Chapter 6

Course PRS-5170-2
Choosing a Career

Secondary V
Duration: 50 hours

6.1   Description of the Course

The aim of the course *Choosing a Career* is to encourage adult learners to reflect on what they know about themselves and their career aspirations, to explore the world of work through trades, occupations or professions that interest them, and to assess the scope of their career choices. To do so, they apply a career orientation process that will be useful to them throughout their lives.

6.2   Subject-Specific Competencies

This course targets the development of the program's two subject-specific competencies. The following table presents an overview of the competencies, their key features and manifestations.

In learning situations, the sequence of manifestations may vary, and the manifestations themselves may be reviewed.

Overview of the Subject-Specific Competencies	
Competency 1 **Researches trades,** **occupations or professions**	**Competency 2** **Contemplates his/her work** **possibilities**
Explores a potential career • Examines factors relating to his/her personal situation • Uses documentary resources in academic and career information • Meets with a guidance counsellor • Selects a trade, occupation or profession to explore • Carries out an in-depth exploration of the chosen trade, occupation or profession **Analyzes information on the trade, occupation or profession** • Compares factors relating to trades, occupations or professions with factors relating to his/her personal situation • Identifies the significant advantages and disadvantages of the trade, occupation or profession	**Consolidates his/her career profile** • Adjusts the factors relating to his/her personal situation, based on the discoveries made • Sets personal and career development goals • Discusses his/her career profile with the people in his/her life **Considers whether a given trade, occupation or profession is realistic** • Takes into account the requirements of the trade, occupation or profession • Prepares an action plan • Examines the possibilities and related constraints • Sets priorities • Estimates the commitments required

6.3   Process

The career orientation process proposed here is built into the development of the subject-specific competencies of the Personalized Career Orientation program. It requires adult learners to apply and master a number of complex skills and to perform a variety of tasks that are not necessarily sequential. It also involves periods of reflection that may extend over several weeks, to allow adult learners time to confirm their career choices.

6.4   Cross-Curricular Competencies

Although all the cross-curricular competences in the program may be called upon, to varying degrees, in the course, it is important to identify those that best meet the requirements of the tasks to be carried out in each learning situation developed by the teacher.

For example, the learning situation *I'm Interested in My Friend's Job* in section 6.8 makes use of three cross-curricular competencies: *Uses information*, *Exercises critical judgment* and *Communicates appropriately.*

When adult learners *use information*, they identify information on situational factors and make sure their sources are credible. They compare the information and make judgments about its value or relevance, and then organize and summarize the information so as to be able to use it.

When they *exercise critical judgment*, they form and express an opinion about a trade, and then qualify their opinion by answering any questions raised as they debate and confirm their career choice.

When adult learners *communicate appropriately*, they express ideas, emotions and intuitions, raise questions, reason and debate their career choices. They also use specific terms, rules, and communication conventions and codes.

6.5 Program Content

The course's program content allows adult learners to undertake a career orientation process. It includes categories of knowledge and their content, as well as cultural references.

The prescribed elements of the course are: the subject-specific competencies, key features and manifestations; the categories of knowledge and their content; and the family of learning situations. While the use of cultural references is prescribed, the examples provided in the course are not.

Categories of knowledge

The categories of knowledge for the course are as follows:

1) Personal situational factors

2) Academic situational factors

3) Factors relating to trades, occupations and professions

4) Techniques and methods

5) Support resources

The numbers in the above list are not intended to denote any particular sequence. The categories may be addressed in any order.

The following table presents the categories of knowledge and their respective content. The elements shown in parentheses are examples or clarifications of scope. These elements are not prescribed.

