

E-Learning Platform

Student's Guide

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1. EPU Platform

EPU Platform is developed focusing on the use of new technologies for digital natives who preferably use personal computers, i-Pads, tablets and smartphones; for professional figures who need to improve their cultural level through independent studying completely separated from the standard program schedule; for those who live in isolated regions or who are disabled and are unable to attend courses on site.

Intelligence, independence and *interactivity* are the basic criteria that characterise the Institution's identity and the overall profile of its educational proposal.

Owing to its capacity to respond in a flexible and effective manner to the students' needs, EPU identifies its students' professional goals and guides them dynamically to the educational goals of the proposed study courses.

Teaching is entrusted to expert lecturers with excellent scientific competences and a secure knowledge of the relevant professional sectors. These are supported by specialised teaching assistants such as Tutors, Mentors and Coaches who assist the student throughout the study course, to ensure the best possible learning results and, at the same time, enhancing each and everyone's personal resources.

Highly technological and interactive tools involve the student in a learning experience that is truly unique and effective.

1.1 How to study

Students access the lessons in their curriculum one academic year at a time. After having requested the activation of the course, the student will find the lessons prepared by his teacher in his workspace, and more precisely:

- a. A number of lessons written as hypertext and therefore with sensitive (clickable) words that refer to supplementary pages that should be studied. These pages may consist of more detailed content, explanatory glossaries author profiles, etc. according to the specifics of each subject. The hypertext structure allows the student to refer to this detailed content during any part of the programme and extends the material that the teacher has prepared for the student while making it more enjoyable.
- b. A number of learning aids in the form of Powerpoint presentations.
- c. A number of video lessons whereby the student can follow recorded (audio-visual) lessons. The learning direction links the video lessons to the Powerpoint teaching aids.



d. A series of exercises provided with each lesson to assess learning. The exercises refer to all learning material (and therefore also the supplementary pages). The exercises are presented immediately after each lesson and can be auto-corrected. These exercises must be done in order to proceed to the next lesson.

All the material referred to in a, b, c, and d is part of the so-called lectures and is more or less vast according to the number of credits attributed to the relevant subject. When the student accesses the first lesson of a particular subject, they are automatically registered in a class to engage in the educational activities of that class or even of single student groups within a particular class. Each class is identified by initials followed by the year of enrolment in that class.

Apart from lectures, each student also benefits from interactive learning. Interactive learning is organised for groups that belong to the same class. It could include:

- 1. Guided exercises (both synchronous and asynchronous)
- 2. Educational video conferences
- 3. Discussions based on requests from the students themselves
- 4. Comments and discussions on the supplementary parts of the hypertext
- 5. Explanations of problem areas of the subject covered
- 6. Topics from the FAQ
- 7. Clarifications and in-depth analysis
- 8. Formative assessments
- 9. Other

The following are also included with interactive learning:

- Access to and participation in Blogs dedicated to the topics studied in the course
- Participation in learning support circuits
- Feedback
- Simulation of exercises
- Other

In order to participate in interactive learning, students must have the code of the class they belong to. In some cases, they must indicate their choice of a subgroup among those envisaged by the Lecturer and, above all, they must familiarise themselves with some of the tools in the platform, first and foremost among these are the Video Lessons, the Forum, Documents, Notifications, and Video Conference. At the same time, after taking note of the number of students in the class, the Lecturer must decide whether to divide it into sub-groups, and also the formation criteria of these sub-groups.

A clarification: what are the formative assessment activities mentioned in point 8 above?



A lecturer or a team of lecturers (including some tutors) propose a series of educational activities which explain some topics and which are open to potential development through research. These activities, which are designed according to transversal field lines, intersect multiple disciplines simultaneously and are linked, more than to subject knowledge, to the practicing the profession of reference.

They serve to present the student, who has already embarked on theoretical study, with the commitments, the tasks and the responsibilities of the professional practice and promote critical reflection and self-evaluation. In other words, they help to understanding up to what point one is "equipped" to carry out a professional task. It follows that the assessment linked to this type of experience is not intended to quantify benefits, but to determine awareness. It is for this reason that we speak of formative assessment.

