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WP2 – Competences on integration and inclusion for VET
practitioners

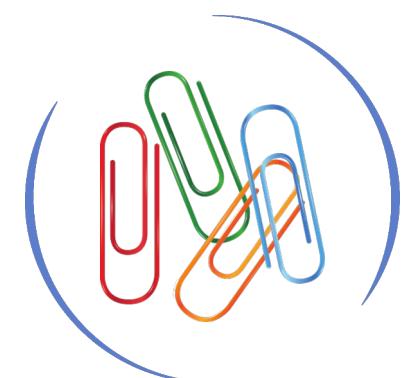
Workshop n.5

“Critical Thinking and Understanding”

IPSANTARÉM

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TRANSFORM



Before we begin...

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for a brief
questionnaire**



**Sign in the
Attendance Sheet**





Introduction

Welcome to our workshop on Critical Thinking and Understanding! In this session, we will explore essential skills that help us make sense of the world around us. Critical thinking enables us to break down information, identify strong arguments, and make informed decisions—skills that are invaluable in both academic settings and everyday life.

Throughout the workshop, we will discuss effective communication, the importance of listening to diverse viewpoints, and reflecting on our own ideas. By developing these skills, we aim to tackle important issues like social inequality and work towards a more inclusive society. Let's embark on this journey together and discover how critical thinking can empower us all!



What is Critical Thinking and Understanding?

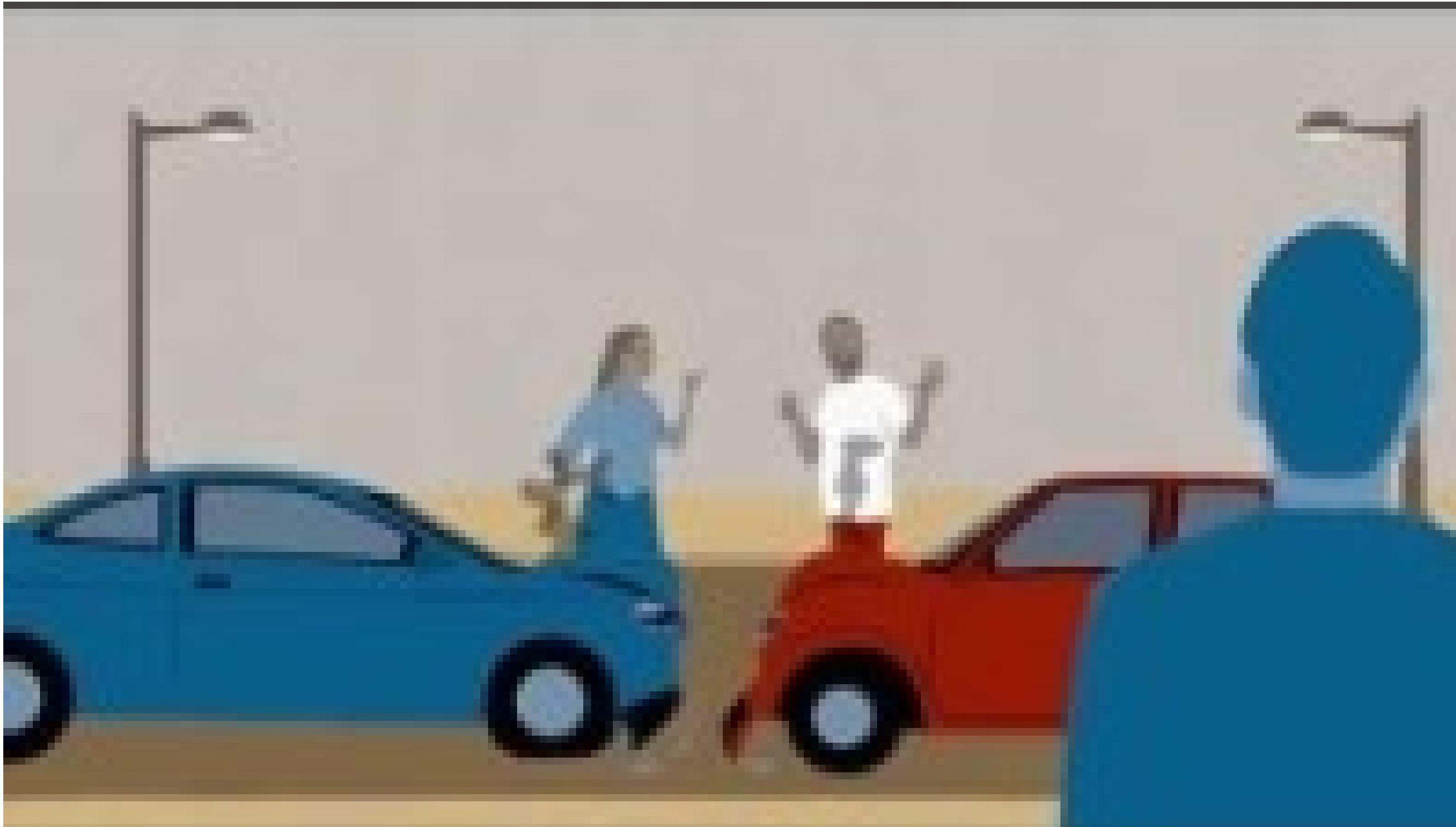
According to the Open OK State, **Critical thinking is the ability to think clearly and rationally about what to do or what to believe**. It includes the ability to engage in reflective and independent thinking.

