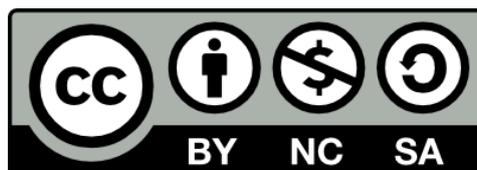


Erasmus+-Project „Job Coach for people with disabilities“



Guideline for the implementation of the qualification concept "Job Coach for People with Disabilities" in Germany

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Content

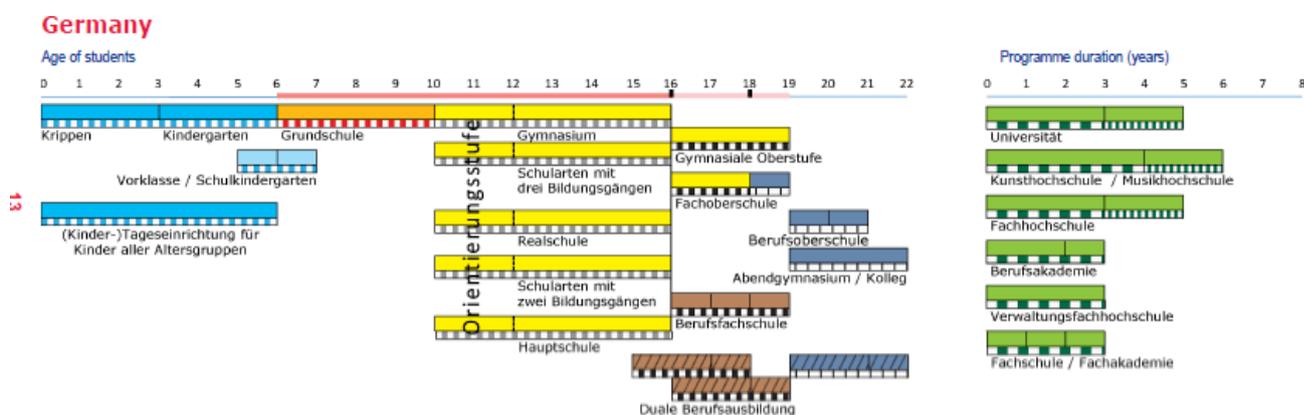
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Description of the German system of vocational education and training

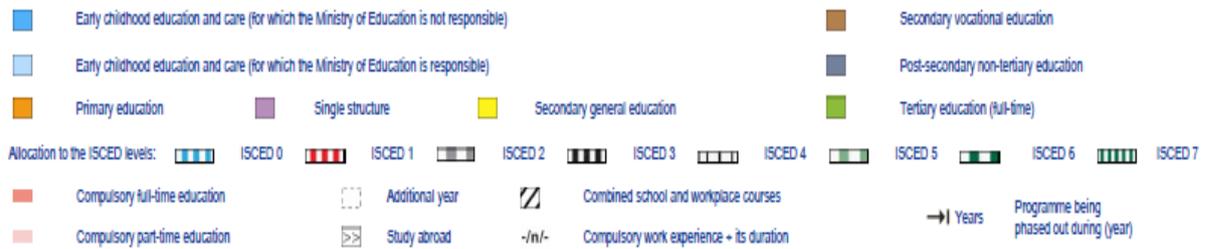
The system of general education in Germany is largely the responsibility of the individual federal states (Länder) (including culture, the so-called cultural superiority of the Länder). As a result, the educational systems of individual federal states in some parts differ from each other a lot. In order to ensure at least a minimum of uniformity in the education systems of all federal states, the Standing Conference of Ministers of Culture was established.¹ The Conference sits three or four times a year and establishes a common framework and trends. In the area of vocational education and training the government has powers to coordinate apprenticeship in companies, whereas the federal states have the competence for vocational training in schools, and thus they are the governing body of vocational schools. Education in Germany is compulsory from the age of 6 years up to the age of 18 years in mainstream schools or in the dual system of vocational training. To continue the education is optional after young people turn 18. The German educational system can be divided into **four stages**:

- 1) Primary, ISCED 1
- 2) Secondary I and II, ISCED 2 and 3
- 3) Postsecondary, ISCED 4
- 4) Tertiary I, ISCED 5 and research programmes ISCED 6

Chart 1. German educational system (source: www.eurydice.org.pl)



¹ The so-called Kultusministerkonferenz (abbreviation KMK) was established in 1948 and involves the creation of a common policy of all the federal states on education, education, science and culture. The provisions of the KMK -not a Germany-wide law- shall come into force in the individual federal states only after the decision by the government of the Land.



