

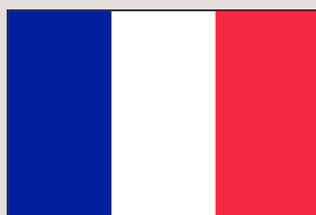
MATCHING

MODELS AND TOOLS FOR CERTIFYING AND HIGHLIGHTING INFORMAL AND FORMAL EXPERIENCES IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND GUIDANCE

Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013 – Leonardo Da Vinci

Multilateral Projects Transfer of Innovation

NATIONAL REPORT



The System of Evaluation and Certification of competences in France

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I – THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTING THE VALIDATION OF VOCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS (NVQ)

“The Validation of vocational achievements: a system and an individual right covered by Law...”

“Any person engaged in a professional activity has the right to qualify their skills and knowledge, particularly those of a professional nature, in order to obtain a diploma, a vocational certificate or professional qualification”- article L900-1 of the Labour code

The ‘Social modernisation’ law from 17th January 2002, and in particular articles 133 to 146, created the right to gain ‘Validation of vocational achievements’ (NVQ). This allows any person, a salaried, non-salaried employee or volunteer worker for at least three years, to have access to a diploma or part of it, on the basis of professional experience, resulting mainly in a professional certification.

The principal behind the NVQ system, the subject of a newly created law, is that the skills and knowledge acquired through experience can be recognised by a diploma, a vocational certificate or professional qualification in a given domain.

I-1 Elements of the context and the stakes in the system

Three elements of the diagnosis based on the system of vocational training in the mid-nineties were essential in creating the notion of validating of vocational achievements and more generally, in engaging in a process to reform vocational training system.

- The need to secure professional routes for individuals with a low level of recognized qualifications. According to the 1995 Work enquiry carried out by INSEE (National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies), four out of ten people in our working population have no vocational diploma and only half of employees work in fields related to their basic training. In a professional world that is marked by an increasing flexibility and a change in the content of jobs and the organisation of work, a consensus has established the necessity for giving people and companies stable references to certify an individual’s skills and make chosen or imposed mobility easier. The development of these references must be complementary to the implementation of individual rights to training and incite workers to implicate themselves in a vocational project leading to a real acknowledgement of the qualifications earned.
- The main role of possessing a diploma for sustainable insertion. The results of work carried out by the CEREQ (Centre for Research, Work and Qualifications) in 1992, 1998 and 2001 with young workers starting out in their first jobs, which was continued over the following three years, prove that a diploma allows quicker access to the job market as well as more sustainable employment. The possession of a diploma also reduces the feeling of discrimination for younger workers. Lastly, employment conditions are linked to obtaining a diploma (more long-term contracts, fewer short-term contracts and temping). Unfortunately, no similar longitudinal studies have been carried out in France for adults. The possession of a diploma plays an obvious role in gaining access to professions with a statutory framework during an individual’s working life. However, putting aside these specific cases, there are few studies showing the effect of a diploma on access to employment both in qualitative and quantitative terms. A recent study showed that job offers making reference to the level of studies and

the diploma obtained is a strictly French specificity, whatever the age of the candidate required. 73% of French job offers on Internet include this stipulations compared to only 27% of those in Great Britain. This information must nevertheless be put into perspective as in France only 6% of recruitments result from job offers on Internet whereas this figure is 30% in Great Britain. Numerous studies do however prove the symbolic importance for adults of obtaining a diploma, not only for their personal well-being but also in terms of their professional identity. This gives a real direction to their job search and the construction of a vocational route.

The low qualifying results of continuing training. In 1996, only 1.5% of the 7 million workers following vocational training took courses resulting in a certificate or diploma. Continuing training has the main objective of provoking or accompanying the change in techniques or organisation within a company and updating the skills of workers who are already qualified. It is rarely an opportunity to acquire new qualifications for employees who have been working for over five years.

I-2 Provisions concerning the Validation of vocational achievements (NVQ)

The Law works on the general principle that each individual has the right to an acknowledgement of his experience in order to obtain a diploma or professional certificate. It places gaining a diploma or certificate by qualifying skills on an equal standing with dignity and the effect in relation to other methods of obtaining a diploma.

It has modified the rules relating to previous procedures for recognising skills. The Law takes into account vocational skills obtained through social activities or volunteer work. It has also reduced the duration of previous experience required from five to three years. It gives the opportunity to obtain a complete diploma via validation of vocational skills and includes specific provisions for higher education, with all higher education qualifications being considered as having a direct or indirect professional outcome.

It is highlighted that refusing to participate in a NVQ project cannot be considered as a reason for dismissal or professional misconduct. One of the most important aspects of the NVQ system is the employee's motivation in the project. Methods for compensating jury members have been broadened to include NVQ juries (authorising absence, maintaining pay). Other methods have also been developed for certain types of employees such as short-term contract workers. Lastly, it gives employees the right to three days' leave for validating their skills and all expenses linked to the NVQ are considered as eligible under continuing company training as long as the certification chosen is included in the RNCP (National Register of Professional Certifications).

I-3 Publication of applicable texts from the Law

Implemented at a ministerial level, provisions included in the law necessitated statutory texts that were drawn up in 2002.

