



Using ECVET for Geographical Mobility (2012)

PART II OF THE ECVET USERS' GUIDE



Numéro de projet: 2012.4589			
Titre: USING ECVET FOR GEOGRAPHICAL MOBILITY (2012) Part II of the ECVET Users' Guide - Revised version including key points for quality assurance			
Version linguistique	Numéro de catalogue	ISBN-13	DOI
EN	NC-30-12-726-EN-C	978-92-79-25816-9	10.2766/37433

The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training

ECVET

Using ECVET for Geographical Mobility (2012)

PART II OF THE ECVET USERS' GUIDE



European Commission

Directorate General Education and Culture

Lifelong learning: Policies and Programme

Professional training; Leonardo da Vinci

The first version of this document was prepared by the ECVET Users' Group and approved during the ECVET Users' Group meeting on 11 May 2011.

This revised version includes key issues for quality assurance when using ECVET for mobility. It was also prepared by the ECVET Users' Group and approved during the ECVET Users' Group meeting on 2 May 2012.

It is part of the series of guidance documents and notes which constitute the ECVET Users' Guide.

If you wish to get a more detailed explanation of ECVET concepts, principles and processes, please refer to another element of the ECVET Users' Guide entitled: *Get to know ECVET Better – Questions and Answers*¹.

The following Users' Group representatives contributed to the drafting of the document:

Hanna Autere (Finnish National Board of Education – Finland), Mounir Baati (European Training Foundation), Sonja Baron (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung – Germany), Keith Brumfitt (EQAVET secretariat – United Kingdom), Alain Bultot (Ministère de l'enseignement obligatoire, Communauté française – Belgium), Gabriela Ciobanu (National Center for Technical and Vocational Education and Training - Romania), Sibilla Drews (Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa beim Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung - Germany), Maja Leena Lampinen (Västra Götalandsregionen – Sweden), Isabelle Le Mouillour (Cedefop), Jos Noesen (Ministère de l'Education Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle – Luxembourg), Richard Maniak (Ministère de l'éducation nationale – France, acting on behalf of the ECVET Support team), Anne Potters (CINOP, on behalf of the ECVET thematic networks of National Agencies for the Lifelong Learning Programme), Brigitte Trocmé (Ministère de l'éducation nationale – France), Christian Sperle and Liliane Volozinskis (UEAPME - European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises).

The group was supported by GHK Consulting, Brussels (Daniela Uličná, Anette Curth) and 3s, Vienna Karin Luomi-Messerer. Coordination: Erik Hess (European Commission, DG EAC). May 2012.

1 The document can be downloaded at: http://www.ECVET-team.eu/sites/default/files/ECVET_qna_web_21_04_2010_1.pdf

Content

Using ECVET for geographical mobility (2012)

Part II of the ECVET Users' Guide

1	Introduction	6
	This guide	7
2	ECVET and geographical mobility	9
3	Quality in ECVET mobility	11
4	The phases of using ECVET for organised mobility	14
	4.1 Before mobility	15
	4.2 During the mobility period	20
	4.3 After the mobility period	22
	Annex A: Functions of ECVET Competent institutions	26
	Annex B: Checklist for using ECVET for transnational mobility	27
	Annex C: Memorandum of Understanding and Learning Agreement	32
	Annex D: ECVET for mobility in practice	36



1 Introduction

The European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) is a technical framework for the transfer, recognition and where appropriate, accumulation of individuals' learning outcomes with a view to achieving a qualification. ECVET tools and methodology comprise the description of qualifications in terms of units of learning outcomes with associated points, a transfer and accumulation process and complementary documents such as Learning Agreements, transcripts of records and ECVET users' guides.

Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council²

The implementation of ECVET has two broad objectives:

- To support mobility of European citizens
- To facilitate lifelong learning

This document concerns the use of ECVET for geographical mobility, in particular mobility that is organised as an element of learners' education and training pathways.

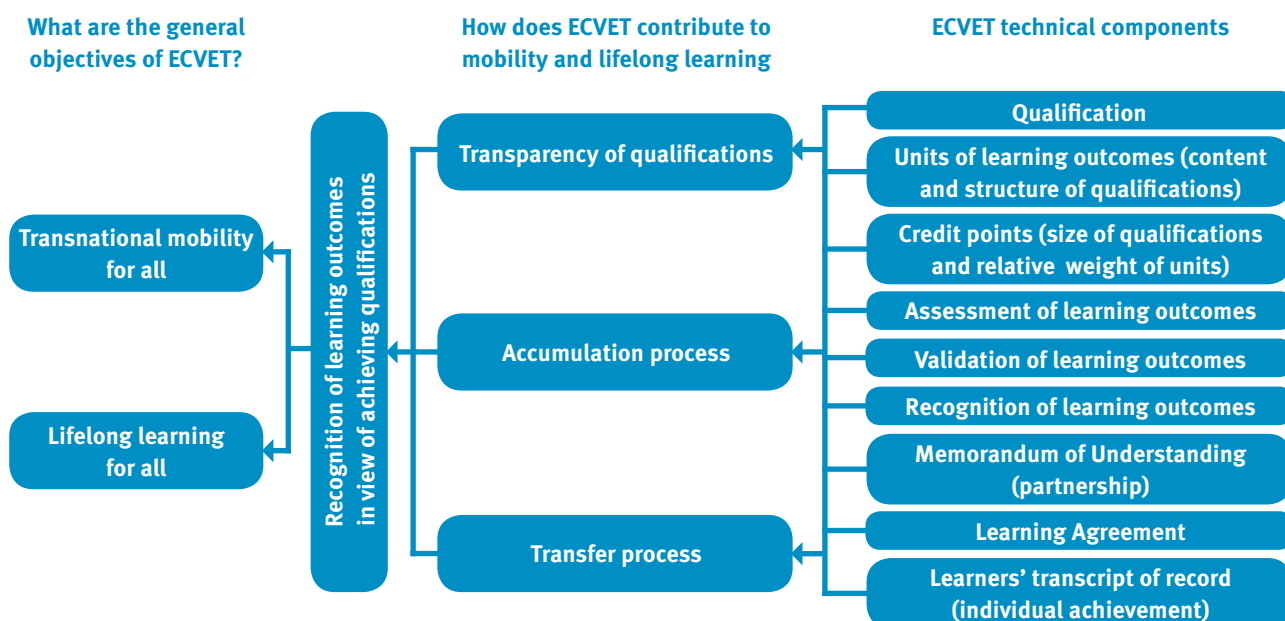
To support mobility, ECVET is expected to improve the possibilities for **recognition of learning outcomes** and thus to enable **people to build on what they have learned** abroad, in a different education and training institution or in different situations. In other words, thanks to ECVET, it should become easier to **fully integrate mobility into learners' learning pathways** and to make visible and recognised what they have learned abroad. The success of ECVET will depend on the development of **mutual trust** among competent institutions.

ECVET is based on a set of technical components that are all underpinned by the **use of learning outcomes**. The technical components referred to in this document are defined in the ECVET Recommendation and further explained in the document entitled *ECVET Questions and Answers*³. The relationship between the ECVET technical components and the ECVET objectives is schematically presented in Figure 1.

² <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:155:0011:0018:EN:PDF>

³ The document can be downloaded at: http://www.ECVET-team.eu/sites/default/files/ECVET_qna_web_21_04_2010_1.pdf

Figure 1 | ECVET objectives and its technical components



This guide

The guide addresses the competent institutions and relevant multipliers wishing to promote ECVET for mobility in their qualifications systems. Due to the different structures of qualification systems and divisions of responsibilities among stakeholders across Europe, the understanding of 'who is a competent institution' with regard to ECVET varies greatly. The range of institutions and bodies that can be involved covers Ministries and other national authorities, social partners, chambers and representatives of sectors as well as education and training providers.

This guide was written to explain the role of ECVET in facilitating the transnational mobility of learners. It presents some possible scenarios for using ECVET in this context, but it is not designed as a manual explaining step-by-step what to do in order to implement ECVET for mobility. It rather seeks to encourage ECVET mobility through explaining the added value and the potential of using ECVET for mobility. It is part of a series of documents that constitute the 'ECVET Users' Guide'.

More pragmatic documentation, such as templates of Memoranda of Understanding or Learning Agreements, will be progressively made available for VET providers and other stakeholders concretely involved in ECVET mobility projects.

This guide presents conceptually a complete picture of ECVET mobility. In practice, when stakeholders engage in ECVET mobility, they can potentially progress in several steps, which is completely in line with the flexible and gradual nature of ECVET.

The 2012 revised version of this document builds on a version published earlier in 2011. In this 2012 version, considerations about quality assurance when using ECVET for geographical mobility were added. By emphasizing the quality assurance aspect the guide reflects the growing need for a coherent use of European tools that facilitate the transparency and recognition of skills and competences, notably the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the EUROPASS and the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET (EQAVET). These European tools contribute to VET excellence and attractiveness and improve the quality of vocational learning abroad. To explain the issues regarding quality assurance in the context of ECVET, this guide refers to the EQAVET quality circle of planning, implementation, evaluation and review. All partnerships using ECVET seek

to implement high quality mobility exchanges and therefore it is recommended to follow the four-step procedure of the EQAVET quality circle. This procedure is used for the quality assurance of ECVET partnerships as well as for individual ECVET mobility exchanges.

The document contains:

- An explanation of the benefits of using ECVET for the organised geographical mobility of learners (Section 2).
- An introduction to the quality assurance procedures underpinning ECVET mobility based on the EQAVET quality circle (Section 3).
- Explanation of the key issues to bear in mind when organising mobility using ECVET at different stages of the mobility process including key points for quality assurance (Section 4).
- A table which shows the functions of competent institutions in using ECVET (Annex A). It is important that those engaging in using ECVET in a transnational context have a good understanding of ‘who does what’ in the partner systems. This table can be used to clarify these roles.
- A checklist with issues and questions to tackle before, during and after mobility periods when using ECVET in transnational mobility (Annex B).
- Lists of key aspects that should be part of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Learning Agreement (Annex C). Examples of such templates are available in the ‘Tool Box’ at: <http://www.ECVET-projects.eu>.
- Two examples of learners’ mobility experiences and the use of ECVET in this context (Annex D). These are real-case examples extracted from the experience of projects funded under the Lifelong Learning Programme testing ECVET.



