



**Train the facilitator handbook: a  
guide to the M9C curriculum**

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## **Notes**

We use 9 C to refer to the 9 Conversations course and M9C to refer to the train the facilitator course.

This document refers to several pedagogical and other technical concepts which are explained in [Appendix 1](#).

### **A note about the materials**

The 9 Conversations project group have developed two training programmes, the initial 9 Conversations programme aimed at refugees, and the Mastering 9 Conversations programme aimed at supporting facilitators of the 9 Conversations programme.

Both programmes are presented with a strong focus on the process, rather than the content. This includes suggested timings and discussion points. For experienced trainers this may seem like an overly scripted and prescriptive approach. However, we would emphasise that facilitators should feel free to deviate from the 'script' where it seems appropriate for their group, as long as the learning objectives are met. Secondly, we are encouraging those without formal training qualifications to run 9 Conversations groups, and here the 'script' is a support to give confidence.

# Why a train the facilitator course?

You can find the M9C course materials [here](#). This document describes what the M9C course is and gives various tips on how to run it successfully.

## **Course aims**

The goal of the Mastering 9 Conversations (M9C) train the facilitators course is to empower volunteer and professional staff to be able to deliver the 9 Conversations [programme](#). The training course will support participants in their production of a plan for the implementation of the 9 Conversations programme in their home area as a social enterprise.

# **How this M9C course helps you deliver the 9 Conversations programme**

## **Target groups**

The target group for the M9C course will be people who work with refugee groups and wish to help the small subsection of refugees who wish to start a business as an alternative to employment. In some EU countries there is great pressure on refugees to work but this can be hard to arrange, and some refugees may wish to try self-employment instead. The M9C course is for volunteers or staff who may run a 9C group on an occasional basis, perhaps once or twice a year and who do not

have the confidence to simply pick up the 9C materials and start. We show below (tap to enlarge) a few key persona descriptions to illustrate these target facilitators. Note that the centre describes the person, the left describes them in relation to the three main learning outcomes (see page 19) and that the right-hand side of the diagram describes positive and negative feelings they have about leading the 9C course.

Download an editable persona template from this [link](#).

## Goals

### Facilitating and extending networks

The main aim is to extend the refugees' active and professional network.

Anne has a wide range of experience of coaching and mentoring and facilitating online. She is therefore comfortable with the role of facilitator where asking relevant questions is more important than having relevant knowledge. Building a relevant network makes this effective.

### Business knowledge

Anne has run her consultancy business for ten years. She does not know much about retail and food businesses which is what many refugees choose.

## Familiarity with 9C materials and process

### You don't have to have all the answers.

She uses the 9C materials as a guide and finds the speaker notes very helpful. She has seen how participants can help each other. She is not afraid of being unable to answer all questions. She tries to find the answer using her network.

## Who are we empathising with?

### Denmark



**Name:** Anne  
**Nationality:** British  
**Age:** 50  
**Education:** Degree and licensed teacher  
**Languages:** English, Danish

**Professional experience:**  
Vocational educator,  
Teaching English as a  
Second Language (including  
intercultural  
communication)  
**Business experience:** Has  
run an educational  
consultancy business since  
2010.

## What does she think and feel?

### Pains (frustrations & obstacles)

#### Desperation

Anne knows some local refugees start businesses without knowing what they are doing.

#### Dangers

Anne wonders if her legal knowledge is enough. If the refugees break the law then there are serious consequences.

#### Language

Anne wonders if the language skills of the participants are enough to interact with suppliers and customers.

## Digital literacy

### Using mobile devices

For years Anne has helped teachers & students use digital tools. She is not so familiar with the use of Smartphones for learning. Most refugees will be working on Smartphones.

## Goals

### Business start-up readiness

By becoming a facilitator, Lina seeks to acquire more knowledge and skills that will allow them to more successfully help refugees build their own business, integrate into the labour market.

### Business knowledge

Lina is familiar with the essential aspects of creating her own business, the steps of integration into the labour market, business strategies.

Most refugee organisations are social enterprises of one sort or another so taking a social enterprise perspective is close to taking an enterprise perspective and therefore will help aspiring facilitators identify more closely with the goals of their participants.

## Familiarity with 9C materials and process

### Basic familiarity

Lina participated in the presentation of the project and trainings and became interested in the possibilities of the facilitator's activities.

