Develop and implement UBC policies and strategies ✓ Develop strategies for establishing and maintaining UBC partnerships ✓ Foster a positive and collaborative attitude towards working with external stakeholders ✓ Create a culture of innovation within university
Learning contents	Unit 1.1: Understanding UBC Unit 1.2: Importance of UBC Unit 1.3 European UBC-related policy Unit 1.4 Development of UBC activities Unit 1.5 Factors that influence UBC (facilitators and barriers) Unit 1.6 UBC supporting mechanisms

Unit 1.1 Understanding UBC

Recent years have witnessed global changes, such as technological advancements, the effects of COVID-19 pandemic and the economic disruptions caused by the war in Ukraine; in response to these changes, strong partnerships between universities and businesses have become essential to drive innovation, education and research (Stieger & Unterweger, 2023).

Traditionally, universities create and disseminate knowledge while businesses receive this knowledge (Olszewski, 2021). However, and in order to achieve innovation, ongoing research suggests a more collaborative model where knowledge will be co-created through interaction between academics and relevant stakeholders (Rossi et al., 2017). This



dynamic is particularly evident in the tourism industry where universities are essential drivers of innovation (Olszewski, 2021).

This shift towards collaborative knowledge and interaction highlights the importance of university-business cooperation (UBC) which are interactions aiming at mutual benefits between universities and businesses (Stieger & Unterweger, 2023). These interactions are generally partnerships designed to benefit both parties and have attracted significant interest from the academic community, the industry professionals and other stakeholders and policymakers due to their potential to drive innovation and enhance economic growth (Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022).

UBCs are complicated relationships which go beyond simple knowledge transfer therefore it is needed to focus on their dynamics instead of their tangible outcomes (Perkmann & Walsh, 2007). According to Galan-Muros & Davey (2019), UBC relies on various resources to succeed, which are categorized into human, financial and physical ones: a) *human resources* include HEI managers, researchers, lecturers, students, and UBC intermediaries, all of whom contribute knowledge, skills, and networks b) *financial resources* involve funding from governments, businesses, and HEIs, which is essential for joint research and commercialization efforts and c) *physical resources* include materials, equipment, and facilities shared or utilized during the cooperation, supporting activities like training, education, and research.

In this training program for Inno4Tourism project, UBC is defined as collaborative activities between universities and businesses which benefit both parties and encompasses interactions across all core university functions: education, research, valorisation and management, which will be further explored in subsequent sections. Also, for the current research, the term “business” will be applied to refer to a wide range of organizations, start-ups, corporations and institutions that can benefit from partnerships with universities.

Activity 1.1

Title/type of the activity	Icebreaker activity “My UBC experience”
Instructions and Content	Participants share their personal or professional experiences that are related with UBC. Firstly, they write a short paragraph describing a UBC experience. Then, they divide into small groups and share their experiences. A representative from each group shares a highlight.

Unit 1.2 Importance of UBC

Knowledge is created to advance societies, to contribute to their economies and to enhance their value (Teixeira et al., 2019). Knowledge transfer involves the dissemination of academic knowledge to the broader public (Lamichhane & Sharma, 2010). As a result, knowledge transfer (or various forms of cooperation between businesses and universities) is crucial for economic growth and community progress (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022; Teixeira et al., 2019). The critical role of university-business cooperation (UBC) is widely acknowledged as a means to foster innovation and education, particularly under the pressure of today’s global competition (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022; Orazbayeva et al., 2019; Rybníček & Königsgruber, 2019; Teixeira et al., 2019). In this context, given today’s competitive business landscape, both at regional and at national levels, UBC has become a vehicle for business success and economic development (Lopes & Lussuamo, 2021).

Firstly, UBC is essential to the future prosperity of all the stakeholders (institutions, businesses) (Orazbayeva et al., 2019) as well as governments, policymakers and the society (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022). As Galan-Muros & Davey (2019) argue, UBC yields different outputs for the parties involved such as: a) academics benefit through increased publications, research results and new educational content b) businesses gain access to new knowledge and technology c) HEIs gain new workshops, seminars, courses and income and d) students gain thesis opportunities and income.



UBC importance is especially evident in urban environments where cooperation between organizations and institutions foster innovation and improve business performance due to the better access of businesses to academic knowledge (Teixeira et al., 2019). UBC is crucial for innovation and economic growth because it benefits both involved organizations and the broader innovation system (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). Through collaboration, UBC not only enhances competitive advantage but is also essential for knowledge transfer between universities and organizations (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022; Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). Such collaboration also ensures that education is aligned with industry needs (Röigas et al., 2018).

Collaboration between companies and institutions also serves as a means to improve student employment rates and to boost the company's competitiveness by advancing knowledge-based growth (Orazbayeva et al., 2020). Businesses gain access to a pool of qualified graduates and enhance their employment reputation (Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022).

Some businesses, like SMEs (small-medium-enterprises), often lack resources and capabilities for extensive R&D; UBC allows them to access knowledge and enhance their competitive advantage (Pereira & Franco, 2022). It provides SMEs an opportunity to innovate, learn and gain new knowledge resulting in new products launching and operational capacity enhancement (Pereira & Franco, 2022). Through UBC, smaller businesses especially are able to solve immediate problems and develop new products - issues critical for their survival in the market (Pereira & Franco, 2022). Differentiating themselves from the competition, businesses are able to adapt to the complexities of the modern business environment (Teixeira et al., 2019) while societal value is created (Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022).

Through UBC, scientific progress is promoted (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022). The reputation of universities is enhanced (Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022) and their strategic missions are fulfilled (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022). UBC is vital for overcoming barriers like scientific risks and cultural differences (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022).

Although research on UBC service sectors is still growing, it seems that UBC is crucial for the tourism industry due to its contribution to new ideas generation and to innovation

capacity enhancement of tourism enterprises; the ultimate goal is the competitiveness and the sustainability of the tourism industry through the limitations overcoming and the adaptation of the partners to the dynamic market conditions (Olszewski, 2021). Indeed, the combination of academic expertise with the tourism industry insights can enhance the quality of the service and develop local tourism through the creation of sustainable businesses (Yessimova et al., 2023).

Despite its importance, both business and academia express concerns about the potential challenges of UBC: a) academics are concerned about maintaining academic freedom and b) businesses refer to time-consuming and financial risks (Davey et al., 2018). Nevertheless, UBC remains a crucial method to foster innovative knowledge transfer, mainly in low-tech countries and industries (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022; Teixeira et al., 2019). It is important to understand UBC activities independently in order to maximize the success of this kind of initiatives (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016).

Activity 1.2.1

Title/type of the activity	Group discussion
Instructions and Content	Participants are divided into small groups to discuss the benefits of UBC for universities, businesses and society

Activity 1.2.2

Title/type of the activity	Case study of a successful UBC collaboration
Instructions and Content	A successful case study is presented and the factors that contribute to its success are analysed https://www.ub-cooperation.eu/pdf/casestudyreport.pdf

Unit 1.3 European UBC-related policy

UBC is necessary in the European context which is marked by global competition, unemployment, economic and social challenges. These kinds of partnerships are central to the success of EU initiatives like Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+. In line with the recent challenges, the Europe 2020 reform strategy aimed to create smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. For this reason, it gave special emphasis on the critical role of universities in facing global challenges. In particular, universities were encouraged to strengthen collaborations with industry in order to foster innovation and competitiveness (European Commission, 2010).

Another significant challenge is that European HEIs are facing increasing pressure to become more efficient and competitive due to reduced public funding (OECD, 2012). In response to this challenge, European HEIs have the opportunity through UBC to expand their funding base (Wood, 2011). An example of successful UBC collaboration is Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden; this institution transformed into an entrepreneurial university, bridged the gap between academia and industry and became independent from the government (Jacob et al., 2003).

The origins of European UBC-related policy can be traced back to 2006, when the first Communication on the Modernisation Agenda, titled "Delivering on the Modernisation Agenda for Universities: Education, Research and Innovation" was published. Since then, significant progress has been made and the European Commission highlighted the importance of HEIs in driving growth through its support in enhancing UBC. In addition to the European Commission's support for UBC, the University Business Forum served as a platform among academia and industry to promote UBC (European Commission, 2018). Broader European UBC initiatives which have been undertaken to foster collaboration between universities and external stakeholders are (European Commission, 2018):

- *European University Initiative (EUI)*: It aims to strengthen strategic partnerships among European universities to enhance their international competitiveness and to foster an entrepreneurial mindset and collaboration with businesses, regional actors, and civil society actors. A project under this initiative is the I Living lab at



the Polytechnic Institute of Setúbal in Portugal which encourages cooperation to address local challenges through innovative smart and sustainable solutions (Stieger & Unterweger, 2023).

- *Blueprints for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills*: In Blueprints, businesses and universities can be important partners and develop strategies for skills development. For example, the University of Twente in the Netherlands is a prime example through its involvement in the DRIVES Blueprint project; moreover, this university has been recognized as the most enterprising in the country (Stieger & Unterweger, 2023).
- *European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT)*: This independent European Union body brings together businesses (including SMEs), research organisations and universities through partnerships called Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). The aim is to develop new products and services to address societal challenges. Within this framework, the Transilvania Living Lab in Romania focuses on collaboration between universities, businesses and local communities in order to engage citizens as co-creators and find solutions in real-life environments (Stieger & Unterweger, 2023).

Building upon these, Galán-Muros & Plewa (2016) suggest that European policy should prioritize encouraging key drivers instead of just reducing barriers.

Activity 1.3.1

Title/type of the activity	Overview of key European policies and initiatives which promote UBC: https://education.ec.europa.eu/ https://ec.europa.eu/ https://eit.europa.eu/
Instructions and Content	Participants analyse European policy implications for UBC activities. They discuss how these policies can be used to support UBC activities in their own countries

Unit 1.4 Development of UBC activities

UBC activities encompass collaboration actions and knowledge exchange between university personnel and external organizations (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019). Other, though valuable, informal interactions like conference meetings, are not classified as UBC interactions (Galan-Muros & Davey (2019). The nature of UBC activities depends on the goals of the participants (Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022). These activities are driven by four kind of academics' motivations – impact, inspiration, promotion and distinction; that means that academics are motivated to create a positive impact on the society, to pursue knowledge, to advance their careers and to differentiate themselves as experts in their field (Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022). UBC activities mainly focus on knowledge transfer (Pereira & Franco, 2022).

Ten UBC activities have been identified and categorized into the fields of education, research, valorization and management (Galán-Muros et al., 2017; Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016; Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019; Orazbayeva et al., 2019).

Education Field: UBC aims to align education with industry needs (Orazbayeva et al., 2020) and involves:

- 1) *Curriculum Design and Delivery (CDD)*: This may include academic programs of courses, modules and experiences created by universities and organizations. Also, guest lectures from the business world may be included (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). This collaborative approach enhances student learning, improves graduate employability and drives innovation (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019).
- 2) *Lifelong Learning (LLL)*: All aspects of ongoing education and training provided by universities to professionals from various business environments. Education focuses on skills development, knowledge enhancement and behaviour building (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). LLL promotes knowledge transfer to the work place and enhances employee satisfaction (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019).
- 3) *Student Mobility (SM)*: It entails the temporary movement of students from universities to businesses, allowing them to gain practical experience (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). It is a common type of UBC; internships and placements are



most known forms of SM (Lamichhane & Sharma, 2010). Through mobility, students gain practical skills so as to enhance their employability while businesses gain access to talent that can foster innovation (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019).

Research: UBC is a core activity in research (Orazbayeva et al., 2019) often directed towards product development (Pereira & Franco, 2022). It includes:

- 4) *Professional mobility* (PM). It involves the temporary movement either of academics (teaching staff, researchers) to businesses or of business personnel to universities (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). Despite its importance, it is a limited and underdeveloped practice in Europe due to various challenges (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019).
- 5) *Research and Development* (R&D) activities. It entails activities such as joint research, consulting, cooperation for publications or projects and joint supervision of theses (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). For businesses, R&D activities may lead to new products and shared costs while universities enhance their research impact (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019).

Valorisation: UBC in valorisation focuses on creating relationships and networks outside the formal programs (Pereira & Franco, 2022). This aspect involves the adoption from the part of the universities of entrepreneurial approaches to generate revenue by providing products or services to businesses (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019) and may include:

- 6) *Entrepreneurship* (ENT) when this sense is cultivated by students (start-ups) or academics (spin-offs) to commercialize their research (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). Several challenges exist including legal restrictions and limited resources; however, student entrepreneurship is more prevalent and academic entrepreneurship is starting to gain attention (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019).
- 7) *Commercialization of R&D* (COM), through the commercialization of scientific research via intellectual property (patents, licences, etc.) (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). The aim is to transform the research findings into marketable products or services but despite its financial benefits, this practice still remains a challenging endeavour for most universities (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019).

Management: It requires effective strategies and processes to facilitate UBC (Orazbayeva et al., 2019) and solve existing operational problems (Pereira & Franco, 2022). Continuous monitoring and feedback analysis are important to ensure the success (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022). According to Davey et al. (2018), UBC activities in management are categorised into three main areas as following:

- 8) *governance* (such as academic representation on business boards and business involvement in university boards).
- 9) *shared services* (it encompasses various forms of collaboration with regard to infrastructure, staffing and equipment).
- 10) *industry support* (e.g. endowments, industry-sponsored conferences, sponsorship of courses and scholarships).

As noted, UBC encompasses various fields. However, the field of research is the most developed area of UBC activities, followed by education; valorisation and management are seen as the least developed areas (Davey et al., 2018).

Activity 1.4

Title/type of the activity	UBC categorization (group activity)
Instructions and Content	a. Participants are divided into groups b. Each group is provided with a list of 10 UBC activities c. Each group is asked to categorize these activities into the 4 fields (education, research, valorisation, management) d. Group discussion follows to compare and discuss the different categorizations e. Feedback is provided

Unit 1.5 Factors that influence UBC (facilitators and barriers)

Even in the absence of perceived barriers, cooperation may not occur without the presence of drivers; facilitators are the factors that initiate UBC (Galán-Muros & Plewa,

2016). For example, while the lack of funding is a main barrier to UBC, the availability of funds will not guarantee the partnerships if other factors are lacking (Davey et al., 2018). The facilitators can be categorized in the following areas:

✓ Facilitators

- **Resource availability:** Access to complementary resources is crucial for all UBC activities, especially for valorisation. (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). Through financial assistance, the government can facilitate UBC by providing necessary resources (Orazbayeva et al., 2019; Rõigas et al., 2018).
- **Research and innovation capabilities:** Capabilities of an organization are particularly important for collaborations with institutions (Orazbayeva et al., 2019; Rõigas et al., 2018).
- **Effective communication and strong relationship building** is another important factor (Orazbayeva et al., 2019) which should be built on mutual respect and on shared goals and objectives (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022; Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019; Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022).
- **Location:** Companies in urban areas are more likely to cooperate with universities due to better access to resources and networks (Teixeira et al., 2019).
- **Educational level of the entrepreneur:** Higher academic education of the entrepreneur correlates with larger possibility to engage in UBC (Teixeira et al., 2019).
- **Motivations of academics:** Academics are motivated by either intrinsic factors, such as personal satisfaction, or extrinsic ones, like external rewards, financial benefits or career advancement (Orazbayeva et al., 2020).
- **Government support** which includes policies that encourage UBC are crucial for success (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022).