Education systems are uniform in all federal states on ISCED level, but they differ slightly depending on the type of school and the possibility of obtaining ISCED levels of education. For example, Saxony decided not to keep separate the “major schools” (Hauptschule) and “real schools” (Realschule) at the expense of secondary schools, so-called. Mittelschule, which conducts classes for all levels of education. The education system of Lower Saxony is basically a reflection of the classic system “Hauptschule-Realschule-Gymnasium”. The novelty of the system is the introduction of so-called integrated comprehensive schools, offering education at each level from class 5 to 13, and further conducting intensive remedial classes for students with disabilities, for example with language disability. This type of school is ideal for regions with a high percentage of an immigrant population and it gives children of migrants chances of getting at least the minimum of general education that learning in the dual system (Hauptschulabschluss after 9 or 10 years of study) permits.

The dual vocational education and training system in Germany

67% of all career entrants are persons who have learned their profession in the dual training system after graduating from school. Currently there are 360 professions on the list of recognized training occupations. The chance to learn in this system is open and does not depend on completing a specific type of school. The dual training system is consisting of two main characteristics: two vocational training centers - in the company or at another authorized educational institution or in a training center and in a vocational school. The learner is a trainee in a company or an administration and is delegated to a school that is recognized as a vocational school, so he is also a vocational student. The trainee himself signs an apprenticeship contract with a company for the practical part of his apprenticeship, then enrolls in a selected school with different levels of education, but which is thematically linked to practical teaching. For training in the company specially trained trainers are responsible.

In the practical part of the education, young people from the age of 16 can participate. There is no upper age limit, although it is not easy for an older person to find a suitable training company.

While practical apprenticeships and the necessary professional experience are taught in the context of company apprenticeship, the school education concentrates on the imparting of theoretical knowledge of the respective profession as well as on the in-depth and intensive communication of general knowledge. The training lasts from 2 to 4 years. The length of training depends on the profession and also on what educational background the student brings.

1. Proposals for the implementation of the qualification concept in Germany

The project partners have agreed that a Job Coach should have completed a vocational training equivalent to the European qualification level 6.

This primarily means a bachelor's degree, although a master's degree could be helpful for research and training purposes.

A bachelor's degree is awarded after completing a minimum of six semesters of 30 ECTS credits (for a total of 5400 hours) and successful final examinations. In Germany, these degrees are awarded by universities and (technical) colleges.

Master craftsmen, state-certified technicians, business administrators and educators can also be added to the level 6. These degrees are awarded by various institutions, including Berufsakademien and Berufsfachschulen.

In all likelihood a Job Coach will not complete his education in one piece, this would not do justice to the nature of the job.

On the other hand, a candidate could complete an apprenticeship or study, gain some professional experience for a few years and then complete the additional training to become a Job Coach. The implementation of the qualification concept is thus primarily about further education.

Three German partners participate in the project: the University of Applied Sciences (FH) Münster and the Grone Schools Osnabrück and Dortmund, non-profit foundations under civil law, which offer education programs for different addressees. While Münster University of Applied Sciences researches and teaches support programs for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders, the Grone schools have been offering Job Coaching for people with various impairments for years.

In order to implement the qualification concept we can therefore start in many places. We can train and educate people with disabilities and Job Coaches. We regularly exchange ideas and experiences with each other and with other researchers and institutions (self-help groups, parent groups, aid organizations).

In fact, the Münster University of Applied Sciences, Department of Social Welfare, and the Grone Bildungszentren GmbH - non-profit -, Dortmund Branch, will develop joint training in the form of a university certificate starting in September 2018 on the basis of the project's results. For this purpose, a development team from the two institutions is formed, which will jointly discuss the duration, content, value and feasibility of the targeted training and submit the result to the decision-making bodies. The international curriculum of the Erasmus + project has been available since August 2018. From these 10 modules, the development team will choose which modules the FH Münster teaches and which the Grone Bildungszentren NRW gGmbH.

The primary goal is to combine continuing education with continuing vocational training in such a way that future Job Coaches after graduation have the qualifications identified and defined in the Erasmus + project.

The secondary objective is to have this newly created training program registered by the Federal Employment Agency (BA) in the staff requirements catalog of the tender documents for the measure "individual company qualification in the context of supported employment according to § 55 section 2 SGB IX (InbeQ)". Based on the Erasmus + curriculum, "Job Coaches for people with disabilities" should therefore be recognized as suitable staff for labor market services for the target group of people with disabilities.

