

## “A Chance – New Opportunities for Adults”. Basic information about the project and its products

The Foundation for the Development of the Education System in partnership with the Educational Research Institute are implementing the project “A Chance – New Opportunities for Adults”. The project is in line with the 2016 Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults; it is co-financed by the European Social Fund and will be completed at the end of 2021.

The main aim of the project is to support adults with a low level of skills, knowledge and competences who are not eligible for support under The Youth Guarantee programme.

The project will offer beneficiaries flexible opportunities to improve their literacy, numeracy, digital and social competences, and the option to progress to higher levels of the Polish Qualifications Framework. These objectives will be achieved by developing effective models that will reach and motivate individuals from selected target groups, and by offering them tailored-made learning programmes, skills assessment and the validation of achieved learning outcomes.

The project “A Chance - New Opportunities for Adults” has three phases:

- **The first phase** (1.10.2018–31.07.2019) includes qualitative research and an analysis of current initiatives (e.g. projects, surveys, reports, strategy documents), the selection of priority target groups as well as the development of specifications and requirements for tailored models supporting adults with a low level of basic skills.
- **The second phase** (1.08.2019–30.06.2021) will focus on developing these tailored models by eligible entities chosen in an open call for grants; the best ones will be piloted.
- **The third phase** (1.07.2021–31.12.2021) will focus on preparing recommendations to the government to be used in developing coherent strategies for raising adults’ basic skills. They will include conclusions from the piloted models and will cover such aspects as the effectiveness of the pilot projects, the cost effectiveness of the interventions, and best practices.

The main products developed during the project’s first phase are presented below. This phase had a conceptual and research character, its objective was to develop the main premises for implementing the next phases of the project “A Chance – New Opportunities for Adults”.

### Definition of adults with low levels of basic skills

Within the framework of “A Chance” project, the following definition of adults with a low level of basic skills was developed:

Persons over 25 years of age, who, regardless of their education and employment status, have basic skills (defined as literacy, numeracy, digital skills and social competences) not higher than level 3 of the Polish Qualifications Framework.

## Ten sets of learning outcomes and their assessment criteria as well as the requirements for validation and the entities performing validation are developed

The sets of learning outcomes will be used by grantees to develop support models for adults with low basic skills. Based on the selected set, grant recipients will be able to diagnose a person's competences, determine a learning offer and validate learning outcomes. The sets of learning outcomes were developed for levels 1 to 4 of the Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF). Each set was formulated with a view to developing at least one of three basic skills. Moreover, all sets take into account the development of social competences.

Within the framework of the project “A Chance – New Opportunities for Adults”, sets of learning outcomes were developed for the following basic skills:

### LITERACY

- SET 1 – Handling business and personal e-mail correspondence, PQF level 2
- SET 2 – Writing official letters and completing official forms, PQF level 3
- SET 3 – Writing cover letters for job applications and developing a CV, PQF level 3
- SET 4 – Obtaining and processing useful information from various sources, PQF level 3
- SET 5 – Obtaining and processing information from advertisements and promotions from various sources, PQF level 3

### DIGITAL SKILLS

- SET 6 – Using internet sites and social media, PQF level 3
- SET 7 – Using internet services and platforms, PQF level 4
- SET 8 – Using smartphones and/or tablets, PQF level 2

### NUMERACY

- SET 9 – Planning and maintaining a household budget, PQF level 3
- SET 10 – Calculating repair/construction costs and preparing for renovations, PQF level 3

Each set of learning outcomes can be modified and adapted to the needs of the selected institution and target group. The annex has two sets of example learning outcomes: set 1 – “Handling business and personal e-mail correspondence” and set 9 – “Planning and maintaining household budget”.

## Guidelines for diagnosing the skills and needs of adults with low basic skills

The aim of the document is to support grantees of the project “A Chance – New Opportunities for Adults” in diagnosing the skills and needs of selected target groups. The material covers the following issues:

- scope of the diagnosis of basic skills and needs,
- the competence profile of the persons conducting the diagnosis,
- methods and tools for conducting the diagnosis,
- duration of the diagnosis,
- cost of the diagnosis,
- required organisational conditions,

- diagnosis report,
- general conclusions on the given target group,
- detailed diagnostic guidelines for selected target groups.

## Guidelines for Performing the Validation of Learning Outcomes

The aim of the document is to support grantees in preparing the validation process during the project “A Chance – New Opportunities for Adults”. It contains basic information on designing validation, the methods used, human resources and validation quality assurance standards. The extent to which the guidelines are used depends on many factors, including the specificity of the set of learning outcomes or qualifications, the size of the organisation and, most importantly, the needs of the persons having their learning outcomes validated.

