

The Application of Learning Outcomes Based Requirements in Vocational Skills Demonstrations in Finland

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In the following 15 minutes short tour on:

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- 🔍 National Vocational Qualification Requirements (NQR) at macro level
- 🔍 Targets of assessment and assessment criteria
- 🔍 Vocational Skill Demonstrations (VSD) as assessment method
- 🔍 Implementation at provider level - Case Helsinki Vocational College / Social and Health Care /Practical Nurse
- 🔍 Strenghts and Challenges of VSD

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National Vocational Qualification Requirements (NQR) at macro level

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- ◉ NQRs are defined and developed nationally under coordination of the Finnish National Board of Education
- ◉ Wide range of stakeholders involved in the process of developing LOs and NQRs at macro level, e.g.;
 - Ministry of Education and Culture and other sectoral ministries
 - Labour market representatives (trade unions, employer organisations, enterprises)
 - Providers of VET
 - Teacher unions, student unions, education committees of vocational education sectors
- ◉ NQRs consist of units, which are composed on the basis of functions in working life and named according to activities at working life
- ◉ NQRs define expected learning outcomes, targets of assessment and assessment criteria for each unit

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Some characterizations of the NQRs

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- Units of qualifications, targets of assessment and assessment criteria have been defined as learning outcomes - knowledge, skills and competencies
- NQRs are operationalized at the provider level following the tripartite principle at local level: Provider specific curricula ➡ including Plan for assessment ➡ including Plan for vocational skills demonstrations
- Assessment of/for learning and assessment of skills and competencies - both always criteria based

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Targets of assessment and assessment criteria

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Q Four targets of assessment – common for each unit:

- 1) Mastery of work processes,
- 2) Mastery of work methods, tools and materials,
- 3) Mastery of knowledge that forms foundation for work and
- 4) Key skills of lifelong learning.

Q Assessment criteria for each unit defined and described are at three levels:

- 1 = satisfactory,
- 2 = good,
- 3 = excellent.

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Targets of assessment and assessment criteria (2)

TARGETS OF ASSESSMENT	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA		
1. Mastering the work process	Satisfactory 1	Good 2	Excellent 3
Systematic work	The student or candidate recognises the strengths and needs for support in the ability to function of clients of different ages, and uses some data acquisition methods.	recognises the strengths and needs for support in the ability to function of clients of different ages, based on resources, and uses different data acquisition methods.	recognises the strengths and needs for support in the ability to function of clients of different ages, in many ways, based on the clients and resources, and uses different data acquisition methods.
	draws up a client-based plan in support of the client's ability to function, in cooperation with the client and a multi-disciplinary team.	draws up a client-based plan in support of the client's ability to function, in cooperation with the client and a multi-disciplinary team, utilising the client's family and different authorities.	draws up a client-based plan in support of the client's ability to function, in cooperation with the client and a multi-disciplinary team, utilising the client's family and different authorities in many ways.

TARGETS OF ASSESSMENT	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA		
2. Mastering the work method, equipment and material	Satisfactory 1	Good 2	Excellent 3
Vocational interaction and communication	The student or candidate works with the clients in a responsible manner and promotes their rehabilitation through vocational interaction skills.	works with the clients in a service-spirited and responsible manner and promotes their rehabilitation through vocational interaction skills. Takes the client's individual situation into account.	works with the clients in a service-spirited and responsible manner and promotes their rehabilitation through vocational interaction skills in a creative and varied manner. Takes the client's individual situation into account.
	uses plain language and exploits the most common communication methods which support and compensate for speech, in ordinary client situations.	uses plain language and exploits the most common communication methods which support and compensate for speech, in client situations.	uses plain language actively and exploits communication methods which support and compensate for speech, in different client situations.

TARGETS OF ASSESSMENT	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA		
3. Underpinning knowledge	Satisfactory 1	Good 2	Excellent 3
Mastering the knowledge related to rehabilitation	The student or candidate in his/her work, exploits his/her knowledge of rehabilitation, ability to function and rehabilitative approach.	justifies his/her actions with his/her knowledge of rehabilitation, ability to function and rehabilitative approach.	justifies his/her actions in many ways with his/her knowledge of rehabilitation, ability to function and rehabilitative approach.
Mastering the knowledge related to networking	in his/her work, exploits his/her knowledge of networking as a work practice.	exploits networking as a work practice and is aware of its different uses and justifies his/her actions with such practices.	exploits networking as a work practice and is widely aware of its different uses and justifies his/her actions in many ways with such practices.

