Digital Assessment Guide

How to implement digital skills assessment and certification system
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**Moaik** Fondacija Moaik

**Les Ateliers du Bocage** Les Ateliers du Bocage

**Haus des Stiftens** Haus des Stiftens gGmbH

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INTRODUCTION

Why is the TechSoup network interested in developing online training today more than ever?

- Logical continuity of our work on how to track, monitor, and recognize NGO staff and leader’s digital skills.
- Democratization of online trainings emphasized by safety measures following the COVID19 crisis.
- TechSoup partners and NGOs need to digitize both existing and to be developed training in order to reach a larger number of people.

This guide aims to help the TechSoup network to go a step further in the implementation of an evaluation system of our online training. But this guide is also intended for:

- NGOs that would like to set up an evaluation system before issuing Open badges as a way to certify skills.
- Trainers that are looking to launch online training and improve the quality of their existing ones (through a grid of evaluation for online trainers).

Adult online education: definition & challenges

New technologies question the way we give training. Thanks to digital tools such as video conferencing, instant messaging, learners and trainers can now be separated by hundreds or even thousands of kilometers without a problem. The learner has at his disposal resources (videos, wikis, etc.) to complete his knowledge that he can consult live for whenever he wishes.

But designing online training brings its own challenges:

- We need to learn new ways to design and facilitate trainings in order to generate engagement.
- We have to try new means to certify skills acquisition with less physical interaction.

Different e-learning systems have been developed to meet these challenges like Massive Open Online Courses, Small Private Online Courses and Corporate Open Online Courses that include a variety of learning materials (videos, documents, podcasts), facilitates interactions (through chats, emails, individual calls,...), assess and certify learning achievements (with Open Badges).

But this guide will focus on formats that are starting to be widely used by NGOs and will be based on the TechSoup network experience with:

- webinars
- online workshops
- offline/online version
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DIGITAL SKILLS FRAMEWORK
DIGITAL SKILLS FRAMEWORK

Existing digital skills frameworks:

The Digital Competence Framework 2.0 also known as Digicomp\(^1\) has become a reference for the development and strategic planning of digital competence initiatives in Europe.

The DIGICOMP framework lists 5 categories divided into 21 competences, with 3 overall levels (foundation; intermediate: advanced; highly specialized) and 8 granular levels (foundation 1 and 2; intermediate 3 and 4; advanced 5 and 6; highly specialized 8 and 9).

Levels are made according to 3 dimensions: complexity, autonomy in performing the skill, and the key cognitive domain activated (remembering, understanding, applying, evaluation, creating).

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Referring to a digital skills framework, like Digicomp, has become unavoidable for many reasons:

- Digital competences are transversal competences and therefore difficult to apprehend. Digicomp describes in an easy and comprehensive understanding what it means to be digitally competent.

- Digicomp gives every trainer organization at European scale the ability to validate and recognize competences that consist in the same definition, no matter where people have acquired them. It allows organizations to have a common language to talk about digital skills.

- Digicomp is a well-developed scientific-based project with an extensive literature review, case study research, and 200 stakeholder and expert consultation process. This widely-recognized framework gives credibility and helps structure training courses.
Digital skills framework and evaluation system: how to link them together?

Reading the Digicomp framework is an easy task, but using it in an operational way is not as easy. How can trainers identify which skills are developed during their course? From which point can trainers certify that a course participant has acquired this skill?

1. **Identify training target profiles**

Are they students? Senior citizens? Teachers? NGO Staff and Leaders? What is their average level of digital competence: basic, intermediate, advanced? Get help from digital maturity European and national studies or by assessing their individual digital maturity level:

2. **Translate, choose and adapt the DIGICOMP**

According to your context and to your target training audience, you can develop your own operational learning outcomes based
on the DIGICOMP adaptation. Organize a focus group with your HR managers or NGO leaders. To help you do that, some translations already exists:

→ English version of DIGICOMP framework available [here](#)

→ French version of DIGICOMP framework available [here](#)

→ Polish version of DIGICOMP framework available [here](#)

→ Italian version of DIGICOMP framework available [here](#)

Some inspiring adaptations to certain context and target groups have already been developed:

→ DIGICOMP adaptation to low digitally-skilled 25+ years old adults [here](#)

→ DIGICOMP adaptation for staff and leaders working in universities [here](#)

