

**ON THE MOVE**Empowering apprentices
through mobility

Qualifications Framework for Capacity Building

Author(s): GeoCamp Iceland**Submission date: 31/3/2026****Dissemination level: Public**

Document factsheet

Project Number: 101195914

Project Acronym: ON THE MOVE

Project Title: Building the capacity of VET actors to create and apply blended mobility schemes

Abstract: Blended mobility for apprenticeships — combining physical and virtual learning within the workplace-based period — is an emerging yet strategically significant innovation in European Vocational Education and Training (VET). This document presents the conceptual and methodological foundations underpinning the four frameworks developed within the “On the Move” project (No. 101195914), co-funded by the European Union and implemented by a seven-country consortium (Greece, Italy, Spain, Iceland, Denmark, Cyprus, and Bulgaria). Drawing on a rigorous mixed-methods approach — including systematic literature reviews, desk research, semi-structured interviews, and two rounds of focus groups — the document identifies cross-cutting findings on the barriers, enablers, and contextual factors shaping blended apprenticeship mobility across partner countries. It further describes the four resulting frameworks: The Blended Mobility Scheme, the Qualifications for Mobility Coordinators in Intermediary Organisations, the Company Capacity Building, and the Integration of Apprentices in the Host Country through blended activities. Together, these frameworks form an integrated ecosystem designed to guide VET actors in planning, managing, and sustaining high-quality blended mobility experiences for apprentices across Europe.

Keyword List: Blended mobility, Apprenticeships, Vocational Education and Training (VET), International Mobility, Capacity Building, Organisational Readiness, Work-Based Learning (WBL)

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Statement of originality:

This deliverable contains original unpublished work except where clearly indicated otherwise. Acknowledgement of previously published material and of the work of others has been made through appropriate citation, quotation or both.

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List of Abbreviations

The following table presents the acronyms used in the deliverable in alphabetical order.

<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Description</i>
BMA	Blended Mobility for Apprenticeships
BMS	Blended Mobility Schemes Framework
CCB	Company Capacity Building for Blended Mobility Framework
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
EaFA	European Alliance for Apprenticeships
EFQEA	European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
EQAVET	European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training
EU	European Union
IAH	Integration of Apprentices in the Host Country Framework
IO	Intermediary Organisation
KSCA	Knowledge, Skills, Competences, and Attitudes
QA	Quality Assurance
QMC	Qualifications for the Mobility Coordinator Offices in Intermediary Organisations Framework
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
VET	Vocational Education and Training

Executive Summary

The “**On the Move**” project (Project No. 101195914 – *Building the Capacity of VET Actors to Create and Apply Blended Mobility Schemes*) addresses a key gap in European Vocational Education and Training: the limited availability of structured and quality-assured frameworks for blended apprenticeship mobility. Funded by the European Union and implemented by partners in Greece, Italy, Spain, Iceland, Denmark, Cyprus, and Bulgaria, the project develops practical tools to help VET actors design, coordinate, and implement blended mobility experiences that combine physical mobility with virtual activities linked to the apprentice’s workplace placement.

Context and rationale. Blended mobility is a priority within the European Skills Agenda and the Erasmus+ programme, however blended mobility in apprenticeships remains an emerging practice. Evidence collected across partner countries shows that most existing initiatives are linked to school-based learning rather than workplace training. Administrative complexity, limited language skills, low company readiness, and the lack of practical reference models continue to limit its adoption.

Methodology. The four project frameworks were developed through an iterative research process combining: (1) a two-phase literature review covering national practices and EU policy developments; (2) semi-structured interviews with stakeholders, including mobility coordinators, VET providers, companies, and apprentices, across the seven partner countries; and (3) two rounds of focus groups, first to generate mobility scenarios and then to validate and refine the frameworks. This approach ensured that the frameworks are both evidence-based and adaptable to different national VET contexts.

Key cross-country findings. The research identified several recurring themes. The feasibility of blended mobility varies significantly across vocational sectors, and stakeholders often require a mind-set shift from traditional physical mobility models. Administrative and regulatory complexity—particularly for SMEs—remains a major barrier. Language skills also limit participation. At the same time, strong networks and intermediary organisations are essential facilitators, while structured onboarding and preparation before mobility are critical for success. Although host companies play a central role, they remain among the least engaged actors in mobility initiatives.

The four frameworks. In response, the project developed four complementary frameworks:

1. the Blended Mobility Schemes (BMS) Framework, defining the organisation, monitoring, and quality assurance of blended mobility programmes;
2. the Qualifications for Mobility Coordinators (QMC) Framework, specifying the knowledge, skills, competences, and attitudes required for mobility coordinators, aligned with the EQF;
3. the Company Capacity Building (CCB) Framework, identifying the support needed to prepare host companies for participation; and
4. the Integration of Apprentices in the Host Country (IAH) Framework, outlining blended activities before, during, and after mobility to support learning and integration.

Together, these frameworks form a coherent system: the BMS provides the structural model, the QMC and CCB strengthen human and organisational capacities, and the IAH translates the scheme into concrete learner-centred activities. The frameworks have been translated into the seven partner languages and are ready to be applied in real-world VET contexts.

1 Introduction

Blended mobility is becoming an increasingly important component of vocational education and training (VET) across Europe. By combining physical mobility with digital and virtual elements, it enables more flexible, inclusive, and accessible learning experiences for apprentices. At the same time, it introduces new organisational demands, particularly for host companies responsible for integrating apprentices into real working environments across borders.

While European policy frameworks strongly promote mobility and apprenticeships, the practical capacity of organisations to implement blended mobility remains uneven. Many organisations, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), face constraints related to limited internal coordination, lack of clear processes, low integration of digital tools, and uncertainty about how to engage effectively in cross-border mobility activities.

This Company Capacity Building (CCB) Framework has been developed within the Erasmus+ project *On the Move* to address these challenges. It focuses on supporting companies in delivering and managing blended apprenticeship mobility, enabling them to strengthen their internal capacity in a structured, realistic, and scalable way.

Rather than assuming ideal conditions, the framework reflects the realities of organisations operating with varying levels of experience, resources, and system support. It provides a structured approach to capacity development across three key areas: internal processes, digital and pedagogical practices, and workplace and partnership engagement.

The development of the framework is grounded in empirical evidence collected across partner countries, including interviews, focus groups, and validation workshops involving employers, VET stakeholders, and intermediary organisations. These findings consistently highlight the need for simple, flexible, and clearly structured approaches that companies can apply in practice.

The framework does not propose complex or resource-intensive solutions. Instead, it supports a gradual and iterative approach, enabling companies to start at an appropriate level and progressively strengthen their capacity through practical experience. It aims to ensure that organisational capacity becomes a driver of quality, accessibility, and sustainability in blended apprenticeship mobility across Europe, rather than a barrier to participation.

1.1 Purpose of the Framework

This framework focuses on strengthening the capacity of companies to host, manage, and sustain blended apprenticeship mobility.

While the broader *On the Move* framework system defines how mobility schemes are structured and delivered, this framework addresses the organisational conditions required to make these processes work in practice. It focuses on what companies need to be able to do internally to participate effectively.

The purpose of this framework is to support companies in assessing their readiness for blended apprenticeship mobility and in identifying practical steps to strengthen their capacity. It provides a structured approach to reflection, planning, and incremental development, enabling companies to engage with blended mobility in a manageable and sustainable way.

The framework is particularly relevant for companies and host organisations, which play a central role in workplace learning but are often among the least structurally prepared actors in mobility systems. By focusing on clarity, simplicity, and practical application, the framework supports organisations in building capacity progressively without requiring extensive prior experience or resources.

1.2 Scope and Target Groups

The framework focuses on companies involved in the practical implementation of blended apprenticeship mobility, with particular emphasis on host organisations.

It is especially relevant for:

- companies and host organisations, including SMEs, that provide workplace learning and are directly involved in hosting apprentices
- organisations that manage or support mobility activities at an operational level

While other actors (such as VET providers and intermediary organisations) play important roles in the broader mobility ecosystem, this framework does not aim to define their functions. Instead, it focuses on the internal capacity that organisations need in order to engage effectively with these actors.

Validation findings across partner countries highlight that companies often face constraints related to time, administrative capacity, and access to clear guidance, while remaining essential to the success of apprenticeship mobility.

Their ability to participate effectively depends not only on willingness, but on access to clear expectations, simple processes, and practical tools. This framework supports that need through an adaptable model that enables organisations to engage at different stages of development.

The framework can be used as::

- a self-assessment tool
- a planning and development guide
- a reference model for strengthening organisational capacity

1.3 Position within the *On the Move* Framework Ecosystem

The Capacity Building Framework is one of four complementary frameworks developed within the *On the Move* project. Together, these frameworks form a coherent system supporting the design, implementation, and quality assurance of blended apprenticeship mobility.

Each framework addresses a specific dimension:

- The **Blended Mobility Schemes (BMS)** Framework defines the overall structure, organisation, and quality assurance of blended mobility programmes
- The **Qualifications for Mobility Coordinators (QMC)** Framework outlines the knowledge, skills, and competences required for effective coordination
- The **Capacity Building (CCB)** Framework focuses on strengthening the readiness of organisations, particularly companies and host organisations

- The **Integration of Apprentices in the Host Country** (IAH) Framework defines the learning activities and support mechanisms for apprentices before, during, and after mobility

Within this ecosystem, the Capacity Building Framework plays a foundational role by addressing whether organisations are prepared to implement what the other frameworks define.

