



FINNISH NATIONAL
BOARD OF EDUCATION

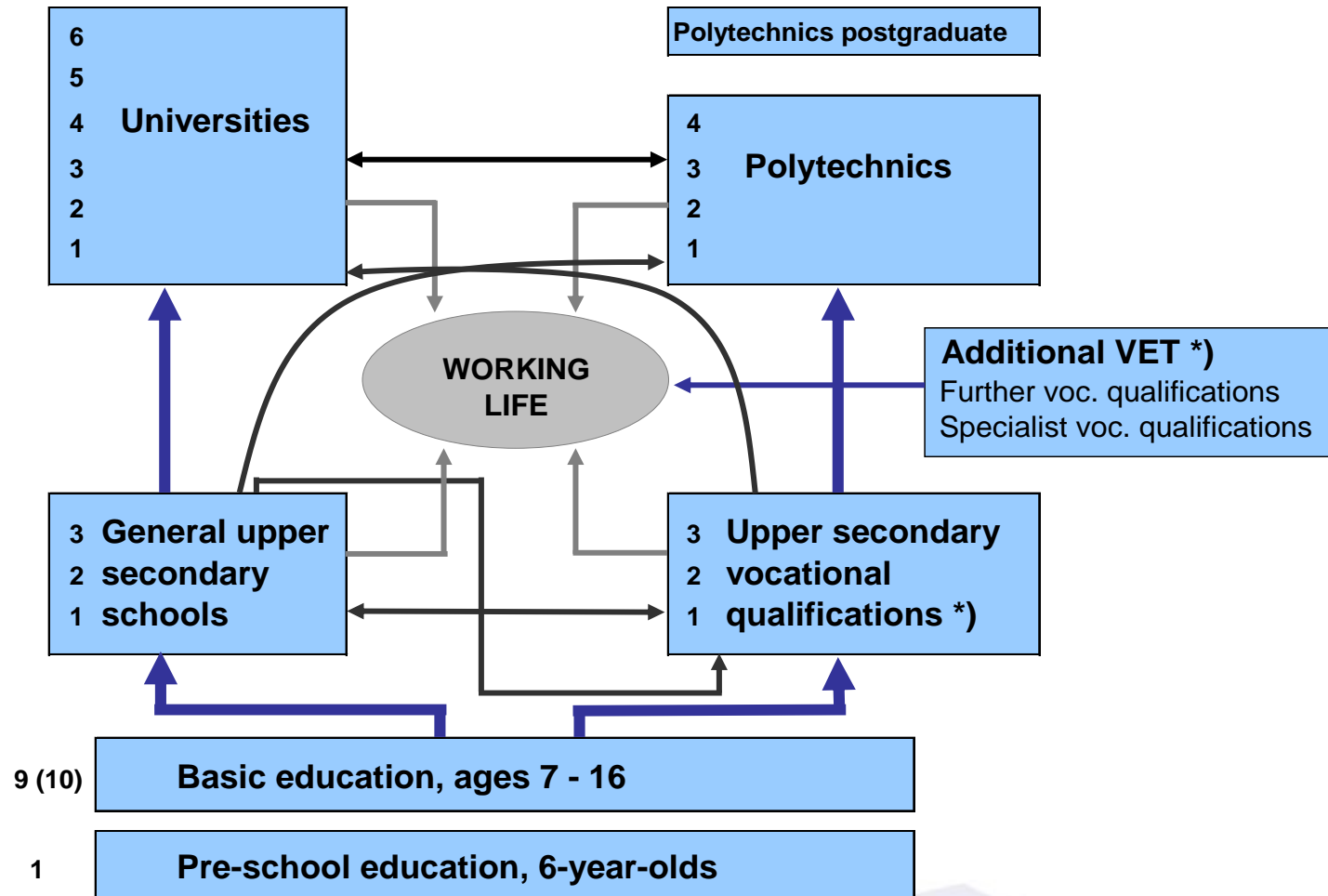
LEARNING OUTCOME APPROACHES IN VET CURRICULA IN FINLAND

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FINNISH EDUCATION SYSTEM



*) Also provided in the form of apprenticeship training



LONG-RUN EDUCATION POLICY IN FINLAND

From parallel to comprehensive basic school 1972 – 1982

Expanding of upper secondary education 1982 – 1995

Two channels at upper secondary level – general (3 years) and VET
(secondary/post-secondary(1-4 years)

From 700 different VET-study lines to 52 vocational qualifications
consisting of 113 study programs (1980's to 2000)

Establishment of polytechnic education 1995 –

**Curriculum reforms 1993-1994 (National framework curricula/ School
curricula)**

**Creation of competence-based qualifications for adults 1994 –
national qualification requirements – competence tests**

**All upper secondary VET-qualifications 3 years 1999-2001 and
Curriculum reform 1999-2001 (National core curricula/ education
providers curricula)**

**Reform of all upper secondary VET-qualifications 2008-2010
(National qualification requirements/ education providers
curricula)**



CURRICULUM POLICIES IN FINLAND/ OUTCOME-ORIENTED APPROACHES

Outcome-oriented approaches in curriculum policy have been true in the Finnish VET-education system nearly twenty years.