→ DIGICOMP adaptation for adult learners [here](#)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>DIGICOMP Competence</th>
<th>DIGICOMP foundation level At basic level and with guidance</th>
<th>Proposed learning outcomes for NGO staff and leaders basic level</th>
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| Sharing information and content through digital technologies | I can:  
  - Recognize simple appropriate digital technologies to share data, information and digital content.  
  - Identify simple referencing and attribution practices | I can :  
  - Share files as attachments by email and other asynchronous communication services  
  - I can share folders on the cloud  
  - I can upload self-created content to be shared on websites |

**EXAMPLE OF OPERATIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES ADAPTED TO NGO STAFF AND LEADERS AT BASIC DIGITAL COMPETENCE LEVEL**

3. **Assemble trainings in learning paths, modules and training units**

Possible options are to assemble training in learning paths either by level (basic, intermediate, advanced, expert) and/or by categories (content creation, data security, etc.).

Each learning unit objective has to match with the learning outcomes you just adapted from DIGICOMP. Each learning outcome targeted at your audience’s profile should be covered.

4. **Add skills and content assessment to learning units, modules and learning pathways.**

5. **Validate and Recognize skills development with Open Badges**

Each competence from the adapted digital skills framework should be represented by 1 learning outcome and therefore by 1 Open Badge. Badge acquisition can be limited by a grade system (more information in APPENDIX 3).
QUALITY & CONTENT ONLINE TRAINING ASSESSMENT
QUALITY AND CONTENT ONLINE TRAINING ASSESSMENT

1. Link your assessment with the course objectives

Define the goals of the training: what do you want to achieve as an organizer or trainer and ask participants what their goals are. If your objectives are measurable, it'll be possible to assess the quality of the course or training.

2. Add assessments in every step of the course

One good practice is to create pre-assessment to analyze the knowledge level of the participants before the course. After the course, you can compare these data and assess the course’s quality. Also, if the training or course consists of different parts or topics (ex. theoretical and practical parts) you can analyze each part separately.

3. How to ask questions

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<th>Application</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who, what, when, where, how?</td>
<td>What are the main ideas? Give examples of...</td>
<td>How is... an example of...? How is...related to...? Why is... significant?</td>
<td>What are the part or features of...? Classify according to...</td>
<td>What would you infer or predict from...? What ideas can you add to...? How would you create or design...? What might happen if you...?</td>
<td>Do you agree that...? What do you think about...? Prioritize and give a rationale for...? Decision making: what is your rationale? Criteria for assessing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table provides examples of how to ask questions at different levels of understanding.
4. What can you assess to know if the training quality was high?

The usefulness of the training and the possibilities of its use:
   a. Training methods (discussions, group work, games, tools)
   b. Training facilitation and capacity to engage participants from a distance
   c. Training materials
   d. Usefulness of training’s parts
   e. Achieving the goals of the training

5. What methods can we use to assess training quality and content?
   a. Interviews with participants
   b. Interviews with participants’ teams and organizations
   c. Written, qualitative feedback from participants
   d. Descriptions of competence development prepared by trainers / consultants, based on participants observation.
ASSESSMENT METHODS
STATE OF THE ART
ASSESSMENT METHODS STATE-OF-THE-ART

Formative assessment

A formative assessment can be a question, an activity, or an assignment - that a facilitator does to see if trainees have understood a given learning activity. It helps facilitators to identify and target misunderstandings and adjust future instruction or activities. To verify understanding and acquisition of skills, the trainer can regularly ask each participant to:

● Summarize the essential elements seen during the training;

● Answer questions about the theoretical elements;

● In addition, the facilitator can favour peer-to-peer learning through group discussion: the most advanced participants can explain the pain points to those who might not have understood.

Resources needed for implementation: possibility to break into groups to have peer-to-peer discussions

Overall advantages: relies on 1 person (the facilitator) only

Overall disadvantages: needs to be in real time, and requires the agility to switch from one application (video conference app) to another (whiteboard, quizzes and surveys,), requires a way to give individual feedback and to collect evidence of learning over time.

How can this method be applied to digital trainings, in particular:
✔ online workshops: best suitable for a limited group of people (max 10), best suitable for theoretical learning activities, sequential levels with increasing difficulty

✔ best suitable to evaluate skills or content knowledge that is relatively narrow in scope

Digital Tools:

- **Mentimeter**
  Allows you to use mobile phones or tablets to vote on any question a teacher asks, increasing student engagement.

- **Kahoot!**
  A game-based response system, where trainers can create quizzes using internet content in a fun and interactive way

- **Dotstorming**
  A whiteboard app that allows digital sticky notes to be posted and voted on. This tool is best for generating class discussion and brainstorming on different topics and questions.