2 ECVET and geographical mobility

Substantially increasing transnational mobility of VET learners and teachers, and recognising the knowledge, skills and competences they have acquired abroad, will be an important challenge for the future.

The Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training⁴

While mobility in vocational education and training (VET) is already happening, the political ambition in Europe is to increase the numbers and the duration of mobility exchanges significantly. Development of learning mobility in VET implies putting in place a range of support activities adapted to the target group of VET learners including for example: language learning, creating funding opportunities or other preparatory and accompanying measures. The recognition of qualifications and the transparency of what learners have achieved abroad are core to mobility in vocational education and training. ECVET was designed as one of the European instruments to improve this recognition and transparency (other instruments being for example, the European Qualifications Framework or Europass).

Learning mobility using ECVET

ECVET supports the valorisation of learning mobility because:

- The **learning outcomes approach ensures** a better understanding and comparability of qualifications and learning achievements across countries. When using ECVET for learning mobility, the learning outcomes that the learner is expected to achieve abroad are clearly agreed by the partner institutions and stated in a Learning Agreement. Consequently everyone, including the home institution, the host institution and the learner; have a shared understanding of the objectives of the mobility.

Following the participation in appropriate learning activities, learners acquire the expected knowledge, skills and competence and they are assessed on what they have achieved. The learning outcomes that they have achieved abroad are documented in a transcript of record and thus made visible.

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/vocational/bruges_en.pdf

- The **validation and recognition of learning outcomes** are in the framework of **mutual trust** among partner institutions.

Individuals' mobility periods are set in a broader framework of agreements. Partner institutions set the conditions for smoother exchanges of learners and develop mutual trust. They also agree to the conditions under which learners' credit (i.e. assessed learning outcomes) achieved abroad will be validated and recognised. These agreements are formalised in Memoranda of Understanding.

ECVET can accommodate different forms of validation and recognition of learners' learning outcomes, such as:

- Awarding credit for the unit(s) of learning outcomes concerned.
 - Exemption from an assessment or its part.
 - Transcription of the learning outcomes achieved abroad in learners' transcripts of record.
 - Awarding additional credit to what s/he would have normally achieved.
- The **integration of mobility into learning pathways**.

When using ECVET all interested parties (learners, employers, education and training providers) will have a clearer understanding and evidence about the added value of learning in a partner institution. ECVET can improve the validation and recognition of both key competences (such as foreign language skills) as well as more technical skills and competences.

Learners will have the chance to enrich their learning pathway by acquiring abroad the knowledge, skills and competences which they would not have had the possibility to achieve in their home institution (for example, because of the differences in technologies used or because of the variety of products).

ECVET may also help VET providers to respond to certain labour market needs by sending learners abroad for units they cannot deliver themselves (for example, because of the investment necessary to purchase the technology). For the same reasons, VET providers may be able to attract new learners from abroad.

What does it mean to use ECVET for transnational mobility?

In short, using ECVET for transnational mobility implies that:

- In one country, the competent institution (the host institution) assesses the learner's achievement of learning outcomes (as defined in units) and provides evidence of the results of the assessment (written statement on learning outcomes achieved or an assessment grid for example).
- In another country, the competent institution (the home institution) validates and recognises credit for units of learning outcomes. ECVET credit points are allocated to the learning outcomes, enabling the learner to add these credit points to those necessary to achieve a particular qualification. The unit(s) of learning outcomes achieved abroad is (are) recorded in a learner's transcript of record.

For organised mobility (i.e. when the learner goes abroad as part of an inter-institutional agreement), the process takes place in the framework of a Memorandum of Understanding and it is supported by an individual Learning Agreement. Therefore, the learning outcomes to be achieved, the assessment, validation and recognition processes are agreed between the competent institutions a priori thus facilitating the recognition of credit.



3 Quality in ECVET mobility

'Piloting and testing is important to find out what work works well and what needs to be adjusted. Use your experiences, even if they are partly negative, as sources to learn from.'

Quote from a participant at a seminar of the ECVET pilot projects in autumn

The ECVET pilot projects, as well as other ECVET projects under the Lifelong Learning Programme and national ECVET projects, have developed approaches for the implementation of ECVET for geographical mobility. Many of these projects have carried out mobility exchanges in order to test the procedures and tools developed in practice and to revise them based on experience (feedback from teachers, students as well as results). Some tools are already available and those who want to start with ECVET can use them. In many cases, however, the tools will need to be adjusted when applied to other contexts to reflect the specificities of each partnership. Therefore, to ensure quality and to further improve the use of ECVET for geographical mobility, piloting, testing and reflecting on experiences are important aspects with regards to continuous improvement. However, it is recommended to map out evaluation and review procedures at the beginning.

The quality assurance procedures underpinning the use of ECVET for geographical mobility are based on the EQAVET quality circle: planning – implementation – evaluation – review. On the one hand, this circle applies to the process of arranging each specific mobility experience: from the planning of the mobility experience to credit recognition and continuation of the learner's pathway. On the other hand, the quality circle also applies to the quality management of each mobility partnership. Ideally, ECVET is implemented in partnerships. They are set up to support regular mobility exchanges (larger numbers of learners) and are expected to last for a duration that is longer than a specific mobility exchange.

Therefore, two quality circles (one for individual learner mobility and another one for partnerships), using the same approach, can be distinguished and are summarised below.

Quality circle for ECVET mobility of an individual learner

- **Planning:** The planning phase includes all quality assurance measures related to the activities in the phase ‘ECVET before mobility’. A crucial point is setting clear goals for the mobility period. In case the specific mobility is organised in the frame of an already established partnership (formalised by a MoU), the already agreed aspects need to be taken into account, but do not need to be laid down or changed for each individual mobility.
- **Implementation:** The implementation phase refers to the learning period abroad (‘ECVET during mobility’). It concerns quality assurance measures for the acquisition of agreed learning outcomes, the assessment of achieved learning outcomes and the documentation of the results of the learner’s assessment.
- **Evaluation (of the mobility experience):** After the mobile learner has returned to the home institution (‘ECVET after mobility’), the person in charge checks whether the learning outcomes achieved are in line with the Learning Agreement. If this is the case, the learner’s credit achieved abroad is validated and recognised. After all three phases (before, during and after) of the mobility process have been completed, the whole process needs to be evaluated. The crucial question is whether the main aim of using ECVET for geographical mobility has been achieved for the specific mobile learner, in other words whether it was possible to recognise the knowledge, skills and competence he or she has acquired abroad. If the credit achieved abroad cannot be (fully) validated and recognised as planned, the procedures put in place before, during and after the mobility need to be evaluated and reviewed to ensure that for future mobility exchanges credit can be recognised. Regardless of whether recognition has been achieved or not, evaluation and collection of feedback is recommended. This will help identify potential areas for improvement (for example, regarding the time spent on specific issues, the instruments used, or the quality assurance procedures implemented). All actors involved in the mobility period (in particular, host and home institution and the mobile learner) should also be involved in the evaluation process to ensure that all perspectives can be taken into account in the review of the ECVET mobility process. The checklist presented in Annex B can also be used for the evaluation of the ECVET mobility of an individual learner.
- **Review:** Based on the results of the evaluation process, an action plan can be developed for improving future mobility exchanges.

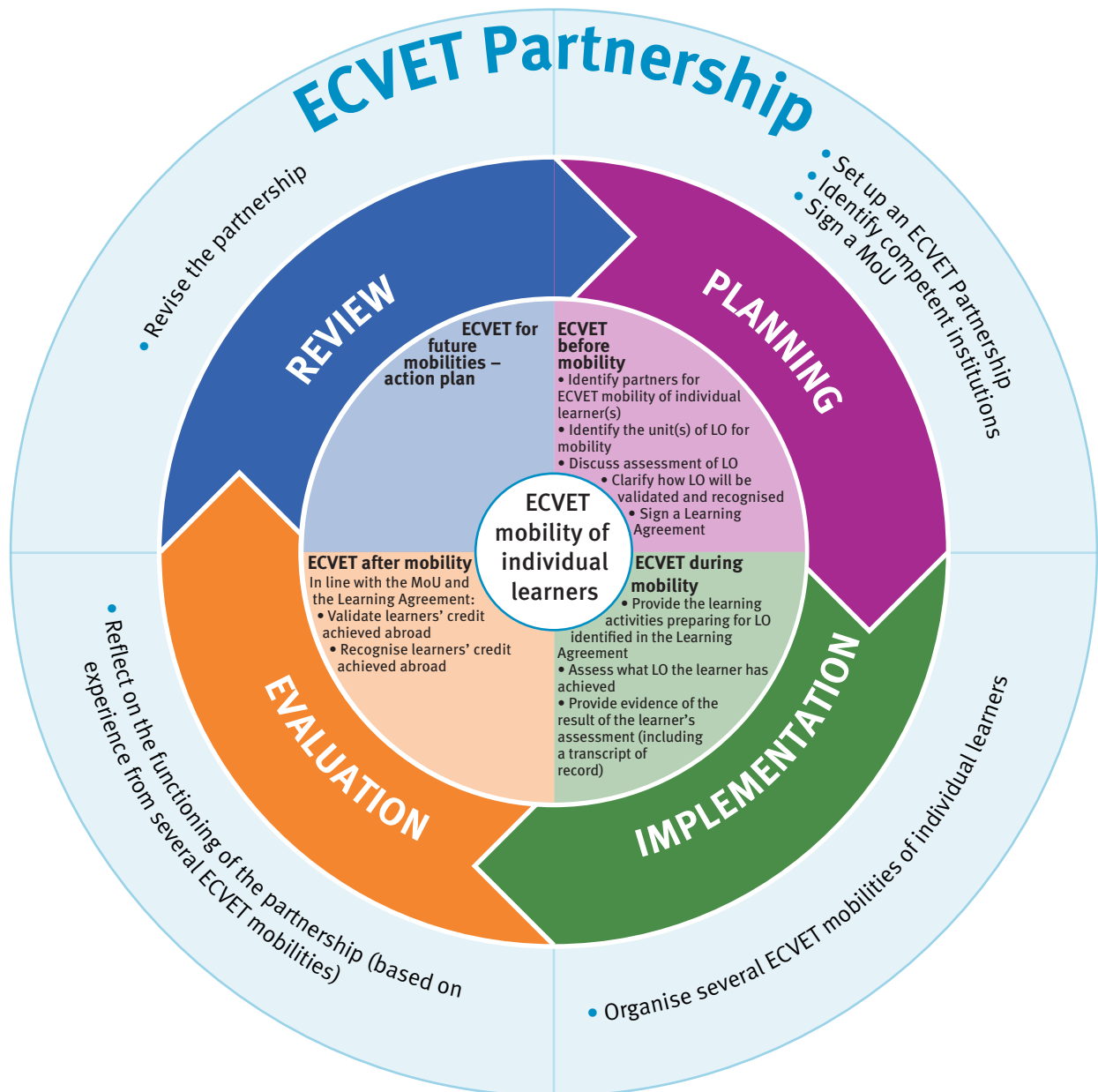
Quality circle for ECVET partnerships for transnational mobility

