

Documentation of country specific conditions IVET/ NQF

Introduction:

Mobility of learners is a European key priority in vocational education. In particular, the mobility of apprentices needs to be promoted to a greater extent. The differences in European vocational education and training systems currently have a rather inhibitive impact on the educational content. It is of great importance to create mutual understanding and trust with regard to transparency and recognition of learning mobility.

The LEONARDO DA VINCI transfer of innovation project "Mobility Excellence" devoted itself to this task and aims to improve the value-added content of mobility as a formally recognized part of vocational training. Therefore ECVET (European Credit system for Vocational Education & Training) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) provide an ideal "bridge" in geographical mobility.

Hosting and sending organizations in our mobility-network work within different National Qualification Frameworks. It is not easy to understand these different national standards. National Qualification Frameworks (NQFs) have, over a short period of time, developed into key instruments influencing national education, training and qualification systems.

"National Qualifications Framework" is an instrument for classifying qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications subsystems and improve transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society.

Formally adopted by the European Parliament and Council in 2008, the EQF recommendation introduced a strict timeframe for countries to link their national qualifications systems to the European meta-framework. NQFs play a key role in linking national qualifications systems to the EQF (and the qualifications frameworks for the European higher education area) reference levels and descriptors. International comparability and the need for a common qualification language is of key importance to our countries. The potential role of NQFs in improving national education, training and qualifications systems is increasingly acknowledged.

Most European countries have decided to develop National Qualifications Frameworks reflecting and responding to the EQF. These developments are important to ensure that the European-level cooperation process is properly anchored at national level. The rapid development of NQFs since 2004 demonstrates the need for increased transparency and comparability of qualifications at all levels and show that the basic principles underpinning the EQF are broadly shared.

The purpose of the EQF is to facilitate comparison of qualifications and levels of qualifications in different countries. It aims to promote citizens' mobility and lifelong learning. The European Qualifications Framework makes it possible to determine relationships between national qualifications and qualifications systems. Each country is expected to classify its national qualifications into the eight EQF levels by means of its National Qualifications Framework or the levels of its national qualifications system. The European Qualifications Framework should, moreover, enable international sectoral organizations to relate their qualifications systems to a common European reference point and thus show the relationship between international sectoral qualifications and national qualifications systems.

Source: "THE EUROPEAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK FOR LIFELONG LEARNING (EQF)" EUROPEAN COMMISSION-Education and Culture

Content:	Page
Vocational Education and Training System (VET)	
Germany	3
United Kingdom	5
Malta	7
France	11
National Standards VET:	
Germany	13
United Kingdom	15
Malta	16
France	19
Stakeholders Role in VET	
Germany	20
United Kingdom	24
Malta	25
France	22
Competence appraisal	
Germany	28
United Kingdom	30
Malta	32
System of Recognition of learning outcomes	
Germany	33
United Kingdom	36
Malta	37
France	35
NQF vs. EQF	
Germany	38
United Kingdom	43
Malta	45
France	41

Germany

Vocational Education and Training System (VET)

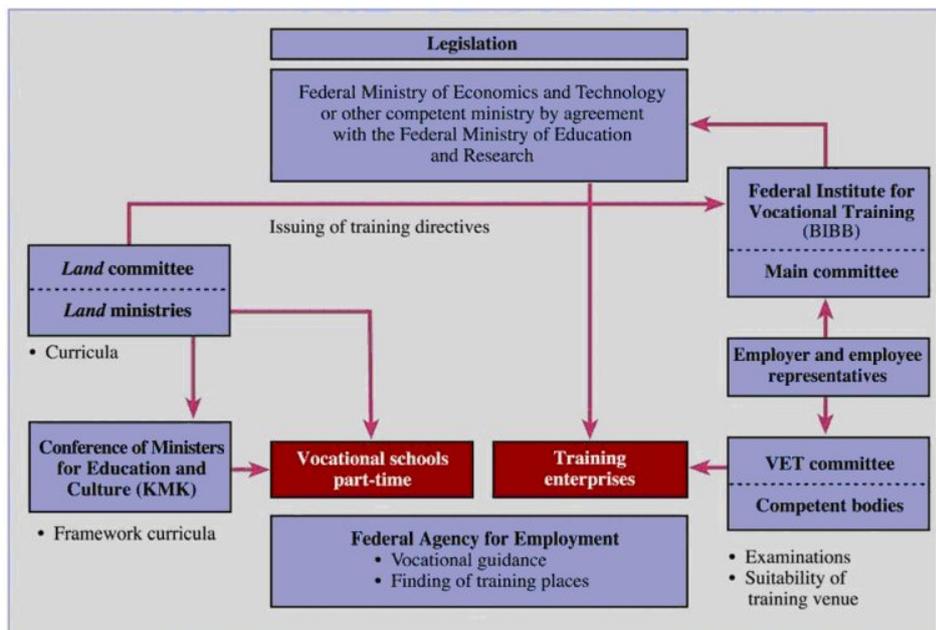
Legal Framework:

(Source: Vocational education and training in Germany Short description Cedefop Panorama series; 138)

In the area of VET, the Vocational Education and Training Act (BBiG) is of crucial importance. The Law of 1 April 2005 reforming vocational education and training comprehensively amended and combined the 1969 Vocational Education and Training Act and the 1981 Aid for Vocational Trainees Act. The aim of the reform was to safeguard and improve youth training opportunities and high-quality vocational training for all young people, irrespective of their social or regional origin. Major innovations since the introduction of the Vocational Education and Training Reform Act are the recognition of time-limited training periods completed outside Germany, the amendment of the Enabling Standard for the promulgation of training directives by the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB), and the amendment of the crediting of prior VET to the training period.

Other important VET legislation includes the Regulation on Craft Trades (HwO), the Regulation on Trainer Aptitude (AEVO), the Safety at Work for Young Workers Act (JArbSchG), the Works Council Constitution Act (BetrVG), the Aid for Further Training for Advancement Act (AFBG) and the FDistance Learning Courses Act (FernUSG). The legal bases for the promulgation of training directives are Section 25(1) BBiG and Section 25(1) HwO. These sections provide that the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi) or the otherwise competent ministry, by agreement with the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), may publicly recognise training occupations via statutory instrument and may issue training directives for training occupations. Training directives are prepared by the BIBB. The BIBB also carries out research projects and helps in the further development of in-company VET by means of development, promotional and advisory work.

Figure 5: Responsibilities in the field of vocational training



Source: Federal Institute for Vocational Training, 2006.

The Standing Conference of Ministers for Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) issues framework curricula for vocational education at vocational schools. These framework curricula are harmonised with the Federal Government's training directives. Curricula for general education at vocational schools are essentially developed by the individual Länder.

The most important form of initial vocational training is the “dual system”! The dual system is far and away the largest field of education at upper secondary level, with approximately 53 % of an age cohort training for a recognised training occupation. After completing their training in the dual system, the majority of participants then take up employment as a skilled worker – later on, many of them make use of the opportunities for continuing vocational training. Under certain conditions, however, those who have qualified may also obtain the academic standard required for entrance to a Fachhochschule in one year at school full-time, and go on to higher education. Successful participants in continuing vocational training are also increasingly permitted to study at colleges. Training places are offered in enterprises in industry and in the public service, in practices of the liberal professions and, to a very limited extent, also in private households. Enterprises enter into a contract with trainees, in which they undertake to provide them with the professional competences in the occupation provided for in the training directive for the relevant training occupation.

The binding requirements of the training directives guarantee a uniform national standard irrespective of current enterprise needs, which corresponds to the requirements in the relevant occupation. Training may take place only in training enterprises in which the skills required by the training directive can be imported by training personnel who are appropriate both personally and in terms of specialised knowledge. The suitability of training enterprises and in-company training personnel is monitored by the relevant autonomous industrial bodies (Chambers). Proper provision of the training itself is also monitored by the Chambers. The training enterprise draws up an in-company training plan for trainees. This plan must correspond to the training directive in terms of its practical and time structure, but may deviate from it if particular features of company practice require this and, for the rest, all training content is included.

The enterprises bear the costs of the in-company training and pay the trainee remuneration for training that is regulated by collective agreement between the parties. The amount of the remuneration increases with every year of training, and averages about one third of the starting pay for a trained skilled worker. The professional competences in the occupation to be acquired in in-company training are specified in a training directive and put in concrete form by the training enterprise in an individual training plan. For the teaching in the vocational school, a framework curriculum, harmonised with the training directives, is drawn up for every recognised training occupation. Small and medium-sized enterprises in particular are often unable to provide all the learning content. Sometimes they lack suitable training personnel, or, owing to their particular specialisation, do not cover all the training content themselves. There may also be other reasons why training is made more difficult or is even prevented.

The in-company entry-level vocational qualification (EQJ, introduced in 2004) involves 6 to 12-month periods of work experience in enterprises, as preparation for training (see 10.1). They are subsidised by the Federal Government, which provides a monthly grant to cover the trainee’s subsistence costs and bears the cost of the flat-rate total social insurance contribution. The EQJ programme is aimed at young training applicants aged 15-25 with limited prospects of finding training, and young people not yet in possession of all the necessary training qualifications. Young people are given the opportunity, for example to obtain partial qualifications in a training occupation via qualification building blocks and specific vocational modules. On the basis of a testimonial from the enterprise, the successfully acquired entry-level qualification is certified by the competent body (e.g. Chambers of Industry and Commerce, Craft Chambers). Six months’ training can then be credited to subsequent training.

Continuing education or training is understood to be the continuation or resumption of organised learning following completion of an initial phase of education of varying scope. In addition to continuing ‘vocational’ education/training, this includes continuing general and political education, which is also subsumed under the heading of ‘adult education’. In Germany, continuing vocational education/training is characterised by receptiveness, flexibility and ongoing changes. The state has only a minor regulatory and creative function in this area. The complexity and heterogeneity of continuing VET is reflected in the variety of activities in the areas of financial support, research, development and quality assurance.

United Kingdom

Vocational Education and Training System (VET)

The UK VET system promotes Lifelong learning. The system is flexible, responsive and relevant to the needs of industry as well as the individual learner. Businesses and other relevant agencies and training organisations all work together to ensure standardisation and quality assurance so that learners are becoming competent in the skills required for the future.

A quick guide to understanding the Education System

← How it was → | ← How it is now →

Student Age	Old School Years	Old Test Equivalent	School Year as Currently Known	General Qualification / Test	NATIONAL FRAMEWORK - NOT AGE RELATED				Level of Qualification	Glossary of Terms
					Vocationally related Qualifications	Occupational Qualifications	Modern Apprenticeships (16-25)	Level of Qualification		
4-5			Reception						<p>Glossary of Terms</p> <p>SATs: Standard Assessment Tests - allows pupils & parents to know how a learner is performing against national benchmarks.</p> <p>KS: Key Stage</p> <p>AS: Advanced supplementary (a full qualification equal to about 50% of 'A' level).</p> <p>A2: the second part of the AS, converting it into the full 'A' level.</p> <p>NVQ: National Vocational Qualification - a standard based on assessed occupational competence.</p> <p>Applied GCSE: a qualification equal to 2 traditional GCSEs giving occupational knowledge and understanding but not occupational competence.</p> <p>Vocational A level: a qualification equal to 2 traditional 'A' levels giving occupational knowledge and understanding but not occupational competence.</p>	
5-6			1							
6-7			2	KS1 SATS						
7-8			3							
8-9			4							
9-10			5							
10-11		11 Plus	6	KS2 SATS						
11-12	1st		7							
12-13	2nd		8							
13-14	3rd		9	KS3 SATS						
14-15	4th		10							
15-16	5th	CSE	11	GCSE/Applied GCSE Grades D-G	Foundation GNVQ	Level 1 NVQ		Level 1 Foundation Level		
15-16	5th	O Levels	11	GCSE/Applied GCSE Grades A*-C	Intermediate GNVQ	Level 2 NVQ	Foundation Modern Apprenticeship	Level 2 Intermediate Level		
16-17	Lower 6th	First Year of A Level	12	AS Level	Advanced GNVQ	Level 3 NVQ	Advanced Modern Apprenticeship	Level 3 Advanced Level		
17-18	Upper 6th	Second Year of A Level	13	AS + A2 = A Level/ Vocational A Level	HND/HNC Foundation Degree	Level 4 NVQ		Level 4		
18 & upwards	18 & upwards	Degree Honours Degree Masters/PhD	Higher Education	Pass Degree Honours Degree Masters/PhD		Level 5 NVQ		Level 5		

Key Stage: One Two Three Four

Funded by www.connexionssurrey.co.uk
 Information, advice, guidance and practical support for all 13 - 19 year olds in Surrey.

Surrey Chambers of Commerce **Guide to qualifications**
www.surrey-chambers.co.uk

IVET usually begins at the last stage of compulsory education, the student is offered work based learning including careers advice, short periods of work experience, industry links. The main IVT programmes begin after the completion of compulsory education which ends in the school year when the young person reaches the age of 16. It must be noted that there is no clear distinction between Initial and Continuous Vocational Training in the UK.

There are a range of qualifications that the learner can choose from including National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) BTECs, Higher National Diplomas (HND), Higher National Certificates (HNC), Key Skills and other Functional Skills based qualifications. These can be studied at sixth form colleges, FH education institutions, training organisations or through apprenticeships and work placements. Each qualification is designed to lead on to either employment or higher education.

British council on National VET

If the learner completes units and obtains the number of credits required then qualifications are awarded. Gaining and developing competencies are the important factors; finding out what you can do rather than what you know. Alongside the vocational qualification students are usually offered basic skills such as Essential Skills in Numeracy, Literacy and ICT.

Scotland has a different education system from the rest of the UK (England, N. Ireland & Wales) however qualifications are recognised across all UK borders.

- a network of Sector Skills Councils, where industry defines and steers the planning for the skills it needs
- occupational standards set by industry, which lead to qualifications based on the assessment of what individuals can do as well as what they know
- vocational education and training programs starting at school for 14 year olds and with links to university study options
- six levels of qualifications which span all the different education and training routes in a coherent national framework
- a Learning and Skills Council which integrates the planning and funding of all academic and vocational post-16 further education and training outside higher education
- over 500 autonomous colleges and many more private education and training providers that work closely with community organisations and local businesses to ensure their courses are responsive to local needs.

Malta

Vocational Education and Training System (VET)

1. Educational Pathways in Malta

Compulsory schooling in Malta starts at the age of five with primary education. Most parents, however, start sending their children to school as from the age of 3. Government provides nursery schooling for free and is housed within primary schools. Following pre-primary education, primary school consists of six years of education. Primary education is divided administratively into two cycles of three years each. Secondary education follows and involves a further five years of education.

The end of secondary school marks also the end of compulsory schooling. Students then have the opportunity to either take the general education or vocational track at post-secondary level. General post-secondary education consists of a two years course leading to entry into University. Vocational courses vary in length and range from two years to a number of years. Vocational education in Malta is provided by the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), by the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS), the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) and the Institute for the Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage (ICMCH) of Heritage Malta.

