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Escola de **Referência** Profissional
de **vínculos**, de **afetos**
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ESCOLA PROFISSIONAL DE AVEIRO

COMPROMISSO EDUCATIVO

2025-26



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à Escola de Todos!

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II. Context

The Educational Project of the Escola Profissional de Aveiro (EPA) is grounded in an Educational Commitment. This is a fundamental commitment: to serve students well, as well as their families and employer organizations. From this arises an internal conviction, embraced by the entire School Community and also by the Educational Community at large, of the need to do more and do better every day; all share the conviction that the education of the person, and of that person's personal and social competencies, must be the primary and active foundation for the construction of any technical or professional knowledge.

Because this is so, and because it is a Commitment that this School truly wishes to enter into with everyone — the School Community and the Educational Community — Educational Project and Educational Commitment shall mean one and the same thing in this and in other documents that affirm this house of Vocational Education.

EPA defines itself as a non-denominational and intercultural school

In developing its Educational Commitment, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro (EPA) makes explicit the mission and vision it holds regarding the education and training that young people should receive for their individual, collective, and professional lives.

On the one hand, its mission is its reason for being — that which justifies its continued existence and makes this regionally based school a national and international benchmark in quality and social responsibility in education and training for life.

As for its vision, this is reflected in the desirable image that the School seeks to achieve in the future.

Accordingly, in both its mission and its vision, EPA seeks to establish the model, the fundamental option, and the identity of a house of education and training.

The Educational Project of the Escola Profissional de Aveiro is not to be confused with any particular educational doctrine, since it neither adopts nor promotes any ideological principles underlying a given conception of the Human Subject, of Education, or of School, nor does it seek to align itself with any moral, racial, religious, political, economic, or other such options.

It is recognized that education and training are of crucial importance to the sustained development of today's society and, in that sense, there is today no professional, social, political, or moral activity whose real and meaningful effectiveness does not result from educational action, from the earliest age through adulthood.

For this reason, EPA's Educational Project must not and cannot disregard the characteristics and potential of each student. In fulfilling its mission to educate and train, EPA recognizes and practices the duty to interpret and respect each student's pace, enabling the positive affirmation of their personality and developing and enhancing their intellectual, emotional, moral, and social aptitudes and abilities.

On these grounds, EPA fulfills its educational function by being guided by the principles, values, goals, and strategies that best contribute to building the identity of an inclusive and intercultural school, in a mission capable of positively shaping the life of each individual so that each individual may, in turn, positively shape the lives of all.

Accordingly, in alignment with the policy set forth in the Portuguese Basic Law on the Education System, EPA embraces, within its mission, the practice of active citizenship as essential to a participatory educational and training process, both individual and collective, that calls for reflection and action on the issues experienced by each person and by society as a whole.

This is an educational and training action grounded in attitudes, practices, and behaviors that express a certain way of being in society, taking human rights as a reference point, namely the values of equality, democracy, and social justice. As a responsible educational and training model, EPA includes in its mission the purpose of contributing to the development of responsible, autonomous, and supportive individuals who know and exercise their rights and duties in dialogue and in respect for others, with a democratic, pluralistic, critical, and creative spirit.

Within this framework, recognizing that the School constitutes an important context for learning and for the responsible exercise of citizenship and interculturality, and that it reflects concerns

that cut across society, EPA, following the guidelines established by the Ministry of Education and Science, develops — both transversally and through specific curricular offerings and national and international projects with different partners — fundamental dimensions such as: human rights education; environmental education/sustainable development; road safety education; financial education; consumer education; entrepreneurship education; gender equality education; intercultural education; development education; defense and security education/peace education; volunteerism; media education; the European dimension of education; and health and sexuality education.

EPA defines itself as a school of equality: equality of opportunity and gender equality

Because equality between women and men is a founding principle of a democratic society and an essential element of its development, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro guarantees access to all education and training activities in accordance with the principles of equal opportunity and gender equality, specifically ensuring gender balance as well as the integration of gender issues as a cross-cutting theme in all educational and training actions. Throughout all training pathways, students shall be introduced to appropriate and positive language that incorporates and promotes gender equality, and they shall be exposed to information and news focused on equal opportunity as reflected across different types of publications.

III. Identity

A Brief History



The Aveiro Vocational School of Commerce (EPCA) began its operations, in temporary facilities, in the 1992/1993 academic year, with 2 classes totaling 50 students and offering only a single Technical and Commercial Practices program.



In 1993, EPCA moved to the Glicínias Building, in Eucalipto, and, in the 1999 academic year, following an amendment to its bylaws, it was renamed the Escola Profissional de Aveiro (EPA). Over the course of this development, it expanded its

educational offering to approximately 120 students and broadened its training provision to include new programs and socio-professional fields more closely aligned with the business reality of the district and the Aveiro region.



Due to the expansion of its educational offering and the growing number of students, between 2002 and 2004 EPA relocated its headquarters to the Cacia facilities and opened a training extension in Vale de Cambra. As a result, it came to serve a community of approximately 200 students and to offer several Level III programs, while also



introducing, for the first time, Level II Education and Training Courses and Technological Specialization Courses (CETs).

In 2005, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro inaugurated its current headquarters in Barrocas, Aveiro, in

a purpose-built facility designed to meet the actual training needs it had been develop.



In 2009, it established a new training extension — Espaço Eng. Victor Matos — also in the city of Aveiro, with 6 additional classrooms and various other facilities supporting education and training.



In 2010, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro expanded to the Aveiro Municipal Stadium, where it established a Technology Center (CATEC) — a space dedicated to the technological education and training of several vocational programs.



In 2010, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro established the Talent Park, adjacent to its headquarters in Aveiro. This is a space housing the education and training component

associated with the fields of socio-cultural animation and childcare support.



In 2015, a Branch Campus of the Vocational School was established in Sever do Vouga. Located in the VougaPark technology and innovation center, it houses a training unit focused on

technology: UniTEC – Technology Unit.



In 2016, UniEST – the Technological Specialties Unit – was established at the Estarreja EcoPark. In partnership with the Municipality of Estarreja, a vocational training unit was set up at the Estarreja EcoPark Business Center which, as

part of the development of Apprenticeship Courses (an AEVA-EPA offering), provides vocational training in close connection with the companies located in that industrial park.

Litoral Centro, October 10, 2016:

To the question, “Why not bring the school into the EcoPark?”, a concrete answer was given, culminating in the opening of the UniEST school at the Estarreja Business Center, located in the EcoPark Business Park. As a result of the joint work carried out by EPA – Escola Profissional de Aveiro and the Municipality of Estarreja, involving the companies located there and SEMA – Business Association, this innovative educational project comprises three programs attended by 90 students.



In 2017, UniAPI – Innovation Support Unit was established in Águeda. In partnership with the Municipality of Águeda and the social solidarity organization Os Pioneiros, a vocational training unit was set up in the former Mourisca do Vouga Primary School

which, in connection with the development of Apprenticeship Courses (which were subsequently developed by AEVA-EPA), provides vocational training closely linked to the companies of Águeda.

Diário de Aveiro, September 17, 2017:

“The Escola Profissional de Aveiro opened a new Qualification Unit, thereby extending its physical presence to the municipality of Águeda. UniAPI – the Innovation Support Unit – was launched with the support of Globaltronic through an apprenticeship program in Computer Technology: Network Installation and Management.