✓ Barriers

Despite the benefits of UBC that were mentioned before, several barriers can hinder its development. These barriers, whose impact varies across UBC activities, can be categorized as follows:

Internal barriers:

- **Lack of appropriate contacts:** This factor primarily impacts research and valorisation activities. Organizations often struggle to find suitable partners which hinders their UBC efforts (Teixeira et al., 2019).
- **Limited resources:** Although limited resources are associated positively with valorisation, they negatively impact research. They include lack of funding, personnel or infrastructure (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022; Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019; Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016; Lopes & Lussuamo, 2021).
- **Lack of time and resources from the part of the academics** can be barriers to effective UBC (Orazbayeva et al., 2019). Academics often prioritize research and teaching rather than industry engagement; therefore, often sporadic collaborations rely on personal connections and not on formal university structures (Orazbayeva et al., 2020).
- **Organisational limitations:** Confidentiality concerns and absorptive capacity mainly affect research. Factors like lack of trust (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022; Lopes & Lussuamo, 2021), the company's technological focus (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022) and the availability of skilled human capital influence the likelihood of cooperation (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022; Lopes & Lussuamo, 2021).
- **Intellectual property concerns:** Issues related with disputes over ownership and sharing of the research outcomes can be significant barriers (Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022).
- UBC activities are **not always recognized in academic progression** (Orazbayeva et al., 2020).
- **Overemphasis on financial incentives** which may not align with the broader motivations that drive UBC (Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022).
- **Internal business characteristics:** They are considered as a less critical barrier overall, with minimal impact on education and valorisation. (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016).
- **Opportunism** by participants can undermine trust (Lopes & Lussuamo, 2021).

- **Different objectives** between universities and businesses (Lopes & Lussuamo, 2021).

External barriers:

- **Cultural differences:** Literature frequently highlights cultural differences as a challenge that significantly hinders research cooperation (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022; Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019; Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016; Lopes & Lussuamo, 2021; Orazbayeva et al., 2019; Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022).
- **Geographical factors and proximity:** Businesses located in rural areas may face challenges in their UBC efforts because of geographical distance (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022; Lopes & Lussuamo, 2021; Pereira & Franco, 2022; Teixeira et al., 2019).
- **High costs of innovation** may be a barrier to UBC (Teixeira et al., 2019).
- **Age:** Older companies as well as older entrepreneurs are less likely to engage in knowledge transfer with universities (Teixeira et al., 2019).
- **Business size:** for smaller businesses, their limited resources including financial autonomy, technological capacity and human capital is the main barrier (Pereira & Franco, 2022). Additionally, the size of the company does not seem to be a factor in the creation of partnerships with foreign universities; this means that larger firms were not found to be more likely to cooperate with foreign universities (Rõigas et al., 2018). As regards domestic universities, the company size is a factor in collaborating with these institutions (Rõigas et al., 2018).
- **Lack of awareness and of understanding** on the benefits of UBC (Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022).
- **Communication gaps** between universities and businesses (Pereira & Franco, 2022).
- **Bureaucracy** (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022; Lopes & Lussuamo, 2021).

Activity 1.5.1

Title/type of the activity	Brainstorming
Instructions and Content	Based on their experience and expertise, participants brainstorm additional factors that can facilitate or hinder UBC development. The participants discuss the potential impact of the identified factors on UBC development

Activity 1.5.2

Title/type of the activity	Group discussion
Instructions and Content	Participants are requested to discuss the impact of different factors on UBC success. After sharing their perspectives, they are encouraged to consider how these factors may apply to their institutions.

Activity 1.5.3

Title/type of the activity	Case study
Instructions and Content	Analyse a case study of a UBC effort which has succeeded or failed. Identify the reasons and provide feedback. https://www.ub-cooperation.eu/pdf/casestudyreport.pdf

Unit 1.6 UBC supporting mechanisms

UBC supporting mechanisms are policies and actions implemented by universities or governments to facilitate and create conditions for successful collaborations (Davey et al., 2018; Galán-Muros et al., 2017). People are generally resistant to change and given the cultural gaps between universities and businesses, these mechanisms try to confront these challenges (Davey et al., 2018). In other words, these mechanisms, which include policies, strategies, structures and operations, play a crucial role in overcoming barriers for a successful UBC; thus, effective UBC requires a coordinated approach aligned with



the overall mission of a university in order for the environment that will be created to be supportive (Davey et al., 2018; Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019).

To maximize UBC engagement, the role of UBC in generating solutions for the society should be emphasized through the four types of supporting mechanisms:

- ✓ Policy: UBC policy mechanisms encompass all the rules at various levels (organizational, national, international) that govern university-business collaborations. Primarily established by the governments, their goal is to achieve long-term economic and social objectives (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019). To be effective, it is necessary for them to be flexible and transparent (Orazbayeva et al., 2019). Additionally, there is a need for regulatory and joint policy measures between universities and governments to support and enhance these collaborations (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022).
- ✓ Strategic: Strategic mechanisms are methods and actions designed to guide and facilitate UBC initiatives within a university (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). They involve high-level university planning and resource allocation (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019). These strategies should be clearly developed and the objectives set be well identified (Orazbayeva et al., 2019) to ensure a long-term commitment to the goals of the UBC (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019). For their effective implementation, UBC strategic mechanisms be aligned with regional contexts (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022). Also, recognizing and addressing the motivations of academics to enhance UBC is crucial for fostering succesful cooperation (Orazbayeva et al., 2020).
- ✓ Structural: Structural mechanisms involve organizational changes, staffing and programmes established within a university to facilitate UBS, based on strategic decisions (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). These mechanisms include people-based structures (UBC positions and advisory boards), office-based structures (technology-transfer offices, career offices) and program-based structures (educational programs, alumni networks) (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019). Structural elements may also include promotion guidelines and the celebration of engagement success (Orazbayeva & Plewa, 2022) as well as efforts for trust establishment and geographical barriers reduction (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022).

- ✓ **Operational:** Operational mechanisms involve practical steps or activities that universities take to create, establish and maintain UBC partnerships (Galán-Muros & Plewa, 2016). These activities target various stakeholders (academics, students, researchers, businesses) (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019) therefore, partners should be identified and selected through efficient processes (Orazbayeva et al., 2019). Key operational mechanisms include communication and exchange mechanisms (promotion and relationship building), linking and support mechanisms (bridging the gap between academia and businesses) and training and seminar mechanisms (providing necessary skills for succesful partnerships) (Galan-Muros & Davey, 2019). Additionally, UBC projects should be closely monitored and evaluated (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022; Orazbayeva et al., 2019) through effective communication and methodologies to measure the results of the collaboration (Figueiredo & Ferreira, 2022).

Activity 1.6.1

Title/type of the activity	SWOT analysis
Instructions and Content	Conduct a swot analysis of your institution (capabilities, opportunities) for UBC. Discuss the identified SWOT factors and how they can influence your UBC strategies

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MODULE 2 – Holistic career services

Overview	This module addresses key aspects that relate with holistic career services for students, recent graduates and alumni focusing on the tourism sector. This second part examines current labour and skill demands of the tourism sector, emphasizing how HEIs can address these needs through career services. Issues such as career counselling and guidance, job search strategies, identification of labour market skills through annual forums and/or surveys, alumni networking, involvement of business and/or other relevant stakeholders, work-based learning opportunities/ placements, employability assessment mechanisms are analysed. Additionally, a case-study on the University of Macedonia's Career Office illustrates effective practices in holistic career services. The connection between career services of HEIs and professional development in tourism is discussed. This section also presents best practices in collaboration between the business sector and HEIs, highlighting examples and evidence from European countries. After each unit, some activities are proposed to reinforce learning and help participants apply the holistic career services concepts to real-world scenarios within their universities.
Learning outcomes	By the end of this module, participants will be able to: ✓ Understand the labour market needs of the tourism industry and the role of HEIs in preparing students for it. ✓ Identify the key components of a comprehensive career services programme. ✓ Recognize the importance of holistic career services in supporting students and alumni throughout their career, particularly in the context of tourism. ✓ Identify best practices and learn from successful case studies of partnerships in European countries. ✓ Become equipped to provide comprehensive and effective career services to students and alumni.
Learning contents	Unit 2.1 HEIs and Tourism Industry Demand for Labour and Related Skills 2.1.1 The tourism businesses and the career services of the HEIs Unit 2.2 The importance of holistic career services 2.2.1 Key components of holistic career services 2.2.2 Case Study: University of Macedonia's Career Office Unit 2.3 Career services of HEIs and professional development in Tourism Unit 2.4 Best practices in collaboration between the business sector and HEIs; some evidence from European countries

Unit 2.1 HEIs and Tourism Industry Demand for Labour and Related Skills

UBC can enhance holistic career services by ensuring that HEIs align their curricula with industry needs and by equipping students with both knowledge and skills to succeed in their professional lives (Quintana et al., 2016). Recognizing these approaches, Europe has taken initiatives to enhance holistic career services through UBC. For example, the report on the European Education Area highlights the significance for collaboration between HEIs, businesses and other stakeholders in societal and economic growth (European Parliament, 2021). The importance of continuous education and skill development in enhancing employability is also emphasized in the aforementioned report. These elements directly support holistic career services which are the focus of the second part of the current deliverable for the Inno4Tourism project. As such, the literature review part in this section focuses on the relationship between the business sector and the career services of HEIs, particularly in the context of tourism, covering a wide range of topics. This review synthesizes key themes, trends and findings from existing literature review research, highlighting the interplay between industry demands and academic readiness in processes and curricula to prepare HEI students and graduates. Its aim is to provide a foundation to understand the broader context in which holistic career services operate, within the relationship between HEIs and the tourism industry. For the convenience of the reader, the following text summarizes the main points of reference of the relevant literature concerning the topics of students' job preparation, career services of HEIs and Industry Demand for Labor and Related Skills (see also the following table).

A first category/section of publications concerns the role of HEIs in terms of Career Services. This includes, among others, actions related to the planning of appropriate training and education programs for HEI students. Important subtopic of the literature are the joint actions for an Industry-aligned curriculum. Studies highlight the importance of aligning academic curricula with industry needs. This ensures that graduates have relevant skills and knowledge for the labour market (Sewell & Dacre Pool, 2010).

In the same publication and literature section one could include actions for Work Integrated Learning (WIL), e.g., Integrating internships, partnerships and practical projects into curricula enhances students' employability (Jackson, 2015). The main topic on the Role of HEIs in Career Services also includes publications related to the creation of a framework for the development and highlighting of students' skills. The sub-section of Skill Development deals with development in soft skills and technical skills. Regarding Soft Skills, the literature emphasizes how HEIs play a critical role in the development of soft skills such as communication, teamwork and problem solving, which as skills elements of HEI students and graduates, are highly valued by the tourism industry (Succi & Canovi, 2020). The literature also emphasizes the importance of Technical Skills including digital literacy and data analysis, which are increasingly integrated into tourism education to meet the demands of the industry (Sheldon et al., 2008; Jackson et al., 2023).

Table 1. Basic literature review topics and sub-thematical section(s)

Source: [Author(s) and publication year]	Content – Main Publication topic(s)	Sub-thematical section(s)
Jackson et al., (2023)	“	Need for graduates that are digitally literate, resilient, adaptable, and able to work and communicate well with others from diverse backgrounds in both virtual and face-to-face settings
Succi & Canovi, (2020)	“	Soft Skill Development
Font & McCabe, (2017)	“	Tourism industry's shift towards environmentally friendly and socially responsible operations
Jackson, (2015)	“	Work Integrated Learning (WIL)
Koc & Boz, (2014)	Collaborative Initiatives between HEIs and the Business Sector/ Experiential learning opportunities	Internships and placements
Seymour & Marotta, (2013)	“	Guest lectures and workshops
Zopiatis & Theoharous, (2013)	Challenges and recommendations/ Internship Quality	The need for better coordination between HEIs and businesses to ensure meaningful experiences for students

Source: [Author(s) and publication year]	Content – Main Publication topic(s)	Sub-thematical section(s)
Sewell & Dacre Pool, (2010)	The role of HEIs in terms of Career Services	Industry-aligned curriculum
Gössling et al., (2009)	“	The need for understanding and react based on the Physical Environmental impacts of tourism and the important of the Environmental, Societal and Economic Sustainability
Law, Leung, & Buhalis, (2009)	Requirements and trends in the Tourism Industry	Changes and trends in Technology
Wang, Ayres, & Huyton, (2009)	Challenges and recommendations/ Gaps in skills	The need for continuously updating of HEIs’ educational & training programs
Blake et al., (2008)	“	Demand for Human Resources that can understand and manage situations due to Economic factors
Sheldon et al., (2008)	“	Technical Skill Development
Tomlinson, (2008)	Challenges and recommendations/ improve HEIs students’ employability	Effective careers services within HEIs
Altbach & Knight, (2007)	Collaborative Initiatives between HEIs and the Business Sector/ Industry-academic collaborations	Industry-academic collaborations
Barkham, (2005)	“	Jointly staffed advisory committees; Industry professionals on advisory boards
Tight, (1996)	Challenges and recommendations/ Continuous Professional Development	Lifelong learning opportunities provided by HEIs

Source/ Note: Own creation by the author(s).

An important main section of publications in the existing literature is also the one concerning the requirements and trends in the Tourism Industry. This main topic includes two separate sub-thematical sections of publications related to a) the Skills Development Requirements and b) the influencing factors of the Tourism Business Environment.



Regarding the trends in the demand for labour force, this is directed towards the search for suitable human resources that possess knowledge of the use of integrated technologies, for example the combination of telecommunications, internet applications, IT and data analysis with the use of digital technology. Thus, in the literature it is found that the tourism industry is changing rapidly due to the advancement of technology, requiring a workforce capable of digital tools and platforms (Law, Leung, & Buhalis, 2009). At the same time, it is also noted that there is a growing demand for professionals specialized in sustainable tourism practices, reflecting the industry's shift towards environmentally friendly and socially responsible operations (Font & McCabe, 2017).

As already mentioned, the effects of the factors of the business environment are noted in the literature. These factors can be classified into two separate sections: Economic and Physical influencing factors. There are publications that note as an important point of reference the Demand for human resources that have, for example, qualifications to understand and manage situations that arise from Economic factors and that can affect the viability and development of business operations. Research highlights how economic fluctuations affect tourism, emphasizing the need for resilient and adaptive skill sets among graduates (Blake et al., 2008). The literature also highlights the need for environmental concerns: Studies focus on the environmental impacts of tourism, prompting the need for education that emphasizes environmental management and sustainable practices (Gössling et al., 2009).

An equally important section of publications refers to collaborative initiatives between HEIs and the business sector. As far as synergies and collaborations are concerned, these can be distinguished in collaborations between HEIs and companies in the tourism sector and in those involving the creation of joint advisory committees. The publication section on Industry-academic collaborations focuses on the collaboration between HEIs and tourism businesses which, as pointed out, is essential for curriculum development, research projects and student practice and placement (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

As noted in the relevant literature, the collaborations and synergies between the two factors of education and employment may be extended to the creation of jointly staffed advisory committees on education and careers of students and graduates of HEIs by



specialty and direction of the field of study. Including industry professionals on advisory boards ensures that academic programs remain current and relevant (Barkham, 2005). A second important section concerning the collaborative initiatives between HEIs, and the Business Sector are the practices for human resource development based on experiential learning opportunities. The emphasis in the case of the literature of this thematic section concerns two aspects: a) practices/work placements and b) lectures and workshops with notable and experienced speakers from the working environment of the industry. According to the first section, empirical studies confirm that internships and placements provide students with practical experience, enhancing their employability and industry readiness (Koc & Boz, 2014). The success of studies and training programs can also be attributed to the effective development of special lectures and joint workshops with guests from the tourism labour market and industry. Engagements with industry experts through guest lectures and workshops provide students with insights into current industry practices and trends (Seymour & Marotta, 2013).