## Who are we empathising with?

### Lithuania



**Name:** Lina  
**Nationality:** Lithuanian  
**Age:** 30  
**Education:** Degree in social work  
**Languages:** Lithuanian, English, Russian

### Professional experience:

Lina has more than 4 years of working with refugees' job experience,

provides social consultations for refugees, helping them to integrate into Lithuanian labour market and society.

### Business experience:

Lina is familiar with the essential aspects of creating her own business, the

steps of integration into the labour market, business strategies.

## What does she think and feel?

### Pains (frustrations & obstacles)

#### Not for everyone

Lina has doubts about whether all her clients (refugees) will fit the 9 Conversations programme, but she hopes that some of the refugees will successfully apply this programme.

## Digital literacy

### Using mobile devices

Understanding that the majority of refugees will have and will be able to use smartphones, Lina will try to use these devices.



## Goals

### Role model

She would like to share with others her personal experience, the difficulties she encountered as an immigrant in a foreign country and help those like her who want to integrate and have a desire to open their own business.

### Business knowledge

She worked in the trade sector, managing various showrooms. She arrived in Italy in 1993, she learned Italian and she started to work, opening a call centre frequented by different communities and cultures. Currently she works in a NGO as intercultural mediator, she speaks Italian Arabic and French perfectly. She knows the bureaucratic procedures for opening a business in Italy.

## Familiarity with 9C materials and process

She took part in the survey about the skills and needs of 9C users. She read the materials of the first part of 9C. She thinks that maybe the materials and the tools could be facilitated, thinking about the experience that she has with immigrants and refugees..

## Who are we empathising with?

### Italy



**Name:** Fouzia

**Nationality:** Italian

**Age:** 59

**Education:** High School and professional mediator course

**Languages:** French, Arabic, Italian

### Professional experience:

After graduating from high school, she worked in the trade sector, managing various showrooms, this experience has implemented her interpersonal and socialization skills. She arrived in Italy in 1993, she learned Italian and she started to work, opening a call centre frequented by different communities and cultures. In 2011 she started her training course with CReA onlus Association which led her to carry out her current profession of intercultural mediator. She Currently collaborates with CReA association as an integral and active part of it.

## What does she think and feel?

### Pains (frustrations & obstacles)

#### Accessibility & empathy

She thinks that maybe the materials and the tools could be facilitated, thinking about the experience that she has with immigrants and refugees.

Furthermore, the tools provided by the project should also be easily accessible from the telephone, because there are people who do not have computers.

## Digital literacy

### Using mobile devices

She has basic digital skills.

# How to judge the quality of the M9C course?

Quality indicators are collated below.

The following features support quality in the M9C course.

1. Learner journey map (based on a few representative personas)
2. Effective pedagogy
  - Effortful
  - Retrieval
  - Chunked
  - Interleaved
3. Universal Design for Learning, UDL
  - Choice of input, output

- Access designed for varied contexts
- Promotion of expert learning through networking and peer exchange

#### 4. Technology

- Mobile first

## Learner journey

A useful strategy is to construct a [learner journey experience](#) infographic to show how both 9C and M9C participants experience the two courses. See example in Figure 1 below.

A Learner Journey Map is a visual interpretation of the overall story from a learner's perspective of their interaction with our services and products over time and across channels. The purpose of using a learner journey map is to understand how the learner feels, what motivates them and what we can do to build upon that experience.