This quality circle and the related processes do not focus on individual learners, but on the whole ECVET partnership:

- **Planning:** The Memorandum of Understanding clearly specifies the objectives of the partnership and contains clear statements on how the partnership will be evaluated.
- **Implementation:** The partnership is implemented by carrying out several mobility exchanges of individual learners and applying quality assurance measures during this process.
- **Evaluation:** After a certain period of time and in particular after several mobility exchanges have been carried out by the partners, the functioning of the partnership is evaluated. For example, data on assessment results, data on mobile learners’ success after the mobility phase, the impact of the mobility experience on their further pathway or feedback from all actors involved in the mobility projects can be analysed to reflect on the overall functioning of the partnership. This should result in identifying potential areas for improvement.
- **Review:** The partnership is revised based on the evaluation results.

The relationship between the phases of using ECVET for organised geographical mobility, the aspects that need to be taken into account in each phase and the phases of the quality circle are schematically presented in Figure 2, which also outlines the quality circle for ECVET partnerships.

FIGURE 2 | Quality Circle: Using ECVET for transnational mobility



Legend: LO - Learning Outcomes; MoU - Memorandum of Understanding

Key points which can support quality assurance in the different steps and phases of ECVET mobility of individual learners are presented in boxes in Section 4. These key points are summarised in a checklist with questions that can guide the quality assurance process before, during and after mobility periods. This checklist is available in Annex B.

Note: This paper only addresses aspects of quality assurance related to the use of ECVET for geographical mobility. In many cases, certain system specific (national, regional, sectoral) aspects of quality assurance need to be respected as well. It is not necessary to set up a new quality assurance system for ECVET, but the existing quality assurance approaches might need to be adapted to include ECVET related issues.



4 The phases of using ECVET for organised mobility

This section outlines the main issues to be taken into account in using ECVET for mobility. It is structured according to the three main phases: before, during and after mobility. These phases are summarised in Figure 2 below.

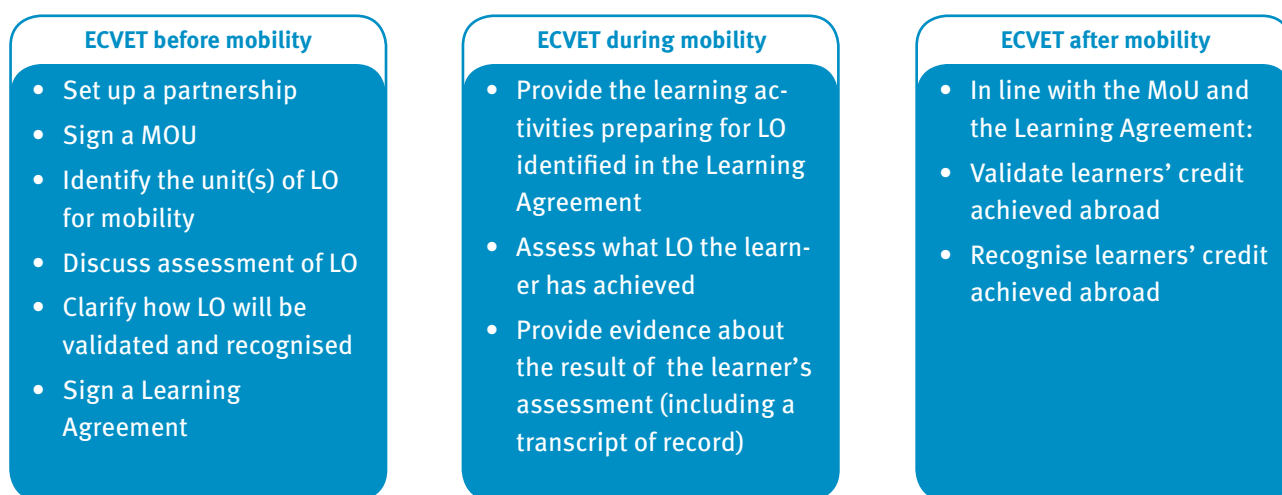
It may initially seem that ECVET is a complex instrument because a great deal of work is necessary in the preparatory phase (i.e. before the mobility takes place). To balance this perception of complexity, it is worthwhile to keep in mind that:

- The preparation phase is needed to make sure that when the learner returns, the knowledge, skills and competence s/he has achieved can be validated and recognised and consequently accumulated. It can be considered as part of a quality assurance process.
- Once a partnership is operating and a Memorandum of Understanding is in place, the preparatory phase becomes much simpler.
- As the mutual trust among partners progressively develops, the partners become familiar with the other qualifications systems and their constraints; the opportunities for cooperation are clarified and the three stages become much smoother.

Note: This text refers frequently to the distinction between the **home** and the **host institution**. In the context of organised transnational mobility:

- The home institution is the one where the learner is regularly enrolled and where s/he prepares the full qualification.
- The host institution is the one where s/he spends a mobility period.

Figure 3 | Key issues to be taken into account before, during and after mobility when using ECVET



Legend: LO: Learning Outcomes; MoU: Memorandum of Understanding

4.1 Before mobility

This section discusses the aspects of ECVET implementation that need to be taken into account before the actual mobility takes place. The actions need to be carried out by VET providers (who can be schools or training companies) in association with the competent institutions that are responsible for validating and recognising the learning outcomes of mobile learners (the nature of these institution will depend on the qualifications system).⁵

4.1.1 Involving the necessary competent institutions

'Competent institution' means an institution which is responsible for designing and awarding qualifications or recognising units or other functions linked to ECVET, such as allocation of ECVET points to qualifications and units, assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes, under the rules and practices of participating countries.

ECVET Recommendation

The use of ECVET relies on a certain number of processes such as the identification and description of units of learning outcomes (including descriptions in terms of ECVET points), the assessment of learning outcomes and decisions on the validation and/or recognition of learners' credit. Depending on the way the qualifications system is organised, different organisations can be involved in different aspects of these processes.

The 'landscape of competent institutions' using ECVET across Europe is very differentiated. In certain qualifications systems, VET providers have a high level of autonomy and can decide to recognise learners' credit from abroad. In other qualifications systems, such decisions have to be made - or confirmed - by another type of competent institution, for example the national/regional authority in charge of the given qualification or an organisation representing the economic sector (e.g. chamber, branch organisation).

The organisations interested in developing partnerships can develop a good understanding of how the competencies for different functions of ECVET are distributed across the qualifications system in which they operate by reflecting upon these questions:

⁵ Please note that there is no fixed order of the necessary steps to be undertaken in each phase. For example, if a partnership is just about to be set up, the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding might take place at a later stage.

ECVET before mobility

- Set up a partnership
- Sign a MOU
- Identify the unit(s) of LO for mobility
- Discuss assessment of LO
- Clarify how LO will be validated and recognised
- Sign a Learning Agreement

- Who and under what conditions has the competence to:
 - Define and/or describe (units of) learning outcomes – including ‘units for mobility’
 - Allocate ECVET points and using what method
 - Assess Learning Outcomes
 - Validate and recognise ECVET credit from abroad
- With how much flexibility can credit be recognised - in terms of comparability or difference between learning outcomes from the host institution and those in the qualifications standard of the home country
- How does validation and recognition of credit achieved abroad need to be carried out and recorded?

In many qualifications systems rules exist on the transfer of learning outcomes within the country from one institution to another, from one type of VET provision to another or from a non-formal or informal learning context towards the formal context in view of achieving a qualification. These rules can constitute the basic structures on which rules for recognition of credit in the framework of ECVET implementation can be put in place.

To identify who is in charge of what element of ECVET, it can be useful to refer to the table with functions of qualifications systems and ECVET-related functions that is presented in Annex A.

Quality assurance – key points:

- Partners know and understand the roles and functions of the competent institutions (from their system as well as from partner systems) involved in the partnership.
- All competent institutions, which in their sector and at the appropriate level of qualification are responsible for the different functions related to ECVET, are involved in the partnership.
- Relevant (national, regional, sectoral) rules and regulations are met when selecting partners abroad to ensure credit transfer. Such rules and regulations could refer to, for example, the required learning sites (e.g. classroom or company), qualifications of teachers or trainers, or the assessment procedures.

4.1.2 Developing ECVET partnerships and establishing mutual trust

A precondition for using ECVET in the framework of organised mobility is the setting up of a partnership. This partnership needs to bring together the competent institutions that fulfil the following functions:

- Identifying the unit(s) of learning outcomes suitable for mobility.
- Delivering the education and training programme/learning activities preparing for the unit(s) of learning outcomes concerned by the mobility.
- Assessing whether the learner(s) has (have) achieved the expected learning outcomes.
- Validating and recognising learners’ credit on their return to the home institution.