TARGETS OF ASSESSMENT	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA		
4. Key competences for lifelong learning	Satisfactory 1	Good 2	Excellent 3
Learning and problem solving	The student or candidate recognises his/her own strengths and areas for development, and assesses his/her own vocational development. Readjusts his/her conduct on the basis of feedback.	recognises the stage of his/her own vocational growth and development and sets objectives for his/her vocational development. Assesses his/her actions and readjusts his/her conduct on the basis of feedback.	recognises the stage of his/her own vocational growth and development and takes the responsibility for it. Assesses his/her actions realistically and readjusts his/her conduct on the basis of feedback.
Interaction and cooperation	acts responsibly in a multi-disciplinary group and copes with familiar interactive situations.	is an active and responsible member of a multi-disciplinary team and exploits his/her cooperation skills.	is an active and responsible member of a multi-disciplinary team, exploits his/her cooperation skills and brings forth his/her own views in order to advance the team's activities.

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Source: http://www.oph.fi/download/140436_vocational_qualification_in_social_and_healthcare_2010.pdf (Rehabilitation support)



Vocational Skill Demonstrations (VSD) as an assessment method

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- ◉ When skills and competences are being assessed, the assessment methods are to be chosen in a way that they measure if and at what level the skills requirements and objectives set are met
- ◉ Further, the methods have to suit to the study and learning methods used and support the student's learning process
- ◉ The students must have an opportunity to show her/his skills and competences in various ways and also assess her/his competences her-/himself
- ◉ In assessment of skills and competences, VSDs are used
- ◉ VSDs, which consist of performing work assignments relevant to the vocational skills requirements and world of work, are to be organised in the most authentic settings possible
- ◉ VSDs are designed, implemented and assessed in co-operation with representatives of the world of work, IVET provider and student

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Implementation at provider level - Case Stadin ammattiopisto : Helsinki Vocational College / Social and Health Care/ Practical Nurse (1/3)

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Some facts on Helsinki Vocational College (HVC):

- Vocational upper secondary institution which offers VET and CVET programmes for various groups and it is owned by the City of Helsinki
- Overall they have around 15,000 students
- Offers vocational curriculum-based upper secondary education and training in 56 study programmes in the sectors of Welfare, Service and Communication, Technology and Installation, and Technology and Logistics
- For the Vocational Qualification in the Social and Health Care/Practical Nurse, around 1,200 students are studying yearly in eight different study programmes.
- Network of around 4,000 suitable workplaces where the on-the-job-learning periods and vocational skills demonstrations are conducted (Welfare sector)

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Helsinki Vocational College / Social and Health Care/ Practical Nurse (2/3)

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- Provider specific curriculum is based on a learning outcomes approach (knowledge, skills, competences) which also steers the implementation of learning, teaching and assessment
 - HVC's guide for student assessment defines and describes how students are to demonstrate their skills and competences in VSDs including designing, implementing and assessing of demonstration in close co-operation with the workplaces
 - Provides guidelines for the provision of information to students, workplaces, workplace instructors, teachers and other relevant representatives of the world of work concerning the implementation of VSDs
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- The process for the recognition and validation of prior competences and skills is defined and described in the guide for student assessment



Case:

Helsinki Vocational College / Social and Health Care/ Practical Nurse (3/3)

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- ❑ Provides guidelines for making decisions on the grades and the renewal process of a demonstration
- ❑ The rectification process of assessment is described in the guide
- ❑ Guidelines for documentation of the assessment process and materials are made available
- ❑ Guidelines for providing certificates are provided
- ❑ For different purposes, various templates are also provided: implementation plan for the assessment, form for assessment of learning, descriptions of vocational skill demonstrations, form for assessment of vocational skills demonstration, form for request of rectification
- ❑ HCV has a local board for vocational skills demonstrations which approves and supervises the implementation of vocational skills demonstrations

