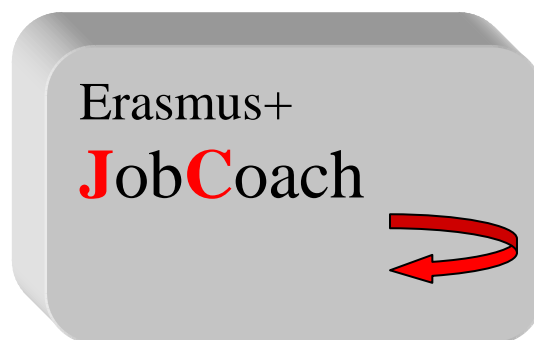
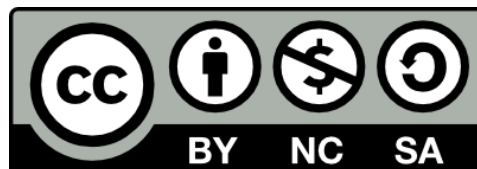


Erasmus+ - project „Job coach for persons with disabilities”



Guideline for European implementation of the qualification concept for the Job Coach for persons with disabilities

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The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

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Guideline for European implementation of the qualification concept for the Job Coach for persons with disabilities was developed under the main responsibility of the project partner Stowarzyszenie Wsparcie Społeczne “Ja-Ty-My” in Poland. As operational partner in the development are mentioned:

	<p>Stowarzyszenie Wsparcie Społeczne Ja Ty My Poland</p>
	<p>Grone-Schulen Niedersachsen gGmbH Germany</p>

The following partners also contributed to the development of these Guidelines:

	<p>Grone-Bildungszentrum NRW gGmbH Germany</p>
	<p>Fachhochschule Münster Germany</p>
	<p>Cordaan Netherlands</p>
	<p>Queen's University Belfast UK</p>
	<p>Les Genêts d'Or France</p>
	<p>Stowarzyszenie Niepełnosprawni dla Środowiska EKON Poland</p>

Introduction

In the light of objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, that is the leitmotiv of growth and employment, and in addition to numerous complementary educational products, the Erasmus+ project “A job coach for people with disabilities” has been prepared, being a European qualification program for job coaches. The project has been coordinated by partners from five European Union countries (Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, France and Poland). The European concept of training Job Coaches will significantly contribute to supporting equality and diversity through implementation of an integrated educational path. Moreover, this concept will also contribute to employment growth to 75% of residents of the European Union who are able to work (a group of 20- to 64-year-olds). On one hand, the European educational concept supports professionalization of services provided by so-called Job Coaches, who advise people with disabilities and support their integration with the labour market. On the other hand, people with disabilities will also eventually benefit from knowledge and experience of Job Coaches: a process of their integration with the labour market will be easier and more effective.

The qualification concept prepared within the project describes various levels of training Job Coaches for people with disabilities in accordance with the European Qualification Framework. Its main element are learning outcomes described at various levels of the EQF, as well as competences and skills that a Job Coach for people with disabilities will be able to gain or improve, following this educational path. Furthermore, our qualification concept includes a detailed curriculum and description of six training modules, that form the basis for training Job Coaches who work with people with disabilities. The European educational concept has been prepared in such a manner that it can be transferred to various EU countries and so that it can be adapted to educational systems of these countries. Its appropriate adaptation in individual countries is necessary due to significant differences in educational systems or varying criteria for access to professions (e.g. in France Job Coach for people with disabilities needs only a level 4 of the EQF, in Poland it should be a level 7). Adapting the European concept to national requirements may relate to

both its content and structure and depends on the EQF level on which it will be based in a given country. However, the main assumptions of the European concept should not be changed within national concepts in order to maintain the highest possible comparability of the concept of training a Job Coach for people with disabilities.

This guide on European implementation the concept of training a Job Coach for people with disabilities aims at showing institutions from various European Union countries the possibilities of implementing this concept into their policies. The guide is to show who can benefit from this concept, what it is used for and in what areas it can be implemented.

The first step to better classify developed approaches to implementation of the European concept is explaining the European Qualifications Framework at different levels and assigning the European concept to specific levels together with its justification. Next, it will be explained in detail how the European concept can be implemented at each level (5, 6 or 7). These are proposals that can be transferred to the educational systems of other EU countries. Finally, a short perspective will be presented for the developed concept.

European Qualification Framework

The European Qualification Framework¹ (EQF) is a European-wide qualifications framework that allows the mapping of qualifications in different EU countries, making comparisons easier to understand.