Finally, the relevant literature also presents proposals while recommending the implementation of policies and actions that HEIs can utilize in collaboration with the tourism Industry.

More detailed reference is made to recommendations for actions aimed at reducing and bridging the gap in terms of the gaps observed in the supply of human resources with necessary skills, as well as ensuring high quality and effective internship for students and future graduates of relevant universities. An important finding of the published research is the realization of the observed gaps in skills. Specifically, research results identify discrepancies between academic training and industry needs, leading to proposals that urge HEIs to continuously update their programs (Wang, Ayres, & Huyton, 2009). In the context of the above efforts to bridge these gaps, a subsection of the scientific literature that refers to strengthening the Quality of practice can be included. The quality and relevance of internships varies, which as a finding of the above surveys requires better coordination between HEIs and businesses to ensure meaningful experiences for students (Zopiatis & Theoharous, 2013). In addition to bridging skills, the literature also points to the need for continuous monitoring and activation to improve HEIs students' employability in the Tourism Sector. The proposed actions and recommendations





concern the Career Services and the opportunities for Lifelong Learning of the graduates of relevant HEIs. Effective careers services within HEIs, including careers advice, job fairs and networking events, are critical to support students' transition into the workforce (Tomlinson, 2008). Continuing Professional Development is also proposed, providing lifelong learning opportunities offered by HEIs to help current and future tourism professionals keep up with changes in the industry and advance their careers (Tight, 1996).

In conclusion, despite variations in practice and gaps in the procedures, the development of programs and procedures for employability and the education and training of students should focus on adaptation and balanced evolution; HEIs must continuously evolve their programs and procedures to achieve positive results in the whole effort of focusing on employability and satisfying employers and students (Dedehouanou, 2022).

2.1.1. The tourism businesses and the career services of the HEIs

The Tourism Industry includes various business activities mainly related to catering, accommodation, hospitality and transportation, all of which contribute significantly to the development of business activities and the strengthening of the National GDP. The effects can be multiple, complex and interrelated. For example, increases in demand for a) Agricultural Products derived from national or local agricultural production to support hotels and accommodation in an area, b) local passenger transport services for the purpose of serving tourists, c) domestically produced hotel equipment in accommodation of various types, all contribute to the growth of GDP and therefore create positive effects for cash flow inflows in the economy.

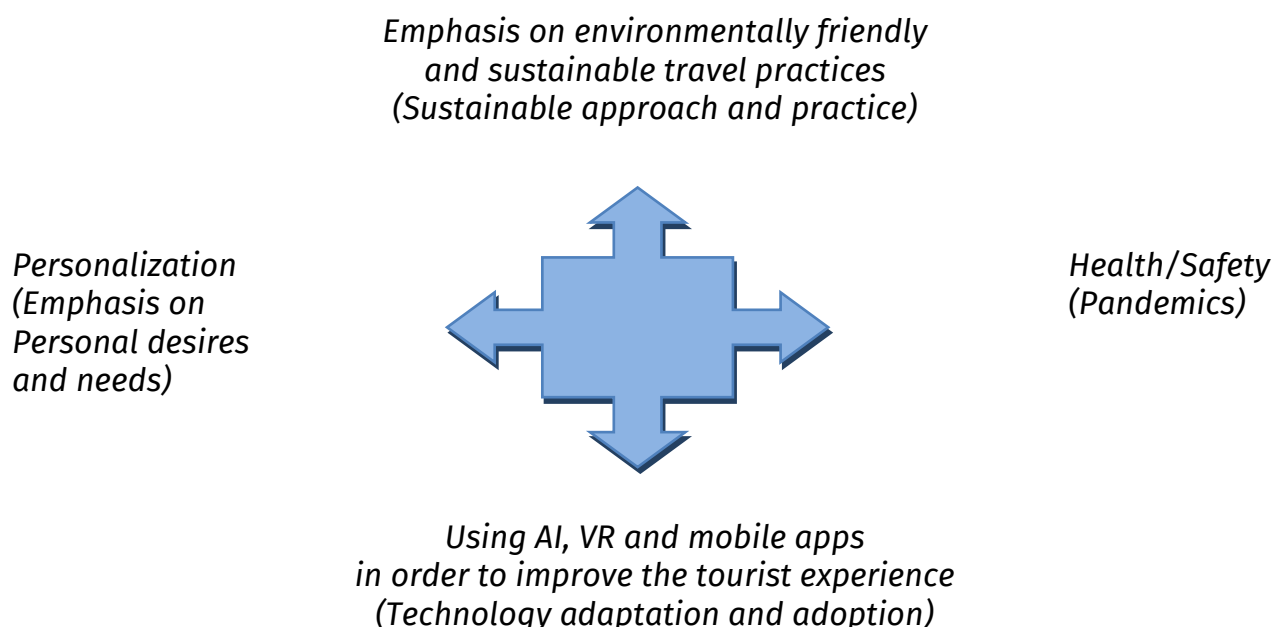
The tourism sector has also unique challenges that require a careful approach, in order to deal with potential negative impacts from development of the relevant tourism activities. Effects due to:

- 
- economic developments and changes (e.g. recession, inflation, unemployment, production/management costs, energy, resource use, tax treatment, policies and incentives, etc.
 - environmental change and condition (e.g. availability of natural resources, degree of alteration of local ecosystems, fires and disasters, degree of reckless use and waste of natural resources, contamination and pollution, etc.).
 - political crisis and social instability (e.g. war conflicts, travel advisories to avoid movements, visitor safety, conditions and political situations of uncertainty and risk).
 - competitive pressure e.g. the fast pace of competition and new innovative practices as well as adoption of infrastructure and superstructure technologies by Competitors.

The interconnection and coordination between the Offer and Demand for Tourist Services can be supported through the preparation and managerial readiness of the development and management agencies of tourism activities in a National Economy. The Offer in the case of tourism activities, which consists of various business activities and services and products of Organizations that contribute to the production and supply of material and immaterial goods, mainly focuses on Catering, Accommodation and Transportation. These sectoral activities are supported by the Demand of Domestic and Foreign Markets or Market Departments for products and services concerning them. On the other hand, Human Resources contribute significantly as an element and productive resource of the Offer in meeting the needs of business activities in the main tourist activities, as well as in the staffing of the Organizations associated with the development and monitoring of the activities in Catering, Accommodations and Transportation. A determining factor for balancing the needs in Supply and in meeting the needs and desires of Demand in tourist services and material goods is the existing capacity of suitably prepared and competent personnel that could meet the requirements of Domestic and Foreign Demand. Gradually, the increasingly specialized approach of the above sectoral activities of tourism, through applications that connect IT technology with telecommunications applications, as well as the use and analysis of a large volume of data and information concerning the Markets

of Demand for Services and Tourist Products, has created at the same time a need for multi-disciplinary approaches in the training and education of Human Resources.

Figure 1. Developments and modern trends in Tourism



HEIs can and do contribute through their institutions, research staff, research programs, study programs and their applications and proposals, to solving administrative problems, creating innovations and best practices as well as supporting administrative decisions of the tourism business community. We would therefore say that the Business sector in Tourism, as well as the career services of HEIs, contribute significantly, when they cooperate and coordinate their activities, in order to prepare the Labor Market in Tourism and supply it with competent and suitable personnel in the following tourism activities:

A. Tourism activities/enterprises by business function and investment

The description of the main basic tourism activities includes a series of professional activities that can be collapsed into the following seven basic units of professional activity and development in Tourism:

A1. Accommodation/Catalysis (hotels, resorts, hostels, camps and apartment/room rental businesses)

A2. Transportation/Passenger Movement (airlines, rental cars and others, buses, cruise lines and rail)

A3. Catering/Food/Food and Beverage (restaurants, cafes, bars and catering services)

A4. Attractions (museums, theme parks, natural parks and historical/archaeological sites)

A5. Intermediation/ Agency/ Brokerage/ Tourist Offices and Agencies (organizations that design and sell travel packages)

A6. Organization of Conferences/Management of Events and Events (organization companies of conferences, festivals and other meetings and events)

A7. E-Businesses/Blogs/Apps /Websites (booking platforms, travel review sites, travel blogs)

The above activities require abilities and skills when combined with developments and trends due to changes in the (tourism) business environment, e.g. in technology and innovation research and development.

Activity 2.1

Title/type of the activity	Literature Review Round-up and Brainstorming
Instructions and Content	• Participants are divided into teams • Each team is provided with a list of key terms mentioned in “A. Tourism activities/enterprises by business function and investment” paragraph. Teams discuss how these tourism activities relate to the development of the labour market and the role of the HEIs in preparing students for those areas. • Based on these discussions, potential research questions come up and opportunities for critical thinking emerge.

Unit 2.2 The importance of holistic career services

The changes of the labour market often necessitate the acquisition of advanced skills; people need encouragement and resources to embrace these challenges (CEDEFOP, 2009). They also need support with their career planning to make informed career choices, a fact that has led to a growing demand for career guidance services in Europe (CEDEFOP, 2009). Today the traditional roles (like counselling and recruitment) of career centres have expanded to a leadership role in university-wide career initiatives and collaboration with all campus stakeholders (Schlesinger et al., 2021).

There is a necessity for better career support for the students and graduates within universities (Kinash et al., 2017). The final years of university are crucial for students as they play a significant role in shaping their future career success (Pshembayeva et al., 2022). In these final years of education, third and fourth-year students must make critical decisions as regards their career development; however, modern graduates have limited resources and career achievements making them ill-equipped in comparison with highly qualified professionals (Pshembayeva et al., 2022).

Students often concentrate on their final exams over career planning leading to delays in their ability to smoothly shift from education to the job market (Kinash et al., 2017). Therefore, universities should prioritize career development support mainly through equipping students with information and knowledge needed for their career choices (Kinash et al., 2017). Career development programs should be integrated into the academic curriculum to prepare students for future careers (Pshembayeva et al., 2022).

Apart from professional knowledge and skills, graduates must have a foundation of soft skills and a commitment to lifelong learning to succeed in today's job market; critical thinking, problem-solving and effective communication skills are essential (Pshembayeva et al., 2022). Career services should be an integral part of higher education, providing students with guidance and resources necessary for their career (Pshembayeva et al., 2022).



The importance of employability skills in higher education and its impact on student success in their chosen industries is highlighted; holistic career services are crucial in supporting students' transition from education to employment (Guachalla & Gledhill, 2019). The role of raising aspirations of tourism students helps them better achieve their potential (Ramakrishnan & Macaveiu, 2019).

In tourism education, the need of improved career guidance is emphasized given that there are several challenges like: a) low student engagement and motivation in tourism courses b) lower academic qualifications and aspirations leading to poor academic performance c) a disconnect between curriculum and career in the tourism industry d) negative students' perceptions about the tourism industry, such as low pay and poor working conditions and e) high dropout rates and low long-term engagement with careers in the industry after graduation (Ramakrishnan & Macaveiu, 2019).

It is important that tourism programmes offer support for students' career aspirations providing a holistic approach to career development, considering both personal and professional factors to empower them (Ramakrishnan & Macaveiu, 2019). For example, entrepreneurship education in tourism can be considered a valuable part of holistic career services as it equips students with skills and mindset that can help them become entrepreneurs (Ndou et al., 2019).

2.2.1. Key components of holistic career services

Holistic career services encompass several components to support students, recent graduates and alumni in their career efforts, as following:

- Career counselling and guidance

According to (OECD, 2021; p. 13):

“The term ‘career guidance’ is used to refer to services intended to assist individuals to make well-informed educational, training and occupational choices. Across the globe, career guidance is known by different terms, including career development, career counselling, educational and vocational guidance and vocational psychology. Effective career guidance performs a number of functions. It informs



individuals about education, training and employment opportunities, and makes this information accessible by helping with its interpretation.

Career guidance helps individuals to reflect on their strengths and interests, provides tailored advice, and empowers individuals to make better decisions about their lifelong career development and learning.”

Similarly, career counselling and career guidance are forms of professional counselling which focus on helping individuals with career-related issues (Savickas, 2019). They are essentially similar in nature to other forms of counselling and are used interchangeably (Savickas, 2019). These services describe different levels of service: advising (providing general, non-personalized information), guidance (tailored, psycho-educational support), and counselling (intensive exploration of personal values and career direction) (Borgen & Hiebert, 2014).

It is important for students to have dedicated career counsellors to provide ongoing career guidance from the beginning of their journey through their career transitions (Kinash et al., 2017). Since youth, it is important to facilitate self-exploration and self-development as foundational to career choices (including career exploration and career reconsideration) (Bakshi & Joshi, 2014). Career counselling also helps students build essential skills which benefit them in the job market; for example, the development of skills like CV and cover letter writing and job interviewing build students' confidence (Guachalla & Gledhill, 2019).

Furthermore, career guidance is important for mid-career workers, particularly during times of transition, to make informed career decisions and build resilience (Bimrose & Brown, 2014). Kumar & Arulmani (2014) highlight the role of career guidance to help individuals navigate career transitions and understand their options in the market trends.

In tourism education, the central role of career counselors in supporting the development of students' career is emphasized; these facilitators help tourism students understand their personal motivations and align them with their career goals, address challenges and uncertainties and build necessary skills for their career success (Ramakrishnan & Macaveiu, 2019).

According to (OECD, 2021) various reasons based on their career stage and employment status urge adults to seek career guidance, for example, job search assistance, career progression, educational choices, job security, unemployment, career uncertainty.

However, barriers to using career guidance services include a perceived lack of need, lack of awareness of the existing career services, time constraints, cost, geographic location or other negative perceptions (OECD, 2021).

Activity 2.2.1

Title/type of the activity	Role-playing exercise
Instructions and Content	Practise conducting sessions with participants, in order to address their concerns about their careers. Based on their feedback, provide guidance for their career development

- **Job search strategies**

According to the Career Office of the University of Macedonia, job search strategies are:

1. Utilizing the resources of the university

- Career offices of HEIs provide personalized guidance and counselling sessions to students and graduates
- New job openings are announced on the bulletin and the website of the university career offices
- The CV can be submitted to the database of the HEI career office for potential matches with employers
- Career development events are organized to network with employers

2. Networking

- Expand personal network to inform friends and family about job search
- Join professional organizations to connect with professionals related to the field
- Engage in Alumni networking for potential job positions or mentoring

3. Online Job Searching

- Apply directly to the websites of companies of the field through their career pages
- Use online platforms to search for available positions
- Use social media (like LinkedIn or other professional sites) to connect with potential employers

4. Do not forget some additional tips

- Tailor the CV for each job application to highlight the skill and experience that is relevant
- Prepare for interviews by practicing
- Send follow-up or thank-you notes after interviews
- Explore freelance work or temporary positions while continuing the job search

To improve the students' job search strategies, tourism programmes should focus on the following: a) align curriculum with industry needs and realities of the tourism market b) provide training on tourism-specific job search strategies, including resume writing, interviewing, and networking c) utilize technology tools and platforms to enhance job search efforts (Ramakrishnan & Macaveiu, 2019). Additionally, it is important to develop practical skills (such as CV writing and interview techniques) to help students to successful job searching (Guachalla & Gledhill, 2019).

Activity 2.2.3

Title/type of the activity	Resume and cover letter writing
Instructions and Content	Participants review sample student resumes and cover letters based on specific job applications. They will then discuss how they, as academic or administrative staff, can provide feedback and guidance to students in improving these documents. They should identify common mistakes and also offer advice on how students can better adjust their resumes and cover letters to specific job requirements.