In this way, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro intends to expand its presence across several municipalities in the Aveiro region, through innovative teaching and learning strategies, increasingly and more effectively meeting, at close range, the qualification needs of the companies that make up the business fabric of the different industrial areas of the Aveiro region and surrounding areas”

“Within the framework of the partnership established between Globaltronic and EPA, which aims to support and contribute to the training, qualification, and professional integration of young people in a real work environment, Globaltronic has made itself available to integrate trainees into the company’s different production and development processes and to give them the opportunity to participate actively in the projects in which it is involved.

Globaltronic and HFA place a strong emphasis on their connection with the school community. In addition to providing development experiences, creating technological challenges, and offering exposure to the business world, this relationship represents added value for both schools and students.

It is with great satisfaction that we currently have on our staff young people who studied at this educational institution, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro (EPA), and that is why we are committed to and supportive of this project, so that in the coming years that number may continue to grow and this initiative may prove to be a successful investment.”



In 2017, UniAVE – Business Development Support Unit was established in Albergaria-a-Velha. In partnership with Polivouga, S.A., a vocational training unit was set up

within the company which, as part of the development of Apprenticeship Courses (an AEVA-EPA offering), provides vocational training closely connected to the companies located in the industrial park of Albergaria-a-Velha.

Rádio TerraNova, October 23, 2017:

“The Escola Profissional de Aveiro began classes at its new Unit at Polivouga, in Albergaria-a-Velha. This marked the launch of the first program to operate at UniAVE – the Business Development Support Unit – recently opened in this city of the Aveiro region, with the support of Polivouga, the business association SEMA, and Colégio de Albergaria.

It is a Electronics, Automation, and Control Technician program intended for young people who have completed the 9th grade and wish to obtain a high school diploma together with a Level 4 professional certification as an Electronics, Automation, and Control Technician.

“This training program will take place entirely in a business environment, at PoliVouga, S.A., and will be developed through a fully innovative model involving this company and other companies in the technology sector, thereby providing the 20 new trainees with unique learning experiences in a real workplace setting.”

At the end of the program, which is expected to last approximately three years, employment is guaranteed for all trained technicians. In the words of Tiago Barros, General Director of Polivouga, S.A., “This program fills a gap in the supply of specialized technicians for industry. We need them, and they simply do not exist. Through this format, by bringing students into direct contact with the work environment, it fosters motivation in the learning process and reduces the time needed to adapt when entering the labor market. Everyone stands to benefit.”

Through UniAVE, in Albergaria-a-Velha, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro thus reinforces its work in providing vocational qualification closely connected to the companies and industrial areas of the Aveiro region.”



In 2017, an agreement/protocol was formalized with NEVA – the Vagos Business Association for the establishment, within that business association, of UniVIT – the Industrial Development Unit. Its purpose was to

develop, through collaboration and partnership, the vocational education and training required by NEVA’s member companies.

Diário de Aveiro, May 24, 2017:

“The Escola Profissional de Aveiro (EPA) is preparing to open its fourth training unit — after Aveiro, Sever do Vouga, and Estarreja, Vagos will be next, the institution’s director, Jorge Castro, announced yesterday. The future campus in Vagos, expected to open ‘soon,’ although no definite inauguration date has yet been set, will focus on technology. In its initial phase, only one program will be offered, one that ‘does not exist in the region’ and is uncommon in the country, serving to meet local ‘needs,’ the director added. At the outset, the program will be attended by a maximum of 30 students.”



In 2017, a collaboration agreement was entered into with Nestlé, headquartered in Avanca, Estarreja, for the development of joint education and training initiatives for young people in a real work

environment.

Diário de Aveiro, October 16, 2017:

“Classes will begin tomorrow at the new vocational training unit of the Escola Profissional de Aveiro (EPA), at Nestlé, in Avanca. Following the opening last year of UniEST – the Technological Specialties Unit – at the EcoPark Business Center in Estarreja, EPA is now extending its vocational qualification work directly into companies, training students for effective employment. At Nestlé, an Industrial Maintenance Technician in Metallurgy and Metalworking program will begin, intended for young people who have completed the 9th grade and wish to obtain a high school diploma together with a Level 4 professional certification as an Industrial Maintenance Technician.”

Diário de Aveiro, December 13, 2017:

"It is every child's dream: to go to school inside the factory that produces Cerelac, Chocapic, or Nestum. Not to mention Pensal, the flour named after the place in Avanca where Nestlé settled more than 90 years ago. That dream has become a reality for two dozen students from the Escola Profissional de Aveiro (EPA). Miguel Neto, director of the Avanca factory, confirms the pioneering nature of this initiative. 'It is the first time we have had a school inside the factory,' he points out.

Years ago, Nestlé tried to implement a similar solution by bringing students into the company as interns, 'but we observed that there was a gap between what we wanted and what the school was actually offering in terms of preparing those students,' the executive emphasized. So, the director continues, we moved toward this compromise solution, which is to have the students learning with us from the very beginning, in the same way we want them to work with us in the future.'

Teaching the company's culture is a priority, as though there were a family tradition to preserve. Joana Guerra is the Human Resources manager at Nestlé Avanca, and she has been the one conveying 'the safety and conduct rules that students must observe.' Joana Guerra recalls that 'they are very young students, and that means there must be an effort of adaptation so that they understand that, although they are attending school, they are not inside a school, and that social and behavioral skills are essential for the labor market.'"

Expresso, 16 de fevereiro de 2019

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Secundário O ensino profissional é uma alternativa para quem quer uma vertente mais prática

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Seis alunos do curso de Manutenção Industrial e dois de Eletrónica e Telecomunicações da Escola Profissional de Aveiro aprendem na fábrica do grupo Renault em Cacia. Foram pedidos pela empresa e no final dos cursos devem ficar empregados

In 2018, a collaboration agreement was entered into with CACIA-Renault, headquartered in Cacia, Aveiro, for the development of joint education and training initiatives for young people in a real work environment.

Rádio TerraNova, July 27, 2018

“Another EPA Partnership Protocol was signed today, this time with RENAULT CACIA. The ceremony was presided over by Michel dos Santos Domingues, Deputy Director of RENAULT CACIA, and Jorge de Almeida Castro, Director of the Escola Profissional de Aveiro.

In the view of Susana Silva, Human Resources Director at RENAULT CACIA, not everyone needs to hold a university degree. ‘There are roles for which a 9th-grade or 12th-grade education is sufficient. There are things that are not learned at a university and never will be,’ she added.

Ilda Costa, who is responsible for training at RENAULT CACIA, highlighted the distinctiveness of EPA students, stating that ‘they come to us having already developed values and attitudes that are the obvious result of work carried out by EPA’s teachers and technical staff, which greatly facilitates their integration into the company and throughout the entire learning process.’

‘Without a doubt, this project is a dream, an aspiration, and a necessity,’ said Constantino Pinto, the engineer responsible for the project. The idea arose from a need identified by the Factory and embraced by the entire management team, even becoming part of its Vision.

Because this is clearly a challenging project, Renault will begin with several programs in different areas, which makes it even more demanding and difficult. ‘The next three years will be very difficult,’ he reflected.

The challenge will not be only for the students, but also for the RENAULT CACIA tutors, who will have to learn to view the project as the continuation of key professions rather than as an undertaking that will consume time and undermine productivity. According to Constantino Pinto, his greatest challenge will be to keep EPA students motivated throughout the three years. ‘To understand that there is life beyond the computer and the keyboard,’ Ilda Costa added.

Jorge de Almeida Castro expressed his gratitude for the opportunity, emphasizing that the people leading the project make all the difference. ‘It is only possible for us to be here today because there are people who believe in the project, despite the inherent difficulties and the major challenges ahead,’ he stated.