EQF Levels

The EQF differentiates between eight qualification levels. The EQF descriptors have been written to cover the full range of learning outcomes, irrespective of the learning or institutional context from basic education, through school and unskilled worker levels up to doctoral or senior professional levels. They cover both work and study situations, academic as well as vocational settings, and initial as well as continuing education or training, i.e. all forms of learning formal, non-formal and informal. Descriptors reflect both specialisations and generalisations. Thus, reaching a higher

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/search/site?f%5B0%5D=im_field_entity_type%3A97

level does not necessarily imply that the required skills and knowledge will be more specialised, although this might be the case in many academic and research contexts. Moving from a lower to a higher level, in some study or work contexts, can also mean becoming more of a generalist. For example, EQF levels 5 to 8 can be compatible not only with qualification degrees acquired in formal way by studying in a higher education institution, but also with vocational. Each of the 8 levels is defined by a set of descriptors indicating the learning outcomes relevant to qualifications at that level in any system of qualifications. The learning outcomes are referred to KSC in Table 1.

Table 1 . KSC descriptors defining levels in EQF

EQF Level	Knowledge	Skills	Competence
	<i>In the context of EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.</i>	In the context of EQF skills are described as: cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking), and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)	<i>In the context of EQF, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy.</i>
Level 1	Basic general knowledge	Basic skills required to carry out simple tasks	Work or study under direct supervision in a structured context
Level 2	Basic factual knowledge of a field of work or study	Basic cognitive and practical skills required to use relevant information in order to carry out tasks and to solve routine problems using simple rules and tools	Work or study under supervision with some autonomy
Level 3	Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts, in a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information	Take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study; adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems
Level 4	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change; supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities
Level 5*	Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; review and develop

	and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge		performance of self and others
Level 6*	Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles	Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study	Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups
Level 7*	Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields	Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields	Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches; take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams
Level 8*	Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields	The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice	Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research

Source: European Council: *European Qualifications Framework - Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008*, Official Journal C 111, 6.5. 2008., Annex 2

In Table 1 levels 5, 6 and 7 of the EQF are deliberately marked in green since they are considered by the project partnership as the most adequate for implementation of the work coach curriculum. Individual levels of implementation have been established, depending on the individual national qualification frameworks and individual educational systems of partner countries.

1. Implementation of the European concept at level 5 of the European Qualifications Framework

Implementation of the qualification concept for the Job Coach for persons with disabilities at level 5 of the European Qualifications Framework is best illustrated with

the example of France, where presumably from the academic year 2019/2020 candidates will be able to enrol at a course for future coaches, which will be run by the University of Brest. (Fr. *Université de Bretagne Occidentale*) and will be attested by a Diploma (French: *Diplôme universitaire - DU*). DU is a university degree. However, contrary to bachelor's, master's or doctor's degree it is not awarded by the French state, but by individual universities. This degree applies to a limited field of knowledge or science and is aimed, most often, at providing professional background. Each university has the right to specify courses attested by DU. The application process, duration of studies, methods of student assessment can vary widely, depending on the topic of and purpose for the diploma. However, most DU courses cover up to three months of study spread over 2 or 3 years (e.g. weekend trainings).

The first meeting of the representatives of the French partner with a director responsible for lifelong learning at the University of Brest ended with confirmation that the University is interested in creating a course for future Job Coaches. A thematic scope of the course, based in large part on the curriculum prepared by the project team, will be developed from September 2018 to April 2019. It is highly probable that the first students will be admitted in the academic year 2019/2020. It must be added that it will be the first university course of this kind (attested by *Diplôme universitaire*) in France.

Details on implementation of the curriculum at level 5 EQF can be found in the document describing the French strategy.

2. Implementation of the European concept at level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework

It can be assumed that due to the nature and specificity of the profession, some future job coaches will not consider acquiring professional qualifications within one educational cycle. It seems more likely that they will first gain professional qualifications or a degree in a related university field, and only after a few years of practising they will decide to direct their career path and undertake further education to become fully qualified job coaches. In such a case, implementation of the

qualification concept for the Job Coach for persons with disabilities at the level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework is best illustrated by the German example.

This model assumes completing vocational training at the bachelor's or master's level, covering at least six semesters, and 30 ECTS points, that is a total of 5,400 hours. In Germany, these degrees are awarded by universities (*Universitäten*) and high vocational schools (*Fachhochschulen*).

