

Mitsubishi Electric launches Mentor ME: a new digital-learning experience for secondary schools in the fields of Industrial Automation and Air Conditioning

The new platform, designed by the Italian Branch of Mitsubishi Electric, is completely free of charge and provides secondary-school students with innovative e-learning and smart-working programs to gain the skills and knowledge needed to carry out real-world technical tasks and receive an official work-study certificate.

Agrate Brianza, March 26, 2020 – **In this moment, the Italian school is at the heart of a profound transformation caused by the delicate context we are living** and it is asked to respond to the changing educational needs in order to continue to provide our young people with efficient teaching proposals.

In this circumstance, digital tools represent a real solution that enables students to access multimedia contents and teachers to ensure progression and continuity with their education.

Mitsubishi Electric, worldwide leader in the production, marketing and distribution of electrical and electronic equipment, now makes available to the Italian schools **[Mentor ME](#), an online platform to support teaching in the technical field**. The platform is totally free of charge and was created in order to provide young people with e-learning and smart-working tools to **learn and be guided** in the fields of **Industrial Automation and Air Conditioning systems**, for a new work-study program experience.

Following an initial trial carried out in September 2019 in the educational district of Monza and Brianza (MB) province, where the company's Italian branch is located, Mentor ME has already involved nearly **100 secondary schools** with more than **1,300 students**. More than **45 teachers**, having recognized the platform's teaching validity, have introduced in their schools these programs combining the e-learning of technical skills with smart-working activities. Mentor ME also helps to update teachers on the

most advanced technologies available in the fields of Industrial Automation and Air Conditioning.

Mr. Tomoyuki Sugai, President of the Italian branch of Mitsubishi Electric said: “Mentor ME is a project that aims to **enable students throughout Italy to support theoretical training with new concepts that are useful for their professional future** and to make practical experience that encourage creativity without moving from their desk or classroom. The use of smart-working techniques within the project makes it possible to reach a huge number of schools and students, opening up unexpected scenarios in the educational environment. It is **an initiative that gives continuity to our values as a company attentive to the needs of the community in which operates** in terms of progress, sustainable growth and for a future of continuing innovation.”



The platform: virtual laboratory between school and business

Mentor ME is a true **digital, remote-working experience** guided by an expert tutor (the teacher) who helps young people to **acquire the fundamental skills and knowledge needed in the professional environment.**

Just as it would happen in a real workplace, students sit at a virtual desk facing topics to study and rework, but also perform tests, come up with strategies and ideas to implement and put into practice. This is done through easy-to-use **digital-learning tools and technologies.**

Mentor ME includes an **introduction module** that is the same for all subjects, aiming to introduce the activities and workflows of a company like Mitsubishi Electric. This includes **a number of video lessons** followed by a **validation test** that each student is required to answer in order to fill in the didactic form and obtain the PCTO (plan for cross-skills and orientation or work-study) certification for the completed hours.

The introduction module, which is the same for the two technical programs offered, takes the students in the world of Mitsubishi Electric, from the history to the company's values so that they can start to get in touch with the corporate reality. It is then the tutor's responsibility to enroll the students to the most appropriate specific program, either:

- 1) Industrial & Mechatronic Automation**
- 2) Air Conditioning**

In each of these modules, students will have access to high-quality, digital **e-learning** contents that provide the same technological level as those provided by Mitsubishi Electric to the company's industrial partners. The e-learning program includes a deep-down training session and a final validation test. The most operational aspect of the course is carried out with a **smart working** activity where students will have to work on a real project, applying the acquired concepts as if they were working in the company.

Both paths offer students to get in touch with the rules and terminology of each sector, integrating theory and practical application, to promote

the acquisition of knowledge that they will be able to use both at school and in the professional environment.

There are also opportunities in which the students can discuss what they have learned with their mentors as well as with their classmates.

Professors can register and log in the Mentor ME platform from the link <https://www.educazionedigitale.it/mitsubishielectric/>.

Mr. Gaetano Parisi, Education Manager for the Air Conditioning Division, said: “Part of the academic world has recently started to approach emerging technologies by bringing them into the classroom and updating educational tools through a process of digital innovation. We have created Mentor ME, a modern learning platform, with two objectives: to provide a tool that could meet the **educational needs of the teachers** through innovative technological contents that would be difficult for a single school to implement on its own and to **help in filling the skills gap**, the competences mismatch, between the students leaving the school and the needs of the work environment.”

“Statistics on the **skills that will be needed in the years to come** show a demand for increasingly specialized technical skills. By 2021, there will be a need for more than 500,000 high technical skill professions ^[1],” said *Mr. Massimiliano Grazia, Application Engineer Manager for the Industrial Automation Division.* “With this project, Mitsubishi Electric is committed to create professional profiles for young people helping them to be properly prepared for the new challenges they will have to face in the work environment. Nowadays schools must aim to develop technical training programs that involve collaborations between companies and students, **thereby meeting the specific needs of Industry 4.0**, which calls for new technological skills.”

“Lessons managed by a company are of great added value for schools teaching. This training course has undoubtedly given further ideas for deep-depth and reflection because it has followed a line of development related to practical applications and real situations and devices, thereby

moving away from the level of abstraction of classroom theory,” said ***Mr. Francesco Russo, teacher at Vimercate’s IIS A. Einstein secondary school.***

“Mentor ME platform is a great remote-learning tool, helping to compensate for the little time students spend in the lab and in the classroom. In this period when we are forced to provide distance learning, it has proven to be even more helpful in order to stay in touch with the students and continue to teach and train them remotely,” said ***Mr. Salvatore Sardella, teacher at Monza’s ITI Hensemberger secondary school.***

From the same school, ***Mr. Matteo Cino, a fifth-year student of Electrical Technology,*** speaking of the Industrial Automation module he attended, said: “The online course was very useful and helped me to learn to program in Ladder using a software different from what we normally use in the lab. I would like to repeat this experience again with a deeper focus on the benefits of using different software applications and also receive more information about automation at Mitsubishi Electric.”

[1] Source Unioncamere

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Mitsubishi Electric

Mitsubishi Electric, with nearly 100 years of experience in production, sales and marketing of electrical and electronic devices, is widely recognized as a leading company at global level. Mitsubishi Electric products and components are used in many fields: information technology and telecommunications, space research and satellite communication, consumer electronics, technologies for industrial application, energy, transport and building. In line with the spirit of its corporate statement “Changes for the Better” and its environmental motto “Eco Changes”, Mitsubishi Electric aims to become a leading green company worldwide, able to enrich the human society thanks to its technology. With over 145,000 employees in the world, Mitsubishi Electric in the past fiscal year ended on March 31st, 2019 reached a total turnover of 4,519.9 billion Yen (40.7 billion USD*). It has been present in Europe since 1969 with branches in 18 Countries: Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Italy, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, United

Kingdom, Turkey and Hungary. The Italian branch, established in 1985, operates through 5 commercial divisions : **Air-Conditioning** – air-conditioning for residential, commercial and industrial real estate, heating, de-humidification and air treatment; **Industrial Automation and Mechatronics** – systems and appliances for industrial automation; **Semiconductors** – electronic components; **Automotive** – systems and components for control of car and motor vehicle devices; **Transport** – products and systems for railway transport.

For additional information please visit the website:

<http://it.mitsubishielectric.com/en/>

*(*Exchange rate 111 Yen - 1 USD. Source Tokyo Exchange Market on March 31st, 2019)*

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