Validation findings highlighted that even well-designed mobility schemes can fail without sufficient organisational capacity. In particular, gaps in coordination, unclear responsibilities, and limited company engagement were identified as critical barriers across partner countries.

By addressing these gaps, the framework supports organisations in developing the structures, skills, tools, and partnerships required to implement blended mobility in a practical and sustainable way. It therefore acts as an enabling framework for the effective application of all other components.

1.4 Approach and Design Principles

The framework is based on the principle that organisational capacity building must be practical, flexible, and context-sensitive, supporting organisations in developing readiness for blended apprenticeship mobility under real operational conditions.

The framework follows a non-linear development model rather than prescribing a fixed pathway. It recognises that organisations may be at different stages of readiness across different areas, and therefore allows them to enter at an appropriate level and progress incrementally over time.

The design of the framework is informed by cross-country research and validation activities conducted within the *On the Move* project. These findings highlight key considerations:

- Organisations, particularly SMEs, require clear and manageable entry points that do not create additional administrative burden
- Capacity building must be supported by practical tools, templates, and examples, rather than relying solely on conceptual models
- Roles and responsibilities need to be clearly defined across stakeholders to avoid fragmentation and ensure accountability
- Digital and pedagogical elements must remain accessible and proportionate to organisational capacity, avoiding overly complex solutions
- Gradual implementation and small-scale piloting are critical for building confidence and reducing perceived risk

Based on these principles, the framework provides a structured approach that combines three core elements: a three-pillar model of **organisational capacity** (People & Processes, Digital & Pedagogical, Workplace & Partnerships), **progressive maturity levels** (Entry, Developing, Mature), and **practical pathways for implementation**.

This combination allows organisations to assess their current position, identify realistic next steps, and develop capacity progressively. It balances clarity with flexibility, enabling organisations to build capacity in a way that is both achievable and sustainable.

2 Scope and Objectives of the Capacity Building Framework

This chapter defines the role of capacity building within the *On the Move* framework system. It clarifies the challenges the framework responds to and the specific areas where companies need to strengthen their readiness to participate effectively in blended apprenticeship mobility.

The framework focuses on the organisational conditions required for implementation, supporting companies in translating policy ambitions for blended mobility into practical workplace-based application.

2.1 Rationale for Capacity Building in Blended Mobility

Blended apprenticeship mobility introduces organisational demands that go beyond traditional mobility formats. While European policy frameworks increasingly promote blended approaches, their successful implementation depends heavily on the readiness of organisations operating at the delivery level, particularly companies, VET providers, and intermediary organisations.

Findings from cross-country research and validation activities within the *On the Move* project confirm that organisational capacity is one of the most critical limiting factors. Many organisations, particularly SMEs, lack the structures, experience, or resources required to engage effectively in mobility activities that combine physical placements with virtual components.

Validation workshops conducted across partner countries identified several recurring issues:

- Administrative procedures are often perceived as complex and resource-intensive
- Digital tools are available but not always effectively integrated into learning and coordination processes
- Companies are willing to participate but require clearer guidance and defined roles
- Communication and coordination between actors remain inconsistent
- Mobility is still frequently perceived as an external or project-based activity, rather than an integrated organisational function

These findings highlight a clear need for a structured and practical approach to capacity building that is accessible and adaptable across organisational contexts.

The Capacity Building Framework responds to this need by focusing on the organisational conditions required to enable blended mobility. It supports organisations in developing the internal structures, processes, and competences necessary for sustainable implementation.

While the Qualifications Framework defines required competences and the Integration Framework outlines system-level conditions, this framework focuses on how organisations translate these into practice through internal capacity development.

2.2 Objectives of the Framework

The primary objective of the Capacity Building Framework is to support companies in developing the internal readiness required to participate in, implement, and sustain blended apprenticeship mobility.

More specifically, the framework aims to:

- provide a structured model for understanding organisational capacity in blended mobility
- support organisations in assessing their level of readiness
- guide practical and incremental capacity development

- reduce complexity through clear and manageable entry points
- strengthen coordination between companies and partner organisations

Validation findings highlight that organisations benefit most from approaches that are clear, flexible, and directly applicable. The framework therefore prioritises usability and gradual development over complexity.

The framework is not a prescriptive or compliance-based tool. It functions as a practical reference that organisations can use flexibly, depending on their starting point and resources.

2.3 Key Challenges Addressed by the Framework

The framework addresses a set of challenges consistently identified across partner countries during research and validation activities.

One of the most significant barriers is administrative and organisational complexity, particularly for companies and smaller organisations. Mobility is often perceived as difficult to manage due to unclear processes and coordination demands. The framework addresses this by promoting simple structures and gradual engagement.

A second challenge relates to limited internal organisation. Mobility activities often depend on individuals rather than established processes, leading to inconsistency. The framework emphasises clear roles and basic internal structures.

Another key issue is the uneven use of digital tools. While tools are widely available, their use in supporting blended mobility remains inconsistent. The framework promotes simple and accessible tools integrated into everyday practice.

Company engagement remains a critical challenge. Companies are essential to mobility but often lack time, clarity, or structured support. The framework addresses this through clear expectations and practical entry points.

Finally, the framework addresses the need to shift mobility from a project-based activity to an integrated organisational function, supported by gradual capacity development.

By addressing these challenges in a structured and practical way, the framework supports organisations in moving towards more stable and integrated mobility practices.

3 Conceptual Model for Organisational Capacity

This chapter presents the conceptual model that underpins the framework. It defines how organisational capacity for blended apprenticeship mobility is structured, how it can be assessed, and how organisations can develop progressively over time.

The model translates the complexity of blended apprenticeship mobility into clearly defined capacity areas that organisations can assess and develop in a structured way.

The model recognises that organisations may have strengths in some areas and limitations in others, supporting flexible and incremental development based on organisational context.

3.1 Overview of the Capacity Building Approach

Effective participation in blended apprenticeship mobility depends on a combination of internal organisational capabilities rather than a single factor.

Organisational capacity is understood as the ability to:

- organise and manage mobility activities internally
- support learning and communication in both physical and virtual contexts
- engage effectively with external partners

These capabilities are interdependent. Weakness in one area can limit the effectiveness of others. For example, strong partnerships cannot compensate for unclear internal processes, and access to digital tools does not guarantee effective use without organisational structure.

The model provides a holistic approach to capacity building while maintaining a focus on practical implementation. It supports organisations in assessing readiness, identifying priority areas, and implementing improvements in a gradual and manageable way.

The model is built on three core components:

- Three **pillars of capacity**, representing the key areas organisations need to strengthen
- **Maturity levels**, describing stages of organisational development
- An **implementation cycle**, supporting continuous improvement through practical application

Validation findings across partner countries highlight that organisations require models that are clear, practical, and adaptable to different operational contexts. The framework therefore functions both as:

- a diagnostic tool (to assess current readiness), and
- a development tool (to guide capacity building over time)

Capacity building is not treated as a linear process. Organisations may demonstrate different levels of readiness across areas, and progress may occur unevenly depending on resources and priorities. The framework therefore supports gradual and realistic development.

3.2 The Three Capacity Pillars

The framework is structured around three interrelated pillars, each addressing a critical dimension of organisational readiness for blended apprenticeship mobility.

These pillars reflect key capacity gaps identified through research and validation across partner countries and provide a structured view of what organisations need to implement blended mobility effectively.

Table 1: Overview of the Capacity Pillars

Pillar	Focus Area	Key Elements
People & Process	Internal organisation	Roles, coordination, mentoring, onboarding.
Digital & Pedagogical	Blended learning capacity	Digital tools, onboarding, monitoring, learning design.
Workplace & Partnership	External implementation	Host readiness, task design, safety, partnerships.

3.2.1 Pillar 1: People & Process Readiness

This pillar focuses on the internal organisation of mobility activities. It includes the definition of roles and responsibilities, the preparation of staff and mentors, and the establishment of clear processes to support apprentices throughout the mobility experience.

Validation findings consistently highlighted that unclear responsibilities and informal workflows are among the most significant barriers, particularly in smaller organisations. In many cases, mobility activities depend on a limited number of individuals, increasing the risk of inconsistency and inefficiency.

Building capacity in this area involves:

- defining clear roles for coordination, mentoring, and administration
- establishing simple and transparent workflows for mobility activities
- preparing staff and mentors to support apprentices effectively
- ensuring internal communication and shared understanding across departments

Strengthening this pillar enables organisations to move from ad hoc arrangements towards structured, reliable, and scalable processes.

3.2.2 Pillar 2: Digital & Pedagogical Readiness

This pillar addresses the specific requirements of blended mobility, particularly the integration of digital tools and the alignment of virtual and workplace-based learning.

Validation findings across partner countries show that digital capacity is often uneven. While tools are widely used informally, they are rarely integrated into structured learning or coordination processes. Overly complex solutions are often perceived as a barrier.

Capacity building in this area focuses on:

- using accessible and widely available digital tools for communication and learning
- developing basic digital onboarding materials for apprentices
- supporting mentors in understanding how virtual preparation connects to workplace tasks
- establishing simple methods for monitoring progress and providing feedback

The emphasis is on practicality and usability, ensuring that digital and pedagogical elements support, rather than complicate, the mobility experience.

3.2.3 Pillar 3: Workplace & Partnership Readiness

The third pillar focuses on the external dimension of capacity, particularly the organisation's ability to establish and maintain effective partnerships that support meaningful workplace learning.

Validation findings across partner countries identify company engagement as one of the most significant challenges in mobility implementation.

