



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Education and Culture

Lifelong Learning – Education and training policies
Vocational training and adult education

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

**EUROPEAN CREDIT SYSTEM FOR
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING
(ECVET)**

**A SYSTEM FOR THE TRANSFER, ACCUMULATION AND RECOGNITION OF
LEARNING OUTCOMES IN EUROPE**

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1- EN

GLOSSARY

This glossary is intended to facilitate legibility and understanding of the ECVET proposal. It is based on the works of CEDEFOP and the EQF and ECVET technical working groups.

Assessment (of learning outcomes)

The process of appraising against predefined criteria learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competence) acquired by an individual in formal, non-formal and informal settings. Assessment is typically followed by validation and certification.

Certification process (of knowledge, skills and competence)

The process of formally recognising knowledge, skills and competence acquired by an individual, following standard assessment and validation procedures. The certification process leads to the award of qualifications, certificates or diplomas which are issued by awarding bodies.

Competence

'Competence' means the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and other abilities in work or study situations, and in professional and/or personal development. In the EQF, 'competence' is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.

Competent body

Authority, institution or organisation that, according to national rules, is responsible for and/or involved in one or more of the functions related to the implementation of ECVET.

Credit points

The numerical expression of the relative weight of learning outcomes that makes up a unit of a qualification.

ECVET

A methodical way for describing a qualification in terms of units of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competence) which are transferable and which can be accumulated, with associated credit points.

ECVET Transfer Process

The process in which learning outcomes are successively assessed, validated and recognised.

Knowledge

Knowledge means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practises that is related to a field of study or work. In the EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual

Learning

A process in which an individual assimilates information, ideas and values and thus acquires knowledge, know-how and competence.

Learning agreement

An agreement drawn up and signed by the sending and receiving organisation, by the learner and, eventually, by a company, and specifying the conditions of the mobility experience (objective and duration of the mobility experience, training arrangements, learning outcomes to be achieved –units or parts of units -, and corresponding credit points, assessment procedure etc),

Learning outcome(s)

'Learning outcomes' means statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process and are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.

Learning pathway

The sum of learning sequences followed by an individual to acquire knowledge, skills and competence.

Memorandum of understanding

Global voluntary agreement between two or more national authorities, VET providers, sectors or competent bodies on cooperation in the field of validation, transfer and, if appropriate, recognition of learning outcomes and credits achieved by mobile learners.

Qualification

Qualification means 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

Recognition (of learning outcomes)

For ECVET purpose, the process of granting official status to validated knowledge, skills and competence, either

- through the award of partial qualification, certificates, diploma
- or
- through the grant of equivalence or credit units.

Skills

'Skills' means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. In the EQF, skills are described as cognitive (use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

Standard

Detailed specifications that indicates the type and level of knowledge, skills and/or competence required for an individual to perform specific tasks and activities and linked to professional requirements.

Transcript of records

A document which describes the units of learning outcomes achieved by a learner (knowledge, skills and competence acquired) and the associated ECVET credit points.

Unit

A set of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competence) which constitute a part of a qualification that can be assessed, validated and, possibly, certified.

Validation (of learning outcomes)

The process of recording that certain assessed learning outcomes are matching specific knowledge, skills and/competence indicated by a standard. Validation is typically followed by certification.

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ANNEX 2 - EN

FIFTEEN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Is harmonisation of VET cycles, programmes and/or qualifications standards necessary for implementation of ECVET?

No. ECVET is designed to be implemented whatever the differences between the national systems. However ECVET requires a dialogue and consensus among the competent bodies responsible for qualifications and requires *memoranda* of understanding to function well.

2. Are non formal and informal learning, professional experience and work placements covered by ECVET?

Yes, ECVET covers the individual's learning outcomes, independently of the context in which their learning takes place: training in the course of employment or resulting of personal development, work placement etc. The ECVET transfer process foresees that learning outcomes can be assessed, validated and recognised whatever the learning process used.