First, a Job Coach needs legal expertise, especially on German labor law and social law. He should be familiar with the German education system, the labor market and the possibilities of authorities and aid organizations.

On the other hand, he should have psycho-social skills, especially with regard to common disabilities. He should be fully informed about his client's disabilities and should be able to inform his superiors and colleagues. He should be able to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of his client - this is indispensable for finding a suitable job. He should continue to identify and collect data and document the development and progress of his client. He should have didactic skills. He should speak the so-called easy language. He should be able to create useful teaching materials to help people with disabilities orient themselves in the workplace. In this especially visual and / or pictogram representations, which follow the principles of TEACCH, have proved themselves. He should move confidently in the field of communication, motivation, mediation, conflict management and resolution, behavior modeling and networking.

He should be able to critically reflect on his own work in order to further develop himself with the help of supervision and training. These instruments - supervision and continuous training - should also be binding in the opinion of the project partners.

We decided on a "tree model". This means that Job Coaching training should build on basic education that teaches about common disabilities, as well as skills that affect all disabilities, followed by specialization in certain disabilities. It should be noted that an existing disability can lead to or exacerbate another. For example, a person in need of a wheelchair could develop depression - through his or her physical disability. Disabilities must therefore not be viewed in isolation from each other.

The Job Coach training should convey a professional attitude. People with disabilities do not (only) need help, but want and can also deliver good work and develop their skills. For example, if the client appears unmotivated due to depression, the Job Coach's job is to motivate him; in other cases, the motivation of the client to study, find a job and stay in the workplace needs to be reinforced.

The Job Coach can only work successfully if he works closely with his client and moves on equal terms with him. The clients should be considered as experts in their own lives.

Job Coaching should not be understood as a privilege, but as compensation for problem-specific deficits.

Therefore the Job Coach should not only mediate between his client and his employer, but also in the direction of the client's colleagues.

In order to avoid envy and disapproval, he must counteract the suspicion that the new colleague with the disability receives a "special treatment".

The Job Coach should teach his colleagues about the deficiencies of his client, and he should include them in the care setting ("buddy system").

Colleagues should know how to support the client. They should formulate clear rules instead of making ambiguous remarks, they can show how to work punctually and yet flexibly and how to manage to see the forest (and not just the trees). They should understand that they themselves benefit if their new colleague develops self-confidence in the workplace.

In order to live up to the idea of autonomy, we conducted a survey among young people with disabilities and asked them what they wanted from a Job Coach. The results should also be considered. Most participants wanted the Job Coach to have a thorough understanding of their disability and their special needs, and to be in contact with the employer. The client should be asked if the Job Coach is allowed to speak to the employer in the absence of the client or not.

It turned out that different groups of people expressed different needs: while younger people and those with a lower education level wanted a Job Coach who had worked in their own profession, so that he could also help them directly with their work, the older and more were more concerned about support in the field of social skills.

Clients should be asked if the Job Coach is allowed to communicate with the client's parents and family. Obviously, as our survey showed, this depends very much on the age of the client and how close the contact with his family of origin still is.

It may be easier for some people with disabilities to build up trust with a Job Coach of a certain gender. A young woman expressed the desire to get a female Job Coach. Such preferences should be taken into account whenever possible.

The client should also be asked how the Job Coach should behave in cases of conflict between client and employer or colleague. Should he behave neutrally or in any case act as a lawyer for the client? Interestingly, many respondents prefer a neutral Job Coach.

Perhaps they fear that a partisan Job Coach would increase the conflict even more.

Maybe their preference also depends on who they are in conflict with - their employer or their colleagues.

Some teenagers stated that the Job Coach should be friendly, but serious and strict, and should not make any jokes or ironic remarks.

Before beginning the caretaking, it should be agreed how long the Job Coach should accompany the client and how close the care should be - or if he should only be available when needed.

In every working relationship with a Job Coach there must be "opt-out" opportunities.

The qualification program and content of the curriculum for Job Coaches should be commented and evaluated by people with disabilities.

I would completely delete the following paragraph! Schol. Anette (not part of the implementation).

In the opinion of the project partners, the most suitable occupational group in the internet platform ESCO (European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations) seems to be the professional group 2423 - personnel and professional experts.

For experienced and proven Job Coaches, who have been working in this field for years, but do not meet the formal requirements, transitional solutions must be found. They need to have a chance to update their qualifications - even more so as academic Job Coaches who meet the new standards will not be available in sufficient numbers in the near future.