Erasmus Mobility Academy
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DOCUMENT Course Description
ISSUED 8 October 2026

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Digital Literacy: Teaching Students How Platforms Are Designed

Confiscating the phone ends the disruption and teaches nothing. This week turns the European Commission's own list of what should be switched off for minors into lessons your students can run themselves.

DURATION **5 days · 25 hours**	LANGUAGE **English (B1+)**	GROUP SIZE **Max 20 participants**
DAILY SCHEDULE **09:30–15:00** Monday to Friday, with a break for lunch	AUDIENCE **All school levels** No specific prerequisites — open to all teachers and school staff.	CERTIFICATE **Attendance + Europass Mobility**
COURSE CENTRES **Antalya · İstanbul · İzmir · Mersin · Budapest · Bremen · Rome** Dates and cities of the scheduled sessions are listed on the course page.		

01 Overview

You build a short unit — two to four lessons for a real class — around a list written by the regulator rather than by us. In July 2025 the European Commission named, feature by feature, what an online platform should switch off for a minor. Your students learn to find those features, name them, and turn them off.

- **Monday** — you audit what your students can already do, competence by competence. That gap list is the specification for everything you build.
- **Tuesday** — you compare the default settings platforms publish for teen accounts with the Commission's list, and see what an account discloses before anyone touches a setting.
- **Wednesday** — the persuasive features: infinite scroll, autoplay, streaks, notifications timed to pull attention back.
- **Thursday** — the feed and the AI inside it: what the platform was told, what it inferred, and what it must warn a child about.
- **Friday** — you teach a segment of your unit to the room, then rewrite it on the strength of what happened.

Nothing here is a talk about screen time. Every feature examined during the week is one a student can go and find in an app they use, or see demonstrated, and every lesson you build is tied to a numbered competence with its own evidence that a student can do it. You go home with that unit, its gap list, and a written note of where your role ends and a safeguarding process begins.

02 Course description

A phone confiscated mid-lesson solves the disruption in front of you. It teaches the student nothing about why the app in their hand was built to be difficult to put down. Most internet-safety guidance stops where the confiscation stops: rules about behaviour, nothing about design.

This week is organised around a document that does the opposite. On 14 July 2025 the European Commission published its guidelines on the protection of minors online under Article 28(1) of the Digital Services Act. They are unusually specific, and their own structure gives the week its shape: what an account discloses by default, how an interface is designed, how a feed is assembled, and what a platform owes a user who reports something.

Say plainly what they are. The guidelines are not binding law. The Commission states that it will use them as a benchmark when it judges whether a platform meets its obligations, and that following them does not by itself make a platform compliant; only the Court of Justice of the European Union can interpret Article 28(1) authoritatively. That distinction matters the first time a parent asks you whether an app is “illegal”.

The week then works through that structure: the default settings a minor’s account should arrive with, the persuasive design features the guidelines name one by one, and the recommender systems and AI features in the feed, which the guidelines treat as a risk to be tested rather than a neutral convenience. Each is a mechanic a student can find, name and switch off, which is a different lesson from being told to use the phone less. Where students have no accounts of their own, as in most primary classes, the same lessons run from screenshots or a teacher demonstration.

Every lesson built during the week is tied by name and number to a DigComp competence. “Internet safety” is a topic, and topics are hard to teach and impossible to assess. But 4.2 Protecting personal data and privacy and 4.3 Supporting wellbeing are two different jobs, with different evidence that a student can do them. The list comes from DigComp 3.0, the European Union’s own digital competence framework, published by the Commission’s Joint Research Centre in November 2025.

There is also machinery behind you that most teachers never hear about. Every member state has a national Safer Internet Centre, and the guidelines themselves devote a section to reporting and user support. You locate your own country’s centre during the week and write down where your job ends and theirs begins. How to respond to an incident after it happens is the work of Cyberbullying: Prevention and Response in Schools; checking whether a claim or image is true is the work of Media Literacy: Teaching Students to Verify What They See; and attention, phones and school rules are the work of Digital Wellbeing: Attention, Phones and School Life.

