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# COUNTRY COMPARISON REPORT

**VARE project**  
Vocational Assessor Requirements in Europe



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## 1 Introduction

The project "Vocational Assessor Requirements in Europe" (VARE, 2015 - 2017) aimed to identify the requirements for assessment and assessors in vocational training programmes across the European Union to support mobility and mobility partnerships in VET (vocational education and training).

### 1.1 *Rationale of the VARE project*

Strong quality assurance in VET assessment is essential for public trust in its robustness and the competence of those individuals entering a profession. However, there is evidence that the recognition of learning and skills across boundaries is hampered by national (regional or system level) requirements for vocational assessment e.g. who may assess, the required qualification, experience and training of assessors, measures to standardise and quality assure VET. The ECVET Evaluation 2014<sup>1</sup> found that the lack of common quality assessment arrangements is the 'main obstacle to transfer' learning outcomes.

A lack of transparency and understanding of system-level VET assessment requirements hinders trust and the development of strong mobility partnerships. In particular, it hinders the recognition of learning and skills gained and assessed during such learner mobility projects. Up until now, there has been little transnational research focussing on who may assess and which competences assessors are required to possess and how these differ across European countries<sup>2</sup>.

The VARE project sought to identify and describe the requirements imposed by various VET systems in terms of summative assessment and those conducting summative assessment. It is anticipated that increased understanding of the qualification and experience required of assessors, the quality assurance of assessment and the regulation of assessment; will increase confidence and trust in the rigour of VET assessment. This will in turn facilitate increased implementation of ECVET and assist competent bodies to validate and recognise vocational achievement across national boundaries.

The VARE project focuses on initial (IVET) qualifications at EQF levels 3 and 4. This limitation of the scope has two principal motivations: first, VET qualifications at these levels seem to be most relevant in terms of cross-border VET learner mobility. Second, due to the large number of countries covered, a limitation of the scope was necessary in order to keep data collection and comparison manageable. The majority of IVET qualifications are linked to EQF levels 3 and 4, although in some cases, they can also be found at EQF levels 2 and 5.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/ecvet-implementation-evaluation-2014\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/ecvet-implementation-evaluation-2014_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> VARE covers 27 EU countries (EU-28 minus Cyprus) plus Norway.

The project was led by UK NARIC, in partnership with 3s research laboratory (Austria), Cooperation fund Foundation (Poland), Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for vocational education and training – CPI (Slovenia), and VTCT (UK).

## 1.2 About this report

This comparative report aims to increase transparency of assessment and assessor requirements in initial vocational education and training (IVET). It aims to shed light on the roles and competences of people who carry out assessment, in order to develop trust between education and training systems across European countries, which in turn would help to underpin the transnational recognition of qualifications in general, and the implementation of ECVET for transnational mobility in particular.

The aim of this comparative report is thus to outline the various requirements for assessment in initial vocational education and training across 28 European countries, in order to support mobility in IVET:

- *How* is knowledge and learner competence assessed?
- *When* does assessment take place? Is it continuous, modular or end-point assessment?
- *Who* assesses? Is the assessment carried out by teachers, trainers or (external) examination committees / boards?
- Who sets the *requirements* for assessment? *What* is the role of governmental actors (ministries, federal / public agencies) and sector representations (e.g. social partners, employer associations)?

The report first gives an overview of the ECVET<sup>3</sup> context, which built the basis for the initiation of this project, and then continues to describing the different IVET pathways. In order to limit the scope of the project, the research focused on IVET qualifications situated at EQF levels 3 and 4. The majority of IVET qualifications are linked to these two levels, and they are most relevant for cross-country VET learner mobility.

There is a wide variety of different initial VET qualifications and programmes at EQF levels 3 and 4 across countries. For reasons of better structuring, we divided them into two broad groups: *predominantly school-based* and *predominantly work-based qualifications/programmes*. This distinction is arguably a pragmatic approach and not always clear-cut, as many programmes combine school-based and work-based learning. Also, in several cases, learners can obtain a certain VET qualification either through a school-based or a work-based learning pathway. The pragmatic approach used here thus refers to pathways where more than 50 % of the learning (measured in hours present in either the classroom or the workplace) takes place in classrooms as predominantly

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<sup>3</sup> ECVET is the European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training.

school-based, and those where more than 50 % of learning takes place at the workplace as predominantly work-based.

Chapter 5 explores the contexts and types of assessment, which are divided into continuous, modular and end-point (final) summative assessment – again following a division along work-based and school-based elements of each pathway.

The final chapter focuses on the actors involved in setting the requirements for assessment and on the assessors themselves. It also highlights any differences observed between predominantly school-based and predominantly work-based VET pathways. This chapter shows the different roles in assessment, as well as differences in the related regulatory requirements.

### *1.3 Summary of key findings*

This research confirmed the considerable variation in VET assessment requirements across Europe that was indicated in the DECVIP project<sup>4</sup>, which set the scene for the implementation of the VARE project (see box below). In arranging transnational learner mobility projects there is thus a need to ensure at an early stage, by choosing a partner and developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), that summative assessment of learning outcomes in the proposed host country will meet the legal and regulatory requirements for accreditation in the learners' home country. Where summative assessment is required to take the form of a final examination, panel or committee which includes external representation (e.g. employer representation) this can pose a major obstacle to accreditation of assessment taking place in a host country. Thus, the use of ECVET and recognition of the learner's achievement on transnational placements will be limited; and if this is an aim of the placement, these countries may not be viable partners. Where summative assessment evidence is gathered on a more continuous basis there is more scope for the use of ECVET and the recognition/validation of learning outcomes.

Current practice shows that many transnational placements try to circumvent the issue of 'host country assessment' by either assessing the learning outcomes achieved by the learner during mobility back at the home institution, or by applying 'shared assessment' approaches between the host/company and the sending institution.

Many countries have requirements for assessors in terms of the skills and knowledge which they are assessing: e.g. qualifications, industry experience and Continuous Professional Development (CPD). If these are recognised at an early stage, arrangements can be made to select appropriate

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.decvip.eu/>

assessors to participate in the project in the host country and/or appropriate validation processes may be put in place.

Almost all countries specify that pedagogically trained staff conduct school-based assessment. Assessors in work-based contexts are far less likely to be trained as assessors. It is important that the competency of assessors be shared and that appropriate validation arrangements be agreed beforehand. These should be set out in the Learning Agreement. Validation activities can themselves be a constructive transnational activity.

This project did not examine other requirements of summative assessment e.g. the assessment environment and the realistic nature of assessment activities, which may apply in certain countries. For example, some qualifications require that assessment is conducted within realistic work environments and with real clients. This may again affect the choice of partner and will need to be agreed before a transnational exchange.

#### Box 1: The DECViP project and how it set the scene for VARE

**DECViP** stands for **D**eveloping **EC**VET in **P**ractice. As a Transfer of Innovation project, DECViP sought to test ECVET principles within the context of sharing innovative practice between partner countries – Austria, Finland and the UK. During this two-year project, from October 2012 – September 2014, the partners worked together with the aim to deliver practical tools and guidance through key project outcomes which other ECVET stakeholders could take forward.

The outcomes of the DECViP project included testing the practical aspects of using ECVET. The final outcome was a Practical Guide to ECVET, “Make It Count”. This Guide was developed based upon the testing carried out by the project team. The testing included reviewing the templates for the Memorandum of Understanding and Learning Agreement developed by the European Commission, and testing how they can be used and filled in in the case of a “theoretical” mobility setting. The guide offers practical advice, guidance and tips on ECVET for mobility using the documents produced to illustrate in a practical manner the steps for using ECVET.

Experience from the DECViP project in particular highlighted the need to look further into the issue of assessor requirements, which might present a barrier to the recognition of learning assessed outside the ‘home country’ system. When testing ECVET during the DECViP project, the project team looked at how practitioners would approach completing the ECVET Memorandum of Understanding. It became apparent that while the training institutions were content with the majority of each others’ practices and procedures, the UK partner would be unable to accept assessment carried out abroad in reality, as there were requirements surrounding the qualifications and training that the course assessors needed to hold. There was insufficient time and resource during the DECViP project, though, to explore the question in greater depth, or look for information on how the matter is addressed in other countries. These outcomes set the scene for the VARE project.

The DECViP project was funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme through a Leonardo da Vinci – Transfer of Innovation project grant.

Project website: <http://www.decvip.eu/>.

## 2 The VARE project in the context of ECVET

The [European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training \(ECVET\)](#) is a European instrument designed to support lifelong learning, the mobility of learners and the flexibility of learning pathways to achieve qualifications. It was developed by Member States in cooperation with the European Commission and adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in 2009. The adoption and implementation of ECVET in the participating countries is voluntary.

ECVET is based on a set of technical components that are all underpinned by the use of learning outcomes. To support mobility, ECVET seeks to improve the possibilities for recognition of learning outcomes and thus to enable people to build on what they have learned abroad, in a different education and training institution or in different situations. In other words, thanks to ECVET, it should become easier to fully integrate mobility into learners' learning pathways and to make visible and recognised what they have learned abroad.

In the framework of geographical mobility of learners, [assessment of learning outcomes](#) can be considered as having two key roles<sup>5</sup>:

- It contributes to valorising mobility: through assessment, the learning outcomes achieved during mobility are made visible.
- The fact that learners' learning outcomes have been positively assessed, in line with the learning agreement, and the result of the assessment is documented serves as basis for validating and recognising learners' credit (i.e. assessed learning outcomes).