Four Council of State decrees organise the process of Validation of vocational achievements:

- A general decree, no. 2002-615 from April 25th 2002 relating to the Validation of vocational achievements to obtain professional certification,
- Two decrees specific to technological training and higher education; decree no.2002-590 from April 24th 2002 concerning Validation of vocational achievements by technological training establishments and decree no. 2002-529 from April 16th 2002 for validation of higher education studies carried out in France or abroad,
- A decree for the validation leave period, decree no. 2002-795 from May 3rd 2002.

Two other Council of State decrees organise the National professional certification commission (decree no. 2002-617 from April 26th 2002) and the national list of professional certifications (decree no. 2002-616 from 26th April 2002).

Two final decrees govern the employer's duty to cover Validation of vocational achievements actions (decree no. 2002-1459 from December 16th 2002) and the control of organisations helping candidates with their skills validation (decree no. 2002-1460 from December 16th 2002).

I-4 Provisions concerning the general system of vocational certification

The Law has created a National Commission for Vocational Certification (CNCP) that is in charge of updating the RNCP. This commission is made up of State representatives, social partners, regional governing bodies and qualified individuals.

The RNCP list is used to provide updated information on certifications to individuals and companies. It classifies certificates by level and domain and includes correspondences between those certificates. The legislator defines the rules for elaborating and creating the certificates under the responsibility of the State. These certifications are created by means of decrees and organised with orders for each professional domain following agreement from the competent consulting authorities in the various certifying ministries. They are automatically included in the national register of vocational certifications (RNCP). Finally, the Law imposes terms of registration for parity or private certificates included in the Register.

I-5 Construction of the National Register of Vocational Certifications

The national register of vocational certifications (RNCP), created by article 134 of the Social modernisation law, has experienced a constant increase in the number of certificates included, now representing 4,121 certifications whose details are all available via Internet. This figure will continue to increase in 2007 with the progressive integration of between 8 to 10,000 higher education diplomas. At present, about two-dozen Vocational qualification certificates (CQP) are included in the register out of the 300 or so active CQPs.

National Register of Vocational Certifications (RNCP)
Distribution of certifications in June 2007 (Source: CNCP)

Entity	Certifications included in the Register
CNCP (inscription on request)	1,463
National Education Ministry (schools)	688
National Education Ministry (higher education)	1,299 (degrees, professional degrees, technological university diploma [DUT], University Diploma for scientific and technical studies [DEUST], engineering diploma)
Ministry of Agriculture	199
Ministry of Employment	310
Ministry of Social Affairs	15
Health Ministry	10
Ministry of Youth and Sports	137
TOTAL	4,121

The CNCP is committed to constantly improving its electronic portal and databases in order to give easier access to information and notably to contribute to the development of the NVQ system. Links between the operational list of trades, job offers at the ANPE (ROME) and the RNCP are today operational. They allow a better identification of the structures between certificates and job contents. The CNCP has also started creating an inventory of other professional certificates that are not included in the register as they are not linked to a specific level of qualification.

I-6 Creating information advice relay centres

A vast publicity campaign called 'My life has suddenly taken off' was launched as soon as the law was adopted and has generated a large number of requests. In order to reply to these, a reliable information advice system was necessary to give individuals the information needed on certifications and the most adapted validation methods for their profile and project, thus allowing them to take advantage of their rights with the highest chance of success.

From 2001 on, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training started preparing the installation of an information advice network with the help of a consultant. The DGEFP (General Authority on Education and Vocational training) circular from April 23rd 2002, along with a national list of specifications, defined the service expected and labelling methods for structures at a regional level.

As from the end of 2004, the large mobilisation of regional participants allowed almost 800 sites to be operational in 23 regions, with labelling of structures in the fields of reception, information, vocational counselling (AIO). Territorial links included under a regional network were inter-service regional cells (CRIS), public reception points around the region and advice relay centres (PRC).

Aside from the advice given to individuals, the network organises co-ordination between the various organisations offering validation and provides information coming from certifiers on candidate's routes. It also develops services for professional entities and social-economic participants. This new service offered to the public and any interested parties has required particular efforts with operators concerned, private or public, becoming more professional with regard to the variety of information domains to be covered, notably:

- the scope of certifications and their value
- validation procedures
- possibilities for financing routes
- schedules for juries and local organisation of the NVQ offer
- training offers and the possibilities of modularisation.

The types of individuals visiting information centres differ from those traditionally seen in job centres. They can be employees looking ahead to eventual mobility opportunities, young adults trying to gain professional and social acknowledgment through their qualifications or individuals planning to start their own businesses where a diploma is indispensable. The AIO experts use the NVQ system to deal with requests linked to methods of skills construction throughout an individual's career and their acknowledgement.

Decentralisation of this network started in January 2006 with loans related to operating the information advice network in terms of the NVQ system being transferred to regional governing bodies.

Parallel to the implementation of this general information network (that is to say not directly linked to certification offers), certifiers have also developed information systems for those individuals making spontaneous requests.

I-7 The dynamics between participants

The implementation period for the Law creating the NVQ system was marked by profound changes in the vocational training landscape: the decentralisation law in 2004, a national inter-professional agreement from December 5th 2003 with its additional clauses from 2005 and the law on life-long vocational training from 2004. European countries opened up an important debate on the transparency of qualifications.