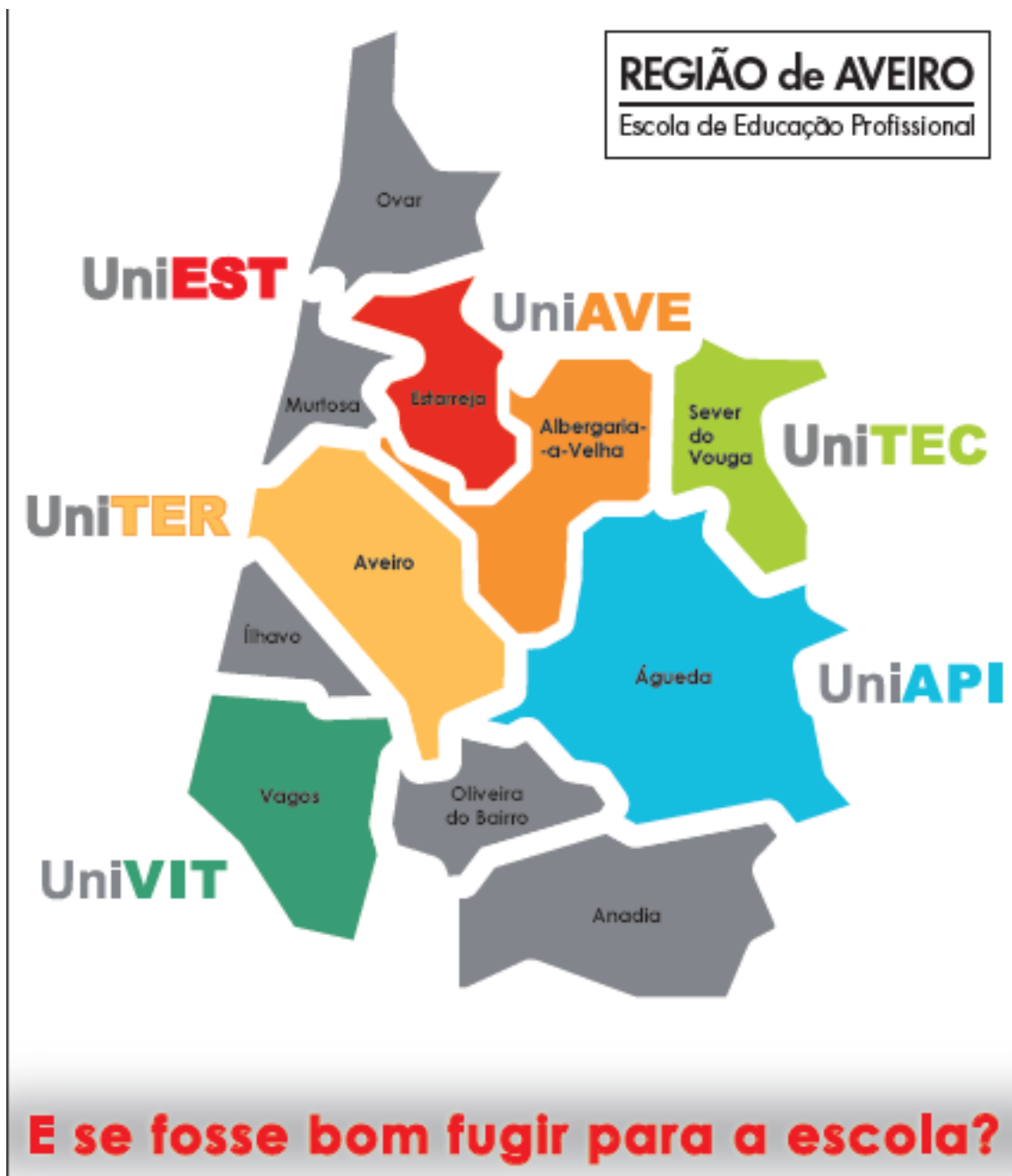
Michel Domingues, Deputy Director of RENAULT CACIA, reinforced the importance of all mid-level technical professions, which are in critically short supply in our region and in our country, and stressed the importance of changing our culture by valuing these qualifications, particularly Vocational Education.

The main objective of this project is to renew the pool of technicians in RENAULT CACIA’s workshops. To this end, Renault will sponsor the 2018–2021 training cycle, through alternating training for 10 young people with a view to their integration into the company at the end of the training cycle. These students/apprentices will be trained according to the company’s needs by its master technicians, who possess extensive experience and technical know-how, in alternation with the Escola Profissional de Aveiro.

The ten selected students, from the Industrial Maintenance Technician and Electronics and Telecommunications Technician programs, will work in the company’s Central, Mechanical, and Electronics Workshops, addressing critical areas such as turning, milling, metalworking, mechanics, and the diagnosis and repair of electronic equipment.”

Expresso, February 16, 2019:

“The school that recovers the students no one wants (...) six students from the Industrial Maintenance program and two from the Electronics and Telecommunications program at the Escola Profissional de Aveiro are learning at the Renault Group factory in Cacia. They were requested by the company and are expected to remain employed there at the end of the program. (...)”



IV. Present Day

Nearly 33 years later, in 2024, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro is now the only comprehensive vocational school, across its different education and training modalities, serving the 11 municipalities that make up the Aveiro Region.

Within the scope of its educational and training mission, EPA directly offers, during daytime hours, Type 2 and Type 3 Education and Training Courses, as well as Vocational Courses.

Indirectly, EPA also serves as the reference institution for the development of many other education and training activities promoted by its owning entity — AEVA — through other brands operating in association with its areas of expertise.

The School is authorized to offer 21 vocational programs leading to a Level 4 professional qualification, and it also stands out nationally as the school offering the largest number of basic-level Youth Education and Training Courses and class groups.

Today, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro is one of the largest vocational schools in the country, with approximately 800 students, and it is unquestionably distinguished for having been one of the schools that most rapidly understood and embraced the technological dynamics required by the educational and training environments of our time.

Indeed, in its modern facilities, the entire School and Educational Community interacts with the latest technology in education and training, whether through state-of-the-art interactive whiteboards installed in all education and training spaces, or through its own “technology plan,” a key feature of which is the assignment of a laptop computer to each student for learning both inside and outside the classroom.

This “Escola Profissional de Aveiro technology plan” has as its main goals greater effectiveness in the learning developed within the programs, particularly through the mobility it enables, as well as motivating students and teachers toward study and research — elements regarded as fundamental to the education and training of Portuguese youth today, particularly in technology-oriented programs.

This is not a project limited to the mere use of technology. Rather, it forms part of a broader technological initiative that extends to its UniTEC Branch Campus in Sever do Vouga, where work and training laboratories are installed.

Also central to its educational project, among the many distinguishing features that define it, are the differentiated pedagogies used in the classroom and in other education and training spaces, adapted to the dynamics and pace of each student and aligned with the specific nature of each subject area and each program.

In fact, by embracing and implementing differentiated pedagogies, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro grounds its educational and training work with students on a threefold foundation that it regards as essential: cooperation, collaboration, and interaction. This is reflected, on the one hand, in the use of alternative classroom approaches, such as cooperative, collaborative, and project-based work, and, on the other hand, in the use of new technologies to enhance learning and develop other personal and professional competencies through virtual environments.

In addition, using new technologies and within an environmental and sustainability-oriented framework, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro affirms its commitment to reducing and, wherever possible, eliminating the use of paper at school.

Another strong example of this school's educational project — and one that has attracted respect and attention from other educational institutions — is its support for students with special educational needs and/or learning difficulties, carried out in collaboration with their families.