In any case, these activities also have an exploratory value and can open pathways to indepth analysis, to which the teaching team will refer to draw up lists of possible dissertation subjects.

Thus, plagiarism can be avoided in the dissertation (and therefore in the final exam) which is actually a continuation of the educational work carried out with the resources supplied by the platform.

1.2 Tracking

Both the students' and the teaching staff's platform use is tracked. Tracking data is strictly reserved. It allows to generate some important reports, among which, first and foremost, are the following:

- a) in relation to the student, a dynamic profile about successful learning and therefore also a list of critical issues for which official proposals for integrative and compensating learning segments can be made;
- b) in relation to the teaching staff, the automatic completion of the learning register envisaged by the ministerial regulations in force.



2. Access to the Platform

All the tools that are available to students on the e-learning platform will be presented and analysed below. Before going into the analysis, we will first see how the user can access it. The access criteria which are received on enrolment in the form of a username and password must be entered into the relevant fields on the home page of the Institution's http://www.epubg.eu/ (figure 2.1; 2.2)



Figure 2.1: Access to study areas



Figure 2.2: Access to study areas

2.1 Home Page

Once the credentials are entered, the student will access his personal profile. Upon first access, where required, the student must complete the entrance exam for the degree course and accept the study plan proposed by EPU.

The entry test is a general knowledge test used to assess the entry level of the students. The student must complete and send the test within an hour. The study plan represents the official career document of each student.

From here, the student will be able to see which exams he has to sit for each year, starting from the year of enrolment. On first logging in, he will have to accept the plan and choose which exams he wants to sit for in the student's course selection section.

The home section (figure 2.3) contains general information linked to the latest news about the Institution, news highlights, innovative tools and social networks. From here it is also possible to



keep one's university career and administrative accounting situation under control. It is possible to submit the final test, pay the tuition fees online and purchase services offered by EPU. Finally, it is possible to access the tracking of the educational activities carried out on the platform. Let us take a look at everything in detail.

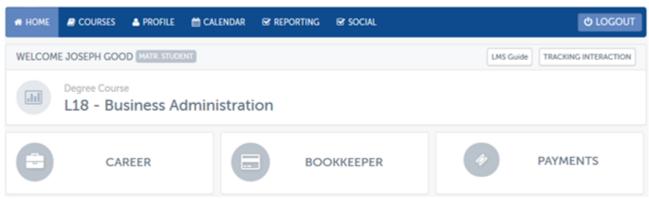


Figure 2.3: Student's home page

2.1.1 Career

In the *Career* section the student can control the progress of his university career at any moment. Useful information, such as average grades, final grade, rounded final grade, exams taken, university credits (ECTS) earned and remaining university credits (ECTS) will always be available.

2.1.2 Administrative accounting

In the Administrative accounting section, you can keep track of payments and ensure, at any moment, that you have paid what is owed or, alternatively, know what needs to be paid and by when.

2.1.3 Payments

In the Payments area you can find all the information about payments.

2.1.4 Interaction tracking and LMS guide

From the home section, it is also possible to check and download the list of all interactions with the platform, by clicking on the button "tracking interaction" (figure 2.4). It is also possible to consult the platform use guide at any time by clicking on "LMS Guide" (figure 2.5).

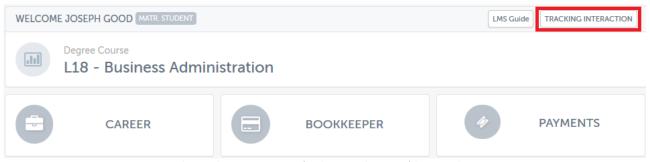


Figure 2.4: Access to the *interaction tracking* section



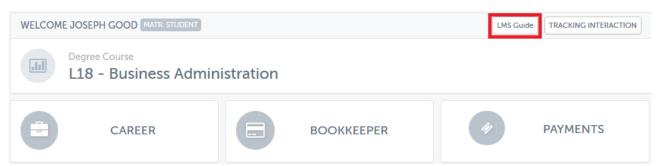


Figure 2.5: Access to the platform use guide

In the interaction tracking section it is possible to check every single access to the platform's tools simply by selecting the day in question. All accesses will be shown to the student.