## Mapping Report

The Mapping Report, i.e. mapping the existing solutions for raising the basic skills of adults in Poland, was developed by twelve external experts as part of the first phase of the project “A Chance – New Opportunities for Adults”. The report is based on existing literature and available data, as well as the experience of the experts who work with low-skilled adults in their professional practice. The report also takes into account the conclusions and recommendations from study visits in Poland and abroad that took place in the first phase of the project.

The main aim of the mapping was to present the specificity of different target groups with low basic skills, defined in the project as literacy, numeracy, digital skills and social competences.

The selected groups were analysed, among others, in terms of their socio-economic situation, previous educational experiences, factors hindering their involvement in the learning process, outreach and the support currently offered. The report also describes the good practices of institutions providing support for adults with low basic skills.

## Qualitative Study Report

The report contains the conclusions of a qualitative study conducted in the first phase of the project “A Chance – New Opportunities for Adults”. This study served to answer the question of the support currently available for adults with low basic skills. To this end, the practices of Polish organisations implementing such activities were identified and described. The survey included 50 organisations from eight voivodships providing support for adults with low basic skills, including Universities of the Third Age, public libraries, continuing education centres, social welfare centres, labour offices, training firms, NGOs and schools participating in the LOWE project (Local Knowledge and Education Centres). The aim of the survey was to describe selected aspects of solutions applied by institutions working to improve the basic skills of adult Poles. The tested and operational solutions presented in the report can serve as inspiration and provide good practices worth implementing by other institutions working to support people with low basic skills.

## Desk Research Report

The report is the result of in-depth desk research analysis conducted in the project "A Chance – New Opportunities for Adults". The results of the research contributed to the development of the substantive assumptions for the next phase of the project.

The analysis included the following issues:

- identification and analysis of policies concerning the skills improvement pathways in Poland and abroad;
- analysis of the definitions of basic skills, social competences and other key terms in the research;
- analysis of target groups and stakeholders in the context of skills improvement pathways;
- identification and analysis of solutions for improving basic skills and social competences in Poland and abroad, including methods and tools used;
- three steps of Upskilling Pathways: competence diagnosis, educational support and validation of learning outcomes;
- identification of the challenges and factors facilitating the effective implementation of upskilling pathways and their benefits.

## Annex. Examples of sets of learning outcomes for basic skills developed in the project “A Chance – New Opportunities for Adults”

### SET 1. Handling business and personal e-mail correspondence

NAME OF THE SET OF LEARNING OUTCOMES	
Handling business and personal e-mail correspondence	
PQF LEVEL	
2	
SHORT CHARACTERIZATION OF THE LEARNING OUTCOMES	
<p>Persons with the skills from the set of learning outcomes for “Handling business and personal e-mail correspondence” prepare e-mails for business and private use.</p> <p>In their correspondence, they use the applicable polite phrases and maintain the appropriate structure of a message.</p> <p>They use the functions of generally available programs (on computers, including laptops, and mobile devices).</p>	
LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THEIR ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
Learning outcome	Assessment criteria
Handles e-mail correspondence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prepares a business email to colleagues</li> <li>● Prepares a business email to one's supervisor</li> <li>● Prepares a personal email</li> <li>● Prepares a response to a received email: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ from a colleague</li> <li>○ from one's supervisor</li> <li>○ in a personal matter</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Prepares e-mail correspondence to more than one recipient using the principles of maintaining privacy</li> <li>● Maintains the structure of messages in the appropriate proportions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ introduction</li> <li>○ main text</li> <li>○ closing</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Uses the terms and forms relating to the content of the message, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ attached</li> <li>○ in response to</li> <li>○ in response to an email</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Uses phrases and polite forms, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ titling the e-mail</li> <li>○ addressing the recipient in the content of the e-mail</li> <li>○ signing the email</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Uses Polish spelling rules</li> <li>● Checks the prepared e-mails to ensure that they comply with the principles of preparing such correspondence</li> </ul>

<p>Uses the functions of the e-mail program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses the functions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ reply</li> <li>○ reply all</li> <li>○ forward</li> <li>○ attach a file</li> <li>○ mark as unread</li> <li>○ add a concealed address</li> <li>○ enter a link (hyperlink)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sets up folders and organises the mail</li> <li>• Sets up the confirmation of delivery and reading of the message</li> <li>• Sets up auto-response</li> <li>• Filters e-mails according to a given criterion, e.g. with attachments over 1MB in size</li> <li>• Checks the messages in the spam folder to ensure that they were legitimately placed there</li> <li>• Follows basic security rules in using e-mail, e.g.: does not open links from messages from an unknown addressee, does not open attached files from unknown sources</li> <li>• Sets up the footer and signature</li> </ul>
<p>Uses knowledge about preparing e-mail correspondence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lists the sources of knowledge (e.g. various materials on the Internet, colleagues) about how to write business and personal e-mails in accordance with accepted standards</li> <li>• Uses ready-made designs and correspondence templates, e.g. invitations</li> </ul>

**REQUIREMENTS FOR VALIDATION AND THE ENTITY PERFORMING VALIDATION FOR EACH SET OF LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The validation entity should provide access to a validation counsellor, who will assist the candidate in identifying their skills and advise on the most beneficial pathways needed to achieve the set of learning outcomes.

