

TTnet Workshop “Professionalisation of the VET-teacher for the Future” Helsinki 5 and 6 April 2001: Summary the Netherlands

The VET-teacher

The VET-teacher is a teacher in a sector of vocational training and adult education. This means that the teacher is appointed on an ROC: a region oriented centre for vocational training and adult education. The ROC's offers a lot of part-time and full time vocational courses on different levels.

The teacher is responsible for the coaching and training of the students in the area of vocational training and adult education. Mostly the teacher is also responsible for parts of the curriculum development, contact with the trainers in the workplace of the student and the preparations of the student for his examinations.

Although there are no formal qualifications needed anymore to exercise as a teacher in this area of education, the VET-teacher mostly is qualified by a teacher training on an institute of higher professional education. This means a second-degree qualification based on a 4-years course (part-time, full time or dual course). More and more there is a tendency to more differentiation in the profession of teachers and trainers (see 4: dual course)

A lot of the VET-teachers started their career in trade and industry or in the services sector, and they became a VET-teacher as a next step in their career.

Competencies of the VET-teacher:

On a national level there is a discussion in how to develop competencies of teachers and trainers in the field of education in relation with personal policy of schools and training institutes

There has been developed a model based on a vocational profile with main competencies as:

1. working on differentiated instruction
2. groupsmanagement
3. Educational flexibility
4. subject-matter knowledge
5. new-style thinking
6. stimulation to new-style thinking
7. co-operative attitude
8. planning
9. consultation of colleagues
10. external relations

These competencies can be seen as to be established on three levels: basic level, experienced level and excellent level. According to the needs of the institute of vocational training and adult education, a combination of competencies in different levels can be recognised in a team of teachers and trainers.

Competencies can be reached on a certain level with a wide range of activities, like training, learning in the workplace, e-learning, coaching and so on. The link with personal policy is in general the link between the organisational needs and the development of competencies.

The competencies are developed on the criterion of 'critical situations'. Those are situations in which the teacher/trainer who starts his/her career in the field of education is to be confronted with.

Based on these critical situations competencies are defined in two parts: the critical starting competencies and the desired (long term) competencies.

The idea is that starting competencies are necessary as a minimal set of competencies to make a successful start in a career in teaching and training; further on it is the basis of obtaining desired competencies

The desired competencies can be realised in the first years of working as a professional in the field of education and training. For an important parts these are the competencies that can be reached by post-initial training courses, learning in the workplace, internal training and so on. The concept set of competencies is developed in the field of vocational training (by the institutes of vocational training and adult education, together with the institutes of teacher training and national institutes for development of education, -curriculum an coaching).

A new development in the training of the VET-teacher: the dual teacher training course.

The last three years there have been a development in the design of teacher training courses. Traditionally we have full time- and part-time courses for teachers and trainers. New are dual courses for teachers and trainers.

For teachers and trainers in the field of vocational training and adult education (ROC's) there are dual courses in which the apprentice works at a school or training institute and attends a course during one or two days in a week. There is a strong link between learning and working and a strong contact between the learning place (teacher training institute) and the working place (school or training institute for vocational training and adult education)

The competencies in the dual course are divided in four levels: Educational assistant, instructor, junior teacher and teacher. These levels related to the educational professions in the ROC's.

The institutes develop the competencies for the different levels for teacher training in co-operation with the schools and institutes for vocational training and adult education.

Recently there has been a validation (legitimisation) of these competencies by the BVE-raad, a council of institutes in the field of vocational training.

Portfolio and assessments are the most important instruments to establish the different competencies.

The teaching career

One of the mechanisms of developing professionalisation during the teaching career can be seen in the personnel policy of the institutes for vocational training and adult education. Every teacher has the opportunity for professionalisation, and most of the VET-teachers are developing their competencies during their career in relation to the organisational needs. Another example is the dual course, in which for instance an educational assistant can obtain the competencies for instructor or teacher.

Internationalisation

Generally spoken there are two main developments linked to internationalisation that are taken place in the work and the professionalisation of Vet-teachers. In the first place the concept of competencies for teachers and trainers; this concept makes the comparison with other standard better possible than on the level of knowledge and skills.

In the second place the role of teacher training institutes and the role of the institutes for vocational training and adult education. The professionalisation the teacher is not only a responsibility of the institutes for teacher training, but also of other actors in the field of vocational training. In obtaining competencies for teachers the concept of a wide variety of learning environments, including e-learning is more and more accepted as a learning-concept and has a impact on the 'de-formalising' of teacher training concerning vocational education.