

Key competences in vocational qualifications

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 FINLAND

Timeline

2019 Design

2020 Approved/Agreed

2021 Implementation

2022 Completed

ID number 36319

Background

Key competences are embedded into vocational skills requirements. In addition to VET, key competences can be learned through hobbies, working life and different everyday activities.

Economic competence and the skills for sustainable development are now more central to society than before. VET students need those skills in everyday life as well as in their work. Based on the results of an inquiry that targeted VET teachers/actors, there is a need to reinforce the study of sustainable development, financial literacy and economic competences.

The Government Programme 2019-23 states: 'We will reinforce the general academic studies in vocational education and training (basic skills, critical thinking and learning to learn). In particular, we will improve the opportunities for vocational education and training graduates to apply to, and successfully study in, higher education institutions. We will consider education in sustainable development and climate change, digital transformation, financial literacy and working life skills, and sexual and equality education as horizontal themes across the different levels of education.'

Since 2018, key competences are no longer addressed as a separate part of vocational competence. They have been integrated in all vocational skills requirements and assessment criteria. The key competences for lifelong learning are: digital and technological competence; mathematics and science competence; communication and interaction competence; competence for sustainable development; cultural competence; social and citizenship competence; entrepreneurial competence; competence to independently use and develop one's skills and knowledge.

Objectives

The objective is to reinforce learning of sustainable development, financial literacy and economic understanding in VET (qualification requirements).

Description

As a part of the larger and continuous updating of VET qualifications, which is caused by the

changes in working life, the Finnish National Agency for Education is preparing optional competence modules for sustainable development, financial literacy and economic understanding to be included in vocational upper secondary qualification requirements.

2019 Design

Preparing the optional competence modules for sustainable development, financial literacy and economic understanding for VET upper secondary qualifications started in 2019.

2020 Approved/Agreed

The optional competence modules for sustainable development, financial literacy and economic understanding for VET upper secondary qualifications were published at the end of March 2021.

2021 Implementation

The optional competence modules for sustainable development, financial literacy and economic understanding for VET upper secondary qualifications were published.

The optional competence modules for working in international environments for VET upper secondary qualifications were published.

The key competence requirements and the criteria for assessment of common modules in VET upper secondary qualifications were renewed.

2022 Completed

The new assessment criterion for common units of initial vocational qualifications was adopted in August 2022. The Finnish National Agency for Education organised various training events for teachers of common units, under the topic of student assessment and implementation of the new criterion.

Bodies responsible

- Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

Young people (15-29 years old)

Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)

Learners with migrant background, including refugees

Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers

Adult learners

Learners from other groups at risk of exclusion (minorities, people with fewer opportunities due to geographical location or social-economic disadvantaged position)

Education professionals

Teachers

Trainers

Thematic categories

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses

Using learning-outcome-based approaches and modularisation

Acquiring key competences

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[The optional provision of financial skills and sustainable development skills will be strengthened, EDUFI news](#)

[Competence descriptions for strengthening sustainable development and financial literacy, EDUFI portal](#)

Related policy developments

2025 Implementation

Sustainable VET and the green transition

Development programme for the sustainable development and green transition of VET is part of the wider development package for Climate and sustainability education. The programme supports implementation of 10 projects of sustainability practices in VET.

 FINLAND

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2019 Completed

Reforming the qualifications structure

As part of the 2018 reform the Ministry of Education confirmed in February 2017 the restructuring of vocational qualifications as of January 2019.

 FINLAND

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

2018 Completed

Reform of the vocational qualifications requirements

There was a need to strengthen the learning outcomes approach of vocational qualification requirements, the modular structure of qualifications, flexibility and individualisation in learning paths and validation of prior learning.

 FINLAND

Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

Subsystem

IVET CVET

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