Capacity building in this area includes:

- identifying and engaging suitable host companies and partners
- defining roles, expectations, and responsibilities clearly from the outset
- ensuring that workplace tasks are aligned with learning outcomes
- maintaining regular communication between sending and host organisations
- supporting mentors and supervisors in the workplace

Strengthening this pillar enables organisations to move beyond informal or one-off collaborations towards more stable partnerships.

3.3 Maturity Levels of Organisational Readiness

To reflect the diversity of organisations involved in blended apprenticeship mobility, the framework introduces three maturity levels. These levels describe typical stages of organisational development and help companies position their level of readiness.

- **Entry Level:** Organisations with limited or no experience in mobility. The focus is on establishing basic structures and understanding requirements.
- **Developing Level:** Organisations with some experience that require more structured processes and clearer coordination.
- **Mature Level:** Organisations with established systems that are able to scale, refine, and innovate their mobility practices.

The model follows a non-linear approach:

- Organisations may operate at different levels across different pillars
- Progression is not mandatory or uniform
- Advanced practices are not required for initial participation

This approach ensures that the framework remains applicable to organisations with different levels of experience, particularly SMEs.

Table 2: Maturity Levels Across Pillars

Level	People & Process	Digital & Pedagogical	Workplace & Partnership
Entry	Basic roles defined	Use of simple digital tools	Basic workplace supervision
Developing	Structured mentoring and onboarding	Basic blended learning design	Tasks linked to learning outcomes
Mature	Integrated processes and coordination	Advanced monitoring and digital integration	Co-designed learning with partners

3.3.1 Entry Level Organisations

Entry-level organisations have little or no prior experience with mobility activities. The focus is on establishing basic structures and gaining initial experience. Typical characteristics include:

- limited or informal coordination structures
- absence of defined processes or tools
- reliance on a small number of individuals
- limited engagement with external partners

At this stage, organisations benefit from simple, practical actions such as identifying a mobility contact person, developing basic onboarding materials, and working with a small number of trusted partners.

3.3.2 Developing Level Organisations

Developing organisations have some experience with mobility but require more structured approaches to ensure consistency. Typical characteristics include:

- partially defined roles and responsibilities
- emerging workflows and procedures
- initial use of digital tools and learning components
- expanding network of partners

At this stage, organisations focus on formalising processes, strengthening mentor preparation, improving communication, and introducing simple digital and monitoring tools.

3.3.3 Mature Organisations

Mature organisations have established systems and are able to implement blended mobility in a consistent and sustainable way. Typical characteristics include:

- clearly defined roles and well-functioning coordination structures
- established workflows and quality assurance mechanisms
- integrated use of digital and pedagogical approaches
- stable and diversified partnership networks

These organisations are able to scale activities, innovate, and support others through knowledge sharing.

3.4 Linking Pillars and Maturity Levels

The framework recognises that organisational capacity is not uniform across all areas. An organisation may be well developed in one pillar while still at an earlier stage in another.

For example, an organisation may have strong partnerships with companies but limited digital capacity, or well-defined internal processes but limited experience in international collaboration.

For this reason, the framework does not assign organisations to a single overall level. Instead, it enables them to assess their position within each pillar independently and identify targeted areas for development.

This approach supports more realistic and manageable capacity building. Rather than attempting comprehensive transformation, organisations can focus on specific priorities, build

confidence through incremental improvements, and progressively strengthen their overall readiness.

By combining the three pillars with the maturity levels, the framework provides a flexible and practical tool that supports continuous development, adaptation, and scaling over time.

3.5 Mizimum Baseline for Participation

While the framework defines progressive maturity levels, validation findings across partner countries highlighted the importance of clearly identifying a minimum baseline for participation, particularly for companies and organisations with limited prior experience.

The framework therefore recognises that organisations do not need to reach a “developing” or “mature” level to begin engaging in blended mobility. A basic level of operational readiness is sufficient to initiate participation.

At a minimum, organisations should be able to:

- assign a clear contact person responsible for coordination
- establish a simple onboarding process for apprentices
- ensure basic communication with partners (e.g. email or shared platform)
- provide supervised workplace tasks aligned with general learning objectives

In terms of digital readiness, a minimum viable approach may consist of:

- use of email and a shared folder for communication and document exchange
- basic onboarding materials (e.g. short written or visual guidance)
- simple progress tracking (e.g. logbook or regular check-ins)

This minimum baseline is intended to reduce perceived barriers to entry and to support organisations, particularly SMEs, in taking initial steps without requiring complex systems or extensive resources.

More advanced practices should be understood as optional and progressive rather than mandatory requirements.

4 Applying the Framework in Practice

This chapter outlines how organisations can use the framework to assess readiness, identify priorities, and implement capacity-building actions in a structured and manageable way. It is intended as guidance rather than a prescriptive implementation model.

The framework supports organisations at different stages of experience and enables gradual engagement through realistic and achievable steps.

The framework supports reflection, planning, and development. It can be used independently or as part of facilitated processes involving partners or coordinators.

4.1 Using the Framework as a Self-Assessment Tool

The first step is to assess the organisation's current level of readiness across the three capacity pillars. This is based on structured reflection using guiding questions rather than formal evaluation. Organisations should:

- review their current practices in relation to each pillar
- identify strengths and gaps
- determine their approximate position (Entry, Developing, Established) within each pillar

This assessment should be realistic. Validation findings show that overestimating capacity often leads to implementation challenges, while accurate assessment supports more effective planning.

4.2 Identifying Priority Areas for Capacity Development

Following the self-assessment, organisations should identify a limited number of priority areas for improvement. The framework does not require organisations to address all areas simultaneously. Instead, it supports a focused approach where efforts are directed towards the most critical gaps.

Priority areas are typically identified based on:

- operational risks (e.g. unclear coordination or lack of structure)
- barriers to participation (e.g. limited company engagement)
- gaps that affect quality or consistency
- areas that are feasible to improve within available resources

Validation findings across partner countries emphasise that organisations benefit from starting small. Focusing on a limited number of priorities supports manageable implementation and early progress.

4.3 Defining Practical Actions

Once priorities are identified, they should be translated into concrete actions. Actions should be:

- simple and clearly defined
- achievable within existing resources
- directly linked to identified gaps

Examples of practical actions include:

- assigning a mobility contact person or coordinator
- developing a basic onboarding document for apprentices
- establishing a simple communication routine with partners
- introducing a shared digital tool for coordination
- clarifying expectations with host companies

The emphasis is on implementation. Even small changes can significantly improve organisational capacity when applied consistently.

4.4 Implementing and Testing Changes

Capacity building is most effective when actions are tested in practice. Organisations are encouraged to apply changes within real or pilot mobility activities rather than developing systems in isolation. This allows them to:

- identify what works in practice
- adjust processes based on experience
- build confidence among staff and partners

Validation findings highlight that learning-by-doing is essential, particularly for organisations with limited experience. Pilot activities provide a low-risk environment for testing new approaches. Implementation should remain flexible, and adjustments should be expected as part of the development process.

4.5 Reviewing and Adjusting Capacity Development

The final step is to review progress and adjust actions. This does not require formal evaluation systems. Organisations should reflect on:

- what has improved
- what challenges remain
- what needs to be adapted or simplified

Feedback can be gathered from:

- staff involved in coordination and mentoring
- apprentices participating in mobility
- partner organisations

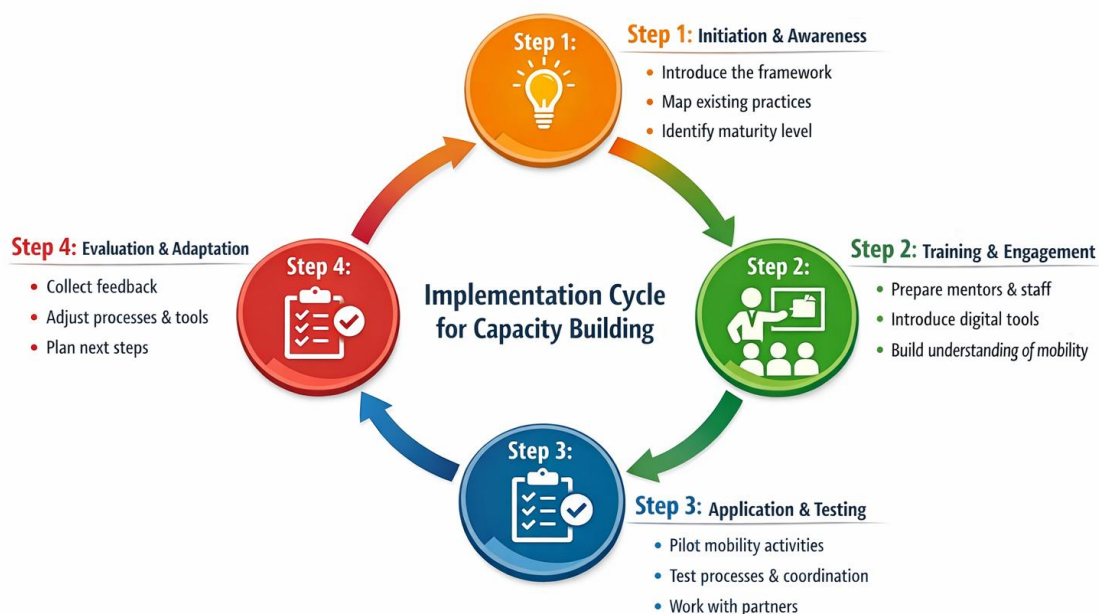
This process supports continuous improvement over time.

