Suggestions for counselling system in Higher Education (R14)

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Introduction

Suggestions for counselling system in Higher Education is a result of work package (WP) 8. The aim of this work package is to draw conclusions from those experiences and to formulate guidelines and recommendations for a wide range of stakeholders from all over Europe. While formulating these documents, the project partners took into account the needs, potential benefits and objectives of different target groups.

The aim of the result is to summarise the suggestions that the partners have based on their prior experience and which have been discussed during the project. The suggestions have been done for institutional level also the document gives suggestions on the content of counselling.

Although the result is targeted for HE institutions the overall principles can be adapted also to VET.

Suggestions for institutional level

- A HE or VET institution should have the liberty to set their system based on their best practice and prior experience.
- RPL is a possibility not an obligation. It is possible for the students to go through the courses and to refresh their knowledge through formal education.
- The codex of counselling and assessment/validation should be developed to assure the equal treatment of RPL applicants.
- A training should be offered to the counsellors to assure the quality of counselling.
- The organisations should gather the experience of those who have had RPL experience.
- The VET institutions should inform their graduates to keep their documents (e.g tests, evaluations, learning diary, portfolio) from VET courses for future studies.
- RPL counselling should be provided at different stages (before, during and after admission).
- The impact of RPL should be evaluated during and at the end of the studies.
- There should be a timeframe for the RPL process.
- More e-opportunities, electronic environments etc. should be used.
- In case there is no national legislation then the organizations should have an institutional legislation about the amount of the programme (e.g 50%) could be recognised.

The content of counselling process

- It should be very clear who is the counsellor (e.g tutoring teacher, administrator, lecturer) whom the students can turn to.
- Counsellors should encourage students to apply.
- During the counselling it is necessary to emphasize the idea of RPL.
- Counsellor should introduce the learning outcomes and content of courses and modules.
- Different methods (e.g simulation, case study, self-analysis, reflection) for proving prior learning experience should be introduced during the counselling session.
- Counsellor should support students to carry out the self-analysis.
- During the counselling process the counsellor should explain the assessment criteria.
- The counsellor should help the student to compile the study plan, including what courses could be taken as a replacement or in addition.
- The fellow student with prior RPL experience could be used in the counselling process.
- The lecturers and other teaching staff could be involved in the counselling process.
- The counselling can be organized as a workshop or group meeting where students can discuss between themselves.
- The counsellors should guarantee quick feedback and answers to questions.

Instructions for applying

- For easy access the instructions and guidelines should be made available on the website.
- The demands for RPL application (including self-analysis) should be made clear.
- The language of instructions should be clear and understandable to everybody.
- A model (an example of application) should be made available for students to follow.

List of abbreviations

RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
VET	Vocational Education and Training
HE	Higher Education
LO	Learning Outcomes
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
LA	Learning Agreement
ECVET	European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training
ECTS	European Credit Transferable System
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training