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Challenges

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- ⦿ Most evident challenge is the language used in NQRs for formulating the assessment criteria
- ⦿ Currently it is seen very complex and difficult to interpret to the needs of vocational skills demonstrations
- ⦿ The language used creates some difficulties when trying to define actual work assignments which could then be used in assessing the vocational requirement according to the related criteria
- ⦿ Complexity of the description can also lead to difficulties concerning the assessment; if different actors have totally different views, first of all, which competence should be assessed and secondly based on which criteria, both the validity and reliability of the assessment are endangered.
- ⦿ For some students who have not so good command of Finnish language or are not so familiar to present her/his thoughts in written and orally, the use of the criteria might be just too overwhelming

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Challenges

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- ⦿ To separate the two types of assessment is not always so clear: the assessment of learning and the assessment of competences (vocational skills demonstrations)
- ⦿ The current way of implementing the vocational skills demonstrations requires quite a lot of paper work (e.g. completing different forms)
- ⦿ Huge amount of skills demonstrations => how to organise so that all parties could take part in the execution of the demonstration? Currently is not possible, creates problem to the quality of the assessment process
- ⦿ Motivation of the work place assessors to take part always with 100% commitment => danger that skills demonstrations are taken as technical exercises which decreases the quality of the demonstrations

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Strenghts

- ◉ The use of learning outcomes as defined in the NQR, together with real work life situations assures that the assessed competences are (more likely) those which are required both by the qualification and the world of work
- ◉ Guidelines (at macro and meso level) for the implementation of the demonstrations, secure that the planned activities are compatible to the vocational requirements and also to the real work assignments
- ◉ The use of defined targets of assessment and criteria of assessment by the NQR is ensuring validity of the vocational skills demonstrations
- ◉ The use of LO-based qualification requirements allows that both the qualification itself and the used certification method are to a high degree equivalent with the demands of the real world of work
- ◉ Guidance and support provided both for the students and for the workplaces seems to ensure the functionality of the method.

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Strenghts

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- ◉ The guidelines for the implementation of the skills demonstrations provide a coherent framework for the realization of the demonstration even if there are variations between the workplaces and/or demonstration environments
- ◉ Co-operation between the VET provider and the world of work in implementing skills demonstrations is seen as positive influence and enrichment to the way how the overall provision of VET is organised
- ◉ The way how the skills demonstrations and their quality assurance is implemented is seen as an effective and relevant tool to determine what a student can actually do and whether s/he is able to cope with the real work. Thus, this provides “evidence” or at least hints whether the person is capable to work in the field of social and health care
- ◉ Students prepare themselves for the future occupations, not for the school, and are also experiencing the used method as motivating if yet also demanding
- ◉ VSD as an “accepted job application”

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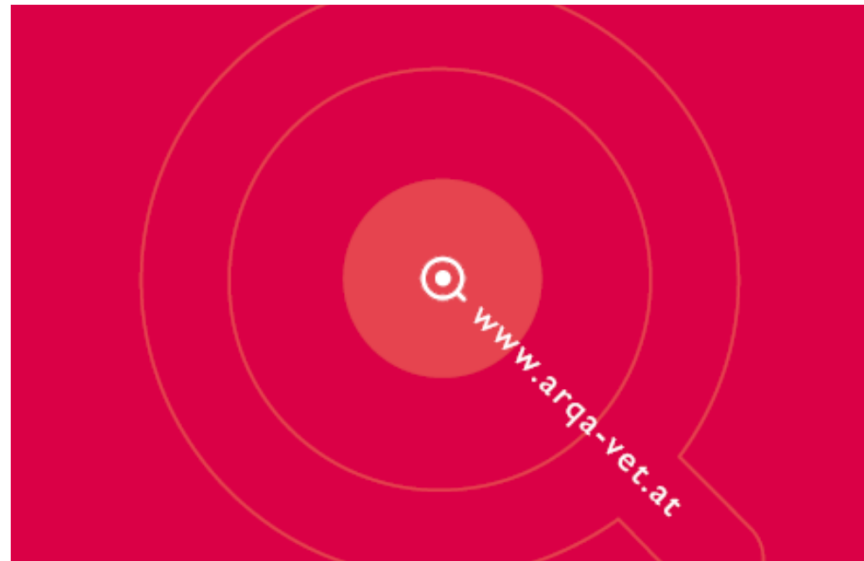
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Thank you!



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