National core curricula in the vocational education and training and national requirements in the competence based qualification system at upper secondary level both initial and additional VET have been based on learning outcome-approach from 1993-1994.

Changes from goal/objective oriented approaches to outcome-orientation have taken quite a long time, because it has meant also rather deep change in the ways of thinking from input orientation to output orientation.

Also in the higher education there has been many development processes towards outcome-orientation and, outcome-oriented approaches are in use in some faculties but not everywhere.

The general Education is not yet very much outcome-oriented.

The proposal of the Finnish National Qualification Framework is based on learning outcomes at all levels.

Vet-curriculum reforms have been implemented years ago and we are all the time developing national core curricula and national requirements more and more systematic way forward



1. REASONS BEHIND THESE CURRICULUM REFORMS IN VET

Need to make the training system more effective and to improve quality of education and training

Demands from work life / decrease of labour force and so on

Need to express to learners and work life as clear and concrete as possible what a learner has be able to do after the education and certification and to get clear basis for assessment of learning outcomes

From subjects to work based and learning results based (study) units

Demand to direct education and training to learning outcomes not only to the content of education - out of detailed content oriented teaching

Learning environments from schools to workplaces and to virtual learning environments -different pathways for different students- different learning environments (schools, workplaces, net, studies abroad)

Need to move focus from teaching to learning - student-oriented ways to learn and students as owners of learning and assessing processes - socio-constructive approach to learning

Recognition and validation of prior learning and its implementation – learning outcomes more important than teaching hours or detailed content



STAKEHOLDERS, CHANGES IN CURRICULA AND ASSESSMENT

Stakeholders in these processes have been Min.Ed., FNBE, trade unions, enterprises, sector ministries, employers, education providers, teacher unions and student unions and the education committees of vocational education sectors

Curricula changes: from earlier goal/ subjects-oriented curricula to qualification requirements/ standards

Assessment changes: student self-assessment, assessment of competencies and LLL skills- not only knowledge, student proves mostly at workplaces his/her vocational skills and competencies required in vocational units/ assessed by teachers and representatives of employees and employers, more assessment of learning and teaching methods, positive assessment culture (support and guidance), national test guidelines and materials for skills demonstrations, national evaluation of learning results



EXPERIENCES

Main challenges have been - to renew ways of thinking from content, time and input orientation to learning outcomes and to change teaching and learning based on learning outcomes -new learning culture has been a challenge for education organisations, not only for teachers

Common aims and commitment at all levels - taking into account different stakeholders and interest conflicts

Educating all stakeholders and freedom for development but support and follow-up- networking between different levels of stakeholders

Development programmes and ESFprojects, development of e-learning, research and development projects, education programme for the teachers (to improve teachers' working life competencies) and training systems for the workplace instructors

Step by step - well-planned development processes

Not only changing laws and norms but processing together – hard work



2. CHARACTERISTICS/PRINCIPLES IN THESE OUTCOME-ORIENTED (CURRICULA) QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS - Upper secondary Vet

Learning outcomes are very central issue –they are basis for learning, teaching and assessment