- **Educreations Whiteboard**
  A whiteboard app that provides students the tool to share understanding and comprehension

**Summative Assessment**

Description of the method: summative assessments consist in more formal exams at the end of a learning unit or module and often results in grades. It is a final exam or practical skill evaluation at the end of the course

Resources needed for implementation: quizzes for knowledge-based tests and practical exercises for performance-based evaluation (share screen, access to tools like WordPress if the training is about this subject)

Overall advantages: summative assessment is an interesting benchmarking tool that allows comparison between trainees, employees from different organizations and across states. It also can be conducted asynchronously

Overall disadvantages: Summative assessment can be time-consuming for person assessing (correct quizzes, test, look at exercises)

How can this method be applied to digital trainings, in particular:

✔ in highly structured learning programs with national, regional or local oversight

✔ in course programs containing courses of sequential levels with increasing difficulty
Qualitative assessment

**Description of the method:** A quality assessment can be a survey or a questionnaire that the training organization asks the trainees to complete after the training session/cycle to understand trainees reactions after the course. Quality assessment evaluates Level 1 (Reaction) of the training. It helps trainers to measure and improve services, materials, tools, user experience, and contents. The questionnaire mixes quantitative and qualitative parameters to evaluate satisfaction, effectiveness, engagement of the trainee after the course: Scale of reaction/opinion/value; Yes/no for non-measurable elements; multiple choice questions for content/learning evaluation; open questions for general opinion and suggestions (e.g. “describe this webinar with an adjective”). In addition, the trainer can start a discussion with the trainees group (verbal reaction)

**Resources needed for implementation:** online forms/surveys

**Overall advantages:** accessible: quick and very easy to obtain. Clear and simple for the participants. Not expensive to gather or to analyze. Qualitative assessment is very useful for the trainer organization to monitor and improve the quality of training.

**Overall disadvantages:** qualitative assessment doesn’t measure trainee’s learning level. Quantitative parameters don’t clarify the motivation behind given scale values.

**How can this method be applied to digital trainings, in particular:**

✔ webinars, online workshops, small classroom or any other learning format

**Digital Tools:** all of these solutions have free basic accounts and nonprofits prices are available if additional features are needed. Most of the tools are user friendly and are cloud based software, so they do not require any hardware or specific settings on local computers. These surveys are mobile friendly and participants can enter the answers via their mobile devices.

**SurveyMonkey**

With a Basic (free) plan, you can create and send a survey with up to 10 questions or elements (including question types, descriptive text, or images). If you need to upgrade to use a feature, you’ll see a notification in your account.

With a Basic (free) plan you can collect unlimited responses for free, but view either 40 or 100 responses per survey (depending on when you created an account and your billing location). Any responses over your account’s response limits are hidden, and will be deleted 60 days after they’re received.

**JotForm**

JotForm has multiple subscription options, including a free plan. Free users have access to all of the same features as paid users, but with lower limits on form counts, form submissions, form views, upload space and submission storage. To check out the different options, visit their Pricing page. Free “Starter package” for 5 forms, 100 submissions for month
Office 365 – Forms

Office 365 has donation plans available for nonprofits absolutely free. This gives you an opportunity to create online forms, quizzes and polls online via https://forms.office.com/. Answers are stored in a spreadsheet which is useful for additional data visualization and analyzing.

Google Forms

Google forms are widely used to create surveys easily and quickly since they allow you to plan events, ask questions to your employees or clients and collect diverse type of information in a simple and efficient way. Google forms allow us to include different types of questions such as short answers, paragraphs, multiple selection, verification boxes, pull-down, linear scale, grid of several options, among others.

Zoomerang

Zoomerang is similar to SurveyMonkey, but offers in general more powerful package if you choose some of the paid plans. Like SurveyMonkey, there’s a very limited free package; the more useful Pro package is offered to nonprofits as a Premium package that includes more options for surveys, reports and statistical analysis. Zoomerang offers extensive reporting, with a flexible cross-tabulation report tool that lets survey administrators see the data relationships across any set of questions.

SoGoSurvey

SoGoSurvey A Basic account allows 100 email invitations and responses per survey per year and a maximum of 200 email invitations and responses per year. Basic account allows you to create unlimited surveys.

Zoho Survey

With this tool you create surveys that participants can access and take using mobile devices. Results are visible in real time.

ZohoSurvey

Zoho Survey

With this tool you create surveys that participants can access and take using mobile devices. Results are visible in real time.

