

Key Findings from Working Groups: Key Messages, Challenges, Opportunities

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Key Issue I - Terminology

Focus of discussion:

Horizontal dimension of learning outcomes – Distinct domains of learning outcomes vs. holistic approach to writing LOs

Challenges identified:

- Degree of variation in national/sectoral/institutional interpretations
- Consistency in construction and implementation of „Competence“
- Clear-cut differentiation between „Skills“ and „Competence“
- Introduction of new categories within national qualification frameworks: focus on observable behaviour/action competence, etc.

Key message:

- Horizontal dimension needs to be maintained. National/sectoral differences are to be respected, but call for reliable assessment and a common reference point in order for LOs to serve as a functioning basis for communication and transparency.

Key Issue II – Standardized Format

Focus of discussion:

Common format of writing learning outcomes vs. varied national/sectoral interpretations

Challenges identified:

- Wide range of authorities in charge of LO descriptions
- Plurality of formats resulting from national/sectoral interpretations
- Common format for writing LOs in NQF databases as common reference point for „translation“?

Key message:

- Standardization of formats is seen as problematic. A common format is of value for transparent display of learning outcomes in national databases but should not put any constraints on diversity.

Key Issue III – Target Groups

Focus of discussion:

Learning outcomes to meet the needs of learners, educators, assessors, employers, etc...

Challenges identified:

- Linguistic challenges
- Balanced consideration of diversified requirements
- Process of involving stakeholders and balancing their interests
- Observed lack of involvement of employees

Key message:

- There is a need for custom-tailored communication strategies that answer to the needs of the respective target group and that deconstruct the barrier of technical language.

Key Issue IV – Levels and Complexity

Focus of discussion:

The vertical dimension of learning outcomes – conveying information on the level of proficiency

Challenges identified:

- Action verbs versus context information
- Terminology and underlying conceptual frameworks – Bloom's taxonomy and beyond
- Implications for assessment methods
- Ensuring flexibility of teaching and training

Key message:

- Information on the level of proficiency benefits the learner and allows for better alignment between LO descriptions and assessment criteria but calls for terminological guidance and sensitivity.

The Way Forward – Part I

Comparative research to shed light on:

- The process of translating labour market needs (occupational standards) into information that is relevant for E&T (learning outcomes, curricula, assessment criteria)
- The procedural and structural challenges of involving stakeholders and balancing their needs
- The terminology used in various national/sectoral/institutional contexts and the resulting obstacles to transparency
- The process of finding the right balance between technical and transversal skills
- Etc.

The Way Forward – Part II

European “Handbook” could provide guidance on

- The use of a common reference point to translate between national interpretations of the K-S-C logic as suggested by the EQF
- The transparent display of learning outcomes in the context of national NQF-databases
- The expression of level and complexity by means of action verbs and the balance between flexibility and specificity (Blooms taxonomy and beyond...)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

*TIME FOR FURTHER
DISCUSSION...*