

Portuguese Requirements to Operate as Trainers

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Portuguese Requirements to Operate as Trainers

Introduction

The Barcelona European Council (March 2002) adopted concrete objectives for improving Member States' education and training systems, including improving education and training for teachers and trainers. In March 2006 the Council noted that 'Education and training are critical factors to develop the EU's long-term potential for competitiveness as well as for social cohesion'.

Numerous social, cultural, economic and technological changes in society, place new demands on the teaching profession and hasten the need for the development of more competence centred approaches to teaching, together with a greater emphasis on learning outcomes.

Structured action in the field of education and training can help in the preparation of individuals for today's society and are vital for Europe's future competitiveness and innovation. Vocational Education and Training (VET) plays a key role, providing the skills, knowledge and competences needed in the labour market.

The education and training of teachers represents a crucial element in the modernisation of European education and training systems, and future increases in the overall level of educational attainment and the pace of progress towards the common objectives of the 'Education and Training 2010' work programme will be facilitated by the existence of effective systems of teacher education.

The main challenges that Vet teachers and trainers face are the recruitment of teachers, the necessity for new competence requirements for teachers, the possibility for competence development of teachers and trainers and the definition of standards at national level to ensure the quality of training.

Improving the quality of Teacher Education is, therefore, an important goal for Europe's Educational systems if quicker progress is to be made towards meeting the common objectives that have been established under the Education and Training 2010 programme.

Previous Considerations

The notions of teacher, trainer and tutor, etc. are just as ambiguous as professionalisation.

In EU countries the concept **teacher** is generally used to name personnel in primary schools, secondary schools and initial vocational training colleges.

Tutors are defined as salaried employees of the enterprise appointed by the employer to be responsible for a trainee in initial training, continuing training or retraining within the enterprise. A tutor's main task is teaching trainees. Many countries use the term (workplace) instructor.

A **trainer** is a professional involved in apprenticeship systems, on-the-job and off-the-job training activities and, more generally, in private sector training.

Trainer - The Portuguese Reality

In the Portuguese reality there are three different kinds of professionals of training:

- The trainer of trainers;
- The trainer;
- The trainer in workplace.

The **trainer of trainers** is a professional who is expected to enable the trainer to perform the trainer function; for this reason he must have specific competences in what concerns:

- Pedagogical skills:
Ability to analyse and identify student needs, ability to design training programmes to meet these needs, ability to teach and ability to assess the educational and professional outcomes of this teaching. These are generic skills needed by all teachers regardless the discipline in which they work.
- Knowledge:
Need to understand and perform the tasks trainees will be asked to perform and also have a firm grounding in the theory underlying these skills.

The **trainer**, once qualified by the training of trainers, is a person who able to perform his technical training as long as he owns a solid ground in the subject area he is about to transmit information.

The **trainer in workplace (many times called tutor)**, also needs to have pedagogical skills, but besides the solid ground in the technical area he has to be able to prepare, develop and assess the process of teaching/learning in a real working context.

Let's us centre in the trainer.

1. Definition of Trainer

The Portuguese law (*Decreto Regulamentar n. 66/94, from 19th November, with the modifications introduced by Decreto Regulamentar n. 26/97, from 18th June*) regulates the activity of trainer in professional context and defines some **general rules** to which the certification of trainers must obey.

The law provides the following definition of trainer:

Trainer is the professional who, when developing a training session, is able to encompass a pedagogical relationship with the trainees, fostering knowledge and competences acquirement, as well as the attitudes and behaviours development, suitable to professional performance.

Therefore a competent trainer must have:

- The **technical**, up dated, domain over the subject in which he/she is specialised;
- The **pedagogical control** of the methods and techniques, suitable to the kind and level of training developed;
- **Communication skills** to facilitate the teaching/learning process.

To perform as trainer professional one must have:

- **Psychosocial preparation**, involving, namely cooperation spirit and communication and relational skills, always adapted to the particularities of each target group, as a way to seek efficiently the cultural, social and economics function of the training;
- **Scientific, technical, technological and practical training**, evolving an academic qualification of equal or superior level to the level the students have on completion of the course, in the subject areas where training is developed;
- Attendance, with success, of the **pedagogical training of trainers course**, homologated by the Portuguese Institute of Employment and Vocational Training – IEFP;

- The Pedagogical Aptitude **Certificate** (CAP) – with the up dated pedagogical competency, issued in the EU or other country (in case of international agreements).

Exceptions:

- When justified by pedagogical or technical reasons of the training sessions, IEFP can allow the participation of professionals who not fulfil one or more of the requirements referred before, but own special academic and/or professional qualification or special knowledge, not accessible in the market.