2.2 Access to the course

The courses section allows access to the lessons to which the student is enrolled (figure 2.6).



Figure 2.6: Course section

It is also possible to organise courses according to personalised categories and, lastly, to view the exam agenda, a summary of the entire exam sessions envisaged for courses of interest.

You can access a single course by clicking on the course name. Inside the course home page (figure 2.7) the student will have a number of tools available which he can use to complete the exam.



Figure 2.7: Course home page

In the following chapter we will analyse all the sections within a single course. The objectives and the method of use of each section will be made clear.

2.3 Profile

The *Profile* section (figure 2.8) allows the student to personalise his personal profile.



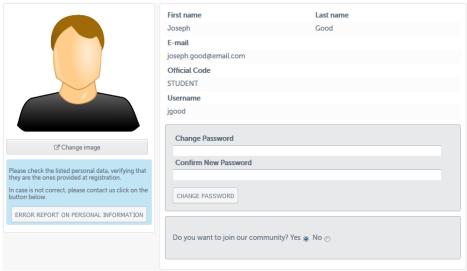


Figure 2.8: Personal profile

Personal information such as profile photos and passwords can be edited from here. It is also possible to send an error message in case of incorrect data.

2.4 Diary

The *Diary* section summarises the upcoming events that are of interest to the student in the form of a calendar (figure 2.9).

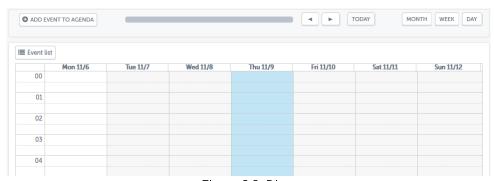


Figure 2.9: Diary

2.5 Register

The Register section summarises the student's situation on the platform. Activities are also checked within the course tools to allow the student, to know how the learning activities are proceeding at any time.





Figure 2.10: Register

2.6 Library

The Library section allows access to the pages dedicated to the Institution's library. The archive provides lecturers, students and tutors with information about the publications of lecturers and researchers of the EPU.

In the *Consultation room* section, you can consult the complete archives of the publications by the Institution's lecturers and researchers. The data entered can be consulted by everyone. The aim is to promote the expertise and the scientific results obtained by EPU in various fields.

Finally, in the Support section, it is possible to make use of a series of published texts written by the lecturers and divided into two sections: e-Humanistic and e-Legal. All the published material can be freely accessed and downloaded by students.

2.7 Chat

In the chat section you can start an interactive live session with all connected users.

2.8 Social

The *Social* section (figure 2.11) is a very useful interactive tool that allows lecturers and students to communicate even outside the course they belong to.



Figure 2.11: Social

Once inside Community the lecturer will see his profile before he can access messages. By clicking on the "messages" icon you can access the platform email.



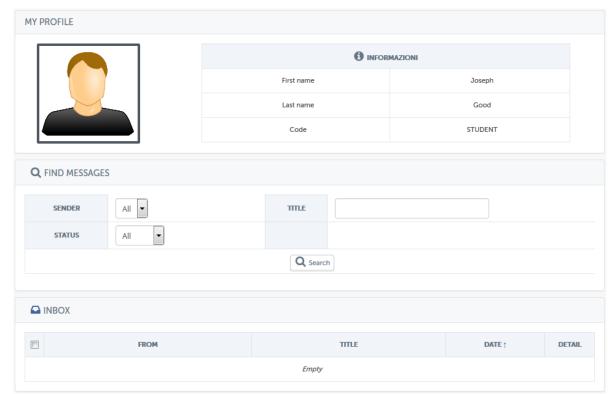


Figure 2.32: Community home page, messaging button

From this screen the student is able to explore his mail box within the platform. In particular, he can search through received messages and filter them by course, title and status (*all, read, unread*).

After having made a search, the student can delete a message or reply, using the icons under "actions". Clicking on the green arrow icon gives access to the area reserved for the reply to a message.

In exactly the same way as for the received messages, by clicking on the icon "outgoing", it is possible to see all sent messages.

Exactly in the same way as for incoming messages, it is possible to search or delete them from the list. From the home screen it is also possible to write a message to any user on the platform by clicking the icon "compose a message".