3. Is ECVET intended to be used only by young people in initial VET?

No. ECVET is intended to be used by all categories of people, young and adults, whatever the learning context in which they are learning: initial training, continuing training, on-the-job learning, distance learning ...

4. What are the main pillars of ECVET?

ECVET is based on the following pillars:

- The ECVET transfer process, including the assessment, validation, recognition and accumulation of learning outcomes
- Units of learning outcomes
- Credit points

5. Why the EQF levels, units and associated credit points are complementary for the implementation of ECVET?

The EQF levels, the units and credit points provide a set of complementary information which enables application of the ECVET transfer process:

- The 8 EQF levels provide a direct support to institutions, providers and competent bodies to identify and compare the qualifications and VET offers
- Units give precise information on the knowledge, skills and competences which constitute a given qualification
- Credit points provide a mean of judging the relative value of each unit.

6. Does ECVET enable a learner to achieve a partial or complete qualification by progressively accumulating achieved units of learning outcomes?

Yes. The awarded units may be accumulated and may be gradually complemented until the qualification is achieved, in accordance with national rules and examination procedures.

7. *Is there an ideal number of units for a qualification and an ideal size of a unit?*

No. This is up to the competent body responsible for the qualification and/or its implementation. However, it is recommended that units should not be too small so as to avoid excessive fragmentation of qualifications. It is also recommended that units should not be too large to avoid creating potential stumbling blocks in the learning and assessment processes.

Units can have specific characteristics that are different from one another (e.g. mandatory, elective, transversal, dedicated to mobility ...)

8. *Does the number of credit points allocated to a qualification and/or to the associated units provide information about the real duration of an individual's formal, non-formal or informal learning pathway?*

No. The number of credit points allocated is totally independent of the characteristics of any particular learning path. It does not give information on the real duration of the individual's learning path.

9. *Can a learner obtain more or less than 120 credits per year?*

Yes. This amount of credits per year is merely an indicative convention.

10. *Have credit points a value outside of units ?*

No. Credit points are intended to provide complementary information on units.

11. *How long can credit points be valid for?*

This is up to the body responsible for the qualification and/or its implementation. This period of validity may depend on several criteria, e.g. the updating of qualification requirements.

12. *Are learning outcomes recognised automatically by competent bodies, VET providers etc?*

Transfer and recognition of learning outcomes, based on units and associated credit points, are not automatic. The authority awarding a qualification decides on what units and credits to accept for a specific qualification. But recognition is mandatory in the case of learner mobility when the prior Learning Agreement, between the sending organisation, the receiving organisation and the learner, makes provision for that. A mobile learner who studies abroad and take exams or assessment abroad should not be obliged to take exams (during or after the stay abroad) at the home institution, covering the same learning outcomes which are mentioned in the learning agreement

13. *What are the differences between the decision of adoption of ECVET, the memorandum of understanding (MoU) and the learning agreement?*

- The decision on adoption of ECVET is the formalisation of the commitment of a national competent body, at relevant level, which adopts ECVET and defines the scope of its implementation.
- The Memorandum of Understanding is a global voluntary agreement between two or more national authorities, VET providers, sectors or competent bodies on cooperation in the field of validation, transfer and, if appropriate, recognition of learning outcomes and credit achieved by mobile learners.
- The learning agreement is an individual agreement which is drawn up for a specific case of learner mobility. It is signed by the sending and receiving organisation and by the learner.

14. Could the Europass certificate supplement be used for ECVET?

Yes, the Europass certificate supplement could be used in the framework of ECVET

- . for documenting the ECVET adoption decision by the competent body
- . for writing partnership agreements
- . for describing learning outcomes using the units included in the specific qualification and associated ECVET credit points.