MCAST in particular, is an umbrella institution which houses all the state vocational institutes and consequently vocational training in Malta.

Students go through a number of defining moments in choosing their career path through their study choices. These are the following:

- End of second year in secondary school: this is when students are asked to make a subject choice as part of their specialisation. This choice will influence the range of career opportunities available to students at a later stage;
- End of secondary education: students at this point need to decide whether they are to continue with their studies or to look for work. In addition, those who decide to stay on at school have to decide whether to take the general or vocational track and which course to follow.

Thus vocational training in Malta is at post-secondary level and is beyond compulsory schooling age.

1.1 Compulsory education

(i) Phases

Education is compulsory from age five to age sixteen

Primary level	Age 5 –11 years
Lower Secondary level	Age 11-16 years

1.2 Post-compulsory education/upper secondary and post-secondary level

(i) Types of education

Educational Institution	Students' ages (1)
Junior College	Age 16 – 18 years
Higher secondary schools	
Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS)	Age 16 – 21 years
ISCED levels 3 and 4	

Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST)	
ISCED level 3 (general)	Age 16 – 18 years
ISCED level 3 (vocational)	Age 16-17/18 years Age 16-18/19 years
ISCED level 4	
University – ISCED 4 level (2)	Age 18-19

A number of non-state schools provide general/academic education courses of two year duration in the sixth form.

(1) The above ages are theoretical ages. This is especially true in the case of ITS and MCAST where there are various day and evening courses of different duration and levels targeting different audiences of the active population. Besides, even the full-time day courses are open to students of all ages, including adults in employment.

(2) This is the Foundation Studies Course which is a bridging course open only to international applicants who have completed their pre-university studies while not following the Maltese educational system and who have obtained the qualifications necessary for admission to undergraduate courses in universities in the country where they obtained the qualifications, but do not meet the entry requirements of the University of Malta.

1. Description of formal ways from VET to HE

Students in Malta have to decide on whether they want to follow the general education track leading to tertiary education or the vocational track at the end of compulsory education at age 16. Thus, the decision on whether to continue studying is linked to a decision on the type of post-secondary education track preferred. Those students wishing to eventually follow tertiary education go to Junior College or Sixth form colleges at upper-secondary level (ISCED 3) where they study two academic subjects at Advanced level and another three subjects at Intermediate level.

The choice of subjects is such that all students study one science and one language at this level. The end of these two years of study lead students to sit for the Matriculation Certificate examination run by the University of Malta and which, on successful completion leads to entry into tertiary courses at the University of Malta.

Students can also choose to opt for vocational courses. These are mainly offered within the Malta College for Arts Science and Technology (MCAST). MCAST houses 10 Institutes:

- **Agribusiness:** This institute offers courses related to agriculture and animal husbandry. It offers courses at Foundation level, BTEC-First Diploma and BTEC-National Certificate and BTEC-Higher National Diploma. There are currently 7 courses offered;
- **Art and Design:** This institute offers training in art and design, offering courses from basic level at certificate level or MCAST Foundation Certificate which provide access to other courses at higher level within the same institute.
 Courses offered range from a BTEC-First Diploma in printing or in art and Design, as well as a BTEC-Higher National Diploma in the same areas. There are currently 11 courses offered;
- **Building and Construction Engineering:** This institute offers training in trades related to the construction

industry. Courses are offered in skills areas such as painting and decorating, plastering, tile laying, air-conditioning, masonry, and stone construction. These are offered at different levels ranging from Foundation courses which require no qualifications, to Certificate, Diploma and Advanced Diploma and National Diploma. There are currently 20 courses being offered;

- **Electrical and Electronic Engineering:** This institute offers courses related to electronics, ranging from electrical installations, industrial electronics, computer engineering to electronic engineering. These courses are offered at different levels from Foundation Course, MCAST Certificate and Diploma, to MCAST BTEC National Diploma and BTEC Higher National Diploma. There are currently 11 courses being offered;

- **Business and Commerce:** This institute offers courses in areas related to business such as insurance, retail, administrative and secretarial studies, as well as applied science. Courses are also offered at different levels, ranging from the MCAST Foundation Certificate to BTEC National Certificate, National Diploma and Higher National Diploma. There are currently 12 courses being offered;

- **Community Services:** This institute offers training in the service related sector. Courses offered are mainly in hairdressing and beauty sector, child-care services, as well as sport and leisure. Courses are offered at different levels ranging from BTEC and ITEC Foundation Certificate and First Diploma to National Diploma in the different areas of study. There are currently 15 courses being offered;

- **Mechanical Engineering:** This institute offers training in the area of mechanical engineering, motor vehicle engineering, aerospace as well as motor vehicle repairs. Most of the Certification offered is at City and Guilds, but there are also other courses at Certificate level leading to an MCAST Certificate. There are currently 14 courses offered;

- **Information and Communication Technology:** This institute offers training in the area of ICT. Courses are offered from a very basic level such as Foundation Certificate to higher levels like MCAST-BTEC First Diploma, National Diploma and Higher national diploma in software development and/or ICT systems support. There are currently 6 courses being offered;

- **Maritime Institute:** This institute offers training to those who are interested in taking up a career in the maritime sector, whether within the Armed forces or as an officer sailing ships. The institute offers courses in National Watch, Engineering Watch, Chief Mate, Second Engineer, Master Mariner, Chief Engineer as well as Probationary Cadet. There are currently overall 7 courses offered in total. Certification is issued by the institution and one can proceed from one course to another, depending on the ambition of job one has.

MCAST also has its Gozo Centre where it offers a range of courses. It offers some of the courses that are also provided by the mainland institutes, thus eliminating the need for students from Gozo to travel to Malta for their studies.

This year, the Gozo centre is offering 16 courses in total. Four courses are at Foundation Certificate level, one that is general and the other three in business, computing and care. Six courses are at level 2: MCAST Certificate in electro- technical technology; MCAST-BTEC First Diploma level for I.T. practitioners;

City and Guilds in mechanical engineering; and MCAST-BTEC First Diploma in electronics, care and construction. There is also one MCAST Certificate in administrative and Secretarial Studies at level 3, an MCAST-BTEC National Diploma also at level 3. At level 4 the courses offered include the AAT Diploma in Accountancy and a Diploma in banking and financial services.

MCAST offers courses at a range of levels, these ranging from lower secondary vocational level –ISCED level 2 to upper-secondary level –ISCED Level 3 to tertiary level at ISCED Level 5B.

Vocational Courses are also offered by the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) which offers courses in the area of Hospitality and Tourism. ITS provides higher and further education and training for the various careers in tourism as an industry of primary importance to Malta. The courses are of different levels, from

	P1: www.mobilityexcellence.eu Documentation of country specific conditions IVET/NQF Germany /France /UK / Malta	 Lifelong Learning Programme
---	---	---

the very basic requirements of the tourism industry to the management level. Students who qualify may continue their studies at the university. One of its courses, a Higher Diploma in Hospitality Management, leads to a University of Malta degree in Tourism Studies. The University of Malta also offers some vocational courses in the area of Healthcare.

In the case of vocational qualifications, entry requirements would be in terms of a number of School Leaving Certificate level (SEC) in a number of subjects. The preferred subjects and grade vary according to the courses offered. In the case of vocational education, students can move from one level of qualification to a higher level course within the same vocational area without any problems.

Mobility from vocational education to tertiary education is limited. This is mainly due to the official entry requirements for entry to tertiary courses at the University of Malta requiring the Matriculation Certificate. However, there are cases where vocational qualifications are being recognised and considered as alternative entry requirements in some particular courses, mainly in the area of engineering.

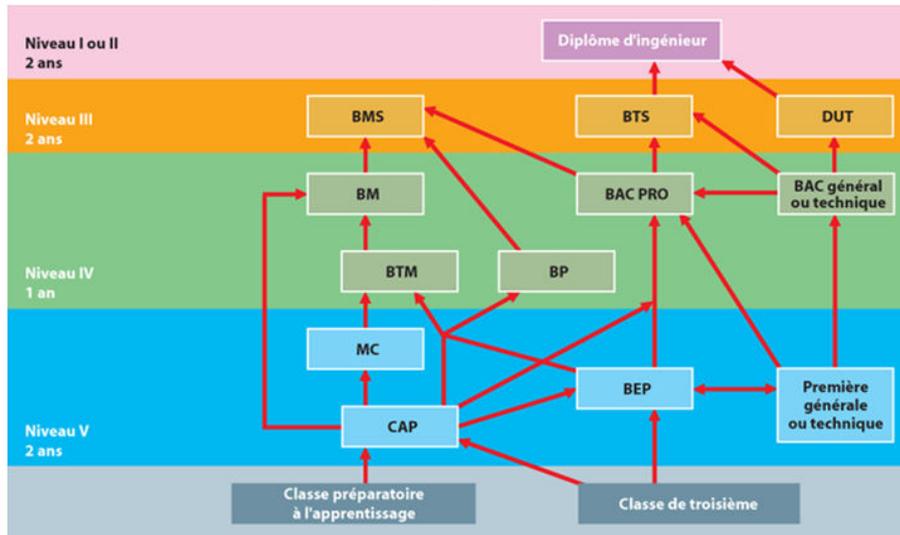
In addition, the University of Malta has a maturity clause which allows any adult of age 23 years or older to apply to follow courses at tertiary level without necessarily having the usually official entry requirements. In such cases, applicants are considered on an individual basis and their prior qualifications and experiences are considered by an interviewing board. In such circumstances, value tends to be given to applicants from the vocational sector by the interviewing board in deciding whether to accept the applicant to follow the course or not.

France

Vocational Education and Training System (VET)

Map of VET System in France

Qualifications. Characteristics (e.g. dual, module-based, outcome-oriented, permeability)



Title		Type of formation
CAP	Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnel	Apprenticeship or full time
BEP	Brevet d'études professionnelles	Apprenticeship or full time
MC	Mention complémentaire	Apprenticeship or full time
BP	Brevet professionnel	Apprenticeship or full time
BTM	Brevet technique des métiers	Apprenticeship or full time
BM	Brevet de maîtrise	Apprenticeship or full time
BAC PRO	Bac professionnel	Apprenticeship or full time
BMS	Brevet de maîtrise supérieur	Apprenticeship or full time
BTS	Brevet technicien supérieur	Apprenticeship or full time
DUT	Diplôme universitaire de technologie	Apprenticeship or full time
LICENCE MASTER DOCTORAT		University/specialised schools

The French education system has three levels: The first level consists of preschool and primary education, the second level of lower secondary education and upper secondary education and the third level relates to higher education. Compulsory school begins at the age of six and ends when pupils turn 16, thereby including primary education, lower secondary education and the first year of upper secondary school. Halfway through the lower secondary education pupils can choose between a general and a technical direction. For less well performing students there is the possibility to follow a work preparatory direction, which can be continued under the apprenticeship system after the transition from lower to secondary school.

The French IVET system comprises a variety of IVET programmes with different durations and different scope.

The IVET System

- **Baccalaureat Technologique or BacTechno**
The BacTechno has a nominal duration of three years, though the average study length is between three and four years. Students who gain a BacTechno can continue their studies in higher education in general or go directly enter the labour market.
- **Baccalaureat Professionnel/BacPro**
To be able to enroll in a BacPro programme, students must have obtained a "first VET qualification", either the Brevet d'études (BEP) or the Certificat d'aptitude (CAP) (See the description below). The BacPro is a second level qualification and it is provided in 73 different pathways, of which 11 are in the agriculture sector. A BacPro can be obtained through different routes; the school-based route, which takes two years and includes a practical training period varying from 12-24 months and the work-based or apprenticeship route, under which students are given an employer contract with a company. Students who obtain the BacPro can continue their studies in higher education or enter the labour market.
- **Brevet d'études professionnelles/BEP**
A BEP programme has a double function. On one hand the programmes are designed to provide preparation for the labour market, and on the other hand, the option of further study is not ruled out. They can either enroll in a BacTechno programme or in a BacPro programme. The BEP programme is modeled as the BacPro and generally takes two years to complete.
- **Certificat d'Aptitude professionnelles/CAP**
The programmes leading to the CAP are primarily designed as preparation for the labour market. A CAP can be obtained through a number of specializations and via three models (school-based, apprenticeship or a qualification contract). The duration of CAP is in general two years.

The apprenticeship system

Apprenticeship in France is a part of the initial VET system. It is based on a working contract concluded by an apprentice (aged 16-26, who have completed compulsory school) or his legal representative and an employer and includes generally a fixed term of 1-3 years, depending on the trade and the intended level of qualification. The contract can be concluded with any craft, commercial or industrial company or any non-industrial and non commercial public-sector company.

The alternating training consists of a mix of theory-based learning in an apprentice training centre corresponding at least 400 hours per year (almost 25 % of the duration of the contract) and occupational training, supervised by an experienced apprentice master within the company. The employer, acting like a tutor, is required to possess pedagogical skills and to involve tasks that will enable the apprentice to complete an annual body of work stipulated in an agreement with the apprentice training centre.

The share of apprenticeship in the French IVET system is 25 %. The number of young people in IVET during 2007/2008 was 1.685.611 (including 556.850 in higher education). The share involved in apprenticeship, was 429.909 (including 97.421 in higher educations).

<http://www.orientation-formation.fr>

Germany National Standards:

Identifying vocational competence in dual vocational training

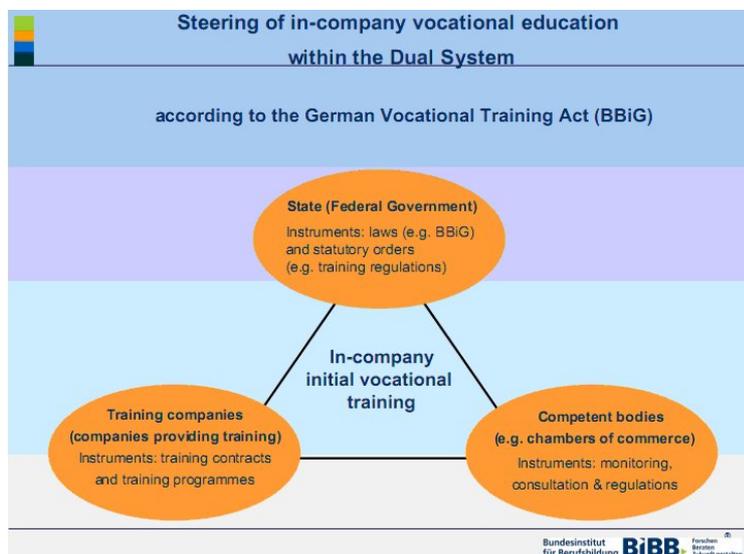
The primary aim of training is to enable young people to acquire comprehensive vocational competence designed to make them capable of fulfilling their duties as employees efficiently, effectively and innovatively, autonomously, on their own responsibility and in cooperation with others. Vocational competence is based on subject-based and social competence and methodological competence. The capacity to practise an occupation in qualified fashion includes, in particular, autonomous planning, implementation and control. This bundle of competences must be demonstrated in examinations regulated by law the "Vocational Education and Training Act"

Quality assurance in Germany has traditionally been acquired through state supervision and monitoring of education and training. Recently, BMBF has tasked the BIBB with setting up a National Reference Point for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (DEQA-VET). BIBB is now part of a European network and has the objective of extending and deepening the exchange of information and experience and boosting sustained collaboration in the area of quality assurance and quality development in vocational education and training.

