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## Methodology of comparison of learning outcomes allowing mobility and permeability

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**LEONARDO DA VINCI TRANSFER OF INNOVATION PROJECT  
“PROPER CHANCE – IMPLEMENTING ECVET IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE FOR THE PROMOTION  
OF PROFESSIONAL PERMEABILITY AND GEOGRAPHICAL MOBILITY”  
DE/11/LLP-LdV/TOI/147429**

For more information on the project “PROPER CHANCE” go to our website  
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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

## Foreword

### Main objective of this document

- To define a common methodology for comparing learning outcomes
- To build up mutual trust as a basis for memoranda of understanding

### Background

This document summarizes a methodology for the comparison of learning outcomes, which was transferred from the German project coordinator AFBB to the entire partnership of “PROPER CHANCE”.

This methodology presents a general approach and provides a basic guideline on how to compare learning outcomes of two different qualifications. The experiences of the three participating countries – Germany, Belgium and Italy – have been included in this document.

## Comparing learning outcomes

### a. Objective of comparison of learning outcomes

The overviews of the learning units of two qualifications – an initial qualification and a targeted (usually higher level) qualification – are compared in order to identify comparable key activities and professional competences. The capacity for validation and recognition of learning outcomes from one profession to another will thus be identified.

### b. Precondition

Both vocational qualifications which are to be compared are described in terms of (units of) learning outcomes, i. e. a coherent set of knowledge, skills and competences as defined in the ECVET documents.

### c. Comparing Learning Outcomes in three Steps

#### STEP 1 – Comparing learning outcomes in a matrix

The comparison of learning outcomes is based on the qualitative analysis of the knowledge and skills as documented in the valid curricula and / or the learning units according to the criteria of the European or National Qualifications Framework and ECVET.

For the comparison of (units of) learning outcomes, the following criteria are taken into account:

- **the workload** necessary for acquiring the knowledge and skills which form a unit on the basis of the timeframe given in the curricula and
- **the complexity and scope** of the learning outcome descriptions – width and depth of knowledge, degree of cognitive and practical skills.

On the basis of the congruence of knowledge and skills, the degree of equivalence of professional competences and units of learning outcomes are detected and documented in a matrix (cf. example). For the documentation of equivalences the following code is applied:

**X ...“partly equivalent”** (congruence of the learning outcomes above 50% ∨ where applicable, adjustment of duration and contents of the unit of learning outcomes, which is to be provided, can be carried out)

**XX ...“predominantly equivalent”** congruence of the learning outcomes above 80% ∨ where applicable, blanket validation of the unit of learning outcomes can be carried out).

The degree of equivalence represents in how far the learning outcomes achieved so far correspond with the specific results (i.e. learning outcomes) which are necessary for the targeted qualification.

For the process of comparison, stakeholders – such as representatives of the labour market and VET teachers of the professions in question as well as other experts – should be included. Working groups of 3-5 persons have proved practicable and efficient. The comparison of equivalences of two vocational degrees, for which methodologically similar descriptions of learning outcomes are

available, can be completed by an expert group in two meetings of 4 hours each. As a precondition, the members of this expert group have to know the relevant framework, i. e. ECVET specifications and the European or National qualifications framework.

*Example: Matrix for the Comparison of Learning Outcomes – Excerpt*

<b>Social Care Assistant</b> Key activities and professional competences	Assist clients with the arrangement of their living environment and dealing with daily life					Implementing Client Care personally and situation-related								
	Develop relationships with the clients on the basis of the knowledge of psychological, pedagogical, and communication skills	Assist clients in dealing with daily life	Assist, advise, and guide clients particular life situations and crisis	Set up functional living spaces that is development-promoting, and aesthetic	Assist Clients with Housekeeping and Nutritional Intake	Assist Clients with Personal Hygiene	Arrange Nursing Care in Accordance with Hygiene Requirements	Assist Clients with their Mobility, with Disruptions in Moving, as well as with Rest and Sleep	Assist Clients with Eating and Aid with Disruptions in the Digestive System	Assist clients in the maintenance of the heart-circulatory functions with respiration. Carrying out countermeasures in case	Assist the Sensory Perception of Patients	Assist Clients suffering Neurological and Psychiatric Illnesses	Administer Professional First Aid in Emergency Situations	
<b>Geriatric Nurse</b> Key activities and professional competences														
<b>Taking over basic nursing care duties</b>														
<b>Assist Elderly People with Personal Hygiene Care</b>														
Reassure Elderly People							X							
Assist the Elderly with Resting and Sleeping								XX						
<b>Support Elderly People with their Mobility and with Disruptions in Motion</b>														
Consider the nursing care-relevant aspects of psychology and geriatric psychiatry in the nursing home situation	(X)													
Provide Professional First Aid Assistance in Emergencies													XX	
Speak with, advise, and guide elderly people	X													
<b>Implementing personal and situation-related nursing care for elderly people</b>														
<b>Assist elderly people with nutritional intake and treating disruptions in the digestive system</b>														
Assist elderly people with urinary excretion and treat disruptions in the urogenital system									X					
Assist the maintenance of heart-circulation functions and respiration of the client, as well as carrying out treatment of disruptions in the heart-circulation system and respiration										XX				
<b>Implement nursing care for elderly people suffering illnesses of the endocrine system and metabolism</b>														
Implement nursing care for elderly people with disruptions of the sensory organs											X			
Implement nursing care for elderly people with neurological, psychiatric, and geronto-psychiatric diseases												(X)		
Attend elderly people in the dying process			X											

