

# CINEL

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## 1. Facts about the institution

Name of institution	CINEL
URL of institution	<a href="http://www.cinel.pt">www.cinel.pt</a>
Country	Lisbon, Portugal
Number of Employees	60
Revenue in 2005	
Experiences with e-learning since	Since 2001
Business sector	Vocational Training Centre for the Electronics Industry
Target group/participants in b-learning	CINEL employees CINEL trainees from initial vocational education and training CINEL trainers Public in general
Content	English, ICT, domotic, business start-ups In 2006, the english course is the only one available
Form	B-learning
Interviewed people	Helena Passos, distance learning trainer and training coordinator

## 2. How the institution used e-learning

### 2.1. The courses

The ICT, domotic and business start-ups distance learning courses promoted by CINEL were developed in the framework of an EQUAL project. The English course was developed with CINEL own resources.

The ICT, the domotic and the business start-ups courses are available through the Internet (online). These courses are b-learning courses that lasts 100 hours each one, divided in 70% traditional training and 30% online training (asynchronous and synchronous sessions).

The English course is an e-learning course (synchronous and asynchronous sessions) organised in 6 levels: 1 initial level, 2 intermediary levels and 1 advanced level with 150 hours each one (100 hours of asynchronous sessions and 50 hours of synchronous sessions); 1 business English level and 1 electronics and telecommunications level with 250 hours, each one (200 hours of asynchronous sessions and 50 hours of synchronous sessions).

### 2.2. Number of employees involved

32 trainees took part in the ICT, domotic and business start-ups courses; the same trainees took part in the 3 courses; 11 of them had special needs (they were either blind or had some physical disability).

During the last 6 years, 720 trainees attended the English course.

### 2.3. E-learning platform and technology issues

The ICT, domestic and business start-ups courses are available through a platform designed by CINEL in the framework of the EQUAL project Domotic@online.

The English course contents are available through CINEL web site (access via username and password); the online synchronous sessions are available through the MSN virtual community, once a week, every Friday night, between 20 and 22 p.m.

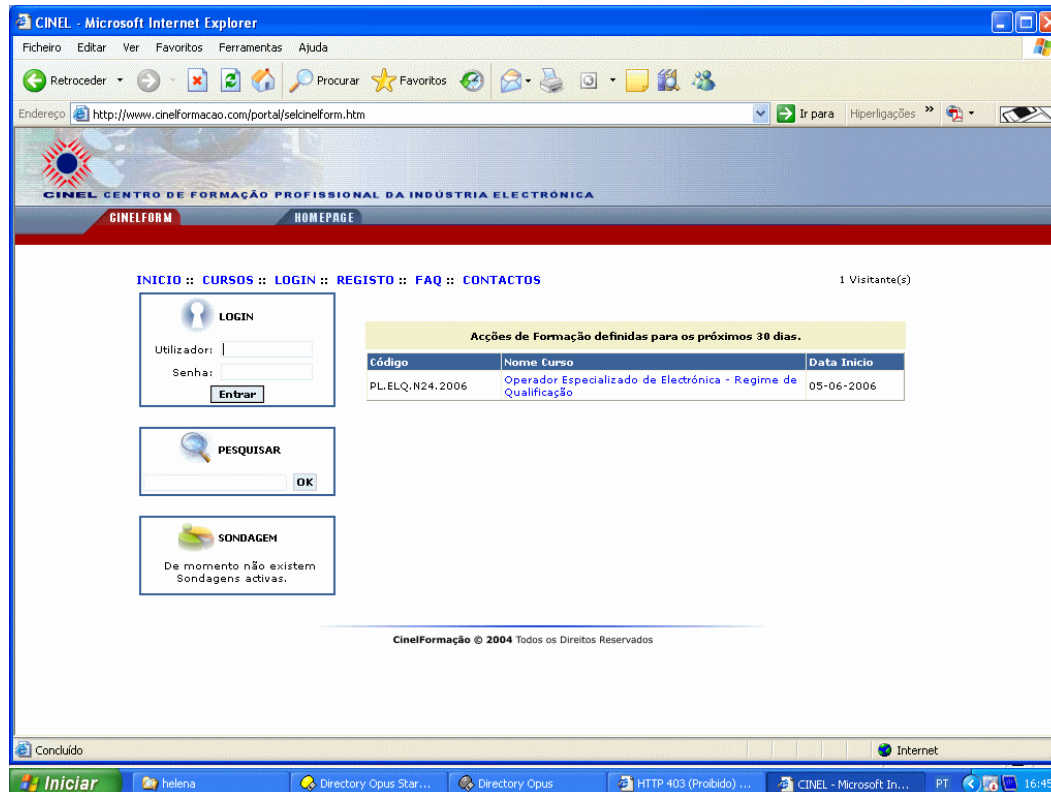


Fig. 1 – Screenshot – entrance page (CINEL platform).



Fig. 2 – Screenshot - entrance page of the ICT course (CINEL platform).

