How to create a responsive learning community (RLC)?

1   Problem

The responsive learning community approach in teaching is the way of performing the teaching process by emphasizing social, emotional and academic growth in a strong, tolerant and safe learning environment. This approach consists of practical strategies for helping the students to build academic and social-emotional competences on a daily basis. This guideline may help everyone who would like to implement the RLC in their environment.

2   Context

Epic seeks to increase employability through closer collaboration between students and industry, by promoting active and problem-based learning, and by promoting international collaboration.

A further goal is to increase the labour market relevance of education through closer collaboration between industry and academia, and making the students better prepared for both national and international labour markets in a globalized world as well as increasing the students learning outcome by promoting active learning methods, based on students solving real-life problems.

3   Factors that affect RLC

- Aversion to new methods.
- Reliability.
- Overall aims of the engaged sites.
- Engagement of involved parties.

4   Solution

There are different types of implementations of the RLC into academic environment. One of the proposed approaches is to make the key steps which directly impacts students behaviour and approach in learning process. The following steps have been introduced as an anchors to the best practices. As the Epic project is literally a living lab project where everything is very dynamic the following guidelines are open to be adopted and adjusted accordingly to the needs.

- Responsive advisory meeting – the routine that builds meaningful relationships between teachers and students as peers. The key components of this segment are: arrival welcome, announcements, acknowledgments and activity to establish team building process.
- Investing students in the roles – students collaborate with each other and with supervisors to establish solution expectations based on goals and outcomes of the project. This phase should also include the setting of the project management process and individual roles in working groups.

- Active teaching – a straightforward, developmentally appropriate strategy for delivering curriculum content. Components: presentation, explanation, illustration, demonstration, open discussion.
- Students practice – students work in groups or individually. Study, explore, practice and discuss the presented content during the meetings. This should be done under the supervisor guidance. All ideas and milestones created during this process should be presented to the supervisor in periodic reports form.
- Students self-assessment – students should be able to assess themselves in P2P or group sessions when working. This should specifically include the evaluation of the progress in delivering the final solution and their engagement in the project.

5   Common mistakes

- Not sufficient engagement of the students and/or teachers and/or company supervisors.
- Lack of clear understanding of the expected outcomes of work.