Case Study – Final Year Student

PART A' : Basic Information	
Name of Student	M.C.
Name of teacher(s)	Nicholas Moudouros – Despo Siati
School/ Place	G C School of Careers – Private Institute Emphasys Centre
Period of observation	May - September 2016
Number of meetings	5 meetings

PART B': Background Information	
Important information	M.C. is a final year student attending the G C School of Careers. She has been informed about the project during the Multiplier Event organized at her school on the 20th of January 2016, as well as by her ICT teachers at the Emphasys Centre. The fact that the student was attending the Emphasys Centre was very convenient, as meetings and observations could easily be organized.
Rationale for participation	M.C. as well as other final year students proposed the idea of using the My Key Tool in order to prepare their 'Extra-Curricular Certificate-portfolio', which could be used as part of the creation of their Personal Statement.
	It is noted that students interested to study in the UK and therefore apply for a place at a UK University have to present their academic performance (i.e. School leaving Certificate, GCE's, IELTS etc.), as well as their extra-curricular activities as part of their Personal Statement – CV. Students' participation in non-formal learning activities in and out of school is particularly important for their overall development. Key competences such as employability, digital, entrepreneurial, citizen, cultural skills are being developed which are most often neglected by schools.
	The tool appeared to the students as a good opportunity to collect, upload and present the knowledge, skills and competences acquired in non-formal learning activities throughout their academic career in a structured way. If the tool was available earlier they could have gone through the process to monitor their non-formal learning and enrich it accordingly.

Rationale for investigation	Emphasys Centre, has decided to investigate this new aspect presented in more detail, as it is an added-value to the project which could initiate a new route for further exploitation and sustainability. After consultation with the Coordinator, it was agreed that Emphasys Centre will investigate the influence and impact that the NONFORLESL process has on students from the side of the non-formal provider towards the school. This was an additional value to the project, as all other partners investigated the impact from the side of the school. Therefore one of the case studies was devoted to the use of the My Key Tool and the processes for final year students to present recognize and validate their non-formal learning acquired in and out of school.
Main aims	Based on the above, the main aims of the case studies are the following: 1. To investigate the use and value of the NONFORLESL products (procedure and tool) for final year students for entry at higher education institutions. 2. To investigate the benefits that the MYKEY TOOL provides for these students as part of their overall student profile along with their academic performance. 3. To identify how recognition and validation of the non-formal learning can support the overall profile of students. 4. To offer an overall evaluation the products, the processes and procedures developed as part of the NONFORLESL project for improvement and further exploitation.
Research methods used	Observations, questionnaire, semi-formal interview
PART C': Implementation	
Comments – observations during the implementation stage regarding the <u>student</u>	M.C. participated in 5 meetings. She was enthusiastic and interested about the process. As she was older she wanted to know more about the theory behind it, as well as the EC recommendation for the Key Competences. During the first meeting a lot of time was spent to explain the background of the project and clarify the terms used, so that students were familiar with them. There was a discussion about the link between the subjects – key competences – non-formal learning activities, in order to for MC and the rest of the students to conceptualize the main idea. During discussion the idea of the holistic approach towards skills and competences was reinforced rather than

the segregation into subjects. Another relation that was made, but couldn't be used in the tool was the prospect of further studies and future plans. MC suggested that it would have been interesting to have a place somewhere to link current knowledge and skills with potential studies and career employment.

MC, as an older student found it rather interesting to explain the reasons for selecting the specific links. Initially very simple comments were used, as the aim was to showcase the process and use all the functionalities of the tool available. MC prepared, however, new explanations to be uploaded.

As, MC was involved in music, she was very happy to upload evidence of her knowledge, experience and skills under each key competence. As she was building up her profile she realized that most of her 'hidden talents' had to do with Key Competence 8 – Cultural Awareness, which matched perfectly with her character.

MC was very pleased to find out how much work she had put in the last years in music. This was evident when she collected all certificates to be uploaded. At the same time she also realized in which key competences she was particularly strong and in which ones she needed more work.

MC thought that the whole process was like a 'flash back' into her academic life that had brought to her memories of her efforts and performance throughout the years. This process was similar to a 'self-evaluation' process for her. She was critical about the effort she has put in some subjects in relation to the mark she got at the end.

Comments – observations during the implementation stage regarding the <u>process and the tool</u>	During the testing-implementation it was noted that the interface of the tool was more appropriate for younger students rather than older ones. The decision to create an Avatar with the specific selections (hair, clothing, jewellery etc.) was much more relevant to younger students rather than final year students. This was a bit 'disturbing' at the beginning, but soon the funny side of things was noted. During the initial stages, the mentor noticed that there was a need for a clearer explanation of the background regarding the project and the procedures to be followed, as well as the links between the subjects, key competences and non-formal learning, as this was not clear in the tool. The screens and interface were not very clear and needed a lot of guidance and support.

	The combination of using audio and text to define and explain the key competences worked quite well, as teenagers are used to audio for music etc. The fact that this was repeated when the links were made was very useful, as a reminder. Students need repetition to accomplish a task. Due to technical difficulties/ errors/ bugs at the beginning a lot of time was used to create the avatar, make links, upload evidence etc. which were not saved and had to be inserted again. The time when the tool was under construction created some disappointment. As MC was quite mature, she was able to work independently and progress with the process in order to complete and upload all certificates etc. Younger students might find it a bit difficult. MC commented on the interface of the tool which could have been clearer and better designed. The use of the Manual actually supported the process and was useful to remind things when the tutor was not present. MC got a bit frustrated during the time when the tutor had to approve the links in order to proceed to the next stage.
Suggestions for improvement	- Avatar relates to younger students - Need for clearer instructions-guidance during the use of the tool - Interface needs to be clearer - Certificate has to be corrected and interface fixed
<u>Conclusions</u>	The NONFORLES project provided a unique opportunity to MC to create her 'Non-formal learning Certificate' with all her extra-curricular achievements. This Certificate covers the gap that exists between the official 'School Leaving Certificate' showing the academic competences of the student and her performance, skills, knowledge and competences in other fields i.e. music, dance, foreign languages, volunteer work etc. The MyKEY tool developed and the procedures/ processes, as well as the theoretical framework behind the project could provide students with an on-going process to monitor their learning in extra-curricular activities, build on their self-confidence and self-esteem. This process could support students in their school life. In this Case Study, another aspect of the project was investigated thus offering an additional value. The specific final year student was

	provided the opportunity to collect, upload and safeguard all her achievements while creating her own extra-curricular CV which could be used in addition to the academic certificate. This was particularly useful for entering higher education, as all certificates were grouped together under the 9 Key Competences identified by the European Commission.
Supporting documents/photos/ evidence	