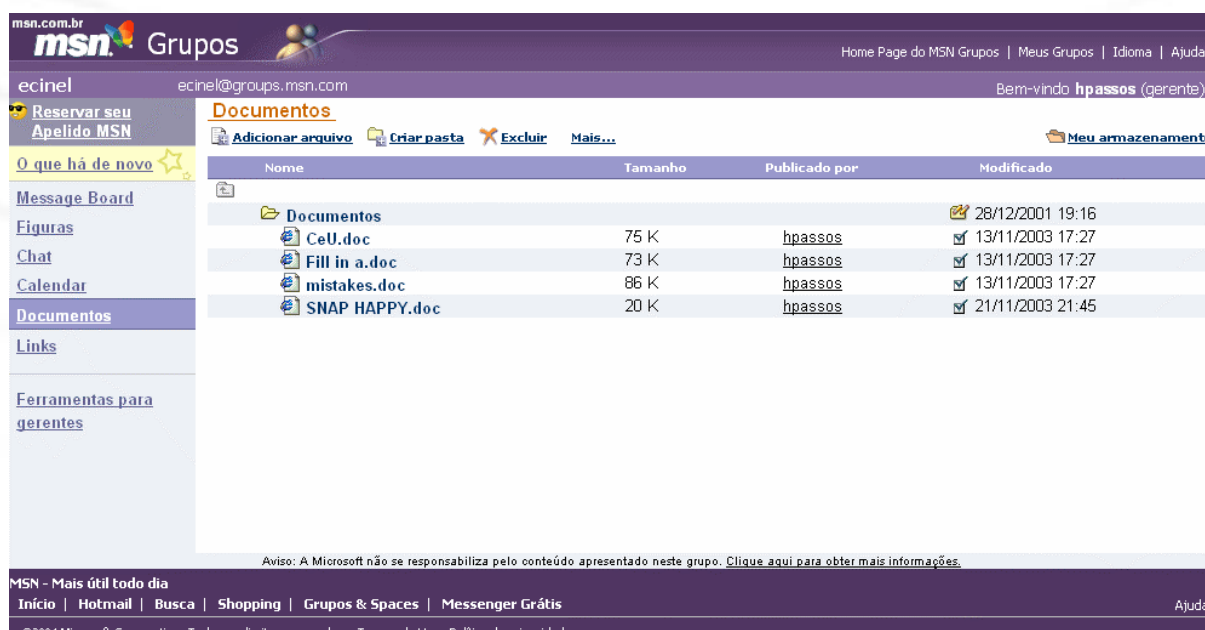


Fig. 3 – Screenshot - English course online virtual community.

## 2.4. Course development

The ICT, the domotic and the business start-ups courses were developed by CINEL staff members and like other EQUAL projects, have passed through the following phases:

- Training needs assessment and characterization
- LMS conception and development

- Testing
- Improvement activities resulting from the test phase
- Dissemination of results and good practices

The English course was developed by Helena Passos (CINEL trainer) to answer to CINEL employees, trainees and trainers' specific needs. The low level of knowledge of the trainees from other CINEL technical courses combined with their need to read and understand technical books and documents in English, were the two fundamental reasons to develop the English course. The course is under improvement changes over the last 6 years to keep up with trainee's requirements.

*Advantages of the platform:*

As long as the data are inserted, the learning management system is easy to handle.

*Desadvantages of the platform:*

- A very formal/rigid system concerning management and course conception;
- The chat and the forum are very formal and very little stimulating;
- There is no possibility of sending "smiles" or other kind of motivation/inducing items for the reinforcement of the trainees' performance.

## **2.5. Course administration**

To access to the online training courses, trainers have to register themselves on the platform. The contents and the entrance assessment test are available online. The platform possesses a virtual secretary to support learning process. Trainers can use e-mail to send assignments or, for example, a digital grammar to trainees

## **3. Effects and outcomes of the e-learning activities**

### **3.1. Completion rates**

In the English course, over the last 6 years, 12 dropouts have occurred and 10 trainees didn't finish the course on their first attempt.

According to the trainer responsible for the contents conception and also by the course coordination, this is a very good completion rate, especially taking into consideration that dropouts are due more to the trainees' schedule incompatibilities with the synchronous training than to other reasons or motivations.

### **3.2. Satisfaction**

According to the trainer' perception, the trainee's level of satisfaction with the English courses is total.

In the first 3 years, the trainees' marks raised from 1.5 to 3.2. According to the English trainer' perception, the English course gave a good contribution to achieve these results.

At this point, it's important to stress out that the English course was conceived to help CINEL trainees to improve their performance in other courses.

## 4. Challenges and barriers

Barriers:

“People don’t take e-Learning serious”.

Challenges:

In general, young people accept e-Learning in a much easier way than others, and they are also more open-minded to synchronous activities. On the other hand, adults are much more responsible when it comes to tasks like exploring contents, and they are much more organized and self-disciplined than young people. To find the most suitable teaching approach to answer to these different learning processes is an important challenge to overcome.

The need of constant improvements, either on the contents level or on the ways of interacting with the trainees is, also, a very defying challenge.

## 5. Success factors

The identified success factors are:

- Trainer’s dynamism and ability to establish a good relationship with trainees;
- Trainer’s good preparation to answer to the different levels of trainee’s knowledge and exigency;
- Existence of interactive and rich contents.

## 6. E-learning investments, developmental costs and operational costs

The costs reported are exclusively related to the contents conception and development (around 1.500 €).

The true benefit is the added-value that the trainees got through this training, helping them in their professional life.