

WorldSkills and the World Reference Levels

Workshop on comparing VET qualifications

Cedefop

Thessaloniki, November 2019

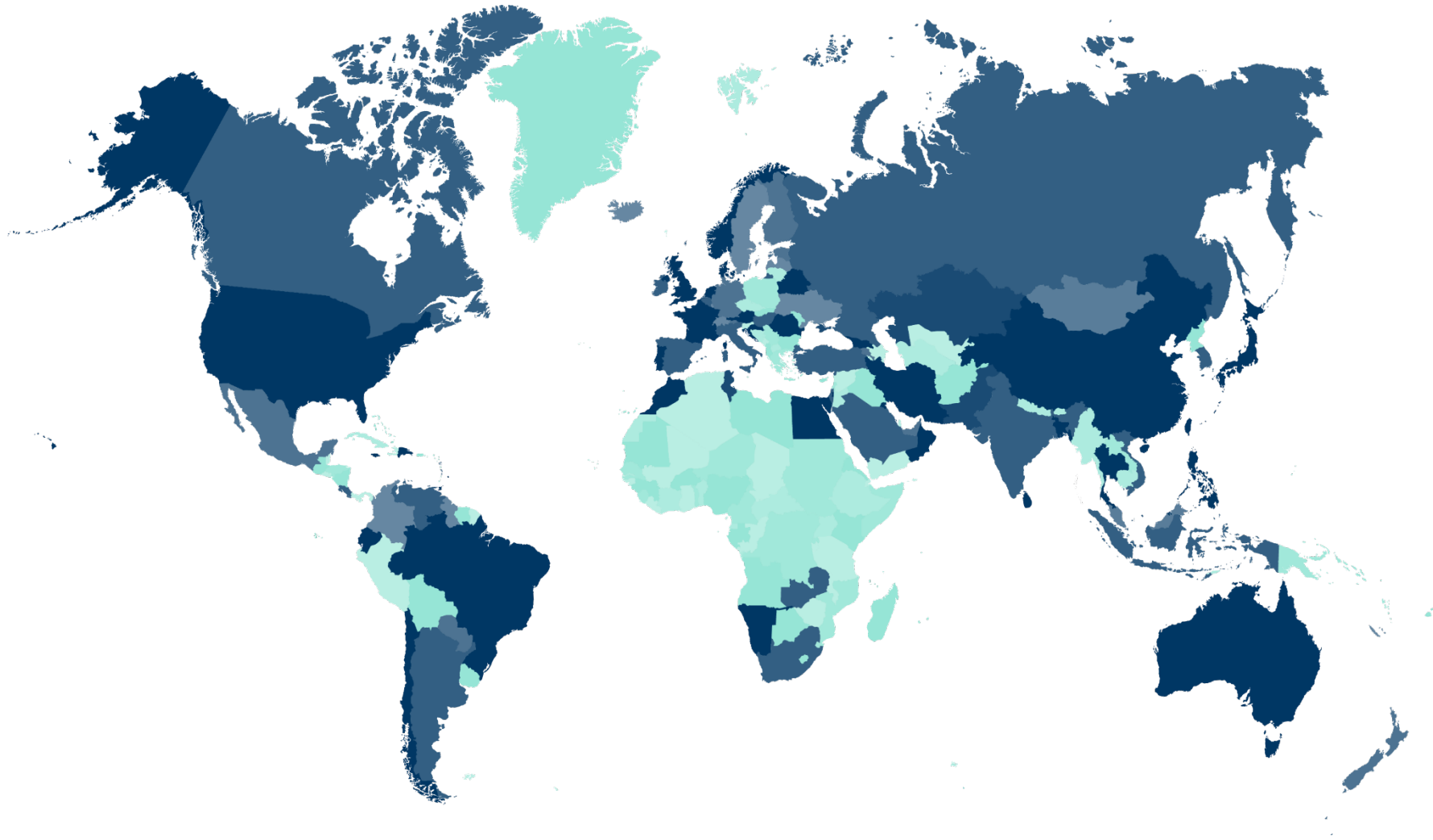
WorldSkills and the WRLs

This presentation

- explains how we approached the trial
- considers the results of the trial
- raises some thoughts about format, use, and value

But first, some context about WorldSkills.

