

## Accreditation of Prior Learning in Higher Education – General Findings of the German Initiative ANKOM and Next Steps

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### Topics:

- (1) German Federal Initiative  
“Accreditation of Certificated Prior Learning for Academic Studies”  
(ANKOM) - Structure
- (2) General Findings of ANKOM (2009)
- (3) Next Steps

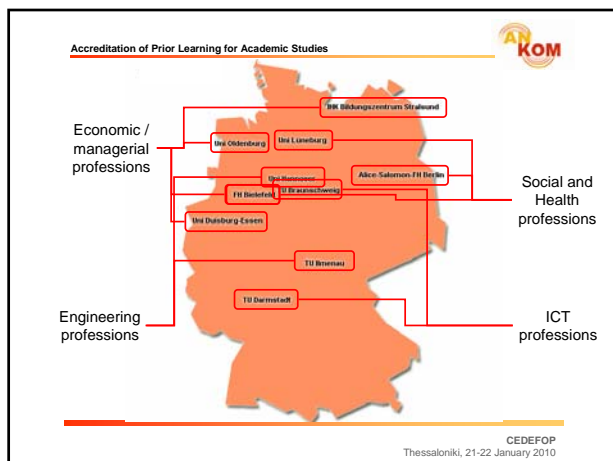
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### Objectives of the Initiative:

- Enhance individual potentials and competencies by further education at academic level, taking prior learning into account
- Develop and implement procedures to identify equivalent certificated prior learning outcomes from VET and accredit them for higher education
- Thus improve transition from VET to HE
- Make the German education system more permeable
- Foster barrier-free lifelong learning

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## Challenges:

- Understand each other (VET & HE)
- Speak the same language
- Remove mental barriers
- Come to a shared understanding
- Make compromises
- Find and agree on cross-sectoral (VET & HE) solutions
- Meet the requirements of an assessment of equivalence to be appropriate, reliable, valid and transparent, and
- Set up practical accreditation procedures

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### A) Describing Learning Outcomes: Approaches used

- Qualifications Frameworks, such as EQF, National QF, QF for German Higher Education, Sectoral GQF: e.g. Social Work of HE
- Taxonomy of Educational Objectives by Bloom, Anderson & Krathwohl, Moon, Dreyfus & Dreyfus, own development
- Work task based approach
- Competence based approach

### B) Methodology of Verification of Equivalence:

- Based on a decision by one or more experts concerning
  - \* content and
  - \* level of learning outcome of VET
- Underpinned by evidence in a different complexity concerning
  - \* variety of experts involved and
  - \* kinds of instruments used
- Types of verification approaches
  - \* weakly structured,
  - \* reasonably structured, and
  - \* strongly structured

### Types of Equivalence Verification Methodology


Type	Experts involved	Instruments used to support decision making
<b>weakly structured</b>	HE teacher responsible for the module concerned	rather unstructured assessment of documents (portfolio)
<b>reasonably structured</b>	more than one HE teacher involved, and expert(s) from VET	checklist, guideline with a list of criteria to assess documents, questionnaires (VET participants, HE students), discussion of results
<b>strongly structured</b>	more than one HE teacher involved, also from other HEI and, expert(s) from VET	psychometric measurement procedure

### Module Level Indicator (MLI) - a strongly structured assessment tool

Aims of the tool	Source / Basics	Characteristics
elaborate description of a module regarding multiple competence dimensions	EQF	8 Scales (so far)
test theoretical constructed reliable scales	QF for German HE degrees	applicable from different perspectives:
applicable to different kinds of	EHEA-Framework	• teachers
• modules	Expert interviews	• experts
• disciplines / domains		• VET graduate, HE student
• teaching and assessment		each scale with 5-10 items
validity of a construct of an entire score as to EQF classification		items referring to learning outcomes proved

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Scales of the MLI and Examples of Items	
Module Level Indicator	
<b>Knowledge</b>	
Scope and Actuality	„The module contains at least some in-depth knowledge on the actual state of research within the domain.“
Critical appreciation	„The module provides an awareness for the limits of the knowledge acquired.“
Inter-disciplinarity	„The module contains interdisciplinary topics, requiring knowledge from different domains.“
<b>Skills</b>	
Problem Solving Skills	„The learning objectives or examination questions require comprehensive cognitive or practical skills.“
Relation to Practice	„The module provides knowledge with immediate practical usability.“
<b>Competence</b>	
Autonomy	„The module contains learning objectives implying non-predictable changes.“
Communication	„The Learners have demonstrated their ability to communicate their understanding of the domain to other learners.“
Awareness of ethical and social issues	„When solving problems, the learners take into account interests of others and show solidarity with people affected by the solutions.“

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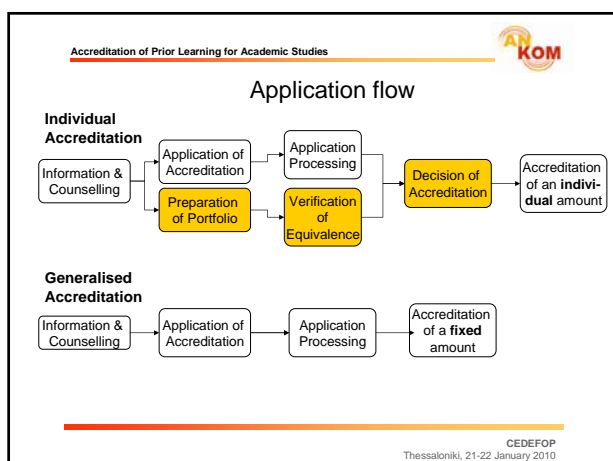


## C) Types of Accreditation

	Individual level	Certificate level	Both levels added
Type of learning	non-formal, informal <b>and/or</b> formal learning (all types)	formal (certificated) learning only	non-formal, informal <b>and</b> formal learning (all types)
Application area	all areas, as the individual person is addressed	restricted to the specific VET certificate	all areas
Number of credits	not fixed, as dependent on the individual person	fixed, as independent of the individual person	maximum amount
Credits transferable	not possible, as dependent on the individual person	possible, as fixed and dependent on the certificate	fixed number of credits only

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- Accreditation of Prior Learning for Academic Studies
- ### Conclusions
- There is equivalence of VET and HE regarding learning outcome (proof of concept).
  - There are different approaches to address recognition/accreditation of prior learning: at individual and certificate level, and in combination.
  - So far there is little practical experience with accreditation, and therefore support for HE institutions (and others) interested is needed.
  - Without adequate study programmes for persons gainfully employed, no real demand for recognition of prior learning, and thus no breakthrough in this matter (co-operation of stakeholders).



### (3) Next Steps (July 2009 – June 2011)

#### Objectives (inter alia):

- To distribute the results of the ANKOM initiative to individuals, HEI, provider of VET, politics/ministries and scientific community
- To support existing (educational) networks of HEI, companies and VET providers and complement them by APL and permeability and set up new study programmes for qualified staff (human resource development)
- To generate a national network on APL, HRD and study programmes

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#### Activities

- To identify potential (educational) networks of HEIs and companies, and VET providers
- To inform and give advice to these networks on APL (ANKOM) and study programmes for employees (HRD)
- To join them up with other experts and networks/network managements where appropriate

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**Thank You For Your Attention!**



[http://ankom.his.de/initiative/index\\_en.php](http://ankom.his.de/initiative/index_en.php)

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