4.6 Implementation Cycle

To support structured application, the framework follows a four-step implementation cycle. This cycle provides a structured pathway for organisations to build, test, and refine their capacity over time, as well as reflecting the iterative nature of capacity development. Organisations are not expected to complete all steps at once but can progress through the cycle gradually based on their context.

Table 3: Overview of Implementation Cycle

Step	Objective	Key Action
Initiation & Awareness	Understand starting point	Mapping, awareness, level identification
Training & Engagement	Build internal capacity	Training, tools, preparation
Application & Testing	Test in practice	Pilots, coordination, monitoring
Evaluation & Adaptation	Improve and refine	Feedback, adjustments, scaling



Step 1: Initiation & Awareness

Organisations begin by introducing the framework internally and developing a shared understanding of blended mobility. This includes mapping existing practices and identifying the organisation's current level of readiness.

Step 2: Training & Engagement

At this stage, organisations focus on preparing staff and mentors, introducing basic digital tools, and building internal understanding of roles and processes related to mobility.

Step 3: Application & Testing

Organisations pilot mobility-related activities on a small scale. This may include testing onboarding processes, communication methods, and coordination with selected partners.

Step 4: Evaluation & Adaptation

Feedback is collected from apprentices, staff, and partners. Based on this, organisations adjust their processes, refine tools, and plan further development.

The cycle can be repeated to support continuous improvement and scaling of mobility activities.

4.7 Addressing Common Barriers

Validation activities across partner countries identified recurring barriers affecting the implementation of blended apprenticeship mobility. These barriers reflect structural and operational realities, particularly for organisations with limited experience or capacity.

These challenges are treated as starting points for capacity development rather than obstacles. Addressing these barriers does not require complex or resource-intensive solutions, but can often be achieved through practical adjustments, simplified processes, and gradual implementation.

The table below summarises the most common barriers identified during validation and outlines indicative approaches that align with the principles of the framework.

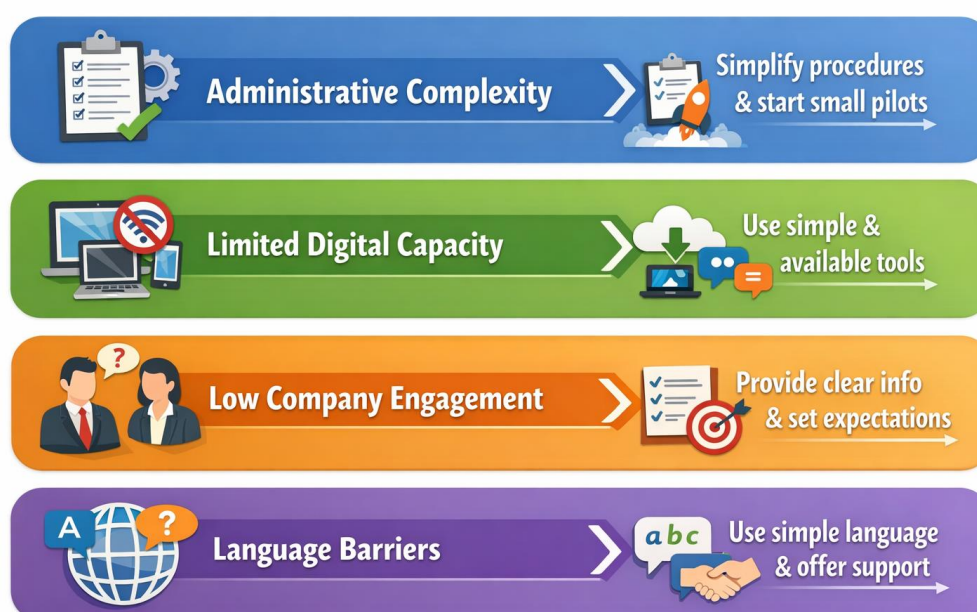


Table 4: Common Barriers and Practical Responses in Capacity Building

Barrier	Description	Recommended Approach
Administrative complexity	Mobility is often perceived as difficult to manage due to documentation, coordination, and compliance requirements.	Simplify internal processes and begin with small-scale pilot activities to reduce complexity and build confidence.
Limited digital capacity	Digital tools are available but often not used in a structured way to support learning or coordination.	Prioritise simple, accessible tools and integrate them gradually based on practical needs.
Low company engagement	Companies may lack time, clarity, or understanding of their role in mobility activities.	Provide clear expectations, maintain regular communication, and build partnerships gradually.
Language barriers	Communication challenges may affect collaboration between partners, mentors, and apprentices.	Use clear, simple communication and support it with visual or structured materials where possible.

By acknowledging these barriers as part of the implementation context, the framework supports organisations in developing realistic and sustainable approaches to capacity building. This reinforces the role of the framework as a practical tool grounded in organisational realities.

4.8 Adapting the Framework to Different Contexts

The Capacity Building Framework is designed to be flexible and applicable across a wide range of organisational, sectoral, and national contexts. Organisations differ in size, experience, resources, and regulatory environments, and the framework is designed to accommodate these differences.

Table 5: Adapting the Framework to Different Contexts

Context	Key Considerations	Practical Adaptation
Organisational Capacity	Organisations operate at different levels of readiness across the three capacity pillars. This is particularly relevant for SMEs and organisations with limited prior experience in mobility.	Begin at an appropriate level based on current capacity; focus on priority areas; progress incrementally rather than attempting full implementation at once.
Sectoral Contexts	Different sectors have specific requirements related to workplace learning, supervision, and safety.	Align workplace tasks with sector-specific learning outcomes; adapt onboarding and preparation to working environments; ensure supervision and safety procedures meet sectoral standards.
National Systems	Education and training systems, as well as regulatory frameworks, differ across countries.	Align practices with national VET systems and qualification requirements; integrate into existing mobility schemes; ensure compliance with national regulations.

4.9 Minimum Digital Standard

Validation findings across partner countries highlight the importance of a clear and accessible minimum digital baseline, particularly for organisations with limited digital capacity. For many companies (especially SMEs) uncertainty around digital requirements can act as a barrier to participation in blended mobility.

To address this, the framework promotes a “minimum viable” digital approach that enables organisations to participate without the need for complex systems or advanced technical expertise.

At a basic level, a functional digital setup may include the use of email for communication, a shared folder for document exchange (such as Google Drive or OneDrive), and a simple logbook or progress tracking document to support monitoring and feedback. This baseline is intentionally simple. It reflects the reality that effective blended mobility does not depend on sophisticated platforms, but on consistent and practical use of accessible tools.

More advanced digital systems, e.g. learning management systems or integrated coordination platforms, should be considered optional. Their use should depend on organisational needs, capacity, and context, and should be introduced gradually where they provide clear added value.

4.10 Scaling and Gradual Implementation

The framework supports gradual implementation and scaling over time. Organisations are not expected to develop full capacity from the outset, but rather to build experience through practical engagement.

In most cases, this begins with small-scale pilot activities. Organisations may start by working with a limited number of apprentices or partners, allowing them to test processes in a manageable and low-risk environment. This approach enables organisations to identify what works in practice, make necessary adjustments, and build internal confidence before expanding their activities.

As experience grows, organisations refine their processes, strengthen partnerships, and increase the scope of their mobility activities. Capacity development is therefore understood as an iterative process, shaped by experience rather than predefined targets.

4.11 Maintaining Core Principles

While the framework is flexible, its effectiveness depends on maintaining core principles, i.e. clarity of roles and responsibilities, alignment between learning objectives and workplace activities, effective communication and coordination between stakeholders, and a strong emphasis on accessibility and practicality.

These principles provide a stable foundation for implementation across different organisational and national contexts. They ensure that, even as organisations adapt the framework to their specific needs, the overall approach remains coherent, consistent, and focused on quality.

Maintaining these principles ensures that blended mobility remains effective and sustainable.

5 Capacity Areas and Descriptors

This chapter provides a detailed description of the three capacity pillars introduced in the framework. It translates the conceptual model into concrete organisational practices by outlining key capacity areas and illustrating how these evolve across different levels of maturity. The descriptors are intended as reference points to support organisations in understanding their current position and identifying realistic steps for development.

Validation findings across partner countries show that organisations benefit from clear and practical guidance that reflects operational conditions. The descriptors therefore focus on observable practices rather than abstract criteria, enabling their use as both a self-assessment and development tool.

The descriptors should be interpreted as reference points rather than strict requirements. Validation findings highlight the importance of distinguishing between essential (“minimum”) practices and more advanced (“optional”) practices.

Organisations should prioritise basic, high-impact actions before progressing towards more structured approaches. This is particularly important for SMEs, where capacity constraints require focused and realistic implementation.

5.1 People & Process Readiness

People and Process Readiness refers to the internal organisational capacity required to plan, coordinate, and support blended apprenticeship mobility. It focuses on roles, responsibilities, workflows, and the preparation of staff and mentors.

Validation findings across partner countries show that unclear responsibilities and informal processes are common barriers, particularly in smaller organisations. Strengthening this area improves coordination and ensures more consistent support for apprentices.