In this context, the various participants, regional councils, social partners and also individuals and certifiers, developed their own work in the domain of NVQs with a personalised dynamic. The different Ministries involved grouped together in an inter-ministerial committee whose activities will be presented later in this document. After an initial period marked mostly by entities wanting to highlight their prerogatives, the group was able to settle on a method of collaboration and co-operation, resulting notably in 2006 with the presentation of 'Recommendations for the development of Validation of vocational achievements' to the National Council for life-long vocational training.

I-8 The European context

In 2006, with the perspective of building a European job market in 2010, the Lisbon European Council invited all member states to reflect on the creation of a reference framework for all vocational certificates, allowing the comparison of certifications and encouraging mobility of workers on a European scale. The transparency of qualifications was gradually imposed as part of European state co-operation on vocational training. This was seen as a solution to the problems of securing life-long vocational routes.

Several provisions resulting from this idea of transparency can be highlighted:

- the EUROPASS, an individual portfolio showing qualifications (European CV, complementary description of certifications, language abilities, etc.),
- the European framework of vocational certifications (EQF: European Qualification Framework), a collective European reference establishing a unique nomenclature for certification levels,
- the European credit system (ECVET: European Credits for Vocational and Education training) organises the transfer of learning skills from one country to another.

France is fully committed to the European decisions that have been made. The National Commission for Vocational Certification has set itself the mission of creating a national framework for vocational certificates. Several projects are in progress at a European level to implement all of these objectives by concerting with the complete group of participants.

I-9 Regional councils

A Regional council's capability concerning NVQs was defined by the law from August 13th 2004 (articles 8 and 12):

- the Regional Council has adopted a regional development plan for vocational training (PRDF) set up in collaboration with from the State and social partners, which defines in particular the priorities relating to the Validation of vocational achievements,
- the Regional Council organises the network of information and advice centres for the Validation of vocational achievements,
- the Regional Council helps candidates with their Validation of vocational achievements.

At present, all Regional Councils have adopted the regional development plan for vocational training (PRDF), which includes a part on NVQs. The quality of these documents is in relation to their ability to bring to light modes and structures of consultation between participants. The ideal place for these consultations is the Regional Co-ordination Committee for Employment and Vocational training (CCREFP) whose law (article L.910-1 of the Labour code) states that there must be a specific commission for the validation of vocational achievements. The success of this authority varies greatly between regions.

Since 1st January 2006, Regional councils have taken on full responsibility for information and advice services relating to NVQs. In the first instance, most of the Regional councils have continued the work previously started by State services through the installation of a network of advice relay centres. Today, many regions have started to reflect on how to find a balance between the importance of combining the information side of NVQs with the general function of information on vocational training on one hand and the necessity of possessing a specific skill in terms of advice in the domain of certification and validation on the other.

The idea of accompanying candidates has for objective providing methodological help to prepare a proof portfolio, professional situation scenarios or interviews with the jury. This support is generally optional and must be paid for. Most Regional councils have put in place a support system using 'NVQ cheques'. These participate in financing individualised help for a target public by covering part of its cost.

Regional councils often ask two questions when reflecting on the implementation of NVQs. The first concerns the consequences of developing NVQs on the training programmes they offer and in particular the situations in which a candidate cannot obtain the complete diploma or certificate they have decided on. Following a validation project presumes that a candidate can benefit from an adapted training route that allows him to acquire the skills that the jury considers as not yet mastered.

In concrete terms, this increases the need for being able to modularise the training offer, which puts responsibility in the hands of regional councils in terms of structuring offers. The second question asked by Regional councils concerns the difficulty of having a good vision of the costs associated with NVQs and common pricing practices. Real differences exist on this issue, not only in terms of the validation itself, but also for accompaniment.

I-10 Social partners

Conscious that the development of access to qualifications and training is a major stake for the economy and society, the social partners drew up an agreement on September 20th 2003 whose aim is to allow each employee to take responsibility for his professional evolution by elaborating and implementing a project which takes into account the needs of his company in terms of skills and more generally, the economic environment and his own ambitions.

The first chapter of this agreement develops notably the use of tools used in recognising skills and professional aptitudes. Article 2 therefore presents the pertinence of a 'training passport' skills portfolio that allows employees to make the most of the skills gained from training and their professional experience.

Article 3 sets out the commitment of social partners included in the agreement to put in place the means needed to make access to validation of vocational achievements open to all. This is made possible in the framework of a legal provision giving all employees the right to this validation as part of their personal project. On these two points, social partners will define the conditions of implementation together with some additional clauses.

In line with this agreement, all social partners signed two additional clauses on July 20th 2005 relating to these two ways of recognising skills. The first concerns a professional interview, a skills assessment and the training passport. The second relates to the validation of vocational achievements. This additional NVQ clause, signed by the 3 French trade unions (CFDT, CGC, CFTC), confides an information mission to the national equalization fund (FUP). This mission is to give information to employees and companies on the NVQ system and vocational qualification certifications (CQP).