The DEQA-VET's work is aimed not primarily at persons who hold positions of responsibility in the education and training field, but also at organizations, companies and enterprises, which assure quality in their vocational education and training or are working on that. QARF Indicators

The following PDF attachment summarises evidence identified that relates any indicators used at national level to the ten indicators proposed in the EQARF recommendation: EQARF Indicators Germany

<http://www.eqavet.eu/gns/what-we-do/implementing-the-framework/germany.aspx>



The system is described as dual because training is conducted in two places of learning – companies and vocational schools. It normally lasts three years. (In addition to training occupations requiring only two years' training, there are also statutory regulations facilitating a reduction in the training period with enterprises' agreement, e.g. for trainees with the Abitur. The aim of training in the dual system is to provide, in a well-ordered training programme, broadly based basic vocational training and the qualifications and competences required to practise an occupation as a skilled worker in a changing world of work. Successful completion of the programme entitles the trainee to practise an occupation as a qualified skilled worker in one of the 346 currently recognised training occupations.

The Sozialgesetzbuch (SGB III) was amended on 1 January 2003 by the First Law on modern services on the labour market, which has led to changes in public funding of continuing education/training. Since then, funding has been linked to the issuing of an education credit voucher (Bildungsgutschein). This can be issued by employment agencies to the unemployed or persons at risk of unemployment for subsidised continuing vocational training when the need for this has been confirmed in a comprehensive advisory discussion. The education credit voucher shows, among other things, the training objective, the period needed to achieve it, the scope of regional validity, and the duration of validity (three months maximum). The credit voucher can be redeemed by the participant with a body of his choice authorised to finance continuing training. It is a precondition for recognition of continuing training bodies that they have been certified and accredited by 'informed' bodies. To this end, on 1 July 2004 a procedure was established, in the Directive on recognition and licensing of continuing training (AZWV), under which providers must comply with a series of statutory provisions.

United Kingdom: **National Standards VET (UK)**

National Occupational standards (NOS) define the competencies which apply to job roles or occupations in the form of statements of performance, knowledge and the evidence required to confirm competence. They cover the key activities undertaken within the occupation in question under all the circumstances the job holder is likely to encounter.

They can be used to:

- * describe good practice in particular areas of work
- * set out a statement of competence which bring together the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to do the work
- * provide managers with a tool for a wide variety of workforce management and quality control
- * offer a framework for training and development
- * form the basis of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) , Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) and Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs).

Awarding bodies can use NOS to develop training and qualifications. NOS will identify learning and skills needs in a particular sector or occupation and can act as the basis for qualifications.

Education and training providers can identify gaps in provision, and can highlight where there is a need to update material to include new areas or to remove materials which are out of date. They can also use NOS to develop entirely new courses basing the syllabus on the units of competence.

Sector Skills Councils (SSC) and standards setting bodies work with employers and partners to develop the Occupational Standards for the industries, sectors and occupations they cover. They develop, maintain and update NOS as the needs of industry change, as work patterns shift, and as new operational practices, legislation and technologies are introduced.

From April 2011 a new database will replace the NOS directory.

Every awarding body will determine the learning outcomes and assessment criteria required to pass a unit in each of their qualifications. Guidance is given but the individual institution delivering the qualification will decide on assessment and the assessors and internal verifiers will decide on assessment scoring through standardisation meetings.

Students make up portfolios which contain evidence such as reflective logs, question banks, professional discussions, witness testimonies, product evidence, observation records but they may also be required to do an end of course examination. This will be decided by the awarding body and noted in the guidance for the qualification. Evidence, projects and assignments are holistically assessed and scored as decided by the assessor. Holistic scoring is encouraged as it is seen to be more cost-effective and a more timely method of assessment. It also can also help motivate students to complete their qualification.

WEB-Links

Directory of competencies <http://www.ukstandards.org>

Malta

National standards for learning outcomes

Description of National Learning Outcomes: Knowledge, Skills and Competences

Learning outcomes are statements that describe what a whole qualification represents in terms of the application of its components, namely knowledge, skills and competences. According to the definition of a NQF a learning outcome is what a learner understands and is capable of doing at the end of a learning process. Therefore learning outcomes prepare individuals for both employment and for further education and training. One way of measuring the learning outcome of VET is through apprenticeship and of HE by course entry requirements. The learning outcomes system is inclusive as it integrates all learning with flexible learning pathways including informal and non-formal learning and there is no time limit.

Key competences such as communication especially in good English are what employers look for, but they must be complemented by personal qualities such as self-presentation and team work, which more often than not are the result of informal (experiential) learning and not necessarily acquired from school. The issue of self-presentation applies to all sectors as the image is a key factor for employability. It is a prerequisite for all those working in particular sectors such as the tourism sector especially the catering industry which implies issues of hygiene. These qualities together with the key competences are important for every level of education but are even more necessary for individuals at Level 1 of the MQF to become employable. One of the key challenges today is to continue to be employable and to face this challenge, one must be flexible and adapt to the fast business cycle and participate in the re-skill, re-educate and re-structure cycle. The Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) acknowledged the value of key competences, personal qualities and informal and non-formal learning. Thus MQC had a consultative role in the process of recognising such learning by certifying it in the newly re-designed School Leaving Certificate, which forms part of the national reform in the education system in Malta.

Knowledge involves the understanding of basic, factual and theoretical information and is normally associated with formal learning and therefore with text books, with contact learning hours and as one progresses along the learning pathway one can engage in research, and participate in seminars and conferences. However, knowledge can also be obtained from informal and non-formal settings.

Skills involve the application of the acquired knowledge and understanding in different contexts. A skill may not necessarily be the result of formal learning and knowledge as described above. It may be the result of repetitive work in an informal setup.

Competences involve concepts such as whether one is competent to exercise the skills with or without supervision, with or without autonomy and with or without responsibility. At the end of 100 months of compulsory education one is expected to achieve the basic key competences which are fundamental for pursuing studies at a post-secondary level and for employability in low-skilled basic jobs. The fact that an individual has a successful achievement in these key competences has an impact on the individual's performance, on the overall service at the work place, on one's employability and finally on the national economy. Thus there are supplementary courses such as the Merýba course provided by the Malta Tourism Authority which gives basic knowledge, such as basic Maltese history and communication skills to people who provide a service in the tourism sector. Such short courses and other similar initiatives give basic knowledge to people who are generally experienced and have skills and competences, foster the continuous professional development, and promote lifelong learning.

Key competences are also intended to provide parity of esteem between the vocational track and the general education track, leading to options for progression beyond Level 5 to those within the vocational track. These are perceived as supporting the development of the necessary skill base for Malta in four main ways:

- Firstly, by providing basis for comparison between general education including post secondary education and possibly the first cycle of higher education;

- Secondly, by creating a foundation of broad skills in VET that will support ongoing learning;
- Thirdly, by establishing a framework of generic skills that taken together with the skills required in different economic sectors, will facilitate the transferability of competences between sectors;
- Fourthly, by connecting the skills developed in Malta's vocational education system with those recognized within the framework of the European Qualifications Framework.

These key competences, essential for lifelong learning, are an integral part of the MQF and consequently of the qualifications. Eight key competences have been included, based on the key competences identified within the European Qualifications Framework. Each one is defined as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes. These key competences include:

1. Communication in the mother tongue

Definition: Communication in the mother tongue is the ability to express and interpret thoughts, feelings and facts in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and to interact linguistically in an appropriate way in the full range of societal and cultural contexts – education and training, work, home and leisure.

2. Communication in foreign languages

Definition: Communication in foreign languages broadly shares the main skill dimensions of communication in the mother tongue: it is based on the ability to understand, express and interpret thoughts, feelings and facts in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in an appropriate range of societal contexts – work, home, leisure, education and training – according to one's wants or needs. Communication in foreign languages also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. An individual's level of proficiency will vary between the four dimensions, different languages and according to their background, environment and needs/interests.

3. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology

Definition:

A. Mathematical competence is the ability to use addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and ratios in mental and written computation to solve a range of problems in everyday situations. The emphasis is on process and activity, as well as knowledge. Mathematical competence involves - to different degrees - the ability and willingness to use mathematical modes of thought (logical and spatial thinking) and presentation (formulas, models, constructs, graphs/charts).

B. Scientific competence refers to the ability and willingness to use the body of knowledge and methodology employed to explain the natural world, in order to identify questions and to draw evidence-based conclusions. Competence in technology is viewed as the application of that knowledge and methodology in response to perceived human wants or needs. Both areas of this competence involve an understanding of the changes caused by human activity and responsibility as an individual citizen.

4. Digital competence

Definition: Digital competence involves the confident and critical use of Information Society Technology (IST) for work, leisure and communication. It is underpinned by basic skills in ICT: the use of computers to retrieve, assess, store, produce, present and exchange information, and to communicate and participate in collaborative networks via the Internet.

5. Learning to learn

Definition: 'Learning to learn' is the ability to pursue and persist in learning. Individuals should be able to organise their own learning, including through effective management of time and information, both individually and in groups. Competence includes awareness of one's learning process and needs, identifying available opportunities, and the ability to handle obstacles in order to learn successfully. It means gaining, processing and assimilating new knowledge and skills as well as seeking and making use of guidance. Learning to learn engages learners to build on prior learning and life experiences in

	P1: www.mobilityexcellence.eu Documentation of country specific conditions IVET/NQF Germany /France /UK / Malta	 Lifelong Learning Programme
---	---	---

order to use and apply knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts – at home, at work, in education and training. Motivation and confidence are crucial to an individual's competence.

6. Interpersonal, intercultural and social competences, civic competence

Definition: These competences cover all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life, and particularly in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflict where necessary. Civic competence equips individuals to fully participate in civic life, based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation.

7. Entrepreneurship

Definition: Entrepreneurship refers to an individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It includes creativity, innovation and risk taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. This supports everyone in day to day life at home and in society, employees in being aware of the context of their work and being able to seize opportunities, and is a foundation for more specific skills and knowledge needed by entrepreneurs establishing social or commercial activity. The business community in Malta believes that this must be given a boost and should be fostered at the early stages of education.

8. Cultural expression

Definition: Appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature, and the visual arts.

The Key Competences will play a pivotal role in the post-referencing process of the MQF to the EQF. As a matter of procedure MQC established that from MQF Levels 1 to 5 key competences will carry a considerable weight at the lower ends of the Framework and decreases at higher levels particularly after Level 5. The table below illustrates the percentage of workload established by MQC and which will help learners acquire key competences at the early stages of lifelong learning and simultaneously carry within their education and training additional competences in Sectoral Skills and Underpinning Knowledge (theory). Thus, the knowledge, skills, competence paradigm covers the whole learning process within Malta's Qualifications Framework and fits within the EQF paradigm in relation to the acquisition of the eight key competences Knowledge.

France: **National Standards**

The CNCP, national committee for professional certification, works as an examination board and is composed of 43 members: ministry representatives, regional representatives, social partners, chamber of commerce representatives, qualified bodies. It is in charge of:

- List the professional certifications offers (RNCP)
- Inform people and companies about the registered certifications in France and in Europe
- Looks after the coherence and the complementarity of certifications as well as their evolution towards the job market
- Give a public advice during the implementation of new certifications
- Assess on national level the professional qualification certificates.
- Give recommendations to institutions regarding diplomas and professional titles.
- Identify certification matches between national certifications or between national and European certifications
- Elaborate new certification levels in regard to occupational activities.

Useful Links:

National directory of professional certifications <http://www.cncp.gouv.fr/>

Germany **Stakeholders Role**

Stakeholders Involvement Dual VET-System Germany

Representatives of the Federal Government

- Federal Ministries of Education and Research, Labour and Economics, Interior

Representatives of the States

- State Ministries of Education, Economics, Labour and Interior

Representatives of the Employer's Associations

- Chamber of Commerce and Industry / Chamber of Craft
- Organisations of Employers

Representatives of the Trade Unions

Co-operation of these Stakeholders in DUAL VET-System:

Federal Ministries, State Ministries, Employers associations and Trade Unions develop:

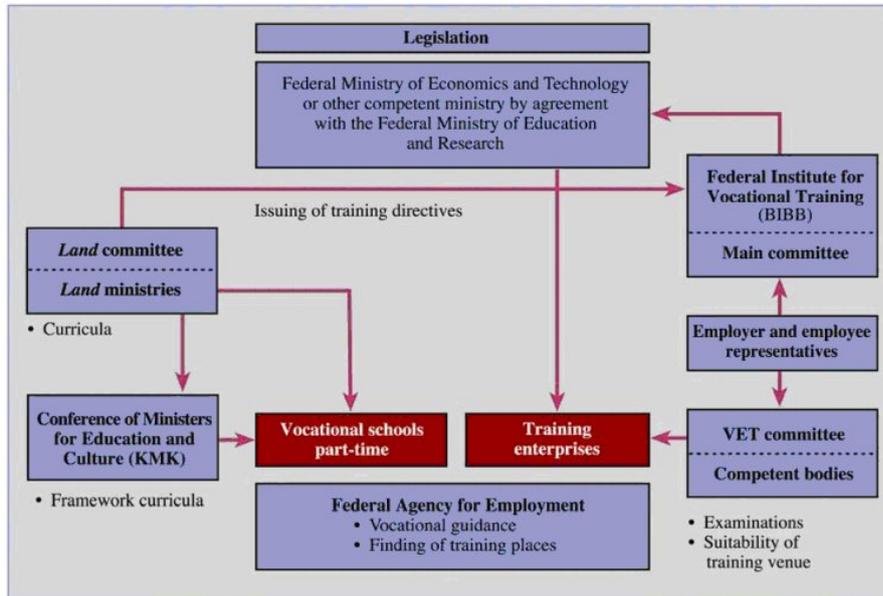
- qualification profiles/VET-standards
- examination requirements
- duration and contents of training programmes
- level of qualifications
- criteria of quality assurance

Organisational Infrastructure through the Chambers:

- some 430 in all sectors of the economy, predominantly commerce & industry & crafts
- act as public authorities in training matters
- accreditation of training companies
- assessment, testing and certification
- monitor and evaluate the training process
- maintain training centres for continuing training

(Source: Vocational education and training in Germany Cedefop Panorama series; 138)

Figure 5: Responsibilities in the field of vocational training



Source: Federal Institute for Vocational Training, 2006.