To find the recipient, you can use the "Select a Recipient" function. This function makes it possible to find a recipient by entering the name and surname and searching through all the courses or, alternatively, only in the course where they are enrolled.



3. Inside the e-learning platform

Now let us have a detailed look at all the single sections within every course. We will analyse their functions and understand the aim and the use of each one.

After a detailed analysis of all the above, we shall proceed to an explanation of the tool whereby the student reserves exams.

3.1 Description

The *Description* section includes the basic information regarding a specific course. In this section the student will find the learning objectives, the resources, the assessment methods and any other information that the lecturer thinks he should supply.

3.2 Documents

We start our exploration of the sections dedicated to the content that is to be studied with the Documents section.

In this section (figure 3.1) the lecturer can include any material which provides further details on the video lessons, and which can be retrieved from a specific link in the text of the lessons to be studied.

The material proposed in this section is considered to be exam material, unless the lecturer (very rarely) indicates, by means of a note at the top of the document, that the proposed passage is an explanatory document, to be read but not to be studied formally.

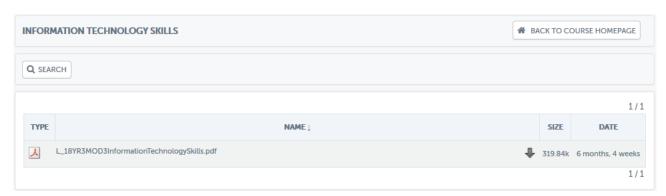


Figure 3.1: Documents section

Documents can be grouped in folders to provide more clarity. When the student clicks on the folder's name, it will open and give access to all the documents inside. It is possible to view, save or, eventually, print the pdf files directly on the platform.

3.3 Links

The Links section, like the Documents section, contains in-depth material for lessons. In this section, the lecturer or tutor can upload links to material that is external to the platform, therefore making it material that provides greater detail or possibly even exam material. Access by the student



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to external material is regularly tracked through access to the relevant tool.

3.4 Notes

In this section the student can keep track of the progress of his studies by noting down any information he considers useful, adding also the date and place of the note. Once the note is saved, it will appear in the column to the left. When it is opened, the text will appear in the centre.

3.5 Wiki

The Wiki section allows lecturers, tutors and students to collaborate to form a real virtual encyclopaedia about the course contents. Just as on Wikipedia's collaborative encyclopaedia (www.wikipedia.org), it is possible to insert content, interconnect it and create an information web, obviously under the supervision of the course tutors and lecturers. The pages available to students are listed in the section "all pages". Clicking on each page gives access to and allows you to explore the contents and possibly modify them by using the commands at the top of the page. In this way, it is possible to put into practice the concept of collaborative learning, one of the key principles on which e-learning is based.

3.6 Modules: video lessons

The Video Lessons section represents the true essence of EPU education. In this section, all the educational content recorded by the teacher is made available to the user and can be viewed at any time. Where the courses are presented in modules, video lessons are divided into folders.



Figure 3.2: Video Lessons section: division into folders

By clicking on the title of each individual folder, you will have access to the individual video lessons that make up the module.



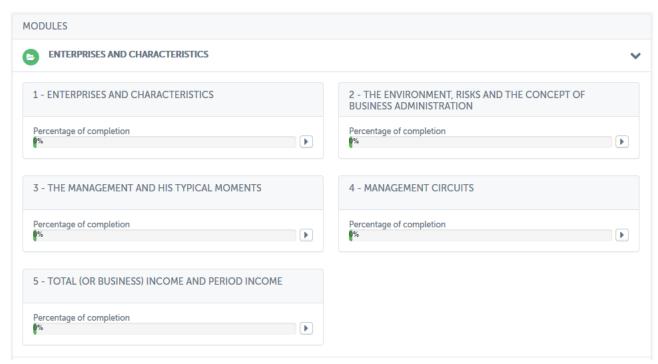


Figure 3.3: Video Lessons section: inside a folder

If there is no modular structure the student will have direct access to the list of the video lessons.

The displayed screen allows the student to have immediate feedback on what he has seen and what he still needs to see. In fact, the progress percentage for each individual lesson shows that the lessons are still at 0%. When the lesson is opened and the student has seen the remaining parts, the percentage will go up to 100% to indicate completion of the lesson in question.