LimeSurvey

This is a powerful, free and open source survey package appropriate for nonprofits looking for advanced survey logic and analysis features and who have substantial technology support. Its range of features includes full customization of survey look and feel, support for 40 different languages, piping, skip logic, a library of available survey questions and blast emailing. The tool has a large support community and is under active development. This is an open source package that can be downloaded for free, installed on your own web server, and customized to your needs by a developer with knowledge of PHP/MySQL. Although the tool itself is free, be prepared to bear the costs for your own web hosting, and the time it takes to properly install, configure, customize and support this product on your own.

Self-assessment questions

Description of the method: A self-assessment can help trainees to self-evaluate his training experience at Level 2 (Learning): knowledge, ability, and attitude. It can be a short video self interview, a concept board with visual and textual inputs or a video questionnaire on learning topics/objectives after the training.
Resources needed for implementation: online tools for video and visual interviews

Overall advantages: Relatively simple to set up; clear-cut for quantifiable skills.

Overall disadvantages: Less easy for complex learning

How can this method be applied to digital training: online workshops or online small classroom or every learning format focused on various learning objectives.

Digital Tools:

- **Animoto**
  Free online tool that gives participants the possibility to make a short, 30-second video about their knowledge.

- **Conceptboard**
  This software facilitates team collaboration in a visual format, similar to mind mapping, but using visual and textual inputs. There is a free subscription with some limitations.

- **Flipgrid**
  This online tool lets participants use 15-second to 5-minute videos to respond to prompts. Trainers and peers can provide feedback.

**Performance-based evaluation**

Description of the method: A performance-based assessment evaluates the learning experience at Level 3 (Behavior): it measures the effective use of knowledge, ability and attitude that determines personal development in the trainee. It can be a follow-up questionnaire (quantitative scale) after 3/6 months about the transferability of the competences in the trainee's professional environment. It can also be a direct observation/evaluation of projects developed by the trainees.

Resources needed for implementation: online forms/quiz, tests or written feedback, descriptions of competence development prepared by trainers / consultants, based on the observations of participants

Overall advantages: Focus on learning objectives

Overall disadvantages: It requires long term engagement.

Digital Tools: Online quizzes are the best tool for this type of evaluation. Here are some of free online solutions that can be used:

- **ClassMarker**
  One of the most popular quiz software, easy to set up and use. Free nonprofit plan includes 100 Credits per month, it is approximately 1,200 tests graded per year.

- **Typeform**
  This solution allows you to create user friendly quizzes with great design options. The No time limit plan includes 100 responses a month included. Allows integration with 3rd party software such as MailChimp, Slack etc.

- **GoSoapBox**
  Free for less than 30 participants, this all-participants response system works with the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) model, so no charge for a clicker. One of the most intriguing features is the Confusion Meter.
Knowledge-based tests: Pre-assessment and post training assessment

Description of the method: Pre-assessment and post training assessment evaluate the knowledge level of the participants at Level 2 (Learning): knowledge, ability, attitude, before, during and after the course. These assessments are useful tools in order to personalize learning activities based on participants' access levels and to assess the course quality: by comparing the results for each learning step (before the course, after every part/topic, at the end of the course), it is possible to evaluate the effectiveness of learning activities.

Knowledge-based evaluations assess different levels of knowledge, both theoretical and practical:

- Knowledge or remembering
- Comprehension
- Application
- Analysis
- Synthesis

Resources needed for implementation: questions, test, interviews, and written feedback

Overall advantages: Focus on learning steps and topics. Objective evaluation when there are measurable parameters/skills

Overall disadvantages: Highly time consuming for the organization to be focused on specific learning steps, to be administered to participants at the right time, to be evaluated

Digital Tools: *same tools as performance-based test

Peer-to-peer evaluation

Description of the method: Peer-to-peer evaluation consists in evaluating or acknowledging a specific work, project, or professional experience of another trainee.

Types of evaluation:

- Giving “grades” to peers. The student's final grade reflects the average of all his assessments in order to harmonize the result. This needs to be completed with qualitative feedback
- Giving qualitative feedback to peers that will help each one to collect different points of view as regards a specific work, project or professional experience.

This method is based on the collective intelligence of the peers. No “standard” correction exists.

Resources needed for implementation: a Peer-to-peer guide for trainees that explains how they can give constructive feedback and how they can relate this feedback from the training content.

A trainer/evaluator that will spend time to:

- Assign homework/practical work for the trainee following a training. For instance: imagining a role-play and a specific work situation, asking trainees how they would solve a problem, or defining a certain concept following the reading of articles.
- encourage trainees to give feedback, relate them to the content of the training, and take this feedback positively to move forward
Overall advantages: The idea is to favour interaction among trainees, give and receive feedback and advice to improve one’s work.

