Using capstone approach to develop a curriculum in Healthy Ageing - SIENHA Project

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Background and purpose

SIENHA (Strategic and Innovative European Network for Education in Healthy Ageing - HA), is an ERASMUS+ project, where seven HEIs aim to develop education for health care professionals that promote HA across lifespan (Foster , 2021).

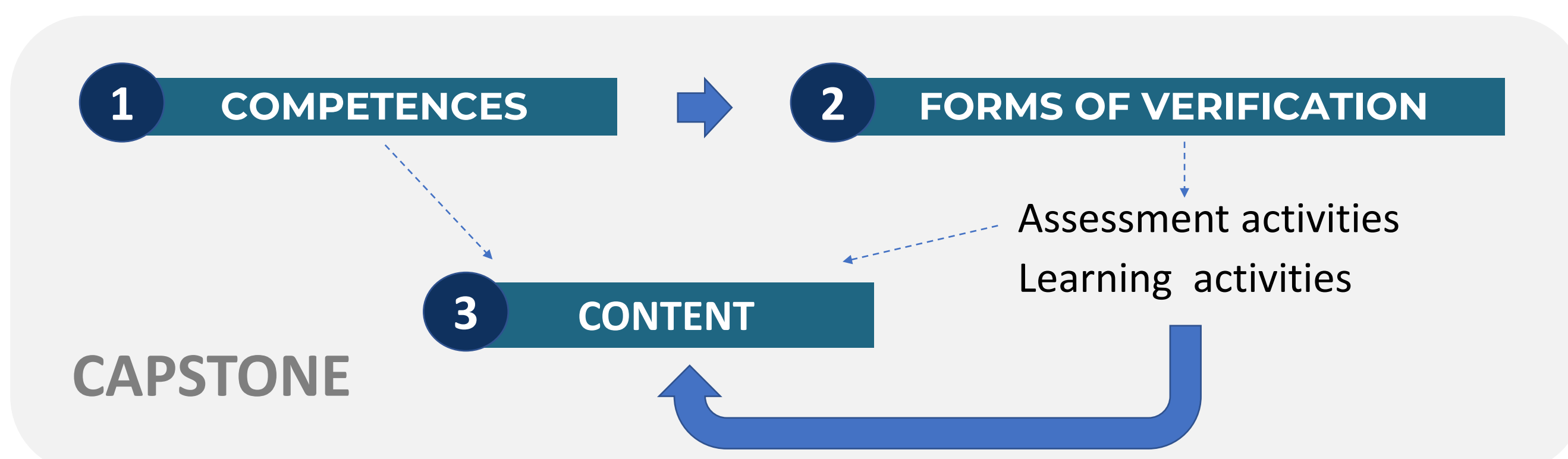The authors will present the process of developing the curriculum of 60 ECTS for EQF level 7.

Description

Under the concept "competence-based education", SIENHA developed a competence framework, based on the Canmeds model, to be used as the guide on developing the educational curriculum for HA approaches.

The following steps were unconventional. Instead of starting the discussion about the content to achieve the competences, we started the discussion about how we would verify those competences., for which the capstone approach was used.

Capstone stands for a project in real life (Chamberlain, 2020), where different disciplines, competences, skills and knowledge need to be integrated, contextualized and applied. It makes clear what is expected from students' performance and which type of content and learning experiences are needed, promoting an alignment between competences, teaching and assessment methods.

After the definition of the models of verification of competences, was defined the content needed to prepare students to acquire the competences and perform at the desired level.

Summary of use

We came to the structure of four capstones where competencies are assessed in practice and real context and content is learned based on needs to develop the project.

Most of the programme is developed in contact with practice and adjusted to the respectives contexts.
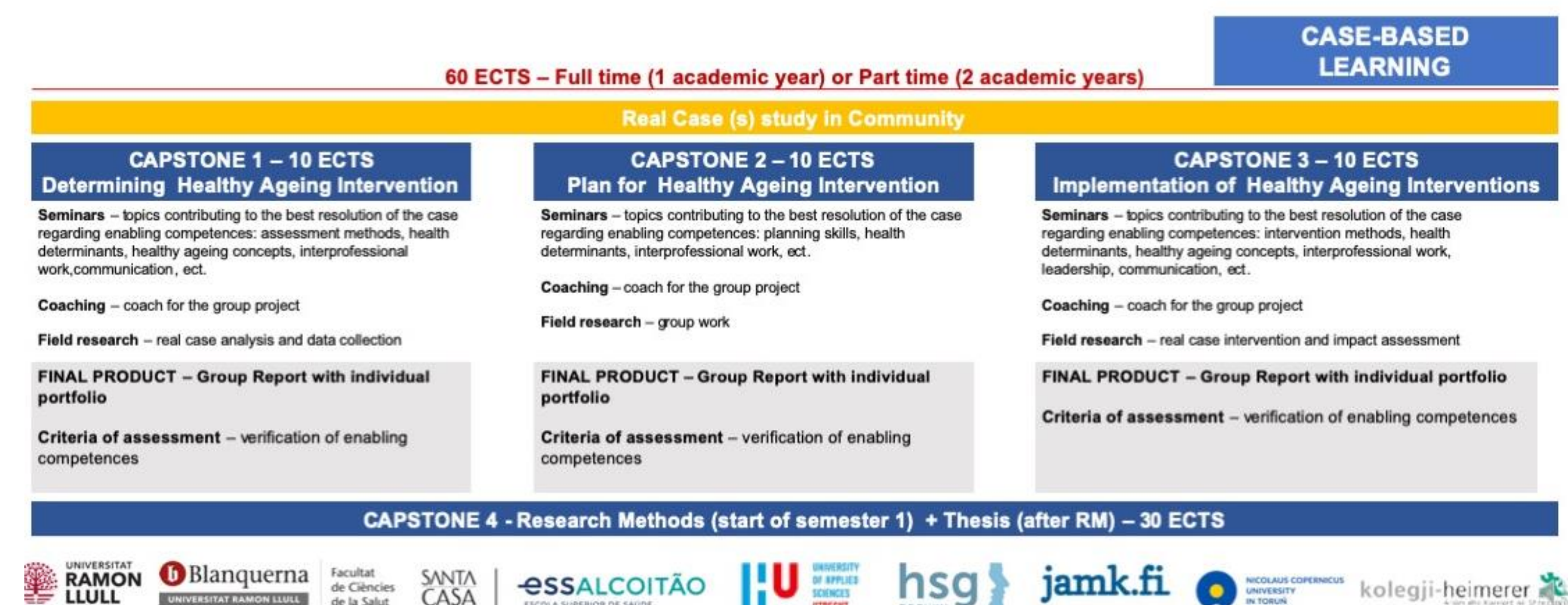
The final product validation was done in two rounds of nominal groups and validated by the consortium.

Importance

The Healthy Ageing paradigm focusing on a process across lifespan requires innovation in educational, social and health environments. Professionals, namely Physiotherapists, should be able to develop competences that promote this process. Sharing the capstone approach can be of relevance to other programmes aiming to education that facilitates contextualized competences.

When talking about competence-based learning or capstone approach, the focus is usually on the benefits for the students and how much meaningful learning should be promoted from practice.

In this project we used these concepts and approaches to facilitate the development of education by guiding the reasoning from teachers and educational developers.

References

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