Our Member network – 82 members



WorldSkills Vision 2025

Strategic Goals:

- Raise ambition and opportunity in VET for young people, employers, and societies
- Enhance the quality of VET provision through stronger connections to labour markets, employers, and economies
- Help build the organizational capability of WorldSkills and the global competitiveness of its Members through skills.

The global
hub for skills excellence
and development

What WorldSkills does, practically

At its core is the WorldSkills Competition: **a test of work performance in the round**

- designed for Members to **test, review and compare the outcomes of their VET systems.**

But how?

Currently through the WorldSkills Standards Specification:

- **a proxy for work mastery in a range of intermediate work role.**

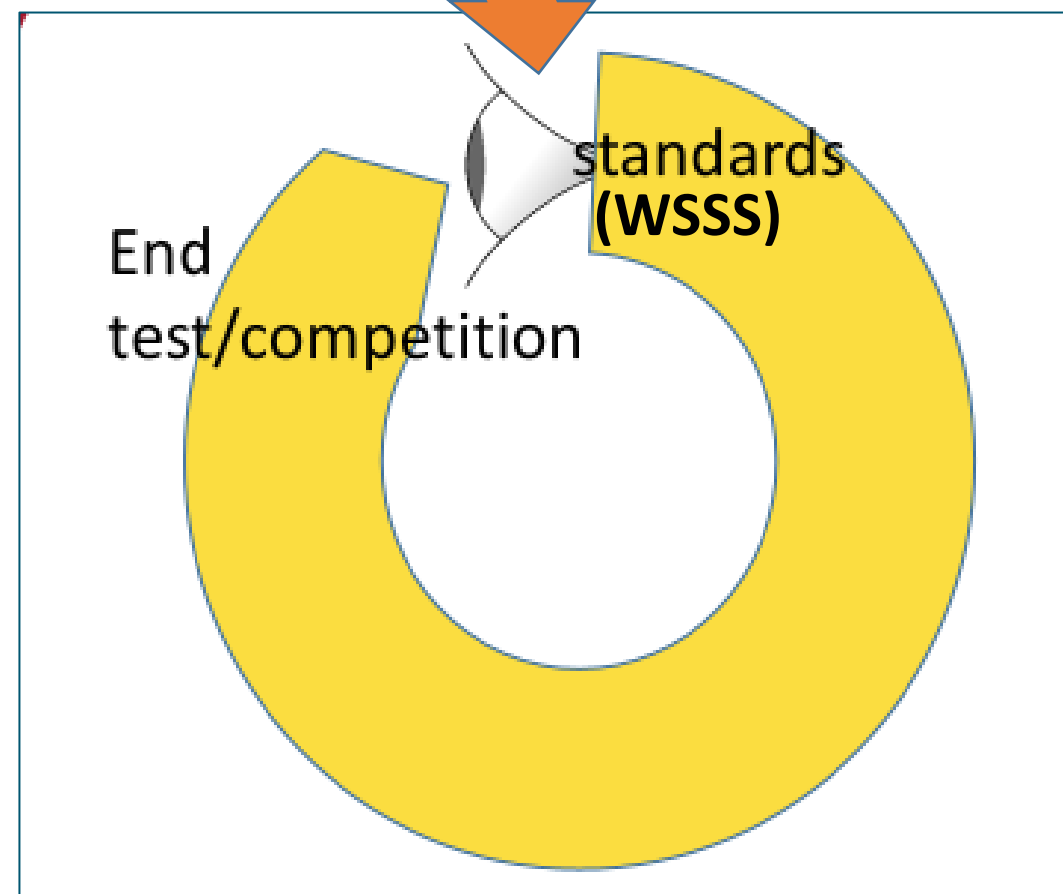
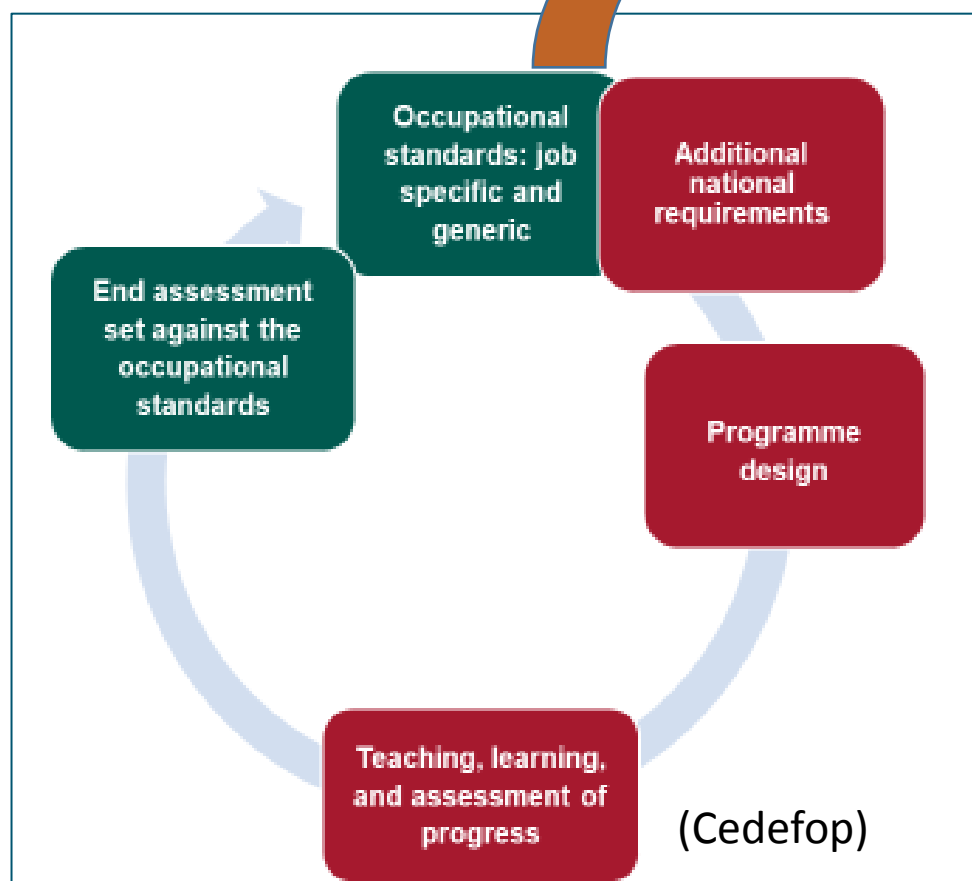
A strongly felt need by Members