It also broadens the scope of NVQs, as prescribed by the Law, by making the expenses linked to CQPs, as defined by the CNPEs, attributable to vocational training funds, whether they are included or not in the national register of professional certifications (RNCP). The law however, given in article L.900-2 of the Labour code, only grants this possibility to NVQs leading to certifications included in the RNCP. At present, no request has been made to extend the additional NVQ clause from July 20th 2005.

With regards to job hunters, the unemployment insurance convention signed in January 2006 has made financing the validation of vocational achievements possible via the Unemployment benefit office (Assedic) for individuals who already receive benefits from the unemployment insurance scheme.

Social partners involved hope to provide NVQ projects that correspond to the real needs of employment catchment areas. They have agreed to finance the continuation of projects for a year after individuals have found a job and the training which can, after partial validation, lead to the total acquisition of the chosen qualification. This financing is authorised on the condition that an NVQ project is created within the first six months of a candidate's unemployment period.

I-11 Organisations offering certification

In order to implement the new validation of vocational training process, certifiers have had to adapt their previous procedures, revise the certification engineering and create a new organisation for candidate evaluation sessions.

Most of the certifiers concerned have accepted this revision in the engineering of each certificate. It is based firstly on a change in position with relation to the elements to evaluate: going from acceptance of a training programme with its disciplinary components towards highlighting the vocational skills acquired that correspond to the skills mobilised in those jobs targeted by certification. The description of each job and the necessary skills are identified in the reference list for employment/activity/skills and the references for each certification speciality.

Moreover, each certification must be created with modules corresponding to an equal amount of evaluation units. This allows juries to validate certain parts of the certification and the next route for the candidate in order to obtain total certification. This idea of module engineering will make the European project ECVET easier to implement.

This new method of elaborating references has therefore not only been accepted by the Ministries for Youth and Sports, Social and Sanitary Affairs, Health and Defence, but also by universities for higher education diplomas, the National Conservatory for Arts and Crafts (CNAM) and engineering schools. Other entities are at present only just committing themselves to this evolution (Ministries of Transport and Culture).

This process obviously takes time to implement which explains why a large number of diplomas have only recently been integrated into the NVQ system. Some of them have still not been included, particularly those diplomas for regulated professions where certain fields of work are strictly controlled by European regulations

mostly based on the possession of diplomas with a fixed training period. This constraint is seen by some as a barrier, validating the idea that they should not be awarded to individuals evaluated on their vocational achievements.

Experience does however show that this inflexibility, mostly of a cultural nature, can be overcome, even if it means losing derogatory measures such as maintaining a restricted, obligatory training module for all candidates. In a more general manner, the transitory period allowing certificates approved within the framework of the old Certificate approval commission (CTH) to be transferred to the National Register of Professional Certifications, has been extended to take into account the time needed to apply this new form of engineering.

The admission phase that takes place at the start of the process, must allow time for the candidate to receive all the information necessary for carrying out his project. The certifier services have adopted procedures allowing them to judge requests that are not acceptable.

However, the acceptance criteria are not only administrative, such as checking the effectiveness and duration of the experience acquired. It is also necessary to judge the correlation between the candidate's experience and the content of the certificate to be obtained. In a more general manner, in order to explore this exchange throughout the process and up to the final evaluation, most certifiers ask candidates to write an in-depth report. This document can often involve a long period of accompaniment by a third party.

This party, even though supposedly neutral, can have an influence on the presentation of this report that will later be evaluated.

For candidates, the length of the process; from collecting information up until the final jury session which implicates various participants (a councillor, administrative services, an accompanist) who are not always coordinated, is in itself a selection factor for starting a project.

The task of finding a relationship between a necessarily singular experience and the content of a certificate is often a difficult one for all individuals participating at the request of the candidate, including the jury members.

Lastly, certifiers must create a specific organisation for evaluation sessions. This includes:

- formalising the portfolios presented to the jury by candidates in which they set out their professional experience in a structured way
- ad hoc convocation of juries with associated costs that might be involved in certain cases (human costs: jury training, chairing sessions by the certifying ministry; financial costs: room rental, food and accommodation costs, travel expenses and payment of jury members).

The effect of regulations fixing a minimum quota of professionals among evaluators on the organisation of juries must be highlighted. This measure, which is entirely legitimate, has encountered some difficulty in its implementation, with many professionals having little time available for this mission as NVQ juries are in addition to training course juries. We can sometimes see competition between certifiers in recruiting professional jury members that is heightened by a lack of harmony in their payments. The willingness of any certifiers to change this situation has always come up against the complexity of existing practices and the potential financial implications.

II – THREE QUESTIONS ON THE NVQ SYSTEM: WHO? WHY? WHAT?

WHO?

Any individual has the right to an acknowledgement of his experience.

The NVQ system is suited to any working person with more than three years' experience acquired in salaried, or non-salaried employment or volunteer work, continuous or not, in relation with the certificate to be obtained:

- salaried workers in the private sector with long –term, short-term or temporary contracts,
- non-salaried employees: members of liberal professions farmers, skilled tradesmen, retailers or independent workers,
- civil servants, incumbent or not
- job seekers, receiving benefits or not
- volunteers with experience and associations or trade unions

Basic training or continuing training periods cannot however taken into account in the required length of experience. The same applies to periods of work experience.

WHY?