Key Capacity Areas

- Definition of roles and responsibilities (e.g. coordinator, mentor, support)
- Internal coordination and communication
- Preparation and support of mentors and staff
- Onboarding processes for apprentices
- Documentation and basic administrative procedures

Table 6: Descriptors Across Maturity Levels (People & Process Readiness)

Entry	Developing	Mature	Examples of Practice
Responsibilities are informal or unclear	Roles are partially defined and shared across staff	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and embedded in the organisation	<i>Assigning a dedicated mobility contact person within the organisation</i>
Mobility activities depend on a small number of individuals	Basic workflows are established for mobility activities	Coordination processes are structured and consistently applied	<i>Developing internal guidelines for staff involved in mobility</i>
Limited or no structured onboarding	Onboarding processes exist but may be inconsistent	Onboarding is standardised and aligned with mobility objectives	<i>Creating simple onboarding checklists for apprentices</i>
Processes are reactive rather than planned	Mentors receive some preparation or guidance	Mentors are prepared and supported systematically	<i>Holding short coordination meetings before and during mobility periods</i>
Internal communication is ad hoc or inconsistent	Basic coordination between staff is established	Clear internal communication and coordination across roles	<i>Establishing regular internal check-ins between staff involved in mobility</i>

These descriptors reflect a progression from informal practices towards structured and embedded organisational processes.

5.2 Digital & Pedagogical Readiness

Digital and Pedagogical Readiness refers to the organisation's ability to integrate digital tools and learning approaches into blended mobility. It includes both the technical use of tools and the pedagogical alignment between virtual preparation and workplace learning.

Validation findings across partner countries show that digital capacity is often uneven. While tools are used informally, they are rarely integrated into structured learning or coordination processes. Overly complex solutions are often identified as a barrier, particularly for SMEs.

Key Capacity Areas

- Use of digital tools for communication and coordination
- Digital onboarding and preparation materials
- Alignment between virtual and workplace learning
- Monitoring and feedback mechanisms
- Basic digital competence of staff and mentors

Table 7: Descriptors Across Maturity Levels (Digital & Pedagogical Readiness)

Entry	Developing	Mature	Examples of Practice
Use of basic communication tools without structured coordination or learning support (e.g. email, messaging)	Use of shared platforms for communication and document exchange	Integrated use of digital tools to support learning and coordination	<i>Using shared platforms (e.g. Google Drive, Teams) for coordination</i>
No structured digital learning or onboarding	Basic digital onboarding materials (e.g. presentations, videos)	Structured digital onboarding aligned with learning outcomes	<i>Providing short introductory videos or digital guides for apprentices</i>
Limited connection between preparation and workplace activities	Initial efforts to connect virtual preparation with workplace tasks	Clear links between virtual and workplace-based learning	<i>Using simple digital logs or check-ins to track progress</i>
Basic monitoring of apprentice progress	Some monitoring of apprentice progress	Regular monitoring and feedback supported by digital tools	<i>Organising virtual meetings before and during mobility</i>

The descriptors reflect a progression from informal tool use towards integrated digital and pedagogical practices that support learning outcomes.

5.3 Workplace & Partnership Readiness

Workplace and Partnership Readiness refers to the organisation's ability to establish, manage, and sustain effective collaboration with host companies and partners. It ensures that workplace learning is meaningful, structured, and aligned with educational objectives.

Validation findings across partner countries identify company engagement as a key challenge in mobility implementation. While companies are generally willing to participate, they often require clearer expectations and structured communication.

Key Capacity Areas

- Identification and selection of host companies
- Definition of roles and expectations
- Alignment of workplace tasks with learning outcomes
- Communication between sending and host organisations
- Support for workplace mentors and supervisors

Table 8: Descriptors Across Maturity Levels (Workplace & Partnership Readiness)

Entry	Developing	Mature	Examples of Practice
Limited or informal partnerships	Initial network of partner companies established	Stable and diversified partnership network	<i>Developing simple partnership agreements or guidelines</i>
Expectations for hosting apprentices are unclear	Basic agreements or expectations defined	Clear and shared understanding of roles and expectations	<i>Providing host companies with clear information before mobility</i>
Workplace learning is not structured	Some alignment between tasks and learning objectives	Workplace learning is structured and aligned with learning outcomes	<i>Defining expected tasks and learning outcomes in advance</i>
Limited or no structured communication with partner organisations	Communication takes place but may be irregular	Regular and effective communication between partners	<i>Maintaining regular contact with host organisations during mobility</i>
Limited support for workplace mentors	Some guidance provided to mentors	Active support for workplace mentors	<i>Providing simple guidance materials or short briefings for workplace mentors</i>
Responsibilities for supervision and safety are unclear	Basic responsibilities for supervision are defined	Clear procedures for supervision, safety, and support are established	<i>Providing host organisations with clear safety and supervision guidelines</i>

These descriptors reflect a progression from informal relationships towards structured and collaborative partnerships.

6 Organisational Capacity in Practice

This chapter translates the capacity areas and descriptors into the day-to-day reality of companies and organisations. While the framework provides a structured model for organisational readiness, its value depends on how it is applied in practice.

For companies, participation in blended apprenticeship mobility is not an abstract concept but an operational activity that must be integrated into existing workflows, responsibilities, and constraints. Capacity is therefore not only about having structures in place, but about how effectively organisations organise, coordinate, and sustain these activities over time.

In practice, organisational capacity is shaped by internal coordination, staff engagement, communication, and collaboration with external partners. These elements interact and influence the organisation's ability to host and support apprentices effectively.

Companies do not need to reach a high level of maturity across all areas to begin participating. Many start with informal arrangements and develop more structured approaches as experience grows. Capacity is therefore iterative and evolves through practice.

This chapter focuses on how capacity is expressed within organisations, highlighting coordination, support, communication, and partnerships, while acknowledging operational constraints. The aim is to provide a practical perspective that supports effective participation regardless of starting point.

6.1 Internal Coordination and Responsibility

At the organisational level, one of the most important foundations for participation in blended apprenticeship mobility is clarity of responsibility. Even in small companies, mobility activities require clear ownership of coordination, communication, and decision-making.

In practice, this role is often informal, particularly in organisations at an early stage of engagement. A manager, supervisor, or administrative staff member may take on coordination responsibilities alongside their existing duties. What matters is not the formal title, but that there is a clearly identifiable contact person responsible for mobility activities.

As organisations gain experience, this function may become more structured. Responsibilities can be distributed across different roles, such as mentoring apprentices, managing communication with partners, or overseeing documentation. In more established organisations, coordination may be embedded into existing HR or training functions.

Regardless of the organisational model, clarity of responsibility is essential. Unclear responsibilities can lead to communication gaps, delays, and inconsistent support for apprentices. Even a simple agreement on “who does what” can significantly improve coordination.

6.1.1 Clarifying Roles and Responsibilities Across Actors

Validation findings across partner countries highlight that unclear roles and responsibilities are a major barrier to effective implementation, particularly in organisations with limited

experience. To address this, organisations should ensure that responsibilities are clearly defined across key actors involved in blended mobility, including:

- company (host organisation): supervision, workplace integration, and day-to-day support
- VET provider: learning design, pedagogical alignment, and assessment
- intermediary organisations: coordination support, facilitation, and communication

These roles do not require complex structures but must be clearly understood and agreed from the outset. Even a simple written or visual role map can significantly improve coordination and reduce misunderstandings.

Clarity of responsibility is particularly important in national systems where accountability is linked to specific roles.

6.2 Supporting Apprentices in the Workplace

The ability to support apprentices in the workplace is a central component of organisational capacity. This support is not limited to technical training, but includes onboarding, guidance, supervision, and day-to-day integration into the workplace.

In practice, many companies begin with informal approaches. Apprentices are introduced to tasks, guided by experienced staff, and gradually integrated into workflows. While this can be effective, it may lead to inconsistencies if expectations are not clearly defined.

As capacity develops, organisations tend to adopt more structured approaches. This may include basic onboarding processes, defined learning tasks, regular check-ins, and clearer supervision arrangements. These elements help ensure that apprentices achieve meaningful learning outcomes.

Support does not need to be complex to be effective. Simple measures (such as assigning a mentor, providing a clear introduction to the workplace, and setting expectations) can significantly improve the apprentice experience. Over time, organisations may expand these practices to include more formalised learning pathways and feedback mechanisms.

Validation findings highlighted the importance of translating learning outcomes into concrete workplace tasks. While educational frameworks often describe learning in terms of competences and outcomes, companies typically operate in terms of tasks and workflows.

Bridging this gap is essential. Learning objectives should be aligned with real workplace activities so that apprentices understand how tasks contribute to their development.

6.3 Communication and Use of Digital Tools

Effective communication is essential for implementing blended apprenticeship mobility. This includes communication within the organisation, as well as with apprentices and external partners.

In many organisations, communication is initially informal and relies on existing tools such as email, phone calls, or messaging platforms. This is often sufficient at an early stage, but challenges arise when communication is inconsistent or unclear.

The integration of simple digital tools can support more effective coordination and engagement. Shared platforms, video conferencing tools, and basic document-sharing systems can help ensure that information is accessible and communication is continuous, particularly in blended mobility contexts where physical and virtual elements are combined.

The focus should be on using accessible and familiar tools consistently rather than introducing complex systems. Clear communication routines, such as regular check-ins, shared documents, and defined communication channels, can significantly improve coordination without increasing complexity.

6.4 Engaging with External Partners

Blended apprenticeship mobility requires companies to engage with external partners, including training providers, intermediary organisations, and other stakeholders. For many companies, this is one of the most challenging aspects of participation in blended mobility.

In practice, organisations often begin with a small number of trusted partners. Relationships are built gradually, based on clear communication and shared expectations. This approach reduces risk and allows companies to build confidence before expanding partnerships.

Effective engagement with partners requires clarity on roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Companies need to understand what is expected of them as hosts, while also being aware of the support available from partners. Regular communication and mutual feedback are essential for maintaining effective collaboration.

As organisations gain experience, partnerships may become more structured and formalised. However, even at more advanced stages, strong relationships are typically built on trust, clarity, and consistent communication rather than complex arrangements.

