



Validation procedure for the recognition of non-formally and informally acquired competences in Germany

Concept: Training of advisers for the validation procedure for the recognition of non-formally and informally acquired competences

Authors: Anett Kromrei-Suwareh, Julia Stertz, Jacqueline Hennig

Content

Introduction.....	3
Aim and direction of the training	
Contents	4
Methods/ Didactics	4
Entry requirements for trainees.....	5
Workflow and conditions	
Attachments (overview).....	6

Introduction

The concept of adviser training is aimed at organizations and institutions, which want to offer further training for advisers in the "validation process for the recognition of non-formally and informally acquired competences".

The concept is based on the curriculum which has been developed and tested in a pilot implementation by staff members of "Die Wille gGmbH" in the framework of the conCERT project. Testing and development has been carried out by the example of the qualification "certified professional work place tutor". The approach is, however, provided that the corresponding survey instruments are available, transferable to other vocational trainings.

Both the trends in the national labor market and the European vested regulations require to make all economically exploitable competences visible and comparable. Regardless of the type of skills acquisition, existing knowledge and skills documented, recognized and formally acquired qualifications shall be equaled.

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the national implementation (the German Qualifications Framework DQR for Germany) created the conditions for a Europe-wide comparability of qualifications. EQF and DQR are explicitly geared to classify existing qualifications, regardless of education on which they were acquired. This includes non-formal education as an acquired as informal education.

To represent non-formally and informally acquired competences adequately, valid methods of competence assessment are required at the operational level. Methods borrowed from formal education paths (tests etc.) are not optimally suited in any case. Especially in further training often time-consuming training courses have to be completed in order to acquire formal evidence of existing knowledge.

Comparable to the processes developed in the framework of the recognition of foreign qualifications the transfer project conCERT developed and tested a validation system for the recognition of non-formally and informally acquired competences.

Transferred and adapted was a successfully-applied system of validation of non-formally and informally acquired vocational competences of the Schweizerischen Verbund für Weiterbildung SVEB to the conditions and requirements of the German educational system.

The conCERT project for the "development and preparatory actions for the implementation of a validation system for counseling and recognition of non-formally and informally acquired competences on the example of professional work place tutor" is funded in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme, Leonardo da Vinci - Transfer of Innovation.

Aim and direction of the training

The training for consultants for the „validation process for the recognition of non-formally and informally acquired competences" builds on existing expertise and advice is thus a further training for advisers. The trainees are both trained in the use of the method and the use of tools developed as well as in terms of counseling techniques, make the non-formally and informally acquired competences visible.

Contents

The focuses of the training will refer respectively to the classification and valuation of informal and non-formal learning competences in the knowledge and ability canon of persons as well as the ways, to reflect these in a comprehensible and valid manner. This includes the provision of appropriate methods, but requires a basic knowledge and experience in the process of consultation. Assuming that the training participants have a qualification as a consultant and / or proven consulting practice, the training contents are focused on:

- The importance of informally and non-formally acquired learning in a professional context,
- Valid collection and documentation of informally and non-formally acquired knowledge and skills - overview of the existing possibilities,
- The conCert validation procedures,
- The role of the adviser in the validation process and the resulting demands on him.

The attitude of the advisor in relation to the aspirants plays an important role in the training. As a cross-cutting issue this learning content runs through all modules. This involves critical self-reflection of one's acting in the consultation process as well as the ability to change perspective.

Methods/ Didactics

The acquisition of vocational and employment-related education takes place both as a formal acquisition of competences in institutions and institutions of vocational qualifications (vocational training institutions and vocational training, colleges and universities) as well as in non-formal and informal ways through experiential knowledge. However, in Germany so far mainly the formally acquired skills are recognized, as these are verifiable by diplomas and certificates

With the adapted validation procedures in conCert there is a proven and valid instrument, which allows the certification of competences acquired outside formal education. The instrument is designed in that way both, the comparability and the equivalence with formal learning, are ensured.

The consultant has to cope with a great responsibility both in terms of purposeful use of the instrument as well as in terms of safeguarding the quality of the support for the aspirant.