The training partners in the economy are industry, commerce, agriculture, the liberal professions, public administrations, health services, and over 900 inter-company training venues. The various Chambers ('competent bodies') are responsible for advising companies, registering trainees, certifying trainers' specialist aptitude, accepting examinations and conducting social dialogue at regional level. The partnership between employers and unions manifests itself at federal level through cooperation in the main committee of the BIBB, at Land level in the competent ministry's VET committee, and at regional level in the Chambers' VET committees and examination Committees. The VET committees are responsible for important tasks in the implementation and supervision of pre-vocational training, and of vocational training, further training and retraining. The social partners have responsibilities at four levels:

Levels of responsibility	
 Federal level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Ministry of Education and Research Government departments Federal Institute for Vocational Training National federations
Federal State (Land) level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministries of the Länder <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and Cultural Affairs Economic Affairs
Regional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presidents of the regional administration Competent bodies (chambers)
 Company level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training companies Vocational schools

1. National level:
 participation in developing training programs/standards, recommendations in all areas and aspects of VET.

2. Regional level:
 a) Land level – recommendations in all areas of VET in respect of coordination between school and enterprise;
 b) Level of the competent bodies – advice, supervision of training provision in enterprises, implementation of examinations, award of qualifications.

3. Sectoral level:
 negotiations on provision of training places; collective agreements on remuneration of training.

4. Company level:
 planning and implementation of in-company training

© BIBB, Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung, Bonn 2002

Federal Institute for Vocational Training **BIBB**

France **Stakeholders Role**

A national Committee for the Co-ordination of the Regional Apprenticeship and Vocational Training Programmes has the task of facilitating the development of coherent and harmonious state and regional programmes. Even though the decentralisation has strongly developed over the last year, the state level remains important in IVET, in the sense, that the National Ministry of Education still issues the diplomas for those programmes and qualifications that are considered to be a part of the national education system and that the teaching and training staff still is the responsibility of the National Ministry.

In addition to the national Committee for the Co-ordination of the Regional Apprenticeship and Vocational Training Programmes, there are Regional Councils and regional authorities, which have the responsibility of the planning and implementation of all vocational education and training programmes. They elaborate a regional plan for the development of vocational training of young people (as well as adults).

The plan determines all actions of initial (and continuing) training for young people as well as information and guidance actions. In addition, regional committees for the co-ordination of employment and vocational training have been set up. These committees are responsible for the co-ordination of vocational training policies and actions and in particular for the co-operation between the many organisations involved in vocational training. The committees consist of representatives from the regional authorities, the regional councils, employers' organisations, trade unions and the regional chambers of commerce and industry, agriculture and trade.

Involvement of the social partners has always been strong in the French IVET system. They have been and are still involved in the development process:

- They take part in juries for examinations.
- They contribute to the drawing up of diplomas.
- They welcome and train young people in companies
- They contribute to the financing of initial technologic and professional trainings by paying a tax called "taxe d'apprentissage" (training tax)

The social partners also intervene in the framework of the professional training. This system is based on the company's obligation to contribute to the financing of the professional training of employees and on the employees' right to train during the working hours.

Moreover, the social partners, the representative employees and employer's unions take part in defining the objectives and priorities of the professional training of the employees.

<http://www.intercariforef.org/formations/recherche-formations.html>

National policy priorities in VET

- 1- For the French state, Lifelong Learning is a national obligation. It includes initial training, including apprenticeship, and subsequent training, which are continuing vocational training for adults and young people already engaged in active life or engaged.
- 2- In France the issue of guidance is currently central to the political concerns. In 2008, France chose this thematic as the Common Market issue for the French Presidency of the European Union. It leads to a European resolution aiming at well including guidance in training and education strategies.
- 3- The recent reform on guidance and Lifelong Learning establishes a right to be trained and guided: each person has at his disposal the right to be informed, counselled and accompanied in the field of vocational guidance.

4- Priority is given to develop Apprenticeship – Alternating Work-study and Professionalization contracts in order to match the companies' needs and the workers competences.

5- Development of EUROPASS used for students In France, applications of Europass have increased 20% in 2005/2006 and 77% in 2006/2007 and 80% in 2008/2009.

The first evaluation of the Europass initiative gave the following results:. Europass is an initiative profitable. Its tools of implementation – the Network of National Europass portal and the Managed by the Internet Cedefop1 – are appreciated by stakeholders and largely satisfy users.

6- For recognition of diplomas non-French, ENIC-NARIC France has been created: the French center for information on academic and professional recognition of qualifications.

- It establishes the comparability of certificates for a diploma (s) obtained (s) abroad;
- It informs on how to pursue a regulated profession;
- It provides information on the procedure of recognition of French diplomas abroad.

Since 1 September 2009, the ENIC-NARIC France shall issue, when studying a case permits, a certificate of comparability to a degree obtained abroad.

7- In order to develop European focus for the students, the French Ministry of Education has set up “European classes” in the VET system where students follow extra language courses.

United Kingdom / Northern Ireland **Stakeholders Role**

Government departments have the main responsibility for education and training in the UK. They help people acquire jobs through careers and job centres. They come up with strategies to develop skills and enhance the quality and provision of learning and skills. They also provide research and statistics. The Government departments have training initiatives and provide funding support to those wishing to undertake further education and training. (Northern Ireland: Department of Employment & Learning (DELNI). England: Department of Education. Wales: Department for Education & Skills. Scotland: Department of Education & Training).

- to reduce skills gaps and shortages
- to improve productivity
- to boost the skills of their sector workforces
- to improve learning supply

SSCs achieve these aims by contributing to the development of National Occupational Standards, the design and approval of Apprenticeship frameworks, brokering Sector Skills Agreements and creating Sector Qualification Strategies.

Regulatory bodies (NI: CCEA, England: Ofqual and QCA (which will be closed down by end of 2011 and remit passed on to Department of Education), Wales: DCELLS. Scotland: SQA) amongst other functions advise governments on what should be taught in schools and colleges. They monitor standards, ensuring that qualifications being offered by awarding bodies are of an appropriate quality.

Sector Skills Council Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) are state-sponsored, employer-led organisations that cover specific economic sectors in the United Kingdom. They have four key goals: Awarding bodies develop vocational courses and submit for accreditation to the regulatory authorities for the purpose of awarding accredited qualifications. The awarding bodies implement specifications and procedures and maintain integrity of their qualifications. They provide support and training to the schools and colleges they have approved to deliver their courses.

The main providers of initial vocational education and training (IVET) in the UK are further education colleges. They choose the courses they wish to deliver and seek approval from the awarding bodies. Training Providers/Private training providers and secondary level schools also deliver vocational education training courses and government training initiatives. Tutors/Assessors deliver the course, set and score assessments, ensuring that evidence meets the criteria as set out by the awarding body in each unit.

National Training Organisations (NTOs) are bodies responsible for determining the qualifications that make up Apprenticeship frameworks in their skills area. They aim to ensure that training offered by different organisations meets the needs of employers with their skill area. There are other national bodies and learning & skills agencies throughout the four countries that make up the UK which support innovation, and are committed to raising standards of teaching and skills development through VET.

Malta **Stakeholders Role**

Educational activities are regulated in Malta by the Education Act XXIV, which emphasizes (among others) the critical nature of education in providing Maltese citizens with skills and vocational qualifications in order to prepare them for the labour market and their future roles as citizens. The Act confirms also the role of private institutions in education and training system.

At the state level, post-secondary vocational education is provided by the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC), the Institute for Tourism Studies (ITS), the Malta College of Arts, Sciences and Technology (MCAST) and the Institute for Conservation and Restoration Studies of Heritage Malta. MCAST is today the largest VET provider in Malta and Gozo. Higher education is provided by the University of Malta and various MBA providers.

Starting from the mid-1990s, a fundamental policy and strategy review of VET was launched, initiated by 1998 electoral commitments as well as by the wider need to prepare Malta for EU accession. This resulted in major new VET policies, including the National Minimum Curriculum, the Strategy for Lifelong Learning, the development of MCAST as a successor to the trade schools and the development of the Malta Qualifications Council (MQC).

Cooperation with the social partners has also been enhanced: a number of “bilateral” programmes between governmental organisations and private companies or public-private partnerships has emerged, while the development of consultative mechanisms on a permanent and ad-hoc basis has increased.

Each organisation providing vocational education has made significant efforts to improve their course offerings and adapt curricula to labour market needs. In addition, each organisation is participating in the activities of the MQC, which will increase the transparency of qualifications. The Department of Further Studies and Adult Education (DFSAE) of the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family provides continuing VET courses in a number of craft and vocational areas. In addition, a number of other national and international providers exist which are recognised as having made major contributions to improving VET and human resources in Malta. The VET supply at the tertiary level had developed rapidly in Malta in recent years, and as a result the traditional availability of tertiary qualifications between “vocational” and “higher educational” has lost some of its importance. MCAST offers tertiary (post-16) diploma and certificate training corresponding to ISCED 3-4 levels. The ten MCAST institutes include the Institute of Art and Design; Institute of Business and Commerce; Institute of Building and Construction Engineering; Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineering; Institute of Information and Communications Technology; the Maritime Institute; Institute of Community Services; Agribusiness Institute; Institute of Mechanical Engineering; as well as the Gozo Centre and the Main Campus.

The curricula are based on the UK National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), and in many cases incorporate internationally recognized corporate qualifications as well. The Information and Communications Institute, for example, offers certified courses from a number of ICT providers, including Microsoft.

The Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) offers a range of tourism-related diplomas and certificates. These include offerings such as the Higher Diploma in Hospitality Management (4 years) as well as Certificates or Diplomas in operations areas such as Accommodation Operations, Food Preparation and Production, Food and Beverage Service, and others. ITS cooperates with the tourism industry in defining VET offerings, as well as with the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA). There are other entry-points into the tourism industry, including through the ETC extended apprenticeship scheme for tourism as well as University of Malta offerings.

In addition to the main providers, a number of other institutions, both Maltese and international, offer VET curricula of various types and durations. Some examples include:

- Malta Institute of Management offer MBA courses in Malta, and are complimented by a number of other MBA providers, including e- MBAs;
- The Malta Chamber of Commerce & Enterprises is a recognised business school: in addition to offering the MBA degree, it offers London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board Diploma Courses;
- The ETC – Employment and Training Corporation offers a range of training courses focussed on small business management and employment promotion, information systems, retail management and others;
- Malta University Services Ltd. (affiliated with the University of Malta) offers courses in innovation, management development, occupational health and safety and other subjects;
- The Foundation for Human Resource Development (FHRD) offers training to improve management development and human resources in enterprises;
- A large number of private training providers and consultancies offer regular and customised training and management development.

Apart from higher education, the main national authority in terms of formal VET qualifications is the work of the MQC.

Set up in December 2005, the overall objective of the Malta Qualifications Council (MQC), as specified in Legal Notice 347/2005, is to steer the development of the National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (NQF) and to oversee the training and certification leading to qualifications within the Framework and which are not already provided for at compulsory education institutions or degree awarding bodies. MQC is responsible for defining the levels of qualifications and competences within the NQF and for establishing standards related to qualifications within the Framework. Malta's Qualifications Framework is at the forefront of European developments, achieving as it does, the inclusion of qualifications across compulsory, vocational and academic sectors into a single framework.

The central aims of the MQC are to:

- Enable learners, employers and the public in general to understand the full range of qualifications available, how they relate to each other and how different types of qualifications can improve the skills, competences and the quality of life of the workforce;
- Help people access education and training in a lifelong context in order to fulfill their personal, social and economic potential;
- Assist training sectors and providers in the design of qualifications, assessment and certification that best fit the Levels of Qualifications in the Malta Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning;
- Accredite formal learning in vocational training;
- Validate informal and non-formal skills within the context of Malta's Qualifications framework.

MQC is committed to make the relationships between qualifications clearer and user friendly. It clarifies exit points and routes for progression within and across education and training sectors. It works towards increasing the opportunities for credit transfer. Over time, it will help accredit informal and non-formal learning, help sectors to design qualifications framework which best fit into the NQF and establish an accreditation system across all qualifications based on credit transfer.

MQC also stands for quality assurance (QA) in the provision of vocational education and training. In designing its QA policy, MQC will further develop guidelines to enable learners, training providers and industry achieve excellence and increase their competitiveness in an open market economy.

Malta's National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC) regulates the implementation and recognition of credit frameworks under Directives 89/48/EEC and 98/51/EEC and works in conjunction with the Malta Equivalence Information Centre, the University of Malta and the MQC.

Malta has also set up the Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC) in 2002 to satisfy the requirements established in Act XVIII of 2002 of the Reciprocal Recognition of Qualifications, as well as the convention on the recognition of qualifications related to Higher Education in Europe. Since August 2008, the MQRIC has been merged into MQC.

MQRIC has the following functions:

- evaluation of diplomas;
- provision of help to mentioned authorities, educational institutions and individuals, similar entities and others interested in a comparative analysis and qualification evaluation;
- the collation and dissemination of information related to professional and vocational qualifications;
- the promotion of qualification recognition of Maltese qualifications abroad;
- the enforcement and facilitation of the application of articles on the comparison of Higher Education qualifications with professional and vocational qualifications;
- the facilitation of academic mobility; and
- the promotion of qualification transparency.

MQRIC works in close collaboration with the University of Malta, MCAST, ITS as well as with other designed bodies and authorities.

MQRIC also forms part of various networks notably:

- The National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC);
- The European Network of Information Centres;
- The National Reference Point (NRP).

Germany

Competence appraisal

Final training examinations are geared to vocational practice, i.e. to the work requirements and processes of the occupation. As a rule, a final examination covers four or five fields based on fields of activity typical of the occupation. Performance in the general subjects, such as languages and mathematics, is evaluated within the framework of school reports.

Before the end of the second year of training, trainees sit an intermediate examination consisting of practical and written elements. The trainee receives a certificate of participation in the intermediate examination, identifying the training stage. The final examination follows at the end of the training period.

Enterprises and vocational schools are responsible for conducting training, but the Chambers (competent bodies) are responsible for conducting the examinations. To this end, the Chambers have to set up their own examination committees for each occupation to be examined. Each examination committee must have at least three members (one representative each of employers and employees and a vocational schoolteacher). The examination certificate is issued by the Chamber.

The specific structure of the examinations is laid down by the individual training directives and the examination requirements they contain. These are applicable to the relevant occupation nationwide and specify a uniform standard for the proof of qualification.

The specified examination method is based on the requirements of the activities being examined. As a result, a very wide range of methods is now used in final examinations. The duration of the examinations may vary widely depending on the occupation, area to be examined and method adopted. There are particularly large variations in the time allowed for practical examination tasks. This can range from a few hours to many hours spread over several days or even weeks. For written tasks, a period of two hours is usually allocated for the examination, and oral examinations usually last 30 minutes.