We will now look at a lesson and explore the different sections that make it up. The starting point is always a screen showing the aims and objectives of the lesson (figure 3.4).

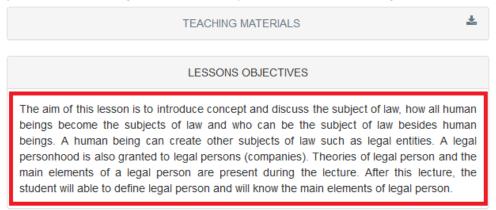


Figure 3.4: Video Lessons section: video lesson introductory screen

In the introductory screen (figure 3.4) you can read the objectives of the lesson, the lecturer's name, the title of the lesson and, above all, you can download the lesson in pdf format by clicking on



the button to the right (figure 3.5). To move forward in the lesson to see all the paragraphs that make it up, click on the button at the top right to display the menu with all the paragraphs in the lesson.

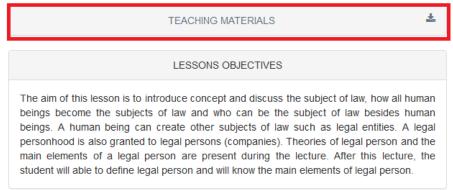


Figure 3.5: Video Lessons section: teaching materials

Graphically, by observing the checkmarks next to paragraph titles, you can already see which paragraph is not displayed. In fact, next to the title, there is a red mark. The paragraphs already viewed have a green checkmark. By clicking on the title of the paragraph in the menu, you can access the video in which the lecturer explains the subject in question (figure 3.6). The explanation will include moments when the lecturer explains the subject to the class and moments when the lecturer's voice-over commentary accompanies a slide prepared by the lecturer himself.



Figure 3.6: Video Lessons section: screen related to a paragraph, lecturer's explanation

In order for the system to change the paragraph checkmark in the menu from red to green, it is necessary to view the paragraph until the end. The student can go backwards or forwards thanks to the scroll bar under the video, but the system will memorise the video as "seen" only if it is viewed completely. To go from one paragraph to another you need to go back to the menu on the top left and click on the title of the paragraph you intend to watch. Alternatively, in order to move between the following and previous paragraphs in relation to the one that has been opened, you can use the



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arrows next to the menu.

Where provided, the lesson's last paragraph will consist of a self-assessment test (figure 3.7) that allows the student to test whether he has understood the topics discussed in the video or needs a repeat.

Self-assessment test						
1 The bar at the top of the screen showing the name of the spreadsheet currently in use is:						
a	The title bar	0				
b	The menu bar	0				
С	The calculator bar	0				
d	The formatting bar	0				
2 If the spreadsheet is just created, its name will be:						
a	Unnamed X, where X is a letter	•				
b	Unnamed X, where X is a number-letter combination	0				
С	Unnamed X, where X is a set of two numbers	0				
d	Unnamed X, where X is a number	0				

Figure 3.7: Vide lessons section: self-assessment evaluation test

The test is made up of ten multiple choice questions (or less, if the lecturer considers these enough). Each question has four answer options of which only one is correct. To give an answer, all you have to do is to check the box next to the answer chosen. To move from one question to another, just click on the numbers and the arrows at the bottom. When you get to the last question, a "get your assessment" button will appear. By clicking on this button, you will be able to view your test results and assess the validity of the answers given.

The test result will tell the student what he did right and what he did wrong and, in case of a wrong answer, will also advise him on which paragraph to repeat (figure 3.8).



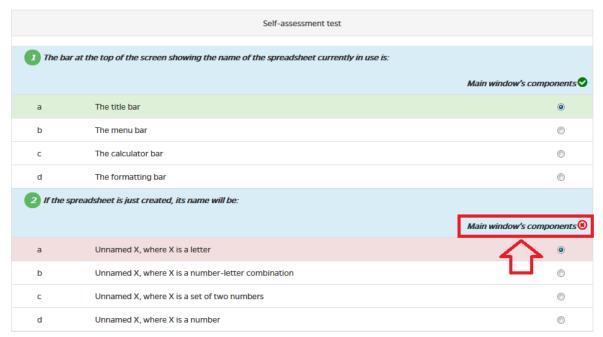


Figure 3.8: Video Lessons section: self-assessment test, test result

The "try to take the test again" button allows the student to take the test an unlimited number of times. The self-assessment test is not an evaluation for exam purposes, but should be considered as a self-learning tool for the student.