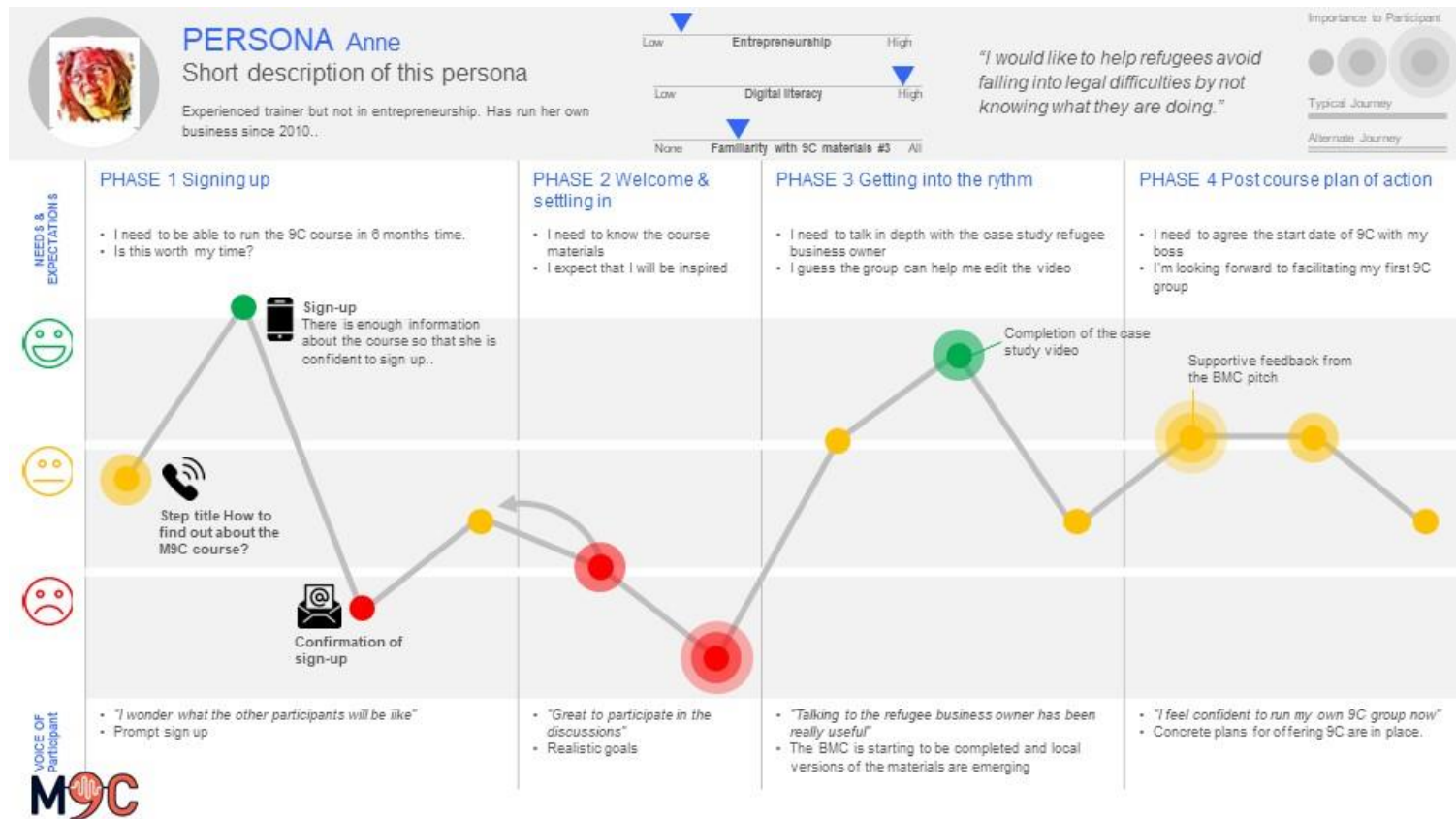


Figure 1 Learner journey for M9C

This can be used to evaluate the facilitators course.



# How will participants learn?

The course promotes [effortful](#) learning (also known as *desirable difficulty*) that is based on the proven efficiency of [retrieval](#) practice, [chunked](#) and [interleaved](#) learning through the following:

- Backwards design that starts with the desired learning outcomes
- Learning experience design (the learner journey on page 14)
- Options to be run face to face, hybrid or in blended format
- Option to follow as self-directed learning
- Option, if working in a group, to experience [Transformative learning circle](#) and [Mastermind](#) approaches using [EduSCRUM tools](#)

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL with firm goals, variability and using expert learning) strategies)
- Place-based by being anchored in the local area

We can expect a tension between *effortful learning* and *motivation* to complete the programme.

## M9C curriculum

### **What do M9C participants need to learn?**

Since this is a course to learn how to carry out a specific work-related set of tasks, we can construct a relevant curriculum from a job description for training purposes ([DACUM](#) approach). The M9C programme is likely to be an irregular assignment required



only once or twice a year. The diagram below represents a first attempt at deriving the M9C curriculum from the job tasks related to putting on the 9C course. Every training course is likely to include several threshold concepts (TC). These are key concepts that unlock understanding to a significant part of the course. Course facilitators are advised to pay particular attention to ensure understanding of the threshold concepts.