In ECVET 'credit' refers to *a set of learning outcomes that an individual has achieved, and which have been assessed and recognised. They can be accumulated towards a qualification or transferred to other learning programmes/courses or qualifications.* Credit, in this sense, does not mean credit points.

Using ECVET for transnational mobility projects implies that (also see graph below for an illustration of this process):

- In the receiving country, the host institution assesses the learner's achievement of learning outcomes and provides evidence of the results of the assessment (e.g. through a written statement on learning outcomes achieved or an assessment grid).
- Upon the learner's return to his home institution, the latter validates and recognises credit for units of learning outcomes achieved abroad. The unit(s) of learning outcomes achieved abroad will then be recorded in the learner's transcript of records.

It is this foreign assessment context that raises questions of trust, equivalence of assessment processes and quality assurance. It is of particular importance to make sure, before the mobility

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<sup>5</sup> GHK (n.d.)

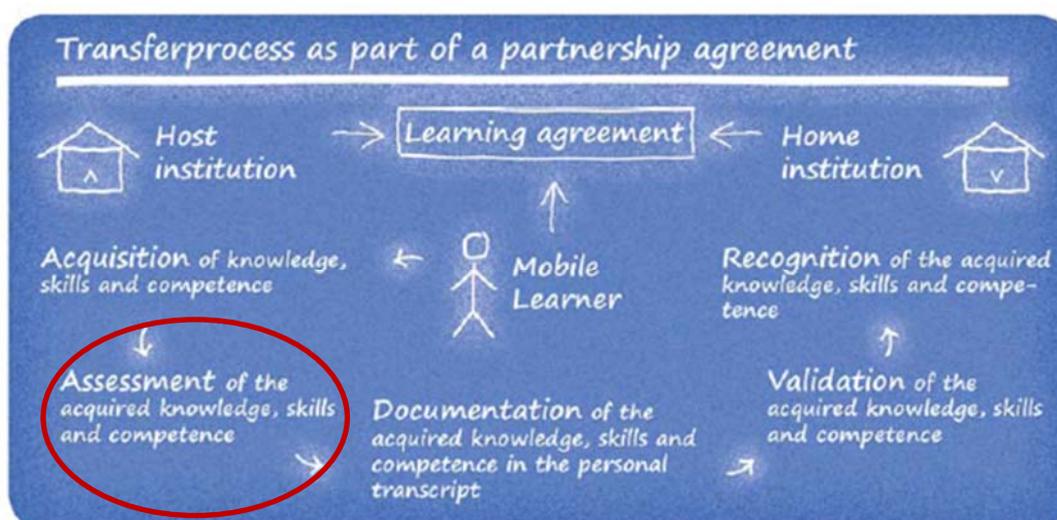
takes place, that the assessment performed by the host institution will be acceptable at the learner's home institution. I.e. in order to recognise learners' credit (i.e. their learning outcomes achieved abroad) when they return to their home institution, the home and the host institutions need to discuss assessment and make sure that they **trust the assessment approach and decisions of the host institution**. In particular, the parties need to agree on the following aspects:<sup>6</sup>

- *Who* will assess the learner, how will learning outcomes be assessed and in what context (including where)?
- *When* will the assessment take place?
- *What* procedures will ensure the quality of assessment?
- *How* will the results of the assessment be recorded in a learner's transcript of record?

It is important to take into consideration, when discussing assessment in ECVET mobility, that all VET systems have their own approaches towards assessment. It is thus important to respect and comply with existing (national, system-level or sectoral) requirements on assessment, and at the same time to accept that different forms of assessment can be reliable and valid. **Mutual trust** between mobility partners is thus a key aspect in agreeing on assessment arrangements.

Experience from ECVET pilot projects<sup>7</sup> suggested a couple of different measures to help establish trust among partners, ranging from visiting each other personally to getting familiar with the conditions or sending home institution teachers to attend assessment in a host institution, or developing joint quality standards for the assessment.

Current experience from ECVET projects shows, though, that there is still significant reliance on visiting assessors from the sending institutions in order to make ECVET transfer processes work.



Source: not available.

<sup>6</sup> ECVET (2012)

<sup>7</sup> ECVET (2012)

### 3 Methodology

In order to set a clear focus, the project concentrates on the requirements of assessors carrying out summative assessment contributing to the certification of initial VET qualifications corresponding to EQF levels 3 and 4. The scope of the project was limited to the most relevant<sup>8</sup> VET pathways in each country.

The sources of evidence used were:

- Desk-based analysis of existing literature within the knowledge bank on assessment of VET in 28 European countries (including Cedefop, ReferNet, and European Commission publications, as well as national publications);
- A web-based survey gathering first-hand information from VET practitioners and policy makers in EU member nations, complemented by stakeholder interviews to fill information gaps.

Rather than providing an in-depth and detailed data collection on assessor and assessment requirements in initial VET, VARE aims to provide a compact, yet comprehensive overview of information on 28 European countries. The key objective of VARE is to contribute to developing transparency around assessment in VET. In addition to the present comparative report, the project led to the following outcomes:

- **Country reports** for each country covered, describing the requirements for summative assessment and of assessors within the EU member's national VET system.
- Short **case studies** that describe examples or approaches that have been identified, during country research, as models of good practice in the area of VET assessment. Each case study focuses on different aspects related to assessors or assessment in VET:
  - Austria: Assessment training certificate (LAP Certificate)
  - Spain: Guidance materials for vocational assessors
  - Finland: Continuous Professional Development for teachers
  - Netherlands: Accreditation of work placement companies for in-company training
  - Poland: Requirements for examiners on examination committees
  - Slovenia: The National vocational qualification (NVQ) certification (Acquisition procedure, counsellor training, panel members qualifications)
  - United Kingdom: Training and accrediting vocational assessors

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<sup>8</sup> The decision on which VET programmes/qualifications were considered as relevant for the project was taken based on desk research.

- An **online mapping tool** to enable organisations embarking on transnational mobility projects to understand the requirements for summative assessment and the qualification/experience requirements of the assessors within the project partner's national VET systems.

The mapping tool, country reports and case studies are available at: [www.vareproject.eu](http://www.vareproject.eu).

## 4 Overview of VET pathways covered

The VET pathways referred to in this report focus on the main initial vocational education qualifications at EQF levels 3 and 4 in a given country. The division into school-based and work-based pathways was based on the predominant learning venue as measured by the amount of time spent in each location<sup>9</sup>. It should be noted that this report does not distinguish between qualifications and programmes.

### 4.1 Overview of predominantly school-based VET pathways

All countries covered by this report offer predominantly school-based VET pathways. In all countries, at least one of the vocational education and training programmes is offered at upper secondary VET schools. Slovenia, for example, offers the qualification of ‘vocational Matura’ (vocational school-leaving exam) which can be obtained from vocational schools which incorporate practical vocational training. An overview of school-based pathways is shown below:

Table 1: Predominantly school-based VET programmes by country

Country	Predominantly school-based VET Programmes / Qualifications	EQF level
AT	3 to 5 year Upper Secondary VET school programmes	4 and 5
BE	Technical or vocational secondary education programmes, Part time vocational programmes	3 and 4
BG	Vocational education and training programmes	3 and 4
CZ	'Vocational certificate' programmes, maturita and VET certificate programmes	4
DE	Upper Secondary VET school programmes	4
DK	Vocational upper secondary education and training programmes (EUD)	4
EE	VET programmes leading to VET certificates - professional examination	3 and 4
EL	School-based three-year study programmes at vocational schools (EPAL)	4
ES	VET Diploma programmes	n/a
FI	VET schools qualifications (upper secondary VET)	n/a
FI	Competence-based qualifications	n/a
FR	Vocational education under school status (technical baccalaureate or professional skills certificate)	3 and 4
HR	4-year upper secondary VET programme leading to State Matura	4
HR	1 to 4-year upper secondary VET programmes leading to VET certificates	3 and 4
HU	Lower and Upper secondary vocational school programmes leading to a national vocational qualification or a vocational secondary school leaving examination	3 and 4
IE	Upper secondary level programmes leading to Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA)	3 and 4
IT	Technical and vocational school programmes leading to Technical Education Diploma or Vocational Education Diploma	4

<sup>9</sup> As indicated above, the distinction between school-based and work-based is not always clear-cut and was mainly chosen to allow for a better structuring of the information.