Here, too, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro stands out as a rare and well-established example of original and effective support in the education and training of these students during their course of study and, subsequently, in their professional placement and follow-up.

Also worthy of note is the professional integration of the young people who complete their studies at the Escola Profissional de Aveiro. The strategy adopted before, during, and after attendance in the programs makes it possible to achieve an excellent success rate. Before a program begins, the procedure is to identify actual training needs in consultation with those who genuinely intend to employ students after program completion. During the program, through work-based learning, close engagement with employers becomes a reality, making it possible for virtually all graduates to secure their first job at the end of the program, while only a small percentage of graduates go on to higher education.

Lastly, the development of European projects is another area in which this school stands out, establishing itself as a leading institution in Portugal. Indeed, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro is distinguished as the Portuguese non-higher-education school that develops the largest

number of projects with other European schools. Whether through partnerships under European support programs or through its own initiatives, EPA maintains with schools from various countries a unique level of educational and training exchanges involving students, teachers, technical staff, other non-teaching staff, and school leaders.

The examples set out above, among the many others that could be given, are intended to convey an idea of the work embodied in the Educational Project of the Escola Profissional de Aveiro, which has established the school, within the landscape of leading Portuguese schools, as a unique model of practice. For this reason, it has been visited by Portuguese partners and by partners from more than 30 European and African countries, and cooperation agreements and strategic partnerships have been formalized with many of them.

As a result of all the work carried out, as well as the way in which it is carried out, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro became the first Portuguese school to be certified under a Quality Management System, through NP EN ISO 9001:2008.

In 2012, as it marked its 20th anniversary, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro became the first school in Portugal — and one of the very few worldwide — to receive internationally accredited Social Responsibility certification: SA 8000. In this way, it extended, in a qualified and certified manner, its status as the only Portuguese educational institution that is a member of RSO PT (the National Network for the Social Responsibility of Organizations).

In 2020, it became the first school in the country to receive the EQAVET Label. EQAVET (the acronym for the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training) is the reference instrument for promoting and monitoring the improvement of European vocational education and training systems.

EPA is therefore a responsible school in and for its time: serving students well; serving families well; serving organizations well. And it affirms, in its own way, the value of education: Education first. Education with purpose. Education with life at school.

Above all, EPA is a School of Care, Connection, and Technology.

V. Future

It is increasingly clear that EPA's future must be aligned with the education and training needs of young people who, within the framework of compulsory schooling now extended to the age of 18, require new technical and pedagogical models of work.

In addition, considering the objectives of vocational education and training, aligning them with the needs of organizations and also with employment prospects, EPA understands, within the framework of its working culture, that it must continue to advocate for vocational education for the Aveiro Region. To that end, it is guided by the following principles:

- ✦ Vocational education and training should be viewed on a regional scale, where employment opportunities are broader and where today's mobility facilitates access to the best training opportunities for employment.
- ✦ Despite respecting and valuing the characteristics of each of the 11 municipalities that make up the Aveiro Region, the dimension of need and opportunity made possible by this intermunicipal regional scale must not be overlooked.
- ✦ Even so, certain areas of specialization within the Region should be identified and valued, associating them with a given territory or area within the Region.

Indeed, employability has become highly mobile, with labor needs frequently shifting on at least a regional scale. In this sense, it is urgent to prepare the young people who attend, or wish to attend, vocational programs — future professionals — for this reality and, accordingly, to do so through a training model of its own and at a scale that incorporates this regional reality.

As a school that receives students from across the Aveiro Region, EPA thus sees the possibility of continuing to make a fundamental contribution to vocational education and training in this Region. To that end, it affirms the following:

- ✦ To place itself at the service of the strategy designed by the competent entities of the Aveiro Region, taking them on — and being recognized itself — as strategic regional partners for regional and national development: the Intermunicipal Community of the Aveiro Region (CIRA); the University of Aveiro (UA), namely through its four polytechnic schools; the Aveiro Region Business Council (CERAVEIRO), with its nine business associations; the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (IEFP); and the Qualifica Centers.

- To define itself — and be definitively recognized — as a School that naturally complements the other schools of the Region (in many cases as a genuine and unique alternative), welcoming students who, because of their characteristics, needs, and motivations, seek a specifically supported education and training pathway that brings them more successfully closer to the labor market and/or to higher education.

VI. Quality Policy

The Mission

As an institution dedicated to the education and training of human resources committed to the exercise of qualified professional activities, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro assumes the responsibility, through the mission of technical and vocational education, of developing qualifying education and training activities that may contribute to raising the cultural and educational level of the population and to the development of the region in which it operates.

The activity of the Escola Profissional de Aveiro is guided by the aim of providing its students with a comprehensive human education grounded in its personal, cultural, scientific, technical, and professional dimensions, thereby equipping them with appropriate preparation for the exercise of qualified professional activity.

It seeks to contribute to the fulfillment of the mission of Educating and Training for:

- ↻ knowing how to be
- ↻ knowing how to conduct oneself
- ↻ knowing how to do
- ↻ knowing how to think
- ↻ knowing how to feel

Guiding Principles and Objectives

In this way, the guiding principles and/or specific objectives that direct the daily work of the Escola Profissional de Aveiro are:

- ↻ To respond to the educational and training needs and demands of the region, positioning itself as an alternative and complementary offering to the traditional education system;
- ↻ To meet the interests and needs expressed by the region's business sector (industry, commerce, and services) regarding professional qualification;

- To promote in students a consistent education, training, and qualification aimed at building a professional profile aligned with the socio-economic fabric of the region, thereby contributing to its development;
- To provide students with a solid general, scientific, and technological education that allows for the possibility of continuing their studies;
- To emphasize partnership with the local, regional, national, and transnational spheres, from a perspective of collaboration and cooperation, thereby promoting pedagogical, technical, professional, scientific, and cultural experiences;
- To maintain a continuous openness to pedagogical, scientific, and technological innovation, as well as to the promotion of innovative experiences in professional development and workforce integration;
- To improve the quality of life of the entire school community;
- To contribute to the effectiveness of the educational community;
- To improve the effectiveness of the internal organization, adapting it to the intended objectives;
- To pursue the ongoing satisfaction of staff, students, families, companies, other institutions, and the surrounding community.

Measures

To implement the Quality Policy, the following measures are adopted and continuously improved:

- To implement a quality management system that promotes the development of self-assessment, innovation, and change strategies;
- To create conditions that motivate everyone who works and learns at the Escola Profissional de Aveiro to become involved in and committed to compliance with the requirements of the standard and to continuous improvement;
- To provide ongoing training for all teaching and non-teaching staff;
- To improve internal and external communication processes in accordance with the model of continuous improvement;

- To comply with the requirements that ensure quality and excellence in service delivery, in accordance with the applicable legislation and standards;
- To invest in environmental quality and in the improvement of working conditions, in compliance with health and safety standards.

Scope

It is understood that the development of an institutional culture based on Quality criteria, together with the resulting values and implications, may pave the way for improvements in the educational and training process, promoting its effectiveness by introducing a more efficient organization and by fostering a culture of rigor, innovation, and continuous improvement.

Quality can and should therefore constitute a tool that we all use in our daily organizational practice, regardless of the role we perform, and that enables us, by identifying and eliminating imperfections in the work we carry out, to pursue optimal performance through the ongoing improvement of our processes.

This Quality Policy, grounded in the principles of continuous improvement, is based on the planning and development of the Integrated Quality Management System — through the application of ISO 9001:2008 (Management System) and SA8000 (Social Responsibility), together with the requirements established under the EQAVET process — involving and committing all those who contribute to the fulfillment of the mission of the Escola Profissional de Aveiro.

