
Methodology of comparison of learning outcomes allowing mobility and permeability

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OF PROFESSIONAL PERMEABILITY AND GEOGRAPHICAL MOBILITY”
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For more information on the project “PROPER CHANCE” go to our website
www.proper-chance.eu

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1. Foreword

This methodology document has been written by the project consortium of “PROPER CHANCE”. It is the aim of this project to promote permeability and mobility on the European education and labour market. For doing this, learning outcomes of qualifications in the field of health and social care have been described and compared on the basis of the ECVET principles and instruments. A Memorandum of Understanding, including agreed assessment standards for learning outcomes, has been set up to assure on-going transnational cooperation between the project partners.

This has been the ideal groundwork for the development, transfer and implementation of extra qualifications, which will provide learners with the chance to acquire additional learning outcomes which are an asset on the labour market.

According to the German Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung – BIBB), an extra qualification is an “instrument for the flexibilisation, differentiation and individualization of [...] vocational education and training”.¹ Thus, education providers are enabled to react to the requirements of the labour market, offering useful supplement qualifications which enhance the quality of the training programmes and attract more learners. Extra qualifications are the “knowledge, skills and competences which go beyond the contents of a training programme”.² Usually, they have a minimum of 40 lessons.³

The relevance and high importance of extra qualifications becomes evident when the focus is shifted towards the European perspective: Extra qualifications can significantly contribute to permeability at the European labour market if they take into account the needs of the labour market either on a European or specific transnational level.

In general, the implementation of extra qualifications usually aims at least at one of the following objectives:

- Adapting training programmes to the requirements of the labour market in general, e.g. in case of highly influential new innovations, and thus avoiding dependency on slowly-changing national qualification systems.
- Preparing learners for special needs of local employers (e. g. orientation towards a dominant regional economic sector).
- Preparing students for needs of the international labour market (e. g. offering qualification which enables them to enter a specific high-demand foreign labour market).
- Preparing new possibilities of permeability for workers (e.g. allowing workers to get new qualifications while taking into account their work acquired skills).

¹ Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB), Bonn (2012): Datenreport zum Berufsbildungsbericht 2012 - Informationen und Analysen zur Entwicklung der beruflichen Bildung p. 246. Available for download under: <http://datenreport.bibb.de/> (26.02.2013)

² *ibid.*

³ *ibid.*

2. Methodology of development, transfer and implementation of extra qualifications

To develop and implement new extra qualifications, follow the steps which are detailed on the next pages.

STEP 1 Needs analysis

The specific needs, which have to be met by the extra qualification, are to be identified as the very first step. Guiding questions, which should be answered, are:

- What is the specific need of the local, national or European labour market? Take into account various stakeholders, from the different employers (small, big, independent) to the public bodies and the workers themselves. Sometimes a need is best appraised in this perspective.
- Do other VET providers already offer similar qualifications? If appropriate, voids of the own training programme and valuable ideas can be identified from other training programmes.
- What is the target group? Who will be qualified?
- What will be the target group's motivation to invest time and (if applicable) money in order to participate in the extra qualification?
- Which key activity will be addressed by the extra qualification?

If you consider developing and offering extra qualifications, remember that the implementation of extra qualifications asks for resources in terms of time, qualified staff, and appropriate learning facilities. You should therefore make sure that the extra qualification can be financed. It is recommended to check whether public funding or financial support from companies is available.

STEP 2 Identification of corresponding learning outcomes

After the completion of the needs analysis, other (international) training providers can be contacted in order to verify whether they already provide training for the identified key activities and if they are willing to share their experiences.

The quantity and quality of documents and information, which are shared between training institutions for the purpose of implementing new extra qualifications, can differ widely. However, it is recommended to share the information as detailed in the annex "Recommended Structure for Learning Outcomes of an Extra Qualification" as minimum requirement.

It is most convenient if the other training provider can provide a description of the learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and competences according to the ECVET instruments and principles. For the implementation of the extra qualification, it would also be convenient if partners shared the already implemented curricula.

If the contacted institutions provide materials, those can be checked for potential assets which could be included in the own training programme as an extra qualification. For this purpose, the provided learning outcome description is to be compared

- 1) with the existing learning outcome description of the training programme, in order to assure that no double training will take place, and
- 2) with the identified key activities, which are to be trained in the extra qualification.

For the comparison, the methodology developed in the project “PROPER CHANCE” can be used.⁴

All identified learning outcomes, which are a supplement to the learning outcomes already being trained and which correspond to the key activity identified in the needs analysis, can be compiled to new unit, which is to be the new extra qualification (see annex for recommended structure).

STEP 3 Implementation: Defining the organisational framework

When the learning outcomes for the new extra qualification have been defined, the organisational framework for implementing the extra qualification has to be set. For this purpose, the following aspects need to be considered:

1. Identification and addressing of potential participants (It is advisable to check whether the extra qualification is also appropriate for other training programmes.)
2. Identification of qualified trainers
3. Necessary financial resources and administrative framework ensued
4. Timeframe for extra qualification (usually lower limit of 40 hours)
5. Place, where extra qualification will take place
6. Necessary equipment (text books, facilities, tools etc.)
7. Learning setting:
 - a. Classroom learning, online learning, or blended learning?
 - b. Group size
 - c. Teaching methods
8. Assessment Instruments and Settings
9. Certification, including documentation of learning outcomes

⁴ Available for download under: <http://www.proper-chance.eu/publications.html>

3. Annex: Recommended Structure for Learning Outcomes of an Extra Qualification

Title of Extra Qualification

Target Group (Qualification(s)):

Duration (lessons of 45 min):

Necessary Qualification of Trainer

Necessary Equipment

EQF / NQF Level

Assessment Instruments

Learning Objective (Summary)

Key activity *or* Unit of Learning Outcomes

Professional Competence

Skills

Knowledge

Professional Competence

Skills

Knowledge

Personal Competence