Quality assurance – key points:

- The partners in an ECVET partnership understand and agree on their roles and tasks.
- The partners communicate in an open manner.
- The partners make explicit their goals within the partnership and come to a clear agreement on what they wish to achieve.

The partnership for ECVET mobility is formalised by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

A MoU is an agreement between competent institutions which sets the framework for credit transfer. It formalises the ECVET partnership by stating the mutual acceptance of the status and procedures of competent institutions involved. It also establishes partnership's procedures for cooperation.

Get to Know ECVET Better: Questions and Answers

A MoU is a framework agreement within which more detailed individual agreements (Learning Agreements) for specific mobility exchanges are signed. The MoU sets the structures and principles of how the partnership will operate. It specifies under what conditions learners' credit achieved in partner institutions (qualifications systems) will be validated and recognised. **It should be designed so that it can last for a certain period of time** without needing to be amended each time the conditions of a specific mobility period change.

MoU can be developed by networks of competent institutions from several countries/systems, but they can also be bilateral. This depends on the partnership needs and ambitions. While the establishment of MoU is recommended for cases of organised mobility, if the institutions concerned already have trust in each other's procedures and they are competent to recognise credit without the agreement of another institution, they can put in place exchanges directly using the Learning Agreement.

Some examples of MoU are available on the ECVET pilot projects web-site⁶.

Quality assurance – key points:

- All agreements between the partners that are related to the acquisition and assessment of knowledge, skills and competence abroad and their transfer to the home institution, are specified in writing.
- All actors concerned are aware of the content of the documents and the issues they have agreed upon.
- The information included in the MoU is sufficient to outline the general framework of cooperation.

A checklist including key aspects that should be part of any MoU (and optional ones) is available in Annex C.

4.1.3 Agreeing on learning outcomes for the mobility

The partnership and the MoU set up the general conditions for recognition of learning outcomes achieved abroad.

To make the partnership operational, it is necessary to agree on the content (unit(s) of learning outcomes) for each specific mobility.

The agreement about the content of a specific mobility is done between the home and the host institution. In this step the two institutions agree what the learner(s) will learn abroad and how these learning outcomes will be integrated into learners' qualifications. In other words, they **agree upon the learning outcomes and the corresponding unit(s)** that the learner(s) will achieve during mobility **and how learners' credit for these units will be recognised** in the home institution.

The nature of the units of learning outcomes will in general, depend on the qualifications system of the home institution. There are three main alternative possibilities:

⁶ <http://www.ECVET-projects.eu/Toolbox/ToolboxList.aspx?id=16>

1. The qualifications system already uses units of learning outcomes and the **credit to be achieved during mobility corresponds to a full unit** (or several units) or part of a unit. Consequently the credit achieved during mobility could be recognised as a full unit, or part of a unit, on learners' return;
2. The qualifications system does not use units or the existing units cannot be used for mobility purposes. For example, because the existing units contain too many learning outcomes or these are too complex to be achieved during a mobility period of a short duration – this also depends on the duration of the mobility and the pre-requisites of the learners.

In such case, it may be possible (if enabled by the qualifications system rules for implementation of ECVET) to **create 'units for mobility'**⁷ specifically for the purpose of mobility partnerships. In systems that do not use units, 'units for mobility' could concern some of the learning outcomes of the full qualification.

3. A third option can be envisaged where the unit(s) achieved abroad is (are) recognised as **additional credit** (on top of the qualification being prepared by the learner).

Whatever the approach chosen (using existing units or developing 'units for mobility'), it is important that **for each specific mobility the partners have:**

- **Identified a unit of learning outcomes** that the learners can achieve during mobility.
- **Described the learning outcomes** that the learner is expected to achieve abroad.
- Ensured that **it is feasible to achieve the learning outcomes abroad** and that the host institution will ensure that the learner takes part in the relevant learning activities preparing for these outcomes.
- Ensured that **the credit for this unit can be recognised** when the learner returns to the home institution.

Quality assurance – key points:

Selection of learning outcomes:

- The home institution has clearly identified how the learning outcomes can be transferred and recognised.
- It is feasible for learners to achieve the learning outcomes abroad (for example, taking into account learners' already acquired knowledge, skills and competence, the duration of the mobility and the learning opportunities in the host institution, make it possible to achieve the defined learning outcomes).
- It is feasible to assess the defined learning outcomes abroad (for example, taking into account learners' foreign language skills, some learning outcomes may be easier to assess abroad than others).

Description of learning outcomes:

- The learning outcomes descriptions are understandable for the main actors involved (learners, teachers/trainers in home and host institutions, any other competent institution which will validate and recognise learning outcomes from abroad).
- There is a clear link between the planned assessment and the defined learning outcomes. The planned assessment criteria and methods enable the evaluation of whether the learner has achieved the defined learning outcomes.

Note: When using ECVET, qualifications and units of learning outcomes should be described using ECVET points. ECVET points provide additional information about qualifications and units of learning outcomes. They describe the size of the qualification as well as the relative weight of the units with regard to the overall qualification.

In the context of transnational mobility of learners, ECVET points give learners information about how the unit(s) of learning outcomes that they will achieve abroad relate(s) to the qualification they are preparing. They also make the achievement of a unit 'visible' because when the learning outcomes are validated and recognised the ECVET points are registered in a learner's transcript of record.

⁷ If you wish to learn more about the experience of ECVET pilot projects in creating units for mobility you can refer to the document on this topic written as part of projects cooperation activities. Useful Guidelines on 'Units of Learning Outcomes for ECVET, in the context of geographical mobility in the framework of partnerships: <http://www.ECVET-projects.eu/Documents/Guidelines%20on%20units%20for%20ECVET%20-%20geographical%20mobility.pdf>

4.1.4 Discussing the assessment of learning outcomes

During the mobility, each learner acquires the knowledge, skills and competence that were agreed between the home and the host institution. At the end of (or during) the mobility period, the learning outcomes they have achieved will be assessed and documented.

To recognise a learner's credit when s/he returns to the home institution, the home and the host institutions need to discuss assessment and make sure that they trust the assessment approach used in the host institution. Namely they need to discuss:

- **Who will assess the learner, how will learning outcomes be assessed and in what context** (including where)? It is not necessary that the profile of the assessor, the assessment method or the assessment context be the same from one system to another. However, it is important that these points are discussed and that the partners agree that the approach to assessment of the host institution satisfies the requirements (for example in terms of quality assurance) of the system of the home institution.
- **When will the assessment take place?** This is a practical detail, but it is important to inform the learner, the institution who receives him/her and also the home institution about the time and place for assessment. Learners should also know how they will be assessed – especially if this is different from the way they are used to being assessed in their home institution.
- **What procedures will ensure the quality of assessment?** The quality assurance of assessment ensures that the learner is treated fairly and that the result of the assessment is valid and reliable. The lack of quality assurance may undermine the trust in assessment that took place abroad and in turn jeopardises the possibilities of validation and recognition.
- **How will the results of the assessment be recorded in a learner's transcript of record?** Evidence about a learner's achievement of learning outcomes is the basis for validation and recognition. It should be made clear before the mobility, how this will be documented.

Quality assurance – key points:

- The actors involved (host and home institution and any other competent institution involved) agree on assessment procedures and criteria. This agreement is related to the issues presented above (cf. questions on who, how, when, etc.) and is described in a transparent way (for example, in the Learning Agreement).
- They ensure that the assessment they envisage is feasible and appropriate (for example, taking into account constraints such as time and resources available or the language skills of learners and assessors).
- The host institution understands well the level of performance expected by the home institution.
- The assessment criteria and indicators are clearly related to the agreed learning outcomes and the assessment procedures are clearly related to the assessment criteria and indicators.
- The assessment method(s) and criteria are appropriate for the learning outcomes concerned (not too complex and not too simple) and feasible for the mobility period.
- It is clear how the results of the learner's assessment will be documented in his or her transcript of records; thus when the learner returns to his or her home institution, there is evidence on the results of the assessment to validate and recognise his or her credit.

Concerning validation and the recognition of credit achieved during the mobility period, each qualifications system will have its own rules. It is nevertheless important to **make it clear to the learner**, before the mobility takes place, **what form validation and recognition will take**.

4.1.5 Preparing and signing the Learning Agreement

A Learning Agreement is concluded by the two competent institutions involved in the training and validation process and the learner, in the framework of a Memorandum of Understanding.

ECVET Recommendation

The Learning Agreement defines the conditions for the mobility of each individual learner. In other words, it defines, for the specific mobility period, what units of learning outcomes the learner will achieve abroad, how and when these will be assessed and how the unit(s) will be recognised. Prior to signing the Learning Agreement the home institution should discuss all aspects of the mobility period with the learner concerned. Some examples of Learning Agreements are available on the pilot projects' web-site⁸. A checklist including key aspects which should be part of any Learning Agreement and optional ones is available in Annex C.

The Learning Agreement can be accompanied by the Europass certificate supplement presenting the learning outcomes of the qualification the learner is preparing.

Note: If the conditions for mobility are the same for a group of learners it is possible to use the same text (in Learning Agreements) for all the learners in the group. However, each learner should receive and sign a Learning Agreement that concerns him/her individually.

4.2 During the mobility period

ECVET during mobility

- Provide the learning activities preparing for LO identified in the Learning Agreement
- Assess what LO the learner has achieved
- Provide evidence about the result of the learner's assessment (including a transcript of record)

During the mobility period the learner aims to acquire the knowledge, skills and competence that s/he is expected to have achieved abroad. Several issues need to be addressed during the actual mobility phase.

4.2.1 The learner participates in learning activities relevant for the unit(s) s/he is preparing

The staff in the host institution need to be aware of the conditions of the mobility of the learner(s) from abroad. It is important that the learner participates in learning activities that actually prepare for the learning outcomes defined in the agreed unit description.