<b>IT</b>	lePF - professional instruction and formation programmes	3
<b>LT</b>	2- and 3 year school-based VET programmes leading to a VET diploma	3 and 4
<b>LU</b>	Programmes leading to Vocational aptitude diploma (semi-skilled worker)	3
<b>LU</b>	Programmes leading to Technician diploma	4
<b>LU</b>	Programmes leading to Technical Secondary School leaving certificate	4
<b>LV</b>	Vocational education programme leading to State qualification exam (Certificate of basic vocational education, Certificate of vocational education, Diploma of vocational secondary education)	3 and 4
<b>MT</b>	VET School programmes leading to VET level 3 certificate or VET diploma	3 and 4
<b>NL</b>	VET school-based programmes: BOL, BBL	3 and 4
<b>NO</b>	Vocational upper secondary education and training (partial and complete)	3 and 4
<b>PL</b>	Basic vocational schools, technical secondary schools, post-secondary schools	3 and 4
<b>PT</b>	VET programmes at basic education level (CEF) and secondary education level (Cursos Profissionais)	3 and 4
<b>RO</b>	Vocational and Technological programmes	3 and 4
<b>SE</b>	VET School programmes leading to a Diploma	4
<b>SI</b>	4 year technical upper secondary and 2 year Vocational technical programmes (leading to Vocational Matura)	4
<b>SI</b>	2.5 year short vocational upper secondary and 3-year Vocational upper secondary programmes (leading to Final Examination certificate)	3 and 4
<b>SK</b>	School-based four-year programmes leading to maturita certification	4
<b>UK (EWNI<sup>10</sup>)</b>	Ofqual regulated occupational qualifications at levels 2 and 3	3 and 4
<b>UK (Scotland)</b>	SQA qualifications at levels 5 and 6	3 and 4

Source: Country reports.

#### 4.2 Overview of predominantly work-based VET pathways

Practically all countries have VET pathways which are mainly work-based – meaning the majority of learning time is spent at the workplace instead of a classroom: these pathways often incorporate some form of apprenticeship model, where part of the training is done directly in a company, under the supervision of a trainer, and – in the so-called ‘dual system’, this training is accompanied by school-based education according to a pre-defined format (e.g. classroom training for some days of the week or ‘blocks’ of classroom training for several weeks throughout the year).

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<sup>10</sup> England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Table 2: Predominantly work-based VET programmes

Country	Predominantly work-based VET programmes/ qualification	EQF Level
AT	Dual system (apprenticeship training)	4
BE	Part time vocational programmes, apprenticeships	3 and 4
BG	Vocational education and training: VET qualification at senior secondary level	4
CZ	'Vocational certificate', Apprenticeship certificate, upper secondary level vocational and technical programmes	3
DE	Dual System Apprenticeship	3 and 4
DK	Dual system, new apprenticeship (EUX)	4 and 5
DK	Basic VET programmes (EGU)	3
EE	VET programmes leading to VET certificates - professional examination	3 and 4
EL	Vocational training schools (SEK) and one-year apprenticeship	3
EL	Dual System Apprenticeship (EPAS)	4
ES	Dual System VET, of varying quality across autonomous regions	n/a
FI	Apprenticeship training	4
FR	Dual system apprenticeship (brevets professionnels)	4
HR	Apprenticeships	4
HU	Apprenticeships leading to national vocational qualification	4
IE	Apprenticeships	3 and 4
IT	Apprenticeship type scheme	4
LT	Not applicable	
LU	Work-based pathway to Vocational capacity certificate (semi-skilled worker)	2
LU	Work-based pathway to Vocational aptitude diploma (skilled worker)	3
LV	Education programmes leading to State qualification exam	2, 3 and 4
MT	Apprenticeships	3 and 4
NL	VET school Diplomas – (dual track pathways) BOL, BBL	3 and 4
NO	Vocational programmes combining school-based and work-based training, including apprenticeships, leading to Competence Certificate	3
NO	Vocational programmes combining school-based and work-based training, including apprenticeships, leading to a Craft- or Journeyman's Certificate	4
PL	Basic vocational schools, technical secondary schools	3 and 4
PT	Apprenticeships	4
RO	Apprenticeship, school- and workplace based IVET	2 and 3
SE	Upper secondary apprenticeship education	4
SI	Not applicable	
SK	Apprenticeship programme and 'Matura and apprenticeship' programmes	3 and 4
UK (EWNI)	Ofqual regulated occupational qualifications (National Vocational Qualifications at levels 2 and 3, Higher Diplomas, Advanced diplomas)	3 and 4
UK (Scotland)	SQA regulated occupational qualifications (SVQs) (National Certificate Higher)	3 and 4

Source: Country reports.

## 5 Context and types of assessment

This chapter focuses on the characteristics of assessment in predominantly school-based VET versus predominantly work-based pathways, taking into account the dimensions of continuous assessment versus end-point (final) assessment.

This distinction is based on the concept that qualifications are either awarded based on a final (end-point) assessment (or a certification exam) at the end of a training programme, or rather the qualification is awarded based on the accumulation of units/modules/credits without final assessment at the end of a training programme. This former is the prevalent approach for most IVET schemes identified in Europe. Examples can, for instance, be found in the IVET systems of Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Hungary, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia. The final assessment (or certification exam, end-point assessment) is often completely separate from the education and training process (cf. Cedefop 2015). The table below illustrates these two approaches to assessment.

In several other countries or IVET schemes, however, qualifications are rather based on the accumulation of units or modules that are assessed separately, without final assessment at the end of a training programme (with examples, for instance, to be found in the IVET systems of Spain, Finland, UK, Ireland or Malta).

Table 3: Approaches to assessment

<b>Qualification is awarded without final assessment at the end of a training programme</b>	<b>Qualification is awarded based on final assessment at the end of a training programme (end-point assessment)</b>
Accumulation of units/modules/credits based on learning process and assessment	Admission procedure to final assessment (e.g. admission is based on successful completion of a learning process)
	Final assessment
Verification of accumulated credits (and decision on grading)	Verification of the assessment and decision on grading
Examples can be found in IVET systems of Spain, Finland, UK, Ireland, Malta	Prevalent approach in most IVET systems across the EU
Awarding of qualification (certificate)	

Source: Cedefop (2015).

Both approaches to assessment have individual advantages:

Benefits of continuous or modular assessment approaches:

- Mitigates underperformance due to exam stress or illness
- Mastery – multiple performances over time are required to evidence competence
- Provides scope for accreditation of prior learning (APL) and use of diverse evidence
- Provides scope for credit accumulation and transfer

Benefits of end-point (final) assessment approaches:

- Separates learning/formative assessment from summative assessment
- Encourages holistic assessment rather than fragmented assessment of elements on competence
- Encourages externality of assessment – removing the conflict of interest of teacher assessment
- May include employers and chambers, which gives greater confidence in the qualification of the learners

### *5.1 Characteristics of assessment in predominantly school- or classroom-based VET*

Assessment in school- or classroom-based VET is typically characterised by taking place at school-premises and including more theoretical aspects than work-based assessment. All continuous and end-point assessments analysed here take place at school / college premises. In Romania, endpoint assessment can only take place at authorised schools. As indicated above, in most IVET schemes across Europe, the certification process includes a final assessment, i.e. the respective VET qualification is awarded based on a final assessment (or certification exam) at the end of a training programme. In other cases, such as the respective pathways in Finland, Ireland, Spain and the UK, the qualification is awarded based on the accumulation of units/modules/credits without final assessment at the end of a training programme (Cedefop 2015).

#### *5.1.1 Continuous and modular assessment in school-based VET*

Continuous and modular assessment refers to assessment taking place throughout the VET programme, including practical and non-practical elements and e.g. ‘mid-term’-exams, presentations or portfolios.

Within the sample, all 28 countries apply a combination of different assessment methods; this is also seen as a way to ensure the validity of assessment. Combination of methods means, for example, the implementation of theoretical and practical exams by applying different methods such as standardised written tests in combination with a practical skills demonstration. This gives candidates the opportunity to show their competences in different settings, and assessors get the possibility to achieve a better impression regarding a candidate’s performance. Various assessment methods and their combination can be observed across countries, including skills demonstrations (demonstrations of practical tasks, role plays, simulations), written exams, oral exams, production of work pieces (e.g. producing a product out of wood or metal, a flower bouquet, a computer programme, a marketing strategy), portfolios or project presentations (Cedefop 2015).

Among the pathways studied in this project, continuous assessment usually takes the form of written tests or assignments, as well as oral tests or presentations (e.g. AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, EE, ES, FR, EL, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, PL, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK). Some schools make use of vocational interviews (e.g. IE, IT, LU), assessing practical tasks / practical skills demonstration (e.g. BG, CZ, IE,

IT, FR, EL – in the final year, HU, LU, MT, NO, RO, SI, UK), project work (e.g. EE), orders (e.g. LU), team-work (e.g. EE), assembling portfolios (e.g. DK, IE, LU, NO) and continuously evaluating skills and competences (e.g. AT, BG, DE, FI, FR, LU), e.g. by observation through the teacher. In Spain, teachers are free to design and select their assessment method, and assess and grade each of the professional didactic units (modules) which a student needs to pass. The final grade is an average of these didactic units. In Greece, a diagnostic test may be undertaken at the beginning of the year to assess students' competences. In the UK (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland), in competence-based qualifications, the tutor sets assessment activities and records observations in simulated work environments, providing feedback to the learner. In other UK qualifications the tutor sets a programme of written assignments with some practical work. In Scotland, a tutor sets a programme of written assignments and practical work and provides feedback to units.

### 5.1.2 *End-point assessment in school-based VET*

End-point assessment refers to final assessment, specifically the final examinations taking place at the end of the VET programmes, as these often include specific arrangements not foreseen for continuous assessment. End-point assessment takes various forms, including individual assessment such as 'classic' written and oral exams or drafting of a thesis, as well as group assessment by evaluating teamwork or project work.

The biggest difference between continuous and end-point assessment among the 28 countries of this sample is the external element: whereas few programmes – with the exception of the UK – include external elements in continuous assessment in school-based VET, most do for the final assessments (LU, NO, UK, FR, IT, PT, DK, NL, AT, BG, RO, LT, PL, SK, LV, HU, EE, CZ).