6.5 The Coordination Function within Organisations

The coordination function plays a central role in connecting all aspects of blended apprenticeship mobility within the organisation. It acts as the link between internal processes, apprentice support, and external collaboration.

In smaller organisations, this function is often carried out by a single individual. In larger or more experienced organisations, coordination may be distributed across a team, with defined roles and responsibilities. Its effectiveness depends on the organisation's ability to manage information, maintain communication, and ensure continuity. Even where resources are limited, a clearly defined coordination function helps prevent fragmentation and ensures coherent management of mobility activities.

Over time, organisations may strengthen this function by introducing clearer processes, improving documentation, and aligning coordination with broader organisational structures such as HR or training departments.

6.6 Capacity Constraints and Realistic Approaches

Companies operate under real constraints, including limited time, resources, and staff availability. These constraints are particularly significant for SMEs, which may have limited experience with mobility.

The framework recognises that organisations cannot address all aspects of capacity simultaneously. Instead, it supports a realistic and incremental approach to development. Companies are encouraged to start with manageable actions, focus on priority areas, and gradually expand their activities over time. In practice, this may involve starting with a small number of apprentices, limited partnerships, and simple processes before scaling. This approach reduces risk and allows organisations to learn from experience.

Capacity building is not about achieving perfection, but about making progress. Even small improvements in coordination, communication, or support can significantly enhance the quality and sustainability of mobility activities.

By adopting realistic and adaptable approaches, organisations can participate effectively in blended apprenticeship mobility within their existing constraints.

7 Validation Findings and Key Insights

This chapter presents key findings from validation activities conducted across partner countries. The process assessed the relevance, usability, and practicality of the Capacity Building Framework, as well as common challenges related to blended apprenticeship mobility.

Validation was carried out through structured workshops, interviews, and focus group discussions involving representatives from VET providers, host companies, intermediary organisations, and experts in vocational education and training.

Rather than presenting country-specific results in isolation, this chapter synthesises findings across partner countries to highlight common patterns and demonstrate how these insights informed the framework.

7.1 Overview of the Validation Approach

Validation activities were conducted in all partner countries using a combination of methods, including:

- focus groups with key stakeholders
- structured interviews
- behavioural simulation exercises
- review of framework components and descriptors

Participants represented a diverse range of organisational types, including VET institutions, SMEs, larger companies, intermediary organisations, and policy-related actors.

This diversity ensured that the validation process captured different operational realities, particularly in relation to organisational capacity, resource constraints, and experience with mobility. The validation approach focused on:

- testing the clarity and usability of the framework
- assessing the relevance of capacity pillars and descriptors
- identifying practical barriers to implementation
- gathering feedback on applicability across different contexts

7.2 Key Cross-Country Findings

Despite differences in national systems and organisational contexts, validation results revealed consistent patterns across partner countries.

7.2.1 Lack of Structured Processes

Across all countries, participants highlighted that mobility activities are often implemented through informal or ad hoc processes. Common issues included:

- unclear roles and responsibilities
- reliance on individual staff members
- lack of standardised workflows
- limited documentation and coordination structures

This finding supports the inclusion of People & Process Readiness as a core pillar of the framework.

7.2.2 Uneven Digital and Pedagogical Capacity

Digital tools are widely used, but typically in an informal and unstructured way. In most cases:

- digital tools are used for communication rather than learning
- there is limited alignment between virtual preparation and workplace tasks
- monitoring and feedback mechanisms are underdeveloped

Participants emphasised that overly complex digital solutions can act as a barrier, particularly for SMEs. These findings informed the design of the *Digital & Pedagogical Readiness* pillar, with an emphasis on simplicity and usability.

7.2.3 Challenges in Company Engagement

Engaging host companies was consistently identified as one of the most significant challenges. Key issues included:

- lack of clarity regarding roles and expectations
- limited time and resources within companies
- insufficient communication between sending and host organisations
- weak alignment between workplace tasks and learning outcomes

Participants stressed that companies are generally willing to participate but require clearer structures and support. This finding informs the *Workplace & Partnership Readiness* pillar and its focus on structured collaboration.

7.2.4 Resource Constraints and Capacity Limitations

Organisations across all partner countries reported constraints related to:

- limited staff capacity
- time pressures
- administrative workload
- lack of prior experience with mobility

These constraints were particularly evident in SMEs and smaller VET providers. As a result, participants emphasised the importance of:

- simple and practical solutions
- gradual implementation
- flexibility in application

This feedback influenced the framework's non-prescriptive and incremental design.

7.2.5 Importance of Clarity and Practical Guidance

A consistent message across all validation activities was the need for clear, practical, and easy-to-use guidance. Participants valued:

- concrete examples

- simple descriptors
- realistic expectations
- tools that can be applied without specialised expertise

This finding reinforced the decision to structure the framework as a practical tool.

7.3 Feedback by Capacity Area

To better understand how the framework reflects real organisational practices, participant feedback was analysed across the three capacity pillars. This approach allows for a more detailed examination of how organisations experience challenges within each capacity area.

The following sections present key insights related to *People & Process Readiness*, *Digital & Pedagogical Readiness*, and *Workplace & Partnership Readiness*, highlighting where organisations are most confident and where further support is needed.

7.3.1 People & Process Readiness

Participants highlighted that basic improvements in organisation and communication can enhance mobility experiences. In many cases, mobility activities depend on a small number of individuals, increasing the risk of inconsistency and inefficiency.

There was strong agreement on the need for clearer internal coordination, simple workflows, and better preparation of staff and mentors. Participants highlighted that even basic improvements in organisation and communication can significantly enhance the quality of mobility experiences.

7.3.2 Digital & Pedagogical Readiness

Feedback indicated that digital tools are widely used but rarely integrated into structured learning or coordination processes. Participants expressed a preference for simple and accessible tools rather than complex digital systems.

There was also a recognised need to better align virtual preparation with workplace learning. Without clear connections, the value of blended mobility is reduced. Participants highlighted the importance of basic digital onboarding materials, simple monitoring tools, and practical guidance for mentors on how to support blended learning.

7.3.3 Workplace & Partnership Readiness

Participants emphasised the need to support workplace mentors, who often play a key role but may lack guidance. Many organisations reported difficulties in engaging companies and defining clear expectations for hosting apprentices.

There was strong agreement on the importance of building relationships gradually, starting with a small number of trusted partners. Clear communication, defined roles, and alignment between workplace tasks and learning outcomes were seen as essential.

Participants also emphasised the need to support workplace mentors, who often play a key role but may lack guidance or preparation.

7.4 Cross-Cutting Insights

Several cross-cutting insights emerged across validation activities.

1. First, **simplicity is essential**. Organisations are more likely to engage with the framework if it is clear, manageable, and directly applicable to their context.
2. Second, **flexibility is critical**. Organisations operate in diverse environments, and the ability to adapt the framework to different contexts was seen as a major strength.
3. Third, **practical support is necessary**. Participants consistently highlighted the importance of tools, examples, and step-by-step guidance to support implementation.

Finally, **gradual development** is key. Organisations benefit from starting small and scaling over time rather than attempting comprehensive implementation from the outset.

7.5 Implications for the Framework

The validation findings informed the final refinement of the Capacity Building Framework. In response to stakeholder feedback, the framework places emphasis on:

- practical actions and entry points for organisations
- simple and accessible tools
- clear guidance on roles, processes, and partnerships
- strategies for addressing common barriers

The validation process confirmed that a non-linear and flexible approach is essential. Allowing organisations to develop capacity incrementally across areas makes the framework more applicable.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the framework is relevant and usable across different contexts, while highlighting the importance of continued support during implementation.

7.6 Conclusion

The validation process confirms that organisations across different countries and sectors face similar challenges in implementing blended apprenticeship mobility. It also demonstrates strong demand for practical and accessible tools to support capacity building.

The Capacity Building Framework responds directly to these needs. It provides a structured yet adaptable approach that enables organisations to:

- assess their current readiness
- identify realistic priorities
- implement manageable changes
- build capacity progressively over time

By grounding the framework in validation across partner countries, this chapter reinforces its relevance and applicability in diverse contexts.

8 Recommendations for Capacity Building

This chapter translates the framework into concrete recommendations that support organisational capacity for blended apprenticeship mobility. It addresses both the internal needs of companies and the broader conditions required to enable effective participation. The recommendations recognise that companies vary in size, experience, and resources. Capacity building should therefore avoid one-size-fits-all approaches and instead provide flexible and scalable support.

8.1 Recommendations for Companies (Internal Capacity)

Companies should focus on establishing clear and manageable internal structures that support participation in blended mobility. This begins with assigning responsibility for coordination, even if informal, and ensuring that basic processes are in place. Companies should:

- define clear internal roles related to mobility coordination and apprentice support
- introduce simple onboarding and supervision practices
- establish consistent communication routines
- use accessible digital tools to support coordination and documentation

Rather than aiming for fully developed systems, companies should prioritise clarity, consistency, and practicality. Starting small and building gradually supports confidence and experience over time.

8.2 Recommendations for Supporting Company Engagement (especially SMEs)

Small and medium-sized enterprises often face structural barriers to participation, including limited time, resources, and administrative capacity. Supporting their engagement requires targeted and simplified approaches. Support mechanisms should:

- reduce administrative burden through simplified procedures and templates
- provide clear and concise guidance tailored to companies
- offer practical examples and entry points for participation
- enable access to external support, including intermediaries or coordination services

Engagement strategies should prioritise trust-building and long-term relationships rather than short-term recruitment. Working with a smaller number of committed organisations is often more effective than broad but shallow engagement.