Independent of whether they are in a VET school or in a company, **the learning activities that the learner participates in, need to enable him or her to acquire the expected learning outcomes.** Obviously the learning activities will not be restricted to only those learning outcomes defined in the Learning Agreement because the learner might participate in learning activities that go beyond these agreed learning outcomes. However, it is also important that the learner has sufficient opportunities to progress in the knowledge, skills and competence that his/her mobility period is in particular concerned with.

The Learning Agreement and the description of unit(s) of learning outcomes it contains, is the guiding document for all: the teacher or trainer in the host institution and the learner.

⁸ <http://www.ECVET-projects.eu/Toolbox/ToolboxList.aspx?id=17>

4.2.2 Assessment of unit(s) of learning outcomes

Once the learning process is completed, the learner must demonstrate the achievement of the required learning outcomes, in line with the Learning Agreement and the MoU, in an assessment process⁹. There can be one or several assessments during the mobility period depending on the duration and the initial agreement. If the assessment does not respect the MoU and the Learning Agreement, the home institution could have difficulties validating and recognising learners' credit.

4.2.3 Documentation of learning outcomes achieved

Once the assessment is completed, it is important that its outcomes are documented in order to support the validation and recognition in the home institution on the learners' return. The evidence about the learning outcomes achieved can take several forms:

- The use of standardised assessment grids in which the assessors record learners' performance.
- Written statement by the assessor about what has been achieved fully, partially, etc.
- Grades, in which case it is important that there is a common understanding or a translation mechanism between the partner institutions as many education and training systems have very different approaches to grading.

The use of Europass mobility¹⁰ can facilitate the recording of learners' learning outcomes achieved.

Quality assurance – key points:

Learning process:

- All actors concerned (such as teachers, trainers, the mobile learner) are aware of all aspects of the planned learning process abroad that are relevant for their roles (for example, they have received a copy of the Learning Agreement or have been briefed about their roles in the mobility phase).
- The host institution is responsible for the quality assurance of the learning context (for example, safety regulations are respected, the relevant activities can be carried out during the mobility period, the necessary equipment is available, guidance is provided to the mobile learner, teachers or trainers have the required competences for supporting the learning process of the mobile learner).
- The host institution is also responsible for the quality assurance of the learning process as such. It helps the learners to acquire the learning outcomes defined in the Learning Agreement.
- There is a designated person who has the responsibility to oversee the mobility process in the host institution (for example, a tutor is appointed).
- The learner knows whom to contact if he or she sees that the Learning Agreement is not being implemented.
- The learning activities the learner takes part in are at least those which have been foreseen in the phase before mobility.
- Procedures are put in place to ensure compliance with the arrangements laid down in the Learning Agreement (for example, the person in charge in the host institution carries out regular checks that everything is in line with the Learning Agreement).
- Procedures are put in place for the handling of problems which might occur during the learning period abroad.

⁹ If you wish to learn more about the reflection and solutions of the ECVET pilot projects on the topic of assessment, you can refer to the document Assessment of learning outcomes <http://www.ECVET-projects.eu/Documents/Note%20on%20assessment%20revised.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/vernnav/InformationOn/EuropassMobility.csp>

Assessment:

- All actors concerned (such as teachers, trainers, the mobile learner) are aware of the assessment criteria to be used to assess the learner.
- Assessment procedures and criteria used are in line with what has been agreed on.

Documentation:

- The learner's transcript of record is issued by the host institution in a timely manner upon completion of the mobility period.
- The learner's transcript of record clearly sets out what has been achieved. The information is presented in an understandable way for the person who is expected to validate learners' credit achieved abroad as well as for other potential target groups (such as employers).
- The assessed and documented learning outcomes correspond to what has been agreed in the Learning Agreement and/or the MoU (or go beyond this agreement).

4.3 After the mobility period**ECVET after mobility**

In line with the MoU and the Learning Agreement:

- Validate learners' credit achieved abroad
- Recognise learners' credit achieved abroad

When learners return to their home institution, learners' credit is validated and eventually recognised. There are different ways in which learners' credit can be validated and recognised, depending on the qualifications system of the home institution, these are outlined below.

Note: While validation and recognition take place after the mobility has been successfully completed, **it is important to clarify how learners' credit will be validated and recognised before the mobility takes place** (see Section 3.1). This should be clear to all: the learner, the teachers/trainers, possibly the school headmaster as well as the competent institutions that may be otherwise be involved in validation and recognition.

4.3.1 Different approaches to credit validation and recognition

At the core of ECVET is the recognition of credit (see the definition of credit below).

Credit for learning outcomes' (credit) means a set of learning outcomes of an individual which have been assessed and which can be accumulated towards a qualification or transferred to other learning 'programmes or qualifications'

ECVET Recommendation

For credit to be recognised in view of a qualification **the learning outcomes have to be relevant for the given qualification**. For example, it is highly unlikely that credit for a unit on 'designing electric circuits' will be recognised for the qualification of a cook, while it is much more likely to be recognised for a qualification preparing for the profession of an electrician.

However, there are differences among qualifications systems regarding the understanding about what is considered to be 'relevant' for a given qualification and how much flexibility is given. Overall, these three main distinctions exist:

- Some qualifications systems enable little flexibility and require that in order for credit to be recognised, **learning outcomes have to correspond to those that would have been achieved in the home system**. In other words, all the learning outcomes defined in the unit description in the home country, have to be contained in the unit for which the learner has achieved credit abroad. This means that **the person is expected to have learned abroad the same things as those s/he would have learned had s/he remained in the home country**.
In many qualifications systems this can be the case for certain units (element of qualifications), for example core units, units related to health and safety or those related to regulations: while more flexibility can be allowed for other units.
- Comparability between learning outcomes from different systems is often difficult to identify. Therefore in some qualifications systems, **it is accepted that the learning outcomes achieved in the foreign qualifications systems are not the same, but equivalent/ comparable**. This means that in general, the person has acquired abroad the knowledge and skills required to carry out the same activities as those that s/he would have learned had s/he stayed at home, even though the detailed knowledge and skills are somewhat different (maybe because the final product or the process are different). For example, the production of many culinary products will vary slightly from country to country.
- In some cases **it is possible to recognise credit even when the learning outcomes achieved abroad** (in the host institution) **differ from the learning outcomes that the person would have achieved in the home institution**. The competent institution can judge that the learning outcomes, even though different, are **relevant** for the qualification – or more exactly relevant for the profession for which the qualification prepares. This is possible when the qualifications system enables learners to choose from optional units and a unit which is not normally offered in the home qualification system can be ‘imported’ and validated as one of the options. For example, the learners can go abroad to learn about technologies and/or processes that their home institution does not provide.
- Finally, sometimes it is not possible to recognise credit when the learning outcomes are not equivalent to the learning outcomes prepared in the home qualifications system. However, it is sometimes still possible to **recognise** such credit as **additional credit** – on top of the learning outcomes defined in the qualifications standard. In these cases the person would achieve the full qualification and an additional unit that can provide additional value to the CV of the person when s/he will be seeking employment.

4.3.2 Validation of learners’ credit

Validation of learning outcomes means the process of confirming that certain assessed learning outcomes achieved by a learner correspond to specific outcomes which may be required for a unit or a qualification.

ECVET Recommendation

In some qualifications systems, the process of validation is not distinguished from the process of recognition, meaning that the two are done together in a single act. However, it is useful to conceptually distinguish between the two processes – also because in some systems they correspond to different acts and are the responsibility of different competent authorities.

The validation of learners’ credit takes place when the learner returns to his/her home institution.

It is based on the results of the assessment. The learner brings to the home institution evidence about the fact that the assessment in the host institution took place as agreed. This evidence also describes what learning outcomes the learner has achieved, compared to the unit description, and to what extent these are fully mastered.

Based on this evidence, the home institution confirms, in line with the Learning Agreement, whether the learner ‘passes’ – i.e. that **s/he has met the expectations** (in terms of learning outcomes) and if so, the credit is validated.

In practice, this can take several forms:

- The learner is not expected to repeat any courses/learning activities (this is a minimum form of validation).
- The learner can be exempt from a formative assessment. This means, for example, that based on the evidence of successful assessment, the title of the unit or the grade for the unit achieved is registered in a learner's transcript of record.
- The learner can be exempt from a summative assessment. This could mean, for example, that based on the evidence of successful assessment, the unit achieved abroad is registered in a learner's transcript as being fully achieved.
- The learner can acquire extra credit. This means for example, that the unit achieved abroad is registered in a learner's transcript as additional credit on top of the credit achieved at home.

When learners' credit achieved abroad is validated it means that it has been **transferred**. It is considered to be an element of the qualification that the learner is preparing for. After the transfer of credit, the learner will continue building on the learning outcomes s/he has achieved and acquire new knowledge, skills and competence. In this way learners' credit is **accumulated**.

Learners' credit is typically recorded in a transcript of record and possibly described with ECVET points. This means that **the learner has a document that describes**, at minimum, the title of **units s/he has already achieved** in view of a given qualification (a short description of learning outcomes can also be provided). When the (unit(s) of) learning outcomes the learner has achieved abroad are registered in the transcript of record it should specify that these were achieved abroad. The accumulation of learners' credit is made visible by the fact that newly achieved (units of) learning outcomes are added to the transcript of record.

4.3.3 Recognition of learners' credit

Recognition of learning outcomes means the process of attesting officially achieved learning outcomes through the awarding of units or qualifications.

ECVET Recommendation

Recognition is the process through which the unit(s) of learning outcomes achieved abroad are officially attested and awarded.

Depending on the qualifications system, the recognition can be done by the same institution as validation or by another institution:

- Recognition can automatically follow validation if for example, the VET provider is at the same time the competent institution for awarding the units and the qualification. In such cases, if the unit is validated as part of a summative assessment, the VET provider can also recognise the unit by awarding a unit-certificate or through other means.
- Recognition can be delayed in time compared to the validation process. It can be done by another type of competent institution who will verify that rules have been complied with and only then, award the unit or the qualification.