Without an agreed global reference point, our Members find their own ways to reference their VET performance and outcomes to a common standard or process:

- EU projects
- Russia's Global Skills Passport
- Mapping to the WorldSkills Standards Specification
- Mapping WorldSkills Competition results to RQFs

And so on...

Pull not push: customised work role specifications drive the WSC



Common cause with the WRLs

The search for robustness, authenticity and value

The WorldSkills Standards are biennially

- updated through global consultations
- compared with ESCO2017 and o*net
- tested practically with Members, industry and wider audiences.

We know these Standards are recognizable, accessible and useful – but do they complete the feedback loop for work mastery, and help us differentiate between competence and excellence?

Even at this stage, WRLs appear to help us address this question.

The technical basis for comparison

WorldSkills biennially creates, standardises, and retains, much evidence of competition performance for 50+ competitions:

Standards specification

Marking scheme (100–250 assessment points)

Test project (15–22 hours of activity)

Information system with data driven quality control (marking analyses; analyses of process and results)

Continuing professional development

A closed and self-checking system



The trial in 2019: the choice of occupations /competitions

Looking for potential scalability, the choice of occupations /competitions aimed for as wide a range as possible:

Criteria:
sector
context
purpose
processes
outcomes
employees

Work roles:
Mechatronics
Cyber Security
Cabinetmaking
Fashion Technology
Health and Social Care
Hotel Reception
Web Design

Method

- Data was gathered for each competition at WSC2019
- Individual marks for each assessment (100–250 Aspects) were split into quartiles
- one competitor was selected at each quartile boundary (Q1 / 2, Q2 / 3 (median); Q3 / 4)
- The performance of each competitor was used for referencing
- The Q4 competitor was assumed to represent mastery.