## **Analysis of 9C facilitator job tasks**

(TC = Threshold concept)

<b>Overall</b>	<b>Pre-requisites</b>	<b>Before 9 Conversation</b>	<b>During a 9 C iteration</b>	<b>Post 9C tasks</b>
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Context for 9 C	This column describes what needs to be known before deciding to offer a 9C programme	This column describes the tasks that need to be done before starting a 9C programme	These are tasks that need to be done during a 9 C programme	These are the tasks that need to be done after a 9C programme is over
<b>Business model (TC)</b>	<b>9 C materials familiarity (TC)</b>	<b>Preparation of materials.</b> <b>Includes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Localisation</b></li> <li>• <b>Digital access</b></li> </ul>	<b>Facilitation skills (TC)</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Offering 9 C as a social enterprise (using the	Local area familiarity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge</li> <li>• Skills</li> <li>• Competence</li> </ul>	Venue, marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal or external venue</li> </ul>	Documentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Networks</li> <li>• Badges and eportfolios</li> </ul>	Badge awards

BMC template)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaching potential participants</li> </ul>		
				Materials update

## Learning outcomes

Using backward design principles, we start with intended outcomes and work backwards to find out how to achieve them.

**Overall learning outcomes (LOs):** By the end of the training the participants will

- **LO1:** Have sourced relevant information to produce a localised **business model** using the M9C template for offering the 9 Conversations training in their area and/or organisation.
- **LO2:** Be familiar with the **materials** of the 9 Conversations training (either to facilitate it themselves or to be able to support others in facilitating the programme)
- **LO3:** Know how to lead each 9 Conversations session using the suggested **process** (either to facilitate it themselves or to be able to support others in facilitating the programme)  
includes administration of badges, suggested tools such as EU Skills Profile and curation of materials.

## Sub-elements of learning outcomes

<b>LO1 Business plan</b>	<b>LO2 Materials</b>	<b>LO3 Facilitation Process</b>
1.1 Local business knowledge	2.1 Familiarity with presentations/materials and tools	3.1 Familiarity with facilitator guide by adapting the guide to the local context
1.2 Use of a BMC (including the BMY perspective)	2.2 Localise the presentations/materials	3.2 Familiarity with recommended session structure
1.3 Local contacts for case study	2.3 Plan how to share the materials with participants (LMS,	3.3 Administering the badges, e-portfolio

video and final pitch session.	website, PDFs, paper etc)	(accreditation of the course).
		3.4 How to support aspiring facilitators

## Colour key

Knowledge

Skills

## Threshold concepts

We have identified the key threshold concepts to be mastered. Threshold concepts are troublesome ideas that in some cases may be counterintuitive but that are key to making progress in

the topic being learned. Once mastered they permanently alter the learners' concept of the topic and are difficult to unlearn/forget.

In the case of M9C, threshold concepts include:

- I know how to access information and support (BEFORE: I don't know enough about business and facilitation to be able to do this)
- How to support learning with easily accessible digital tools (BEFORE: My organisation needs to install an LMS)
- How to make learning accessible using UDL? (BEFORE: Learning styles are the best way to provide personalised learning)

- Some of the refugees will probably go ahead and start without knowing everything. (BEFORE: They will wait until the end of the course when they know enough to start a business.)
- Social enterprises aim to make a surplus (BEFORE: Companies only exist to make a profit)
- The BMC as a process diagram (BEFORE: the BMC is a helpful diagram whose pieces could be put together in any order)
- Efficient and targeted network building is a skill I can pass on (BEFORE: People don't need to be told how to build networks)

Aspiring facilitators need to be aware of the threshold concepts included in the 9 Conversations programme. These are likely to



overlap to a certain extent with the threshold concepts of M9C.

The 9C threshold concepts include:

- The BMC as a process diagram (BEFORE: the BMC is a helpful diagram whose pieces could be put together in any order)
- Efficient and targeted network building (BEFORE: I am too shy to contact people OR I do not have the language level to talk to people about a business)
- Self-directed learning (BEFORE: I can only learn from a teacher)
- Transformative learning circles/Mastermind groups or EDU Scrum approach (BEFORE: Other people at my level cannot teach me anything)



# Structure of full course

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The mindmap above illustrates the facilitator focus of each of the nine sessions.

The full course can be offered both in 100% online and 100% face to face versions. The need for a tutor can be minimised by requiring participants to take turns in facilitating from Step 2 or 3.

The M9C course is a 9-unit course that mirrors the 9 Conversations course itself and the nine chapters of the Facilitation Guide. This means that each unit consists of a review of one of the Facilitation Guide chapters and its implications for implementing the 9 Conversations course in the participant's organisation and a review of one of the 9 Conversations steps to ensure that the materials are understood, how they need to be

adapted to the local context and any specific skills relevant to that step. There is no logical connection between each side of the table. In the end, the course is working towards a coherent whole and all aspects will be needed.

