









Digital Learning Job Profiles

e-Jobs-Observatory.eu

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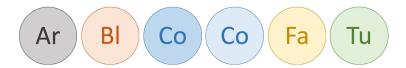
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Digital learning role profiles

An introduction



What is digital learning?

Digital learning is a term that describes the application of computer hardware and software, and computer networks such as the Internet, to any aspect of teaching and learning. Digital learning frees the learner from the constraints of time and space, providing access to billions of fellow learners and practically limitless educational content. The term 'digital learning' is equivalent in most respects to terms such as 'virtual learning', 'online learning' and 'e-learning'.

E-learning has the potential to dramatically reduce the costs of vocational learning as well as providing access to learning for many more people across the EU and the rest of the world; this at a time when economic success is so closely tied to the knowledge and skills of working people.

Forms of digital learning

Digital learning, within the context of vocational education and training, comes in many varieties:

- Interactive, self-study lessons delivered online, and taking various forms including tutorials, practice drills, scenarios, games and simulations. This is the form of digital learning that is perhaps most familiar in a corporate context and is often referred to in this context as e-learning.
- Non-interactive digital content, including videos, podcasts, web articles, infographics, slide shows, software demonstrations, PDF files, e-books and so on.
- Live online sessions delivering a virtual classroom experience with the aid of web conferencing software. Sessions that cater for larger numbers of participants are typically called 'webinars'.
- Distance learning courses, which may make use of the content and live sessions described above, but also allow for on-going collaboration between students and with tutors. These courses may be entirely online or blended to include face-to-face elements. Although most of these courses are relatively small, we are now a rapid expansion in MOOCS (massive open online courses) that may include tens of thousands of students.
- Performance support systems, which provide employees with just-in-time access to the information they need to carry out their jobs. These systems are particularly useful when they are made available on mobile devices.
- Informal learning, outside the scope of formal courses, using tools such as social networks, wikis, blogs, search engines, video content libraries and so on.

Clearly these varieties of digital learning can be applied independently or together in many ways, depending on the context. Similarly, the roles undertaken by professionals working with learning technologies can be combined in all sorts of ways.





The e-Virtue project

The e-Virtue project was established to help make sure we have the skills available in Europe to take advantage of the opportunities provided by learning technologies. E-Virtue aims to identify the competences and skills required to fulfil various roles in digital learning, not just by full-time specialists but all learning professionals. The role profiles identified by the project have been mapped to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the European e-Competences Framework (e-CF). Furthermore, e-Virtue has developed a set of training guidelines, including a catalogue of learning outcomes.

The role profiles and training guidelines will help to boost the employability of digital learning professionals, reducing the mismatches between labour demand and supply and enhancing the mobility of workers.

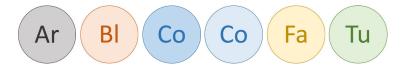
A note on role profiles and job descriptions

In reviewing and using these profiles, it is very important to understand the distinction we make between role profiles and job descriptions:

- *Role profiles* describe a particular area of responsibility.
- *Job descriptions* describe all the responsibilities relating to a particular job position.

It is possible for a role profile to require a person's full-time attention, a very typical example being the specialist digital learning content developer. In this case the role profile and job description are essentially equivalent. However, more often than not, a person will undertake several roles, one or more of which may be described in this document.

The six digital learning role profiles



In the course of the e-Virtue project, we have identified six roles, which we believe best describe the sorts of tasks that learning professionals have to undertake to take advantage of learning technologies. Remember these are role profiles not job descriptions – only in some cases will they be carried out by anyone on a full-time basis. There will be many times when several of these roles are combined into a one job position, often in conjunction with all sorts of roles that are not connected with learning technology.



Architecting a digital learning strategy: this role is responsible for the development and implementation of an organisation's longer-term strategy for the use of learning technologies.



Designing blended learning solutions: this role is responsible for the top-level design of an overall learning intervention, whether or not the decision is ultimately taken to include a digital learning element.



Developing digital learning content (specialist): this specialist role is responsible for designing and/or developing more sophisticated forms of digital learning content, particularly those that are mediarich or highly interactive.



Developing digital learning content (non-specialist): this role is responsible for designing and developing simpler forms of digital content as needed to support the job holder's own teaching and training.



