

European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)

Glossary

accreditation (of programmes, institutions)

Process of accrediting an institution of education or training, a programme of study, or a service, showing it has been approved by the relevant legislative and professional authorities by having met predetermined standards. [EQF]

assessment

The sum of methods and processes used to evaluate the attainments (knowledge, know-how, skills and competences) of an individual, and typically leading to certification. [EQF]

certificate/diploma

An official document, issued by an awarding body, which records the achievements of an individual following a standard assessment procedure. [EQF]

certification (of knowledge, skills and competences)

The process of formally validating knowledge, know-how and/or skills and competences acquired by an individual, following a standard assessment procedure. Certificates or diplomas are issued by accredited awarding bodies. [EQF]

comparability of qualifications

The extent to which it is possible to establish equivalence between the level and content of formal qualifications (certificates or diplomas) at sectoral, regional, national or international levels. [EQF]

competence

Competence includes: i) cognitive competence involving the use of theory and concepts, as well as informal tacit knowledge gained experientially; ii) functional competence (skills or knowhow), those things that a person should be able to do when they are functioning in a given area of work, learning or social activity; iii) personal competence involving knowing how to conduct oneself in a specific situation; and iv) ethical competence involving the possession of certain personal and professional values. [TWG ECVET]

credit points (or credits)

Credit points are allocated to qualifications and to the units that constitute them. By agreement, they represent, in numerical form the volume of learning outcomes, the relative

importance of each of the units that make up a qualification, in relation to the expected results, i.e. the knowledge, skills and competences that must be acquired and assessed, regardless of the learning pathway. [TWG ECVET]

credit system

A system of credits makes it possible to break down a qualification or the objectives of a programme of vocational education and training into units. Each unit is defined in terms of knowledge, competences and skills. It may be characterised by its size and relative importance, expressed in general by credit points (or credits) or other factors. Each unit can be validated and awarded separately. [TWG ECVET]

formal learning

Learning that occurs in an organised and structured environment (in a school/training centre or on the job) and is explicitly designated as learning (in terms of objectives, time or resources). Formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It typically leads to certification. [EQF]

informal learning

Learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner's perspective. It typically does not lead to certification. [EQF]

knowledge

The facts, feelings or experiences known by a person or a group of people [EQF]

learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to do, or is able to demonstrate, after completion of any learning process or at the end of a period of learning. [TWG ECVET]

mobility

The ability of an individual to move and adapt to a new occupational environment. [CEDEFOP]

module

A self-contained, formally structured learning experience. It should have a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes, expressed in terms of competences to be obtained, and appropriate assessment criteria. [ECTS]

non formal learning

Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support), but which contain an

important learning element. Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner's point of view. It normally does not lead to certification. [EQF]

qualifications

Qualifications are a formal expression of knowledge, skills and wider competences of the individuals. They are recognised at local, national or sectoral level and, in certain cases, at international level.

A qualification is achieved when a competent body determines that an individual's learning has reached a specified standard of knowledge, skills and wider competences. The standard of learning outcomes is confirmed by means of an assessment process or the successful completion of a course of study. Learning and assessment for a qualification can take place through a programme of study and/or work place experience and/or any type of formal, non formal or informal learning pathway. A qualification confers official recognition of value in the labour market and in further education and training. A qualification can be a legal entitlement to practice a trade. [TWG ECVET]

recognition

a) Formal recognition: the process of granting official status to skills and competences either -through the award of certificates or -through the grant of equivalence, credit units, validation of gained skills and/or competences and/or
(b) social recognition: the acknowledgement of the value of skills and/or competences by economic and social stakeholders. [EQF]

skill

The knowledge and experience needed to perform a specific task or job. [EQF]

transparency of qualification

The degree to which the value of qualifications can be identified and compared on the (sectoral, regional, national or international) labour and training markets. [EQF]

unit

A unit is part of a qualification. It can be the smallest part of the qualification that can be evaluated, validated or certified. A unit can be specific to one particular qualification or common to several qualifications. The knowledge, skills and competences that make up the credit form the basis for the assessment and validation of people's outcomes. Units are validated at the end of the assessment of outcomes, the results of which must comply with the requirements of the qualification. [TWG ECVET]

validation (of non formal and informal learning)

The process of assessing and recognising a wide range of knowledge, know-how, skills and competences, which people develop throughout their lives within different environments, for example through education, work and leisure activities. [EQF]

valuing learning

The process of recognising participation in and outcomes of (formal or non-formal) learning, in order to raise awareness of its intrinsic worth and to reward learning. [EQF]

vocational education and training

Education and training which aims to equip people with skills and competences that can be used on the labour market. [CEDEFOP]

workload

The workload includes all learning activities required for the achievement of the learning outcomes (i.e., lectures, practical work, information retrieval, private study, etc.). [ECTS]

Sources

[CEDEFOP] CEDEFOP (Philippe Tissot), Terminology of vocational training policy. A multilingual glossary for an enlarged Europe, Luxembourg 2004

[ECTS] Directorate-General for Education and Culture, ECTS users' guide. European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System and the Diploma Supplement, Brussels 2005

[EQF] Commission of the European Communities, Commission Staff Working Document. Towards a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, 2005

[TWG ECVET] European Credit System for VET (ECVET). Technical Specifications (Report 2005 of the Credit Transfer Technical Working Group)