8.3 Recommendations for Strengthening Company-Partner Collaboration

Effective collaboration between companies and external partners is essential for implementing blended mobility. This requires clear communication, shared expectations, and well-defined roles. To strengthen collaboration, organisations should:

- expectations should be clearly defined at the outset of cooperation
- communication channels and routines should be agreed early
- responsibilities between partners should be transparent and realistic
- feedback mechanisms should be introduced to support continuous improvement

Partnerships should be built progressively, allowing companies to develop confidence over time. Strong collaboration is based on clarity and consistency rather than complexity.

8.4 Recommendations for Programme and Policy Support

Enabling company participation requires supportive programme and policy environments. Systems should facilitate, rather than hinder, engagement. At programme and policy level:

- simplify administrative requirements and reduce unnecessary complexity
- recognise the diversity of companies and adapt support accordingly
- provide funding mechanisms that reflect real organisational constraints
- invest in intermediary structures that support coordination and engagement
- promote the use of flexible and blended mobility models

Policies should lower entry barriers while maintaining quality. Supporting gradual engagement is more effective than requiring full readiness from the outset.

9 Illustrative Company Scenarios

To support understanding and practical application of the framework, this section presents three illustrative company scenarios. These reflect different levels of organisational capacity and demonstrate how companies can engage with blended apprenticeship mobility in practice.

9.1 Entry-Level Company (Minimum Capacity)

An entry-level company has little or no prior experience with apprenticeship mobility. Participation is exploratory and driven by interest rather than established processes. Typical characteristics include:

- coordination is handled by a single individual, often informally
- communication relies on basic tools such as email or phone
- apprentice support is provided through informal supervision
- partnerships are limited to one trusted external organisation

The company focuses on understanding expectations and testing participation on a small scale. Activities are simple, and learning is primarily experiential. The goal at this stage is to build initial experience and confidence.

9.2 Developing Company (Structured Approach)

A developing company has some experience with mobility and begins to introduce more structured processes. Typical characteristics include:

- roles and responsibilities are more clearly defined
- onboarding and supervision practices are established
- communication is more structured and supported by digital tools
- partnerships are more stable and based on prior collaboration

The organisation begins to align workplace tasks with learning objectives and introduces basic monitoring and feedback mechanisms. The focus shifts from experimentation to consistency.

9.3 Established Company (Integrated Mobility Practice)

An established company has embedded mobility activities into its organisational structure and operates with a high level of coordination and consistency. Typical characteristics include:

- coordination functions are clearly defined and integrated into organisational processes
- apprentice support is structured, with defined learning pathways and mentoring systems
- communication and digital tools are used systematically
- partnerships are well-established and may include multiple stakeholders

Mobility is integrated into the organisation's broader training or HR strategy. The company is able to scale activities and contribute to long-term collaboration networks.

10 Expected Outcomes and Impact

Building on the validation findings, this chapter outlines the expected outcomes and broader impact of the Capacity Building Framework. It highlights how the framework strengthens organisational readiness for blended apprenticeship mobility and contributes to wider educational, organisational, and systemic development.

10.1 Organisational Outcomes

The framework supports organisations in developing more structured and consistent approaches to mobility. By strengthening internal processes, clarifying roles, and improving coordination, organisations can reduce administrative burden and improve the quality of mobility experiences.

For organisations with limited prior experience, the framework provides a clear and accessible entry point. For more experienced organisations, it supports further development, refinement, and scaling of existing practices.

By applying the framework, organisations are expected to achieve:

- Improved organisational clarity, with clearly defined roles, responsibilities, and workflows related to mobility activities
- Increased staff confidence and competence, particularly among mentors, coordinators, and administrative staff
- More effective use of digital tools, supporting communication, onboarding, and monitoring without creating unnecessary complexity
- Stronger internal coordination, reducing fragmentation and improving the overall management of mobility activities

These outcomes contribute to more consistent and reliable implementation of blended mobility across different organisational contexts.

10.2 Impact on Apprentices and Learning

The framework improves the quality and coherence of learning experiences in blended mobility. By promoting alignment between virtual preparation and workplace activities, apprentices benefit from more structured and meaningful learning pathways. Improved onboarding, clearer expectations, and better support enhance engagement and learning outcomes.

It also supports more consistent monitoring and feedback, allowing apprentices to better understand their progress throughout the mobility experience.

10.3 Impact on Partnerships and Collaboration

The framework strengthens collaboration between sending organisations, host companies, and intermediary actors. By encouraging clear communication, defined roles, and shared expectations, the framework strengthens stable and effective partnerships. This is particularly important for engaging companies, which were identified as a key challenge during validation.

Over time, stronger partnerships contribute to more sustainable mobility ecosystems, where organisations and companies are more confident to participate.

10.4 System-Level Impact

At a broader level, the framework contributes to the development of more accessible and scalable models for blended apprenticeship mobility. By focusing on simplicity and practical implementation, the framework lowers barriers to participation, particularly for SMEs and organisations with limited resources. This supports wider engagement and more inclusive participation across sectors and regions.

The framework provides a common reference point that supports alignment across national systems while allowing for local adaptation.

10.5 Long-Term Impact and Sustainability

The framework supports long-term development through gradual capacity building and continuous improvement. Rather than requiring immediate transformation, it enables organisations to build experience, refine practices, and scale activities over time. This reduces risk and increases the likelihood of lasting impact.

By embedding practical tools, clear structures, and adaptable processes, the framework supports the sustainability of mobility activities beyond individual projects or funding cycles.

11 Conclusions

This report presents the development and validation of the Capacity Building Framework for blended apprenticeship mobility. The framework responds directly to challenges identified across partner countries and provides a structured yet flexible approach to strengthening organisational readiness.

The findings confirm that organisations require practical and adaptable solutions. By focusing on three core capacity pillars and supporting gradual development through maturity levels, the framework offers a realistic pathway for organisations with varying levels of experience.

Validation activities demonstrated that the framework is relevant and applicable across different contexts. Participants consistently emphasised the importance of simplicity, clear guidance, and practical tools, which are reflected in the final design of the framework.

A key strength of the framework is its flexibility. It allows organisations to adapt their approach based on their specific context while maintaining core principles that ensure quality and coherence. This makes it particularly suitable for SMEs and organisations entering mobility.

It also supports more experienced organisations in refining and scaling their practices. By promoting continuous improvement, stronger partnerships, and better alignment between learning and workplace activities, it contributes to more effective and sustainable mobility systems.

Overall, the Capacity Building Framework provides a practical and evidence-based tool for implementing blended apprenticeship mobility. Its emphasis on usability, adaptability, and gradual development ensures that it supports organisations not only in initiating mobility activities, but also in sustaining and improving them over time.

11.1 Key Messages

This framework demonstrates that organisational capacity for blended apprenticeship mobility is defined by the ability to organise, coordinate, and adapt, rather than by size or resources. Companies do not need to reach full maturity before participating. Instead, they can begin with simple steps and develop their capacity over time.

Clarity, practicality, and gradual development are more effective than complexity. Organisations that focus on manageable actions and continuous improvement are better positioned to sustain participation.

11.2 Contribution of the Framework

The framework contributes to the broader *On the Move* project by providing a structured yet flexible approach to developing organisational capacity. It complements other frameworks by focusing specifically on the company perspective and addressing the practical realities of implementation.

It bridges the gap between policy and practice by translating requirements into concrete organisational actions. In doing so, it supports companies and stakeholders in creating more accessible and effective mobility systems.

11.3 Final Reflections on Company Capacity in Europe

Across Europe, companies play a central role in apprenticeship mobility, yet their capacity to participate varies widely. Supporting this diversity requires flexible and practice-oriented approaches.

The framework highlights that capacity building is not a one-time intervention, but an ongoing process. By enabling companies to engage at different starting points and develop over time, it contributes to a more inclusive and resilient mobility ecosystem.

Ultimately, strengthening company capacity is not only about improving participation, but also about enhancing the quality, relevance, and sustainability of apprenticeship mobility across Europe.

12 References

The Capacity Building Framework is informed by European policy frameworks, methodological research, and empirical findings from the On the Move project. The following sources provide the conceptual and practical foundation for the framework.

12.1 European Policy and Strategic Frameworks

- European Commission (2020). *Council Recommendation on Vocational Education and Training (VET) for Sustainable Competitiveness, Social Fairness and Resilience (2020/C 417/01)*. Official Journal of the European Union.
- European Commission (2018). *European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (EFQEA)*.
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- European Commission (2020). *Digital Education Action Plan 2021–2027: Resetting Education and Training for the Digital Age (COM(2020) 624 final)*.
- European Commission (2020). *European Skills Agenda for Sustainable Competitiveness, Social Fairness and Resilience*.
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- European Commission (2024). *Erasmus+ Programme Guide (2024 Edition)*.

12.2 Methodological and Analytical References

- Cedefop (2020). *Apprenticeships for More Inclusive Societies: Policy Brief*. Publications Office of the European Union.
- Cedefop (2023). *Blended Learning in VET: How to Make It Work*.
- European Training Foundation (ETF) (2022). *Digital Skills and VET Transformation in Europe*.
- European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA) (2023). *Policy and Practice Compendium*.
- OECD (2021). *Apprenticeships for the 21st Century: A Global View*. OECD Publishing.