Facilitating virtual classroom sessions: this role is responsible for the delivery of real-time, online sessions making use of web conferencing software.

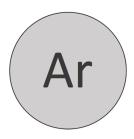


Online tutoring: this role is responsible for the successful delivery of, and support for students engaged in, extended online and blended programmes.

The profiles in one paragraph

The first task of an organisation is to architect the digital learning strategy, establishing the right policies, infrastructure and skills. Blended learning solutions can then be designed to meet specific learning requirements. Specialist content developers create sophisticated content, normally to support self-study. Teachers, trainers and subject experts may also develop simpler forms of content to support their work and may also run live online sessions. Online tutoring is required to deliver extended online and blended programmes.

In the sections that follow, we explore the six roles in more detail.



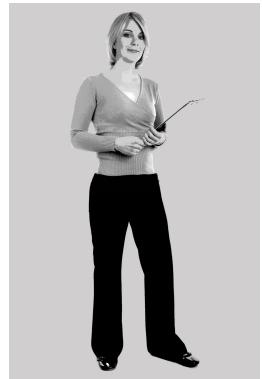
Architecting a digital learning strategy

This role involves the development and implementation of an organisation's longer-term strategy for the use of learning technologies. This role may require a full-time position in a large organisation (although the term 'architect' will not usually be how it is described), but is more likely to be just one role of a senior learning professional with a general responsibility for strategy. The role could also be undertaken by an external consultant on behalf of an organisation.

Key elements of this role include establishing goals for the application of learning technologies within the context of an organisation's business strategy; engaging with key stakeholders, developing capabilities, recommending the purchase of digital learning platforms and tools, and reporting on progress to senior management.

Digital learning architecture in action





Peter is Head of Learning and Development for an automobile manufacturer. As part of his responsibilities for this position, he has been undertaking a strategic review of the way in which his organisation makes use of learning technologies, in conjunction with external consultants. Alexandra is the newly-appointed Learning Technology Manager for a college that provides vocational training. Her responsibility is to engage with key stakeholders in order to transform the way that the college delivers its courses, in particular for overseas students.

Note: the shaded areas behind the characters on this and future pages represent the proportion of the person's work that is likely to be taken up by this role.

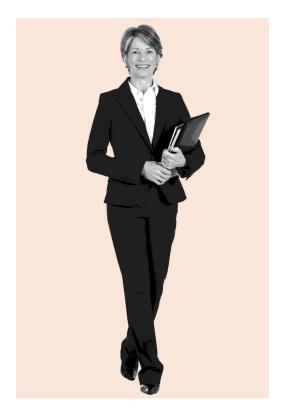


Designing blended learning solutions

This role involves the top-level design of an overall learning intervention, whether or not the result of the design process is a decision to make use of learning technologies. In this sense, the role could described as simple curriculum design, or learning solution design, because, until the problem has been properly analysed, it will not be clear whether technology can play a major role in the solution.

The major elements of the role are analysis of a particular learning need and then determining the most appropriate methods and media for meeting that need. As such, this role must be carried out before content development or online facilitation.

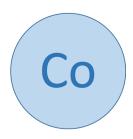
Blended learning design in action



Winifred is a learning and development consultant responsible for addressing the learning needs of one division of a major bank. She meets with line managers and analyses their requirements before putting together proposals for solutions for their approval. In doing this she may consult with the bank's learning technology department to see how digital learning might help to address the problem.



Anton is responsible for designing the curricula for a new series of vocational courses to be provided on a blended basis by a college. He is working with the faculty to develop outlines for each course, including specifications for any new digital learning content that will be required.



Developing digital learning content (specialist)

This role centres on the design and/or development of more sophisticated forms of digital learning content, particularly those that are media-rich or highly interactive.

This is the only profile where we have assumed that this role will be undertaken by a full-time specialist. We have contrasted this with the role that many learning professionals undertake in designing and developing learning content on an occasional basis.

The specialist role will be an essential element of more sophisticated projects that require the skills only normally found in multi-disciplinary teams including creative, technical and subject matter specialists. The role will be found within the learning and development departments of large employers, in the media departments of colleges and universities, and in small specialist agencies that work as contractors to employers.