OCCUPATIONS: HIGH PERFORMERS (Q4)

Web Devt Mechatronics Cabinetmaking CyberSecurity HotelReception HealthSocialCare Fashion

Key

8: D2

7: D1

6: C2

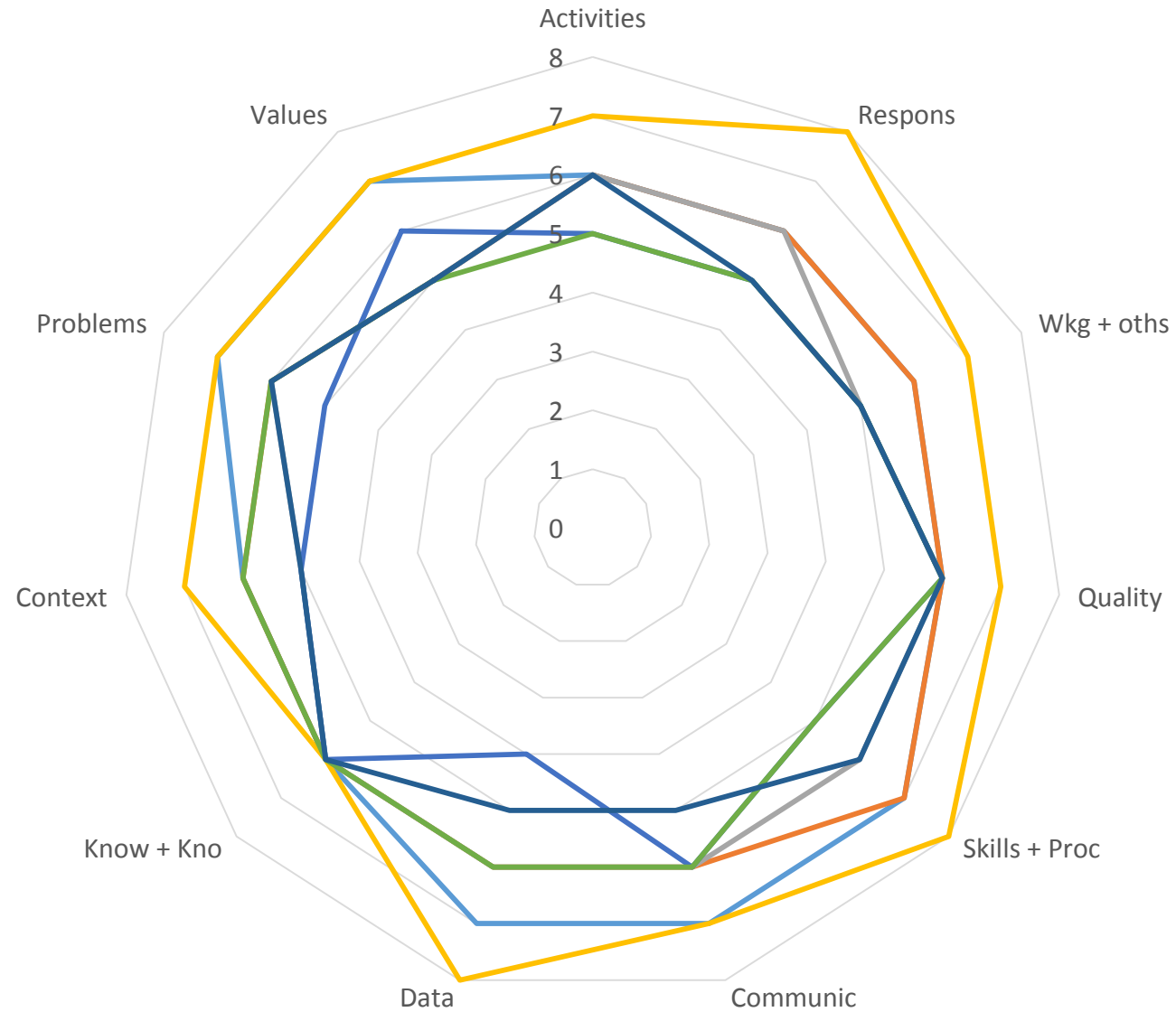
5: C1

4: B2

3: B1

2: A2

1: A1



Headline Q4 results

The referencing is based on young people aged 18–25, in work, with VET ranging from 3 to 7 years. This is reflected by