Activity 2.2.4

Title/type of the activity	Mock interviews
Instructions and Content	Based on specific job applications, conduct mock interviews to help participants get prepared. Provide feedback on their performance

- Identifying labour market skills

Understanding and developing the skills required by the labour market is essential for preparing students for successful careers, especially in the tourism industry. Emphasis should be given on equipping youth with labour market knowledge, job search skills, social networks and prior experience to find success in their career (Bakshi & Joshi, 2014). Acquiring skills such as lifelong learning, adaptability, employability skills (e.g., communication, teamwork, problem-solving) (Bimrose & Brown, 2014; Kumar & Arulmani, 2014) are essential for success in the current labour market. These skills enable the students to be more flexible and open to various job opportunities (Borgen & Hiebert, 2014). Additionally, there is a persistent gap between what graduates and employers perceive as essential soft skills; universities have moved away from traditional methods to adopting student-centered approaches to better align with labour market needs (Emanuel et al., 2021). In the tourism sector, it is important to identify and develop specific skills that are required in this sector, where graduates often face challenges (Ramakrishnan & Macaveiu, 2019). These specific skills include problem solving, leadership, innovation and project management (Ndou et al., 2019).

To effectively identify these skills, the Career Office of the University of Macedonia, suggests the following types of labour market assessments methods:

- **Informal Discussions** with industry professionals who can provide insights into current trends and skill demands.
- **Utilizing internal resources and expertise** to gather information about labour demand.
- **Conducting surveys** to collect data directly from companies and other key stakeholders.

- **Labour market research** through instruments to gather information (in-depth studies, questionnaires) and understand labour market trends.
- **Collaborating with businesses** to identify and analyse skills and knowledge necessary for a particular job.

Activity 2.2.5

Title/type of the activity	Skill gap analysis
Instructions and Content	• Participants are divided into groups • Each group is provided with a list of skills related to tourism • Groups conduct a survey to recent graduates to gather information on the skills required in their jobs • Results are presented and discussion follows

• Alumni networking

In recent years, alumni networks have grown into increasingly valuable resources for universities; through these networks, universities gain various advantages (including more opportunities for financial support) and graduates also get numerous benefits (Semova, 2013). For example, building social networks, including connections with mentors, is crucial for their career development (Bakshi & Joshi, 2014). To facilitate these interactions, Kinash et al. (2017) recommend hosting regular networking events that involve alumni, current and future students; these events create opportunities for professional growth.

Activity 2.2.6

Title/type of the activity	Alumni networking simulation
Instructions and Content	• Participants are divided into groups of 3-4. • Each one is assigned a role as following: • Alumni: A recent graduate with experience in the field of tourism. • Current student: A student seeking advice and guidance. • Mentor: A seasoned professional with expertise in the field of tourism. According to the scenario, students should imagine that

they are attending a networking event and start engaging into a networking conversation.

- Involvement of business and/or other relevant stakeholders

To effectively prepare students for the work reality, particularly in fields like tourism, it is important to involve businesses and other stakeholders in the educational process. Partnerships with employers and businesses are essential for providing practical learning opportunities (Bimrose & Brown, 2014). In the context of tourism education, it is important to engage with practitioners to stay relevant and aligned with the needs of the industry (Ramakrishnan & Macaveiu, 2019). Educational institutions should actively collaborate with various industry stakeholders (including educational institutions, industry partners, governmental and non-governmental organisations) to ensure that curricula are aligned with actual needs and opportunities (Ndou et al., 2019). Through this engagement with businesses, professionals and other stakeholders, tourism students get prepared with real-world experiences (Guachalla & Gledhill, 2019). This collaborative and experiential approach is an effective means which supports the employability of tourism students and bridges the gap between learning and practising (Guachalla & Gledhill, 2019).

Activity 2.2.7

Title/type of the activity	Stakeholders mapping
Instructions and Content	● Participants are divided into small groups and brainstorm potential stakeholders from the tourism industry (e.g. tourism businesses, local community, government agency). ● Then they discuss the relationships between different stakeholders and their potential levels of influence for the industry. Through this analysis they identify potential opportunities for collaboration and discuss the importance of building long-term relationships with stakeholders.

- Work-based learning opportunities/placements

Another important component of holistic career services is the integration of practical experiences into educational programs so as to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and work. Offering practical experiences, such as internships and simulations, is crucial for helping students gain real-world entrepreneurial skills and experiences (Ndou et al., 2019). In tourism programs it is important to provide students with more practical experience and career guidance to enhance their understanding and experience (Ramakrishnan & Macaveiu, 2019). Experiential learning, including work-based placements, is vital for tourism students to develop skills and knowledge, such as those related to job interviews and assessment centre experiences, and to gain insights into industry practices (Guachalla & Gledhill, 2019). Moreover, collaborative learning experiences within these practical settings benefit tourism students by enhancing their self-confidence, developing team-work skills and gaining a positive attitude towards teamwork (Guachalla & Gledhill, 2019).

Activity 2.2.8

Title/type of the activity	Supporting students in finding work-based learning opportunities
Instructions and Content	• Participants explore strategies to help students identify work-based learning opportunities and connect with potential employers. • Participants are divided into groups where they brainstorm potential strategies and they list possible ways (like job platforms, alumni networks) to provide support. • Then each group shares its findings, participants discuss and the most effective approaches are evaluated.

- **Employability assessment mechanisms**

Universities which aim to enhance employability should focus on developing both the students' employability skills and their interests; interest motivates students to pursue a career that will be related to their field and their passion (Quinlan & Renninger, 2022). Kinash et al. (2017) suggest creating a Graduate Employability Portfolio, which will involve key university departments like Marketing, Faculties, and Alumni Offices to contribute to ongoing employability assessments. As regards tourism programmes, universities should

develop more effective mechanisms to assess students' career readiness; these mechanisms help identify areas where the students may be lacking in knowledge, skills or work experience (Ramakrishnan & Macaveiu, 2019). Although graduate employment rates are often used as a factor in university rankings and government funding, these rates alone are insufficient to capture how effectively universities prepare their graduates for success in the job market (Healy et al., 2022).

Activity 2.2.9

Title/type of the activity	Supporting students in their career development plans
Instructions and Content	Participants discuss and share ideas on how they can support students in creating their career development plans. They also search and share a helpful resource (such as a template or an article) that can assist students. Participants explain why this resource is helpful.

2.2.2. Case Study: University of Macedonia's Career Office

To illustrate effective practices on holistic career services, this section will draw on the extensive experience of the University of Macedonia's Career Office (CO), which has been operating since 1994. This office has been offering a range of services designed to help individuals manage their knowledge, skills, and experiences to achieve personal and professional growth. As a practical example, we will describe how the CO offers individual study and career-related consultancy, organizes events to facilitate networking with the labour market, implements group counselling and workshops to enhance professional readiness, and maintains continuous communication with academic and professional bodies to explore collaboration opportunities (University of Macedonia Career Office).

- **Career counselling and guidance**

The University of Macedonia's Career Office offers a comprehensive range of career counselling and guidance services. These services are designed to assist students and graduates in making informed decisions about their academic and professional futures (University of Macedonia Career Office). These services include:

- **Study Counseling:** Guidance on academic decision-making, such as selecting the right postgraduate program.
- **Postgraduate Studies Decision:** Assistance in choosing the appropriate postgraduate course based on individual goals and interests.
- **Application for Postgraduate Studies:** Support in preparing and submitting applications for postgraduate programs.
- **Application for Doctoral Studies:** Guidance on the application process for pursuing doctoral degrees (PhD).
- **Application for Scholarships:** Help with finding and applying for scholarship opportunities.
- **Curriculum Vitae for Academic Purposes:** Assistance in creating a CV tailored for academic applications.
- **Personal Statement:** Support in writing self-descriptive essays required for academic programs.
- **Research Proposal Planning (PhD):** Guidance in drafting research proposals for doctoral studies.
- **Letters of Recommendation:** Assistance in obtaining and preparing strong letters of recommendation.
- **Extra Tips:** Additional advice and tips for enhancing applications and achieving academic goals.
- **Job Search Resources:** Students and alumni get access to various job search tools and resources as well as alumni networks.
- **Job Search and Professional Skills:** The office supports students to develop job search skills, like cv writing, interviewing and networking.

The Career Office also organizes seminars relevant to career counselling, such as crafting an **Elevator Pitch**, enhancing **Presentation Abilities** and preparing for **Interviews**.

- [Job search strategies](#)

The University of Macedonia's Career Office acts as a bridge between students, graduates, alumni and employers and provides tools and support providing (University of Macedonia Career Office):

- **Job Listings Archive:** A comprehensive archive of available job positions.
- **Job Search Links and Engines:** Resources for job search websites and engines.
- **Job Search and Workplace Behavior Tips:** Advice on effective job search strategies and professional conduct in the workplace.
- **Jobs in International Organizations:** Listings and resources for positions in international organizations.

The career office also provides several self-assessment tools and materials for job application and interview preparation like:

- **Self-Assessment Tools:** Forms and resources to help a student or alumni better understand their skills, personal characteristics, and experiences (Recording My Experiences, Finding Verbs to Describe My Responsibilities, My Social Skills, My Personal Characteristics).
- **Career Preparation Tools** to aid in the preparation of application materials and interview readiness (Cover Letter and Resume Preparation, Personal Statement/Motivational Letter, Interview Preparation).
- **Pre-Meeting Preparation** forms for the student/alumni to complete before meeting the career counsellor (Postgraduate Program Selection, Resume and Cover Letter Completion, Job Search Guidance).

To support effective job searching, the career Office hosts seminars which cover topics such as **Job Search Strategies and Workplace behaviour**.

- **Identifying labour market skills**

The Career Office also focuses on developing labour market skills through specialized seminars. Topics like **Intercultural Skills in the Workplace** and **Leadership Skills** are addressed to help participants align their abilities with current market demands.

- **Alumni networking**

The Career Office organizes the **Career Days Event** which is a large-scale annual event designed to connect graduating students, postgraduate students, and recent alumni with potential employers. This event offers a unique platform for students to engage directly with representatives from numerous Greek and multinational companies. Over 60



employers participate each year, providing valuable networking opportunities and evaluating the professional readiness of attendees. Many participants secure employment through the interviews and connections made during Career Days, showcasing its significant role in bridging the gap between education and the labour market.

Also, the **Alumni Office** at the University of Macedonia serves as a connection between the university and its graduates. It supports alumni by providing continuous updates on further education opportunities and collaborative ventures. Its aim is to build a strong alumni community, to offer alumni services and to enhance the reputation of the university.

- **Involvement of business and/or other relevant stakeholders**

Through the **annual career days**, students and graduates of University of Macedonia are engaged with industry professionals and explore job openings.

- **Work-based learning opportunities/placements**

The University of Macedonia's Career Office provides support for work-based learning opportunities and placements to facilitate smoother transition into the job market (University of Macedonia Career Office), as following:

- **Collaborating Companies:** Partnerships with businesses for employment opportunities.
- **Gaining Work Experience:** Guidance on acquiring practical work experience.
- **Internship Positions:** Information on available internship opportunities. Also, the Internship Program, established in 1997, offers students valuable practical experience, helps them compete more effectively in the job market and allows businesses to invest in high-skilled talent.
- **Internship Listings Archive:** An archive of previous internship positions.
- **Employability assessment mechanisms**

The University of Macedonia's Career Office provides the **Employability Level Self-Assessment Test** which is designed to help individuals evaluate their readiness for entering the job market. It is particularly useful for those who are actively searching for a job, for recent graduates who are exploring career opportunities and for those alumni who are dissatisfied with their current job and are considering a new career path. Through this test, the participants can assess their level of professional preparedness for the positions they are targeting. Also, the Career Office organizes seminars that serve as mechanisms for assessing and enhancing career readiness. These sessions offer practical insights into **Employability Assessment**.

Activity 2.2.10

Title/type of the activity	University of Macedonia Case Study
Instructions and Content	• Read the case study and visit the website of the career office of University of Macedonia. • Describe the types of holistic career services that are offered to students, recent graduates and alumni. • Also, describe how these services are integrated with the UBC initiatives of the university. • Refer to challenges and opportunities. • Discuss the effectiveness of these services in helping students and alumni achieve their career goals. • Discuss the lessons that can be learned from the experience of UoM and suggest areas for improvement or further development. • Discuss about the long-term impact of these initiatives on the university, the students and the community.

Unit 2.3 Career services of HEIs and professional development in Tourism

Building on the example of the University of Macedonia's Career Office, it is essential to explore the broader scope of career services provided by HEIs. Modern HEIs have established career and professional development services to support their students and graduates, which is facilitated through their (liaison) career offices, staffed by specialized staff. The purpose of these offices is to connect the graduates of the HEIs and those of



each Institution separately with the Labor Market. In the framework of these practices, the liaison offices of the HEIs provide career services related to the various academic subjects of the HEIs. For active students and graduates of Tourism Studies career services usually include:

1. Consulting, information and guidance services for HEI graduates:

- Providing guidance on career paths in the tourism industry.
- Provide information on job opportunities, industry trends and required skills.

2. Contact with the Labor Market and Tourism Professions

- Support in finding and choosing the relevant work subject as well as opportunities for Internship in relevant jobs related to Tourism Professions.
- Facilitation of the interface process between students and employers in terms of internships as well as information on the offer of positions in the Labor Market.
- Organization of exhibitions and events related to employment in the tourism industry and the Labor Market in general, business presentations by business executives and networking events (e.g. managers of personnel offices and human resources of hotels, transport and catering services), with an emphasis on the criteria and skills for a successful recruitment into jobs in Tourism.

3. Development of skills of active students and graduates of HEIs

- Offering workshops and courses to develop relevant skills such as customer service, language proficiency and digital marketing.
- Support skill development by emphasizing soft skills such as communication, teamwork and cultural or ecological awareness.

4. Development of Collaborations and Partnerships with the Tourism Industry and in particular by important Sector of Employment in Tourism.

- Collaboration with tourism businesses to create internship opportunities and develop joint applications and projects.

- Hospitality Inviting professionals and presenting job-related lectures. Joint creation of workshops and development of human resources and skills in collaboration with industry professionals.

5. Research and support of active students and graduates.

- Conduct research on tourism trends, consumer behaviour and innovations in the Tourism Industry.
- Encouraging the participation of students in research projects in order to train them and provide them with practical knowledge related to the Tourism Sector.

6. Creation and strengthening of Alumni networks.

- Building strong alumni networks to help current students with guidance and information about job opportunities.
- Facilitating alumni engagement through events and platforms for knowledge sharing.

The career services of HEIs and professional development in Tourism include a series of necessary actions that can be summarized in the following ten basic activity and action units (see also the following related figure).

To be able to modernise and coordinate their actions, which concern the strengthening of the skills and abilities of their students and graduates in the Labor Market, HEIs establish organizational structures such as the Liaison & Career Support Offices or services to strengthen the actions for the absorption of the graduates from the Labor Market. For this effort with the scope to pay off, they develop appropriate training and skills acquisition programs that can be integrated into their existing curriculum, e.g. as elective courses, or offered to interested students and graduates as specialized training programs, e.g. seminars for graduates, in the academic subjects/ knowledge areas of the Tourism business sector activities.

Figure 2. Basic structured actions and activities for the design and development of the EU HEIs career services and Employment actions for their graduates.





A basic first step is the existence of a modern and appropriate Education and Training Program, which considers the trends and developments that the Labor Market itself requires for the smooth operation of the professional requirements per job position in the Tourism industry. The activation of this step is based on the support of the effort through the establishment of advisory committees that may include professionals, researchers, trainers and executives of competent bodies (e.g. from local government, public administration, agencies and organizations of Tourism, Employment and Education). Obviously, according to priority, time juncture and sectoral professional reality and occupation, the corresponding skills and the necessary knowledge and abilities are differentiated or even require differentiated training programs adapted to specificities (e.g. in Accommodation, Transport and catering/food), and consider these new conditions and priorities of the professional sectors. So, in the simplified scheme above, the first step is devoted to curriculum development.