<b>Module/ Step</b>	<b>Facilitator Guide chapters</b>	<b>9 Conversations steps</b>	<b>Learning objectives</b>
1	What, why, who & how?	Introduction to the BMC	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2
2	Group guide skills	Your skills	2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2

3	Getting ready	The local business landscape	1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2
4	What is the BMC?	Value proposition & customers	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2
5	A typical session	Channels & relationships	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2
6	The 9 Steps	Activities, resources & partners	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2

7	Using slides and notes	Costs and income	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2
8	Badges	Storytelling	1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3
9	What next?	Pitching	1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.3, 3.4

The table below shows an example of how the first line from the table above expands to include suggested tasks in Module or Step 1.

Facilitator Guide chapters	9 Conversations steps	Online Live one-hour meetings once a week to discuss tasks	Face to face 3-hour meetings
What, why, who & how?	Introduction to the BMC	<p><b>Expectations</b> provide prompts in a survey and discuss overall results in meeting.</p> <p><b>What?</b> BMC as a pedagogical tool, accessible tool, process tool.</p> <p><b>Why?</b> The importance of local networking and how to promote it. CRM tool</p> <p><b>Who?</b> Language levels, previous entrepreneurial</p>	<p>Tasks listed in the column to the left are adapted for face to face.</p> <p>More of the tasks are carried out during the session rather than as individual 'homework'.</p>



		<p>experience, participants who will take their mutual support responsibilities seriously ie by attending, by listening to course colleagues etc (Persona as a tool)</p> <p><b>How?</b> Go through Step 1 of 9C. What would you change? What do you have questions about?</p> <p>Level 2 materials</p> <p><b>Prep for Step 2:</b> Create a Euro Skills Profile for yourself</p>	
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## Module structure

Each of the nine modules/steps is similarly structured.

<b>Module section</b>	<b>Detail</b>
Aims	General
Learning Outcomes	Specific, also phrased as essential questions
Time allocation	Overall
Introduction	Introducing concepts
How the BMC relates to facilitators	With task related to producing an NGO BMC

Review of the same step in 9 Conversations	To review and edit if necessary
Case study/example /good practice	Make your own local case study, preferably as a video.
Documenting your learning	Adding to eportfolio
Resource list	URLs

## Evidence of mastery

To be credited as having met the requirements of the course, the elements below need to be evidenced based on the contents of an e-portfolio.

- Completed the M9C programme.
- Produced and presented a localised social enterprise BMC.
- Adapted the materials and facilitation guide to suit local conditions

**Note that** we are not asking for evidence that the programme has been run in the local area.

# Support tools

The M9C course is presented in two formats.

1. As copiable Google site and slides with speaker notes for portability and editability. [[Link](#)]
2. As H5P objects in a non-interactive Lifter course on the project website for reference. [[Link](#)]

An editable persona template can be found [here](#). (Copy first, then edit).

Suggestions on how to implement the M9C and 9C courses from a technical perspective can be found here. [[Link](#)]

Guidance on how to implement the badging and eportfolio can be found here. [[Link](#)]

## Appendix 1: Terminology

**9C** is the 9 Conversations programme [\[Link\]](#) which the M8C train the facilitator course will prepare future facilitators to deliver.

**Backwards design** is used to design courses by starting with defining what you want learners to be able to do because of the course. Assessments and activities are then developed to meet these desired outcomes, starting with the **learning outcomes**.

**Badge** reminds us of the badge system used in the scout organisation and is used in 9C as a way to recognise competency. Learning badges are also visual.

**Blended learning** refers to the situation when a trainer uses a mix of face to face and digital tools.

**BMC** is short for Business Model Canvas which is a one-page, visual representation of the main aspects of a business.

**Chunking** refers to dividing learning material into appropriately small amounts to avoid overwhelming learners with too much new content.

**EDUscrum** is an educational adaptation of the Agile approach to development in business. A version of this is used in **M9C** to monitor the progress of the participants from week to week.

**Effortful learning**, or desirable difficulty, refers to the need for learners to process what they are learning through activities, even though they may find these time-consuming or otherwise challenging.



**E-portfolio** is an assessment approach that relies on the collation of evidence of learning activity in the form of diary entries and other artefacts in digital format. In both M9C and 9C, a completed BMC will be an important element of the eportfolio.