This working model is based on an Integrated Quality Management System that is implemented within the School's owning entity — AEVA.

VII. Shared Vision in the Practice of Quality



VIII. Profile and Areas of Action

Quality and the Academic and Professional Success of the School's Programs

As made clear throughout this Educational Project, the quality and the level of academic and professional success of the education and training provided at EPA are fundamental. Accordingly, considering the EQAVET quality framework, it is important to verify and analyze all the factors and indicators present in the process.

To this end, the levels of academic success and employability associated with each program/course shall be measured annually through specific mechanisms under the responsibility of the Technical and Pedagogical Directorate, including, among others, the following elements:

- Completion rate
- Employability rate
- Employability rate within the training field
- Rate of continuation of studies

The verification and analysis of these elements shall result in an annual report, subject to review by the School's Technical and Pedagogical Directorate, which shall issue its opinion and decide on the subsequent measures to be implemented.

Recovery Mechanisms in Cases of Academic Underachievement

In keeping with the primary strategy of its vocational education and training project, EPA aims to provide an alternative education and training service, complementary to the network of schools in the Aveiro Region, that offers an appropriate response to young people experiencing learning difficulties. It thus seeks to be a genuine alternative for all those who wish to develop their different abilities and "multiple intelligences," finding here a more responsive and supportive teaching-learning approach.

The different support modalities are set out and developed in specific regulations prepared by the appropriate teams. Even so, some modalities/programs should be highlighted, namely: lack of competencies; tutoring programs to support study strategies, student guidance, and counseling; recovery and/or compensatory measures, namely extra support sessions outside regular class time; and specific language and science instruction programs.

Relevance of Training to Local, Regional, and National Needs

Through consultations with IEFP and with the employer business community, with the aim of aligning the training offer with human resource needs, EPA has been able to develop a more accurate understanding of those needs, particularly regarding unemployment and its variation over time and across indicators.

Likewise, EPA analyzes the data made available by Education Statistics on the evolution of enrollment, dropout, and retention rates. Regarding the regional area in which EPA operates, these data point to a scenario of need, both in terms of quantity and quality, in the provision of support to young people at risk due to learning difficulties and/or a lack of appropriately tailored training opportunities.

In addition, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro currently maintains effective partnerships with more than 500 companies in the Aveiro Region. Only in this way has it been possible to promote, each year, work-based learning placements/internships for approximately 600 students.

In this context, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro has formalized partnership agreements with various industrial, commercial, and service companies in the Aveiro Region, promoting and anticipating an innovative “dual” model of education and training known as “from courtship to marriage.”

The School’s Institutional Involvement in the Economic, Social, and Cultural Fabric

In addition to its partner companies and the many formal agreements it has established, which include virtually every local and/or regional stakeholder, particular note should be made of its

partnerships with the Child and Youth Protection Commissions; the Aveiro Social Network; IDT; Escola Segura; IEFP; business associations; IPDJ; CIRA; surrounding and regional schools; the University of Aveiro and its four polytechnic schools.

Regarding international partnerships, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro carries out significant exchange activities with different training entities based in several European countries. To this end, it has joined with various international partners and submitted a number of applications for projects under the ERASMUS+ Programme, Youth in Action, and other initiatives.

In addition, given the presence of different perspectives arising from the economic, social, and cultural fabric of the region, the School continues to place particular emphasis, within its sphere of action, on the work carried out in and through the School's Advisory Council.

Accordingly, taking into account the opinions, requests, and proposals put forward by the entities that lead the region's business and social fabric, in response to the needs identified, and in line with the objectives of vocational education, as well as of other specialized educational offerings, EPA intends to continue serving the region in which it operates by responding to its training needs and to its aspirations and expectations for socioeconomic and sociocultural development.

Alignment of Training with the Regional Network of Vocational Education and Training Offerings

Regarding the program requested, it is known that the existing provision in the region is insufficient, as confirmed by various opinions issued by different institutions. In fact, according to the documents that have been developed within the framework of the school network in the Aveiro Region, the need for the type of provision delivered by EPA within the broader educational and training offer has been clear, namely vocational programs regarded as relevant by companies.

The documents issued by various entities, particularly by IEFP, but also by organizations representing the business sector, clearly identify the existing education and training needs.

The educational offering included each year in EPA's proposals has complemented the remaining provision proposed by other schools in the region, and in some cases has reinforced the urgent need for additional training opportunities.

Equal Access to Opportunities

Within the framework of this Educational Project / Educational Commitment, particular care is taken to use appropriate instruments for informing, guiding, and directing candidates seeking admission to the School, especially through partner entities that lead us directly to the population targeted by the education and training we provide — namely regional institutions such as private social solidarity institutions (IPSS), the Child and Youth Protection Commissions (CPCJ), Local Social Development Contracts (CLDS), the Social Security Institute, IDT-CRI, the Reintegration and Prison Services (IRS), among others.

For this purpose, we rely on the Qualifica Centers (especially AEVA's CQ-RA), on the distribution and publication of various informational and explanatory materials about the programs offered, and, in particular, on an admissions office where equal opportunity in access to the education and training provided is addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Work-Based Learning

Since 1992, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro has provided training in a real work environment, namely in the form of training internships, involving companies as active participants in a training model that has promoted effective employment in the companies where students complete their internships.

Contributing to this has been a school-company partnership model unique in Portugal, in which the Multidisciplinary Team of the Escola Profissional de Aveiro, through its Professional Placement and Follow-Up function, and specifically through its team of “training-employment officers,” places, follows, integrates, and employs motivated and well-prepared students/trainees/apprentices/professionals in companies across the Aveiro Region, enabling them to make a decisive contribution to the needs of those companies and to the country’s economic development.

This has been a successful model and, therefore, one that should be continued and further improved.

Regarding follow-up and monitoring during professional placement, it should once again be emphasized that this entire process is the responsibility of a team exclusively dedicated to

placement, monitoring, and post-training follow-up. For this purpose, the service relies on dedicated professionals and on an IT platform that supports the management of the entire technical and pedagogical process. This is an online application that enables interaction among the students, the school, and the company. In this way, all related processes — namely integration, attendance, and assessment — are shared, easily monitored, and readily measured.

Accordingly, for EPA, the monitoring of processes, both technical and pedagogical, is essential, particularly for its continuous improvement process. At the level of monitoring the organization of training, monthly attention is given to compliance with the training workload, schedules, compliance with pedagogical guidelines of a curricular nature, and the activity plan. As regards the performance of class groups and individual students, their behavior and attendance are monitored daily, and their academic achievement is monitored monthly. It should also be emphasized that, in addition to the quantitative monitoring of these processes, the satisfaction of students, parents/guardians, and companies is likewise monitored and measured.

Mechanisms to Support Graduates' Workforce Integration and to Monitor Their Post-Training Trajectory

EPA has made use of the necessary annual adjustments to its Internal Regulations in order to ensure greater effectiveness in its educational and vocational action. Accordingly, this document is reviewed every year and amendments are introduced with a view to improving the school's reality in pursuit of the objectives set. For that purpose, the School and Educational Communities are heard, through their legitimate representatives, within the appropriate bodies. Within the framework of the Quality Certifications it holds — ISO 9001:2008 (Management System), SA8000 (Social Responsibility), and the EQAVET Label — EPA has committed itself to the ongoing self-evaluation of the teaching and learning process, while also challenging itself to introduce new capacities and/or practices in the pedagogical-didactic / teaching-learning domain.