The second step is to be able to present the requirements of a job and its overall duties in a real active work environment. To support this action, a continuous (long-term) rule-based participation of students and graduates in practical employment programs is needed. This possibility of utilizing such programs that are also financed by wider bodies, such as the EU's Erasmus and National scholarship programs, contribute to students' familiarity with the requirements of the Labor Market. The detection of partners in this effort and in particular relevant contributors of the Labor Market can and does contribute to the success of the next steps of the Student & Graduate Employability Office; the career offices, of the HEIs. The effort here focuses on the creation and development of cooperation plans and programs with the relevant stakeholders (employment agencies, businesses, organizations, local government and society) and especially with the Labor Market.

The possibility of connecting students with the Labor Market may initially include a series of presentation procedures, in exhibitions, in seminars, as well as in advisory actions in the context of pre-planned Meetings and Events; M&E, concerning e.g. Employment Days in the Tourism Industry, etc. Another possibility for highlighting the effort to inform and participate in employment events in Tourism with the participation of the HEI Liaison



Office is the encouragement and utilization by the HEI of its graduates who have successfully filled relevant jobs and are employed in relevant professions of Tourism Industry.

The development of skills among prospective employees is, after the contact of the interested parties in relevant information and consultation days, the main goal for the success of the project to increase the employability of HEI's graduates. The purpose of developing skills through HEIs' certified training and educational programs (i.e., Tourism Job Certification and Language Certification, Courses) can be considered the development and creation of a competent potential of HEIs' graduates who will staff the Tourism Labor Market in the future.

The possibility of distinguishing the graduates of a HEI that specializes e.g. in Tourism Studies, is therefore based on the possibility of developing and highlighting the skills of the trainees who should be supported during their educational development by cooperation networks, e.g. of Tourism professionals with the structures, specialized training programs and human resources of each relevant Universities, which will bring them close to experiential learning in the workplace, for example visits to tourism businesses and intra-business joint training or innovation workshops or/and practical employment and training courses.

The programs should have succeeded in being recognized through an outreach program that emphasizes the establishment of a culture of sustainable and socially responsible business practices. It is important that they are based on the promotion of Corporate Social Responsibility policies and practices, as well as that there is a commitment from the graduates of the programs for the long-term adoption and application of the study of the effects on the Economy, Society and the Natural Environment (Triple Bottom Assessment) in every planning process and administrative decision-making in a business function related to tourism activities. Adoption of protocols and activation of protocols that support the Commitment relationship for the adoption of Corporate Social Responsibility development actions, are important means to enforce the above actions and achieve the sustainability status and the related goal settings.



The performance of the above actions and activities required to be judged during the implementation, at the end and after the end of the time intervals for completing the procedures and actions. Finally, it is important to evaluate the success of the initially formulated goals for each of the above actions and activities (e.g., evaluation and interventions for adjustments of policies and actions, Determining and assessing the benefits and effects of actions and programs, etc.). The certification of the graduates' skills requires the highlighting of their qualifications by the respective professional bodies that supervised, advised and trained them in the workplace, for example through their professional training and the study programs they attended but also through the important internship in the Tourism Branch, of students and graduates of a relevant HEI. Determining the following advantages of the future workforce (Students and Graduates), like the, a) skills acquired from the activation of the programs, b) satisfaction degree of Entrepreneur and job offer related tourism industry staff, about the adoption and use of the skills of HEIs' students and graduates in the related Labor Market, c) certificates of completion of practical (experiential/laboratory) work experience, and d) level of adoption of cooperation protocols (e.g. M.O.U.s) and acquisition of skills that support the Commitment relationship between HEIs and Representatives of the Labor Market (e.g. Professional, Hotel, Tourist Chambers, professional bodies and associations) for the enforcement of actions to develop Corporate Social Responsibility.

Unit 2.4 Best practices in collaboration between the business sector and HEIs; some evidence from European countries

Incorporating best practices in collaboration between the business sector and HEIs can significantly improve the quality of tourism education and career services. By aligning curricula with industry needs, providing practical experience and encouraging



continuous professional development, both sectors can ensure that graduates are well prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities in the tourism industry. This collaborative approach not only benefits students but also contributes to growth and innovation.

Here are some suggested practices related to Curriculum Development aligned with the industry and its trends.

1. **Industry-aligned curriculum development.** Curriculum design often relies on partnerships between educational organizations and industry professionals. One such example is the Swiss educational organization EHL-Hospitality Business School (Musseau, 2023). The Tourism and Hospitality sector is now developing after the Pandemic dynamically returning and exceeding the traditional forms of travelling e.g., Staycation, Leisure travel, Transformative travel, etc. Having the right staff who understand and capitalize on new trends due to their technical and soft skills enables hospitality and tourism businesses to understand their target markets and requirements, ultimately setting businesses up for success (Azzahra, 2023). For the creation of suitable human resources, the existence of a study program dynamically adapted to the Market and Demand for work plays an important role. In the educational environment, pillars of academic subjects have been created that combine the requirements in the Research and development of innovations of the HEIs with the needs for Demand for a suitable workforce that has, according to the Tourism Industry, the certified skills and practical training and experience. Therefore, the educational institutions of the HEIs that aim at the domestic and international approach of the Education and Training Markets should have the possibility to exploit any need and desire in the relevant labor market to which they are addressed. Thus, the sustainability, distinction and performance of HEI study programs is based, among other things, on the utilization of the prevailing trends in Technology (e.g. Artificial Intelligence applications, Gamification, Modern applications of mobile technology and telecommunications), Experiential and Lifelong Learning and in the Demand for tourist services (e.g. trend for Environmentally Friendly products and Services, impact of CSR on the choice of Tourist Services, consumer behavior between Generations and search for



information from electronic sources, etc.), which also affects how to adjust the Offer of Tourist Activities Services and finally the selection of suitable staff and therefore also of HEIs' graduates. EHL is based on and included in the learning program Vocational Education & Training (VET), which is a hospitality training program offered in Switzerland. It is an updated and certified curriculum that follows modern current industry standards, preparing students for their absorption in the future tourism labor market. More specifically, the Vocational Education & Training of the educational organization EHL uses a combination of learning tools that support experiential learning and Lifelong education resulting in the holistic training of the student in Tourism and Hospitality issues while showing a practical interest in personal development and dynamics of each individual student in terms of improving abilities and acquiring skills as well as their working career (Musseau, 2023). On a practical level the educational institution combines online learning, on-site workplace visits and consultancy supervision and guidance. As it becomes clear the non-traditional educational institutions of the HEIs - as is also the case with EHL; Hospitality Business School, which adopt the trends in their programs with the aim of developing the skills of their students are the ones that cooperate with the Labor Market and can then easily be positioned as innovative and forward-thinking, resulting in differentiation and innovation. In this way, they manage to attract the interest of students and tourism professionals, in relation to traditional HEIs that present a stable one-sided and unrenewed situation in their study programs.

2. Another good practice is the procedure adopted and followed by the **University of Barcelona and the affiliated partner CEA CAPA**. At the University of Barcelona, the relevant advisory committee is created consisting of industry professionals who provide regular feedback on the design and content of the curriculum (UB, 2024; CEA CAPA, 2024) and the challenge-based learning (CBL); project-based learning (PBL); Case studies visiting the real work environment, as learning procedures (CETT, 2024). For example, the Tourism Business and Management program at the University of Barcelona regularly updates its curriculum based on input from the Tourism Industry Advisory Board and other partners like the CEA CAPA education abroad center (i.e., the creation of Academic Management and Leadership teams



and the use of standing committees and working groups). The proposals of the committee help and support the continuous renewal and adaptation of the curriculum through the development of specialized courses that respond to the current trends and demands of the sector, such as digital marketing in tourism, sustainable tourism practices and event management. Several HEIs emphasize synergies and the involvement of experienced professionals in teaching activities, lectures, guest speakers, presentations, program planning and assessment committees, supervision of work and theses, research projects and actions. An example is the HEI In many cases (as is the case with the HEI of the France ESSEC Business School (MBA in hospitality and management at ESSEC), which has training programs that include the involvement of students in real practical issues (i.e., like the Work on a real-life Capstone Project; Lukins, 2024) of the workplace of partners - future employers. This internship enhances the students' practical experience and competence (ESSEC, 2024).

3. **Breda University, Holland.** In this university, the internship is a mandatory completion procedure regarding the study program in Hotel Management. The University of Applied Sciences in Brenda, Netherlands, requires students to complete an internship, providing them with real-world experience and industry contacts (BU, 2024). As noted on the relevant website of the Dutch University:

“Every year a group of top-performing students is selected to benefit from exclusive guest lectures and access to Hilton Worldwide University e-learning programmes. If you join the Hilton Class, you will also get support and advice from senior executives from Hilton Worldwide. In addition, you will be offered two full-time work placements at Hilton. Outstanding students could also secure the opportunity to start their career with Hilton upon graduation.”

4. Another good practice followed by the modern HEIs is the **participation or organization by the liaison offices of the HEIs** or their participation and the creation of reports presenting the educational programs and communication with the labour market by industry experts and Tourism professionals. The “Fitur-International Job Fair for Tourism and Hospitality” or the “Fitur Talent” in Spain

(Smith, 2024) is a typical example, connecting students with employers from all over the world, pursuit that is also mentioned and noted in the relevant blog of the Fitur exhibition body:

“They require agile and prepared individuals capable of interacting with the new digital tourist (demanding, hyper-connected, and omnichannel) and possessing the necessary knowledge to manage the new technologies impacting the tourism business (artificial intelligence, big data & analytics, chatbots, blockchain, IoT, etc.).”
(Fitur 2025-Fitur Talent, 2024).

5. The use of **Mentorship Programs** is also considered a good practice, which for many European HEIs is not only an important opportunity to utilize their alumni network. A good example of the application of the program are the actions of the Graduates of the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management of the University of Surrey (Surray, 2024). Alumni actively mentor current students, providing them with advisory services as well as networking opportunities. This effort also contributes to the organization of events on a regular level where the oldest graduates participate in the panel. This opportunity supports, through the recent experience and knowledge of past graduates, the development and careers of current and future graduates of the HEI.

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MODULE 3: Establishing UBC and Holistic Career Services: A Guide for HEIs

Introduction	This last part is designed to be used as a practical guide that will help trainers educate HEI staff on the establishment of the UBC mechanism and holistic career services. Its aim is to provide a framework that trainers can follow to ensure the successful knowledge transfer and implementation in their institutions. In this context, the whole-institution approach is explored as a tool to enhance the effectiveness of career services. Also, an action based-checklist audit for organizing the HEIs career offices is provided. Through this audit the reader can understand the basic aspects of a process of an activity-based functional audit checklist with the scope to improve the organizing status and prepare the related steps of a HEI's typical career office. A plan framework that includes the establishment and operation of the UBC mechanism, providing guidance on its pilot implementation and incorporating a monitoring and evaluation M&E framework is presented. This framework can serve as a practical guide for HEIs helping them establish effective UBC mechanism and holistic career services.
Learning outcomes	By the end of this module, participants will be able to: ✓ Develop a comprehensive UBC mechanism and holistic career services plan within their HEI ✓ Apply a whole-institution approach into the design and operation of career services in HEIs ✓ Create an action-based check-list audit to organize and assess career services in HEIs ✓ Implement monitoring and evaluation frameworks to pilot the implementation of their plans
Learning contents	Unit 3.1 Implementing a whole-institution approach to establish UBC and holistic career services mechanisms

Unit 3.1 Implementing a whole-institution approach to establish UBC & holistic career services mechanisms

Since the 1980's, "whole" has been applied as a term to describe a holistic teaching approach that emphasizes not only knowledge but also practical application (Kohl et al., 2022). Human beings, as a reflection of the universe, should be educated through holistic approaches; HEIs can serve as a microcosm, helping students understand the world (Kaldis, 2009). Back to 1992, Agenda 21 recognized the role of education as essential for sustainable development (United Nations, 1992). Similarly, in recent years and in line with the 2030 Agenda, the UN General Assembly recognized the contribution of education to sustainable development (United Nations General Assembly, 2019).

In 2014, UNESCO proposed that a whole-institution approach involves integrating the concept of sustainability into every aspect of an educational institution, from teaching and learning to the management of facilities and the engagement of the community (Buckler & Creech, 2014). In HEIs, the idea of sustainable development revolves around the "whole" approach; there, education alone through lectures and seminars is not enough (Schopp et al., 2020). Thus, a holistic perspective should be adopted which will consider the interconnectedness of the various elements (education, operations, campus life) of the institution (Schopp et al., 2020).

The whole-institution approach to sustainability in HEIs should be a commitment shared in the university and thus it requires the active participation of all stakeholders involved, including students, faculty, staff and administrators (Christou et al., 2024). This approach bridges the gap between formal and informal learning in order to create a sustainable environment that supports effective learning experiences (Holst, 2023).



Holst (2023) suggests a comprehensive framework for implementing a whole-institution approach which is built on five core principles (coherence, continuous learning, participation, responsibility, long-term commitment) and seven organizational areas of action (governance, curriculum and formal learning, operations and campus management, community and networks, research, human capacity building, and communication).

Building on this holistic framework, the next section introduces an actionable tool that helps HEIs enhance the organization of their career offices.

Activity 3.1

Title/type of the activity	Whole-institution approach SWOT analysis
Instructions and Content	Participants brainstorm a list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to their entire HEI and its ability to implement a whole-institution approach to sustainability.

