

Training of trainers: Qualification standards

1. Qualification standards on national level

For trainers in enterprises (in the framework of apprenticeship training) the vocational and pedagogical qualification standards are regulated by the Austrian law.

The vocational qualification must be at least on the level of an experienced skilled worker. In terms of law the trainer must

- have passed the final exam after an apprenticeship and at least a two years practical experience in the field of work or
- a graduation from a relevant school and at least two years practical experience in the field of work or
- at least five years practical experience in the field of work (which does not have to be a training practice).

For pedagogical qualification a rather simple and practice-oriented standard is set, for the reason that it should not be a too big hurdle for SMEs. A person who fulfils the above mentioned vocational standard has two possibilities to become an acknowledged trainer for apprenticeship training:

- a trainers exam before an exam's commission
- a recognised trainers course (at least 40 hours) with a final "expert talk" (instead of a formal examination)

For both the following minimum contents are legal standard:

1. Determination of the training targets and planning of the training in the enterprise

- a) analysis of the job profile regarding the planning of training measures
- b) specification of individual training targets
- c) choice and design of appropriate training measures
- d) time- and organisation-related structuring of the training activities in the company workflow

2. Preparation, realisation and supervision of the training measures

- a) training methodology (taking into consideration activating methods in particular)
- b) use of more staff in the training
- c) use of training tools
- d) success control

3. Trainer's attitude / behaviour

- a) tasks and responsibilities of the trainer
- b) personality development of the apprentice
- c) leadership and motivation
- d) communication skills

4. Training-relevant legal provision

The trend in Austria is rather to make the legal standards even easier. There are many political and economical reasons for this trend. But on the other hand there are – as we know - many reasons for a high quality standard in vocational training. So in consequence I think we must search for other than legal standards, which could for instance be based on a European recommendation from TTnet and CEDEFOP.

2. Qualification standards on European/transnational level

“ETQ – European Trainer Qualification” (D/96/1/01064/PI/I.1.1.a/FPC) is an already finished Leonardo-project with the following partners:

Contractor: Handwerkskammer zu Köln (Chamber of Handicrafts Cologne) - Germany

Partners from Belgium (German speaking community), Germany, France, Ireland (FAS) and UK (Scotland)

One of the products from this project is a curriculum for a European Trainer Qualification consisting of a national part (in each partner country) and an additional European module.

The European module covers the following contents:

1. Basics and legal framework of vocational education

- a) Vocational education in EU member states and its legal framework: similarities and differences
- b) Models of initial vocational education
- c) Types of trainers in enterprises
- d) Contractual relations in initial training
- e) Conditions for access to initial vocational training
- f) Responsible authorities for vocational education
- g) Exams in initial training

2. Live and work in Europe

- a) Targets of the European Union
- b) Rights of Union citizens
- c) Working in an other EU country
- d) Recognition of qualification in other EU countries
- e) Cultural differences
- f) Dealing with intercultural conflicts
- g) The European dimension of initial vocational training

3. Management of Change

- a) Global Trends (economic, technical and cultural changes)
- b) Changes in Enterprises (changes in leadership, attitudes of employees, organisation)
- c) Changes in field of activities of trainers
- d) Interaction between the areas of change
- e) Scope for activities and functions of the trainer according to the realisation of innovations, difficulties in the realisation of innovations, getting over these difficulties.

With the exception of Ireland it was not possible for the project partners to achieve national recognition for the ETQ curriculum. The actually achieved result is an interregional recognition from the involved partners.

To my personal opinion the curriculum (I only know the German curriculum) is too much knowledge oriented, too less action oriented and too less specific for trainers.