

Assessment and validation of parts of qualifications – identification of units: links between reform projects at national level and ECVET?

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Basic concepts of ECVET

- Qualifications
- Units → which contains
 - I. knowledge,
 - II. skills
 - III. and competence
- ... all related to Learning outcomes

The description of qualifications in terms of units of learning outcomes makes it possible ...

...to specify knowledge, skills and competence which characterise each qualification and to improve the legibility

...

- for the individuals as well as
- for the competent bodies responsible for qualifications and
- for employers.

Source: ... working document, SEC(206) 1431

Units describe qualifications

What is a unit?

A set of knowledge, skills and competence which constitute a part of a qualification.

A unit can be the smallest part of a qualification that

- can be assessed, validated
- and, possibly, certified.

A unit can be specific

- to a single qualification or common
- to several qualifications.

Source: ... working document, SEC(206) 1431

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Source: ... working document, SEC(206) 1431

... for ECVET purposes, the specifications for a unit should typically give information such as:

1. **the generic title of the unit,**
2. **the knowledge, skills and competence which are contained in a unit,**
3. **the criteria for assessment of the corresponding learning outcomes.**

... units of learning outcomes should be:

1. **legible and understandable;**
2. **built up and organised in a coherent way;**
3. **assessable.**

Source: ... working document, SEC(206) 1431

The heart of ECVET: Units of learning outcomes

Who defines units?

The characteristics of units composing a qualification (content, size, total number of units, etc.) are defined by the competent body responsible for the qualification at the appropriate level.

There are numerous methods for describing qualifications in terms of learning outcomes.

From the moment of the adoption of ECVET, the European Commission will support the diffusion of the most suitable methodologies as well as the development of new methodologies.

Source: ... working document, SEC(206) 1431

Diversity of I-VET – but common challenges

Some countries are already familiar with the terms “unit” or “part qualifications” or “learning outcomes”, others are quite fixed to full qualifications, final exams and “input-criteria” in defining VET-programs.

Nevertheless there are many efforts to make I-VET-provisions more flexible due

- to changes of the service and knowledge based economy and
- growing challenges of inclusion of all young persons into employment and training.

Different terminologies – various innovative approaches in I-VET

There are different terminologies in use and considerable challenges of common understanding can be observed, e.g. concerning the term “modularisation”.

Some reform projects to increase flexibility of curricula are running under the headline of “modularisation”.

Some countries offer various I-VET-learning routes which are segmented strongly.

Some countries try out “entry I-VET-routes” for youth at risk.

Common use of an outcomes-oriented approach

I-VET in Europe show a picture of diverse situation and efforts but common challenges.

A common approach could be to define I-VET-learning at least in form of supplements in terms of units of learning outcomes.

In the long run this could enhance not only transparency of learning outcomes in different learning routes or forms but also mutual trust of stakeholders and recognition of part or full qualifications.

A tentative example:

Description of I-VET learning outcomes in terms of units

<u>Complete</u> qualification	<u>Complete</u> qualification plus	<u>Basic</u> qualification	<u>Partial or</u> <u>entry</u> qualification	<u>Related</u> qualification
Unit 1	Unit 1	Unit 1	Unit 1	
Unit 2	Unit 2	Unit 2	Unit 2	Unit 2
Unit 3	Unit 3	Unit 3		
Unit 4	Unit 4	Unit 4		Unit 4
Unit 5	Unit 5			
Unit 6	Unit 6			
Unit 7	Unit 7			
	Unit 8			
	Unit 9			

Source: Schneeberger, 2006