Digital Tools: Peer-to-peer evaluation if it creates a basis of discussion within peers that will encourage each trainee to defend their point of view and the solutions put in place for their work, project or experience.

Collection of open badges can be conditioned to peer-to-peer evaluation (from “I have been evaluated by a peer” to “I have an average grade of more than 6/10 on a specific work, project or experience”.

Overall disadvantages: The person evaluating must react impartially and quickly assimilate the projects presented to them.

Digital Tools: There are many available tools for peer to peer evaluations available online.

Teams
Available for free online download with unlimited chat messages and search. Built-in online meetings and audio and video calling for individuals and groups, with a duration of up to 24 hours per meeting or call. Allows users screen and file sharing. Office 365 is available through the donation program for validated nonprofits. Enables recording meetings.

Zoom
- Free account available, host up to 100 participants, 40-minute maximum group meetings and unlimited 1:1 meetings. Allows screen and file sharing. Enables recording meetings.

Google Hangouts
- One of the more reliable free online communication software allowing users to hold high-quality Google video conference calls with up to 10 attendees, and audio conference with up to 150 participants for free.

Skype
- One of the most used and free online communication software, it is an excellent tool for both audio and video chat in real-time without consuming too much data.

Viber
- Free online communication tool, you can share videos, files, messages, pictures and voice recordings.

WhatsApp
- Free online communication tool you can share videos, files, messages, pictures and voice recordings.
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<td>ClassMarker, Mentimeter, Google Hangouts, JotForm, SurveyMonkey, etc.</td>
<td>*same tool as performance-based test</td>
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*Diagram of digital tools is included.*
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DONALD KIRKPATRICK, KIRKPATRICK EVALUATION METHOD, AVAILABLE FORM:
APPENDIX
Survey example from Mobility Erasmus+ Project 2019 in Warsaw

Pre training assessment:
1. What is your level of knowledge in the areas (before after training)?

*Please rate 1 to 5 where 5 is the highest:*

- Marketing & PR
- Social Media Marketing
- Digital Content Creation
- Video creating and editing
- Email marketing
- SEM & SEO
- Crowdfunding
- Co-operation and task management

2. What takeaways would you expect from this training?

3. What would you like to avoid during training?

Post training assessment:
1. What is your level of knowledge in the areas (after training)?

*Please rate 1 to 5 where 5 is the highest*

- Marketing & PR
- Social Media Marketing
- Digital Content Creation
- Video creating and editing
- Email marketing
- SEM & SEO
- Crowdfunding
- Co-operation and task management

2. What are your main takeaways from this training?

3. Which content of the workshop was THE LEAST useful to you?

4. What do you think was missing?

5. How strongly you agree with sentence: Training met my expectations and needs (from 1 to 5)
6. How do you estimate strong points of the trainers?

7. How do you estimate the content of each day?

8. How do you think you can implement the knowledge in your activities?

9. What else would you need to implement this knowledge in your activities / organizations?

Post-training self-assessment
Interview with Sebastien Dauvet on how to link skills framework with assessment method

Sebastien Dauvet is a sociologist at Article 1, a French NGO that offers orientation assistance, methodological support, knowledge of sectors and professions, networks, international opportunities to young students from working-class backgrounds. With Article 1, Sebastien Dauvet helped launch a digital platform “Jobready” to certify and recognize young students’ soft skills.

How did you create the softskills framework?

The skills framework used by Jobready is derived from the European academic work Elene4Work. Then, the Jobready research team detailed it by translating it into a set of 45 competences organized into 11 families with the help of HR managers and employers.

This framework was set up so that Tech For Good companies, universities and young beneficiaries can speak the same language about soft skills.

How is the framework linked with Open Badges?

In our system, 1 Open Badge was created for each of the 45 competences. Levels in Open Badges were also added (beginner, advanced, experts) and evaluated with a 360° assessment:

- qualitative self assessment: beneficiary has to answer questions regarding his/her professional and/or personal experience enabling soft skills identification
- peer-to-peer evaluation: beneficiary has to identify and enter the contact of one manager, colleague, peer who will have to confirm the soft skill acquisition.

Experiences filled in are weighted according to their duration by a grade system: the higher the score, the higher the Open Badge level is.

How many human resources was necessary to launch Jobready?

The project was launched 3 years ago and the digital platform was published in March 2019. 5 people worked on this project during this period:

- 1 HR expert
- 1 sociologist researcher
- 1 project manager
- 1 educational engineer
- 1 partnership manager