NVQs give individuals the opportunity to have the experience gained throughout their working life recognised and to obtain all or part of a diploma, certificate or professional qualification. NVQs concern all sectors of activity, all levels of employment and qualifications on the condition that the target certificate is included in the RNCP.

A minimum of three years experience, acquired over a continuous or non-continuous period, must be directly linked to the content of the targeted diploma, certificate or professional qualification.

WHICH certifications?

Any certifications with a professional outcome that are registered in the RNCP:

- Diplomas or certificates delivered by the State
- Certificates from consular chambers: Chambers of Commerce, Chamber of Trade, Chamber of Agriculture
- Professional qualification certificates in specified fields (CQP)
- Certificates from private organisations

The diplomas, certificates or professional qualifications delivered hold the same value as those obtained from a traditional education route.

HOW?

NVQs mean the verification and evaluation of professional skills and knowledge by a jury of professionals. The jury members will decide whether to award a partial or complete diploma on the basis of the portfolio presented by the candidate, a possible interview and, in certain cases, observation in a work situation.

Most validating organisations offer accompaniment for preparation of the portfolio and practice with situation scenarios. An NVQ advisor helps candidates to describe their experience, the activities and tasks they have carried out, the work environment, tools used, responsibilities, etc. The advisor then helps the individual to highlight their skills and accompanies them through the different stages of the process.

III – THE CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE FOR VALIDATORS

Each authority sets out its specific rules in statutory texts:

- Conditions for accepting candidates
- The type of portfolio to be presented
- Procedures to be followed
- Methods for evaluating and validating experience

The main stages are generally:

- ⇒ Examining the acceptance conditions (number of years experience required)
- ⇒ Accompanying candidates in the creation of their portfolio
- ⇒ Examining the candidate's experience in relation to requirements for obtaining the diploma
- ⇒ Evaluation by the jury and decision
- ⇒ Results and possibly the creation of stages to come

Accompaniment offered by the validator

Aim: to help each individual describe his personal and professional activities, inform them on the evaluation procedure and prepare them for it.

Content:

- Signature of an accompaniment contract
- Help with selection of experience to include in the portfolio
- Identify domains of activity, the level of responsibility, functions to carry out, etc.
- Methodological help with the description of activities
- Help with formalising and describing experience
- Preparation for an evaluation of professional practices

Validation

A jury whose composition and description are fixed by the regulations of each diploma must carry out the evaluation. The jury must include professionals and trainers.

The jury can award a targeted certificate or not, validate a certain part of the candidate's knowledge, skills and capabilities required for certification and request further examinations of a candidate's knowledge and skills.

The jury's decision cannot be overridden. It is made using the portfolio put together by the candidate and perhaps professional situation scenarios.

Duration of the procedure

The period necessary for obtaining all or part of the targeted diploma can differ greatly, from a few months to a few years. A candidate who only obtains partial validation of a certificate has a period of five years to acquire the remaining units, either through training or extra experience.

IV - SERVICES LINKED TO THE NVQ SYSTEM AND ITS PARTICIPANTS

In order to make the right to validation of vocational achievements widely accessible, it was necessary to formalise a collective organisation with different networks based on distinct and complementary stages.

1st and 2nd stages: information and advice (the Region's responsibility)

3rd stage: acceptance and accompaniment (the certifier's jurisdiction)

4th stage: validation (the validator)

5th stage: if there has only been a partial validation, acquiring missing skills (extra experience or training)

THE REGIONAL SYSTEM OF INFORMATION / ADVICE: PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR ROLES

There are two different levels of intervention:

⇒ *reception and information networks*

⇒ *the network of NVQ advice relay centres*

1. Reception networks: reception - information on NVQs

- National Agency for Employment (ANPE)
 - Youth services (Mission Locale)
 - Centre for Youth Information (CIJ)
 - Executive Employment Agency (APEC)
 - Chambers of commerce
 - Chambers of trade
 - Chambers of industry
 - Accredited Social Partners' bodies (OPCA) (collect funds relative to vocational training)
- etc.

Their role in relation to NVQs:

- Meeting individuals, identify their requests and deciding on the pertinent information to give them, the advisability of NVQs in a professional project.
- Generally inform on:
 - the principle and the result of NVQs
 - the statutory conditions
 - the stages
 - evaluation methods
- Check the basic conditions, differences between representation and reality
- Distribute adapted documentation

- Direct individuals to an Advice relay centre (PRC)
- if there is the possibility
- if the basic conditions are met

The use of PRC must be based on an individual's proximity to the service and must not depend on the person's status or certification project.

2. Advice Relay Centres (PRC)

The law pertaining to liberties and responsibilities from August 13th 2004, transferred the organisation and financing of this information-advice network for Validation of vocational achievements (NVQ) over to the Region.

The information-advice service for NVQs aims to:

- ⇒ increase the development of accompaniment for individuals by:
 - giving advice and support to an individual until they obtain total certification
 - proposing a route to acquire qualifications via an NVQ or other similar systems
- ⇒ increase an individual's commitment to the NVQ system by offering personalised, individualised information and advice
- ⇒ check the pertinence of an NVQ for the individual in relation to his profile and his project
- ⇒ ensure that all possible certifications have been presented and help the candidate to choose the most suitable certificate.