Examples of external assessors or observers/verifiers taking part in final assessments are:

- 'Expert assessors' (LU)
- Verifiers appointed by awarding bodies (UK)
- Professional representatives, nominated by regional 'Director of Education' (FR)
- Sector representative bodies, nominated by regional 'Director of Education' (FR)
- School managers, state school teachers or HE professors (IT)
- Qualified VET teachers / pedagogical staff from other schools (NO, FR, IT, SK)
- Representatives of the province (IT)
- Experts appointed by trade unions (IT)
- Experts from Trade committees (DK)
- School/Education inspectorate / Licensed school inspector (CZ, NL)
- External observers (e.g. external teachers to supervise) (AT)
- Employer representative, assigned by the national authority (SK)
- Representative of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (HU)

Many countries have set up a group of external observers for the final assessment, such as examination boards, committees or a jury:

- Examination Board: members from regions, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, trade unions, employers, teachers, person in charge of institution (IT, depending on the region)
- Tripartite Jury/Examination committee: programme director, teacher, business association representative, trade unions representative, recognized professional in the field (PT)
- Examination Committee: trainer, teacher and representative of employers' organisation (BG)
- External assessors: trained teachers or representatives of a company in the respective sector (RO)
- Examination Committee: president of VET school, representative of social partners, two evaluation members - a representative of employers and a VET teacher preferably from a different school; selected or approved by regional school inspectorates (RO)
- Assessment commission: composed by external accredited competence assessment institution (e.g. chambers): trade union representative or employee; employer representative; VET teacher (LT)
- Examination Commission: group of supervisors, composed of at least 3 teachers or 3 representatives of employers (depending on location of examination) (PL)
- Examination Commission: representatives from sectoral enterprises (LV)
- Examination committee: 4 members (1 teacher/trainer, 3 external: president - recommended by Chamber or Minister responsible for VET, chosen from register of examination committee presidents, 2 members - experts recommended by Chamber or other predefined organisations, chosen from register of examination committee members) (HU)

#### Box 2: External examinations in Poland

The system of external examinations is a key element for ensuring and improving the quality of education and qualifications acquired in schools in Poland. The Central Examination Board and eight regional examination boards are responsible for organizing external examinations. The external examination system is supervised by the Minister of Education. In the external examination system, all examinees solve the same problems to verify whether they have achieved the learning outcomes defined in the core curriculum. Exam results are rendered anonymously and assessed according to uniform criteria for the entire country. Trained examiners registered at the regional examination boards assess the exam results. The examination consists of a written part (conducted in the form of a test) and a practical part. The exams are conducted only in centres possessing the necessary infrastructure to carry out the practical part of the examination. The practical part may be assessed by practitioners of the exam's main occupational focus.

Source: Country report.

## 5.2 Characteristics of assessment in predominantly work-based VET

### 5.2.1 Continuous assessment in work-based VET

The emphasis of assessment in work-based VET lies in end-point (final) assessment. However, continuous or cumulative assessment of work-based learning does exist among the pathways studied. A popular type of assessment is ‘practical demonstration’ of skills and competences. In Norway, for example, practical demonstrations are continuously evaluated by the workplace trainer, and two meetings per year are held to review progress. In the UK (England, Wales and Northern Ireland), the assessor (training provider) visits the workplace to set work criteria, assessment targets and activities to achieve the assessment criteria required by the awarding body, which are set in accordance with the occupational standards laid down by the sector skills council, to assess achievement and to provide feedback to the learner. Assessment is competence-based. In Luxembourg, following a VET reform in 2008, all apprenticeships include qualitative assessment of learning outcomes, working with letter grades and transcripts of acquired and non-acquired skills rather than marks in figures. In Portugal, practical training is closely linked to formative classroom assessment in order to engage the individual student in the learning process. The student’s results are entered into the student’s education book (portfolio/log book), including the marks the student is awarded and the guidance he/she receives, following each school-based and practical period, enabling the students to see where they need to improve. In Bulgaria, the workplace mentor documents the results of the ongoing assessment in a so-called diary of practical training. Based on these results, the mentor and a teacher at the VET school assess the practical training.

Other methods of assessment include:

- Vocational interviews (e.g. LU, IT)
- Written exams (e.g. AT, DE, DK, EE, LV)
- General knowledge assessment (e.g. SE)
- Practical tests and assignments / practical demonstration in artificial or ‘real’ work setting (e.g. BE, CZ, EE, EL, FI, HR, HU, IT, LU, LV, NO, SK)
- Portfolios / ‘Diaries of practical training’ (e.g. BG, IE, LU, PT, RO)
- Continuous observation / evaluation of competences (e.g. AT, DE, DK, EL, IE, FR, LU, NL, NO, UK)
- Competence tests in real working life (e.g. FI)

### 5.2.2 End-point assessment in work-based VET

In order to give employers confidence in the competence of candidates graduating from vocational courses and entering the workplace, practical exams are frequently assessed by panels or committees, which include employer representation. Such arrangements are usually compulsory, often set out in legislation in the countries employing this approach. Regarding endpoint assessment, work-based learning pathways often emphasise the final assessment through external involvement, e.g. through commissions or external verifiers. Commissions typically consist of

practitioners (professional representatives) sector representatives, external and internal teachers. Examples include:

- External verifiers appointed by Awarding Bodies (UK)
- Professional representatives and sector representative bodies, nominated by regional 'Director of Education' (FR)

Examination boards:

- Examination boards: at least one examiner from each training provider, employers could be represented (IE)
- Assessor committees: two members nominated by regional councils following advice from employers and education providers (NO)
- Examination commission: VET teachers, employer representatives, employee representatives (DE)
- Tripartite Jury/examination committee (4-5 members): programme director, teacher or trainer (IEFP trainers), business association representative, trade unions representative, recognised professional in the field (PT)
- Examination board: appointed examiners, external verifiers, chairs appointed by heads of apprenticeship offices for duration of 5 years, observers: one by regional chambers of labour, one by regional chambers of economics (AT)
- Commissions for apprenticeship exams: master craftsmen and external teachers (HR)

### 5.3 Assessment in the context of ECVET

According to Cedefop's 2015 ECVET monitoring report<sup>11</sup>, 15 countries have existing credit systems compatible with ECVET (in IVET); in nine of these 15 countries the system is compatible for CVET too. Another four countries are working towards ECVET-compatible systems, and ten countries are currently testing one or more ECVET technical components.

Table 4: Implementation of ECVET principles

Country	Countries
Countries with existing credit systems compatible with ECVET (in IVET)	BE-fr, EE, FI, FR, IS, IE, LU, MT, SI, ES, SE, UK (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales)
Countries developing a credit system compatible with ECVET principles	BG, HR, CY, CZ
Countries testing ECVET technical components	AT, DK, IT, LV, LT, NL, PL, PT, NO, RO
Countries with neither credit system nor system-level ECVET initiatives	BE-nl, DE, EL, HU, LI, SK, CH

Source: Country reports.

<sup>11</sup> Cedefop (2016).

In ECVET mobility, it is the **foreign assessment context** that poses a challenge in a number of countries and IVET systems. Even the presence of an existing credit system compatible with ECVET does not guarantee that host-country assessment of the learning outcomes achieved during mobility can be accepted. In some cases, double assessment cannot currently be avoided.

Selected examples of how countries deal with the foreign assessment context in ECVET<sup>12</sup>:

- In *Austria*, legislation allows recognition of learning/work placement periods abroad (time apprentices can spend abroad increased in 2010). However, there is no automatic validation and recognition of learning outcomes, but reassessment at national level (double assessment) takes place.
- In *Bulgaria*, VET providers define units of learning outcomes for learner mobility. Work placements in a VET school abroad can be recognised as a mandatory placement within a training programme. Learning outcomes from such placements are assessed as part of the overall assessment done by the provider (home institution) for successful graduation of learners.
- In *France*, the assessment of the learning outcomes achieved abroad can be recognised following validation by a jury. A corresponding ministerial decree (*arrêté*) of June 2014 creates an optional mobility unit transversal for all vocational baccalaureates. The unit covers professional and general learning outcomes, which should be achieved through a training period abroad. The professional learning outcomes must be assessed abroad while the general ones are assessed in France.
- In *Greece*, there is currently no framework to support the transfer of assessed learning outcomes between qualifications or institutions, yet in some cases learning (i.e. semesters) can be recognised and validated to avoid double assessment.
- In *Spain*, learning outcomes acquired and assessed during work placement periods abroad, and related to the workplace training module of a VET programme, are recognised subject to a learning agreement among teachers. Learning outcomes acquired and assessed abroad, related to other training modules of IVET, are validated and recognised by a specific department of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport.
- In *Sweden*, many crosscountry mobility periods are relatively short and do not cover entire modules or courses. Thus, the home institutions assesses the learning outcomes acquired abroad in the overall assessment of the module/course.
- In the *United Kingdom*, in most cases, achieved learning outcomes abroad have to be reassessed at national level (double assessment) due to national quality assurance measures.

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<sup>12</sup> Examples were taken from Cedefop (2015).

## 6 Assessor Requirements

This chapter examines the requirements needed to become an assessor in each of the 28 European countries. It compares the bodies involved in regulating assessor requirements, their roles and the surrounding regulatory requirements.