03 Learning outcomes

01 Audit what your students can currently do against named DigComp 3.0 competences, and identify which of them nothing in your curriculum covers.

02 Compare the teen-account defaults platforms publish with the settings the European Commission says a minor's account should arrive with, and teach students to run the same check.

03 Teach the persuasive design features by name — infinite scroll, autoplay, streaks, artificially timed notifications — as things a student can find and switch off rather than as reasons to use the phone less.

04 Explain to a class how a recommender feed is assembled, and what a platform must warn a child about when an AI feature is involved.

05 Teach a segment of your own unit to a live audience, revise it on what happened, and state where your role ends and a safeguarding process begins.

04 Methodology

The Regulator's List, Not Ours	Every feature examined during the week is named in a published European Commission document, and participants work from that document rather than from a trainer's opinion about screen time.
Checked Live, Not on Slides	Default settings, notifications and feed behaviour are examined live in the room, on demonstration screens and, if you wish, on your own phone, so what participants teach afterwards is something they have verified themselves.
Named Competences, Not a Topic	Each lesson built during the week is tied to a numbered DigComp 3.0 competence with its own evidence of success, so the unit can be assessed rather than only delivered.

05 Daily programme

Day 1

What Students Can Already Do, and What They Cannot

- **Icebreaker:** each participant writes down the last thing they told a class about being safe online, without naming a rule. The notes come back out at the end of the day
- DigComp 3.0: five areas, twenty-one competences, and the ones this week works in — with an honest note on what it leaves out
- **Why a named competence beats a topic:** what changes when "internet safety" becomes 4.2 Protecting personal data and privacy and 4.3 Supporting wellbeing, two jobs rather than one
- **The guidelines introduced:** what Article 28(1) of the Digital Services Act asks of platforms, and what the Commission says its guidelines are and are not
- **Working session:** each participant marks, competence by competence, what their students can currently do and where the gaps are. That gap list is the specification for everything built this week

Day 2

What the Account Gives Away Before Anyone Touches It

- **Warm-up:** "On, off or no idea?" — the trainer names five settings from today's list, such as read receipts, autoplay and like counts, and participants answer from memory for an app they use; the "no idea" answers are counted, and no one needs to take out a phone
- Age assurance (how a platform checks a user's age) and registration: what a platform is expected to establish before a minor gets an account
- Default settings, compared with the guidelines' list using the platforms' published teen-account defaults (and, optionally, your own device) — autoplay and live streaming, push notifications and core sleep hours, likes and reaction counts, streaks, the "… is typing" indicator, read receipts, account recommendations, filters linked to negative effects on body image
- 4.2 Protecting personal data and privacy: what the account discloses when nobody has changed anything
- **Output:** one lesson in which students audit an app's settings against that list, with its evidence of success — by screenshot or teacher demonstration where students have no accounts

Day 3

The Features Built to Hold Attention

- **The persuasive design features the guidelines name:** scrolling without end, the extra action required to refresh, automatically triggered video, notifications timed to regain attention, notifications that pretend to come from another user, scarcity and urgency cues, and virtual rewards for repeated actions
- 4.3 Supporting wellbeing: teaching this as a competence with observable evidence rather than as advice about screen time
- What the list gives a teacher that a rule does not: a mechanic a student can find, name and switch off
- Time-management tools and nudges — what the guidelines expect platforms to offer, and what actually exists in the apps in the room
- **Output:** a lesson in which students audit an app against the guidelines' own list, by screenshot or teacher demonstration where students have no accounts