The bibliography is available both at the end of each lesson and at the bottom of each worksheet.

In some cases, there are also suggestions for possible further personal reading or links to web pages whose reliability is guaranteed by the lecturer of the particular subject.

3.7 Preparation Test

The Preparation Test section provides the student with a test of 30 questions taken from the contents of the complete course.

Thanks to the preparation test, it is possible to practise multiple choice tests. Each test consists of 30 questions with 4 possible answers each. The test lasts 30 minutes and 16 questions out of 30 have to be answered correctly in order to get a pass.

To start the test, just click the "run" button. Once you enter you will find 30 selected questions. Every question needs to be answered before the system allows you to move to the next one. After doing the test, the student will know immediately if he has passed or not.

In both cases, by clicking where indicated, you can view the question details and understand which questions were answered correctly and which were not.

Tests can be repeated as many times as the student considers appropriate, since they have a self- assessment purpose.



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3.8 Exams

Where provided, the Exams section is very important to access exams. In this section the lecturer submits exercises and invites the student to do them.

Once in the exams section, you can select the area for the test you want to take. Then a list of the tests submitted by the teacher with the date set for delivery is shown. To access the exam, just click on its title. Once inside, you will find yourself on the screen that presents the set of exercises available for each test.

To submit the exam, you must first use the "UPLOAD A DOCUMENT" feature. The file to be uploaded must contain the answers to the exercise/exercises proposed by the lecturer. Multiple files with answers for the same test cannot be submitted. The submitted file must be in PDF format, as files of a different format are not accepted by the system.

To proceed with the submission of the test, the student must select the test chosen from the drop-down menu under the heading "Exam Title". At this point, he will be asked to select the track and the exam he intends to do.

Once he has submitted the exam, the student will see the screen from where he can see that he has correctly submitted the exam and wait for the lecturer to correct it.

After the lecturer has corrected the exam, the student can see the result and the mark. He will know that the exam has been corrected through the symbol under to the "corrected" column.

The student can pass or fail the exam. The result will appear in the test details.

In the case where the student did not pass the test, he is allowed to do another test chosen from the remaining tracks proposed by the lecturer. Each track envisages a maximum number of users who can do it, according to the total number of users divided by the number of tests available. Tests may be submitted within the terms of EPU Regulations in order to be able to reserve the exam session.

3.9 Multimedia

The Multimedia section is dedicated to the exchange and sharing of any type of multimedia content between lecturers and students.

For example, the student will be able to view images, photographs, videos, animations, and conceptual maps. He will also be able to benefit from audio content and lesson podcasts.

3.10 Glossary

The Glossary section provides a set of definitions compiled by tutors and lecturers for the student. It is a very useful tool for understanding the concepts tackled in the course lessons.

3.11 Notifications

In the Notifications section important information will be published for each course. Students will be referred to this section for any kind of communication. Students are therefore strongly advised to consult this section from time to time.



3.12 Forum

The course forum is a very important interactive tool for lecturers, tutors and students. In this section one can participate in discussions proposed about study topics or a more detailed analysis of topics.

It is possible to intervene in the discussions proposed by the lecturer and to ask for any kind of clarification. In every course there are active thematic and class forums, to give each student the opportunity to make the best use of the tool. Each user can choose whether or not to receive email notifications, simply by ticking the red "envelope" icon. If the icon is green, the user will receive a notification in the email registered in the platform account each time a new message is posted in the forum.

The lecturer and the student have two possibilities of interaction within the forum: they can answer a single post, or intervene in the discussion. In the first case, by clicking the "reply" button, it is possible to reply to the post individually and the answer will immediately appear under the post.

Instead, in the second case, students and lecturer can continue the discussion by adding a post that will be added at the bottom. To do this all one has to do is to click on the icon on the bottom right. At this point, a post will appear at the bottom of the discussion which is not to be considered a reply to a specific comment.

