

Apply ECVET and EQAVET criteria on courses involving ConClips

With the introduction of Video clips based upon identifying skills gaps amongst those working on Passive Housing, it is important to identify the performance standards required to ensure that skills and knowledge are utilised to provide top quality craftsmanship.

Using ECVET as a framework, we are looking to develop the Knowledge, Skills and Competences (KSC) for each of the Video clips to aid learning through VET Providers and others involved in training and development. Where there are differences in practices across member states e.g. Internal and External insulation, further Units will be developed to reflect performance standards. The ECVET principles feature a Learning Outcomes approach, identifying the standards which workers should attain through Units, Learning Outcomes and associated Assessment Criteria, to aid the assessment of workers. Furthermore, we will be looking to identify the Level, using EQF levels 1-8 for the Units and competences, also reflecting Partner's NQFs.

As an Indication of the amount of learning required by workers, again using ECVET principles, we will also seek guidance from VET providers on the amount of time required for workers to achieve the skills and knowledge required to achieve the Unit. This will be translated into ECVET points based upon Notional and Guided Learning hours e.g. 78 Hours.

The ECVET principle of 1 credit point is equal to 10 learning hours will be a guiding principle in identifying credit points for each Unit, to enable transfer.

Applying EQAVET indicators to our work, the priority, as it is across all member states, will be focused on the quality assurance processes where worker's competence is assessed and validated against the Units of competence in order that we encourage trust through competent bodies and recognition of competence and credit transfer across member states.

What is ECVET?

The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) is a European initiative, allowing for the accumulation and transfer of credits gained through the recognition of learning outcomes in vocational education and training (VET) across Europe. ECVET has been developed to facilitate the recognition of achievements in vocational education and training, in formal, informal and non-formal learning. Although ECVET is underpinned by [European legislation](#), participation is voluntary and national protocols are respected.

→ Learn more about the [technical specifications of ECVET](#).

The Aim of ECVET

The aim of ECVET is to facilitate the mobility of the workforce in VET across Europe. It has been tested in pilot projects across the European Union with the intention of extending its application gradually to a wider range of VET qualifications, either existing or new – as part of the [Education and Training 2020 initiative](#).

Mobility

ECVET facilitates the mobility of VET students by enabling the accumulation of credits from different training providers in different countries. Credits are validated by each awarding institution and recognised by the awarding body of the final qualification.

The aim of the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) is to:

- make it easier for people to get validation and recognition of work-related skills and knowledge acquired in different systems and countries – so that they can count towards vocational qualifications;
- make it more attractive to move between different countries and learning environments;
- increase the compatibility between the different vocational education and training (VET) systems in place across Europe, and the qualifications they offer;
- increase the employability of VET graduates and the confidence of employers that each VET qualification requires specific skills and knowledge.

ECVET is part of the development of common European tools for education and training: the European qualifications framework and the related national qualifications frameworks, the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET (**EQAVET**), and Europass. It is also linked to the application of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (**ECTS**) in higher education. All these tools are based on and promote learning outcomes as a key principle in the definition and description of qualifications, and they all emphasise The ECVET users' guide describes ECVET as a process through which tasks are allocated to different VET stakeholders.

The tasks in question are the design of qualifications, the design of formal or non-formal programmes, the design of assessment/validation processes and procedures, delivery of education and training programmes, assessment of learning outcomes and recognition of learning outcomes (European Commission, 2011). Thus, capacity building involves considering how qualification systems are organised and which organisations are performing which tasks.