Role of in-company mentors/ trainers

The education personnel involved in the German VET system can be broadly categorised as 'teachers' and 'trainers'. Teachers are employed in the various vocational schools, while trainers are skilled workers in enterprises, who provide trainees above all with the practical vocational knowledge and practical skills of a training occupation. In addition to teachers and trainers, the staff of VET workshops for the disabled also include psychologists, doctors and social education workers. The requirements for in-company trainers in initial training are governed by the Vocational Education and Training Act (Sections 28-30 BBiG) and the Regulation on Trainer Aptitude (AEVO); there are no explicitly formulated training provisions for staff working in continuing vocational training.

In Germany, the designation 'trainer' is used in association with in-company training as an umbrella term for various tasks and functions that may vary depending on the company's size and organisation. In addition to the function of trainer instructing trainees as his main or secondary job, these include, for example, training foreman, training engineer, training adviser and training leader.

In small or medium-sized enterprises with few trainees, training is often the trainer's secondary job, and he takes on the training task in addition to his main job as an employee. In larger enterprises, training is usually the trainer's main job and, if necessary or appropriate, the trainer works in training departments set up for the purpose, such as training workshops or training offices. In larger enterprises, training departments for industrial/technical training are usually under the aegis of the production or works manager, and for commercial training under that of the office manager. Those responsible for training are of particular importance. They are skilled workers who, in addition to their specialised tasks, take on training tasks in the enterprise's departments, on assembly lines, in commercial and engineering offices or in the service sector. As trainees pass through the enterprise, trainers provide them with the knowledge and skills required in their job.

In order to assure the quality of in-company training, the Chambers of Industry and Commerce (IHKs) are responsible for monitoring the Regulation on Trainer Aptitude and the occupation's relevant training directive. If it is not possible for all the necessary knowledge and skills to be provided in full, the missing content can be provided or supplemented by training measures outside the place of training, for example via cooperation with other enterprises, intercompany training centres or coherent training structures (Ausbildungsverbände).

The training of in-company trainers is governed by Federal law. Under the statutory provisions of the Vocational Education and Training Act (Sections 28-30 BBiG) and the Regulation on Craft Trades (Section 21 HwO), trainers must be suitable both personally and in terms of specialised knowledge to train young people.

Subject aptitude involves, in particular, the specialised vocational skills and knowledge required for the relevant occupation. As a rule, trainers must have a qualification in a subject area appropriate to the training occupation. However, vocational training also includes knowledge of the educational theory of the occupation and job.

Until 31 July 2003, a test of trainer aptitude was required in accordance with the Regulation on Trainer Aptitude (AEVO). On 1 August 2003, for a trial period of five years (until 31 July 2008) this was suspended with the aim of making in-company training easier and promoting the provision of in-company training places. This means that in-company trainers are currently no longer required to confirm their knowledge of the educational theory of the occupation and job by means of separate proof of qualification. The Chambers' responsibility for monitoring training quality remains unaffected by the suspension of the AEVO.

In-company trainers are under no statutory obligation to participate in further or continuing training events. In small enterprises in particular, the resources necessary for this are often lacking. Nevertheless, Germany has a large number of in-company continuing training offers for trainers. In large companies, in the context of staff development, for example, further and continuing training is often offered in their own training departments or in external premises and educational establishments, by their own or external personnel. Trainers in SMEs have the option of attending courses of further training organised by Chambers or professional associations. (Source: www.CEDEFOP.Europa.eu)

United Kingdom / Northern Ireland **Competence appraisal**

The Assessor is usually the person who is responsible for providing training to the learner; it can be a work place supervisor. They will assess a learner's work and compare it to the National standards. They will also ask knowledge based questions to ensure understanding.

The role of the Internal Verifier (IV) is to monitor the work of all Assessors involved with a particular qualification, ensuring accuracy and consistency of activities and decisions. This is tracked through a sampling plan. They also provide guidance and raise issues of good practice in assessment. They will hold regular meetings between all staff involved in the process. The internal verifier ensures that a centre puts into place any corrective actions required by the External Verifier.:

The External Verifier (EV) has a crucial role in the Quality Assurance system, ensuring that a centre is implementing systems effectively, maintaining national standards and assessments are consistent with National standards. They will provide accurate advice to a centre relating to best practice.

The Assessor, the IV and EV all have to hold or be working towards the relevant qualifications.

To ensure quality, standardisation meetings are held periodically between the team.

In England the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulate and inspect in education and skills for learners of all ages. They state that they will give impartial information as they inspect fairly and truthfully. The Education and Inspections Act, which established the new Ofsted requires that they should:

- promote service improvement
- ensure services focus on the interests of their users
- see that services are efficient, effective and promote value for money.

In N. Ireland, the Education Training Inspectorate (ETI) inspects Education & Training on behalf of the Department for Employment & Learning (DEL) and the Department of Employment(DE). Improving Quality: Raising Standards (IQ:RS)is ETI's inspection and quality assurance framework and is linked to DEL's strategy for quality improvement. The key objectives are:

to develop and embed a culture of self improvement so that providers are responding fully to the needs of learners, employers and the wider community.

to assist in the development of clear & coherent systems of support to ensure that findings are addressed and that innovative and good practice is identified and shared.

To develop strong and innovative leadership and management at all levels

In Wales, Estyn inspects quality and standards in education and training providers. There strategic objectives are:

- To provide public accountability to service users on the quality of education and training provision
- To inform the development of National policy by the Welsh Assembly Government
- To promote the spread of best practice in the delivery of education and training
- To develop Estyn as 'best value' organisation and as 'an employer choice'

In Scotland, HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) inspectes, reviews and reports on Education. Its core objective is to promote sustainable improvements in standards, quality and achievements for all learners in a Scottish education system which is inclusive. Their strategic priorities are:

To promote public accountability for the delivery of high quality education to all learners in Scotland through inspection and reporting.

To work with other organisations to build capacity to provide education and services for children of the highest quality for all users.

To support informed policy development by providing high quality, independent, professional advice drawn from inspection and review evidence and knowledge of the system.

Before delivering a qualification for the first time a centre needs to achieve centre and qualification approval from an awarding body. This will involve filling out a detailed application form outlining staff roles and policies and procedures, submitting an example of assessment, and a visit from the awarding body. The EV will act on behalf of the awarding body when they periodically visit the centre.

Work-based in-company learning has been heavily promoted in the UK since the late 1980's. There has been a trend where training will take place in the work place by work supervisors and work based trainers/assessors.

Trainers should have subject knowledge and experience of on-the-job activities. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is important in UK VET training, trainers may have higher level qualifications if not they are encouraged to have achieved or be working towards a recognised vocational qualification, which they themselves can gain through on-the-job training. If the in-company mentors/trainers is also acting as an Assessors (assessing evidence and portfolios to prove criteria and competencies against learning outcomes as set by awarding body) they must have a qualification such as the A1 Assessor's Award.

An in-house company trainer manages the learning and professional development of an organisation's workforce. They equip staff with the knowledge, practical skills and motivation to carry out work-related tasks. Trainers help with ongoing, long-term improvement of employees' skills, enabling them to fulfill their potential within their organisation. Mentors will also look at any special requirements of the learner and provide any additional support.

Opportunities exist in a wide range of private and public employment sectors including retail, manufacturing, information technology and educational institutions. In-company trainers and mentors are common in companies like McDonalds and Security recruitment companies.

Malta **Competence appraisal**

The National Vocational Qualifications Framework offers the opportunity to establish qualifications in the field of vocational education and training in Malta as well as within the European area of education. In order to rise to this challenge, it is important to ensure that the quality of the training and assessment provided meet set standards. It is also essential to have a system of certification which would be easily readable and understood in Malta and also across Europe. Thus, it is the role of the Malta Qualifications Council to address important issues relating to accreditation, quality assurance, competence appraisal as well as certification as they are the basis of the credibility of vocational qualifications issued in Malta.

Training providers need to indicate the type of assessment used for each and every Malta Credit Transfer System for VET (MCVET) provided. The Malta Qualifications Council encourages the use of a variety of competence appraisal, ranging from written tests to on-the-job competences. Demonstration of competences can thus be through a combination of ways: practical demonstration, evidence through testimonials, knowledge questions as well as written assessment. Training providers need to apply competence appraisal procedures that ensure standardisation and fair assessment of the individuals' competences.

The Malta Qualifications Council, in providing accreditation to any certification provided by training institutions, also requires a description of the assessment procedures adopted. The process of accreditation of training institutions ensures that training institutions have in place adequate assessment structures. The accreditation process of each training course offered ensures that the appropriate assessment tools are used for each and every training course being provided. The MQC is also involved in helping accredited training institutions train official assessors as well as provide independent verifiers who provide external quality assurance of any training provided.

External Quality Assurance ensures that standards agreed upon are being incorporated within the assessment procedures used by training providers.

Training institutions may also opt to present their candidates for assessment by Local Awarding Bodies which may provide the assessment of competences at particular NQF Levels or in occupational areas. In both cases, it is necessary that the Awarding Body providing assessment is accredited with the Malta Qualifications Council. Once a learner has successfully completed the vocational course s/he will be issued with a certificate.

Germany

System of Recognition of learning outcomes & prior learning

Recognition of prior learning should meet the needs of learners. Recognition of prior learning can support the socially inclusive purposes of further and higher education and training, in that it facilitates entry to programmes, gives credit to or exemptions from a programme of study or access to a full award. Recognition of prior learning can address the needs of disadvantaged groups, part-time students and mature students, and can have a positive impact on retention of students. In addition, recognition of prior learning gives opportunities to providers of education and awarding bodies to use their assessment capability to up-skill individuals and meet workforce needs at local and national levels.

Recognition of prior learning can bring benefits to the workplace by enhancing worker's employability and a better matching of skills demand and supply.

Recognition of prior learning can assist in supporting staff development within organizations by increasing staff motivation to undertake appropriate education or training. It can reduce the amount of time required to acquire a qualification.

Principles and Operational Guidelines for the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Further and Higher Education and Training

Source:

© Copyright: National Qualifications Authority of Ireland Published by: National Qualifications Authority of Ireland
5th Floor, Jervis House, Jervis Street, Dublin 1

Recognized Training Occupations Germany

There are about 350 state recognized training occupations. The period of training in these occupations is usually two or three years. About 60% of the young people take up dual vocational education and training which is concluded by a state examination. The "problem" in this fact is, that we have in Germany the first "Recognition" of learning outcome earliest after 2 or 3 years!

The term of "recognized training occupation" refers to training courses which are nationally regulated in training regulations on the basis of §§ 4, 5 of the Vocational Training Act (BBiG) or §§ 25, 26 of the Crafts and Trade Code (HwO). The BBiG is oriented to occupations in business enterprises or similar institutions of public administration as well as in the independent professions, i.e. skilled workers or employees. Training for these occupations is provided under a dual system, i.e. at the two learning sites of companies and vocational schools.

Training in recognized training occupations primarily serves the purpose of providing young people with vocational qualifications. The objective is to give them opportunities for permanent employment. In addition, the training is to provide business enterprises with qualified skilled labour in the long term.

Adolescents aged under 18 years can train in a recognized training occupation. About 60% of all young people in Germany therefore start training in a recognized training occupation after leaving school. Access to this training is not formally linked to a specific school certificate. Apprentices receive training pay. The development of training occupations. An information brochure of the BIBB.

Vocational guidance

Many questions arise on the threshold between school and work: What is the right occupation for me? What occupation do I want to learn? What conditions do I have to fulfil? And: What will the occupation be like? The answers to these questions depend on a host of factors including individual particularities as much as the regional situation at the place of residence or work. Information on regionally available training places is provided by the local Employment Agencies. The counsellor responsible for vocational guidance is also located in the employment agencies. Source.
<http://forschungsministerin.net/en/550.php>

CREDITING PRIOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING TOWARDS THE PERIOD OF TRAINING Germany

In contrast to § 29 subsection 2 of BBiG 1969, § 7 subsection 1 of the new BBiG delegates to the Länder the decision on whether to allow prior learning at a vocational school or other vocational training establishment to be credited towards a subsequent period of initial vocational training in a recognised occupation. The Länder governments may decide by ordinance whether periods of training at vocational schools or other establishments can be credited towards the duration of company-based initial vocational training, and what length of reduction to allow.

As a rule, this possibility can only be contemplated if the syllabus contents and timetables of such training courses correspond to those set out in the training regulation of a recognised training occupation. Secondly, in future (from 2009 at the latest) the procedure will require a joint application for credit by all parties to the training contract, since the granting of credit inevitably shortens the length of in-company training, in effect modifying the contractual terms binding the respective parties.

In a similar vein, it was recognised that in special cases (e.g. apprentices who are lone parents or have caring responsibilities for a dependent relative), part-time vocational training may be possible.

The regulations governing admission to the final examination for “Externe” (employees beyond the scope of normal initial vocational training) were also amended. Sentence 2 of § 40 subsection 3 of BBiG 1969 gave the Federal

Ministry for Economics and Labour powers to determine by ordinance which schools and institutions offer courses which meet the standards of the BBiG.

This “confirmation of equivalence” would give trainees who had completed such courses the right to be admitted to the chamber examination. As yet, however, no use has been made of the power to pass such ordinances. § 43 subsection 2 now provides for delegating to Länder governments the decision on which training courses meet all the standards specified in the BBiG for an initial vocational training programme. This enables the Länder to offer full-time school-based vocational training courses run according to the structures and syllabus content specified in BBiG for avocational training course, to provide high standards of training which is relevant to the labour market, and to conduct final examinations in accordance with the BBiG.

Firstly, this provision brings together the decision-making authority (establishment by the Länder of school-based training courses leading to full qualifications) and the responsibility for incorporating these courses into the vocational training system. Secondly, it serves to reduce unnecessary and costly delay periods within the education and training system.

This part of the Act deliberately gives the Länder scope to exercise their responsibilities. It remains to be seen whether and to what extent the Länder make use of the opportunity. In recognition of this uncertainty, the plan is to carry out an evaluation to study the influence of the provision on the overall system of dual vocational training. This should enable conclusions to be drawn as to whether the current time limit imposed on this provision of up to August 1, 2011 should be retained or removed.

France

System of Recognition of learning outcomes & prior learning

Different tools of coordination between vocational training and labor market exist at regional level. The Regional Coordinating Committees for Employment and Vocational Training (comités de coordination régionaux de l'emploi et de la formation professionnelle - CCREFP), created by the law of social modernization of 17 January 2002, are four regional forums bringing together all stakeholders on the scope of training including the partners representing the economic sector. Regional Observatories for job and training (Observatoires régionaux emploi-formation OREF) were established by the contract plans with the regions since 1989. They bring together different services in a region: regional council, departments, services of the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, the Ministry of Education, some chambers of commerce and social partners. Their role is to collect data on employment and training for a prospective analysis of trades and qualifications in each region.