Advice is given in 4 phases:

- Listening to and analysing the candidate's request
- Giving individualised information: giving pertinent information on the NVQ system
- Advising
- Carrying out follow-up on the project

PRC advice fits into a chain of services:

Help from a PRC does not replace accompaniment for an NVQ; this is the validators' responsibility. PRC help is given before the accompaniment stage but the centre's advice cannot be taken as absolute fact.

PRC specificities:

PRCs are open to all types of individual.

It is up to the candidate to choose a PRC.

Each candidate has the right to a 1st interview in one or several PRCs where advice on starting a project will be given.

The candidate signing a contract makes his commitment to the advice process with a 'chosen' PRC official.

PRC commitments:

A PRC guarantees providing an adapted service to each individual.

The PRC is open to all types of individuals, whatever their age, status, level of studies, qualification, professional or geographic category.

The PRC provides objective and neutral advice, independent to the structure it belongs to.

The PRC guarantees complete confidence of all information collected by advisors.

The PRC is a free service for the beneficiary.

In 2008, the Lower Normandy Regional Council approved 16 Advice Relay Centres for NVQs, including the Cotentin region Training and Employment Office (MEF), a three yearly contract.

THE RECEPTION NETWORK AND PRC: DIFFERENTIATING MISSIONS

<u>RECEPTION STRUCTURES</u>	<u>ADVICE RELAY CENTRES (PRC)</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Give information on NVQ opportunities without any previous request▪ In reply to an individual's request, check the basic conditions, differences between perception and reality▪ Direct individuals towards Advice Relay Centres or directly to a validator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Analyse the pertinence of each request▪ Their mission is centred around the project's feasibility:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- analysing activities- finding certifications that correspond- helping candidates with their choice- directing candidates towards the suitable validator

PRCs AND VALIDATORS: DIFFERENTIATING MISSIONS

<u>PRC</u>	<u>VALIDATORS</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Mission centred on an individual's project for evolution▪ Mission centred on activities▪ Mission of working with different certification hypotheses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Mission centred on the certification chosen▪ Missions centred on an individual's skills▪ Mission of working on preparing the candidate for the validation system chosen

V – FINANCING FOR THE NVQ SYSTEM

The costs associated with NVQs vary depending on the validators.

An individual can either finance their NVQ project personally or find a third party to cover costs depending on their situation.

For employed workers, financing can be obtained via the OPACIF (Approved Joint Organisation for Personal Training Leave) if the project is part of a Personal Validation Leave project, or directly by the employer if it is included in the company's training plan.

For civil servants, administrations or public establishments costs can be covered as part of their training plan.

Financing for job seekers can be obtained via the Lower-Normandy Regional Council or the French Labour Department (DDTEFP) for certificates under the Ministry of Employment (work, employment and vocational training department) or via the Unemployment insurance scheme (ASSEDIC).

Personal validation leave for employed workers

Duration: 24 hours

1. Make a request to the company
 - request to be made 2 months in advance
 - reply from the employer after 1 month
 - maximum postponement period: 6 months
2. Request financing from an approved joint organisation (OPACIF)
 - this can take the form of compensation or validation costs (accompaniment and/or evaluation)

VI - APPENDICES

Decree no. 2002-615 of April 26th 2002, relating to the Validation of vocational achievements for delivery of vocational certificates

The general procedure for implementing NVQs: access conditions and organisation chart

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATING NVQs – THE DECREE Enaction of the right to NVQs

Decree n° 2002-615 of 26th April 2002 drawn up for application of article 900-1 from the Labour Code and articles L. 335-5 and L. 335-6 of the Education code relating to the Validation of vocational achievements in order to obtain a professional certification.

NOR: MESF0210487D

Version consolidated on 24th May 2006

The Prime minister, With a report from the Ministry of employment and solidarity,

In view of the Code of Education, notably articles L. 335-5 and L. 335-6 issuing from article 134 of law n° 2002-73 of 17th January 2002 on social modernisation;

With the Labour code, notably articles L. 900-1 and L. 934-1,

With Decree n° 93-489 of 26th March 1993 relating to the validation of vocational skills for obtaining technological and professional diploma;

With Decree n° 2002-590 of 24th April 2002 to be applied with the first paragraph of articles L. 613-3 and L. 613-4 of the Education code relating to the Validation of vocational achievements by higher education establishments;

With the decision of the National Council for vocational training, social promotion and employment dating from December 18th 2001;

With the decision of the National Council for Agricultural training dated 23rd January 2002;

With the decision of the Superior Council for Education dated January 31st 2002;

With the decision of the National Council for Higher education and research in the agribusiness and veterinary sector dated February 5th 2002;

With the decision of the National Council for Higher education and research dated February 18th 2002;

The State council (social sector) witnessed,

Article 1 (abrogated on 24 May 2006)

Abrogated by [Decree 2006-583 2006-05-23 art. 7 72° JORF* 24th May 2006](#)

The Validation of vocational achievements is implemented following the conditions set out in the present decree in order to deliver all diplomas and certificates of a professional nature as well as qualification certificates. This does not include diplomas and certificates delivered by the higher education establishments mentioned in article L. 613-3 of the Education code.