12.3 Project and Empirical Sources

- *On the Move – Erasmus+ Project (2024–2027)*. Internal WP2 documentation, including framework development materials, interview templates, and validation methodologies.
- *Interview Reporting Template – Capacity Building of Organisations (GeoCamp Iceland, 2024)*.
- *Interview Reporting Templates – On the Move Partner Countries (Bulgaria, Spain, Denmark, Cyprus, Italy, Greece, 2024)*.
- *National Validation Reports – Capacity Building Framework (On the Move Partner Countries, 2025–2026)*. Includes workshop-based validation results assessing relevance, feasibility, maturity levels, and EU quality alignment across different national contexts.
- *Data Analysis – Key Insights: Capacity Building Framework (2024)*.
- *Outline – Capacity Building Framework (2024)*.
- *Focus Group Reports – Blended Mobility Scenarios and System-Level Insights (On the Move Partner Countries, 2025)*.
- *Comparative studies on blended mobility (Nordplus and Erasmus+, 2019–2023)*, including case-based evidence on digital readiness, mobility formats, and SME engagement.

13 Annex I: Practical Examples of Capacity Building Actions

This annex provides illustrative examples of how organisations can begin to develop their capacity for blended apprenticeship mobility in practical and manageable ways. It complements the main framework by translating key capacity areas into concrete actions that can be implemented in real organisational contexts.

The examples presented are not prescriptive. They are intended to support organisations in identifying realistic entry points and to demonstrate how capacity building can be approached incrementally, particularly in organisations with limited prior experience or resources.

In line with validation findings across partner countries, the emphasis is placed on simplicity, usability, and immediate applicability. Organisations are encouraged to adapt these examples to their specific context, sector, and level of readiness.

A1. People & Process Readiness

Capacity building in this area focuses on strengthening internal organisation, clarifying roles, and establishing basic processes to support mobility activities.

At an entry level, organisations may begin by identifying a single contact person responsible for coordinating mobility-related activities. This role does not need to be formalised but should be clearly understood internally. Establishing even a basic point of contact significantly improves communication and accountability.

Organisations can also introduce simple onboarding practices for apprentices. This may include a short checklist covering key aspects such as workplace introduction, safety procedures, and expectations during the mobility period. These onboarding processes do not need to be complex but should be consistent and repeatable.

As capacity develops, organisations may introduce more structured internal workflows. This could involve defining how communication takes place between staff and partners, organising short coordination meetings, or providing basic guidance to mentors and supervisors.

At a more advanced stage, organisations may embed mobility-related responsibilities into existing organisational structures, such as HR or training functions, and develop more systematic mentoring and coordination processes.

A2. Digital & Pedagogical Readiness

This area focuses on the use of digital tools and the alignment between virtual preparation and workplace learning.

At a basic level, organisations can rely on simple and widely available tools. For example, email communication and shared folders (such as Google Drive or OneDrive) can be used to exchange documents and coordinate activities. Introducing a basic logbook or progress tracking document can support communication between apprentices, mentors, and partners.

Organisations may also develop simple digital onboarding materials. These could include short written guides, presentations, or brief videos that introduce apprentices to the workplace,

safety requirements, or key tasks. The aim is not to create comprehensive learning modules, but to provide practical and relevant preparation.

As organisations gain experience, they may begin to link digital preparation more closely to workplace activities. For example, virtual preparation tasks can be designed to support safety awareness, familiarisation with tools or processes, or understanding of workplace expectations.

More advanced approaches may include structured monitoring and feedback using digital tools, or the integration of digital elements into learning design. However, these practices should remain proportionate to organisational capacity and should not introduce unnecessary complexity.

A3. Workplace & Partnership Readiness

Capacity building in this area focuses on establishing and maintaining effective collaboration with partners and ensuring meaningful workplace learning.

At an initial stage, organisations may begin by working with a small number of trusted partners. Building relationships gradually allows organisations to develop confidence and establish clear communication without creating unnecessary complexity.

It is important to define expectations early. Organisations can provide partners with simple information outlining roles, responsibilities, and basic expectations for hosting apprentices. This clarity reduces misunderstandings and supports smoother cooperation.

Organisations should also identify simple workplace tasks that are appropriate for apprentices and aligned with general learning objectives. These tasks should be realistic, safe, and clearly explained.

As capacity develops, organisations may introduce more structured approaches to partnership management. This can include regular communication routines, clearer alignment between tasks and learning outcomes, and basic support for workplace mentors.

At a more advanced level, organisations may collaborate more closely with partners to co-design learning experiences, establish longer-term partnerships, and integrate mobility into broader organisational strategies.

A4. Using the Examples in Practice

The examples presented in this annex are intended to support organisations in taking practical steps towards capacity building. They should not be interpreted as a checklist of requirements, but rather as a set of adaptable reference points.

Organisations are encouraged to:

- select a small number of relevant actions based on their current needs
- implement these actions within existing workflows where possible
- test and refine approaches through practical experience
- expand their activities gradually over time

Validation findings consistently emphasised that organisations benefit from starting small and building confidence through experience. Even limited actions (when applied consistently) can lead to significant improvements in organisational capacity.

By focusing on practical implementation and gradual development, organisations can engage with blended mobility in a way that is both realistic and sustainable.

14 Annex II: Tools and Templates for Capacity Building

This annex provides practical tools and templates to support organisations in implementing the Capacity Building Framework for blended apprenticeship mobility. These resources are designed to be simple, adaptable, and immediately usable, particularly for organisations with limited prior experience.

The tools presented here are not mandatory. They are intended to reduce administrative burden, provide clarity, and support consistent implementation across different contexts. Organisations are encouraged to adapt these tools to their specific needs, sectoral requirements, and national systems.

A2. Role and Responsibility Mapping Template

Clear roles and responsibilities are essential for effective coordination. This simple template can be used to define “who does what” across key actors.

Function & Task Notes	Company (Host)	VET Provider	Intermediary Organisation	Notes
Assign mobility contact person	✓			Named individual
Apprentice onboarding	✓	✓		Shared responsibility
Learning design		✓		VET-led
Workplace supervision	✓			Mentor role
Communication with partners	✓	✓	✓	Define lead
Monitoring progress	✓	✓		Shared
Problem escalation	✓	✓	✓	Clear contact points

How to use: Complete this table at the start of cooperation. Keep it simple. One page is enough.

A2.2 Apprentice Onboarding Checklist (Basic)

A simple onboarding process improves apprentice experience and reduces misunderstandings.

Before arrival:

- ☐ Apprentice receives basic information about company and tasks
- ☐ Contact person is identified and shared
- ☐ Work schedule is clarified
- ☐ Basic safety information is provided

First day:

- ☐ Introduction to workplace and team
- ☐ Explanation of tasks and expectations
- ☐ Safety briefing (mandatory)
- ☐ Tour of facilities

First week:

- ☐ Check-in meeting with mentor
- ☐ Clarification of learning goals
- ☐ Confirmation of communication method

A2.3 Minimum Digital Setup Guide

This tool defines a “minimum viable” digital approach.

Required:

- Email communication
- Shared folder (Google Drive, OneDrive, etc.)
- Simple logbook (Word, Excel, or shared doc)

Optional:

- Video calls (Teams, Zoom)
- Shared calendar
- Messaging apps

Not required (advanced):

- Learning Management Systems (LMS)
- Complex monitoring platforms

Key principle: If it complicates the process, don't introduce it yet.

A2.4 Apprentice Progress Log (Simple Template)

This tool supports basic monitoring without adding complexity. Weekly Log (example):

Week	Tasks Completed	Skills Developed	Challenges	Support Needed
Week 1	Assisted in basic operations	Safety awareness	Language barrier	More visual instruction

This can be completed by:

- apprentice
- mentor
- or both together

Frequency:

- weekly or bi-weekly (keep it light)

A2.5 Communication Routine Template

Clear communication prevents most problems.

Minimum communication structure:

- Before mobility: One coordination call or email exchange
- During mobility: Weekly check-in (10–15 minutes)
- After mobility: Short feedback exchange

Contact points:

- Company: [Name + email]
- VET: [Name + email]
- IO (if applicable): [Name + email]

A2.6 Workplace Readiness Snapshot (Pre-Mobility)

A quick check before hosting an apprentice.

- ☐ Tasks are identified and suitable for apprentice level
- ☐ Mentor or supervisor is assigned
- ☐ Safety procedures are clear
- ☐ Work schedule is defined
- ☐ Contact with VET/partner established

A2.7 Task-to-Learning Alignment Template

Helps translate “work tasks” into “learning” (this was a key validation issue).

Workplace Task	Skill / Learning Outcome	Level (Basic / Intermediate)
Operating equipment	Technical competence	Basic
Assisting team tasks	Communication & teamwork	Basic

A2.8 Mentor Micro-Guidance (1-page)

Mentors don’t need training manuals — they need clarity.

Key responsibilities:

- Explain tasks clearly
- Check understanding
- Provide short feedback
- Ensure safety

Good practice:

- Show → don’t just explain
- Keep instructions simple
- Check in regularly

Avoid:

- Overloading apprentices
- Assuming prior knowledge

A2.9 Quick-Start Guide for SMEs

For organisations with no prior experience.

- *Step 1: Assign a contact person*
- *Step 2: Use onboarding checklist*
- *Step 3: Start with one apprentice*
- *Step 4: Use simple digital tools only*
- *Step 5: Do one weekly check-in*

A2.10 Using These Tools

These tools are designed to support immediate application of the framework. Organisations should not attempt to use all tools at once. Instead, they should select a small number of relevant tools based on their current needs and capacity.

Validation findings consistently show that simplicity, clarity, and gradual implementation are more effective than comprehensive but complex systems.

The goal is not to create perfect systems, but to support practical, consistent, and sustainable implementation of blended apprenticeship mobility.