- The range of outcomes from C1 to D2
- Greatest convergence in knowledge and know-how (assumed to grow with experience)
- Close convergence with quality (competitors focus on this)
- Greatest divergence in data and responsibility.

The WRL tool appears to have broad validity for this group, and, by extension, for all Q4 competitors in each competition.

A cross-check on the results

The seven selected competitions relate to occupations classified by the ILO as

- **Professional** (Cyber Security)
- **Para-professional/senior technician** (Mechatronics, Web Design)
- **Crafts and trades** (Cabinetmaking, Fashion Technology)
- **Services** (Health and Social Care, Hotel Reception)

The profiles appear to fit this classification.

Competence to excellence for WRLs

Extract from table of actual marks. Yellow = below average mark

0.05	0.05	0.05
0.15	0.15	0.12
0.05	0.05	0.05
0.05	0.05	0.05
0.5	0.5	0.17
1.17	1.5	0.17
1	1	0.67
1	1.5	1.33
0.5	0.5	0.39
1	0	0
0.53	0	0
0.2	0	0
0.3	0.3	0
0.3	0.3	0.3
0.2	0.2	0
0.3	0.3	0
0.3	0.3	0.3
0.3	0.3	0.3
0.2	0.2	0
0.2	0.2	0.2
0.2	0.2	0.2
0.2	0.2	0.2
0.2	0.2	0.2
0.2	0.2	0.2
0.2	0.2	0.2
0.3	0.3	0.3
0.3	0.3	0.3

Depending on participants and competition standards, competitions produce a very large range in standard deviation.

The preferred range is 10 to 24. Outside this range, competitions differentiate too little, or too greatly, to give confidence.