Quality assurance – key points:

- In the validation process, learners are treated fairly, taking into account issues such as circumstances of the assessment, differences in the learning environment between home and host institutions or possible language barriers they may have faced in the host institution.
- The actors involved implement the practical results of validating a learner's credit (for example, exemption from taking certain courses, exemption from formal or summative assessment, acquisition of extra credits) and of recognising a learner's credit (for example, registering a unit in a learner's transcript of record, issuing a certificate, registering credit in another way in the learner's transcript of record).
- Mobile learners can progress in their training pathway as planned.
- In case the recognition process is not implemented as planned in the Learning Agreement, the home institution makes it clear to the learner why, and identifies remedial measures.

Annex A: Functions of ECVET Competent institutions

Abstract from *ECVET Questions and Answers*.

This table shows the different functions competent institutions can have in qualifications systems (in white) and the functions they have with regard to ECVET (in grey). Some functions (dashed grey) apply to the implementation of ECVET, but are also present in qualifications systems.

The table shows for example, that the institutions that have the competence to design qualifications are normally competent for describing qualifications in terms of units of learning outcomes and their descriptions in terms of ECVET points. However, these institutions can delegate this function to other competent institutions. The table enables those in charge of setting up a framework for the implementation of ECVET to clarify 'who does what' with regard to ECVET in their systems.

Qualifications system	Conception functions			Realisation functions			
	Design of qualifications	Design of formal or non-formal programmes	Design of assessment/validation process and procedures	Carrying out the formal or non-formal programme	Assessment of learning outcomes (formal, non-formal and informal)	Validation of learning outcomes (formal, non-formal and informal)	Certification/recognition of learning outcomes (including the award of qualification, certificate, diploma...)
Quality assurance (both in qualifications systems and with regard to ECVET)							
Support functions (both in qualifications systems and with regard to ECVET): information, guidance, documentation and communication							
ECVET functions	Design of ECVET elements			Use of ECVET for accumulation and Transfer			
	Description of qualifications in terms of units of learning outcomes	Link between units of learning outcomes and the formal or non-formal programme	Link between assessment/validation processes, the achievement of units of learning outcomes and award of associated ECVET points	Practical use of learning outcomes and credit for mobility	Establishment of learning agreements Assessment of learning outcomes and award of corresponding credit	Recording of assessed learning outcomes and credit in the personal transcript Validation of learning outcomes and of corresponding credit Award of corresponding ECVET points to the learner	Recognition of learning outcomes and process for taking credit into account for the award of qualification (i.e. transfer and accumulation)
Establishment of Memoranda of Understanding							
(all actors may be involved in the establishment of a MoU directly or by delegation)							

Annex B: Checklist for using ECVET for transnational mobility

The key points which can support quality assurance in the different steps and phases of ECVET mobility of individual learners (cf. boxes in Chapter 4) are summarised in the checklist below. This checklist could be used as a basis for reviewing the use of ECVET for mobility by the competent institutions involved. It focuses on the key aspects of using ECVET for mobility, but it can be further expanded or adapted.

It is recommended to look at each of the questions and reflect on what they mean for the specific partnership or the specific mobility in order to identify what kind of actions are needed.

Mobility Phase	Focus	Questions for Evaluation
Before mobility	Partnership	<p>Do the partners know and understand the roles and functions of the competent institutions (from their system as well as from partner systems) involved in the partnership?</p> <p>Do the competent institutions involved cover the functions with regard to ECVET (including the validation and recognition of learning outcomes) relevant for the partnership? In other words, are those institutions that need to take part in credit transfer involved?</p> <p>Are the relevant (national, regional, sectoral) rules and regulations met when selecting partners abroad to ensure credit transfer (such rules and regulations could refer to, for example, the required learning sites (e.g. classroom or company), qualification of teachers or trainers, or assessment procedures)?</p> <p>Do the partners in an ECVET partnership understand and agree on their roles and tasks?</p> <p>Do the partners communicate in an open manner?</p> <p>Does each of the partners have clear and explicit objectives for participation in the partnership?</p> <p>Is there a clear agreement among the partner institutions about expected achievements?</p>
	MoU	<p>Are all agreements that are connected with acquiring and assessing knowledge, skills and competence abroad and their transfer to the home institution specified in writing?</p> <p>Are all actors concerned aware of the content of the document and the issues they have agreed upon?</p> <p>Is the information included in the MoU sufficient to outline the general framework of cooperation?</p>

Units of learning outcomes

Selection of learning outcomes:

Has a (have) unit(s) of learning outcomes for mobility been identified?

Is it clear how this (these) unit(s) relates to the qualification the learner is preparing for?

Has the home institution clearly identified how the learning outcomes can be transferred and recognised?

Given learners' prior knowledge, skills and competence, their language skills, the duration of the mobility and the learning opportunities in the host institution, is it feasible:

- for learners to achieve the defined learning outcomes abroad?
- to assess the defined learning outcomes abroad?

Description of learning outcomes:

Are the learning outcomes descriptions understandable for the main actors involved (learners, teachers/trainers in home and host institutions, any other competent institution that will validate and recognise learning outcomes from abroad)?

Is there a clear link between the planned assessment and the defined learning outcomes?

Do the planned assessment criteria and methods enable the evaluation of whether the learner has achieved the defined learning outcomes?

Assessment

Do the actors involved (host and home institution and any other competent institution involved) agree on assessment procedures and criteria?

Is this agreement related to the questions about who, how, when, etc. and is it described in a transparent way (for example, in the Learning Agreement)?

Do the actors involved ensure that the assessment they envisage is feasible and appropriate (for example, taking into account constraints such as time and resources available or the language skills of learners and assessors)?

Does the host institution understand well the level of performance expected by the home institution?

Are the assessment criteria and indicators clearly related to the agreed learning outcomes and are the assessment procedures clearly related to the assessment criteria and indicators?

Are the assessment method(s) and criteria appropriate for the learning outcomes concerned (not too complex and not too simple) and feasible for the mobility period?

Is it clear how the results of a learner's assessment will be documented in his or her transcript of records (thus when the learner returns to his or her home institution, is there evidence on the results of assessment to validate and recognise his or her credit)?

**Validation
and
recognition**

Is it clear how learners' credit will be validated and recognised?

Is it clear who is responsible for the validation and recognition of a learner's credit? Is the mobile learner aware of how this will be done?

Are the persons responsible for a learner's pathway and possibly the certification, aware of the practical results of validating the learner's credit (for example, exemption from taking certain courses, exemption from formal or summative assessment, acquisition of extra credits) and of recognising the learner's credit (for example, registering a unit in a learner's transcript of record, issuing a certificate, registering the credit in any other way in the learner's transcript of record)?

Are the practical procedures and responsibilities for validation and recognition of a learner's credit documented in partnership agreements (MoU and/or LA)?

**Learning
Agreement**

Does the Learning Agreement identify the learning outcomes to be achieved, how these will be assessed and how learners' credit will be validated and recognised?

Does the host institution agree with preparing the learner for the achievement of these learning outcomes?

Is there agreement about how the host institution will document the result of the assessment (assessment grid, written statement – in what language[s])?

**During
mobility**

**Provision of
the learning
activities
preparing
for LO
identified in
the Learning
Agreement**

Are all actors concerned (such as teachers, trainers, the mobile learner) aware of all aspects of the planned learning process abroad that are relevant for their roles (for example, have they received a copy of the Learning Agreement or have they been briefed about their roles in the mobility phase)?

Is the host institution acting according to its responsibility for the quality assurance of the learning context (for example, safety regulations are respected, the relevant activities can be carried out during the mobility period, the necessary equipment is available, guidance is provided to the mobile learner, teachers or trainers have the required competences for supporting the learning process of the mobile learner)?

Is the host institution acting according to its responsibility for the quality assurance of the learning process as such? In other words: do they help the learner to acquire the learning outcomes defined in the Learning Agreement?

Is there a designated person who has the responsibility to oversee the mobility process in the host institution (for example, is a tutor appointed)?

Does the learner know whom to contact if he or she sees that the Learning Agreement is not being implemented?

Are the learning activities the learner takes part in at least those which have been foreseen in the phase before mobility?

Are procedures put in place to ensure compliance with the arrangements laid down in the Learning Agreement (for example, does the person in charge in the host institution carry out regular checks that everything is in line with the Learning Agreement)?

Are procedures put in place for the handling of problems which might occur during the learning period abroad?

Assessment

Are all actors concerned (such as teachers, trainers, the mobile learner) aware of the assessment criteria to be used to assess the learner?

Are the assessment procedures and criteria used in line with what has been agreed on?

**Evidence/
documenta-
tion**

Is the learner provided with the evidence of his or her assessment which will serve as basis for the validation and recognition of credit?

Is the learner's transcript of record issued by the host institution in a timely manner upon completion of the mobility period?

Does the learner's transcript of record clearly set out what has been achieved?

Is the information presented in an understandable way for the person who is expected to validate learners' credit achieved abroad as well as for other potential target groups (such as employers)?

Do the assessed and documented learning outcomes correspond to what has been agreed on in the Learning Agreement and/or the MoU (or go beyond this agreement)?

**After
mobility****Validation**

Has the learner achieved the expected learning outcomes, based on the evidence of his or her assessment in the host institution?

Can his or her credit be validated in line with the LA? If not, why?

Has the learner been treated fairly in the validation process (taking into account issues such as circumstances of the assessment, differences in the learning environment between home and host institution or possible language barriers they may have faced in the host institution)?

Do the actors involved implement the practical results of validating learners' credit (for example, exemption from taking certain courses, exemption from formal or summative assessment, acquisition of extra credits)?

Recognition

Can his/her credit be recognised in line with the Learning Agreement? If not why?

Do the actors involved implement the practical results of recognising learners' credit (for example, registering a unit in a learner's transcript of record, issuing a certificate, registering credit in another way in the learner's transcript of record)?

Follow-up

Can the mobile learners progress in their training pathways as planned?