1. Methods

The following methods are used to assess the set of learning outcomes for “Handling business and personal e-mail correspondence”:

- observation in simulated conditions in accordance with provided scenarios (practical tasks)
- structured or unstructured interview (interview with the validation commission)

2. Staff resources

A commission made up of a minimum of two members assesses the learning outcomes. One member is the chairperson, and has the deciding voice in cases of differing assessments.

Each assessor:

- has at least 3 years of work experience where writing e-mails is one of the main methods of communication
- applies validation principles as well as different validation methods and ways to assess the achievement of learning outcomes

The assessors together have at least 3 years of teaching experience and experience in confirming learning outcomes in the area of the given set of learning outcomes.



### 3. Organisational and material conditions

In order to assess the learning outcomes, the following are required:

- computer with access to the Internet
- mail program
- scenarios for the practical tasks
- scenarios for the interview with the candidate
- conditions in which to conduct a discussion with the candidate

*SET 9. Planning and maintaining a household budget*

NAME OF THE SET OF LEARNING OUTCOMES	
Planning and maintaining a household budget	
PQF LEVEL	
3	
SHORT CHARACTERIZATION OF THE LEARNING OUTCOMES	
<p>Persons with the skills from the set of learning outcomes for “Planning and maintaining a household budget” plan a monthly household budget. They prepare it in writing, for example, using a spreadsheet or calendar. The budget includes the income of the entire household and fixed expenses. Expenses incurred for food and other needs of household members are estimated. They plan expenses rationally, taking into account in each month an amount for unforeseen expenses. They analyse the situation of the household and indicate sources of savings and possible solutions. They compile information on income and expenses and communicate this to household members. They are responsible for checking how the budget is being implemented by the other household members. They use their knowledge of credit and loans to avoid debt spirals.</p>	
LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THEIR ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
Learning outcome	Assessment criteria
Plans and monitors a monthly household budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepares a statement of monthly income and fixed costs</li> <li>• Estimates the weekly cost of grocery shopping</li> <li>• Estimates the amount of money available for unforeseen expenses</li> <li>• Drafts a monthly budget, including a list of expense categories</li> <li>• Discusses budget plans with other household members, taking into account their needs</li> <li>• Establishes spending priorities for the budget in the short and long term</li> <li>• Checks how the budget is being implemented and communicates this information to other household members</li> <li>• Discusses the rights and responsibilities of household members in the context of managing the household budget</li> </ul>
Uses knowledge on credit and loans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicates the differences between: bank credit, loans (loans from private loan companies, loans from work)</li> <li>• Indicates sources of reliable financial information (Financial Supervision Commission - KNF)</li> <li>• Seeks information on credit and loan agreement clauses</li> <li>• Discusses the risks of inappropriately managing money and the debt spiral</li> <li>• Discusses the ways and various criteria for comparing loan and credit offers</li> <li>• Indicates the benefits of credit/loan insurance</li> </ul>
Uses a spreadsheet for calculations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Names available spreadsheet programs (free and fee-based)</li> <li>• Looks for free spreadsheets</li> <li>• Uses basic spreadsheet functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ rows (e.g., calling them expenses)</li> <li>○ columns (e.g., months)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- totalling
- creating new spreadsheets
- dividing the spreadsheet into sheets
- Calculates the percentage share of each budget expense category using a spreadsheet

**REQUIREMENTS FOR VALIDATION AND THE ENTITY PERFORMING VALIDATION  
FOR EACH SET OF LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The validation entity should provide access to a validation counsellor, who will support the candidate in identifying his/her possessed skills and advise on the most beneficial pathways needed to achieve the set of learning outcomes.

**1. Methods**

The following methods are used to assess the learning outcomes of the set of learning outcomes for “Planning and maintaining a household budget”:

- observation in simulated conditions in accordance with a provided scenario (practical tasks)
- structured or unstructured interview (interview with the validation commission)

**2. Staff resources**

A commission made up of a minimum of two members assesses the learning outcomes. One member is the chairperson, and has the deciding voice in cases of differing assessments.

Each assessor:

- has at least 3 years of experience in financial/business advising
- applies validation principles as well as different validation methods and ways to assess the achievement of learning outcomes

The assessors together have at least 3 years of teaching experience and experience in confirming learning outcomes in the area of the given set of learning outcomes.

**3. Organisational and material conditions**

In order to assess the learning outcomes, the following are required:

- computer with access to the Internet
- spreadsheet program
- examples of credit or loan agreements
- scenarios for the interview with the candidate
- conditions in which to conduct a discussion with the candidate