Categories of Knowledge		
1) Personal Situational Factors	**2) Educational Situational Factors**	**3) Factors Relating to Trades, Occupations and Professions**
Self-knowledge • Psychometric tests • Interests (Holland, CURSUS, CLEO) • Skills (strengths, limitations) • Qualities (talents) • Physical abilities • Work habits • Personal and career aspirations • Personal and career values **Personal obstacles** • Prejudices • Stereotypes • Fears • Time available for learning • Financial resources • Geographic mobility **Influence of other people** • Pressure from family members • Pressure from friends • Key resource people **Elements relating to perseverance** • Motivation • Self-confidence • Success • Dynamism • Work method **Life experience** • Prior knowledge • Competencies developed • Paid work • Volunteer work • Entrepreneurship	**Information on the education system** • Secondary school • CEGEP • University **Conditions for admission** • Prerequisites • Entrance examination • Quotas **Educational institutions** • Types (private, public) • Types of diplomas (vocational training, college studies, university studies) **School organization** • Course timetable • Workplace training/practicum • Type of instruction • Concurrence **Education programs** • Competencies required • List of courses • Duration	**Workplace roles and tasks** • Economic activity sector • Roles and responsibilities • Specific tasks **Characteristics of the trade, occupation or profession** • Physical abilities • Skills (strengths, limitations) • Qualities (talents) • General aptitudes (physical, psychological, relational) • Interests • Work habits **Educational requirements** • Level of education • Specialization • Regulatory requirements **Working conditions** • Schedule • Salary • Risks • Possibility of promotion • Working environment (climate, level of autonomy, individual work or teamwork) **Specific requirements** • Mobility (driver's permit) • Tools or materials required • Professional order **Occupational health and safety** • Prevention • Safety rules • Equipment • Workplace risks **Job prospects** • Unemployment • Competition • Economy (local, regional, national, international) **Types of employers** • Private sector • Public sector • Parapublic sector • Self-employment (entrepreneurship)

Categories of Knowledge (cont.)	
4) Techniques and Methods	**5) Support Resources**
Recording methods • Use of recording tools (sheets, summary, logbook, portfolio) • Data collection (retrieval, understanding, relevance) • Organization of information (collection, analysis, summary, evaluation) **Report of the exploration or career orientation process** • Strategies used • Difficulties encountered • Discoveries and questions • Possible follow-up • Observations on the exploration or career orientation process **Decision-making** • Internal and external factors • Constraints and obligations of the trades, occupations and professions **Action plan** • Personal and career development goals • Means of achieving their goals (compromise) • Resources (human, material, financial) • Timeframe • Potential obstacles and solutions • Alternative choice (Plan B) • Monitoring indicators **Interview techniques** • Interview preparation • Analysis of message components • Attitudes and behaviours to adopt **Oral or written presentation** • Planning (prepare an outline) • Arguments • Interaction	**Key resource people** • Family, friends, teachers • Guidance counsellors **Career exploration activities** • Appropriate choice (student for a day, worker for a day, real or virtual tour, information interview, experiential tool)

Cultural References

The examples of cultural references provided in the course refer to socioeconomic aspects that adult learners consider when they choose a career. They refer to contexts that influence adult learners and the trades, occupations or professions they explore. These examples are not compulsory.

Immediate Context (local and regional)	National Context	International Context
Influence of family history • Importance attributed to education and work • Need for prestige, personal fulfillment and material possessions **Influence of the social network** • Influence of group culture • Importance of leisure • Work-family balance **Regional economic development** • Factory closures • Business development • Job losses • Labour prospects	**New economic and political trends** • Primary sector (fishing, farming, etc.) • Secondary sector (processing, wood, electronics, etc.) • Tertiary sector (services, tourism, consulting, etc.) **Natural resource development** • Renewable resources (solar energy, forests, etc.) • Nonrenewable resources (petroleum, minerals, etc.) • Sustainable development (consumer society) **Value of work** • Advent of a leisure society • Value attributed to work by different generations in Québec **The population of Québec** • Migration to cities • Multiculturalism • Development of urban communities based on job prospects • Influence of demographic data on the Québec work force	**Globalization of trade** • Structure and shifts in the global economy • Global production and information networks **Sustainable development** • Consumer society versus environmentally conscious society **Technological development** • Changes in the relation to work • Diversification of tasks • Influence of knowledge-based culture • Growing social demand for a work force with certified competencies

6.6   Family of Learning Situations

A family of learning situations is a group of related situations that provide contexts designed to give meaning to the students' learning. In this course, the family of learning situations is Career Exploration.

6.7   Broad Areas of Learning

The broad areas of learning serve as anchors for competency development and learning situations. The course *Choosing a Career* has connections with all the broad areas of learning, and in particular with *Career Planning and Entrepreneurship*.

The proposed learning situation *I'm Interested in My Friend's Trade* requires adult learners to undertake and complete a career exploration exercise focused on developing their potential and helping them integrate into society. This aim is entirely consistent with the course's subject-specific competencies and with the proposed career orientation process. Adult learners develop greater self-awareness and better knowledge of their own potential and how to fulfill it. They identify existing strengths and interests and discover new ones. They visualize future plans and share them with others, which promotes introspection. Lastly, they broaden their knowledge of the world of work, social roles, trades, occupations and professions.

6.8   Example of a Learning Situation

Every learning situation is based on a pedagogical aim connected to different elements of the program and course. Three aspects are taken into consideration when developing a learning situation: the combination of activities or tasks, the repertoire of resources, and opportunities for reflection.