In most countries, assessors are required to have specific competences, and in many cases, assessment is carried out by VET teachers or trainers themselves. Thus, in most cases, there is no separate set of assessor requirements, but they form part of the general competence requirements for becoming a VET teacher or trainer. Typical requirements include pedagogical training, vocational specialisation in the respective profession and a defined minimum professional experience. A number of IVET systems require the examination board as a whole to cover a defined set of requirements rather than each single member.

Regulations indicate how assessors are selected and appointed and by whom; this is done by different institutions across countries depending on the governance of IVET systems and the distribution of responsibilities for assessment. Very few IVET systems (such as Croatia and the UK), though, have separate assessor qualifications as a requirement. Although most countries offer training for assessors, most of them are on a voluntary basis (cf. Cedefop 2015).

### 6.1 *Bodies involved in the process*

When comparing requirements for assessors in the participating countries, this report distinguishes between governmental actors and autonomous actors. This sub-chapter explores the question of who sets the requirements for assessment and the related legal requirements.

#### 6.1.1 *Actors regulating assessor and assessment requirements*

All countries report some form of governmental intervention in the process of **regulating assessor requirements**. Ministries of Education are involved in setting the requirements for assessment, including those for assessors, in all countries of the sample. They are either directly involved, or indirectly through agencies. With the exceptions of Italy and Spain, where these requirements are set regionally, they are set centrally/nationally. Other government agencies involved include Ministries responsible for the Labour Market (in countries with dual VET apprenticeship systems, such as Austria) or National Institutions for Vocational Education and Training.

Table 5: Actors and agencies involved in setting requirements for predominantly school-based pathways

Country	Actors responsible for school-based VET pathways
AT	Ministry of Education - federal laws
BE	Ministry of Education and Training
BG	Government: Vocational Education and Training Act; work based learning requirements set by Minister of Education and Science through ordinances concerning the State Educational Standards by professions
CZ	Ministry of Education
DE	Federal Ministry of Education, Regional (Länder) Ministries of Education, Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training
DK	Ministry of Education, Social partners
EE	Uniform assessment system used in vocational training as bases for assessment of learning outcomes, assessment methods and criteria are established by a regulation by the Ministry of Education and Research; government has authority to approve framework requirements for teacher training; professional councils make proposals for developing and updating professional standards
EL	Schools (EPAL) follow the guidelines of the Ministry of Education, National Organisation for Certification of Skills & Career Guidance (EOPPEP). Requirements for IVET assessors are set nationally by the Ministry of Education.
ES	Central government by Royal Decrees, Autonomous Communities
FI	Ministry of Education and Culture
FR	Ministry of Education
HR	National Centre for External Evaluation of Education selects assessors on the basis of recommendations of the expert council: public call for assessors
HR	Ministry of Education
HU	Ministry responsible for Vocational Education and Training, Chambers of Commerce
IE	Department of Education and Skills, State Examinations Commission
IT	Ministry of Education
IT	Regional School Office
LT	Ministry of Education and Science, Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Crafts, and Agriculture
LU	Ministry of National Education, Children and Youth
LV	Cabinet of Ministers and National Centre for Education, National Tripartite Sub-council for Cooperation in Vocational Education and Employment (NTSC)
MT	The Council for the Teaching Profession is legally responsible for regulating the teaching profession in Malta
NL	Vocational Education Act: broad framework with key elements; VET providers: detailed programme design and assessment procedure (designed by social partners, adopted by Ministry of Education/Ministry of Economics, curricula development in cooperation with training forms by VET providers)
NO	UDIR (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training - government agency under the Ministry of Education and Research) sets national requirements for IVET
PL	Ministry of National Education
PT	National laws governing each of the occupations
RO	Assessment standards expressed in terms of learning outcomes are defined by the Ministry of Education and are used as a common reference point in certification.
SE	National Agency for Education determines that a teacher is qualified; teachers of vocational subjects are exempted from the registration requirement
SI	Ministry of Education
SK	Ministry of Education; National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements (NUCEM)
UK	Awarding Bodies or Sector Skills Councils

Table 6: Actors and agencies involved in setting requirements for predominantly work-based pathways

Country	Actors responsible for work-based VET pathways
AT	Ministry of Education (school-based part), Ministry of Economy (work-based part), regional authorities, schools
BE	Ministry of Education and Training
BG	Government: Vocational Education and Training Act; work based learning requirements set by Minister of Education and Science through ordinances concerning the State Educational Standards by professions
CZ	Ministry of Education
DE	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economy, Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training
DK	Ministry of Education, Social partners
DK	Municipalities: practical training requirements for Basic Education and Training (EGU)
EE	Assessment methods and criteria are established by a regulation by the Ministry of Education and Research; the government has authority to approve framework requirements for teacher training; professional councils make proposals for developing and updating professional standards.
EL	Ministry of Education
EL	National Organisation for Certification of Skills & Career Guidance (EOPPEP) is responsible for certification exams for apprenticeships following Ministry of Education guidelines.
ES	Not applicable
FI	Ministry of Education and Culture
FR	Ministry of Education, sectoral professional consultative commissions (referential framework of standards for examination in each occupation), consists of representatives of concerned ministry, social partners, experts and sector bodies (e.g. Chambers)
HR	Agency for VET and Adult Training and National Centre for External Evaluation of Education (NCVVO); respective ministry (Act on Crafts)
HU	Ministry responsible for Vocational Education and Training, Chambers of Commerce
IE	SOLAS (Further Training Agency of the Department of Education and Skills) and Education and Training Boards
IT	Regional authorities
LU	Ministry of National Education, Children and Youth (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de l'Enfance et de la Jeunesse, MENJE)
LT	Not applicable
LU	Not applicable
LV	Cabinet of Ministers and National Centre for Education, National Tripartite Sub-council for Cooperation in Vocational Education and Employment (NTSC)
MT	Not applicable
NL	Vocational Education Act: broad framework with key elements; VET providers: detailed programme design and assessment procedure (designed by social partners, adopted by Ministry of Education/Ministry of Economics, curricula development in cooperation with training forms by VET providers)
NO	UDIR (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training - government agency under the Ministry of Education and Research) sets national requirements for IVET
PL	Ministry of National Education
PT	National laws governing each of the occupations
RO	Ministry of Education (sets assessment standards for certification)
SE	National Agency for Education determines that a teacher is qualified; teachers of vocational subjects are exempted from the registration requirement
SI	Not applicable
SK	Ministry of Education; National Institute for Certified Educational Measurements (NUCEM)
UK	Awarding Bodies or Sector Skills Councils

### 6.1.2 Actors in assessment

In all qualifications and programmes, both school- and work-based, the schools or VET providers for 'off-the-job' learning play a role in assessment. Training companies or employers play a quantitatively higher role in assessment for work-based pathways (13 countries involve them in work-based assessment whereas only 10 countries involve them in school-based assessment). Furthermore, the involvement of social partners and employer representatives is slightly higher in work-based pathways (9 countries for work-based learning vs. 7 countries for school-based learning).

More specifically, autonomous actors in [predominantly school-based pathways](#) include:

- Special interest groups:
  - Chambers of Industry or Commerce, Crafts or Agriculture (DK, HU, LT, LU, NL, PT),
  - Chambers of Labour (DK)
  - Trade Unions (PT)
  - Sector Skills Councils (UK)
  - Social Partners (DK, NL, LT, CZ)
  - Other Employer organisations (BG, CZ, EE, FI, FR, LV, PT, UK)
- Special committees or commissions:
  - Occupational qualifications committee (EE)
  - National tripartite sub-council for cooperation in vocational education and employment (LV)
  - Examination Boards/Committees/Commissions (HU, IE, PL)
- VET providers / Schools (AT, BE, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, NO, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK)
- School inspectorates (CZ, RO)
- Employers / companies offering work-based training (BG, CZ, DE, EE, ES, FI, HU, IT, LV, NL, NO, PT)

Autonomous actors in [predominantly work-based pathways](#) include:

- Special interest groups:
  - Social Partners (FR, DK)
  - Chambers of Industry or Commerce Crafts or Agriculture (DE, DK, HR, FR)
  - Chambers of Labour (AT, CZ, DE, DK, FR, HR, HU, LU, NL)
  - Other Employer organisations (incl. Sector Skills Councils) (BG, CZ, EE, HE, LV, UK)
  - Employee organisations (FI)
- VET providers / Schools (AT, BE, CZ, DE, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, NO, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK)
- Special committees:

- Assessment committee (for summative work-based assessment) (NO)
- Qualification committees (FI)
- Sectoral professional consultative commissions (FR) National Assessment and Certification Commission (BG)
- Central and regional examination boards (PL)
- National tripartite sub-council for cooperation in vocational education and employment (LV)
- Employers / companies offering work-based training (AT, BG, DE, EL, FI, FR, HU, IT, LV, NL, NO, PT, SE)

**Box 3: Example of Chambers' involvement in training and assessment in German dual VET**

In Germany, the Chambers of Industry and Commerce are responsible for monitoring company-based VET. They consist of 79 Chambers of Industry and Commerce and 53 Chambers of Crafts and Trades. They also participate in developing training regulations. Training advisers of the chambers verify the capacity of companies and ability of trainers to train and advise both companies and apprentices. They are also responsible for providing examination regulations and evaluation standards for the final examinations at national level. Furthermore, they provide assessment training and guidelines for voluntary assessors taking part as an employer representative in an examination committee. Each committee consists of at least one employer representative, one employee representative and one VET-school teacher.