Equivalence of Learning Outcomes  
 X ... partly equivalent (ca. 50%)  
 XX ... mostly equivalent (ca. 75%)

**Blue Writing:** Professional Competence is not part of the Social Assistant Qualification

The results of the comparison of the learning outcomes of the two professions “Social Care Assistant” and “Geriatric Nurse” show that both key activities are comparable in large parts. Two professional competences “Assist the elderly with resting and sleeping” and “Provide Professional First Aid Assistance in Emergencies” are even evaluated as mostly equivalent. Consequently, a more detailed analysis of those learning outcomes should be carried out in order to give recommendations on actual recognition potential (cf. steps 2 and 3).

When using the approach described above, the detection of equivalent learning outcomes is based on the official training regulations and on descriptions of learning outcomes only. Numerous special characteristics and methods of the skills and competences are not taken into account and constitute thus a limit to the opportunity of blanket recognition.

## STEP 2 – In-detail comparison of the key activities and documentation of knowledge gaps

In order to make available a more detailed comparison of the two professions in question, the contents of each key activity are contrasted in a table. The effort for acquiring the learning outcomes as well as the complexity and scope of the learning outcomes are taken into account, too.

Learning outcomes, which are missing in one of the qualifications as opposed to the other, are documented as “Major knowledge gaps in the comparison of learning outcomes“. They thus describe the need of qualification with regard to the vocational degree in question.

The following table should be completed for each unit of learning outcomes for which a (partly) equivalence has been detected.

*Example: In-detail comparison of the key activities “Taking over basic nursing care duties” and “Implementing Client Care personally and situation-related”*

Geriatric Nurse	Social Care Assistant	
Comparable key activities and professional competences		
<b>Take over basic nursing care duties</b>		
Assist Elderly People with Personal Hygiene Care	0	-/-
Reassure Elderly People	X	<b>Implement Client Care personally and situation-related</b> Arrange Nursing Care in Accordance with Hygiene Requirements
Assist the Elderly with Resting and Sleeping	XX	<b>Implement Client Care personally and situation-related</b> Assist Clients with their Mobility, with Disruptions in Moving, as well as with Rest and Sleep
Support Elderly People with their Mobility and with Disruptions in Motion	0	-/-
Consider the nursing care-relevant aspects of psychology and geriatric psychiatry in the nursing home situation	X	<b>Assist clients with the arrangement of their living environment and dealing with daily life</b> Develop relationships with the clients on the basis of the knowledge of psychological, pedagogical, and communication skills
Provide Professional First Aid Assistance in Emergencies	XX	<b>Implement Client Care personally and situation-related</b> Administer Professional First Aid in Emergency Situations
To speak with, advise, and guide elderly people	X	<b>Assist clients with the arrangement of their living environment and dealing with daily life</b> Develop relationships with the clients on the basis of the knowledge of psychological, pedagogical, and communication skills
Effort for acquiring learning outcomes, complexity and scope of the learning outcomes		
<u>Effort for acquiring learning outcomes:</u> <b>150 lessons</b> according to curriculum ca. 120 lessons in the field of activity “Taking over basic nursing care duties” as well as ca. 30 lessons in the field of activity “To speak with, advise, and guide elderly people”  <u>Complexity and scope of the learning outcomes:</u> <i>Knowledge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The graduates are in possession of deeper general knowledge or theoretical professional knowledge (comprehensive knowledge, description mostly with “describe”, “differentiate”, “illustrate”) within the field of geriatric nursing care.</li> </ul> <i>Skills</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The graduates are in possession of a broad spectrum of cognitive and practical skills (numerous skills, e.g. “set up”, “design”, “plan”, “process”) which facilitate autonomous preparation of tasks and problem solving and the evaluation of work results and processes according consideration to alternative courses of action and reciprocal effects with neighbouring areas.</li> <li>They are able provide transfers of methods and solutions.</li> </ul>	<u>Effort for acquiring learning outcomes:</u> <b>135 lessons</b> according to curriculum ca. 135 lessons in field of learning N°5: „Assisting nursing care of people in health and illness“.  <u>Complexity and scope of the learning outcomes:</u> <i>Knowledge</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The graduates are in possession of extended general knowledge or extended professional knowledge (medium knowledge, description mostly with “describe” and “explain”) of tasks in person- and situation-related nursing care.</li> </ul> <i>Skills</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The graduates are in possession of a spectrum of cognitive and practical skills (numerous skills, e.g. “set up”, “design” and “process”) for the planning and processing of technical tasks in person- and situation-related nursing care.</li> <li>They evaluate results in accordance with criteria which are largely pre-stipulated.</li> <li>They provide simple transfers of methods and results.</li> </ul>	