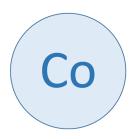
Specialist digital learning content development in action



Lucy works for a specialist content development company. She moved into this position as a graduate trainee having studied English and media. Her job involves working with customers, mostly large businesses and public sector organisations, to design digital learning programmes for the customer's employees. Within her organisation, she works alongside other specialists, including graphic designers and software engineers, to develop highly-interactive programmes.



Karol works as a designer and developer within the learning technologies department of a large vocational training college. He works with academic staff and the college's media department to develop sophisticated interactive content that is required for use within the courses provided by the college.



Developing digital learning content (non-specialist)

This role involves the design and development of simpler forms of digital learning content including reference materials, slides, assessments, software demonstrations, interview videos, podcasts, etc.

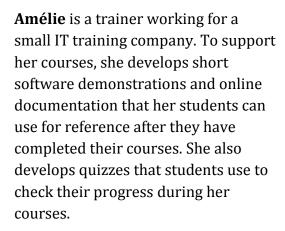
The role will normally be just one aspect of a general teaching/training position although, in some cases, it may also be undertaken by a subject specialist who is not a learning professional.

An essential aspect of this role is that it supports a broader teaching or training responsibility, an example being a teacher creating slides or hand-outs for their own classes. This can be contrasted with specialist content development, which could involve creating content for any subject or purpose and with no responsibility for teaching or training.

It would not be too far-fetched to say that most teachers or trainers are likely in the future to have some responsibility for designing and developing digital learning content. The exceptions will only be those people who teach courses that are developed from top to bottom by third-party design specialists.

Non-specialist content development in action







Nicolas is a learning and development specialist responsible for providing leadership training for a large employer. He has been assembling a library of simple interview videos in which managers discuss their roles as leaders.



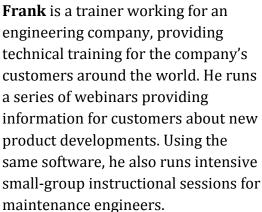
Facilitating virtual classroom sessions

This role centres on the delivery of real-time, online sessions using web conferencing software. These sessions are the online equivalent of sessions held in physical lecture rooms and classrooms and could take the form of lectures, seminars, workshops, coaching sessions or instruction. This role will normally be just one aspect of a general responsibility for teaching or training or will be undertaken by a subject expert who is not necessarily a learning professional.

Some virtual classroom facilitators may also take on the broader role of online tutor, in which they have overall responsibility for overseeing and delivering an online or blended learning programme, as we see below.

Virtual classroom facilitation in action







Janet works in employee communications for a government department. She is responsible for facilitating a series of panel discussions involving senior managers and specialists for the benefit of the department's employees.



Online tutoring

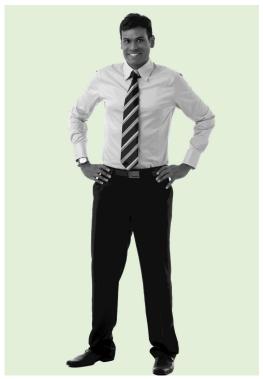
This role centres on the delivery of, and support for students engaged in, online and blended programmes, typically lasting many weeks or months. This role may include communications with students, grading assignments, moderating forum discussions and dealing with any difficulties that arise as the programme progresses.

An online tutor may play some role in the design of online activities and assignments for individuals and groups that take place within a programme. One of their responsibilities may also be to act as a virtual classroom facilitator. However, not all virtual classroom facilitators have the broader responsibility of online tutor.

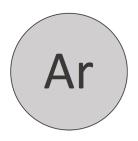
Online tutoring in action



Astrid is the tutor responsible for a two-year online MBA programme run by a business school. She acts as the primary focal point for all student communications and makes sure the programme runs smoothly. She grades assignments and moderates collaborative activities. As part of the programme she facilitates a series of webinars featuring professors from the school and managers from business.



Asif manages a one-year graduate trainee scheme for a multinational pharmaceutical company. This is a blended programme that includes face-to-face events as well as individual and group assignments that are conducted online. Asif monitors all aspects of the programme and looks to make sure that all of the trainees successfully complete the programme.