The project was participated by three partners from Germany, including Fachhochschule (FH) Münster, i.e. a high vocational school, and two non-governmental organizations having experience in working with job coaches: Grone Schulen from Osnabrück and Dortmund. It allowed for exchanging a wide variety of experience and confronting theoretical approach with practice, but most of all resulted in close cooperation between the Fachhochschule (FH) Münster and the organization from Dortmund, that aims to create a vocational course training future job coaches. The course curriculum will be based on the curriculum prepared by the project partnership.

Details on implementation of the curriculum at level 6 EQF can be found in the [document](#) describing the German strategy.

In Northern Ireland, The Open College in Dublin² provides certification in supported employment training for Job Coaches. This is a 12-week course, offered by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), which aims to provide the skills required to facilitate job seekers into work experience/job sampling and/or supported employment opportunities. Successful completion leads to a Certificate in Supported Employment (QQI3 Level 7 Special Purpose Award). QQI awards align with the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) standards, and are referenced to the Level 6 of European Qualifications Framework (EQF)⁴. The course is designed for those already working/experienced as Job Coaches who are seeking accreditation in Supported Employment.

² See <http://www.jobs.ie/TrainingCourses/Certificate-in-Supported-Employment-Learning-Together-with-the-Open-Training-17391.aspx>

³ Quality and Qualifications Ireland: see <http://www.qqi.ie/Pages/NFQ-Standards-and-Guidelines-.aspx>

⁴ See [http://www.qqi.ie/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-\(NFQ\).aspx](http://www.qqi.ie/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-(NFQ).aspx)

Details on implementation of the curriculum at level 6 EQF can be found in the [document](#) describing the British strategy.

3. Implementation of the European concept at level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework

Implementation of the qualification concept for the Job Coach for people with disabilities at the level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework is best illustrated by the Dutch example. In the Netherlands, guidelines for job coach qualifications framework have been in force since 2012. It is worth emphasizing that the curriculum prepared in this project is based largely on the Dutch model.

Guidelines on qualifications that a job coach should have are set out in detail in the document “Vision and objectives of training programs for job coaches” issued in 2012 by the Professional Association of Work Coaches in cooperation with the focus group for training and development. On its basis, educational programs preparing for the profession of a job coach have been created. According to the document, a prerequisite for being employed as a job coach is completing studies and obtaining a bachelor's degree, while the course curriculum must cover not only theoretical professional preparation, but also practical training. It is necessary, since in their practice coaches deal with many complex problems and must be able to analyse them, determining which factors affect client's behaviour. In order to perform their job well, the coach must be able to recognize, handle and take actions in different systems and processes.

Currently, due to dynamically changing work environment, the role of a job coach is changing as well. There is a distinction between the three “subtypes” of coaches: (1) an elementary-level coach, who is able to fully implement a developed plan and set goals in practice; (2) an advanced-level trainer who combines consulting with coaching; and finally (3) an expert-level coach, who can undertake a role of organizational advisor and HR specialist. In this respect, the Netherlands has introduced a distinction between an “internal” job coach, who provides direct,

practical support in the field of finding a job and an “external” job coach, who has a broader market perspective and currently updated knowledge.

Details on implementation of the curriculum at level 7 EQF can be found in the document describing the Dutch strategy.

Also in the case of the Polish system, training of work trainers will take place at level 7 EFQ. The commencement of postgraduate studies will require a masters degree or a bachelor's degree. Currently, intensive work is underway on a new law on assisted employment, in which the job trainer is to be described for the first time and thus entered into the Competition Qualification System. The bill will be submitted to public consultations this year.

Details on implementation of the curriculum at level 7 EQF can be found in the document describing the Polish strategy.

Summary

We hope that standards developed during the three years of the project partnership will be useful and widely used in Europe: they will be placed in the ESCO - the classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations. Three of the project partnership countries, namely France, Germany and the Netherlands, have undertaken intensive work to adapt a selected concept to their educational systems.

To sum up, it is worth emphasizing that a large variety of solutions adopted within the process of implementation of the European concept, both at the stage of a qualified employee and at the academic level, gives other EU countries a chance to adopt these concepts at the level which is the most suitable for their educational systems. We do hope that we will find adequate, transient solutions for talented and experienced job coaches. Individuals who have been working in this area for years, but do not meet formal criteria must have the opportunity to update their qualifications.

The project partnership intends to continue cooperation within development of the concept of job coaches training through improving developed concepts by creating and running webinars.