

3rd International Workshop on Curriculum Innovation and Reform: "Changing Assessment to improve learning outcomes"

Case study Greece
Sector Tourism

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Why Greece

- Because tourism in Greece is one of the most important industries
- Tourism education in Greece has a 55 years of existence
- There is a dual system approach to assessment

Tourism in Greece

- In terms of tourism arrivals, Greece ranks among the top 20 destinations in the world.
- Tourism accounts for 18% of Greece's GDP,
- Employs 900.000 people (SETE, 2010)
- Currently, more than 9,000 hotels operate in Greece.
- From 14.2 million international visitors in 2004, more than 17 million people visited Greece in 2008, and it is expected that in a few years this number will reach 20 million, almost twice the country's population.



Source: GNT0 and NSS of Greece

Vocational Education in Greece

- The Greek vocational education system is centralised and **objectives oriented**
- Learning outcomes have not been **implemented** yet, but the **NQF is completed as a law**
- **Professional profiles called Job Profiles** exist for each specialisation in vocational training
- The existing certified **Job Profiles** in Greece describe the vocational qualifications in terms of knowledge, skills and competences. The assessment methodology for IVET and continuing VET is developed on this basis
- According to the International Standard Classification for Education (ISCED), the system of initial vocational training is placed at ISCED levels 3 and 4.

Tourism Education in Greece

Case study institutions

PUBLIC IEK (OTEK)

The School of Tourism Professions operates eight Training Centers for Technical Vocational Studies in 8 cities

2 years of study:

First year (Semester A + B) + workplace placement

Second year (Semester A + B) + workplace placement

PRIVATE IEK (XINI)

- 2 years of study (Semester A+B)
- Workplace placement at the end of the 2 years (compulsory if students want to be certified at the end)

Reception and Hospitality Specialist (ISCED L4)



Job specific competences

- Hotel marketing
- Reception organisation and operation
- Hotel organisation and operation
- Environmental management of hotel enterprises

Generic competences

- Computer skills
- Hotel hygiene and security regulations
- English tourism terminology
- German

Source: EOPP (2010)

Tourist office assistant L4



Job specific competences

- Tourism geography
- Organisation and operation of tourist agencies
- Tourist law
- Use of travel guides
- Reservation systems
- Package tour planning and promotion
- Client services / sales techniques

Generic competences

- Computer skills
- English tourism terminology
- Public relations

Source: EOPP (2010)

Innovation in teaching methods

- Although the **learning outcomes** concept has been recently introduced in the new law by the Ministry of Education, Life long learning and Religious Affairs this is not yet implemented in vocational training.
- The curriculum is **competence-based** and existing **Job Profiles** provide the descriptions of the knowledge, skills and competences required to acquire in IVET.
- The teaching material is prepared based on the EOPP guidelines that also gear the assessment methods designed for the modules.
- The teaching is in the form of a lecture where the students listen to what the teachers present in the classroom; in addition they teach the students in a **real context within the institution premises where they also have their practicals.**

Learning environment: Classroom-based

IN THE CLASSROOM

- The students are prepared during the academic session based on the guidelines provided by the respective **Job Profile** as well as based on what their profession requires.
- They work using either teachers' notes or textbooks provided by the respective organisation.

ASSESSMENT

- **Formative assessment:** takes place during the academic year with interaction in classroom i.e. with oral presentations that do not count towards the final mark.
- **Summative assessment:** Tests during the semester and written exams at the end of the semester + Oral examination on practicals

Learning environment: School-based

PRACTICALS

- Facilities that resemble the **real context** are offered i.e. a hotel reception where the students do their practical training by playing the related **roles**, by applying the knowledge they gained in class and by using the related software for check in, reservations etc.
- The teachers expressed the view that these practical classes are offered by people who **already work in the industry** and are **qualified trainers**

ASSESSMENT

- **Formative assessment:** on the job training and assessment during the academic year during their practicals
- **Summative assessment:** Oral and written examination at the end of the semester and the year

OTEK Reception



Learning environment: workplace placement

- The students undertake a **workplace placement** during the summer period
- This placement is organised and monitored by OTEK.
- If the placement is successful the students may progress to their second year of studies or complete their studies and proceed with their time-based certificate.

ASSESSMENT

- The **assessment is based on student performance at real job tasks**, thus **on-the-job training** takes place.
- The employers and the students' supervisors do the assessment **once a month**.
- Additionally, in some cases the students are required to keep a **log** in which they record their experiences from work.

ASSESSMENT FOR CERTIFICATION

- At the end of the 2 years: 3 hours **written exams by EOPP**
- The **Examination Committee**: experts in the field, testing and timing the exam
- If the students pass the exam they are eligible to take the **oral examination on competences on practicals (with 2-3 assessors) on a real work test or with a relevant project.**

What is assessed?

These questions include general topics as well as more specialised relevant to the job profile

EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS

Receptionist

General knowledge

- Provide a definition of the term 'hotel'

Specialist knowledge

- Which are the methods to measure customer satisfaction?
- Provide reasons for overbooking in hotels.

Travel agency assistant

General knowledge

- Explain the term 'sustainable tourism'

Specialist knowledge

- How many and which are the ways to pay for an airline ticket?
- In which cases do we apply the control procedure Circle Trip Minimum (CTM)?

Findings from interviews



- Teachers use more innovative teaching methods during the practical training of students (i.e. role playing, projects, scenario based exercises etc.)
- The available financial resources and infrastructure are **limited**, **however** both public and private schools have **facilities for practical training** (e.g. reception, kitchen, restaurant) *to apply relevant knowledge gained in classroom and to prepare students for the workplace.*
- **Employers** recommend that students should be assessed more on their communication skills with oral presentations as well as case studies that reflect real situations in order to develop critical thinking.

Benefits for the learner

- The students are assessed on knowledge, skills and competences relevant to their profession.
- Employers believe that the quality of students from vocational schools varies depending on the institution and how well is organized. Nevertheless they claim that usually those who have studied at a vocational school **with emphasis on practical training** are those who have more experiences, more practical knowledge and skills required to work in the sector.

Some conclusions on the case study in tourism in Greece

- Learning outcomes have been introduced in the NQF but not in curriculum reform yet, although tourism curricula is competence-based.
- Assessment is designed based on competences for the certification. Both knowledge and skills are assessed with examination, theory and practice, both last 3 hours and 3 assessors are involved in the latter.
- Some innovation is evident mainly from motivated teaching staff who implement innovative teaching strategies or use labs and practical training or combine teaching with visits at tourism organisations
- The procedures are followed as instructed by the Certification Examination Committee and the social partners to ensure quality assurance.