Unit 3.2 An action-based checklist audit for organising the HEI career offices

The connection between the Labor Markets and therefore the tourism professions with the training and learning of the educated students e.g., using alternative teaching methods like active learning activities or such as project-based and work-integrated training (Phan et al., 2021) makes the Career and Labor Market Liaison Offices necessary and useful in terms of the professional career of their graduates (Bridgstock, 2009). As the contemporary global job market becomes increasingly pressing due to the various skills acquired by HEI graduates (Coelen & Gribble, 2019), the need for robust, well-planned career services has become more apparent in our days (Cummings et al., 2017: p.118). As sources for this proposal for the design and review of HEI liaison and careers offices, we use the international literature review that explores the design and



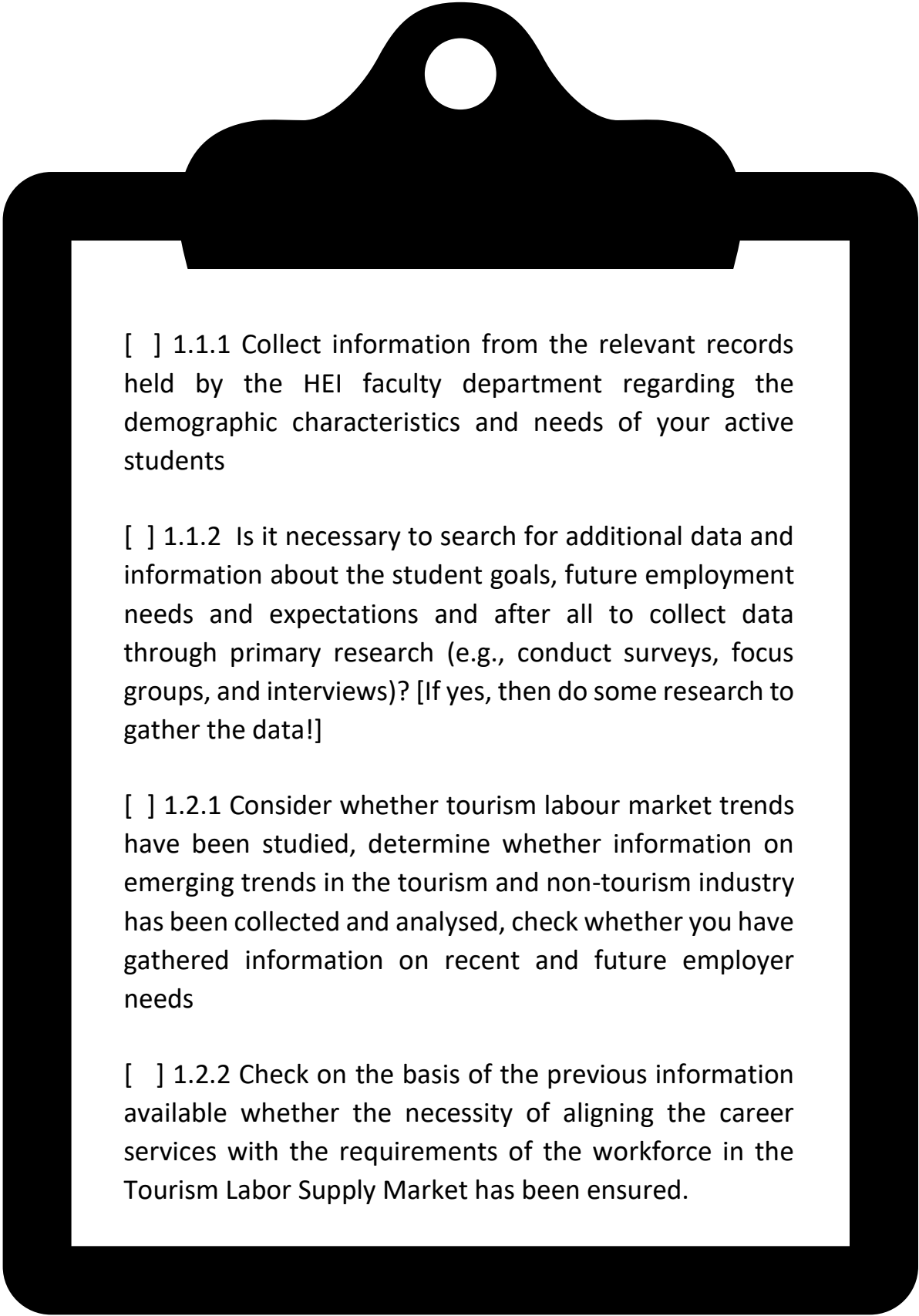
development of careers services within HEIs, focusing on best practices, challenges and emerging trends (Dey & Real, 2010). More specifically, in the following text we present, based on the relevant literature review, a checklist or else an action-based audit with important points and steps to be achieved and completed, so that the HEIs career & liaison offices can plan and control the priority of their actions and activities that should be carried out and be checked (Dey & Cruzvergara, 2014).

In the following section the reader can understand the basic aspects of a process of a activity based functional audit checklist with the scope to improve the organizing status and preparing the related steps of a HEI's typical career office. Each checkpoint is further analysed in order to provide a more detailed approach to the activities that could be considered for a practical approach regarding the organization and management of activities in HEIs' career & liaison offices.

*** 1st POINT: Assessment and planning of the needs of students, the tourist labour market and the HEI career office**

1.1 In this action level, the analysis describes the profile of potential graduates of the HEI's Tourism & Hospitality; T&H department(s). More specifically, their demographic information is analysed, based on data like e.g. age, gender, place of permanent and temporary residence, occupation of parents, high school graduation, etc. The collection of information can be additionally done through primary data collection that will yield the appropriate information. If you do not have specific qualitative information about the demographic characteristics and specifically the needs of your students, enable primary research through interviews, focus group discussions, and questionnaires to identify i.e., students' career goals, challenges, and expectations (see also below the "Checklist" figure: 1.1.1-1.1.2).

1.2 The second level of the 1st step contributes for a Tourism Labor Market Industry Situation and a Tourism Industry Sector - Trend Analysis. Here you have to record and study the current and future state of the e.g., Tourism Labor Market. In this part of this first step, you have to explore the labour market trends, the emerging industries and also the employer needs to ensure that the career services align with the workforce requirements (see also below the "Checklist" figure: 1.2.1-1.2.2).

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[] 1.1.1 Collect information from the relevant records held by the HEI faculty department regarding the demographic characteristics and needs of your active students

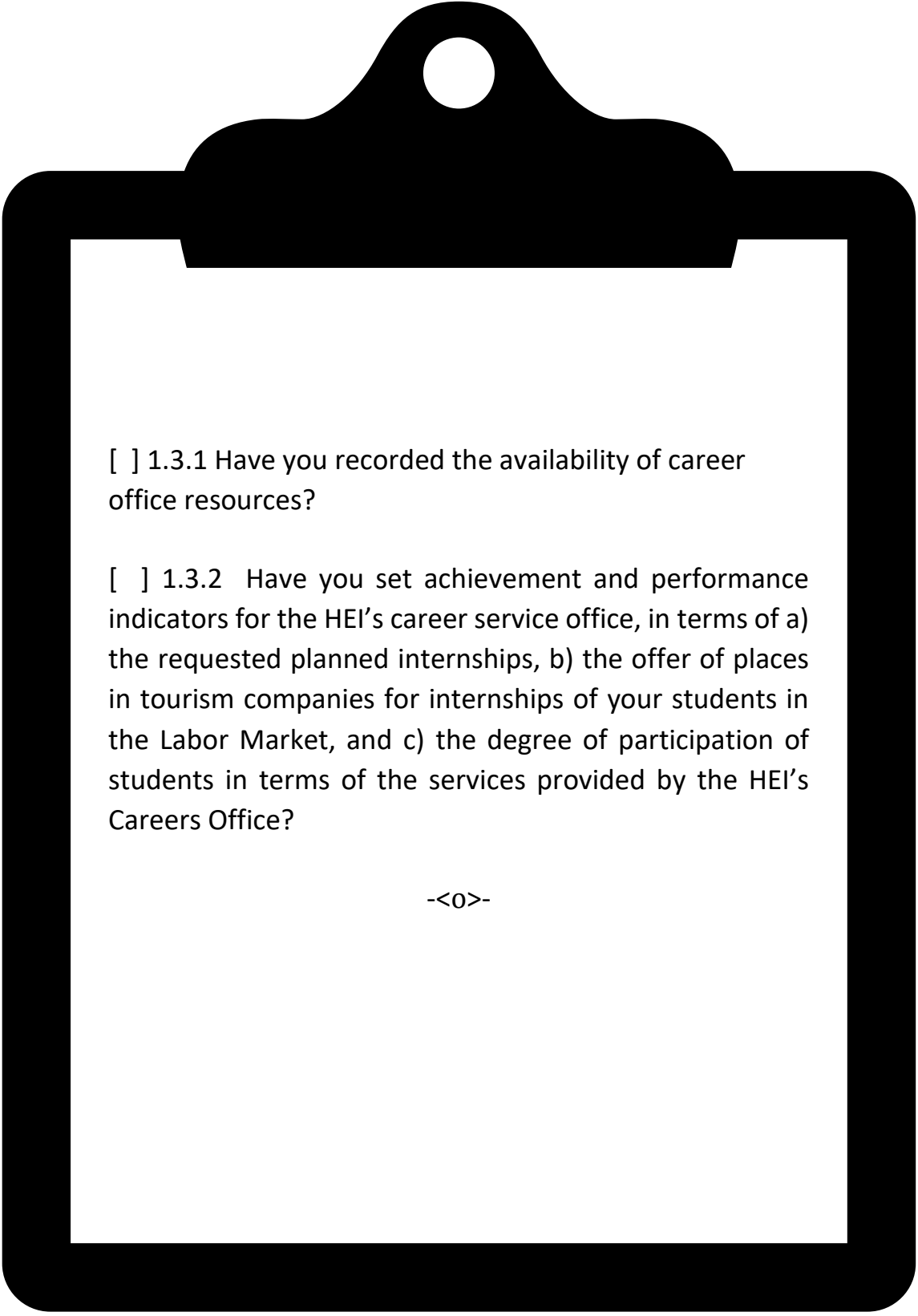
[] 1.1.2 Is it necessary to search for additional data and information about the student goals, future employment needs and expectations and after all to collect data through primary research (e.g., conduct surveys, focus groups, and interviews)? [If yes, then do some research to gather the data!]

[] 1.2.1 Consider whether tourism labour market trends have been studied, determine whether information on emerging trends in the tourism and non-tourism industry has been collected and analysed, check whether you have gathered information on recent and future employer needs

[] 1.2.2 Check on the basis of the previous information available whether the necessity of aligning the career services with the requirements of the workforce in the Tourism Labor Supply Market has been ensured.



1.3 After making a record of the current state of the Career Office's needs, set based on the availability of resources the objectives of the Office by setting indicators of achievement and evaluating the performance in terms of e.g., a) the requested planned internship positions, b) the offer of positions in tourist companies for internships of students in the Labor Market and, c) the degree of student participation in the services of the Career Office of your HEI (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 13.1-1.3.2).

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[] 1.3.1 Have you recorded the availability of career office resources?

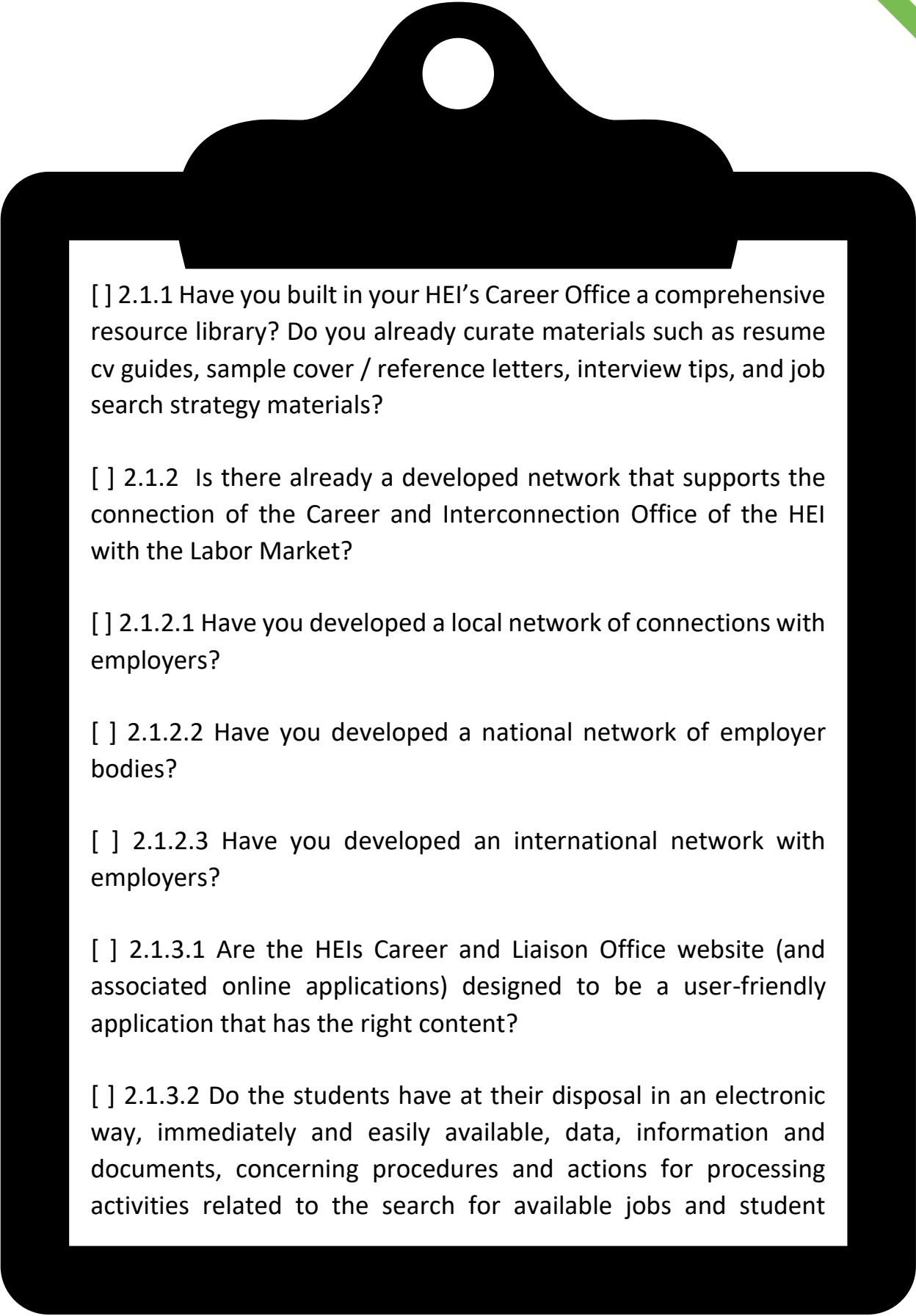
[] 1.3.2 Have you set achievement and performance indicators for the HEI's career service office, in terms of a) the requested planned internships, b) the offer of places in tourism companies for internships of your students in the Labor Market, and c) the degree of participation of students in terms of the services provided by the HEI's Careers Office?

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*** 2nd POINT: The Development of available HEIs Career Office resources**

2.1 This level of action is related to determining the available status of the HEI Careers Office.

2.1.1-2.1.3 More specifically, it includes actions and actions concerning the implementation of a series of tasks and arrangements that strengthen the operation of the Career Office. The actions are focused on the tripartite: a) Integrated support from databases of active students and graduates that are also available electronically through the relevant library of the Career Office of the HEI (Gamelin, 2023), b) Actions for planning the actions concerning the contacts and continuous communication with the agencies and employers of employment in the (Tourism) Labor Market and c) Organization, design and development of the Electronic Environment for activating the Career Office of the HEI; A good contemporary practice for a user friendly application is to create a user-easy available website or portal (e.g., intercultural and also available for students and people with special needs) where students can access resources, schedule appointments, and track their professional development progress. These actions are presented, like also the previous ones, in the form of a checklist and fulfillment, and are integrated in the relevant figure of the next document text (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 2.1-2.1.3.2).

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☐ 2.1.1 Have you built in your HEI's Career Office a comprehensive resource library? Do you already curate materials such as resume cv guides, sample cover / reference letters, interview tips, and job search strategy materials?

☐ 2.1.2 Is there already a developed network that supports the connection of the Career and Interconnection Office of the HEI with the Labor Market?

☐ 2.1.2.1 Have you developed a local network of connections with employers?

☐ 2.1.2.2 Have you developed a national network of employer bodies?

☐ 2.1.2.3 Have you developed an international network with employers?

☐ 2.1.3.1 Are the HEIs Career and Liaison Office website (and associated online applications) designed to be a user-friendly application that has the right content?

☐ 2.1.3.2 Do the students have at their disposal in an electronic way, immediately and easily available, data, information and documents, concerning procedures and actions for processing activities related to the search for available jobs and student

*** 3rd POINT: Engagement and process of approaching students**

3.1 Professional guidance and student support are important points of reference that concern, among other things, the main function and responsibility of the career's office. The integration of support services e.g. library, electronic simulation applications for control and acquisition of skills in tourism, gamified learning applications, interactive website with ease of access and use, etc. contributes to significantly facilitating the services offered to students, at the same time motivating them for more involvement, participation and in investigating and seeking information (Reinders & Wattana, 2015). An important element is the integration of career services that invest in new orientations based on the new needs of the Labor Market in tourism, e.g. Specialist in human resources in Marine or Undersea tourism, or specialist in electronic applications in Tourism, or Specialist in the application of robotic technology in Tourism etc. Finally, an important issue is to Incorporate career services into the new student orientations and offer regular workshops on topics such as resume writing, interview skills, networking, and job search strategies (Smith, 2014), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 3.1.1- 3.1.3).