Furthermore, the social partners have set up joint bodies at the national level, the branches and at the regional level to harmonize, coordinate and regulate the mechanisms of vocational training:

- * The Joint National Vocational Training Committee (Comité paritaire nationale de la formation professionnelle CPNFP), created by the Agreement of 3 July 1991, ensures regular monitoring of the inter-national agreement on employee access to training throughout life;

- * Joint National Employment Commissions (commissions paritaires nationales de l'emploi CPNE) contribute in each branch or cross-sectors to the definition of training policy (definition of policies and priorities);

- * The joint inter-regional employment commissions (commissions paritaires interprofessionnelles régionales de l'emploi Copire) perform the same role at the regional level in cooperation with the CPNE.

- * They validate learning outcomes recognition through the Répertoire National des Certifications Professionnelles (RNCP).

United Kingdom / Northern Ireland **System of Recognition of learning outcomes & prior learning**

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA) have existed in UK VET where students can use certificates in related fields and study to show that they have already achieved competencies. Recognition of Prior Learning is broadly the same and is in connection with the new Qualifications & Credit Framework, it has become an increasingly important topic in the UK VET system. Ofqual state that it is a “method of assessment that considers whether learners can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and so not need to develop through a course of learning”. (Ofqual – Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework) Learners’ achievements that have not been certificated can be assessed and validated through RPL.

Typically the learner will identify areas they feel they have already learnt or shown competency in and they should offer evidence which proves they possess the necessary skills and abilities. They will discuss and be supported by their Assessor who will deem if the evidence is relevant, reliable and authentic, sufficient and current. The Assessor must also be satisfied that the evidence of the learner meets the assessment standards established by the learning outcomes of a particular unit. The Assessor can hold a follow up discussion with the learner to check understanding and to take away any doubt. RPL provides a more holistic approach to work based learning and is considered a cost-effective method of assessment.

Individual awarding bodies have their own policies and procedures in place in recognition and accreditation of Prior learning and achievement. The Government departments responsible for VET throughout the UK have identified a need to formalise processes in relation to RPL as they are hoping to increase the skills of the workforce, meet the needs of the employers and also promote a positive learning curve for students. Over the past few years some projects have taken place. The Department for Employment and Learning (NI) hope to do some further work in this area and hope to formalise their policy by the end of this year.

Malta

System of Recognition of learning outcomes & prior learning

Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process. The shift of emphasis is from learning inputs such as taught subjects and hours of instruction to what learners achieve and how. The focus on the user of education - the individual is the key factor which makes this shift an innovative reform process. This can be established by an assessment procedure. For a qualification to be given a level and to form part of a Framework of qualifications it has to be assessed by an accredited body.

The EQF recommendation defines qualifications as: A formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards. Unlike the learning inputs system, learning outcomes are not designed solely by policy makers, but these are shaped by the stakeholders' contribution depending on the qualification(s) reviewed. Stakeholders such as social partners, education and training providers, sectoral representatives, learners and civil society are now the key actors who define learning outcomes tailor made for industry's needs. This shift is considered "as an opportunity to tailor education and training to individual needs, improve links to the labour market and improve the way non-formally and informally acquired learning outcomes are recognised."

The role of learning outcomes in education and training plays an integral part of a lifelong learning strategy to promote:

- National reform;
- Recognition of informal and non-formal learning;
- Award, accumulation and transfer of credit;
- Quality Assurance;
- Flexible learning pathways;
- Key competences; and
- Credibility for training institutions and employers

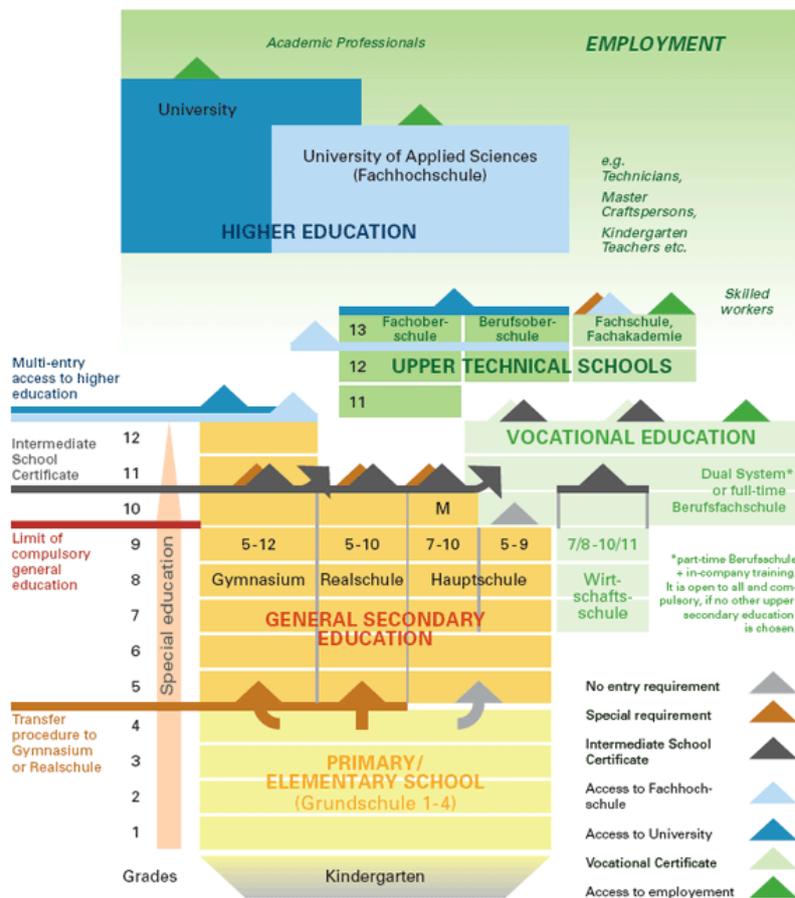
One of the main trusts of the referencing process is the application of a learning outcomes approach to describing qualifications. In Malta the learning outcomes approach is gradually becoming the dominant factor in describing qualifications and in ensuring that the referencing of such qualifications to the level descriptors of the qualifications framework is transparent, coherent and understandable. A major characteristic of learning outcomes-based qualifications is the requirement that qualifications are demand-driven. At the end of a learning process the learner should have acquired those learning outcomes that would enable him or her to sustain their position within a changing labour market.

In Malta there is consensus for a partnership between education and training providers and industry in identifying and forecasting the skills needed in fifteen to twenty years time. The forecasting results should be reflected in learning outcomes-based qualifications. Thus, learning outcomes must be future oriented and must be the result of such dialogue between the training providers and stakeholders.

Germany NQF vs. EQF

National Qualification Framework:

General and Vocational Education Integrated in One Formal System



[Film: Vocational Education and Training in Germany - Assuring the Future](#)

The film "Vocational Education and Training in Germany - Assuring the Future" presents the basic elements of the German VET system such as collaboration with government and industry, the "two learning venues" principle, and qualifications that are recognized nation-wide. (source:www.bibb.de)

Compulsory full-time education begins at the age of six and lasts nine years (or ten years, depending on the Land). After that young people who are no longer in full-time education must attend a part-time (vocational) school for three years. To simplify, in Germany compulsory education exists for persons aged 6-18 and for trainees in the dual system (even if they are over 18).

Following four years of primary school for all, educational paths are divided in the 'subdivided school system' consisting of secondary general schools, intermediate schools, grammar schools and, in almost all the Länder, also comprehensive schools. In the dual system, the various paths often come together again. Those learning under it include those who have completed their education in special, secondary general, intermediate, comprehensive, vocational and grammar schools.

A broad consensus exists in Germany in the discussion on the draft European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the possible development of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF): We started in Germany many project activities for referencing our NQF to the EQF System. It is becoming

	P1: www.mobilityexcellence.eu Documentation of country specific conditions IVET/NQF Germany /France /UK / Malta	 Lifelong Learning Programme
---	---	---

ever more important to cooperate at European and international level in the field of VET. Germany attaches particular importance to cooperation in VET policy within the European Union.

German Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning
www.deutscherqualifikationsrahmen.de

In the detailed work programme for general and vocational education systems in Europe, it was agreed to intensify cooperation at European level with regard to the jointly determined education-policy objectives. Indicators are to be used to make advances and developments transparent (benchmarking). The programme is currently being implemented in ten thematic working groups and in peer learning groups on selected topics. Germany is involved in almost all the peer learning groups.

The expert working group set up by the European Commission to draft the concept for a European Qualifications Framework (EQF) submitted a draft EQF to the Commission in the middle of 2005. On the basis of this draft, the Commission launched an EU-wide consultation process. Consequently the structure of this consultation process was one of the focal points of implementation of the work programme for Germany in 2005. The development of a European Qualifications Framework was welcomed in principle in an initial national opinion.

To put the process into action, in addition to a steering coordination committee, three working groups were established on the subjects of transparency, quality assurance and the credit transfer system, and they began work at the beginning of 2003. Germany had an active co-steering role in the Copenhagen Process from the outset, and is represented in all the working groups.

Work has now begun on a process of developing a National Qualifications Framework (NQF), designed to improve further permeability and interlinking between the various fields of education, and also on the creation of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

The prime concern at system level is to ensure the international compatibility of (vocational) education programmes. Qualifications and competences acquired in the German vocational education and training system should lend themselves to smooth and barrier-free transfer to foreign, especially European, labour markets and to other countries' (vocational) education systems. Of course the converse is also true: a (vocational) education system with an international outlook must be structurally capable of accommodating the transfer of qualifications and competences acquired abroad into the domestic education system. The European Commission is therefore striving for the rapid introduction of a European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and a European Credit System in Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). The EQF and ECVET are intended to support and facilitate the transparency, permeability and competence-orientation of qualifications throughout Europe, with the ultimate aim of mutual recognition and credit transfer. The German federal government, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder (KMK) and the Board of BIBB have staunchly supported this process. Above all, they view it as an opportunity to redress the undervaluing of in-company vocational training in Europe.

In Germany we have many "pilot" projects in this field:

Project DECVET

The aim of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF, Germany) pilot initiative for the development of a credit system for vocational education and training is to put this deficiency right. Improvements in permeability and in the accreditation of competences have the potential to increase the attractiveness of vocational learning pathways and will especially assist in the avoidance of waiting loops, redundant qualifications and educational "dead ends". <http://www.decvet.net/>

National Priority ECVET in LdV Mobility

NetECVET: Working together to understand and implement ECVET

The thematic network NetECVET consists of 14 National Agencies of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP). It promotes ECVET in the context of transnational mobility and supports the implementation process in the member states through a bottom-up approach. It addresses VET practitioners and supports and guides them in the

application of ECVET.

<http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/thematicgroup/ECVET>

Press release 29.06.2011: Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB)
BIBB Board recommends assigning university entrance qualification to Level 4 of the German Qualifications Framework (GQF)
<http://www.bibb.de/en/58023.htm>

News 03/2011 Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB):
(Status Quo DQR and ESCO)
<http://www.bibb.de/dokumente/pdf/HA140.pdf>

<http://www.bibb.de/dokumente/pdf/HA141.pdf>

Source:

[BIBB report](#)

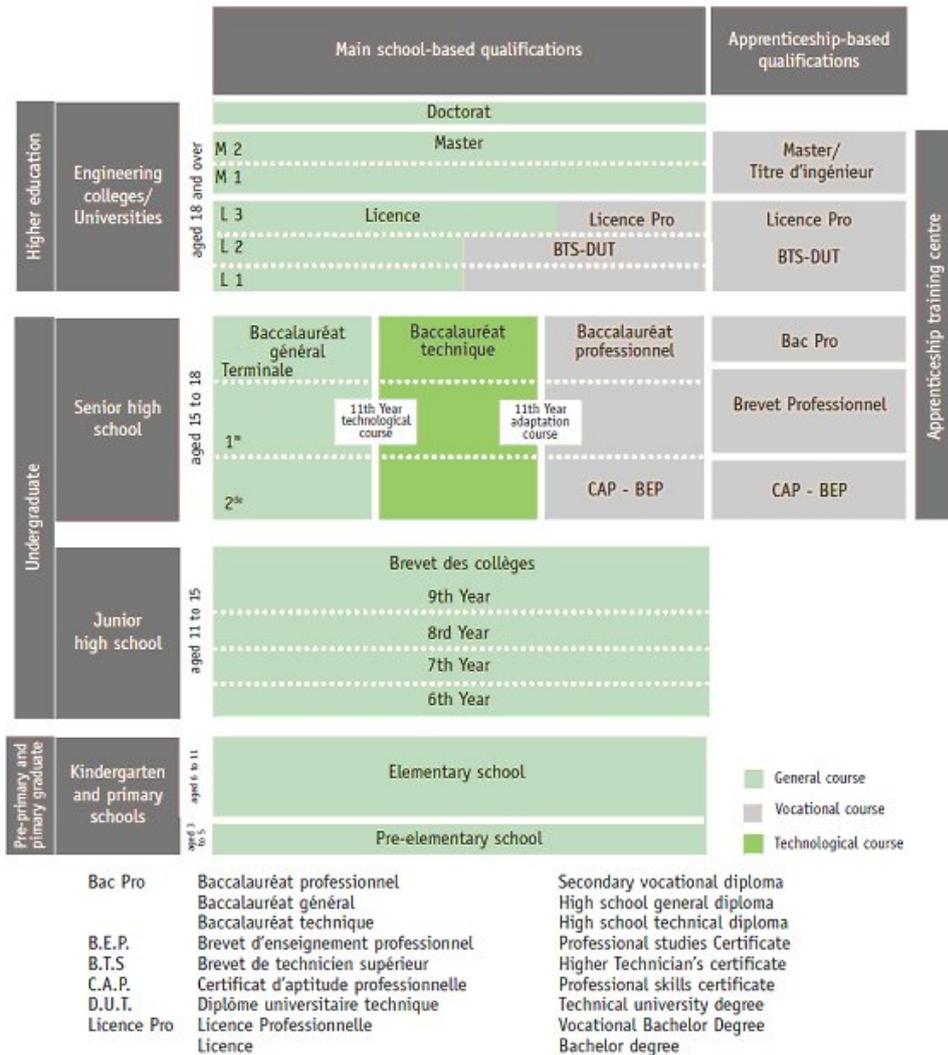
<http://www.deutscherqualifikationsrahmen.de>

[BIBB zum NQF](#)

http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/consultation_eqf_de.pdf

France NQF vs. EQF

National Qualification Framework France



Technological education prepares specifically for higher vocational education. Vocational education trains students to attain a professional qualification (certified by a diploma).

