

Parallel session C

Developing high quality validation methodologies

Using validation methodologies fit for purpose

Validation methodologies seek to make visible the outcomes of individual learning experiences, irrespective of where or when these took place. Methodologies differ depending on the purpose of validation, notably if they are summative (aiming at certification) or formative (supporting learning).

Validation methodologies face challenges related to the validity, reliability, objectivity, scalability and cost of the methodologies. For every validation approach developed and implemented there will be the need for finding a balance across these elements.

- Strong validity is a key requirement for any methodology. The process must be able to capture the experiences of the individual in an appropriate way. Depending on the complexity of the experiences, dialogue-based methodologies will often be required.
- Strong reliability is important for the credibility of the validation outcomes. It must be possible to document that the validation is fair and can be repeated in a trusted way. Methodological standardization will often be applied to ensure reliability.
- The cost of validation is a key concern and will influence the choice of methodology. ICT-based systems have traditionally been hampered by limited validity, this may however be changing along with developments of software and technologies. Further, innovation in ICT capabilities create possibilities for the identification, documentation and assessment of learning outcomes that need to be explored.
- All validation must refer to some form of reference point or standard. The design of standards will, to a large extent, define the focus and orientation of the validation process. There is the need for a stronger focus on the design of standards and reference points, linking directly to the challenges of writing and applying learning outcomes.

Objectives of the parallel session

The parallel session will explore some of the key challenging aspects of validation methodologies. The objective is to gather information on the way validation methodologies differ and/or are similar to traditional assessment methods and in what way validation can build more robust and trustworthy methods for identification, documentation and assessment of learning outcomes. The purpose is to integrate more examples and practical information in the Guidelines regarding the use of different methodologies.

This theme will be addressed by the following sessions:

1. C.1: Methodologies to measure transversal skills
2. C.2: ICT-based approaches for tailoring validation tools to the individual
3. C.3: Scalability and cost of validation

Orienting question

- In what way can different methodologies balance validity, reliability, and cost?
- In what way can standards from different contexts be linked? Which are the main lessons regarding

the design of standards and reference points in relation to:

- Qualifications standards/curricula
- Company and sector-based standards
- Which are the key messages regarding validation methodologies and validation standards to be included in the European Guidelines?

Reading:

Note EQF AG – 55-5: Developing high quality validation methodologies