Architecting a digital learning strategy

Role	Architecting a digital learning strategy		
Summary	This role is responsible for the development and implementation of an organisation's strategy for the use of learning technologies, as derived from the business strategy. This role may be undertaken by a learning technologies specialist, by a manager with overall responsibility for learning, by external learning consultants or by some combination of these.		
Mission	To establish strategic goals for the application of learning technologies within an organisation and to establish an infrastructure that will support these goals.		
Deliverables	Accountable for The application of learning technologies across an organisation in support of the organisation's strategic goals.	Agreeing goals, schedules, budgets and responsibilities with regard to the digital learning strategy. Managing the contributions to the development and implementation of the strategy made by direct reports and external contractors.	The broader learning strategy for an organisation. The broader technology strategy for an organisation.
Main tasks		s, weaknesses, opportuni e use of e-learning in the	

Establish an overall strategy for the use of digital learning as part of an overall blended learning strategy.

Determine gaps in the skills of those who will be responsible for implementing the strategy and plan to overcome these.

Determine gaps in the technical infrastructure and make plans to overcome these.

Analyse the sources of resistance to learning technologies among key stakeholders, such as managers, other trainers/teachers and/or students, and make plans to overcome these.

Develop a plan for promoting the digital learning strategy and maximising take-up both within the organisation and externally where appropriate.

Monitor and report on the KPIs that have been established for the digital learning strategy.

Environment

This role operates within the context of a learning and development team. Depending on the size of the organisation, the role may be undertaken by the leader of the team or by a specialist. The role may have to influence the actions of learning professionals who do not report directly to the job holder to ensure the strategy is implemented. The role is likely to require extensive work with external suppliers and contractors, such as software companies and digital learning content developers.

KPI's

Cost and time savings that are achieved through the use of learning technologies (primarily through reduced travel costs, reduced need for teachers and trainers, and less time spent by learners away from the job).

Improved learning outcomes achieved through the use of learning technologies, as measured by assessments of learning and competency, as well as improvements made in employee performance.

Learner feedback, as evidenced by surveys, focus groups and other methods.



Designing blended learning solutions

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Role	Designing blended	d learning solutions	
Summary	This role relates to the design of any learning intervention, whether or not the decision is taken to include a digital learning element. This role must be in place if digital learning is to be applied appropriately.		
Mission	effective in achieve the use of time, m	for new learning progr ring the desired learning oney and other organis hose delivering the lear	g outcomes, efficient in ational resources, and
Deliverables	Accountable for	Responsible for	Contributor to
	The design of curricula for learning programmes that prove to be effective in meeting learning outcomes, efficient in terms of time, cost and effort, and flexible in terms of delivery, and can be implemented within the budgetary, time	Analysing the needs (e.g. a skills shortage, a new product requiring training) for the learning programme, as articulated by those making the request for the programme. Establishing a relationship with project sponsors / clients whereby the designer is seen as a trusted consultant and not merely an order-taker.	Organisational initiatives to improve employee performance over and above the provision of learning solutions. The development of organisational policies relating to the design of learning programmes.

and other constraints imposed by the organisation.

Liaising with and maintaining good relationships with subject experts and representative learners.

Designing programmes that make appropriate use of learning technologies but are not driven by them.

Communicating their designs to those responsible for developing and delivering the programmes, e.g. e-Learning Content Developers, Online Tutors.

Monitoring and refining the programmes.

Main tasks

Analyse the requirement for learning in terms of the overall business need and the specific types of learning required.

Analyse target audience characteristics.

Analyse practical constraints and opportunities, such as budget, time, facilities, equipment, software tools, Internet access, numbers of available online tutors, virtual classroom facilitators, content developers, etc.

Determine how the programme should be structured in terms of a curriculum, and the learning objectives to be achieved in each element of the curriculum.

Select effective methods (learning activities) for each key stage / element in the programme.

Select learning media to efficiently deliver each of these methods, for example, what should be delivered face-to-face and what online.

Environment

The role could be undertaken by an employee or an external contractor. They will have to liaise extensively with other stakeholders, including learners, subject-matter experts, and those that will go on and develop and deliver the programme.