15. To what extent is quality assurance essential for the implementation of ECVET?

Quality assurance systems for ECVET should be set up at national level in order to improve transparency and accountability of processes and procedures designed for the assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes and thus to promote the effectiveness and transparency of provision at all levels and thereby promote mutual trust, recognition and mobility, within and across countries.

This could be achieved through common European principles, which would reflect a shared understanding of sound quality assurance approaches applied to ECVET.

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ANNEXE 3 - EN

THREE EXAMPLES FOR IMPLEMENTING AND USING ECVET

Example n°1

Mobility type: organised by two partners (VET providers)

Beneficiary: individuals who are involved in a mobility programme such as Leonardo da Vinci

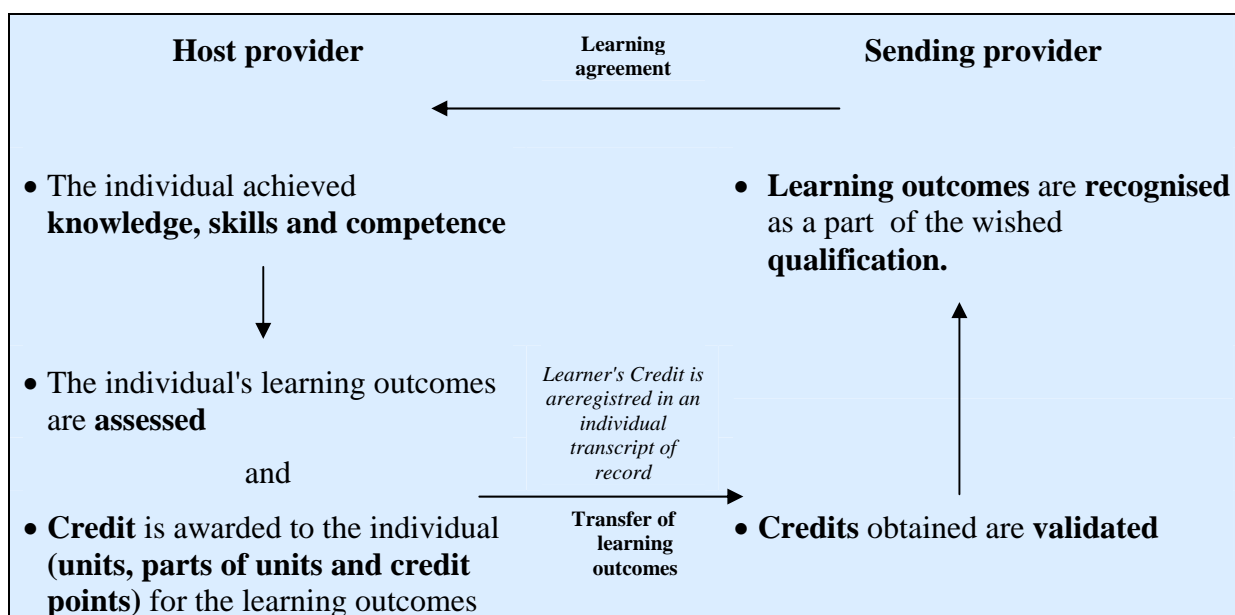
Learning context: formal

Preliminary phases:

- The two partners adopt the ECVET principles, that is:
 - Qualifications are described in terms of units of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competence)
 - The ECVET transfer process is adopted (assessment of learning outcomes, validation and recognition)
- The two partners adopt a Memorandum of Understanding
- The learner, the sending provider and the host provider establish an individual learning agreement.

Individual's benefit:

- Learning outcomes achieved during the mobility period, are effectively recognised when the individual comes back in his/her home VET provider.



Exemple n°2

Mobility type: valorisation of learning outcomes achieved in a professional experience, by a formal qualification

Beneficiary: individuals who have a professional experience and who wish to attain a qualification.