In case it was not possible to implement the validation and recognition process as planned in the Learning Agreement, does the home institution:

- identify the reasons for deviating from the Learning Agreement?
- make it clear to the learner why?
- identify remedial measures?

ANNEX C: Memorandum of Understanding and Learning Agreement

A partnership for ECVET mobility is formalised in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). To lay down the conditions for a specific mobility period a Learning Agreement is concluded for each learner. These documents include arrangements that need to be in place when using ECVET for transnational mobility in addition to the usual practical arrangements for planning mobility exchanges¹¹. This Annex (Annex C) presents the key aspects that should be part of these documents. If necessary, additional arrangements can be included. Templates from various ECVET pilot projects are available in the tool-box section at <http://www.ECVET-projects.eu>.

Memorandum of Understanding

Objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding

The MoU forms the framework for cooperation between the competent institutions. It aims to establish mutual trust between the partners. It is explicitly stated in the MoU that the partner organisations mutually accept their respective criteria and procedures for assessment, validation and recognition of knowledge, skills and competence for the purpose of transferring credit. Should the partners agree on additional objectives specific to a given partnership, these should also be included in the MoU.

Identification of the organisations signing the MoU

Partners provide information on the organisations signing the MoU and describe what they are competent for in their systems.

The MoU contains the relevant contact information of all institutions involved and their functions and roles.

Organisations that are covered by the MoU (if appropriate)

The organisations directly signing the MoU are not necessarily all the organisations which are entitled to operate in the framework of the MoU. For example, in the case of MoUs signed at sectoral or regional level, these may concern the full range of VET providers who are governed by the national/sectoral authorities signing. Therefore the MoU may contain either a list of names of VET providers to whom the MoU applies or it can refer to a type of VET provider (for example, those accredited by the national ministry of education). The list can be put in an annex.

Information about the qualification(s) covered by the MoU

The availability of sufficient and transparent information about the VET qualification(s) in the home and host country forms the basis for mutual trust. Relevant information has usually already been exchanged before drawing up a MoU. The MoU itself can contain key information (such as a Europass Certificate Supplement) – possibly in an annex. The MoU can cover a group of qualifications.

¹¹ The identification of these key aspects is mainly based on the note on documents used to underpin ECVET processes that was developed by the ECVET pilot projects. It presents the synthesis of the discussion on Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), Learning Agreements (LA) and Learners' Transcript of Record, that took place during the sixth seminar in Prague (18-19 November 2010) (available in the tool-box section at <http://www.ECVET-projects.eu>).

Competent institutions with regard to ECVET technical specifications

Partners describe the competence of the competent institutions regarding the ECVET functions (see Annex A). This differs from one system to another. The following needs to be clarified:

- Who is competent to identify the unit(s) of learning outcomes suitable for mobility;
- Who is competent for delivering the education and training programme/learning activities preparing for the unit(s) of learning outcomes covered by the mobility;
- Who is competent to assess whether the learner(s) has (have) achieved the expected learning outcomes;
- Who is competent to validate and recognise learners' credit on their return to the home institution.

Assessment, documentation, validation and recognition

The MoU could explain the procedure and responsibilities for the assessment, documentation, validation and recognition:

- What are the procedures and methods of assessment used by the host institution;
- What is the form of documentation used by the host institution (such as a learner's transcript of record, which can be enclosed as an appendix to the Learning Agreement, the Europass mobility, or form sheets specified by the sending institution);
- Validation: how does the home institution determine that the learning outcomes achieved abroad can be validated;
- Recognition: how does the home institution officially confirm that the learning outcomes have been achieved and validated (such as by issuing a certificate).

More detailed information is provided in the Learning Agreement.

Validity in time of the MoU

Partners specify the duration of the validity of the MoU. In some cases it can be useful to conclude the agreement with a validity of a few years; in other cases, a longer period of validity will be more appropriate. In principle, however, a period of several years is recommended.

Evaluation and review process

Partners specify the date and procedures for evaluating the functioning of the partnership and for future improvement.

Additional topics

The MoU could also include spaces for adding additional topics. For example, partners could agree to establish a partnership that is open to other organisations that would like to join the partnership at a later stage.

Learning Agreement

Information about the establishment of a MoU

The Learning Agreement provides information on whether a MoU has been developed and sets the framework for this specific mobility exchange.

Information about the actors involved

The Learning Agreement contains the key contact information of the partner institutions involved (such as VET providers in the home and host country as well as other competent institutions or intermediary institutions) and the mobile learner (or his/her legal guardian, if applicable).

Duration of the training period abroad

The Learning Agreement specifies the start and end dates and the overall length of the training period abroad.

Qualification being prepared by the learner - including information on where the learner is in his/her learning pathway (his/her current status of acquired knowledge, skills and competence)

To enhance transparency and ensure that the mobile learner is assigned tasks during the mobility stay that are in line with his/her competence level and the training objectives of the stay abroad, it is recommended to provide sufficient documentation of knowledge, skills and competence previously acquired by the learner and/or to state the tasks s/he is already able to carry out (for example, under instruction, under supervision, or independently). Existing instruments and Europass documents will help to describe other already acquired knowledge, skills and competence of the learner, such as language skills.

Description of the learning outcomes to be achieved during mobility

A key element of the Learning Agreement is information about content (unit[s] of learning outcomes) for each specific mobility (and the associated ECVET points according to the home country regulation). In some cases the mobility does not concern a full unit. The Learning Agreement specifies if that is the case and if only part of the learning outcomes are concerned.

It is also recommended to specify how the learning activities abroad will be organised in relation to the learning outcomes to be acquired. The information provided does not need to be too detailed but it is important that the planned learning activities are clearly relevant for the learning outcomes to be acquired. This will facilitate that the mobility period goes smoothly and the learners have sufficient and appropriate opportunities to develop learning outcomes for which they will be assessed. For example, an individual development plan for the learner could be enclosed or one could be created at the beginning of the stay abroad. This plan can describe the tasks to be completed and/or the courses to be attended which are necessary for the acquisition of the agreed knowledge, skills and competence.

Assessment and documentation

To recognise a learner's credit when s/he returns to the home institution, the home and the host institutions specify and agree upon assessment procedures (including criteria, indicators and methods). Furthermore, it is important to specify how the results of the assessment will be recorded in the learner's transcript of record and who is responsible for ensuring that the documentation is clear so that the learning outcomes can be validated and recognised by the home institution.

Validation and recognition

To ensure that the learning outcomes achieved abroad will be integrated into a learner's qualification or pathway, the Learning Agreement specifies how the home institution will validate and recognise them. It also specifies who is responsible for validation and recognition in the home system and more specifically in the home institution (note that the organisation in charge of recognition may be another body). Depending on the system in place, validation and recognition can be kept separate in two steps, but it can also be combined in a single action. This should be explained. In case the learner is participating in a VET programme in which grades are used, it should be specified how grades will be given to the mobile learner for the learning outcomes achieved abroad.

Additional topics

The Learning Agreement can include spaces for adding additional topics relevant for the respective partnership.

Annex D: ECVET for mobility in practice

Legend: **LO** – Learning Outcomes, **MoU** – Memorandum of Understanding, **VET** – vocational education and training

Before mobility

During mobility

After mobility

EXAMPLE 1 The mobility of Rosa, who is preparing for a qualification in the tourism sector (tourism organiser) in Finland

Based on the experience of the ECVET pilot project M.O.T.O

Set up a partnership

In the framework of a broader agreement between the national competent institutions in charge of qualifications, a Finnish VET school developed a partnership with a VET school in Iceland. This broader partnership brought together the Finnish National Board of Education and the Icelandic Ministry of Education, but also other national authorities (from Italy and Austria) who took part in the M.O.T.O project.

In Finland the VET school is in charge of validating and recognising learners' credit. In Iceland, together with the VET school, an important partner institution was the employer who received Rosa and provided the work-placement.

Sign a MoU

The two VET schools sign a MoU which specifies, among other things, the requirements for assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes achieved abroad of each of the VET schools and the quality assurance used by each institution¹².

Identify the unit of learning outcomes

Rosa will go on a mobility period to Iceland. In Iceland she will achieve the learning outcomes that correspond to the unit of the qualification she is preparing for at home entitled *Implementing Tourism Services*. The learning outcomes for that unit are described in the Learning Agreement.

In Iceland, Rosa will be learning on the job. She will be learning in a riding centre where she will take part in various activities including taking care of horses (between 30 and 60), grooming them and taking customers on guided tours. Rosa has already worked with horses in the past and therefore she has the necessary prerequisites to fully take part in these activities.

This mobility will last three weeks.

Discuss Assessment of LO

The MoU states the general rules to be followed for assessment during the mobility period.

It specifies that for Finnish students abroad:

When performing on-the-job learning in another country, the teacher in the host country arranges an assessment discussion at the end of the on-the-job learning period with the student, the workplace representative or job instructor and the contact person or a VET teacher from the host country VET institution

The Learning Agreement contains an assessment grid which also identifies the assessment criteria for all learning outcomes. Rosa's achievement of learning outcomes will be assessed using these criteria during a discussion between these three persons. This is also in line with the Finnish approach to learners' assessment.

¹² The completed MoU can be accessed on the web-site of the ECVET Pilot projects – go to 'more information': <http://ECVET-projects.eu/Projects/ProjectDetail.aspx?id=11>

Clarify how LO will be validated and recognised

Through this experience Rosa will achieve some very specific knowledge and skills that are in particular related to horse riding and breeding. These are not explicitly specified in the qualification she is preparing for at home. However, she will also develop more general competences that are related to the development and implementation of tourism services. These competences are explicit in the qualification she is preparing for in Finland and hence she will be able to accumulate the credit for these learning outcomes.

If Rosa is positively assessed, she will achieve the unit *Implementing Tourism Services*. This will be recorded in her transcript of record and she will obtain the credit points that correspond to this unit.

Sign a Learning Agreement

When all the details of the mobility are agreed on, representatives from the home and host institution as well as Rosa sign a Learning Agreement. She brings it with her to the host institution and it is also ensured that all actors involved have access to it during the mobility period.