Article 2 (abrogated on 24 May 2006)

Abrogated by [Decree 2006-583 2006-05-23 art. 7 72° JORF 24th May 2006](#)

Salaried, non-salaried and volunteer workers can request the Validation of their vocational achievements, whether gained over a continuous period or not, but during a cumulated duration of at least three years and in relation with the diploma, professional certificate or qualification certificate they have requested.

Periods of basic or continuous training, whatever the status of the individual may be, as well as any work experience and periods of training in companies as part of preparation for a diploma or certificate, cannot be taken into account for the period to experience required.

Article 3 (abrogated on 24 May 2006)

Abrogated by [Decree 2006-583 2006-05-23 art. 7 72° JORF 24th May 2006](#)

Candidates will address their request for validation of their vocational achievements to the authority or organisation delivering the diploma, certificate or professional within the deadline required and respecting the conditions which have been previously fixed and made known to the public.

* JORF: Official Journal

Candidates cannot make more than one request during the same calendar year for the same diploma, certificate or professional diploma. It is however possible to make three requests for different diplomas within the same year. These obligations and the candidates pledge to respect them, must be included on each of the candidate's request forms for a validation of vocational achievements.

This form will specify the diploma, certificate or qualification requested as well as the status of the individual at the time of his request. This document is accompanied by the candidate's portfolio whose content is decided on by the authority or organisation delivering the diploma, certificate or qualification. The portfolio will include documents proving the skills acquired during the candidate's activities in paid, unpaid or volunteer work, as well as the duration of each job, the certificates for training courses followed and any previously obtained diplomas.

Article 4 (abrogated on 24 May 2006)

Abrogated by [Decree 2006-583 2006-05-23 art. 7 72° JORF 24th May 2006](#)

I. - The validation request is examined by a jury, constituted and presided over as per the regulations and provisions governing the diploma, certificate or qualification in question.

At least a quarter of the jury members must be professionals (half employers and half employees, and so as to ensure a fair balance, an equal number of male and female participants).

II. – When jury members are from the organisation or company where the candidate works or if those individuals have accompanied the candidate in his project, they cannot participate in debate on the candidate in question.

Article 5 (abrogated on 24 May 2006)

Abrogated by [Decree 2006-583 2006-05-23 art. 7 72° JORF 24th May 2006](#)

I. The evaluation procedures allow the jury to check if the candidate's acquired skills correspond to the skills, aptitudes and knowledge required by the regulations in part I of article 4 for delivery of the diploma, certificate or qualification in view.

II. The jury decides on delivery of the diploma, certificate or qualification. Otherwise, the jury can validate a part of the candidate's experience for part of the skills, aptitudes and knowledge which, within a period of five years from the notification of this decision, must be re-evaluated in order to obtain the diploma, certificate or qualification.

Article 6 (abrogated on 24th May 2006)

Abrogated by [Decree 2006-583 2006-05-23 art. 7 72° JORF 24th May 2006](#)

The decision for validation made by the jury is given to the candidate by the authority delivering the certification.

Article 7 (abrogated on 24th May 2006)

Created by [Decree 2002-615 2002-04-26 JORF 28th April 2002 rectified JORF 26th October 2002](#)

Abrogated by [Decree 2006-583 2006-05-23 art. 7 72° JORF 24th May 2006](#)

The waivers mentioned in the previous paragraph of part I in article 335-5 of the Education code are decided on by the Authority delivering the diploma, certificate or qualification and by the Ministry interested in practice of the profession to which the diploma, certificate or qualification gives access, if it is a separate entity from the aforesaid authority. When the diploma or certificate is delivered by the State or in its name, the nature of these waivers and their detailed list must be set out in a separate order drawn up by the Ministries concerned after a decision from the National Commission of Professional Certification.

Such measures are taken for each individual diploma or part of a diploma as well as certificates or parts of certificate.

They will only be applied to a complete profession or sector of activity.

Article 8 (abrogated on 24th May 2006)

Candidates who have made a request to validate their vocational achievements according to the provisions set out in the aforementioned Decree of 26th March 1993, and whose request has not been examined by the jury before the date of this decree can ask to benefit from the provisions included in article 5 of the aforementioned decree.

Article 9 (abrogated on 24th May 2006)

The Ministry of Economy, Finance and Industry, the Ministry of Employment and Solidarity, the Keeper of the seals, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Department of Health, the Ministry of Education delegated to Vocational training, the Ministry of Industry and Trade for small and medium sized companies, traditional commerce, crafts and consumption and the State secretary for women's rights and vocational training are each responsible, in their own domains, for implementing the present decree, which will be published in the Official Journal for the French Republic.