Source: Country report.

## 6.2 Roles in assessment and the surrounding regulations

Assessors in IVET can be divided into three groups: teachers, trainers and sector representatives. Their occupational competency can be proven either by a certain amount of work- or research experience / expertise in the sector (e.g. years of practice) or by having obtained a certain qualification (e.g. teacher qualification).

Competency in assessment skills is proven either by qualification (e.g. as part of teacher training) or by training in assessment.

Assessors are either required to be a qualified teacher, or have substantial professional expertise, which can be proven e.g. through an occupational qualification on the same level or selection/appointment by a competent actor (e.g. Chambers of Commerce). This section focuses on teachers and trainers in both school- and work-based settings. A detailed description of external actors taking part in end-point assessment through membership in external examination boards or committees can be found in section 6.1.

Where VET teachers and trainers are responsible for summative assessment it is clearly crucial that they are competent to do so. They require competence in the trade or profession in order to

identify competency in the performance of the learner. In school-based VET this is, for instance, specified in terms of qualification (e.g. in DK, FI, FR, HU, LT, PL, PT, UK), and/or experience (e.g. in DE, DK, FR, LT, LV, NO, PT and SK). Again, where this is specified rigidly it can hinder mobility programmes based on ECVET, but where these requirements are stated clearly beforehand, appropriate assessors may be identified to participate in the transnational exchange. In work-based learning this is less of an issue, as almost all assessors are generally assumed to be occupationally competent.

Occupational competency is often implicitly part of the formal qualification needed to work as a teacher or trainer who functions as assessor. 22 of the 28 countries report that no specific training for assessors is required; that the training is either voluntary or that assessment training is – very often implicitly – part of the regular teacher training. A pedagogical competence course is compulsory for assessors in Croatia. In the UK, specific training is compulsory for QCF/RQF and SQA regulated occupational qualifications, and usually for QCF/RQF regulated vocational qualifications.<sup>13</sup> Many countries offer voluntary assessor training.

Generally accepted standards rather than legal requirements (or in addition to legal requirements) apply in the UK, Ireland and Italy (for assessment in apprenticeship-type qualifications).

Table 7: Is specific assessment training a requirement for assessors?

Specific assessment training	Country
Required	HR, HU (for heads of examination boards), RO, UK (with few exceptions)
Not required	AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, SE, SI, SK

### 6.2.1 Roles in assessment: predominantly school-based VET

Assessment in predominantly school-based VET pathways is usually done by teachers, who have to fulfil certain requirements. Furthermore, trainers or mentors are often involved for assessing internships or short periods of practical training. In mainly school-based pathways, UK assessors are required (except for SQA qualifications, where they are only ‘expected’) to be occupationally competent. In Norway, they should be occupationally competent whereas Latvian assessors need at least five years of experience in the field. Competence requirements may also vary according to the focus of the programme: in Croatia, VET teachers for three-year VET programmes for subject fields not represented in higher education, do not need a higher education degree but at least a

<sup>13</sup> In the UK, occupational qualifications refer to those which are explicitly designed to meet national occupational standards as set out by sector skills councils; therefore all occupational qualifications are vocational qualifications, but not all vocational qualifications are occupational.

secondary school certificate. In addition, they have to complete a pedagogical competence course of 60 ECTS.

### VET Teachers

A teacher is defined as a person whose function is to impart knowledge, know-how or skills to learners in an education or training institution. A teacher may fulfil several tasks such as organising and carrying out training programmes/courses and transmitting knowledge, whether generic or specific, theoretical or practical. A teacher in a vocationally-oriented institution may be referred to as a 'trainer'.<sup>14</sup>

The requirements for VET teachers identified are described in detail in the following table. Unless otherwise stated, there are no separate requirements for them to act as assessors.

Table 8: Teacher requirements for predominantly school-based VET pathways

Country	Teacher requirements for predominantly school-based VET pathways
AT	Qualified teachers: for part time teachers: Bachelors degree, for full-time teachers: Masters degree, including an aptitude test, test of communicative skills within teacher training.
BE	Qualification to teach 2 or 3 subjects; qualification to teach technical subjects (integrated model with training practice); certificate of teaching competence (all practical and some technical subjects); university diploma to teach in upper secondary education
BG	Qualified teachers
CZ	Qualified teachers
DE	Vocational school teachers: must have a university degree at master level
DK	Completed vocational education in subjects they teach, typically also taken HE, minimum of 5 years professional experience (2 years for teachers in general subjects); pedagogical training course at Bachelor ('diploma') level is mandatory to be completed within the first four years of teaching
EE	Trained teachers: Requirements set in professional/occupational qualification standards for teachers and vocational teachers.
EL	Trained teacher: initial training at University Departments (tertiary education degree), providing studies relevant to the subjects included in the secondary education curricula and initial training of prospective teachers of secondary vocational education (consecutive model) -- the pedagogical training follows the training in each subject (teaching qualification)
ES	The school instructor for WBL should be a teacher with 'company experience' (practical experience related to skills and competences to be acquired in real work environment);
FI	Master's or Bachelor's degree in their field, pedagogical training of 60 ECTS or highest qualification in the respective field, if no study programme available
FR	Vocational lycée teachers must sit a national entrance examination and demonstrate either an equivalent level of qualification to the subject to be taught or a number of years of professional practice in the relevant profession.
HR	For general subjects: university education and pedagogical qualification (passed exams on general pedagogy, didactics, psychology of education, teaching methodology); for VET professional-theoretical contents: HE (≥180 ECTS) and pedagogical competence course (60 ECTS); for VET teachers of practical lessons and exercises: undergraduate or professional degree (≥80 ECTS) and pedagogical competence course (60 ECTS) along with required qualification

<sup>14</sup> Cedefop (2014a).

<b>HU</b>	Vocational qualified teacher
<b>IE</b>	Trained teacher, generally a degree and a post-graduate teaching qualification are required for teachers
<b>IT</b>	Teachers in this context are state employees who must pass a State certification exam, have a specific subject degree (five-year academic education) followed by a traineeship in a school.
<b>LT</b>	Qualified teachers
<b>LU</b>	Bachelor or Master degree in specific field of study, subsequently teacher education - initial training
<b>LV</b>	Vocational school teachers
<b>MT</b>	No specific training for VET teachers, general subject teachers hold degrees in Education, vocational teachers might not have tertiary qualifications or pre-service teacher training (pre-service teacher training currently not available)
<b>NL</b>	Teachers in upper secondary vocational education need to have either a second or first-degree teaching license or a teaching certificate. This teaching certificate requires a higher education diploma and can be obtained by following a work-based course of one year (640 study hours), covering both pedagogical and educational subjects.
<b>NO</b>	Must be a trained teacher: qualifications in the relevant subject and in education (pedagogics and didactics); either a) vocational-practical-pedagogical education or b) vocational teacher education. Admission requirements for these programmes are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a professionally oriented Bachelor or Master's degree plus minimum two years of professional experience,</li> <li>or</li> <li>• qualification as a skilled craftsman/worker and,</li> <li>• two years of occupational experience;</li> <li>• two years of further studies (technical, professional, managerial); and</li> <li>• general matriculation qualifications or recognition of informal and non-formal qualifications.</li> </ul> For the vocational teacher education (3 year bachelor programme) the admission requirements are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an upper secondary vocational qualification and</li> <li>• two years of relevant work experience, and</li> <li>• general matriculation qualifications or relevant informal and non-formal qualifications</li> </ul>
<b>PL</b>	Vocational teacher qualification
<b>PT</b>	Teacher qualification (HE degree or professional experience of a minimum of 5 years and pedagogical certificate)
<b>RO</b>	Should be qualified teacher, no compulsory work based learning experience
<b>SE</b>	Higher Education Degree in vocational education and teacher registration (teachers of vocational subjects exempted from registration)
<b>SI</b>	Trained teacher which requires a university degree or at least secondary education in specific subject area, at least three years of adequate work experience and pedagogic training or a master craftsman's exam.
<b>SI</b>	Trained teacher which requires a university degree or at least secondary education in specific subject area, at least three years of adequate work experience and pedagogic training or a master craftsman's exam.
<b>SK</b>	Not applicable
<b>UK</b>	Generally a teaching qualification and industry experience

Source: Country report.

### VET trainers / mentors

As opposed to teachers, a trainer is defined as anyone who fulfils one or more activities linked to the (theoretical or practical) training function, either in an institution for education or training, or at the workplace.

Two categories of trainers can be distinguished:

- *professional trainers* are training specialists whose job may coincide with that of the teacher in a vocational training establishment – where this is the case, requirements are described in the ‘teacher’ section above;
- *part-time or occasional trainers* are professionals in various fields who take on, in their normal duties, part-time training activity, either in-company (as mentors and tutors of recruits and apprentices or as training providers) or externally (by occasionally offering their services at a training establishment);

Trainers may carry out various tasks, including:

- design training activities;
- organise and implement these activities;
- provide the actual training, i.e. transfer knowledge, know-how and skills;
- help apprentices develop their skills by providing advice, instructions and comments throughout the apprenticeship.<sup>15</sup>

The following table provides an overview of VET trainer requirements for predominantly school-based VET pathways. Unless otherwise stated, there are no separate requirements for them to act as assessors.