Someone with critical thinking skills is suitable to do:

- Understand the logical connections between ideas.;
- Identify, construct, and evaluate arguments;
- Detect inconsistencies and common mistakes in reasoning;
- Solve problems systematically;
- Identify the relevance and importance of ideas;
- Reflect on the justification of one's own beliefs and values;



What is Critical Thinking and Understanding?





5 tips to improve Critical Thinking





Reflexion Moment

After you've seen the videos, please take 5-10 minutes to reflect on them. Take your own conclusions, and after that we'll discuss it everyone's thoughts.



How Critical Thinking can help Socially Excluded Persons?

Challenging Prejudices and Biases: VET trainers with critical thinking can and should encourage individuals to question assumptions and reflect on their own biases. When it comes to socially exclude groups, due to race, gender, socioeconomic status or disability, critical thinking allows trainers to recognize and challenge stereotypes that may contribute to their exclusion, by helping them dismantling unconscious beliefs.

Empathy and Perspective-Taking: A key component of critical thinking is understanding others. It involves the ability to listen to different perspectives and understand the unique challenges faced by socially excluded persons. By encouraging empathy, critical thinking enables us to engage more deeply with the experiences of others and work towards solutions.

Social Justice Advocacy: Critical Thinking empowers people to question social structures and advocate for a change. For socially excluded individuals, critical thinking can be a tool to raise awareness about injustices, analyze root causes of exclusion, and promote inclusive practices.



How to implement?

Developing Autonomy and Problem-Solving Skills:

Strategy: Offer workshops that teach problem analysis and decision-making techniques tailored to the realities of socially excluded individuals.

Example: A programme for long-term unemployed individuals, helping them evaluate realistic job opportunities, identify barriers (such as lack of transportation or skills), and find creative solutions, like remote work or vocational training.

Promoting Self-Awareness and Self-Esteem:

Strategy: Use critical thinking to challenge limiting beliefs and rebuild a positive personal narrative.

Example: Support groups encouraging participants to reflect on their experiences and skills, helping them recognize their strengths often overshadowed by societal stereotypes.

Empowering People to Identify and Challenge Inequities:

Strategy: Encourage critical analysis of social norms and policies that perpetuate exclusion.

Example: Training for at-risk youth on identifying discriminatory practices in schools or workplaces and guiding them to draft formal complaints or petitions.

Fostering Support Networks and Collaboration:

Strategy: Use critical thinking to develop collaborative strategies for group problem-solving.

Example: Workshops where socially excluded communities collectively analyze available resources (e.g., social support centres) and develop effective strategies to access them.

Improving the Ability to Evaluate Information:

Strategy: Teach how to distinguish credible information from falsehoods, especially in the digital space.

Example: Media literacy sessions for migrants to help them avoid scams in job advertisements or misleading information about visas and rights.



Critical Thinking Components for Social Inclusion

Defy Stereotypes and Prejudices: Social exclusion often occurs from deeply rooted stereotypes and prejudices that shape how society views marginalised groups. A good component of critical thinking is the ability to challenge these generalisations by questioning their validity, understanding their origins and recognising the harm they cause.

Promote Inclusive Dialogue: By critical thinking, individuals are incentivised into constructive conversations, listen to diverse viewpoints, and contribute to solutions that address exclusion. This kind of inclusive dialogue is essential for building understanding between different social groups and ensuring that socially excluded individuals have a voice in shaping the society.

WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

Let's dive in





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Activity Group – Watch this video





Activity Group 1 – Case Study Analysis

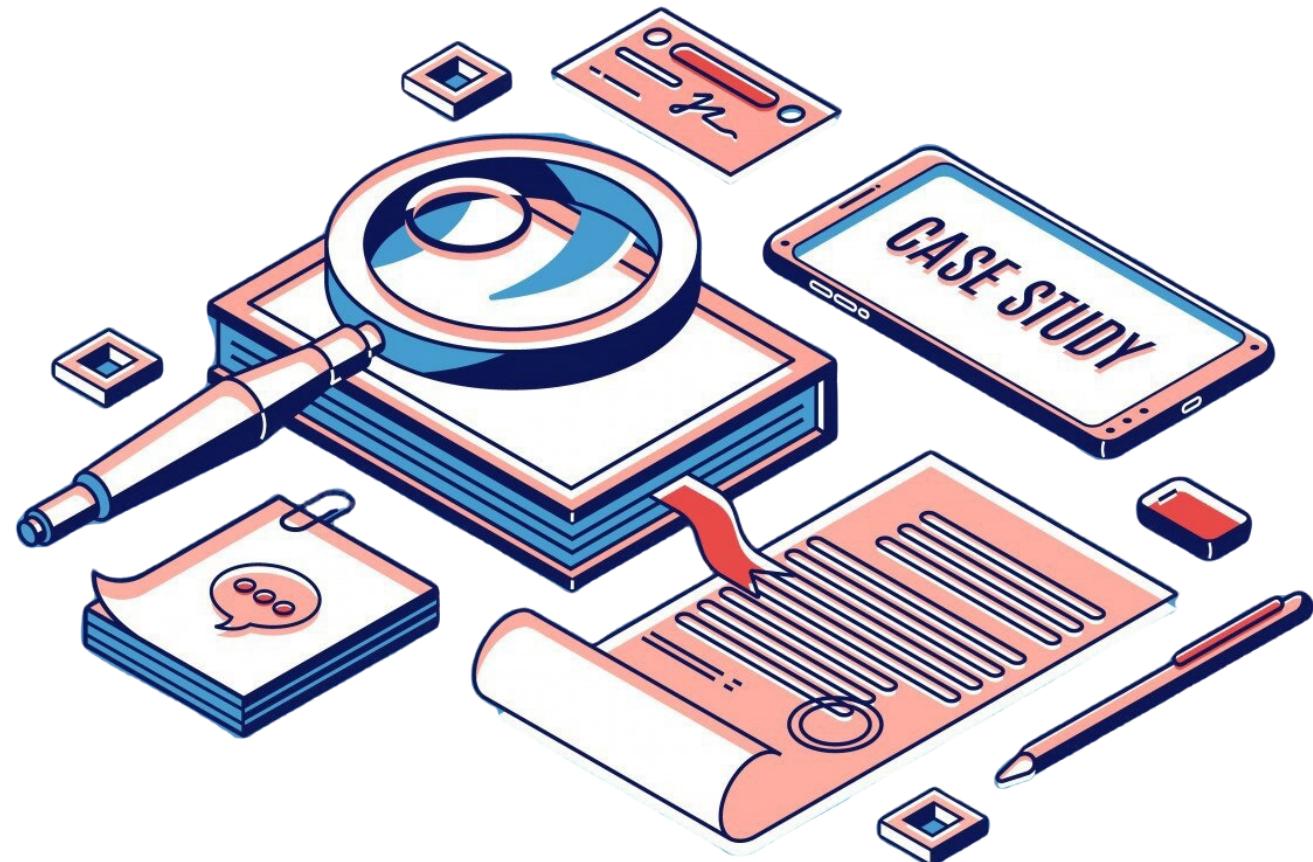


Image from Freepick

Activity: Based on the video you have watched, and your knowledge of the case, identify strong and weak arguments and discuss potential solutions. Use logic to support your conclusions.

Activity Group 2 – Decision Making Scenario

Implementing AI Tools in VET



Image from Freepick

Scenario:

A VET institution has decided to introduce Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based tools to enhance the learning experience for trainees. These tools include adaptive learning platforms, performance analytics systems, and chatbots for student support. However, the introduction of these technologies raises concerns among trainers and administrators regarding ethics, the role of trainers, data privacy, and equitable access.

Decision-Making:

You, as a VET trainer or administrator, have been invited to participate in a decision-making meeting to discuss how and when to implement these tools. Key issues to address include:

Ethics: How can you ensure that AI tools respect ethical principles in collecting and using student data?

Impact on Trainers: Will AI tools replace or complement the traditional roles of trainers? What additional skills will trainers need?

Accessibility: How can you ensure that all trainees, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, have equal access to these new technologies?

Learning Outcomes: What evidence exists that these tools genuinely improve student performance and outcomes?

Cost-Benefit Analysis: How can you justify the costs associated with acquiring and implementing these tools?

Activity Group 3 – Role Playing Debate

Policies of Integration of Immigrants

Theme: Should governments impose mandatory integration programs for immigrants?

Activity:
Split the class into 4 groups:

1. Policymakers
2. Citizens
3. Minority groups
4. Social activists



Image from Freepick

Each group has to incorporate their role and come up with an answer to that question, and prepare that answer based on solid arguments to justify. In the end the groups, each by each present their arguments.



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ABOUT US

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