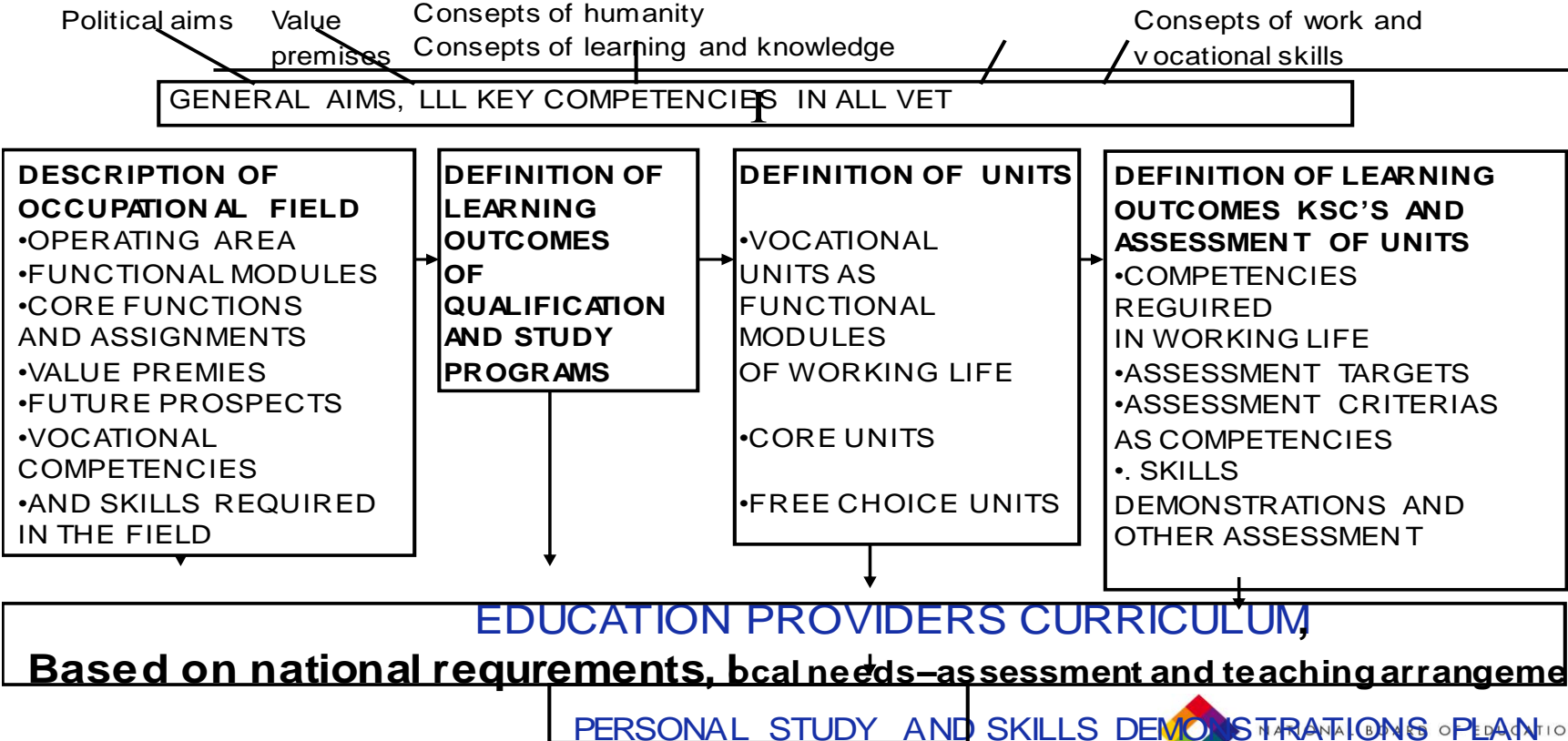
The competencies of the whole qualifications are expressed as learning outcomes.

Vocational qualifications consist of units, which are composed on the basis of functions in working life and named according to activities at working life.

Units are nationally decided and defined by the Finnish National Board of Education in the national qualification requirements.



EARLIER NATIONAL CORE CURRICULUM





CHARACTERISTICS/PRINCIPLES IN THESE OUTCOME-ORIENTED (CURRICULA) QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS - Upper secondary Vet

The learning outcomes (KSC's) of the units of qualifications, as well as assessment targets and assessment criteria of units has been defined as learning outcomes and guidelines for skills demonstrations and other assessment are based on learning outcomes.

Theory and practice (KSC's) are expressed, studied and assessed together within the same unit and there is a common one mark in the certificate.