Major Knowledge gaps  
Qualification Need per Professional Competence

**Assist Elderly People with Personal Hygiene Care**

-- entirely --

**Reassure Elderly People**

*Skills*

- Prevent accidents through the conscientious behaviour in nursing home duties
- Recognise infections
- Implement appropriate treatment for chronic pain patients
- Carry out nursery home duties in accordance with the intimate sphere of the elderly

*Knowledge*

- Explain procedures for accident prevention
- The origin of pain, describing and differentiating the signs and types
- Explain the fundamental rules for dealing with chronic pain patients

**Assist the Elderly with Resting and Sleeping**

*Skills*

- Monitor the sleeping habits of elderly people, and take note of possible treatments

**Consider the nursing care-relevant aspects of psychology and geriatric psychiatry in the nursing home situation**

-- entirely --

**Consider the nursing care-relevant aspects of psychology and geriatric psychiatry in the nursing home situation**

*Skills*

- Recognize and understand the experience and behaviour of elderly people in connection with their life story and mental state. To consider this when fulfilling nursing care duties

*Knowledge*

- Describe the subject matter of Psychology
- Explain the significance of every day psychology and professional psychology
- [...]

**To speak with, advise, and guide elderly people**

*Skills*

- To produce discussion-promoting conditions in the interaction with elderly people
- [...]

*Knowledge*

- Explain nursing care relevant basis of communication
- [...]

For the documentation of knowledge gaps, experts of the professions in question and teachers should be integrated. It is highly important to involve their expertise and view on professional realities in order to detail the differences of the two key activities which are compared.

### STEP 3 – Revision and Recommendation for Recognition and Further Training

Based on STEP 2, the table “Matrix for the Comparison of Learning Outcomes” is revised. In-detail information gained in STEP 2, which are relevant for the revision, are:

- the effort for acquiring learning outcomes (number of lessons of training),
- if applicable, ECVET points and
- the documentation of knowledge gaps.

On the basis of the documents “Matrix for the Comparison of Learning Outcomes” and “In-detail comparison of the key activities” a recommendation for the recognition of learning outcomes and further training with the aim of achieving the targeted qualification can be formulated. This recommendation should clearly state *which key activities are equivalent* and which thus do not have to be addressed in further training; a recommendation for the blanket recognition of these key activities can be formulated.

Furthermore, the recommendation can – if purposeful – contain information on the *key activities* which are partly equivalent and which *professional competences* are missing in the comparison of the two qualifications; The professional competences which are missing are to be part of further qualification with the aim of gaining a degree. Last but not least, the recommendation can state for which *key activity* of the targeted qualification no equivalence could be detected, i.e. which key activities have to be addressed in further training in their entirety.

In the given example, the conclusion which can be drawn for the recognition of professional competences is as follows:

*Example: Recommendation for the recognition of professional competences (excerpt)*

**Recognition of the qualification „Social Care Assistant” for further training as „Geriatric Nurse“**

Learners of the qualification “Social Care Assistant” acquire the following learning outcomes (professional competences), which are thus recommended for blanket recognition for further training as “Geriatric Nurse”.

Key Activities and Professional Competences „Geriatric Nurse”
<p><b>Take over basic nursing care duties</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist the Elderly with Resting and Sleeping</li> <li>• Provide Professional First Aid Assistance in Emergencies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implement personal and situation-related nursing care for elderly people</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist the maintenance of heart-circulation functions and respiration of the client, as well as carry out treatment of disruptions in the heart-circulation system and respiration</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assist elderly people in their daily life situation and to maintain and activate the independence of elderly people</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the assessment of the lifestyle and the social environment of elderly people as the basis for situation-adequate nursing care</li> <li>• Assist elderly people with contributing to community life</li> <li>• Arrange the daily schedule of elderly people and their care-takers</li> </ul>

❖ **N.B.:**

- Pay attention to the involvement of stakeholders at the different steps of the comparison process. According to specific laws and regulations the necessity may differ from country to country.
- Always consider that a more complex approach for the recognition of learning outcomes might be necessary. For example, student biographies and outcomes of informal or non-formal learning should be respected as well.