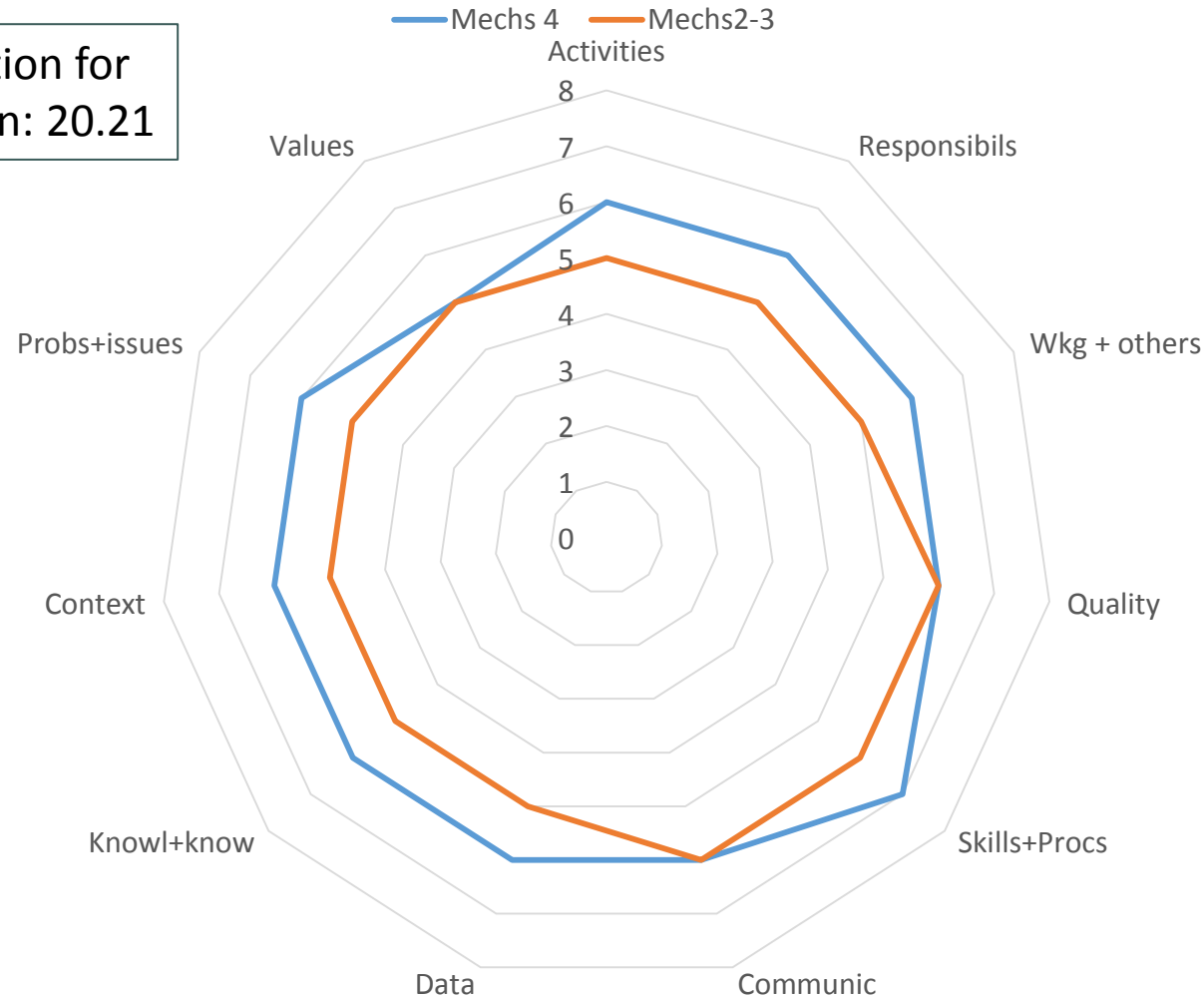
Within that range, there should be a link between quartiles and WRL stages.

