Lifelong Learning Programme

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MULTILATERAL PROJECTS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATION

D.3.3. Operational guidelines for the allocation of ECVET credits

Foreword

This document provides some guidelines, summarising the European Recommendation on ECVET, about the recognition of learning outcomes process and the allocation of ECVET credits, taking into account topics as such: transfer, recognition and accumulation of learning outcomes; learning agreement and personal transcript; ECVET points.

1. Operational guidelines for the allocation of ECVET credits

This document provides some guidelines, summarising the European Recommendation on ECVET, about the recognition of learning outcomes process and the allocation of ECVET credits, taking into account topics such as: transfer, recognition and accumulation of learning outcomes; learning agreement and personal transcript; ECVET points.

1.1. Transfer, recognition and accumulation of learning outcomes

ECVET is a technical framework for the transfer, recognition and, where appropriate, accumulation of individuals' learning outcomes with a view to achieving a qualification. ECVET tools and methodology comprise the description of qualifications in terms of units of learning outcomes with associated points, a transfer and accumulation process and complementary documents such as learning agreements, transcripts of records and ECVET users' guides.

ECVET is intended to facilitate the recognition of learning outcomes in accordance with national legislation, in the framework of mobility, for the purpose of achieving a qualification. It should be noted that ECVET does not imply any new entitlement for citizens to obtain the automatic recognition of either learning outcomes or points.

In ECVET, units of learning outcomes achieved in one setting are assessed and then, after successful assessment, transferred to another setting. In this second context, they are validated and recognised by the competent institution as part of the requirements for the qualification that the person is aiming to achieve. Units of learning outcomes can then be accumulated towards this qualification, in accordance with national or regional rules. Procedures and guidelines for the assessment, validation, accumulation and recognition of units of learning outcomes are designed by the relevant competent institutions and partners involved in the training process.

Credit transfer based on ECVET and applied to learning outcomes achieved in formal learning contexts should be facilitated by establishing partnerships and networks involving competent

institutions, each of which is empowered, in their own setting, to award qualifications or units or to give credit for achieved learning outcomes for transfer and validation.

The establishment of partnerships aims to:

- provide a general framework of cooperation and networking between the partners, set out in Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) through which a climate of mutual trust is established;
- assist the partners in the design of specific arrangements for credit transfer for learners.

The MoU should confirm that the partners:

- accept each other's status as competent institutions;
- accept each other's quality assurance, assessment, validation and recognition criteria and procedures as satisfactory for the purposes of credit transfer;
- agree the conditions for the operation of the partnership, such as objectives, duration and arrangements for review of the MoU;
- agree on the comparability of qualifications concerned for the purposes of credit transfer, using the reference levels established by EQF;
- identify other actors and competent institutions that may be involved in the process
- concerned and their functions.

For applying ECVET to learning outcomes achieved in a non-formal and informal learning context or outside the framework of an MoU, the competent institution which is empowered to award qualifications or units or to give credit should establish procedures and mechanisms for the identification, validation and recognition of these learning outcomes through the award of the corresponding units and the associated ECVET points.

1.2. ECVET partnerships: learning agreement and personal transcript

For applying credit transfer involving two partners and a specific mobile learner, a learning agreement is concluded by the two competent institutions involved in the training and validation process and the learner, in the framework of an MoU. It should:

- distinguish between competent "home" and "hosting" institutions;
- specify the particular conditions for a period of mobility, such as the identity of the learner, the duration of the mobility period, learning outcomes expected to be achieved and the associated ECVET points.

The learning agreement should lay down that, if the learner has achieved the expected learning outcomes and these have been positively assessed by the "hosting" institution, the "home" institution should validate and recognise them as part of the requirements for a qualification, according to the rules and procedures established by the competent institution.

Transfer between partners can apply to learning outcomes achieved in formal and, where appropriate, non-formal and informal contexts. Thus, the transfer of credit for achieved learning outcomes has three stages:

- the "hosting" institution assesses the learning outcomes achieved and awards credit to the learner. The learning outcomes achieved and the corresponding ECVET points are recorded in a learner's "personal transcript";
- the "home" institution validates the credit as a suitable record of the learner's achievement;
- the "home" institution then recognises the learning outcomes that have been acquired.

This recognition gives rise to the award of the units and their corresponding ECVET points, according to the rules of the "home" system (*in case a "home" institutional system is not available yet, an experimental system based on a mutual agreement between partners*). Validation and recognition by the competent "home" institution depend on the successful assessment of learning outcomes by the competent "hosting" institution, in accordance with the agreed procedures and quality assurance criteria.

1.3. ECVET points

ECVET points provide complementary information about qualifications and units in numerical form. They have no value independent of the acquired learning outcomes for the particular qualification to which they refer and they reflect the achievement and accumulation of units. To enable a common approach for the use of ECVET points, a convention is used according to which 60 points are allocated to the learning outcomes expected to be achieved in a year of formal full time VET.