3.13 Video conference

The Video conference tool allows the lecturer to integrate the educational contents uploaded with more in-depth study and meetings that simulate an on-site lesson.

On entering the Video conference section, the student immediately sees which meetings are scheduled and he can choose to reserve a place in one or more of these.

By clicking the button "go to the video conference" the student will have access to the video conference.

Inside the virtual classroom, that is accessed by clicking on the classroom created by the lecturer, the student will see the lecturer and can listen to the video conference.

3.14 Video chat

The Video chat section, in addition to what is already provided by the Video conference, allows the student to initiate a conversation with other users of his course and with the lecturer at the same time. If the user has a webcam, it is also possible to start a one-to-one video chat.



4. Exam Reservation

The section dedicated to the exam sessions allows the student to be always updated on all exam sessions and to reserve those he is interested in. The section is immediately accessible from the home page of each course through the buttons beneath "Exam dates and reservation".

Let us now examine the menu's options one by one.

4.1 Sessions

Clicking on sessions will give access to the list of the exam sessions available for the course in question.

It is possible to view the date, the venue, and the opening and closing of reservations for each session that is present in the list. This way, the student can choose the session that is most suitable for him as regards to both date and venue. For each session, he will know right away the opening and closing dates for reservations.

4.2 Reserve

By clicking on reserve, you will have access to the list of sessions that you can reserve.

To reserve an exam, one simply has to click on the "reserve" button. The system will then control all the student's educational requirements and only if he has satisfied them all, he can proceed with the reservation.

When lacking one requirement or more for the reservation, the student can still ask the lecturer to allow him to sit for the exam. Such a request will be evaluated at the discretion of the administration or the course lecturer.

Before proceeding with the reservation, the student can check whether he has carried out the educational activities required through the tools that are accessible via the buttons at the top. By clicking on "view percentage" he will see if he has completed the educational activities required by the course.

By clicking on "test percentage" he will be able to see if he has completed the self-evaluation tests, where these were required.

In our specific case, the student has done 100% of the required tests. The details also show how many he passed and how many he failed.

By clicking on the "AVA teaching record" he will be able to see the course assessment record and may proceed to compile and submit it.

4.3 Exam notifications and procedures

By clicking on the "exam notifications and procedures" button, the student will have access to the Notifications section dedicated to the exam sessions. The opening and closing reservation dates and the lists of the students who will be sitting for each exam are published in this section. The exam procedure will also be specified.



4.4 Reservations history

By clicking on the "reservations history" button, the student will see a list of the reservations he has made. From here, he will be able to see the reservation details, print the reservation receipt, with the clause that after printing he will not be allowed to cancel the session, and, finally, he can cancel the reservation by, and not later than, the closing date stipulated by the session.



5. Minimum requirements for platform use

5.1 Software specifics

The platform offers maximum compatibility with both fixed and mobile systems. The video lessons follow the HTML5 standard.

For optimal viewing of video content, a browser with the following characteristics is therefore recommended (among the most used):

	(3)			0	C
Explorer	Firefox	Safari	Chrome	Opera	Edge
9.0+	3.5+	4.0+	5.0+	10.5+	all

The platform is fully compatible, in terms of structure, layout and graphic organization, with mobile devices, such as tablets and smartphones.

Continuous testing has been carried out on Android and Apple platforms, as regards mobile devices, on Windows, Unix and Apple systems as regards fixed devices.

The versions under examination were, specifically:

- Android 5 and later, with native browser, Firefox and Chrome
- iOS 8 and later with Safari and Chrome
- Internet Exlorer 9.0+
- Mozilla Firefox 3.5+
- Safari 4.0+
- Google Chrome 5.0+
- Opera 10.5+
- Microsoft Edge all versions

As far as video streaming is concerned, it is guaranteed thanks to the consolidated compatibility of the mp4 format with all the major web browsers in circulation.

5.2 Hardware specifics

For optimal use of the platform we recommend using a latest generation system with at least 2 GB of RAM and a good performance video card.



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It is strongly recommended that you have a high-speed Internet connection that guarantees a download speed of at least 2 MB per second.