In France, the school system is under the responsibility of the Ministry of national education, (*Ministère de l'éducation nationale*). Initial education is free of charge in State schools. School is compulsory between the ages of 6 and 16 but most children go to nursery from the age of three.

	P1: www.mobilityexcellence.eu Documentation of country specific conditions IVET/NQF Germany /France /UK / Malta	
---	--	---

STRUCTURE OF FRENCH VOCATIONAL DIPLOMAS	
ISCED 3C	Certificat d'Aptitudes Professionnelles - CAP (Professional Skills Certificate) and Brevet d'Etudes Professionnelles - BEP (Professional Studies Certificate)
ISCED 3B	Brevet professionnel - BP (Vocational Certificate) Brevet de technicien – BT (Technician's Certificate) Baccalauréat Professionnel - BAC Pro (Vocational Baccalaureate)
ISCED 5B	Brevet de Technicien Supérieur - BTS (Higher Technician's Certificate) Diplôme Universitaire de technologie - DUT (University Technological Diploma) Diplôme National de Technologie Spécialisé - DNST (Specialised National Technology Diploma) Diplôme d'Etudes Universitaire en Sciences et Techniques - DEUST (University Scientific and Technical Studies Diploma)
ISCED 5A	Licence Professionnelle (Vocational Licence) Master's, Engineering Diploma

In France, professional degrees have a national value. There are qualified by level, starting with level V (first level of qualification) going to level I which is the highest level.

NQF - FRENCH LEVELS	EDUCATION LEVELS	FRENCH VOCATIONAL DIPLOMA	EQF
LEVEL VI	output junior secondary level (6th, 5th, 4th)		1-2
LEVEL VA	exits 3rd Overall, 3rd and 4th of technological level and the second short cycle before the year end		2
LEVEL V	output of the final year of professional and short cycles of schooling dropouts of second round long before the final class	second stage short vocational diploma (such as the CAP – vocational aptitude certificate)	3
LEVEL IV	classes output terminal of the second long cycle of enrolment and dropouts and a post before reaching the level III	baccalauréat or vocational certificate (BP) or Mention Complémentaire (MC - additional diploma)	4
LEVEL III	exits with a diploma level Bac + 2 years (DUT, BTS, DEUG, schools training health or social ...)	baccalauréat + 2 years type of diploma (such as BTS (higher vocational certificate) or DUT (university technological diploma))	5
LEVEL II	outputs with a second degree or postgraduate university degree or Great school	bachelor's degree type diploma (such as licence professionnelle - vocational degree)	6

Current status regarding development of ECVET - France -

ECVET is a common methodological framework that facilitates the accumulation and transfer of credits for learning outcomes from one qualifications system to another. It aims to promote transnational mobility and access to lifelong learning. It is not intended to replace national qualification systems, but to achieve better comparability and compatibility among them. ECVET applies to all outcomes obtained by an individual from various education and training pathways that are then transferred, recognised and accumulated in view of achieving a qualification. This initiative has also been developed in France in some specific activity sectors where transversal competences are key for transnational mobilities such as the automotive industry, the hotel industry, tourism, logistics, trading.

United Kingdom & Northern Ireland NQF vs. EQF Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) - UK –

The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) has been referenced against the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The aim of the EQF is to link European countries' qualifications systems so that it makes it easier to cross reference qualifications between countries. The National Coordination Point (NCP) was established in the UK as the official body responsible for referencing the new framework to the EQF.

The NCP was made led by the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) in England and the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) in Northern Ireland with participation from key stakeholders from across the education, training and skills sector. In Wales the Welsh Assembly Government was designated the NCP to reference their framework, Credit & Qualifications Framework Wales (CQFW) and in Scotland the job went to the Scottish Credits and Qualifications Authority Partnership (SCQA).

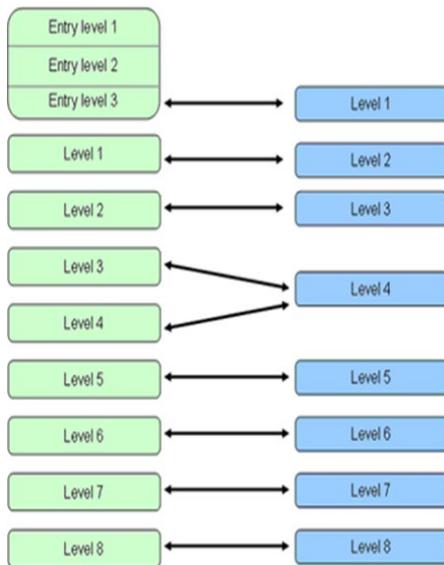
The QCF is at the heart of major reform of the Vocational system in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Vocational qualifications are changing to become more responsive to employers' needs and more accessible to learners.

Initial research was carried out by all three NCPs to explore the issues involved in referencing the respective frameworks to the EQF and establishing a baseline referencing. The Welsh NCP also included an analysis of quality assurance arrangements. Reports were produced and were disseminated so that awareness of the EQF would be raised and to allow for debate, challenge aspects and identify issues of the proposed framework alignments.

One major concern was that it is impossible to have precise level to level referencing. In the UK all of the frameworks have more levels than the EQF. In the UK all frameworks have levels which recognise lower level achievements such as Entry Level. These levels play a major part in the UK life-long learning as they provide support to learners who lack basic skills. In the UK it is believed that these levels help encourage and motivate learners to take further steps to gain qualifications. Such levels do not exist in the EQF. Another concern was that quality assurance processes to reference the frameworks was under developed, there was no standardised methodology in place and the EQF only provided basic guidelines.

The framework referencing process has been completed using criteria issued by the European Commission. The hope is that the final part of the process will be complete by 2012, exploring how all qualification certificates, diplomas and 'Europass' documents contain a clear reference by way of the national qualifications systems, to the appropriate EQF level.

QCF Levels EQF Levels



QCF (& CQFW) in relation to EQF
www.rewardinglearning.org.uk

SCQF	EQF	Summary
12	8	SCQF Levels 11 and 12 can be confidently referenced to EQF Levels 7 and 8.
11	7	
10	6	SCQF Level 10 can be confidently referenced to EQF Level 6.
9	6	While SCQF Level 9 is intended to be more demanding than EQF Level 5, it may not reference fully to EQF Level 6 in terms of the language of the descriptors. It is agreed, however, that SCQF Level 9 should be referenced to EQF Level 6.
8	5	SCQF Level 8 can be confidently referenced to EQF Level 5.
7	5	For SCQF Level 7, it is difficult to employ 'best fit' on the basis of an analysis of the descriptors alone. However, it is agreed that SCQF Level 7 should be referenced to EQF Level 5.
6	4	SCQF Levels 3-6 can be confidently referenced to EQF Levels 1-4.
5	3	
4	2	
3	1	
2		SCQF Level 2 can be referenced to EQF Level 1 only in some domains. This partial matching was not typical of other levels. Considering the intention of the SCQF level and the extent to which referencing is not possible, it is agreed that SCQF Level 2 should not be referenced to the EQF.
1		There are no grounds for referencing SCQF Level 1 to the EQF.

SCQF in relation to EQF
www.scqf.org.uk

Malta

NQF vs. EQF

Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF)

The Malta Qualifications Framework is an eight-level system which reflects the education tradition of an Island under British rule for over a hundred and sixtyfour years. The level descriptors of this framework reflect the various stages of the educational process from compulsory to lifelong learning. This includes the Bologna and Copenhagen paradigms. Since the promulgation of the level descriptors in Legal Notice 347 in 2005 two institutions (Directorate of Quality and Standards in Education – DQSE, and National Commission for Higher Education – NCHE) were set up to complement MQC and therefore cover the whole spectrum of education in terms of standards and quality assurance. Malta’s active participation in European fora particularly those organised by the Commission led the Maltese authorities to synergise the already existing qualifications framework to the type of framework created on the EQF typology.

Malta officially launched the MQF in June 2007. It is one of the first European countries which is referencing its framework to the EQF. Besides the political commitment towards the process, qualifications are shaped by stakeholders as more industry-driven qualifications are learning outcomes based. Qualifications are increasingly becoming demand-led.

The MQF captures all levels of education from compulsory to post-doctoral degrees, continuous professional development and adult education and is modeled on the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Framework of the European Higher Education Area (QF/EHEA). Thus the three pillars on which the MQF is founded are:

1. Qualification Levels;
2. Qualification Types; and
3. Quality Assurance Criteria.

All qualifications of level 1-5 are referred to as Further education qualifications, and all qualifications and degrees of levels 6-8 are referred to as Higher education qualifications.

MALTA'S NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK FOR LIFELONG LEARNING *			
8	DOCTORAL DEGREE		8
7	MASTER'S DEGREE POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE		7
6	BACHELOR'S DEGREE		6
5	UNDERGRADUATE DIPLOMA UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE	VET HIGHER DIPLOMA	5
4	MATRICULATION CERTIFICATE ADVANCED LEVEL INTERMEDIATE LEVEL	VET DIPLOMA	4 (e)
3	GENERAL EDUCATION LEVEL 3 SEC Grade 1-5	VET LEVEL 3	3 (d)
2	GENERAL EDUCATION LEVEL 2 SEC Grade 6-7	VET LEVEL 2	2 (c)
1	GENERAL EDUCATION LEVEL 1 SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE	VET LEVEL 1	1 (a/b)

Annotations

* The National Qualifications Framework is designed in such a way as to be able to include diverse forms of qualifications not as yet covered by this Framework.

(a) Attainment of the Basic Employment Passport together with either the Adult Skills Certificate or the MQC 8 Key Competences at Level 1 are also considered as a Full VET Level 1 qualification.

(b) The MQC recommends that a Full VET Level 1 qualification should enjoy the same parity of esteem as a Full School Leaving Certificate.

(c) The Malta Qualifications Council recommends that a Full VET Level 2 qualification should enjoy the same parity of esteem as 4 General Education Level 2 subjects.

(d) The Malta Qualification Council recommends that a Full VET Level 3 qualification should enjoy the same parity of esteem as 6 General Education Level 3 subjects.

(e) The Malta Qualification Council recommends that a Full VET Diploma should enjoy the same parity of esteem as 3 Advanced Level subjects.

MALTA'S NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK FOR LIFELONG LEARNING BY OCCUPATION		
8	DOCTORAL DEGREE	PROFESSIONAL AND MANAGERIAL
7	MASTER'S DEGREE POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE	
6	BACHELOR'S DEGREE	
5	UNDERGRADUATE DIPLOMA UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE VET HIGHER DIPLOMA	TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE
4	MATRICULATION CERTIFICATE ADVANCED LEVEL INTERMEDIATE LEVEL VET DIPLOMA	
3	GENERAL EDUCATION LEVEL 3 SEC Grade 1-5 VET LEVEL 3	SENIOR OPERATIVE AND OPERATIVE
2	GENERAL EDUCATION LEVEL 2 SEC Grade 6-7 VET LEVEL 2	
1	GENERAL EDUCATION LEVEL 1 SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE VET LEVEL 1	

The Level Descriptors for the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF)		
LEVEL	LEVEL 1 EQF	LEVEL 1 MQF
Knowledge	Basic general knowledge;	1. acquires basic general knowledge related to the immediate environment and expressed through a variety of simple tools and contexts as an entry point to lifelong learning; 2. knows and understands the steps needed to complete simple tasks and activities in familiar environments; 3. is aware and understands basic tasks and instructions; 4. understands basic textbooks;
Skills	Basic skills required to carry out simple tasks;	1. has the ability to apply basic knowledge and carry out a limited range of simple tasks; 2. has basic repetitive communication skills to complete well defined routine tasks and identifies whether actions have been accomplished; 3. follows instructions and be aware of consequences of basic actions for self and others;
Competences	Work or study under direct supervision in a structured context;	1. applies basic knowledge and skills to do simple repetitive and familiar tasks; 2. participates in and takes basic responsibility for the action of simple tasks; 3. activities are carried out under guidance and within simple defined timeframes; 4. acquires and applies basic key competences at this level;
Learning outcomes	1. Knowledge and Understanding; 2. Applying Knowledge and Understanding; 3. Communication Skills; 4. Judgemental Skills; 5. Learning Skills; and 6. Autonomy and Responsibility	1. has basic knowledge and understanding of textbooks and simple tasks while relating to the immediate environment 2. follows instructions and completes repetitive simple tasks in familiar contexts and under a quality controlled system; 3. communicates basic information in familiar repetitive contexts; 4. assesses and ensures that assigned tasks have been completed effectively; 5. acquires and applies key competences to defined actions; 6. takes some responsibility for completing simple tasks and exercises limited autonomy;
LEVEL	LEVEL 2 EQF	LEVEL 2 MQF
Knowledge	Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study;	1. possess good knowledge of a field of work or study; 2. is aware of and interprets types of information and ideas; 3. understands facts and procedures in the application of basic tasks and instructions;

		4. selects and uses relevant knowledge to accomplish specific actions for self and others;
Skills	Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools;	1. has the ability to demonstrate a range of skills by carrying out a range of complex tasks within a specified field of work or study; 2. communicates basic information; 3. ensures tasks are carried out effectively;
Competences	Work or study under supervision with some autonomy;	1. applies factual knowledge and practical skills to do some structured tasks; 2. ensures one acts pro-actively; 3. carries out activities under limited supervision and with limited responsibility in a quality controlled context; 4. acquires and applies basic key competences at this level;
Learning outcomes	1. Knowledge and Understanding; 2. Applying Knowledge and Understanding; 3. Communication Skills; 4. Judgemental Skills; 5. Learning Skills; and 6. Autonomy and Responsibility	1. understands and uses good knowledge for tasks, procedures or a field of work or study; 2. follows instructions and completes a range of well-defined tasks; 3. communicates basic information in unfamiliar contexts; 4. selects and uses information for specified tasks and be pro-active; 5. acquires and applies key competences to a range of actions; 6. takes responsibility and exercises autonomy in well-defined tasks under a quality controlled system;
LEVEL	LEVEL 3 EQF	LEVEL 3 MQF
Knowledge	knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study;	1. understands the relevancy of theoretical knowledge and information related to one field of work or study; 2. assesses, evaluates and interprets facts establishing basic principles and concepts in a particular field of work or study; 3. understands facts and procedures in the application of more complex tasks and instructions; 4. selects and uses relevant knowledge acquired on one's own initiative to accomplish specific actions for self and others;
Skills	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information;	1. demonstrates a range of developed skills to carry out more than one complex task effectively and in unfamiliar and unpredictable contexts; 2. communicates more complex information; 3. solves basic problems by applying basic methods, tools, materials and information given in a restricted learning environment;
Competences	Take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study adapt own behaviour to circumstances	1. applies knowledge and skills to do some tasks systematically; 2. adapts own behavior to circumstances in solving problems

	in solving problems;	by participating pro-actively in structured learning environments; 3. uses own initiative with established responsibility and autonomy, but supervised in quality controlled learning environments normally within a craftsmanship environment; 4. acquires key competences at this level as a basis for lifelong learning;
Learning outcomes	1. Knowledge and Understanding; 2. Applying Knowledge and Understanding; 3. Communication Skills; 4. Judgemental Skills; 5. Learning Skills; and	1. understands theoretical knowledge and information related to complex procedures in a field of work or study; 2. follows instructions and carries out complex tasks systematically and in unfamiliar and unpredictable contexts; 3. communicates complex information in unfamiliar and unpredictable contexts; 4. assesses, evaluates and interprets facts related to a field of work or study and applies basic problem solving techniques; 5. acquires and applies key competences as a basis for life-long learning;
LEVEL	LEVEL 4 EQF	LEVEL 4 MQF
Knowledge	Factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study;	1. understands broad theoretical knowledge and analysis of information related to a field of work or study; 2. understands facts and establishes basic principles in broad contexts within a field of work or study; 3. applies facts and procedures in broad contexts within a defined field of work or study; 4. selects and analysis theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a specific field of work or study;
Skills	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study;	1. demonstrates acquired knowledge and the ability to apply a range of technical or academic skills to carry out multiple complex tasks; 2. communicates theoretical and technical information in a work or learning environment; 3. generates solutions to specific problems within a field of work or study;
Competences	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change; Supervise the routine work of others, take some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities;	1. applies knowledge and skills to perform qualitative and quantitative tasks that require technical capacity normally associated with a technician's competence; 2. supervises the quality and quantity of work of self and others' under quality assured structures, with responsibility and autonomy; 3. demonstrates an advanced level of key competences at this level as a basis for higher education;
Learning outcomes	1. Knowledge and Understanding;	1. understands and analyses broad theoretical, practical and technical knowledge related to a field of work or study;