Regarding graduates, and following their entry into the labor market, the School remains attentive to their professional or academic pathway, as well as to the assessment they make of the education and training they received. Using the application platform, EPA carries out follow-up at three points in time: 3 months after completion, 6 months after completion, and a further 6

months after the second follow-up, with the purpose of verifying employability; assessing satisfaction with integration and job performance; assessing the company's satisfaction with integration and job performance; verifying continuation into postsecondary education or lifelong learning; and inquiring into any situations in which graduates have applied the knowledge acquired throughout the course.

Educational & Pedagogical Resources

In its pedagogical management, EPA places particular emphasis on the value and use of equipment associated with new information and communication technologies.

All teachers and students use technical and didactic resources of a good standard, both in quantity and in quality. These resources are also made available to the entire school community and are subject to ongoing and continuous updating and improvement.

In technical support, updated resources and tools are used, supported by electronic systems. The institution is equipped with a structured IT network and modern support technologies, namely: a wireless network; all spaces equipped with an interactive whiteboard; all students with access to a laptop computer; a “Corporate TV” channel for institutional use (displayed on LCD screens distributed throughout the training spaces), developed and contributed to by the trainees; interactive learning platforms on which trainees are required to work; and all students are provided with a laptop computer for full use throughout their training.

Human Resources – Teaching Staff

EPA's teaching staff is composed entirely of individuals who hold non-precarious employment ties with the institution.

All teachers possess the academic and professional qualifications required for the subject areas they teach. Priority has been given to the stability of the teaching staff, with the result that most teachers work at the school on a full-time basis. In this way, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro is also able to maintain a high standard of teaching quality. Particularly in the sociocultural and scientific components, EPA's teaching staff is experienced, committed, and highly competent,

responding with a high level of expertise to the educational and technical-pedagogical challenges it faces. In addition, there is an ongoing commitment to continuous professional development with a view to ensuring the best and fullest performance of their duties.

Given EPA's orientation toward a quality policy, all teachers currently in service have been selected in accordance with criteria that take into account their qualifications, their technical-pedagogical quality, and their professional experience, especially that acquired in workplace settings in related professional fields.

As EPA is a vocational school, professional experience — particularly experience arising from a connection with companies — is fundamental for the teaching of the technical component of its programs. To reiterate, we rely on teachers with extensive professional experience, which enables our students to acquire high-level technical and professional competencies, as evidenced during periods of Work-Based Learning and after completion of their programs.

Accordingly, the School has a strong pedagogical team made up of experienced training professionals with demonstrated competencies in the fields in which they work. For that reason, this team stands out as being:

- ✦ Interdisciplinary, seeking diversified responses to multifaceted situations;
- ✦ Flexible and open to new roles, innovating and adapting its responses to specific needs;
- ✦ Multi-organizational, acting jointly in the resolution of identified issues.

Human Resources – Non-Teaching Staff

The Escola Profissional de Aveiro places strong and crucial importance on the human resources at its service. It recognizes that it is through the value placed on their work that the education and training it provides will have a meaningful impact on students, families, and organizations.

In addition to the work carried out by the necessary teaching staff, EPA places particular value on the other technical personnel required for the implementation of its Educational Commitment. For that reason, it has at its service a broad multidisciplinary team, including psychologists, sociologists, educational support assistants, therapists, and other specialized technical staff. All non-teaching staff hold non-precarious employment ties with the institution.

EPA's non-teaching staff clearly understand their duties and the key processes in which they are responsible for intervening, and which underpin the various stages of the training process.

All non-teaching staff possess training in their area of intervention, acquired through formal education, through professional experience in real workplace settings, and through ongoing professional development.

On-the-job training is a current and regular practice, periodically reinforced through interdepartmental and intradepartmental meetings, general meetings/training sessions, and internal and external training initiatives.

EPA therefore has a highly qualified and specialized non-teaching staff who, together with the teachers, constitute the essential pillars of the success of this project.

Selection and Recruitment of Human Resources

The human resources serving the School shall continue to be selected and recruited in accordance with the criteria and procedures defined in the Integrated Quality Management System, as implemented through Human Resources Services.

Accordingly, as has been the case to date, the staff serving EPA shall continue to be carefully selected in compliance with clearly defined quality criteria, namely: academic and/or professional qualifications appropriate to the profile of the position; teaching experience and/or experience in the relevant professional sector, whether public or private; the ability to relate effectively to students and to the other members of the School Community and Educational Community; and motivation to exercise their competences within a type of education and within a School possessing very specific characteristics.

The educational infrastructure provided is appropriately suited to the educational and training offering proposed and implemented. It is a differentiated type of infrastructure, designed to meet the demands currently placed on high-quality vocational education and training.

This infrastructure is duly aligned, in both capacity and quality, with the curricula developed across the different programs, enabling the desired learning outcomes in their sociocultural, scientific, and technical components.

From traditional classrooms — which are themselves innovative and aligned with the School's own educational project — to laboratories, workshops, and various support spaces, the infrastructure provided is suited to the sound education, training, and qualification of young people, making a decisive contribution to their personal and professional success.

Workshop Equipment

The workshop equipment is in accordance with what is defined as necessary for the educational and training provision proposed and implemented.

Naturally, it shall be continuously updated to keep it aligned with emerging needs.

Theoretical Classroom Equipment

The so-called “theoretical classrooms” play, in this School, an active role in supporting the sound education and training it provides, and are accordingly equipped in an appropriate manner. The learning developed in these “theoretical classrooms” is supported by innovative furniture suited to the cooperative and collaborative work carried out there, and these spaces are equipped with all the necessary technical and multimedia resources, namely individual computers (all students, teaching staff, and non-teaching staff are provided with laptop computers), interactive whiteboards, air conditioning, and other such facilities.

Learning Support Spaces

The learning support spaces, namely the library/media center and study rooms, are provided in accordance with the educational model and project implemented by the School, as well as with current requirements in terms of didactic and pedagogical resources. For this reason, the learning support conditions offered by these spaces are reflected across the different types of spaces available and are distributed in a manner appropriately aligned with actual needs.

In addition to the contribution made by various other spaces, the so-called libraries/media centers are organized by pedagogical teams (Curricular Development Areas), under the proper

guidance of the teachers who make up those teams. The so-called study rooms are varied in nature and are organized in accordance with the student support model developed by the Multidisciplinary Team.

Social Support Facilities

The capacity, quality, and suitability of the so-called **social support facilities** — namely restrooms/changing rooms, and the cafeteria/bar — are regarded as excellent. This classification is assigned by external entities which, within the framework of the Integrated Quality Management System in place, audit these spaces, which are essential to supporting education and training.

Overall Quality of Training Infrastructure

In general, and in accordance with the technical audits carried out by qualified entities, the education and training rooms, laboratories, workshop spaces, support spaces, and social areas provide a level of natural lighting considered necessary and sufficient for the teaching-learning process.

Likewise, all spaces offer a good level of climate control and ventilation for the teaching-learning process. In addition to natural ventilation, all educational and training spaces are climate-controlled through air conditioning.

IX. General Principles and Indicators for Intervention and Assessment

The Escola Profissional de Aveiro must continue to pay close attention to the various indicators it has for assessing the effectiveness of its education and training activities, as these determine and interact with the training provided, as well as with the structure that supports that model of education and training.

Accordingly, based on the overall results of the evaluation of the educational project currently in force — through the systematic application of diagnostic instruments to the different target groups — it is important to remain attentive to the resulting needs, as well as to the interventions that may need to be put in place.

The Escola Profissional de Aveiro must therefore continue to monitor closely the various indicators it has for assessing the effectiveness of its education and training activities.

