

# Validation of prior learning for adults

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT**    **REGULATION/LEGISLATION**     FINLAND

## Timeline

**2015 Approved/Agreed**    **2016 Implementation**    **2017 Implementation**  
**2018 Completed**

ID number 28208

## Background

Finland was among the first European countries to have adopted standards and legislation in IVET and CVET for the validation of non-formal and informal learning (a competence-based qualification system used mainly for adults). Validation of prior learning is part of the legislation at all levels of education. Learners have the right to have their prior learning assessed/validated as part of their studies in VET and HE; this is mostly used in VET and adult learning. The competence-based qualifications (CBQs) in Finland embed validation of non-formal and informal learning as an integral part of the entire CVET qualifications system.

## Description

The competence-based qualifications in Finland embed validation of non-formal and informal learning as an integral part of the entire CVET qualifications system. The system has been in place since 1994 and was further strengthened in 2007 and in 2015 by the Decree on individualisation. The Decree defines principles of validation more precisely than before. The CBQ system is very popular among the adult population in Finland with 100 000 learners involved each year. In IVET, validation is integrated in the teaching and learning process as a first step to determine the individual learning path. The 2017 Act on vocational education states that each learner should have an individual competence development plan. The plan includes information on, for example, identification and recognition of prior learning, acquisition of missing skills, competence tests and other demonstration of skills, and the necessary guidance and support.

**2015 Approved/Agreed**

**2016 Implementation**

**2017 Implementation**

**2018 Completed**

## Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Culture

## Target group

### Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices  
Learners with migrant background, including refugees  
Adult learners

### Education professionals

Adult educators

### Entities providing VET

VET providers (all kinds)

## Thematic categories

### Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications

Learners' possibilities of accumulation, validation and recognition of learning outcomes acquired non-formally and informally

### Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Lifelong guidance

## Subsystem

CVET

## Further reading

[Validation of prior learning for adults, Study info portal \(in Finnish\)](#)

## Related policy developments

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**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.

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#### Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

#### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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**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.

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### Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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#### ... Cite as

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