	2. Applying Knowledge and Understanding; 3. Communication Skills; 4. Judgemental Skills; 5. Learning Skills; and 6. Autonomy and Responsibility	2. follows instructions and carries out defined theoretical, complex and technical tasks; 3. communicates theoretical and technical information in a work or learning context; 4. interacts with and generates solutions to problems within the immediate environment of a given field of work or study; 5. applies key competences to defined actions and to a technical or academic field of work or learning context;
LEVEL	LEVEL 5 EQF	LEVEL 5 MQF
Knowledge	Comprehensive, specialized, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundary of that knowledge;	1. understands knowledge in a field of study that builds upon advanced general secondary education and is typically at a level supported by advanced textbooks leading to further studies to complete the first cycle; 2. develops strategic and creative responses in researching solutions to well defined concrete and abstract problems; 3. makes judgments based on knowledge of relevant social and ethical issues;
Skills	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems;	1. demonstrates transfer of theoretical and practical knowledge, in creating solutions to problems; 2. conveys ideas in a well structured and coherent way to peers, supervisors and clients using qualitative and quantitative information; 3. has the ability to identify and use data to formulate responses to well-defined concrete and abstract problems; 4. evaluates own learning and identifies learning needs necessary to undertake further learning;
Competences	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; Review and develop performance of self and others;	1. manages projects independently that require problem solving techniques where there are many factors, some of which interact and lead to unpredictable outcomes; 2. shows creativity in managing projects, manages people and reviews performance of self and others; train others and develop team performance; 3. expresses a comprehensive internalized personal world view reflecting engagement of solidarity with others; 4. has the learning skills to undertake further studies with some autonomy;
Learning outcomes	1. Knowledge and Understanding; 2. Applying Knowledge and Understanding; 3. Communication Skills; 4. Judgemental Skills; 5. Learning Skills; and	1. understands advanced textbooks which may lead to further academic or vocational learning and, researches solutions to abstract problems; 2. demonstrates operational capacity and management skills using creativity; 3. interacts with others to convey abstract and concrete solutions to problems in a field of work or study; 4. formulates practical and theoretical responses to abstract

	6. Autonomy and Responsibility	and concrete problems and makes judgments on social and ethical issues; 5. evaluates own learning and can improve key competences for further learning, and promotes team training; 6. is responsible for the effective and efficient management of projects and people within agreed timeframes;
LEVEL	LEVEL 5 EQF	LEVEL 5 MQF
Knowledge	Comprehensive, specialized, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundary of that knowledge;	1. understands knowledge in a field of study that builds upon advanced general secondary education and is typically at a level supported by advanced textbooks leading to further studies to complete the first cycle; 2. develops strategic and creative responses in researching solutions to well defined concrete and abstract problems; 3. makes judgments based on knowledge of relevant social and ethical issues;
Skills	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems;	1. demonstrates transfer of theoretical and practical knowledge, in creating solutions to problems; 2. conveys ideas in a well structured and coherent way to peers, supervisors and clients using qualitative and quantitative information; 3. has the ability to identify and use data to formulate responses to well-defined concrete and abstract problems; 4. evaluates own learning and identifies learning needs necessary to undertake further learning;
Competences	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; Review and develop performance of self and others;	1. manages projects independently that require problem solving techniques where there are many factors, some of which interact and lead to unpredictable outcomes; 2. shows creativity in managing projects, manages people and reviews performance of self and others; train others and develop team performance; 3. expresses a comprehensive internalized personal world view reflecting engagement of solidarity with others; 4. has the learning skills to undertake further studies with some autonomy;
Learning outcomes	1. Knowledge and Understanding; 2. Applying Knowledge and Understanding; 3. Communication Skills; 4. Judgemental Skills; 5. Learning Skills; and 6. Autonomy and Responsibility	1. understands advanced textbooks which may lead to further academic or vocational learning and, researches solutions to abstract problems; 2. demonstrates operational capacity and management skills using creativity; 3. interacts with others to convey abstract and concrete solutions to problems in a field of work or study; 4. formulates practical and theoretical responses to abstract and concrete problems and makes judgments on social and ethical issues;

LEVEL	LEVEL 6 EQF	LEVEL 6 MQF
		5. evaluates own learning and can improve key competences for further learning, and promotes team training; 6. is responsible for the effective and efficient management of projects and people within agreed timeframes;
Knowledge	Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study involving a critical understanding of theories and principles;	1. understands knowledge that builds upon advanced general secondary education and typically includes some aspects that will be informed by knowledge of the forefront of their field of study; 2. uses detailed theoretical and practical knowledge which is at the forefront of a field of study and involves critical understanding of theories and principles; 3. understands methods and tools in a complex and specialized field of work or study and innovation in terms of methods used; 4. makes judgments based on relevant social and ethical issues that arise in a field of work or study;
Skills	Advanced skills demonstrating mastery and innovation required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialized field of work or study;	1. applies knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a professional approach to work or study and has skills typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems; 2. communicates ideas, problems, and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences using a range of techniques involving qualitative and quantitative information; 3. has the ability to gather and interpret relevant data (usually within their field of study) to inform judgments that include reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues; 4. devises and sustains arguments to solve problems; 5. consistently evaluates own learning and identify learning needs;
Competences	Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; Take responsibility for	1. demonstrates administrative design, resource and team management and is responsible for work or study contexts that are unpredictable and require that complex problems are solved; 2. shows creativity and initiative in developing projects in management processes, manage and train people to develop team performance; 3. has developed those learning skills that are necessary to
Learning outcomes	1. Knowledge and Understanding; 2. Applying Knowledge and Understanding; 3. Communication Skills; 4. Judgemental Skills; 5. Learning Skills; and	1. understands professional theoretical and practical knowledge in a specialized field of work or study; 2. demonstrates innovative theoretical and practical responses to work or study contexts; 3. communicates ideas, problems, and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences using a range of techniques involving qualitative and quantitative information to sustain arguments;

	6. Autonomy and Responsibility	<p>4. makes professional judgments on social and ethical issues within the area of specialization, masters problem solving skills, and evaluates the management of projects and people;</p> <p>5. assesses own learning and can specialize in one or more key competences for further learning;</p> <p>6. is responsible for the management of creative and innovative projects and the team's performance;</p>
LEVEL	LEVEL 7 EQF	LEVEL 7 MQF
Knowledge	<p>Highly specialised some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study as the basis for original thinking and/or research;</p> <p>Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields;</p>	<p>1.. has comprehensive knowledge and understanding that is founded upon and extends and/or enhances that knowledge typically associated with Bachelor's level;</p> <p>2. uses specialized or multi-disciplinary theoretical and practical knowledge some of which is at the forefront of a field of study. This knowledge forms the basis of originality in developing and/or applying ideas;</p>
Skills	Specialized problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields;	<p>1. demonstrates specialized or multi-disciplinary knowledge that include reflecting on social and ethical responsibilities linked to the application of one's knowledge and judgments;</p> <p>2. can communicate to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously work or study related conclusions and knowledge which may be the outcome of research, self-study or experience;</p> <p>3. performs critical evaluations and analysis with incomplete or limited information to solve problems in new or unfamiliar environments, and to produce original research;</p> <p>4. develops new skills in response to emerging knowledge and techniques and demonstrates leadership skills and innovation in complex and unpredictable work and study contexts;</p>
Competences	<p>Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches;</p> <p>Take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams;</p>	<p>1. creates a research-based diagnosis to problems by integrating knowledge from new or interdisciplinary fields and makes judgments with incomplete or limited information;</p> <p>2. manages people and projects and demonstrates the ability to respond to the fast changing business environment;</p> <p>3. demonstrates autonomy in the direction of learning and a high level of understanding of learning processes;</p> <p>4. has the learning skills to allow continuation to study in a manner that may be largely self-directed or autonomous;</p>
Learning outcomes	<p>1. Knowledge and Understanding;</p> <p>2. Applying Knowledge and Understanding;</p> <p>3. Communication Skills;</p>	<p>1. has comprehensive specialized or multi-disciplinary theoretical and practical knowledge which forms the basis of original research, which may contribute to social and ethical issues;</p> <p>2. demonstrates capability in using knowledge and skills, to adapt to the fast changing business environment and to manage people and projects efficiently;</p>

	<p>4. Judgemental Skills;</p> <p>5. Learning Skills; and</p> <p>6. Autonomy and Responsibility</p>	<p>3. communicates with specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously conclusions and knowledge which may be the outcome of original research, self-study or experience;</p> <p>4. performs critical evaluations and analysis with incomplete or limited information to solve problems in new or unfamiliar contexts, and to produce original research;</p> <p>5. makes assessments of personal continuous professional development, takes initiative to undertake self-directed study and may proceed to further specialisation;</p> <p>6. is accountable and responsible for the original research within a personal social responsibility and/or business context, for one's operations and for adapting the management of people and projects reflecting the dynamic nature of the environment in which one operates;</p>
--	--	---

LEVEL	LEVEL 8 EQF	LEVEL 8 MQF
Knowledge	Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields;	<p>1. has a systematic understanding of a highly specialized field of study which builds upon a specialized or multi-disciplinary knowledge and understanding;</p> <p>2. extends or redefine existing knowledge and/or professional practice;</p>
Skills	The ability to apply the most advanced and specialized skills and techniques including synthesis and evaluation to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice;	<p>1. demonstrates mastery in skills such as the selection and analysis of research, writing, design, development and sustainability of the argument manifested in innovative scholarly research;</p> <p>2. responds to technological, social and cultural issues and addresses the needs of a knowledge-based society;</p> <p>3. communicates expertise to a wide audience including peers and the general public using different methods including national and international publications, and participates in specialist fora;</p> <p>4. demonstrates expertise in critical evaluations and analysis with incomplete or limited information to solve problems in new or unfamiliar environments, and to produce original research;</p>

Competences	Competence at the forefront in work or study including research contexts demonstrating substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly or professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. demonstrates authority in a specialized field of work or study and makes judgments involving a multitude of interacting factors; 2. promotes social, scientific and ethical advancement through actions; 3. has a sustained commitment in the development of new ideas;
Learning outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knowledge and Understanding; 2. Applying Knowledge and Understanding; 3. Communication Skills; 4. Judgemental Skills; 5. Learning Skills; and 6. Autonomy and Responsibility 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. has theoretical and practical expertise in a specialized field of knowledge which may contribute to social and ethical issues in a national and international dimension; 2. demonstrates leadership and innovation in mastering research in work and study contexts; 3. communicates expertise to a wide audience including peers and the general public using different methods including national and international publications, and participates in specialist fora; 4. demonstrates expertise in critical evaluations and analysis with incomplete or limited information to solve problems in new or unfamiliar environments, and to produce original research; 5. has a sustained commitment to generate new ideas and innovative projects related to technological, cultural and social development; 6. is responsible for the leadership of a number of specialized projects and an authority in a specialized field of work or study.

Summary

Malta's National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (NQF) is governed by Legal Notice 347 of October 2005.

- Malta's NQF is in line with the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) which on the 5th of September 2006, the European Commission adopted as a proposal for a Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the EQF.
- Malta's NQF is based on the principle that levels of education and qualifications can be measured by what a person is capable of doing rather than by what an individual has been taught.
- The NQF is also a reference tool using the learning outcomes approach.
- The NQF is a common reference and translation device between various qualifications, qualifications systems (including sectoral qualifications frameworks) and levels.
- The NQF will place sectoral qualifications within a common agreed Framework of Qualifications.
- The National Qualifications Framework increases transparency of qualifications, recognition of learning outcomes and builds mutual trust among all stakeholders.
- Malta's National Qualifications Framework adheres to the Bologna and Copenhagen processes and aims at attracting more individuals to learning experiences and to employability.
- Malta's NQF has eight levels of qualifications and is compatible with the Framework of Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) or the Dublin descriptors.
- The descriptors for higher education short cycle (within or linked to the first cycle) developed by the Joint Quality Initiative as part of the Bologna process corresponds to the learning outcomes of Malta's NQF Level 5.

- The descriptors for the first, second and third cycle in the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area correspond to the learning outcomes of NQF levels 6, 7 and 8.
- The NQF proposes a new Vocational Education and Training Framework with five levels of qualifications from VET Level One to a VET Higher Diploma which should enjoy the same parity of esteem as an undergraduate diploma or undergraduate certificate.
- Eight Key Competences (initially at Levels 1 to 3) whose level descriptors are in line with the EQF form an integral part of Malta's NQF and will facilitate mobility and progression of Malta's workforce.
- Informal and Non-formal education and training as well as the recognition of prior learning (RPL) will eventually form part of the national qualifications framework for lifelong learning.

Useful Links:

Malta Qualifications Council (MQC)	http://www.mqc.gov.mt
Malta Qualifications Framework (Files to download)	http://www.mqc.gov.mt/malta-qualifications-framework
Referencing Report of the Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area (QF/EHEA)	http://www.mqc.gov.mt/referencingreport?l=1
Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC)	http://www.mqc.gov.mt/mqric
Directorate of Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE)	http://www.education.gov.mt/edu/dirgeneral/dg_dqse.htm
National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE)	https://www.nche.gov.mt