1.1. Internal or External Trainer

The trainers can be internal trainers – when they are employees of a training entity – or external trainers in the other situations.

2. Professional Certification as Trainer

In Portugal, since the 1st of January 1998, the pedagogical certification of trainers is **compulsory** for the training actions supported by governmental funds.

The professional certification guarantees that a worker is able to perform, with quality, a specific professional activity. Certification can contribute, through recognition of titles, to the mobility of workers in the European area.

Behind each certificate of professional aptitude there is a professional profile used to evaluate the competences of the candidate. This profile, conceived specially for each profession, indicates the activities that a professional must perform as well as the knowledge that he must have.

As far as the training activity in a professional context is concerned, the Portuguese law (*Portaria n. 1119/97 from 5 November*) establishes several general rules to which the certification of trainers must obey. This law settles the certification rules that refer to the requisites of homologation of pedagogical training needed to obtain the pedagogical aptitude certificate as well as its renewing conditions.

3. The Pedagogical Aptitude Certificate (CAP)

3.1. Definition

CAP is a certificate offered by a Portuguese Governmental Institution (IEFP) to those who attend and are successful in a course of Pedagogical Training of Trainers with the syllabus and number of training hours indicated by IEFP.

The course can be provided by an allowed institution of training or similar. This Institution gives a diploma of attendance which generally indicates the mark the student obtains in the end of the course. Only with this diploma the student can go to the IEFP to ask for the trainer certificate.

3.2. The Pedagogical Training

The pedagogical training, to be homologated by the IEFP, as certifying entity, should have a minimum duration of 90 hours and be organised and developed to be able to accomplish the criteria defined by IEFP concerning the methodologies, trainers of trainer's profile, spaces, equipments, didactical resources, acceding conditions and the process of trainer's evaluation.

The pedagogical training should encompass the following **contents**:

- The trainer and the context in which training is developed;
- Theories, factors and processes of learning;
- Pedagogical relation, groups animation in training;
- Pedagogical methods and techniques;
- Pedagogical relation, groups animation and managing different routes in learning;
- Training Planning;
- Designing training objectives;
- Resources in training and the new information and communication technologies;
- Learning assessment;
- Training assessment.

The pedagogical training should include the planning and presentation, by the trainees, of two sessions of training – initial simulation and final simulation.

3.3. Degrees that allow acceding to CAP

Some certificates, however, are seen as relevant to consider a candidate to be certified for the trainer ability, through training.

Those certificates can be presented by candidates who have completed the degrees in Education, Psychology, Human Resources and others, whose syllabus include subjects essentially pedagogical or specifically in the area of the training that, some how, can be considered equivalent to the syllabus required for the pedagogical training of trainers, ruled by the Portuguese law (Portaria n.^{er} 1119/97, from 5th of November).



3.4. CAP's Validity and Renovation

CAP - Period of Validation	Requirements
<p>5 years</p> <p>...if another validity period is not established in a specific rule.</p>	<p>- To have attended a Training of Trainer's Course, homologated by the IEFP, with duration equal or superior to 90 hours;</p> <p style="text-align: center;">or</p> <p>- To own a certificate that enables him/her to act as a trainer, issued inside the European Union or in other country, in case an international agreement is valid.</p> <p>This certificate can be renewed (for several periods) if the following cumulative conditions are present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 60 hours of training in pedagogical up dating (all together or separated) or other significant experiences in the pedagogical area, during the validation of the certificate, considered adequate by the certifying body such as books publication, articles in the pedagogical area, participation in seminars or similar; - 300 hours of proved training experience.
<p>2 years</p> <p>...for the trainers who were in the market before 1st January of 1998</p>	<p>The Trainer must meet one of the following requirements:</p> <p>- To have attended a training of trainer's course, before the 1st of January 1998, with a minimum of 60 hours; this course must include the programmatic contents considerate adequate by the IEFP - Institute of Employment and Vocational Training;</p> <p style="text-align: center;">or</p> <p>- To have a minimum of 180 hours of training experience developed between the 1st of January 1990 and the 1st of January 1998.</p> <p>This certificate can be renewed (for several periods) if the following conditions are gathered cumulatively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 60 hours of training of pedagogical updating (all together or separated), during the validation of the certificate; - 120 hours of training experience.

The Portuguese law – Decreto Regulamentar n^o 26/97 from 18th June – states that the renewal of the CAP can only be effectuated if **cumulatively**, during the period of validation of the certificate, the owner of it meets the following **requirements**:

- Scientific and technical up date in the area of training in which he is an expert;
- Developing of a continuous pedagogical adjustment to the aims, subjects and target group namely through pedagogical training;
- Proved number of training hours and performance as trainer.