LIST OF VALIDATORS

Departmental authority for Work, Employment and Vocational training ([Direction Départementale du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Formation Professionnelle](#))

Departmental authority for Forests and Agriculture ([Direction Régionale de l'Agriculture et de la Forêt](#))

Departmental authority for Social and Sanitary Affairs ([Direction Régionale des Affaires Sanitaires et Sociales](#))

Departmental authority for Youth and Sports ([Direction Régionale et Départementale de la Jeunesse et des Sports](#))

Ministry of National Education/ National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts ([Education Nationale / Centre National des Arts et Métiers](#))

Ministry of National Education/Teaching Academy ([Education Nationale / Rectorat](#))

Ministry of National Education/University ([Education Nationale / Université](#))

Departmental authority for Maritime Affairs ([Direction Régionale des Affaires Maritimes](#))



Validation of vocational achievements

Decree no.2002-615 from 26th April 2002 relating to the Validation of vocational achievements for delivering a vocational certification

Maison de l'Emploi et de la Formation du Cotentin

ACCESS CONDITIONS



3 years experience

- Salaried employment
- Non-salaried employment
- Volunteer work



Certification¹ included in the National Register of Professional Certifications (RNCP²)

¹ Certification is the term used to describe all diplomas, vocational certificates and professional qualifications

² www.cncp.gouv.fr



— Point d'Information Conseil en NVQ —

An Information Advice point is a place where it is possible to get precise information on the work to carry out. This advice is personalised and financed by the Lower Normandy Regional Council. It is free and allows individuals to be fully informed when creating their NVQ project.

LES SERVICES³ RENDUS PAR UN POINT D'INFORMATION CONSEIL EN NVQ⁴

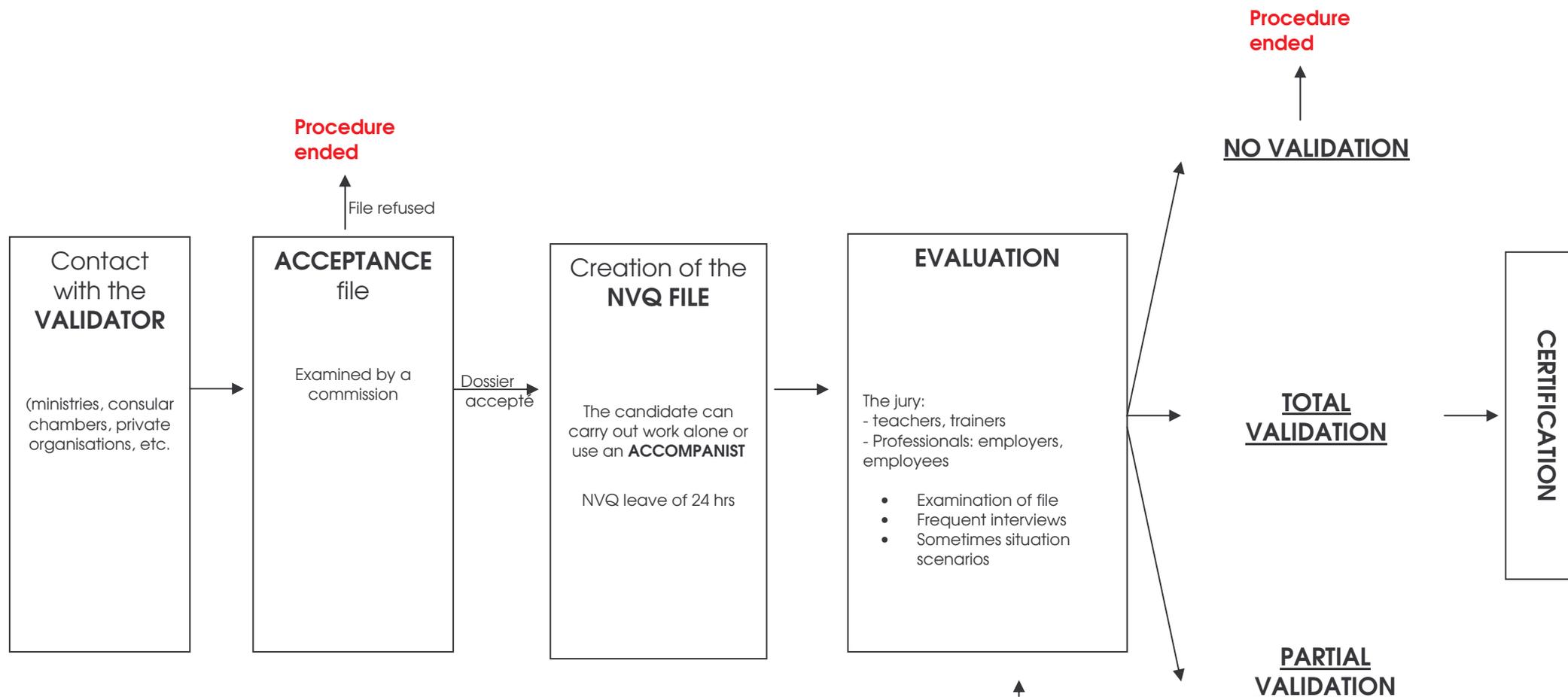


- Listen to and analyse the request
- Give information
- Check the project's pertinence
- Look for certifications
- Find financing
- Create a summary document

³ The PIC NVQ advisor gives advice on the NVQ region by region and before the NVQ procedure

⁴ A meeting with the PIC NVQ advisor is optional.

PROCEDURE FOR VALIDATION OF VOCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS



Definitions

The validator: the authority delivering certification
 Acceptance file: this file is made up of proof justifying experience over a 3 year period
 Accompaniment: can be carried out by a person or organisation offering support to a candidate in the creation of their NVQ file

1. Units awarded (validity of 5 years)
2. Units not awarded (5 year period to acquire the missing units through:
 - Training
 - Or
 - Extra experience