Take part in the learning activities preparing for the LO identified

As foreseen, Rosa takes part in the different activities of the riding centre. She takes care of horses and while doing it she observes the safety regulations (one of the learning outcomes to achieve). She guides tourists in English (language skills are also among the learning outcomes to achieve) and serves customers with courtesy taking into account their cultural background (also among the learning outcomes), etc.

Rosa is aware of the learning outcomes she is expected to achieve and if needed she can request that the job instructor let her further work/develop in a specific area which she needs to develop.

Assess what LO the learner has achieved

As foreseen, at the end of the mobility period, the job instructor, the VET teacher from the Icelandic school and Rosa have an assessment discussion. This discussion is guided by the assessment grid in the Learning Agreement. Rosa is first asked to self-evaluate her performance with regard to the different learning outcomes. The company representative does the same and the results are discussed between the three persons.

Based on the discussion, the VET teacher from the host institution confirms the assessment result.

It appears during the discussion that a small part of learning outcomes has not really been achieved because Rosa did not take part in related activities – this concerns mainly learning outcomes related to the use of resources on the work place. These learning outcomes are hence not assessed.

Provide evidence about the assessment

Rosa's self-evaluation, the assessment of the job instructor, as well as the assessment of the VET teacher are recorded in a single assessment grid that is attached to the Learning Agreement which Rosa brings with her to her home institution.

Validate learners' credit

When Rosa returns to her home institution, her teacher looks at the assessment grid and confirms that she has indeed achieved the learning outcomes needed for the unit *Implementing Tourism Services*.

Despite the fact that she has not achieved a few learning outcomes (because of lack of opportunities), the home institution considers this gap is a minor part of the unit and it does not prevent Rosa from achieving the unit.

Recognise learner's credit

The unit *Implementing Tourism Services* is recorded in Rosa's transcript of record, together with the grade that she has obtained. She is also awarded the credit points that correspond to that unit.

Evaluate and review

Afterwards, the whole mobility exchange is evaluated. Using a standardised questionnaire, all actors involved (Rosa, her teacher in Finland, the job instructor and the VET teacher from the Icelandic school) are asked for feedback on all steps and phases of the mobility process. Based on the results of this evaluation an action plan is developed that supports the improvement of future mobility actions (for example, actions to avoid that certain agreed upon learning outcomes are not acquired during the stay abroad).

EXAMPLE 2**The mobility of Yvonne, who is preparing a qualification in the metal industry sector (Mechatronikerin) in Germany in the Dual VET System**

Based on the experience of the ECVET ITP project MOVET¹³
(modules for vocational education and training for competences in europe)

Set up a partnership

In the framework of a project with 15 partners in Germany, Finland and Denmark, vocational schools in Munich (DE), Pori (FI) and Copenhagen (DK) developed three modules (units) for IVET in the metal industry for the qualification mechatronic resp. automation technician. For the German consortium, a tight partnership between the dual partners on the one hand, the Berufsschule für Fertigungstechnik (vocational school for metal engineering) and on the other hand, the companies BMW, MTU aero engines and SWM Stadtwerke München – was elementary. The three VET schools had several years experience in student exchange – even before entering the ECVET topic. To process the IVET-modules all three schools cooperated with local companies – for visits and/or internal training.

Identify the unit of learning outcomes

Yvonne will go on two transnational mobility periods, each lasting three weeks. In Copenhagen she will take part in a multinational module for Hydraulics. In Pori she will achieve learning outcomes in IT-BUS technology. Both are topics within the national curricula for mechatronics / automation technicians in Germany, Finland and Denmark. Besides the transnational learning periods, Yvonne will take part in the German unit for Programmable Logic Control. Here she will be one of the hosting students. Each unit of the curriculum is taken by local as well as guest students. The delivery of the training preparing for the units varies, but in general it combines a period of two weeks of school based learning and one week of learning in a company. All units are assessed through a final assessment (paper and pencil, skills demonstration and technical discussion).

The process of identification of these units of learning outcomes started with a comparison of the three national curricula. The VET schools had preliminary knowledge about special competences in teaching in diverse technical fields. In addition, the level of expected learning outcomes had to be decided and ensured. Therefore an instrument called TaxonomyTable (TaxTab) was developed¹⁴.

Discuss Level and Assessment of LO

Developing the common units of learning outcomes involves several layers of discussion. From a rough idea concerning a first draft, to an elaborated description of all LO based on allocation in the TaxTab tool. The TaxTab tool provides transparency about the level of cognitive processes and the types of knowledge related to the skills and competences. All the documents (description of LO, TaxTab, timetable for the module) are discussed and validated by the participating partners, mainly the sending and hosting schools and companies. The matching tasks for assessment and the criteria need to be developed in parallel.

Clarify how LO will be validated and recognised

Through this experience Yvonne will achieve some very specific knowledge and skills in automation technology. These are explicitly specified in the qualification she is preparing for at home. She will also develop more general competences in the area of personal and social competences as well as language skills. All the modules are processed in the English language. If Yvonne is positively assessed, she will achieve the units *Hydraulics and IT-BUS Technology* as transnational units and *Programmable Logic Control* as national unit. This will be recorded in the Europass certificate and documented by special certificates. The recognition she receives concerning the curricula of company based learning, is that she does not need to repeat these units in company based training.

¹³ For more information about this project refer to the Adam data base description and the links provided there: http://www.adam-europe.eu/prj/7093/project_7093_en.pdf

¹⁴ See www.gomovet.eu for details.

Sign a MoU

Yvonne and the three VET schools (and in Germany the companies) sign a MoU which specifies among other things, the requirements for assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes achieved abroad. The VET schools ensure the quality, including the consistency in the level of LO by filling in the TaxTab¹⁵.

Take part in the learning activities preparing for the LO identified

As foreseen, Yvonne takes part in the training by preparing for the three units; one unit is prepared at home, hosting the foreign students in her VET school and two units are prepared abroad, where she is a guest in the partner institutions.

She takes part in the school based and company based learning arrangements. She follows the cultural programme in the foreign country, participates in sports activities and visits historic places or cultural events. In the youth hostel she arranges with the other foreign students their daily catering and organises evening free time.

Yvonne is aware of the learning outcomes she is expected to achieve and, if needed, she can request that the teachers let her work and learn further in a specific area that she needs to develop.

Assess what LO the learner has achieved

As foreseen, at the end of the mobility period the VET teacher from the hosting school, the company trainer (if available) and Yvonne carry out the assessment about what she has learned. This has three parts: a small paper and pencil test in the school, a skills demonstration / programming task in the company and a technical discussion at the end. There is the possibility of participating as a guest observer for a person from the sending institution if interested (e.g. a company trainer from Munich).

The VET teacher of the hosting VET school (and the company trainer) confirms the assessment result. Yvonne receives the certificate and the Europass mobility.

Provide evidence about the assessment

Yvonne's skills demonstration (the programme file), her paper and pencil test, the assessment of the VET teacher (and if appropriate the assessment of the company trainer) are recorded and attached to the Learning Agreement which Yvonne brings with her to her home institutions.

Validate learners' credit

When Yvonne returns to her home institutions (VET school and company), her teacher and company trainer look at the assessment documents and the certificate and confirm that she has indeed achieved the learning outcomes needed for the unit **Hydraulics resp., IT-BUS Technology** and also the unit **Programmable Logic Control** which she participated at home.

Recognise learner's credit

The units **Hydraulics resp., IT-BUS Technology resp., and Programmable Logic Control** are recorded in Yvonne's transcript of record, together with the grade that she has obtained (if appropriate).

(Due to the fact that Germany does not have an elaborated credit system, she cannot be awarded credit points.)

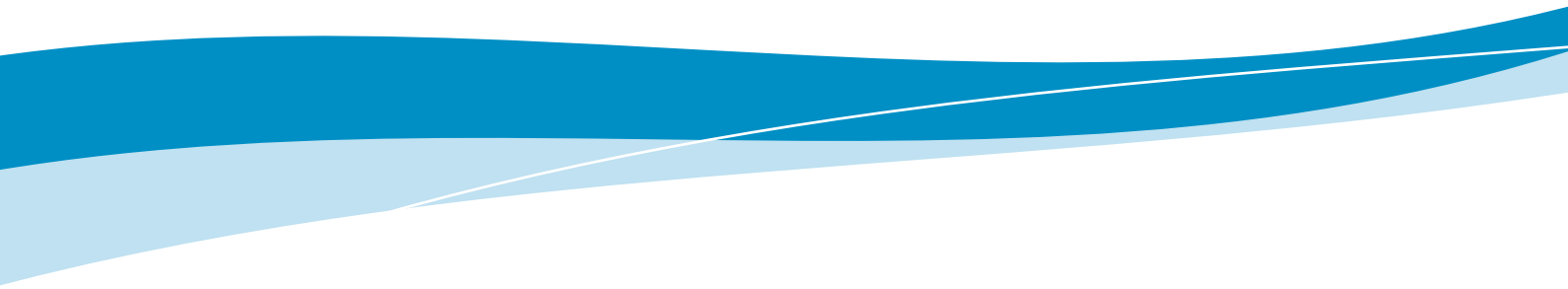
Evaluate and review

After all three units have been carried out in the partner countries, the whole partnership is evaluated. All mobile learners, their teachers and the trainers in the companies are asked for their feedback (questionnaire). The aim of this evaluation process is to identify potential areas for improvement and to recommend necessary changes for the future success of this partnership.

¹⁵ The MOU and the TaxTab can be found at www.gomovet.eu



Numéro de projet: 2012.4589			
Titre: USING ECVET FOR GEOGRAPHICAL MOBILITY (2012) Part II of the ECVET Users' Guide - Revised version including key points for quality assurance			
Version linguistique	Numéro de catalogue	ISBN-13	DOI
EN	NC-30-12-726-EN-C	978-92-79-25816-9	10.2766/37433



ISBN 978-92-79-25816-9



9 789279 258169