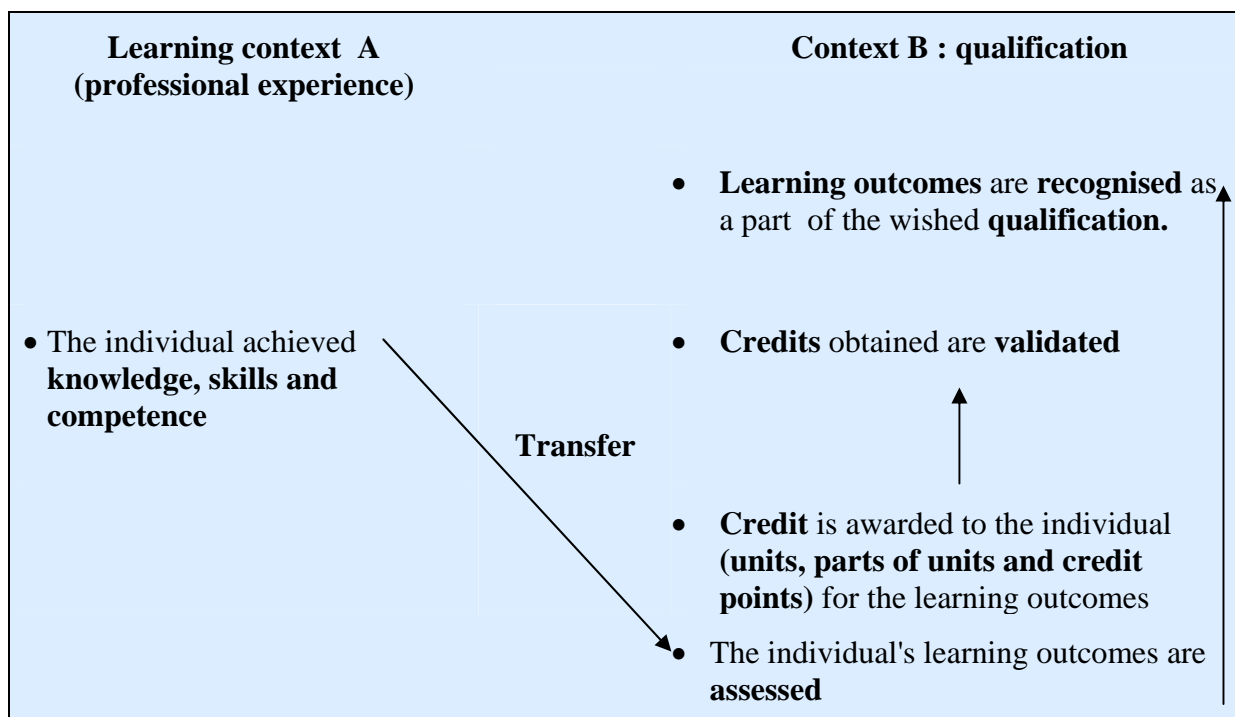
Learning context: non formal et informal

Preliminary phases:

- The relevant body has adopted the ECVET principles, that is:
 - Qualifications are described in terms of units of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competence)
 - The ECVET transfer process is adopted (assessment of learning outcomes, validation and recognition)

Individual's benefit:

- Learning outcomes achieved during a professional experience are really recognised for the attainment of a qualification.



Exemple n°3

Mobility type: passage d'un contexte d'apprentissage par l'expérience professionnelle à un contexte formel d'apprentissage

Beneficiary: personnes ayant acquis des savoirs, aptitudes et compétences par l'expérience professionnelle et souhaitant s'engager dans une formation formelle

Learning context: non formel et informel

Preliminary phases:

- The relevant body has adopted the ECVET principles, that is:
 - Qualifications are described in terms of units of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competence)
 - The ECVET transfer process is adopted (assessment of learning outcomes, validation and recognition)
 - The training provision is flexible et individualised

Individual's benefit:

- Thank to the recognition of the learning outcomes achieved during the professional experience, the individual gain an exemption of certain courses, modules or other learning businesses.