KPI's

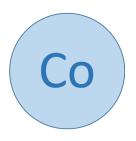
Extent to which the underlying need is satisfied

Cost per learner

Timeliness of the solution

Learning outcomes

Learner feedback



Developing digital learning content (specialist)

Role	Developing digit	al learning content (special	ist)
Summary	This role relates to the design and/or development of digital learning content in all its forms - tutorials, simulations, games, assessments, videos, podcasts, troubleshooting guides and simple reference material. It is required for sophisticated projects that need the skills only normally found in multi-disciplinary teams including creative, technical and content specialists. This role will normally constitute a full-time position.		
Mission	To create digital learning content that meets the stated learning needs, taking into account the characteristics of the target population, and within the given technical, budgetary and time constraints.		
Deliverables	Accountable for The quality of the finished content in terms of its usability, the relevance and accuracy of its subject matter, the extent to which it engages learners, its production quality standards and its technical	Undertaking whatever additional research and analysis is required. Leading the detailed design and development effort within the parameters established for the overall programme/curriculum, typically in consultation with other specialists. Documenting the detailed design. Writing and editing the verbal content.	Curriculum design. Graphic design, audio-visual development, building the content, depending on the way the team is structured and tasks allocated.

robustness (freedom from bugs). Preparing storyboards as necessary.

Co-ordinating with other specialists such as graphic designers, animators, illustrators, software developers, audio and video specialists, etc. to ensure the content is designed and developed in accordance with the design and script/storyboard.

Maintaining a close relationship with representative learners to ensure an effective user experience and that the content is relevant.

Obtaining approvals from project sponsors (those who have asked for the programme and may well be paying for it) and subject experts.

Main tasks

Project manage the process of content creation.

Design the content.

Script/storyboard the content.

Prepare interactions and test items.

Source audio-visual assets.

Contribute to or oversee the building of the content

Test and refine the content.

Environment

The role operates as a co-ordinator of a team of specialists, including blended learning designers, project sponsors, subject specialists and learners. The role can be found

within specialist departments of larger organisations or within small, independent content development companies.

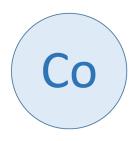
KPI's

Completion to budget.

Completion to schedule.

Sponsor/client satisfaction.

Learner feedback.



Developing digital learning content (non-specialist)

Role	Developing digital learning content (non-specialist)		
Summary	This role is undertaken by a teacher or trainer who designs and/or develops simpler forms of digital learning content, including reference materials, slides, assessments, screencasts, interview videos, podcasts, etc. This role will normally be just one aspect of a general teaching or training role. In some cases, the role may also be undertaken by a subject specialist who is not a learning professional.		
	This role differs from the specialist digital content development role because the content will typically be developed to support the teaching or training for which the person is responsible, an example being the slides or reference material that a teacher or training creates for their classes. This can be contrasted with full-time content development, which could involve the creation of content for any subject or purpose.		
Mission	To create digital learning content that meets the learning requirements, taking into account the characteristics of the target population, and within any technical, budgetary and time constraints.		
Deliverables	Accountable for	Responsible for	Contributor to
	The quality of the finished content.	Undertaking whatever additional research and analysis is required, including with representative learners.	Curriculum design.
		Leading the detailed design and development	

effort within the parameters established for the overall programme/curriculum.

Writing and editing the verbal content.
Preparing storyboards as necessary.

Sourcing or developing graphical and audiovisual content, possibly with the help of external specialists.

Building the content using a variety of tools.

Obtaining approvals from third parties (subject experts, curriculum designers, managers, etc.) where required.

Main tasks

Design the content.

Script/storyboard the content.

Prepare interactions and test items.

Source or develop graphical and audio-visual assets.

Build the content.

Test and refine the content.

Environment

The role will be just one aspect of a broader teaching, training or subject specialist position. S/he is likely to undertake most aspects of the work her/himself or in partnership with colleagues/peers, but may also receive help from creative or technical specialists.

KPI's

Learning outcomes.

Learner feedback.



Facilitating virtual classroom sessions

Facilitating virtual classroom sessions			
Role	Facilitating virtu	al classroom sessions	
Summary	This role involves the design and delivery of real time group sessions using web conferencing tools (these are sometimes called 'webinars'). These sessions are the online equivalent of sessions held in physical lecture rooms and classrooms and could take the form of lectures, seminars, workshops, coaching or instruction. This role will normally be just one aspect of a general teaching or training role, or could be undertaken by a subject expert.		
	possible respons	of virtual classroom session of virtual classroom session is stated of an online tutor, which is sufficiently and control of the control of t	who will have
Mission	To design and deliver live online sessions which are at least as effective as their physical classroom equivalents, while delivering the time and cost efficiencies and improved flexibility which comes from learners not having to travel.		
Deliverables	Accountable for	Responsible for	Contributor to
	The effectiveness of the sessions delivered, as evidenced by the learning outcomes and learner feedback.	Undertaking whatever additional research and analysis is required. Designing the detailed structure and content of the live online sessions.	Curriculum design.