Most European countries are developing or have developed comprehensive national qualifications frameworks (NQF) covering all types and levels of qualification. National qualifications frameworks aim at making national qualifications systems easier to understand and at making relationships between qualifications more transparent, thereby facilitating access and progression. They rely upon learning outcomes-based level descriptors and form a reliable basis for the transfer of learning outcomes. In recent years, the learning outcomes approach to qualifications emerged as a way of ensuring transparent qualifications and qualifications systems. It is now applied to a wide range of qualification-related activities, from the definition of specific work practices to the description of the broadest qualifications levels. Learning outcomes can be used in different contexts: in definitions of occupational and educational standards, descriptions of curricula/ programmes, assessment specifications, qualification descriptors, national qualifications frameworks and for other purposes, such as credit arrangements, curricula vitae, job advertisements, information, advice and guidance or the management of education and quality assurance (European Union, 2011).

Learning outcomes, curricula and learning processes

Whilst developing VET standards in terms of learning outcomes can be demanding, the culture change required to ensure the paradigm shift permeates the learning process thereafter, is considered to be much more challenging. Some countries that have progressed beyond the stage of re-defining standards in terms of learning outcomes

Assuring the quality of VET qualifications

Countries differ in their approaches to curriculum development for VET; sometimes within countries different approaches are adopted for initial VET (IVET) and continuing VET (CVET) and even for different forms of provision within these two broad sectors. Some countries set standards based on learning outcomes centrally and then devolve responsibility to providers/teachers to develop curricula based on those standards; this can result in teachers having more control over whether and to what extent they change their practice. Other countries develop standards, curricula and assessment guidance centrally, thereby obliging teachers to change practice at greater speed. Some countries have started to implement the learning outcomes approach and are confronting issues resulting from an information gap between policy-papers that set out 'what ought to happen' (policy objectives) and the needs of practitioners to 'make it happen'.

Across VET, curricula can be implemented by 'teachers', 'trainers' and 'instructors'; each may have different qualifications, formation, status and dedication-time ('instructors' are often full-time employees with work tasks other than training). These 'learning facilitators'

require tailored support to enable them to adapt to the learning outcomes based approach as well as support to collaborate more closely. Learners also require support to adapt to the new demands that the learning outcomes based approach makes on them, for example, for articulating their learning needs and self-assessment

Learning-outcomes and assessment

The differences between teaching input-based standards and learning outcomes-based standards become very evident in the assessment of learning outcomes. In VET there is a good deal of experience of assessing learning outcomes based on occupational standards. For the most part these outcomes are demonstrated in the work context and assessed by employers. In some countries such as Finland this form of assessment is being built into school based VET in the form of *skills demonstrations*.

The focus of assessment in the learning outcome approach is the learner, and what s/he is expected to know, be able to do and understand. This shift from the learning context to the learner, and from input to output, facilitates the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Interestingly, some countries are building on experience gained in relation to the assessment of non-formal and informal learning when developing systemic approaches for the assessment of learning outcomes in the context of VET programmes.

Applying ECVET to ConClips

With the emphasis on reform of qualification across member states, specifically the design of qualifications based on job roles and standards, the structure of qualifications is changing. The Learning Outcomes approach for standards emphasises the need to look at jobs from the point of view of competence based upon knowledge and skills required to perform the work. In addition, the assessment of competent performance is a key part of the ongoing reform process to ensure mutual trust is developed amongst competent bodies who certificate and Quality assure the assessment and validation process. Without this, there will be doubts about the credibility of the assessment and certification processes and systems.

As ConClips concentrates on providing video clips to encourage further learning / skills acquisition for those involved in the construction of Passive Housing, it is important that performance standards are identified for both the worker, the supervisor and those involved in VET. From the latter perspective, having Units, Learning outcomes based upon competence will provide a framework to develop a syllabus and pedagogic approaches for teaching and learning.

Therefore for each of the video clips which are being produced, there will be a structure of a Unit(s) with supporting Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria. The differences in construction practices across member states will mean that in our testing phase, national practices will be taken into account and for which VET providers can design specific learning.

ECVET Points

When we speak about the relevance of ECVET points when defining the didactic value of ConClips, it is necessary to describe the system of ECVET points: These are a numerical representation of the overall weight of learning outcomes in a qualification and of the relative weight of units in relation to the qualification.