3.2 A main activity of the HEI career office includes, among others, the Counseling service regarding the student careers, the labor market opportunities and the support of graduates of the Institution. As part of these actions it is also important to provide individual counselling sessions to assist students in career exploration, planning and decision making (Gordon, 1998; 2006; 2015), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 3.2).

3.3 The effort to support students also requires appropriate communication and promotion of the Services provided by the Career Office. For the most effective communication use email campaigns, social media, posters and presentations e.g. by academic staff or office staff in the classroom e.g. first year students to raise awareness of the services offered by the Career Office (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 3.3.1- 3.3.3).



Checklist

☐ 3.1.1 Does your Careers Office service have appropriate and up-to-date support infrastructure and superstructures? (e.g. updated library, software of electronic simulation applications for control and acquisition of skills in tourism, interactive website with ease of access and use, gamification applications for acquisition and development of skills, etc.)

☐ 3.1.2 Have you integrated career services that invest in new orientations based on the new needs of the Labor Market in tourism?

☐ 3.1.3 Do you offer regular workshops in the Careers Office on topics such as resume writing, interviewing skills, networking and job search strategies?

☐ 3.2 Are individual counselling sessions provided to assist students in career exploration, planning and decision making?

☐ 3.3.1 Do you use email campaigns to communicate more effectively?

☐ 3.3.2 Do you use social media to communicate more effectively?

☐ 3.3.3 For more efficient communication do you use posters and presentations, e.g., from academic staff or office staff, in the classroom?

*** 4th POINT: Creation and development of Internship and job placement programs**

As a fourth important step, there are actions regarding the help and support provided by the Career Office in matters related to the T&H Student Internship and Work Placement Programs.

More specifically, this part of actions examines the triptych of, a) creating an appropriate internship program, b) finding positions and placing students in relevant jobs for employment, and c) the identification and organization of relevant events concerning the professional career of e.g., Tourism and Hospitality students and graduates of the HEIs (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 4.1- 4.3). In more detail in each subsection of this step the following actions could be taken into account:

4.1 Create an appropriate internship program. Those interested can rely on the relevant literature and consult it regarding the key points and steps for creating an internship program (see also: indeed, 2024a; CRA, 2024; Kolb, 2014), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 4.1).

4.2 Find jobs / workplaces for your students in relevant jobs for their tourism related careers. Track student placement results and continually refine strategies to improve job placement rates (see also: Emmersion, 2024; GOV.UK, 2024), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 4.2).

4.3 Identify and organize relevant events e.g., career fairs, concerning the professional career of your students. Prioritize on organizing events where students can meet potential employers, learn about industry expectations, and explore the tourism related job opportunities (see also: indeed, 2024b), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 4.3).



Checklist

☐ 4.1 Are you looking to work constructively with academic departments to develop internship opportunities that align with their students' academic programs?

☐ 4.2 Have you organized or are you organizing as a Careers Office relevant career events where students can meet potential employers, learn about industry expectations and explore any job opportunities?

☐ 4.3.1 Have you established a system to track the results of your students' work placements?

☐ 4.3.2 Do you systematically monitor the progress and results of your students' work placements and based on them constantly adjust the following strategies to improve your tourism job placement rates?

*** 5th POINT: Alumni Mentoring and Engagement**

The Career office also performs important activities related to the offer of services from graduates to active undergraduate students, but also supports and utilizes the graduates of the HEI in general. More specifically, in the context of the activities it undertakes, it emphasizes counselling and guidance from graduates, develops networks with graduates and promotes students to jobs that graduates recommend and offer, informs through direct contacts with graduates, e.g. during workshops, seminars or events for current undergraduate students on developments in, for example, the tourism industry and hospitality; T&H. The activities included in this step may concern the following:

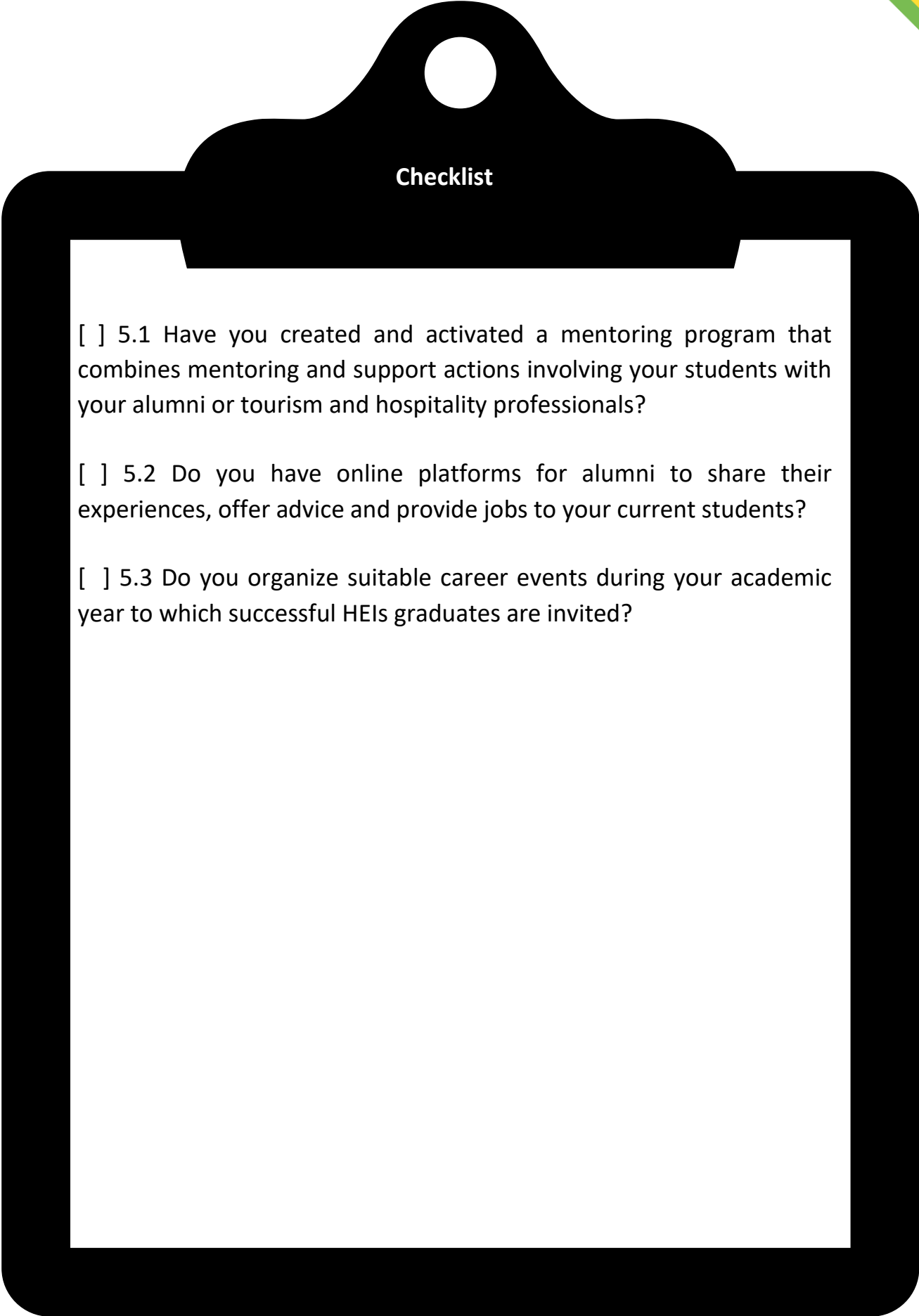
5.1 Creation of a Mentoring Program. The formal form of cooperation is based on the agreement of the gentlemen, for this reason it would be good to define the rules of cooperation with the mentors, e.g. the goals of the mentoring relationship are defined, the skills expected to be strengthened with regard to your T&H students are defined and the communication and cooperation frameworks based on the expected benefits between the two parties. The success of the program is evaluated, among other things, by its performance, i.e. the quality and content of the career guidance and by the employability skills required by employers and how these are included in the program (see also Okolie et al., 2020), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 5.1).

5.2 Actions of Alumni engagement. In the modern reality of HEIs, the commitment of graduates is an important activity of the Career Offices because it is also linked to the promotion of the Brand, i.e. their reputation and the qualitative distinction of HEIs. Through the literature and related research studies, it appears that graduates may respond positively to engagement efforts when they are actively involved in providing career support through networking events and activities organized by career services, attending lectures on campus, and other opportunities related to facilities and policies that are part of higher education e.g. internship programs and guidance in the workplace. Relationship building and networking activities with the Alumni community can be greatly enhanced through the use of technology e.g. teleconferences, regular updates via e-seminars and career information days. Former students and now successful professionals working in Tourism and Hospitality can support the professional orientation of active



students. Their participation in activities such as career talks, mentoring, CV workshops and virtual (mock) interviews are some examples of important activities that they can support as volunteers and graduates of a HEI. Communication between students and professionals is crucial as students can interact within a community of people who share a unique common professional experience (Veluvali & Suriseti, 2023; Obeng-Ofori & Kwarteng, 2020; OECD, 2021), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 5.2).

5.3 Career workshops, seminars or events with the assistance of Alumni. The ability to follow the developments in the Tourism and Hospitality sector in terms of the relevant labour market is strengthened through the organization of career events where the contribution of graduates of the alumni association is important. During the year, Career Offices usually organize for their undergraduate and postgraduate students a series of workshops, e.g. creating visions and designing the individual career path per interested student, enforcing reflecting discussion, creating a professional profile e.g. on LinkedIn, ways to search for jobs and related information about, for example, the tourism industry, guidance on salary negotiation, skills acquisition and development, as well as CV writing related to the various stages of their students' career path (INSEAD, 2024; De Winter et al., 2017; Nugent et al., 2023), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 5.3).



Checklist

- [] 5.1 Have you created and activated a mentoring program that combines mentoring and support actions involving your students with your alumni or tourism and hospitality professionals?
- [] 5.2 Do you have online platforms for alumni to share their experiences, offer advice and provide jobs to your current students?
- [] 5.3 Do you organize suitable career events during your academic year to which successful HEIs graduates are invited?

*** 6th POINT: Evaluation and continuous improvement**

The possibility of developing a framework of professional guidance from the career office that will have a permanent active character, is based on the existence of data and information that can guide the executives of the office as well as the recipients of their services, i.e. the students of the HEI. The following section highlights the need to collect information and data and measure the effectiveness and performance of actions through the collection of information on students, the monitoring of indicators and the utilization of the information collected in order to continuously improve the services provided by the career office. Here are three suggestions for the success of the aforementioned actions.

6.1 Collect regular feedback from students, alumni and employers on the effectiveness of career services (OECD, 2021; Vanable, 2010), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 6.1.1.-6.1.4).

6.2 Track key metrics such as internship placement rates, job placement rates, and student satisfaction to evaluate the success of Career Office initiatives (see also Thereja, Gupta & Gang, 2012), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 6.2.1.-6.2.2).

6.3 New ideas, innovations and improvement actions. Use the data and feedback collected to make continuous improvements to the services offered, ensuring they remain relevant and effective (Kettunen, 2023), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 6.3).



Checklist

☐ 6.1.1 Do you collect regular feedback from active students of your HEI?

☐ 6.1.2 Do you collect regular feedback from alumni of your HEI?

☐ 6.1.3 Do you collect regular feedback from your students' employers?

☐ 6.1.4 Do you regularly collect feedback from alumni about the effectiveness of career services?

☐ 6.2.1 Are you tracking key metrics related to internship placement rates?

☐ 6.2.2 Do you track key metrics related to job placement rates and student job satisfaction?

☐ 6.3. Do you use the data and feedback collected from your surveys and analytics to make continuous improvements to your service offerings of your HEI's Career Office?

***7th POINT: Integration with Academic Program**

It is also important to adapt any actions within the framework of goal-setting and planning of the main educational program of the HEI based on the availability of resources, regulations and institutional goals and relevant priorities. In this context, the effort to integrate your action(s) into the Academic Program of the HEI is required!

This section delves into the necessary actions that the Career Office could develop in order to develop and implement an appropriate and effective training and career program. Emphasis is placed on the cooperation of HEI career and education programs, on the development and delivery of training and study program content related to job search and skill development for tourism professions, as well as on the development of appropriate actions to motivate students to participate in programs cooperation with employers and in those of internships programs. In more detail, within the framework of these actions, the following are foreseen:

7.1 Create an Integrated Career Curriculum (Guden & Safaeimanesh, 2024; Bridgstock, et al., 2019; Panagiotakopoulos, 2012; Pollock & Ritchie, 1990), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 7.1).

7.2 Give emphasis on Career Courses by promoting employability skills (Healy, 2023; Asonitou, 2015; Panagiotakopoulos, 2012), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 7.2).

7.3 Develop and offer Capstone Projects and University-Industry collaborations (Brodowicz, 2024; Mezgec, 2022; Hess et al., 2013; Ray, 2003), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 7.3).



Checklist

- [] 7.1 Do you work with teaching staff to integrate your students' careers into the curriculum? (e.g. the opportunity to learn through joint completion of projects and activities and strengthening your HEI's, HEI-T&H industry relationships)
- [] 7.2 Do you offer to your HEI's students, "for-credit" courses that focus on career planning, job search strategies, and professional skill development?
- [] 7.3 Do you encourage students to undertake projects that involve collaboration with industry partners? (E.g., by providing practical experience and networking opportunities)

*** 8th POINT: Leveraging Technology and Innovation.**

The control section of this activity refers to Leveraging Technology and Innovation issues. In more detail, the section includes, in terms of content, audit activities concerning: a) the use of appropriate software for the management of career actions, b) the use of virtual technology for advice, seminars, events and exhibitions for students and graduates as well as for other interested parties e.g. x sponsors, professionals in Tourism and Hospitality, Local Government and Media, as well as, c) the availability and use of equipment for carrying out analyses and use of statistical data as well as the relevant software and modern databases and sets for monitoring trends through analyses and statistics e.g. Statistics and trends of the T&H branch of the aforementioned Office.

Therefore, these elements include three action control modules, which are briefly mentioned below:

8.1 Use career management software. Implement tools to track student progress, manage relationships with employers and facilitate virtual career services. The effective use of technology can now contribute to the organization of virtual digital communities by students and employers, i.e. the Tourism and Hospitality Job Market. The student is no longer an isolated recipient of services, he communicates with other stakeholders and shares his relevant concerns, comments, remarks, and work experiences. This includes technological means such as social media platforms, which help to engage and engage students with the services provided by the Careers Office, the transfer of advice, suggestions, ideas, innovations and good practices, as well as job offers from the employers. At the same time, the possibilities of communication and efficient completion of the Career Office's processes are expanded and facilitated through the use of video conferencing tools and applications for mobile devices. In this way students of e.g. Tourism and Hospitality as well as their relevant interested employers can benefit from more tailored programs that match their interests as well as personalized advice that is specifically tailored to their needs (Dey & Cruzvergara, 2014), (see also below the "Checklist" figure: 8.1.1-8.1.2).