Table 9: Trainer requirements in predominantly school-based VET pathways

Country	Trainer requirements for predominantly school-based VET pathways
AT	see above
BE	see above
BG	At least 4 years’ experience in the profession to become part of examination committee
CZ	Instructors of practical training are employed in companies and must 'prove expert knowledge and skills in the respective field'
DE	No specific requirements mentioned.
DK	Apprentice tutors or practical training instructors: no formal requirement of training competence, public courses available
EE	see above
EL	Requirements to be a member of the profession or a trained sector expert
ES	Usually appointed by HR manager of company; the work trainer should be an expert with an ‘educational knowledge’ (pedagogical skills)
FI	No formal requirements; training voluntary
FR	see above
HR	Vocational trainers require a level of education regulated by curricula, at least secondary vocational education and pedagogical competence course (60 ECTS) and work experience in appropriate

<sup>15</sup> Cedefop (2014a)

	profession for at least 5 years; teaching associates require secondary education and pedagogical competence course (60 ECTS) and 5 years work experience
<b>HU</b>	Work trainer: qualified practical instructor with master craftsmanship exam (recent new requirement); vocational school trainer: trained and qualified trainer
<b>IE</b>	see above
<b>IT</b>	Recruitment and selection are not regulated by law; trainers usually require a degree or upper secondary school diploma and professional experience. There is no required pre-service training
<b>LT</b>	No specific requirements
<b>LU</b>	Companies responsible for work-based vocational training have to hold a "training authorisation", assigned by Chambers of employers/employees; training tutors within the companies need a minimum of 3 days pedagogical and social competences training
<b>LV</b>	Enterprise mentors: requirements not specified
<b>MT</b>	see above
<b>NL</b>	Work supervisors have to be qualified a least at the same work level for which they provide wbl-supervision, have regular contact with VET school, and have pedagogical competences: regular training courses are offered
<b>NO</b>	Trainers (instruktører) in training enterprises are vocationally skilled often with a formal vocational qualification. They are not required to have a teaching certificate. Some trainers have not formalised their vocational skills, but perform solely based on skills developed through work practice. Formal regulations simply state that the management of the training enterprise must ensure that trainers have the necessary qualifications
<b>PL</b>	Trainer qualification: having complete professional teacher training, including diagnosis, monitoring and evaluation of the effects of students' work
<b>PT</b>	see above
<b>RO</b>	No specific requirements (often no pedagogical knowledge)
<b>SE</b>	see above
<b>SI</b>	Vocational or Technical upper secondary education and at least five years of relevant work experience or Higher vocational education and at least two years of relevant work experience.
<b>SK</b>	At least a certificate of apprenticeship in respective study field and three years of practice as fully qualified worker in respective occupation, instructor training within first year of appointment (no Matura or pedagogical studies required)
<b>UK</b>	see above

Source: Country reports.

### 6.2.2 Roles in assessment: predominantly work-based VET

Occupational competency is an explicit requirement for trainers of predominantly work-based pathways in 8 countries (AT, DE, HU, IE, IT, NL, NO, UK). They are specifically required to be 'occupationally competent'. In Norway, they 'should be occupationally competent', whereas in all other countries they need to have a certain degree of experience, e.g. three years of experience within the company for in-company trainers in Italy, three years of relevant work experience for assessors in Austria, and the same level of qualification or years of work experience in the field for German assessors of work-based learning. Bulgarian assessors of work-based learning need four years of experience to become part of an examination committee. In Hungary, ten years of professional experience are needed to enter the Register, which creates a pool for assessors in examination committees. In Croatia, a master crafts person who teaches in a licensed crafts/workshop has to be qualified to train apprentices, and is obliged to take an exam in industrial pedagogy administered by an independent expert commission.

Unless otherwise stated, there are no separate requirements for them to act as assessors.

## VET teachers

Table 10: Teacher requirements in predominantly work-based VET pathways

Country	Teacher requirements in predominantly work-based VET pathways
AT	Qualified teachers: for part time teachers: Bachelor's degree, for full-time teachers: Master's degree, including an aptitude test, test of communicative skills; 3 years of relevant work experience.
BE	Qualification to teach 2 or 3 subjects; qualification to teach technical subjects (integrated model with training practice); certificate of teaching competence (all practical and some technical subjects); university diploma to teach in upper secondary education)
BG	Not applicable
CZ	Qualified teachers
DE	Vocational school general subject teachers: must have a university degree at master level; practical work teachers: must have vocational practice
DK	Completed vocational education in subjects they teach, typically also taken HE, minimum of 5 years professional experience (2 years for teachers in general subjects); pedagogical training course at diploma level is mandatory
EE	Requirements set in professional/occupational qualification standards for teachers and vocational teachers
EL	Initial training at University Departments, providing studies relevant to the subjects included in the secondary education curricula and initial training of prospective teachers of secondary vocational education (consecutive model) -- the pedagogical training follows the training in each subject
EL	Trainers require tertiary education degree and a certificate in pedagogics. Additionally, in some practical specialties, secondary education graduates with considerable work experience may be employed.
FI	Master's or Bachelor's degree in their field, pedagogical training of 60 ECTS or highest qualification in the respective field, if no study programme available
FR	Pedagogical tutor responsible for following up apprentices training and progress in school and enterprise, using control books or check sheets; For apprenticeship, there is no national examination to become a teacher; the training centre does its own recruitment, and candidates should apply directly to it. To become a teacher, applicants must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- for general teaching roles: demonstrate a qualification equivalent to that required for a similar post in a public establishment;</li> <li>- for technical, theoretical and practical teaching roles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o demonstrate a relevant qualification that is at least at the same level of the qualification that the apprentices are working towards;</li> <li>o and have several years of vocational experience in the relevant speciality</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
HR	For general subjects: university education and pedagogical qualification (passed exams on general pedagogy, didactics, psychology of education, teaching methodology); for VET professional-theoretical contents: HE (>=180 ECTS) and pedagogical competence course (60 ECTS); for VET teachers of practical lessons and exercises: undergraduate or professional degree (>=80 ECTS) and pedagogical competence course (60 ECTS) along with required qualification
HU	Vocational qualified teacher
IE	Vocational school instructor/teacher
IT	Not applicable
LU	Bachelor or Master's degree in specific field of study, subsequently teacher education - initial training
LV	Not applicable
MT	Not applicable
NL	Not applicable
NO	Must be a trained teacher: qualifications in the relevant subject and in education (pedagogics and

	<p>didactics); either a) vocational-practical-pedagogical education or b) vocational teacher education. Admission requirements for these programmes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A professionally oriented bachelor's or master's degree plus minimum two years of professional experience,</li> <li>OR</li> <li>• Qualification as a skilled craftsman/worker and,</li> <li>• Two years of occupational experience;</li> <li>• Two years of further studies (technical, professional, managerial); and</li> <li>• General matriculation qualifications or recognition of informal and non-formal qualifications.</li> </ul> <p>For the vocational teacher education (3 year bachelor programme) the admission requirements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an upper secondary vocational qualification and</li> <li>• two years of relevant work experience, and</li> <li>• general matriculation qualifications or relevant informal and non-formal qualifications</li> </ul>
<b>PL</b>	Vocational teacher qualification
<b>PT</b>	Assessor candidates should hold a qualification attesting to technical, scientific or practical training of a level equal to, or higher than, the level achieved by those who are to receive the training, and they should have completed teacher training appropriate for the level and context of the training to be given. Teacher training must be certified by certificate of professional competence.
<b>RO</b>	Should be qualified teacher, no compulsory work based learning experience
<b>SE</b>	Higher Education Degree in vocational education and teacher registration (teachers of vocational subjects exempted from registration)
<b>SI</b>	Not applicable
<b>SK</b>	Not applicable
<b>UK EWNI</b>	Not specified
<b>UK SC</b>	<b>Not specified</b>

Source: Country reports.

### VET trainers / mentors

Unless otherwise stated, there are no separate requirements for trainers/mentors to act as assessors.