Collaborating with colleagues who will also be involved in delivering the sessions.

Sourcing or developing any graphical and audio-visual content, possibly with the help of external specialists.

Communicating with learners before and after sessions.

Delivery of the sessions.

Review and evaluation of the sessions.

Main tasks

Undertake research and analysis with regard to the subject matter, learning requirements, audience characteristics and practical constraints.

Design sessions.

Collaborate with colleagues who will also be involved in delivering sessions.

Source or develop any graphical and audio-visual content, possibly with the help of external specialists.

Deliver sessions.

Review and evaluate sessions.

Environment

The facilitator is most likely to have experience of delivering similar sessions in a physical environment. The virtual classroom will therefore be just one of the ways in which they deliver sessions. In those organisations in which design is carried out centrally, facilitators may only be responsible for the delivery of sessions. Facilitation can be carried out from any location, including the facilitator's home.

KPI's

Learning outcomes.

Learner feedback.



Online tutoring

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Online tutoring

Summary

This role ensures the successful delivery of extended online and blended distance learning programmes and supports students as they engage in these programmes.

It may also involve providing support to those learning informally on-the-job, outside the scope of a formal programme, perhaps through content curation.

The online tutoring role may include input into the design of online activities and assignments for individuals and groups that take place within a programme.

Note that one of the responsibilities included in online tutoring may be to act as a virtual classroom facilitator. However, not all virtual classroom facilitators are also online tutors.

Mission

To provide the support that is required to ensure students are successful in completing the online and blended learning programmes in which they enrol/are enrolled. This could include process facilitation, coaching, counselling, providing feedback on assignments, grading formally-submitted assignments, curating content and helping learners to learn more productively.

To monitor, influence and, where necessary, control the behaviour of students on these programmes. To ensure, where appropriate, the academic integrity of these programmes.

Also, in some situations, to continue to support and facilitate learning beyond the scope of a programme.

Deliverables

Accountable Responsible for Contributor to

for

The successful Refining online Curriculum learning activities and design.

outcomes of online and blended programmes. assignments to meet the needs of particular individuals and groups.

Moderating activities using forums, wikis, blogs and similar social learning tools.

Monitoring and addressing the online behaviour of students.

Grading assignments.

Providing feedback to students.

Delivering live virtual classroom sessions, where these are included in the curriculum (see the separate role profile for the Virtual Classroom Facilitator).

Supporting students who are experiencing difficulties.

Monitoring and refining programme schedules.

Curating content.

Digital learning content development.

The design of online activities and assignments.

Setting up programmes within a virtual learning environment.

Main tasks

Contribute to setting up programmes within a virtual learning environment.

Refine online activities and assignments to meet the needs of particular individuals and groups.

Moderate activities using forums, wikis, blogs and similar social learning tools.

Monitor and address the online behaviour of students.

Grade assignments.

Provide feedback to students.

Deliver live virtual classroom sessions, where these are included in the curriculum (see the separate role profile for the facilitating a virtual classroom session).

Support students who are experiencing difficulties.

Monitor and refine programme schedules.

Curate content for students on programmes and those not currently participating in a programme. This is likely to take the form of recommending particular books, websites, videos and online communities.

Environment

The person undertaking this role may also have experience in running similar programmes in a traditional, face-to-face environment.

In many cases they will not be expected to have any major involvement in designing the programmes that they tutor.

They may also be responsible for delivering virtual classroom sessions to their.

They may also be responsible for designing and developing digital learning content (see developing digital learning content).

The role can be carried out from any location, including the tutor's home.

KPI's

Learning outcomes.

Learner feedback.

Practical Information:

You can find the Digital Learning Job Profiles as well as other related documents at:



http://www.e-jobs-observatory.eu/focus areas/e-learning

Contact Form:

http://www.e-jobs-observatory.eu/contact

We are happy to receive your comments, feed-back and suggestions to make the profiles even more usable!