8.2 Offer virtual advice, webinars and online job fairs to reach a wider audience. Give emphasis on Career Courses by promoting employability skills. Student employment



brings about changes in the way of understanding and dealing with the duties and tasks that a job requires. The creativity of the students, which is strengthened by the direct contact of the students with the everyday issues of the working environment, can and intensifies the tendency to produce innovations in the working environment with applications that stem from their creative ideas. The creativity phase (generation of new ideas) is the driving force for the innovation, i.e., the next phase, which focuses on the implementation and acceptance of the idea. Also keep in mind that interpersonal skills and communication with other people are a basic requirement for the Job Market even with the technological peculiarities of the modern age (e.g., there is a need to communicate complex ideas, negotiate, and lead between the people involved in workplace communities) (Cheng et al., 2022; Hagggar & Alshamamary, 2020), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 8.2).

8.3 Use Data Analytics and Metrics. Use data analytics based on the new available technology, data analytic, machine learning, and AI-related skills, to predict job market trends and tailor services to student needs (Börner, et al., 2018; Gaftandzhieva et al., 2022), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 8.3).



Checklist

☐ 8.1.1 Regarding your HEI's Careers Office, does it implement tools to track student progress?

☐ 8.1.2 Regarding the Career Office of your HEI, does it have the ability to manage relationships with employers as well as facilitate virtual career services?

☐ 8.2 Do you offer virtual advice, webinars and online job fairs to reach a wider audience interested in your Career Office as a common recipient of your services?

☐ 8.3 Do you use contemporary tech for data analytics, machine learning, and AI-related applications, to predict labour market trends and tailor services to student needs?

*** 9th POINT: Sustainability and financing/funding**

The development of the Career Office's activities is based on the existence and availability of appropriate available resources. The financing of the proposed actions is a basic condition for the creation and smooth development of the career services provided at the HEI. As the needs expand over the years and the resources remain almost constant, the need to manage the operating costs and the costs of the services provided, becomes more and more pressing and necessary. The financial viability of the Office is linked to the possibility of managing its inputs/revenues and financing its actions. Important checkpoints to investigate are the following points of attention:

9.1 Ensure the existence of continuous funding. Explore funding opportunities through grants, corporate partnerships and alumni donations to maintain and expand career services (Abiola et al., 2022; Hyden et al., 2015; Bloch et al., 2014), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 9.1).

9.2 Consider and adopt sustainable practices that can reduce the waste of resources with positive social impacts or positive impacts in matters of natural resource management and protection of the Natural Environment. Incorporate sustainable practices into operations, such as reducing paper usage by digitizing resources and promoting virtual events (Shishakly et al., 2024; Alojail and Khan, 2023; Hashim et al., 2022; Sugiarto et al., 2022), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 9.2).



Checklist

☐ 9.1 Have you explored funding opportunities through grants, corporate partnerships, and alumni donations to maintain and expand career services?

☐ 9.2 Have you integrated sustainable practices into the operations of your HEI and related Careers Office? (e.g., such as reducing the use of paper by digitizing resources and promoting virtual events?).

*** 10th POINT: Building a strong reputation**

As also an important control element of the coverage and effectiveness of the actions of the Career Office that are of interest to the graduates and students of the HEI, e.g. in the case of Tourism studies, is also the confirmation of the success of the actions that arouse the interest of students and third parties (e.g. professionals, local community, local government agencies) and contribute to the creation of a positive reputation, i.e. they can and do strengthen the institution's reputation for producing successful graduates, e.g. in Tourism and Hospitality. More specifically, this section includes actions concerning:

10.1 The promotion of the achievements of the students and graduates of the HEI. These activities include actions to present real successful employment and career stories of your students. More specifically you can highlight these achievements of e.g., students and graduates on the institution's website, in newsletters and through social media (Seifert et al., 2022; Lowden et al., 2011), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 10.1.1-10.1.2).

10.2 The recognition of the contribution of your volunteers, professionals, companies and graduates. Build a reputation for excellence; Strive to become a leading institution for careers services by continuously improving and promoting the achievements of your graduates (Giancaspro & Manuti, 2021; Resh et al., 2021; Hartman & Andzulis, 2019), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 10.2).

10.3 The certification of career services and the creation of a reputation for the Career Office through the recognition of successes. Create for this reason Awards Programs, e.g., Recognize outstanding employers, alumni and students who contribute to the success of the Career Office (Kosfeld and Neckermann, 2011; Gubler et al., 2013), (see also below the “Checklist” figure: 10.3).



Checklist

☐ 10.1.1 Are the achievements of students and graduates highlighted on the institution's website?

☐ 10.1.2 Are the achievements of students and alumni highlighted in newsletters and the related social media platforms?

☐ 10.2 As a careers office, do you strive to become a leading institution for careers services by continuously improving and promoting the success of your graduates?

☐ 10.3 Do you recognize the outstanding employers, alumni and students who contribute to the success of your Career Office?

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Unit 3.3 A framework for a HEI's plan for the establishment of the UBC mechanism & holistic career services

In this final section, a comprehensive framework designed to guide HEIs in developing their plans to establish the UBC mechanism and holistic career services is outlined, including structured guidance for implementation and integration across the institution.

In this framework, the principles of the whole-institution approach are integrated, offering a structured plan that HEIs can tailor to their contexts.

1. Introduction

2. Context analysis

- Description and Background of the institution
- Strengths and weaknesses, possible challenges related to the external environment, trends in the industry
- Objective of the plan based on the specific context of the HEI

3. Understanding the current landscape of the HEI

- Information based on the D2.3 Inno4Tourism report for the country and the institution
- Analysis of internal and external stakeholders of the HEI
- Analysis of potential UBC activities that the HEI may be involved

4. Strategic planning for HEI's UBC Mechanism and Holistic Career Services

- Planning based on the HEI's objective for UBC mechanism

- Design policies (aligned with the mission of the institution) that encourage faculty and industry collaboration
- Build strategies based on the strengths of the institution (e.g. strong regional presence, internationalization, partnerships)
- Build/expand a career office to coordinate UBC efforts (focusing on expanding existing and developing new partnerships)
- Integrate holistic career services into UBC framework
- Focus on sustainability across all aspects of these initiatives

5. Implementation of UBC Activities in Education, Research, Valorisation, and Management

- Aligning education with industry needs
 - 1) curriculum design and delivery (CDD): Co-design curricula with industry partners, incorporate guest lectures from industry experts, offer specialized courses, provide blended learning approaches
 - 2) lifelong learning (LLL): Create programs, workshops and seminars tailored to the industry needs, focus on upskilling, encourage alumni participation
 - 3) student mobility (SM): Expand student exchange programs, internships, and work placements, increase international exchange programs, focus on practical experience
- Research collaboration
 - 4) Professional mobility (PM): Facilitate exchanges between faculty and industry professionals, promote joint research projects with industry to foster knowledge sharing
 - 5) Research and Development (R&D) activities: Develop R&D initiatives focusing on the skills revealed on the transnational report on skills demand
- Valorisation
 - 6) Entrepreneurship (ENT): Create a supportive environment for innovation, provide resources and mentorship for start-ups and new ventures

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- 7) Commercialization of R&D (COM): Collaborate with industry partners to commercialise research outputs, develop intellectual property management
 - Management
 - 8) Governance: Establish government structures and also form advisory boards (with representation from industry and community stakeholders) to ensure effective management of UBC activities
 - 9) Shared services: It should identify opportunities for collaboration where the institution and industry partners can share resources, expertise, and infrastructure
 - 10) Industry support: Offer consulting services, workshops, and training programs on a range of topics

6. Development of Holistic Career Services

The career services of the institution should provide a wide range of initiatives to support students, graduates and alumni in their career development. As described in detail in part B of the current training program, the institution should 1) offer career counseling and guidance, 2) develop resources and tools to help them in their job search efforts 3) equip them with the necessary labour skills to succeed in the market 4) establish a strong alumni network to facilitate them create opportunities for mentoring and industry engagement 5) through also the involvement of business and/or other relevant stakeholders 6) provide work-based learning opportunities aligned with its educational goals and industry needs, focusing on digital skills, sustainability, and entrepreneurship and, lastly, 7) implement employability assessment tools to evaluate their readiness.

7. Pilot Implementation Plan

- Firstly, it is important for the university to test the UBC mechanisms and holistic career services with a selected group of students, graduates and alumni, before its official launch. Therefore, a representative group of these participants should be identified, prioritizing those with a strong interest in UBC. Focus should be given



on key areas, such as digital skills development, entrepreneurship and sustainability.

- A detailed timeline should be created, including key activities, deliverables and milestones. This timeline must be aligned with goals and priorities of the university and include achievable deadlines.
- Also, the necessary resources should be identified to support the pilot implementation plan phase. Human, financial and technological resources should be determined and effectively allocated.
- The roles and responsibilities of the university staff, particularly within the career office, should be clearly defined. Training and support to the staff involved in this phase should be offered.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework

- Performance indicators:

To measure the effectiveness of the UBC mechanisms and holistic career services and to track the number, the quality and the progress of UBC partnerships, key performance indicators (KPIs) should be established. These may include the graduate employability rates, job satisfaction levels among alumni, number of industry partnerships or even the impact of UBC activities on regional development.

- Monitoring Process:

Regular feedback collection should be established to collect data from all stakeholders (students, graduates, faculty, industry partners and other). Surveys, focus groups or interviews could be used to gather data and analyze it to identify areas for improvement. The overall initiative should be tracked through regular progress frameworks prepared by the career office and shared with the management of the university, the industry partners and the rest stakeholders.

- Evaluation and continuous improvement:

M&E is an ongoing process, therefore, periodic evaluations to assess the effectiveness of UBC mechanism should be conducted. For example, curricula and training programs may

require updating, or partnership strategies may need to be refined, based on updated stakeholder feedback or industry trends.

9. UBC Mechanism and Holistic Career Services Dissemination

It is also critical to raise awareness about this mechanism and to promote its activities both internally and externally. Firstly, it is important to engage the university community (including students, faculty and staff) through regular updates, workshops, events and social media channels. Also, this initiative should be promoted to external stakeholders (industry partners, government agencies, prospective students). Digital channels, industry events, research findings, dissemination media collaboration could be utilized towards this direction.

Activity 3.2

Title/type of the activity	A Collaborative Design for UBC and Holistic Career Services
Instructions and Content	Participants work in groups to brainstorm and collaboratively design a draft plan for their university based on the framework provided.

Conclusion

The proposed plan framework outlines a comprehensive approach to establishing UBC mechanisms and holistic career services and is aligned with the strategic goals of the university and the evolving needs of the tourism industry. Its successful implementation requires the commitment and the coordinated efforts from all stakeholders mentioned.

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Appendix – Modules syllabus

This appendix includes the syllabi of the UBC and Holistic Career Services modules. These syllabi provide information on each one of the three modules, including an introduction, the expected learning outcomes and outlines of the learning contents.

A.1 UBC Mechanisms

The following syllabus details the training module related to the “1. UBC mechanisms”, corresponding to the Training Programme on setting up University – Business sector cooperation mechanisms and holistic career services.

Training Title	Introduction to UBC mechanisms
Learning module	1. UBC Mechanisms
Duration (hours)	4 hours including activities
Introduction	This first module introduces the fundamental concepts of UBC mechanisms. It highlights the importance of UBC for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and presents policies that support UBC at the European level. This part also explores the development of UBC activities, the factors that influence UBC as well as the mechanisms that support these efforts. After each unit, several activities are proposed, designed to help participants get familiar with these concepts and apply them in their institutional context.

Learning outcomes	By the end of this module, participants will be able to: • Understand the concept of UBC and its benefits for universities and businesses • Become familiar with European UBC-related policies and best practices • Analyse facilitators and barriers to UBC • Develop and implement UBC policies and strategies • Develop strategies for establishing and maintaining UBC partnerships • Foster a positive and collaborative attitude towards working with external stakeholders • Create a culture of innovation within university
Learning contents	• Unit 1.1: Understanding UBC • Unit 1.2: Importance of UBC • Unit 1.3 European UBC-related policy • Unit 1.4 Development of UBC activities • Unit 1.5 Factors that influence UBC (facilitators and barriers) • Unit 1.6 UBC supporting mechanisms

A.2 Holistic Career Services

The following syllabus details the training module related to the “2. Holistic Career Services”, related to the Training Programme on setting up University – Business sector cooperation mechanisms and holistic career services.

Training Title	Developing holistic career services for students, recent graduates and alumni
Learning module	2. Holistic Career Services
Duration (hours)	4 hours including activities

Overview	This module addresses key aspects that relate with holistic career services for students, recent graduates and alumni focusing on the tourism sector. This second part examines current labour and skill demands of the tourism sector, emphasizing how HEIs can address these needs through career services. Issues such as career counselling and guidance, job search strategies, identification of labour market skills through annual forums and/or surveys, alumni networking, involvement of business and/or other relevant stakeholders, work-based learning opportunities/ placements, employability assessment mechanisms are analysed. Additionally, a case-study on the University of Macedonia's Career Office illustrates effective practices in holistic career services. The connection between career services of HEIs and professional development in tourism is discussed. This section also presents best practices in collaboration between the business sector and HEIs, highlighting examples and evidence from European countries. After each unit, some activities are proposed to reinforce learning and help participants apply the holistic career services concepts to real-world scenarios within their universities.
Learning outcomes	By the end of this module, participants will be able to: • Understand the labour market needs of the tourism industry and the role of HEIs in preparing students for it • Identify the key components of a comprehensive career services program • Recognize the importance of holistic career services in supporting students and alumni throughout their career, particularly in the context of tourism • Identify best practices and learn from successful case studies of partnerships in European countries • Become equipped to provide comprehensive and effective career services to students and alumni
Learning contents	• Unit 2.1 HEIs and Tourism Industry Demand for Labour and Related Skills 1. The tourism businesses and the career services of the HEIs • Unit 2.2 The importance of holistic career services 2.2.1 Key components of holistic career services 2.2.2 Case Study: University of Macedonia's Career Office • Unit 2.3 Career services of HEIs and professional development in Tourism • Unit 2.4 Best practices in collaboration between the business sector and HEIs; some evidence from European countries

A.3 Establishing UBC and Holistic Career Services: A Guide for HEIs

The following syllabus details the training module related to the “3. Establishing UBC and Holistic Career Services: A Guide for HEIs”, related to the Training Programme on setting up University – Business sector cooperation mechanisms and holistic career services.

Training Title	HEI's plan for the establishment of the UBC mechanism and holistic career services
Learning module	3. Establishing UBC and Holistic Career Services: A Guide for HEIs
Duration (hours)	4 hours including activities
Introduction	This last part is designed to be used as a practical guide that will help trainers educate HEI staff on the establishment of the UBC mechanism and holistic career services. Its aim is to provide a framework that trainers can follow to ensure the successful knowledge transfer and implementation in their institutions. In this context, the whole-institution approach is explored as a tool to enhance the effectiveness of career services. Also, an action based-checklist audit for organizing the HEIs career offices is provided. Through this audit the reader can understand the basic aspects of a process of an activity-based functional audit checklist with the scope to improve the organizing status and prepare the related steps of a HEI's typical career office. A plan framework that includes the establishment and operation of the UBC mechanism, providing guidance on its pilot implementation and incorporating a monitoring and evaluation M&E framework is presented. This framework can serve as a practical guide for HEIs helping them establish effective UBC mechanism and holistic career services.



Learning outcomes	By the end of this module, participants will be able to: • Develop a comprehensive UBC mechanism and holistic career services plan within their HEI • Apply a whole-institution approach into the design and operation of career services in HEIs • Create an action-based check-list audit to organize and assess career services in HEIs • Implement monitoring and evaluation frameworks to pilot the implementation of their plans
Learning contents	• Unit 3.1 Implementing a whole-institution approach to establish UBC and holistic career services mechanisms • Unit 3.2 An action-based checklist audit for organizing the HEI career offices • Unit 3.3 A framework for a HEI's plan for the establishment of the UBC mechanism and holistic career services



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