Together with units, descriptions of learning outcomes and information about the level of qualifications, ECVET points can support the understanding of a qualification. The number of ECVET points allocated to a qualification, together with other specifications, can indicate for example, that the scope of the qualification is narrow or broad. The number of ECVET points allocated to a unit provides the learner with information concerning the relative weight of what s/he has accumulated already. It also provides the learner with information concerning what remains to be achieved.

How many ECVET points are allocated to a qualification and how is it done?

Allocation of ECVET points to a qualification is based on using a convention according to which 60 points are allocated to the learning outcomes expected to be achieved in a year of formal full time VET.

For a given qualification, one formal learning context is taken as a reference and on the basis of 60 points per year of formal full time VET, the total number of points is assigned to that qualification. In a number of European countries qualifications' descriptions are independent of the education and training programme preparing for these qualifications. Furthermore, it is also possible that the same qualification can be prepared through various programmes. Therefore ECVET allocates points to qualifications and not to education and training programmes. However, to decide on the number of ECVET points allocated to a qualification, one formal learning programme is chosen as a point of reference. It is up to the competent institutions in charge of designing qualifications to decide which specific programme will be chosen as a point of reference (e.g. the initial VET or the most common programme). The duration of the selected reference programme together with the ECVET convention on ECVET points will give the number of ECVET points allocated to the qualification.

What is the difference between ECVET points and credit?

ECVET points are not to be confused with credit. While credit designates the learning outcomes the learner has achieved, ECVET points provide information about the qualification and the units. In other words: while credit is related to a person and his/her personal achievement (credit does not exist on its own without someone having achieved it), ECVET points are linked to the qualification structure and description (independent of whether someone has achieved the qualification or not). Credit can be transferred and accumulated if the competent institution recognises that the credit the learner has achieved is relevant and can be taken into account as part of the qualification the learner is preparing (or seeks recognition for). ECVET points provide information about the credit the learner has transferred and accumulated (e.g. what is the relative weight of units the learner has already achieved).

What is EQAVET?

The European Quality Assurance system (originally known as a “Reference Framework”) for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) is designed to make sure that the quality of training programmes and assessment of competence can be trusted. Its aim is to contribute to quality improvement in VET and to increased transparency of, and consistency in, VET policy developments between Member States, thereby promoting mutual trust, mobility of workers and learners, and lifelong learning.

In June 2009, EU member states adopted a recommendation from the European Commission to establish a reference instrument to help to promote and monitor continuous improvement of their VET systems based on common European references. EQAVET is the result of this process. EQAVET is a reference tool for policy-makers based on a four-stage quality cycle that includes goal setting and planning, implementation, evaluation and review. It respects the autonomy of national governments and is a voluntary system to be used by public authorities and other bodies involved in quality assurance. One of the key elements of EQAVET is the [10 selected quality indicators](#) which support the evaluation and quality improvement of VET systems across Member States.

Member States are encouraged to use the framework, and develop a national approach to improving quality assurance systems that involves all relevant stakeholders. This approach should include the establishment of national reference points for quality assurance, as well as active participation in the relevant European-level network.

List of Indicators

1. Relevance of quality assurance systems for VET providers
2. Investment in training of teachers and trainers
3. Participation rate in VET programmes
4. Completion rate in VET programmes
5. Placement rate in VET programmes
6. Utilisation of acquired skills at the workplace
7. Unemployment rate
8. Prevalence of vulnerable group
9. Mechanisms to identify training needs in the labour market
10. Schemes used to promote better access to VET

Applying EQAVET to ConClips

In many member states the Framework is being developed based upon national systems for quality assurance. Within the context of ConClips, it will be important at the initial stage to develop the performance standards for workers involved in the construction of Passive Houses and in so doing identify Units and Learning Outcomes for each of the videos to support VET providers and Learners. The assessment of the competence of workers will have to be addressed using national systems across states as EQAVET develops and is applied.