Day 4

The Feed, and the AI Inside It

- **Recommender systems:** how a feed is assembled from what a user told the platform and what the platform inferred from behaviour, and why the two produce different feeds
- 1.2 Evaluating information: what a results page and a feed are each selecting for, and what students believe about the order things appear in
- **AI features in the guidelines:** chatbots and filters that should not switch themselves on, should be easy to turn off, and should warn a child that this is not a person and can be factually wrong. Each claim checked against an app in the room
- **Commercial practices, briefly:** what is being sold, and to whom
- **Reporting and user support:** what a platform owes someone who reports something, your own country's Safer Internet Centre, and where a lesson stops and a safeguarding process starts — written down in your school's terms
- **Output:** one lesson on how a feed is assembled and one on what a chatbot must tell a child, each with its evidence of success

Day 5

Teaching It to the Room

- Each participant teaches a fifteen-minute segment of their own unit in small groups, with the rest of the group as the class — the only honest test of a digital-literacy lesson is whether it survives an audience with phones
- Feedback on what the group actually did rather than what the plan intended, and one selected segment taught again to everyone
- **Revision time:** participants amend their unit on the strength of what happened, not on advice
- Course evaluation and reflection on learning
- Certification ceremony

PLEASE NOTE

Sessions run from 09:30 to 15:00, Monday to Friday, with a break for lunch. Timings can shift a little to suit the venue and the group.

Course activities and content may vary depending on participants' needs and the trainer leading the session; any changes are at the trainer's discretion. If there is a specific topic you would like included, please let us know — content-related requests must reach us at least 3 weeks before the course start date so we can confirm them in time.

06 Materials

- The European Commission's guidelines on the protection of minors online under Article 28(1) of the Digital Services Act (14 July 2025) — the document the week is organised around, worked with section by section
- DigComp 3.0, the European Union's Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (Joint Research Centre, November 2025) — used to name and assess each lesson built during the week
- The Better Internet for Kids portal and the national Safer Internet Centres, where each participant locates their own country's centre

07 How to prepare

- Your own phone is welcome but not needed: Tuesday and Wednesday work from demonstration screens, and you choose whether to open your own settings.
- It helps to have one class in mind, so the lessons you build fit real pupils; a general age group is enough.
- If your school has a written policy on phones or online safety, it helps to know roughly what it says; Day 4's boundary note can be written without it.

08 After the course

- Participants will receive their Certificate of Attendance and the co-signed Europass Mobility document.
- Participants will complete a general course evaluation and event survey.
- Participants will receive course materials, videos, photos, and PDF documents in both digital and print formats.
- Follow-up support: self-evaluation materials are provided. Depending on the group, an email group may be set up so that participants can keep exchanging ideas.

09 Why this is Erasmus+ eligible

Of the capabilities the Erasmus+ Programme Guide lists under its digital transformation priority — the skills citizens of all ages need to "live, learn, work, exercise their rights, be informed, access online services, communicate, critically consume, create and disseminate digital education content" (Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2026, Part A – Priorities of the Erasmus+ Programme, p. 8) — this week is built on one: critical consumption. Students are taught to locate, name and switch off the specific platform features the European Commission set out for minors, rather than to hear a talk about screen time. The participant returns with a short taught unit for a real class, each lesson tied to a numbered competence and to evidence that a student can demonstrate it.

10 What the course fee covers

INCLUDED IN THE COURSE FEE

- 25 hours of training and course materials
- Certificate of Attendance + Europass support
- On-site local support throughout the week

ARRANGED SEPARATELY BY THE PARTICIPANT

- Travel to the host city — invitation letter on request
- Accommodation — we share recommended options
- Travel & health insurance

ISSUED BY

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COURSE PAGE

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ABOUT ERASMUS MOBILITY ACADEMY

Erasmus Mobility Academy (OID: E10304561) is an Erasmus+ training provider offering professional development courses for educators, school staff and youth workers across Europe. Our courses are designed for international mobility — open to participants travelling from a country other than the host country — and support schools in building lasting institutional capacity. We provide structured learning, logistical guidance and certification with Europass.