Table 11: Trainers / workplace instructors' requirements in predominantly work-based VET pathways

Country	Trainers / workplace instructors' requirements in mainly work-based VET pathways
<b>AT</b>	In-company trainers: min. 18 years of age, proof of qualification: either by IVET trainer exam, IVET trainer course, or master craftsman exam, completion of part time industrial master college or entrepreneurial exam
<b>BE</b>	Not applicable
<b>BG</b>	At least 4 years' experience in the profession to become part of examination committee
<b>CZ</b>	Instructors of practical training are employed in companies and must 'prove expert knowledge and skills in the respective field'
<b>DE</b>	Category 1: journeymen or foremen (only rarely formally qualified trainers) or category 2: full-time trainers certified as master craftsmen (any company taking in apprentices needs to have at least one certified instructor); certification offered by chambers (aptitude tests)
<b>DK</b>	Apprentice tutors or practical training instructors: no formal requirement of training competence, public courses available
<b>EE</b>	Not applicable
<b>EL</b>	Requirements to be a member of the profession or a trained sector expert
<b>EL</b>	Trainers require tertiary education degree and a certificate in pedagogics. Additionally, in some practical specialties, secondary education graduates with considerable work experience may be

	employed.
<b>FI</b>	No formal requirements; training voluntary
<b>FR</b>	While some regions and branches [?] require pedagogical training for work trainers, the requirement is not systematic across the country
<b>HR</b>	Vocational trainers require a level of education regulated by curricula, at least secondary vocational education and pedagogical competence course (60 ECTS) and work experience in appropriate profession for at least 5 years; teaching associates require secondary education and pedagogical competence course (60 ECTS) and 5 years work experience; master crafts person have to be qualified to train apprentices: obligated to take an exam in industrial pedagogy administered by an independent expert commission.
<b>HU</b>	Work trainer: qualified practical instructor with master craftsmanship exam (recent new requirement); vocational school trainer: trained and qualified trainer
<b>IE</b>	Occupational competence e.g. holder of a national craft certificate and SOLAS approval
<b>IT</b>	3 years in the firm
<b>LT</b>	Not applicable
<b>LU</b>	Training companies responsible for training - have to hold "training authorisation", assigned by Chambers of employers/employees; training tutors: min. 3 day pedagogical and social competences training
<b>LV</b>	Not applicable
<b>MT</b>	Not applicable
<b>NL</b>	Work supervisors have to be qualified a least at the same work level for which they provide wbl-supervision, have regular contact with VET school, and have pedagogical competences: regular training courses are offered
<b>NO</b>	Trainers (instruktører) in training enterprises are vocationally skilled often with a formal vocational qualification. They are not required to have a teaching certificate. Some trainers have not formalised their vocational skills, but perform solely based on skills developed through work practice. Formal regulations simply state that the management of the training enterprise must ensure that trainers have the necessary qualifications
<b>PL</b>	Trainer qualification: having complete professional teacher training, including diagnosis, monitoring and evaluation of the effects of students' work
<b>PT</b>	Trainers have to take a training course in vocational pedagogy (min 90 hours) and are required to hold a university degree or be professionals with minimum 5 years' experience
<b>RO</b>	No specific requirements (often no pedagogical knowledge)
<b>SE</b>	No formal requirements, those who have necessary knowledge and experience are considered suitable
<b>SI</b>	Not applicable
<b>SK</b>	At least a certificate of apprenticeship in the respective field and three years of practice as skilled worker in the respective occupation, instructor training within first year of appointment (no Matura or pedagogical studies required)
<b>UK EWNI</b>	Internal verifiers (IV) review the assessment of assessors and organise standardisation exercises, they are expected to hold an IV qualification. External verifiers are appointed by awarding bodies by competitive selection and while there are no national requirements they will ordinarily be expected to have undertaken or be working towards a recognised external verifier qualification.
<b>UK SC</b>	Internal verifiers (IV) review the assessment of assessors and organise standardisation exercises, they are expected to hold an IV qualification. External verifiers are appointed by awarding bodies by competitive selection and while there are no national requirements they will ordinarily be expected to have undertaken or be working towards a recognised external verifier qualification.

Source: Country reports.

### 6.3 *Quality Assurance and continuous professional development*

Arrangements relating to the profile, selection and training of assessors are crucial to ensure the quality of the assessment and certification process. Providing teachers and trainers with access to quality professional development and support is essential to ensuring that both their technical and pedagogical skills are up to the highest standards. This also refers to their assessment skills. Furthermore, providing them with the possibility to exchange experiences and learn from each other is an important aspect; it contributes to increasing the reliability and consistency of the assessment process.

Continuous professional development is thus crucial for keeping teachers and trainers up-to-date with the latest pedagogical and administrative developments in their field.

Regarding continuous professional development (CPD) specialising on assessment, Norway sets a good example with the comprehensive examiner seminar that is held annually for Norwegian examiners.

In Portugal, there is no systematic and specific assessor training of trainers responsible for assessment, but assessors have to attend regular meetings which involve assessors reviewing, assessment tools and outcomes.

In Sweden, increased focus is put on the role of supervisors for work-based learning: a web-based course with an introductory general module for workplace supervisors was launched in 2014, and a supplementary module for apprenticeship education was developed successively. They are not obliged to take part but there are financial incentives to encourage participation.

The boxes below provide further examples of how countries approach this topic.

#### Box 4: Example Romania

VET schools are involved in networks, aiming to provide a cooperation platform for the development of methods and instruments of the quality assurance of the IVET provision and for sharing of best practice in the teaching – training – assessment processes. An online platform for assessors has been launched at national level, facilitating the dialogue and exchange of good practice between assessors.

*Source:* Country report.

#### Box 5: Example Norway

For centrally set examinations, a yearly comprehensive examiner seminar is held, as well as a general meeting for the examination boards in all subjects that have centrally set examinations under the Knowledge Promotion Reform. All external examiners are practising teachers that are recommended to the County Governor by the principals from their own schools. The goal of the examiners' seminar is to professionalise the assessment of the examination tasks and to contribute to a common interpretation of fair assessments. This type of schooling of examiners also provides the Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training with valuable information about how the examination and the schemes around it are understood and function in the education sector as a whole.

*Source:* Country report.

#### Box 7: Example Hungary

In Hungary, members of examination committees who were recruited through the Chambers of Commerce have to participate in regular CPD focusing on changing administrative rules and standards. The Chamber published a Manual for organising the final vocational exam that has a chapter focusing on the preparation of members and president of the examination board. Otherwise, however, the legislation only refers to their task of 'getting informed about the special content and conditions of the training prior to the start of the examination'.

*Source:* Country report.

## 7 Conclusions

Although one can observe considerable differences in assessor and assessment requirements across European VET systems, they share many similarities. Approaches in assessment may seem very different at first sight but do have quite a number of similarities when explored in more detail.

All countries have mechanisms for formative assessment, i.e. ongoing diagnostic assessments to inform teaching and learning. This is good teaching and learning practice but does not impact on the summative recognition of that learning e.g. as a result of transnational learner mobility projects.

Most countries have an aspect of internally assessed, continuous or modular summative assessment in their learning programmes, and combine practical work and elements of theory in their assessment activities. This provides opportunities for ECVET and the summative recognition of learning from transnational learner mobility projects.

However, continuous assessment can lead to fragmentation of competence into separate skills rather than holistic performance as is expected in the workplace. Furthermore, skills demonstrated and assessed at the beginning of the learning programme may have been lost by the end, such that the learner is not fully competent at the time of completion. In addition, internal assessment by the VET teacher may be seen as creating a conflict of interest, especially if their success is measured in terms of pass rates and thus may not be trusted by employers. For these reasons, many countries use an endpoint exam to confirm the qualification. This is especially the case for apprenticeships.

Assessors also require the competence to ensure that assessment is valid, reliable and fair. Almost all countries specify that school-based assessment be conducted by pedagogically trained staff. What is unclear from this research is whether and to what extent teacher training courses contain **explicit assessment training**. Assessors in work-based contexts are far less likely to be trained as assessors, exceptions are UK, DE, AT, HR. This need not necessarily provide a barrier to an ECVET mobility programme; if identified in advance appropriate validation procedures may be agreed between the partners.

### **Implications for the implementation of ECVET mobility programmes<sup>16</sup>**

In the framework of geographical mobility of learners, assessment gives additional value to mobility. By the fact that learners are assessed, the achieved learning outcomes are made visible, and they highlight the progress made by a learner during his or her stay abroad. Furthermore, assessment builds the basis for validation and recognition of learning outcomes achieved abroad.

In countries where only annual or endpoint exams result in summative assessment towards the final qualification (e.g. BE, BG, CZ, DE, HR, RO, SI) it is likely that the opportunity for ECVET mobility projects will be limited and the recognition of learning will require further compensation activities. Similarly, where employers are required to be on the panel/committee to confirm qualification, this poses a barrier to skills and knowledge assessed on placement in another country being recognised within the home country. This however does not mean that ECVET cannot be successfully used.

The findings from the comparative research underline that any mobility partnership should reflect on the feasibility and appropriateness of assessment they envisage, as early as possible in the ECVET transfer process. This concerns reflecting on constraints such as time and resources available or the language skills of learners and assessors, or any legal/sectoral requirements in place towards assessor requirements or assessment requirements in general.

At the same time, it is important to note that the purpose of ECVET is not to ‘take one’s own assessment approach abroad’. It is important for mobility partners to accept that learning outcomes can be assessed using different approaches/methods or that the profile of assessors may differ from one country to another. This, however, requires mutual trust between the mobility partners.

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. European Commission (2012).

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## 9 List of acronyms used

CPD	Continuing professional development
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
ECVET	European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
IVET	Initial vocational education and training
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
n/a	Not applicable
Ofqual	Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation
QCF	The Qualifications and Credit Framework for education qualification in England, Northern Ireland and Wales
SQA	The Scottish Qualifications Authority
VET	Vocational education and training
WBL	Work-based learning

### Countries:

AT – Austria  
BE – Belgium  
BG – Bulgaria  
CZ – Czech Republic  
DE – Germany  
DK – Denmark  
EE – Estonia  
EL – Greece  
ES – Spain  
FI – Finland  
FR – France  
HR – Croatia  
HU – Hungary  
IE – Ireland  
IT – Italy  
LT – Lithuania  
LU – Luxembourg  
LV – Latvia  
MT – Malta  
NL – Netherlands  
NO – Norway  
PL – Poland  
PT – Portugal  
RO – Romania  
SE – Sweden  
SI – Slovenia  
SK – Slovakia  
UK – United Kingdom (SC – Scotland, EWNI – England, Wales, Northern Ireland)