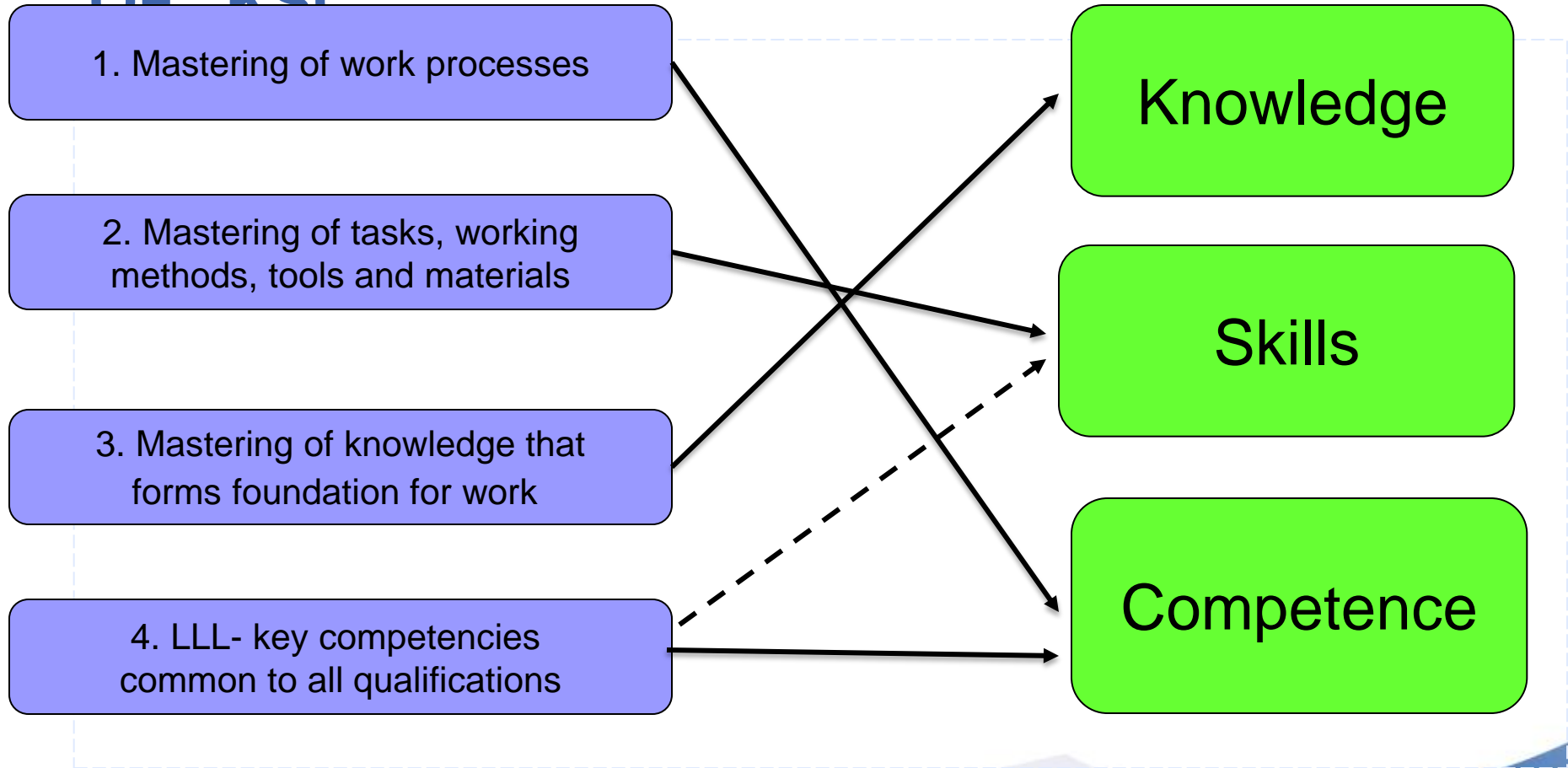
Targets of assessment are common in all VET qualifications

Learning outcomes and assessment criteria are expressed as activities of the occupational area and activities in work.

National requirements of qualifications/units consist expected learning outcomes and assessment criteria of each unit are at three levels (satisfactory, good, excellent).



FINNISH TARGETS OF ASSESSMENTS VS LEARNING OUTCOMES DESCRIBED IN TERMS OF "KSC"





CHARACTERISTICS/PRINCIPLES IN THESE OUTCOME-ORIENTED (CURRICULA) QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS - Competence-based qualification system

Qualifications are independent of way how the vocational skills have been acquired

The student makes her/his vocational qualification by competence tests in real working life situations.

National requirements for qualification: tripartite representatives (employers, employees and educators) have defined the requirements.

KSC's written in requirements shall be demonstrated in competence tests. The competence test is assessed by tripartite evaluators: representatives of employers, employees and educators

The responsibility for the organisation and supervision of the competence tests rests with Qualification Committees(trade unions, employers and teachers), who give certificates



3. BENEFITS AND SUCCESS OF THESE REFORMS

Learners know better than earlier what they have to learn to do in work life

Learners are able to participate to plan their studies and to assess their learning

Follow - up of every reform/ implementation process (research and evaluation) and national evaluation of learning results

Success of these reforms – processes take time and there are still teachers who have not change their instruction

Most of teachers, ed. providers, work life – changes have been necessary



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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN FINLAND

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For education and learning





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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

White snow and blue moments