Accordingly, based on the overall results of the evaluation of the educational project currently in force, it is important to remain attentive to the resulting needs, as well as to the interventions that may need to be put in place, namely:

- a) Verification of needs based on students coming from the Regular Education System – personal and social development, human relations, preparation for active life
- b) Levels and intervention plans concerning human resources – teaching staff, non-teaching staff, and management staff
- c) School–Community Relationship
- d) Education for life and the relationship between education and training

Let us now look at each of these in greater detail.

a) Verification of needs based on students coming from the Regular Education System – personal and social development, human relations, preparation for active life

- ↻ Verification of deficits in the prerequisites students bring with them.
- ↻ Verification of differences between the methodologies and teaching approaches used by teachers and those desired by students.
- ↻ Based on the previous point, identification of deficiencies in the pedagogical relationship, especially at the emotional level as experienced by the student.
- ↻ Verification of the lack of alignment between basic education and secondary education (particularly within the vocational and professional subsystem).
- ↻ Lack of work and study habits and attitudes, as well as insufficient research and critical-thinking skills in relation to curricular content.
- ↻ Some shortage of physical spaces and school materials.
- ↻ Students' lack of interest in school content

Attention to Students' Personal and Social Development

Need for value-based education:

- ↻ Citizenship
- ↻ Sociocultural education
- ↻ Health education
- ↻ Environmental education

Valuing Human Relations

- ↻ Recognizing the existence of certain relational conflicts.
- ↻ Valuing and improving the integration of new members into the School.

- ⇒ Healthy and constructive use of students' free time.
- ⇒ Ongoing training (for students and teachers) that responds to the School's educational needs.

Preparation of Students for Life: Life at School

- ⇒ Closer connection with the world of work (development of personal and professional competencies).
- ⇒ Promotion of the development of cognitive skills and problem-solving.
- ⇒ Vocational information and guidance, followed by proper placement.
- ⇒ Affective and relational values (development of personal competencies).
- ⇒ Development of citizenship values (development of social competencies).

b) Levels and intervention plans concerning human resources – teaching staff, non-teaching staff, and management staff

Recalling the concept of School set out in its Educational Project, and proceeding from the problems already identified, and given that the necessary conditions have been created, EPA defines the following intervention plans as priorities:

Teaching Staff

To continue the retention and ongoing professional development of the teaching staff, with a view to shaping a teacher who continues to meet the following profile:

- ⇒ Committed to self-development.
- ⇒ Committed to research and experimentation, while remaining in constant self-assessment.
- ⇒ Endowed with a critical spirit and open to change.

- ↻ Capable of linking theory and practice.
- ↻ Active and engaged.
- ↻ Aware of their role as an educator/trainer, so as to overcome dysfunctional interpersonal relationships.
- ↻ Able to innovate and diversify methodologies and strategies that meet students' interests.
- ↻ A promoter of study habits, critical reflection, observation, and experimentation.
- ↻ Sensitive to human relations, developing bonds of care and connection with students inside and outside the classroom.
- ↻ Able to create a working environment conducive to dialogue, trust, understanding of different points of view, and respect for each person's individuality.

Non-Teaching Staff

- ↻ Reinforce among educational support assistants and the remaining non-teaching technical staff the School's culture and the fundamental objectives of the educational act that it values.
- ↻ Provide methodological and technical knowledge indispensable to the proper development of their work.
- ↻ Make all members co-responsible for their tasks.
- ↻ Foster healthy coexistence.
- ↻ Continue to emphasize the value of and respect for the fundamental role of non-teaching staff.

Parents/Guardians

- ↻ Provide information on how EPA, with its distinct culture, positions itself within education and within the context of the different education subsystems.

- ↻ Make known the School's Educational Project, its technical and pedagogical organization, and its school facilities.
- ↻ Promote communication between school/family/other stakeholders.
- ↻ Encourage their participation, continuing to seek their collaboration in School activities and in those directly related to their children.

Technical and Pedagogical Structure

- ↻ Heightened attention to assessment criteria, especially diagnostic assessment.
- ↻ Promotion of interdisciplinarity, with a view to maximizing the value of projects and strategies implemented within areas, programs, and subjects.

Establishment and Strengthening of Partnerships and Protocols with a Wide Range of Community Institutions in the Following Areas

- ↻ Vocational
- ↻ Scientific
- ↻ Pedagogical
- ↻ Sports
- ↻ Social
- ↻ Cultural
- ↻ Artistic
- ↻ Vocational
- ↻ Professional

c) School–Community Relationship

- That the School continues, in the already established spirit of openness to the surrounding community (“life at school”), to draw from it themes of motivation and educational and socio-professional enrichment (techniques, distinguished figures, requests for participation in a wide range of areas such as colloquia, requests for support from companies and municipalities for certain planned activities).
- That the School continues to open itself to the community in order to contribute through support or participation in collective initiatives — training, provision of services, animation, exhibitions, fairs, assistance, lending of facilities, interschool competitions, etc.
- That the School helps students and other members of the educational community become aware of the real problems occurring around them, bring some of those problems into educational and training spaces, and then return once again to the community in a constant exchange involving knowledge, know-how, and intervention.

d) Education for Life and the Relationship Between Education and Training

- Atentar numa educação e formação profissionalizantes diversificadas que assegurem a atualização permanente dos níveis de educação/formação da população em geral e, em especial, daquela que vai sendo marginalizada à medida e na medida em que os níveis de escolaridade básica avançam.
- To give attention to diversified vocational education and training that ensures the ongoing updating of the education/training levels of the population in general and of those who are increasingly marginalized as basic education levels advance.
- To adopt training modalities aimed at encouraging the lifelong updating of knowledge, know-how, “learning to be with others,” and relational and behavioral competencies among the population, especially among individuals and socio-professional groups affected by processes of social and professional exclusion.

- To foster the creation and diversification of education and training courses and vocational training programs of different levels and types for young people who have not yet completed compulsory basic education up to age 18, and for those who have already completed it.
- To diversify, within the framework of the opportunities created the education/training pathways within the type of education and teaching-learning culture developed at EPA, always leading to certification and qualification (dual certification), combating school dropout and promoting education and training for life and for employment.

X. Systemic Approach to the Educational Project / Educational Commitment

From a systemic perspective, with the student placed at the center — that is, student success — EPA must increasingly value holistic solutions that lead each and every staff member and partner, within their respective sphere of action and responsibility, to pursue excellence in their performance as a School of Vocational Education for the Aveiro Region.

Without excluding other possible directions, and in alignment with the educational policies outlined through 2024 and with the intervention priorities defined in the various official documents, this Educational Project — with a duration of 2 years (2024/2025–2025/2026) — places particular value on certain components that we consider essential to strengthening and transforming education as a driver of development in the Aveiro Region and in the country.

Accordingly, placing student success at the center, within a leadership model that interprets the regional, national, and European policies (and priorities) established for the 2025–2026 period, our action will focus on 5 areas that we regard as fundamental:

- ↻ professional development (through vocational education);
- ↻ curriculum development and assessment;
- ↻ the use of information and communication technologies;
- ↻ the use of sustainable physical, material, human, and financial resources;
- ↻ the ongoing practice of research and evaluation.

A possible diagram illustrating what we will continue to value:



We highlight leadership — in its broadest expression — as the dimension best able to bring together the other components that will contribute to the success of the students who currently attend, and who will in the future attend, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro.

When we speak of leadership, we are not referring here to different leadership styles, nor do we limit it to top-level structures or intermediate management structures.

Rather, the concept of leadership we value is a model of ongoing interpretation and action across the organization, arising from a regional school culture shaped by a unique educational

and training approach that has been built, in a sustained and respected way, over the last 33 years.