4. Courses to Obtain the CAP for Trainer

4.1. Initial Pedagogical Training of Trainers

Introduction

This course aims at qualifying professionals for the training role/activity in the thematic areas of their academic qualifications, promoting their psychosocial development and providing them with pedagogical competences that will allow a proper transference of scientific and technological knowledge.

It also intends to broaden the professional outcomes of the trainees.

By the end of the course the trainee must be able to plan and prepare, to develop and animate and to evaluate a training session, showing the competences he was able to obtain in the course concerning the knowledge domains: attitudinal - to be, knowledge - to know, behavioural - to know how to do.

Target group

People older than 18, with or without pedagogical experience who want to minister actions for professional training purposes, and gather the following requisites:

- Degree or attendance of a degree;
- Bachelor or attendance of a Bachelor;
- Complete the last year before entering university with technical competence or professional experience of at least 3 years;
- Compulsory school and professional experience of minimum 3 years.



Syllabus

Modules	Subject
Module 1	Pedagogical initial simulation
Module 2	The trainer and the context in which training is developed
Module 3	Theories, factors and processes of learning
Module 4	Pedagogical relation, groups animation in training
Module 5	Pedagogical Methods and Techniques
Module 6	Designing training objectives
Module 7	Resources in training and the new information and communication technologies
Module 8	Learning assessment
Module 9	Training assessment
Module 10	Training Planning
Module 11	Pedagogical final simulation

Methodology

The Initial Pedagogical Training of Trainers courses can adopt face-to-face methodology or the Blended learning methodology.

The methods used in the training sessions can be the expositive, demonstrative and active methods.

The subjects are generally introduced by a theoretical introduction by the trainer and worked in class by the trainees by the use of exercises that go through the subject's focus of each training session. The active methods in the resolution of problems are stressed as well as the experimental, practical work, individual or in groups, to contribute to the acquisition of knowledge by the trainee, making a real active agent of his learning process.

Learning Assessment

The trainees are evaluated through different processes of assessment: diagnosis, continuous and final.

The participation of the trainers during the training sessions is also important contribution to the continuous assessment.

For the final assessment there are two elements:

- The **pedagogical simulation**, which represents the most important component of the final assessment.
As the course aims at certifying professionals of training it is evident that they should have competencies to train others, therefore all the competencies required to perform the function of trainer should be carefully looked at, evaluated and criticised – the final simulation is the best moment for it.
- For the theoretical aspects (knowledge) there is a **final written exam**.

It is considered a frequency of the course with success, if the trainee:

- Gets a final mark equal or superior to fair, good or very good – 50% or more;
- Attends 95% of the total hours of the course.

Certification

The conclusion of the Initial Pedagogical Training of Trainers Course, with approval, leads to the CAP – Certificate of Professional Aptitude – issued by IEFP – after being asked by the trainee who owns the course diploma.

4.2. Continuous Training of Trainers

The requirements needed to renew the CAP of trainer / pedagogical competency, namely the frequency of pedagogical training during the period that CAP is valid, is considered a priority to the governmental entity - IEFP and other training entities.

This entity – IEFP – indicates a significant training offer of continuous training to be selected by trainers to meet certification purposes.

The structure of training is organised in four main **domains**:

- Educational Systems, Training and Certification;
- Training Management;
- Technology in training;
- Training methodologies.



The Continuous Training of Trainers integrates several courses, with an approximate duration of 30 hours.

The trainer can choose the course according to his/her preferences in order to fulfil the minimum period of time required to renew the certificate.

Examples of courses:

- Group animation in training context;
- Design and production of self-study materials;
- Training management;
- Conflict management in training context;
- Methods and strategies in training;
- Principles and methodologies of working with adults;
- Assessment techniques in training;
- Power Point as a tool to develop interactive products to training.

Conclusion

The quality of teaching / training represents one key factor in determining whether the European Union can increase its competitiveness in the globalise world. Only qualified persons, with theoretical and practical knowledge of the respective subject, may be engaged as trainers in adult education.

In Portugal the technical domain over the subject is not sufficient for a trainer to be considered a competent trainer; also pedagogical and relational skills are required.

The Portuguese Institute of Employment and Vocational Training – IEFP offers the trainer the possibility of obtaining the Pedagogical Aptitude Certificate (CAP) through the attendance, with success, of a Pedagogical Training of Trainers Course.

This certification is already compulsory for the training actions supported by governmental funds, and constitutes an important reference for the rest of the actions as it guarantees that a person is able to perform, with quality, the training of a specific professional activity.

Briefly, the CAP for trainers has been considered an added value to the professionals who are in the field of training and, on the other hand, a decisive tool to all the contractors who look for qualified trainers.