Mechatronics: high and average performers

Standard deviation for
This competition: 20.21

Key

7: D1
6: C2
5: C1
4: B2
3: B1
2: A2
1: A1



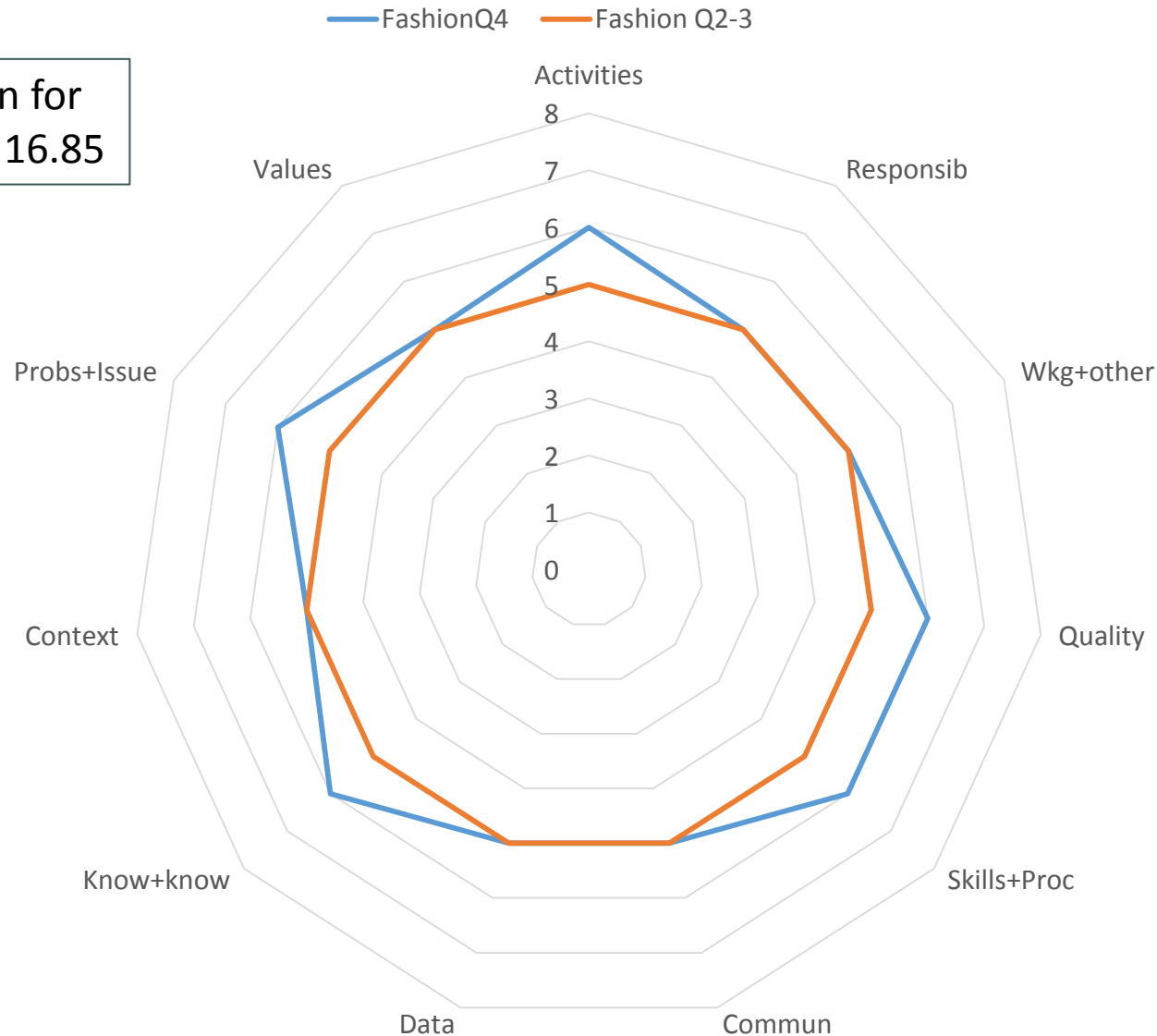
In a good
work place
the
exceptional
worker will
be working
beyond their
required
roles

Fashion Technology: high and average performers

Standard deviation for
This competition: 16.85

Key

7: D1
6: C2
5: C1
4: B2
3: B1
2: A2
1: A1



The “average” worker evenly fulfils their role. The exceptional worker is more competitive in the labour market

Substantive feedback

- The selected individuals for the trial are in work with continuing training of many types across the world
- No overall difficulty in using the “core material” (elements) with competition evidence
- A strong case for setting the tool within two explicit contexts, based upon the nature of the evidence to be used: qualifications evidence, or open/ work-related
- This would shorten, simplify and tailor the guidance to diverse users’ needs and contexts.

Substantive feedback (continued)

- Modern work patterns may separate the acquisition of increasing autonomy, responsibility and complexity, from traditional organizational structures. Is this fully recognized?
- Values were rather difficult to give credit to where they were a defining attribute, and critical at all levels
- The merger of training with quality seems rather “forced”, and narrowed the definition of quality.

Substantive feedback (continued)

- Qualifications relate to broad assumptions about the scope of work roles. Referencing to qualifications may lead to a more consistent profile than when referencing to work
- High achievers, or other circumstances, create diverse work roles, covering expected work, and other work at a “higher level”. Individual learning outcomes exceed the overall nature of the role
- This occurs with work–related evidence. Will this occur with graded qualifications?

The evidence box

Accurate recording of evidence for each element can be time-consuming and repetitive. Subject to the nature of the evidence:

- the (full) evidence might be appended to the report
- each evidence box simply references the relevant sections of that evidence.

Conclusion: a significant advance!

Subject to enhancements to meet expectations of on-line tools, the WRL appears **viable and very useful**, especially for those close to having qualified, and in “normal” employment.

For **global applicability and usefulness**, it may need to “speak more” to new forms of work, informal learning, and achievement, especially in its introduction and guidance.

WorldSkills can **automate WRL results**, based on samples, to provide average and higher performing competitors (700+) with WRL profiles; **disseminate the WRL; use it for CPD; and relate it to WSSS.**

Thank you

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