In this sense, we will engage the Escola Profissional de Aveiro, as an institution unique in Portugal, in an increasingly effective leadership role within the Aveiro Region in carrying out the major teaching-learning changes that are recognized as necessary for vocational education and training in the country.

The school leadership model we advocate defines a long-term vision, communicates it clearly, and promotes the improvement and transformation of the school organization and of education in general. Its action is essential in encouraging teachers, parents, guardians in general, different members of the community, funding bodies, and others to believe in that vision and to work toward achieving it.

We believe that, through effective leadership of the School as a whole and on a regional scale, it will also be possible to align the goals for transforming the School and education with broader regional and national objectives.

XI. Guiding Lines for Meaningful and Effective Work

1 – From EPA’s Educational Commitment

The Escola Profissional de Aveiro (EPA), now marking 33 years of existence, and further deepening its work in vocational education for the region, for the country, for Europe, and for the wider world, seeks to maintain its leadership in pedagogical innovation, while continuing to serve a specific population of young students drawn primarily from across the Aveiro Region.

EPA seeks to continue combating school dropouts by deepening internal mechanisms that make it possible to rehabilitate and motivate the young people it welcomes, ensuring that no one fails to complete their school and vocational training pathway.

This School seeks to strengthen a working model that reaffirms its place and its necessity, in complementary terms, alongside the other Schools of the Aveiro Region.

The Escola Profissional de Aveiro seeks to define itself increasingly as a School that is genuinely close to companies/entities and employers, carrying out with them work that is necessary and meaningful, and that promotes appropriately tailored training and effective employment.



2 – EPA at Present

- a) The Escola Profissional de Aveiro currently serves more than 800 students from across the Aveiro Region, enrolled in Youth Education and Training Courses and Vocational Courses.
- b) Almost all students come to EPA through referral/guidance from schools (Psychology and Guidance Services, School Boards, Homeroom Teachers), families, Child Protection

Commissions, Juvenile Courts, Private Social Solidarity Institutions, the Ministry of Education at its highest level, and others.

- c) Almost all the young students received by EPA present a range of vulnerabilities, whether individual or social, which constitute a major risk to their remaining in school. Nearly all are referred to as individuals at risk, whether of school dropout or of social exclusion.
- d) It is observed that many of the young people referred are already close to 18 years of age — the age limit for remaining at the School.
- e) All referring entities believe that EPA develops an education and training project that may be better suited to each student's life project
- f) It is true that EPA develops a distinct education and training approach, grounded in the creation of conditions to address the difficulties and needs of each young student, of their families (or lack of family support), and to provide personalized education and training capable of offering everyone a fair and promising future.
- g) Given the characteristics of the young students received by EPA, their vulnerability, and their tendency toward school dropout, the School works with different partners, particularly the companies in which students undertake work-based learning, complete their internships, and later gain employment.
- h) It is in this way that, in many cases, and particularly in vocational courses, EPA has succeeded in being an alternative to other providers, namely IEFP and its Apprenticeship Courses. At EPA, with the proper support and follow-up, young people are able to obtain a comprehensive education and training path capable of providing qualifications and skills suited to each individual case.
- i) Companies and other partner entities increasingly value the model of work that EPA develops in the education and training of its vocational-course students, and they increasingly express their willingness to deepen the relationship between the parties, particularly in relation to the timing and methods through which students' work-based learning is carried out.
- j) EPA increasingly believes that, if it can develop an education and training project that brings the School even closer to the company, it may become an even better and more highly

qualified alternative for the vulnerable and at-risk young population it has been receiving. This same population often sees in other providers, and in their short- to medium-term courses of questionable quality and suitability, above all an opportunity to earn immediate income. However, this will not represent a true education and training pathway capable of leading those young people to qualified employment and, above all, it will not lead them to change their lives.

3 – EPA’s Near Future

- a) Within the scope of the excluded population it serves, the Escola Profissional de Aveiro (EPA) seeks to continue fully combating school dropout possible; to continue finding personalized education and training pathways for everyone; and to continue promoting the socio-educational and socio-professional integration of its trainees.
- b) Recognizing that many of its students who reach the age of 18 want to leave school to work, EPA intends to create an alternative argument capable of retaining its students in school and enabling them to complete their studies.
- c) Despite the respect it has for the so-called “vocational” and “apprenticeship” courses developed by other providers, EPA considers that the Vocational Courses of the Ministry of Education are more effective vehicles in the fight against youth vulnerability and exclusion, combating school dropout, promoting support, education, and responsible citizenship, and allowing an effective path toward the labor market.
- d) EPA believes that, through an Innovation Plan formally endorsed by the competent authorities, it may deepen its work as a School — one that is currently a point of reference for the Aveiro Region (schools, families, institutions, and companies) in matters of youth recovery, rehabilitation, education, qualification, and employability.
- e) EPA understands that it should work with the supervisory authorities, namely DGEstE — Directorate-General for Schools — and ANQEP — National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education and Training — with a view to becoming a Business Reference School, within the framework provided for in Decree-Law No. 92/2014, of June 20.

- f) EPA believes in the physical decentralization of its facilities and resources (physical, material, and human), bringing them closer not only to the regional territory in which it operates, but also to the partners with whom it develops vocational education. To this end, it intends to strengthen, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the work carried out in its two Youth Vocational Education Units — UniTER, the Tertiary Sector Unit, located at the Head Office in Aveiro; and UniTEC, the Technology Unit, located at the Branch Campus in Sever do Vouga.
- g) Within this school culture of education close to people and companies, EPA also intends to expand its network of Units — which may themselves become Branch Campuses — whether by moving closer to specific territories within the Aveiro Region or by moving closer to partner companies that have the capacity to host them.

4 – EPA’s Brief SWOT Analysis

For the design and development of the work expected under this Educational Project | Educational Commitment, the following SWOT analysis elements identified at the Escola Profissional de Aveiro are recorded here:

- Strengths

- A well-known brand throughout the region, the country, and abroad
- Strong relationships with satisfied companies/entities
- Good internal organization, with dedicated staff

- Weaknesses

- Communication with some external stakeholders is not yet fully effective
- Late access of young people to the education and training opportunities offered (absence of serious school and vocational guidance on a regional scale)
- Still too few companies capable of becoming partners in the vocational education model

- Threats

- The stigma of EPA's image as a place for “problem students”
- A formal legal framework that is insufficiently permissive and insufficiently supportive of pedagogical innovation
- A student population that requires human resources not available in the labor market

- Opportunities

- National (and European) commitment to the advancement of vocational education
- The willingness / confidence / need of companies and other entities with regard to the School's vocational education model
- The possibility of continuing into higher education in related fields and within the education model developed in partnership with companies/entities

XII. Validity of the Educational Project | Educational Commitment

This Educational Project | Educational Commitment shall remain valid for 2 years (from the 2024–2025 school year to the 2025–2026 school year).

Elements that support the technical and pedagogical work carried out at EPA shall be incorporated into it whenever justified.

For this purpose, and without prejudice to other moments of review, the Educational Project | Educational Commitment shall be evaluated annually by all parties involved, through specific mechanisms defined within the framework of the Integrated Quality Management System.

For each year, specific objectives and defined targets shall be established and shall form an integral part of the Educational Project | Educational Commitment of the Escola Profissional de Aveiro.

Aveiro, EPA, September 1, 2024

Proposed.

The Technical and Pedagogical Directorate of the Escola Profissional de Aveiro

Approved.

The Directorate of AEVA – Associação para a Educação e Valorização da Região de Aveiro