

# FORMING MINDSET & DEBATING



## LEARNING GOALS

THINK ETHICALLY AND SUSTAINABLY

ASSESS IMPACT

## OTHER RELEVANT COMPETENCES

TAKING THE INITIATIVE

CREATIVITY

VISION

MOTIVATION & PERSEVERANCE

SELF-AWARENESS & SELF-EFFICACY

# 1. Forming Mindset & Debating

## 1.1. Overview

There is a need to embed ethical values in our society. This assumption will build the base for the present module. In this module, students will get in touch with ethics and sustainability in the context of teaching and learning. By assessing the consequences and impacts of their ideas and actions as future teachers, students learn to differentiate between wrong and right behaviour, building up their value awareness over time.

## 1.2. EntreComp Competence – Ethical and Sustainable Thinking

This module tackles the competence *‘Ethical and Sustainable Thinking’*. According to EntreComp, this competence refers to the assessment of consequences of ideas that bring value on the target community. It also includes the reflection on sustainable long-term social, cultural and economic goals and responsible acting (Bacigalupo et al., 2016). Other competences touched include *‘Vision’*, *‘Taking the initiative’*, *‘Self-Awareness & Self-Efficacy’* and *‘Motivation & Perseverance’*.

## 1.3. Learning Goals

1. **Thinking ethically and sustainably:** Students learn how to behave ethically and think sustainably including the demonstration of integrity, honesty, responsibility, courage, commitment and environmentally friendly behaviour.
2. **Assessing impact:** Students can assess the impact of human actions and their own actions in social, cultural, environmental or economic contexts, and are accountable for their actions.

## 1.4. Teaching / Learning Methods

- Individual homework assignment (written proposal submission)
- Diary keeping
- Practical learning experience
- Debating in class
- Case Study

## 1.5. Activity

The module extends over a period of four weeks and starts with a kick-off event to clarify terms, conditions and tasks. During these four weeks, students work on a pre-defined topic (see content) and are challenged to find out what teaching and learning in an ethical way means and how they can make teaching and learning more sustainable.

To do so students get an introduction into the topic by the lecturer and are directed to keep a diary, making one diary entry per week. At the end, student have to submit an assignment where they present their outcomes in form of a proposal. Thus, the major part of this module foresees initiative and individual contribution from the student side.

For both, the diary keeping and the final assignment, a literature research alone will not be sufficient. The module requires practical student engagement with and in ethical and sustainable operations, at least however, observations (e.g. engagement in social activities, community projects, social/environmental campaigns, visiting a retirement home, watching documentary about climate change etc.). What and how they achieve to do so, is their responsibility and part of the task. The aim is the collection of practical experiences/observations in a real world setting (out of the classroom) and the familiarisation with ethical and sustainable thinking. Students should reflect on their experiences, impressions, observations, findings, insights and reflect them in terms of ethics and sustainability. Once a week, these impressions are kept as a diary entry and must be uploaded/send to the lecturer on a predefined weekday (e.g. Sunday noon). In addition, students must submit the final assignment at the end of the course. This assignment should be structured in a proposal format.

After this submission, and in the final week, students meet up in class. Every students presents his/her proposal in front of the class. After all presentations a debate about the best idea/proposal starts. Finally, the lecturer awards the best proposal.

Ideally, and if feasibly, the winning student together with the support of the lecturer, pursues the development of the idea and its implementation in the curriculum. At least however, its presentation in front of the university council. This procedure will increase student motivation substantially.

The application of a case study method is regarded as equally efficient and can be introduced as an alternative. In this case, students have to solve a certain problem and come up with proper solution (e.g. identification of ethical and/or non-ethical behaviour / sustainable didactical methods etc.).

#### Further Links:

- [Case Study Examples](#)

### 1.6. Role of the Educator

Experienced faculty in the field of ethics and sustainability should facilitate this module. The educator should introduce students to the topic of ethics and sustainability during the kick-off meeting (please have a look at the source Farrell, K. (2017)). Furthermore, he/she must check diary entries of all students once a week, providing them with feedback and further instructions or advices. Even before, the educator establishes standards regarding length,

style and format (digital or not) of the diary entry. In the final presentation round, the educator should clarify conditions for debating, fostering a respectful and secure debate climate (see further links: conducting a debate). Finally, educators judge students' performance and are challenged to award the best student proposal (see evaluation).

## 1.7. Contents

### Topic recommendations:

- Sustainability in digital/online education
- Sustainability of learning goals
- Ethics for teachers of foreign languages
- Ethics is assessing student performance
- Etc.

For the initial kick-off meeting educators should prepare an introduction to the topics of ethics and sustainability. An adequate source to do so is Farrell, K. (2017). Furthermore, the following videos can be helpful:

- The Ethics Center (2020). [What is Ethics?](#)
- Global Education First Initiative (2015). [#EducationCan: Sustainable development begins with education](#)

### Recommended proposal structure for the final student assignment:

1. Current situation / starting position / problem statement
2. Aims & Proposed solutions
3. Steps & actions involved
4. Benefits & Chances
5. Potential obstacles & risk

The final presentation should be structured accordingly.

### Guideline for debates:

- Organizing students in teams (task of the educator)
- Establishing rules for debating, including timelines (task of the educator)
- Research on the topic and preparation of logic arguments (task for the students)
- Gathering supporting evidence and examples for positions taken (task for the students)
- Anticipate counter arguments and prepare rebuttals (task for the students)

Please have a look at the links below, which can be helpful when conducting a debate.

#### Further Links:

- Beqiri, G. (2018). [Complete guide to debating: how to improve your debating skills](#)
- [Conducting a debate](#)

### 1.8. Implementation/Integration, Extent, ECTS

The present module, though straightforward in its implementation, might be better suitable for extra-curricular educational offers. Thus, students can choose freely if they would like to enrol or not, which will influence student motivation. Furthermore, the module is not recommended for freshman students. Freshman students do not possess enough background knowledge regarding pedagogy, and learning and teaching in general, which is regarded a precondition to successfully participate in this module. The module can be awarded with a maximum of 2,5 ECTS and foresees a maximum of 25-30 students.

### 1.9. Evaluation

The educator should assess the final assignment of student proposals. Thereby, the educator should include the debates in class. For the final evaluation, the following rubric can be used.

Evaluation Criteria	1 (very good)	2 (good)	3 (satisfactory)	4 (sufficient)	5 (not sufficient)
Ethical & sustainable thinking					
Assessment of impact of action					
Accountability					
Aims & solutions presented					
Benefits & chances					
Obstacles & risks					
Debate					

Figure 1: Criteria for the evaluation of students completing the "Forming Mindset & Debating" module.

#### Further Links:

- [Ethical and sustainable thinking – Activity](#)
- [Ethical and sustainable thinking booklet - European Schoolnet \(2017\)](#).
- [Ethics Case Studies](#)
- [Approaches to Ethics in Higher Education](#)

## 1.10. References

Farrell, K. (2017) Embedding ethical and sustainable thinking in the entrepreneurial mindset, (ECSB) 3E conference, Cork, Ireland, May 10-12, 2017. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/0a1d/e65601dbdc2ca2839a392f093159b6e1f7fd.pdf>

Bacigalupo M, Kampylis P, Punie Y, et al. (2016) *EntreComp: The entrepreneurship competence framework*. JRC Science for Policy Report. DOI: 10.2791/593884.