The training is structured in a user-based and action-oriented way. The focus is the validation tool. Since it will be the task of future consultants in validation procedures to advise aspirants in the preparation of the dossier, the consultants have the instrument know well. Accordingly, within the framework of training they are working large parts of the dossier from the standpoint of the aspirant. In the subsequent reflection and analysis they identify the key points of the machined dossier-parts and derive consultation priorities and important criteria for guidance. Problems and issues that arise in the application of the instrument, are immediately fed and processed in the training process.

Knowledge transfer through input presentations and handouts forms the basis for the exercises to apply the conCert validation instrument. Furthermore, interview techniques are taught which help the consultant to support the aspirant in becoming aware of existing skills and to describe these adequately comprehensible and for third parties.

The curriculum includes handouts and worksheets, which can be applied both in the training course as well as in the consulting practice. Especially the support tools aligned to the consultation process (travelogue, Life profile) are to be understood as a proposal and recommendation. They can and should both in the training as well as in the consulting practice be supplemented by other appropriate means.

Entry requirements for trainees

The training for advisors in the validation process for the recognition of non-formally and informally acquired competences is a further training for consultants and thus presupposes basic counseling skills. This includes sound methodological knowledge as well as experiences in (educational) advice. In addition, the trainees should have a basic understanding of the income relevance of non-formally and informally acquired skills and have strong skills in participant-centered interviewing. The consultant profile, created as annex for the curriculum, serves as a template to define the admission criteria for the training.

A participant should fulfill the following requirement for the training:

- Training as a consultant or coach,
- Experience in self-assessment and assessment by others,
- Knowledge in a constructive and solution-oriented conversation,
- Possible 2 years' experience as a consultant / coach,
- Good analytical skills,
- Quick grasp,
- Empathy,
- Interpersonal skills and competence in interviews / conducting conversations,
- Objective dealing with criticism and conflict.

Prior to entering the training the participants should be well aware that they are as a consultant in the validation process for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning operating in a dual function. On the one hand they give "technical assistance" in the use of the validation dossier, on the other hand they use their consulting competences to make the aspirant aware of his/her existing competencies. Advisers-to-be in the validation process should therefore have a strong linguistic competence. In that way they can support aspirants to describe existing knowledge adequately and comprehensible to third parties. A basic emphatic and appreciative attitude towards the advised person is indispensable.

Workflow and conditions

Since the training is built strong action-oriented and practical testing of the validation tool is at the center, no more than 10 participants should be worked with. With a larger number of trainees more time must be allowed for the modules 2 and 3, which would enlarge the temporal overall scope.

This curriculum at hand is geared towards a temporal extent of four days of attendance. Thereof three days are foreseen as seminar days and one (temporally separated therefrom) day as consultation date. The training sequences are structured in that way the seminar days can be implemented both as a block course as well as individual modules. In case of a chronological breakdown of more than 4 x 1 seminar days of 6 hours, a slightly higher amount of time should be set to recapitulate the already acquired knowledge in each case shortly.

The fourth module greatly increases by reference to the experiences of the trainees. In case the advisers start immediately after the training with the consultation in the validation process for the recognition of non-formally and informally acquired skills, the fourth module builds on the experiences from consulting process and recent consultative processes will be reflected. If this is not given, the fourth module must be based on simulations. In any case there should be an interval between the first three modules and the fourth module, allowing the trainees to make themselves familiar with the procedures and the instruments of validation in the counseling process or in an individual and personal examination.

The speakers must know validation methods and validation tools as much the methods of aspirant - centered counseling.

In order to process the validation tool in digital form, the necessary technical requirements must be met. It is optimal if all the trainees have a computer workstation available. In that way they could -especially in the fourth module - work with the documents of concrete aspirants.

The pattern of a flow chart for a four-day training session is attached to this concept as an annex.

Attachments

- Curriculum training for advisers in the validation process for the recognition of non-formally and informally acquired skills incl. handouts and worksheets
- Sample schedule for a training course in the amount of 4 days / 6 hours
- Manual for Training

The concert project was implemented by:

- VESBE – e.V. - Hennef (project coordination)
- Schweizerischer Verband für Weiterbildung SVEB (transfer provider)
- GAB München - Society for Education Research and Professional Development eV.
- EU WAREHOUSE, Brussels

-
- The Wille gGmbH, Berlin
 - Perform partners (external staff)

Many thanks to all the partners who have contributed to this concept with their skills and commitment.