The following learning situation contains:

1) a reference to the elements of the program and course

2) the context: initial situation and situational problem

3) the pedagogical aim, activities and connections with the subject-specific competencies

It is entitled *I'm Interested in My Friend's Trade.*

I'm Interested in My Friend's Trade	
1) Reference to Elements of the Program and Course	
Broad area of learning	• Career Planning and Entrepreneurship
Cross-curricular competencies	• Uses information • Exercises critical judgment • Communicates appropriately
Family of learning situations	• Career Exploration
Subject-specific competencies	• Researches trades, occupations or professions • Contemplates his/her work possibilities
Categories of knowledge	• Personal situational factors • Academic situational factors • Factors relating to trades, occupations and professions • Techniques and methods • Support resources
Cultural reference	• Influence of the social network

2) The Context: Initial Situation and Situational Problem
Your friend is a civil engineering technician. He knows all the facets of the trade and says there are jobs available in the field. Just last week, two new people started working for the company that employs him. Carry out your career orientation process and compare your personal situational factors with the factors relating to your friend's trade. Identify the main steps you would need to take to become a civil engineering technician. Note: A different trade, occupation or profession may be chosen instead.

3) Pedagogical Aim, Activities and Connections With the Subject-Specific Competencies	
Pedagogical aim: **Adult learners assert themselves as individuals by comparing their personal situational factors with factors relating to the trade of civil engineering technician**	
Activities	**Subject-Specific Competencies**
To clarify their opinion regarding the possibility of becoming a civil engineering technician, adult learners explore the trade. They examine the information collected in order to see whether the trade matches their career interests. To do this, they: • examine their educational path and life experience, and write down the key elements • consult *Jobboom.com*, the *Dictionnaire des métiers ou professions* and the Web site *Repères Internet sur le métier de technicien en génie civil* to gather information on the educational institution, training program and educational path required to become a civil engineering technician (additional tool: CareerCruising.com) • meet the training centre's guidance counsellor to prepare for an information interview with the friend in question, develop the questions to be asked, and review interview techniques • conduct an interview with the friend in the workplace to complete and verify certain information • use a recording method to classify the information gathered • go over the interview and identify the similarities and differences between their personal situational factors and the factors relating to the trade of civil engineering technician • identify the significant advantages and disadvantages of the trade of civil engineering technician for themselves • present a report of the exploration process and the follow-up required (production)	**Researches trades, occupations or professions**

As they continue their reflections, adult learners consolidate their career profile and consider whether the trade of civil engineering technician is realistic for them. To do this, they: • make an inventory of what they know about themselves and the personal obstacles they discovered as they explored the trade of civil engineering technician • meet with the training centre's guidance counsellor with a view to converting their personal obstacles into personal and career development goals • prepare an oral presentation on their career profile in order to validate it with people they know • prepare an action plan to meet the requirements of the trade of civil engineering technician • identify the possibilities and constraints associated with the actions needed to become a civil engineering technician • select the priority elements • revise their action plan (production) • describe the investments needed to respect the action plan • formulate an argument to support their decision to become or not to become a civil engineering technician (production) • present their thoughts on the career orientation process, including the discoveries made and any problems encountered (production)	**Contemplates his/her work possibilities**

6.9   End-of-Course Outcomes

To develop the subject-specific competency *Researches trades, occupations or professions*, adult learners use career exploration resources. They gather information on personal and academic situational factors and factors relating to the trades, occupations or professions concerned, and they use the techniques and methods they have learned to draw correlations between these various factors.

To develop the subject-specific competency *Contemplates his/her work possibilities*, adult learners consolidate their career profile by identifying various situational factors. They refer to support resources, decide whether a given trade, occupation or profession is realistic, and use the techniques and methods they have learned to assess the scope of their career choices.

The following productions are expected:

• an oral or written presentation giving their opinion of the choice of a trade, occupation or profession (critical argument)

• a summary of their exploration process and the follow-up required (checklists, reports, meetings, portfolio, practicum report, etc.)

• a summary of their career orientation process (action plan, reflection, new questions, etc.)

6.10 Evaluation Criteria

To support learning and evaluate the development of subject-specific competencies at the end of the course, teachers base their judgment on evaluation criteria. These criteria are used to evaluate learning in order to recognize competencies.

Subject-Specific Competencies and Evaluation Criteria	
Subject-Specific Competencies	**Evaluation Criteria**
Researches trades, occupations or professions	• Processing of information gathered on trades, occupations or professions
Contemplates his/her work possibilities	• Debating of his/her career choices