**Face to face learning** refers to learning activities that are scheduled to happen with the whole group and instructor present in the same location at the same time.

**Facilitator** is the person who will help the 9C and M9C groups to achieve their learning aims, without necessarily being an expert in all areas of the courses.

**H5P** is a free tool for creating digital learning objects that can be transferred from one website to another.

**Hybrid learning** describes the situation when there is a face-to-face class with some participants connecting to the class by digital means if they are unable to attend physically.

**Interleaving** is an effective pedagogical strategy, and we use this in **M9C** by working both on facilitation processes and the **BMC** in each session.

**Learner journey** is a visual way of looking at the experience of the learners on our courses. We can identify the challenges in the learners' journey and work to minimise these (while still maintaining levels of **desirable difficulty** or **effortful learning**).

**Learning outcomes** are the starting points for running training. Where there is doubt on any point, a facilitator should refer to

the learning outcomes and steer the session so that they are supported.

**M9C** or Mastering 9 Conversations is the train the facilitator course developed to help facilitators offer the 9 Conversations programme successfully.

**Mastermind** is a business strategy whereby a small group of people from different businesses agree to meet and discuss their specific goals in a structured and supportive atmosphere.

**Persona** is a generic description of someone in your target group. Having two or three representative personas in mind as you plan the M9C course delivery will help you meet participant needs.

**Retrieval** is an effective pedagogical and assessment strategy where you require participants to recall in their own words what they know. In M9C and 9C, the BMC is a constant reference point and participants must explain their growing BMC many times over the programme.

**Self-directed learning** describes the situation where learners work through a learning programme on their own without a group. In the case of 9C and M9C, a key factor would still be for the lone participant to extend their network of external contacts. Both the 9C and M9C materials could be followed by individuals in a self-directed learning scenario.

**Social enterprise** describes an organisational model where the aims are to achieve social benefit. Although the aim is different – social benefit rather than profit – the approach to achieve this is in many ways like a for-profit business. Many refugee support organisations will be social enterprises.

**Threshold concepts** are troublesome ideas that in some cases may be counterintuitive but that are key to making progress in the topic being learned. Once mastered they permanently alter the learners' concept of the topic and are difficult to unlearn/forget.

**Transformative learning circles** are mutually supportive small learning groups where the facilitator is there to organise rather

than to teach. The idea has been developed in the Nordic countries and applies to adult education.

**UDL** stands for Universal Design for Learning which follows the principle that if you make learning more accessible for one group of people then you are making it more accessible to all. This echoes the idea of universal design in architecture where help for disabled people tends also to benefit others. The M9C and 9C programmes were developed to follow UDL principles.

## Appendix 2: Learner journey mapping for quality evaluation

### Creating a learner journey map

A learner journey map is a timeline that highlights the learner experience over time, from the moment they learn about your course, through the decision to sign up, over the lifetime of the course and the first few weeks after the course when they put into practice what has been learned. By plotting the learner experience, the organisation offering the course can identify potential weak points and focus on improving the quality of the experience.

The timeline of the journey map consists of the different stages involved in the journey. Before the course is run for the first time, the organisation can only imagine the different stages and reactions of the learners. After one iteration it will be possible to get feedback from the learners about their experience so that the journey map becomes more accurate and can be used as the basis for deciding on what needs to be improved and how.

### Stages of the M9C learner journey

Learner journey mapping involves identifying the key stages which a learner will go through. In the case of M9C, they might be the following:

1. Finding out about the course



2. Signing up to the course
3. The first session
4. Getting into the rhythm of updating and localising the 9C materials and facilitator guide
5. The last session, pitching the 9C BMC
6. Follow up actions to implement 9C

### Questions to build a learner journey map

Training organisations need to answer a number of questions to build the image of the learner journey. Learners themselves can provide information in relevant cases.

- How will the learner find out about the course?

- What will the sign-up process look like? Is it intimidating to certain learners?
- What impression will the first session leave the learner with?
- What factors will increase motivation?
- How will participants be supported to put their learning into practice at the end of the course?

### Follow up actions

As a quality evaluation tool, learner journey maps can be re-visited after each iteration of the course to discuss whether the framework is accurate (eg were all the stages correctly identified) and to discuss any weak points where learner moods were lower

than expected and how these could be improved (eg. Perhaps the first session was not welcoming to all learners).