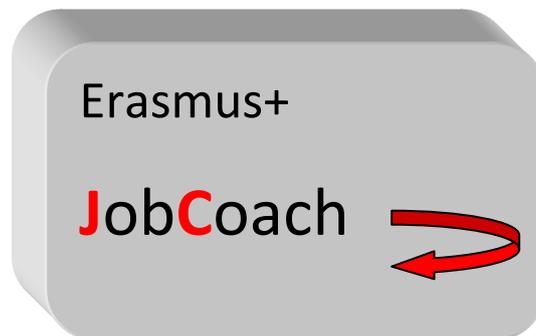
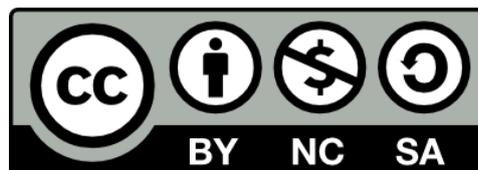


Erasmus+ Project „Job Coach for persons with disabilities”



internationally adapted qualification for “Job Coach for Persons with Disabilities”



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International adapted qualification concept for the Job Coach for Persons with Disabilities

The internationally adapted qualification for further training to become a Job Coach for persons with disabilities was developed by a collaborative partnership led by Grone-Bildungszentren NRW GmbH – gemeinnützig -. Each project partner was responsible for developing its country-specific national qualifications. The participating organizations are:

	<p>Grone-Schulen Niedersachsen gGmbH Grone-Bildungszentren NRW GmbH – gemeinnützig - 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 Wsparcie Społeczne Ja – Ty - My Poland</p>
	<p>Stowarzyszenie Niepełnosprawni dla Środowiska EKON Poland</p>

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1 Introduction¹

This document is the final outcome of a European project to develop an internationally recognized qualification profile for job coaches, to facilitate the social and economic inclusion of people with developmental, cognitive and mental health problems.

Currently, as a non-registered occupation, the position of Job Coach is not regulated within the European Qualification Framework for lifelong learning (EQF), and this is an issue that the present project aimed to address.

Although the role of 'Job Coach for persons with disabilities' does not currently have the status of an established profession within the European Union, there is common agreement that the main professional task of a 'Job Coach' is to provide personal on-site assistance in employment for persons with specific health needs². As a result, the partner organizations, representing five European nations, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Poland and the United Kingdom, set out to design 'Job Coaching' as a new occupation via the Erasmus+ project, "Job coach for persons with disabilities. Strategic partnerships in vocational education and training (2015-2018)". To take account of different national regulations with respect to the labour market, disability funding and social services, it was recommended that each partner country should develop its own national curriculum for the Job Coach qualification (product 4 of the project). Through focussing on the project's specific products, this international concept reflects the core deliberations of each partner organization.

The Job Coach's work is based on fundamental values defined in the supported employment programme, which the coach acquires, develops and strengthens during his or her work and cooperation with people representing different kinds of disadvantaged groups, including people with disabilities. Among these values are, notably:

- treating all people with dignity and respect,
- focusing one's efforts on the individual client who is developing or using their potential skills and widening their relationships,

¹ The content is taken from the national concepts.

² H.R. Röttgers & C.Metje, *European quality standards for the profession Job Coach for persons with disabilities*, 2016.

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- creating conditions for the empowerment of clients by letting them make choices and by controlling the supported employment process,
- promoting social and professional inclusion, understood as offering persons with disabilities access to common or generally available places or activities as well as the opportunity to fulfil all social roles.

"Supported employment measures" may be sought throughout the career path by the disabled worker and, when he or she holds a position, by the employer. It includes, as a minimum, the following services:

- assessment of the situation of the disabled person, taking into account his or her professional project, his or her competences and needs and, if applicable, the needs of the employer;
- identification of the career aspirations of the disabled person and specification of the assistance which is necessary to achieve employment in an ordinary working environment as soon as possible;
- assisting the disabled person in his or her job search in close co-operation with potential employer(s);
- employment coaching, with the aim of securing the professional career of the disabled person benefiting from it. In particular, this should facilitate access to training and competency checks, ensure, where necessary, intermediation between the disabled person and his or her employer and offer ways of adapting or organising the work environment to the disabled person's needs, in conjunction with company stakeholders, such as the occupational health physician.

These supported employment services are similar to those articulated in the *"European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) Toolkit"*³, which has exerted a significant influence on this project. The definition of the Job Coach qualification⁴ developed by Ewa Matuska within the framework of our Erasmus project also takes into account the EUSE proposition.

We have built our programme of international qualification for job coaches on the basis, among other sources, of these two publications, with additional inputs from each of the partner organization.

The key feature of this educational programme is that it represents the 'further training' option. This means that it can be incorporated within the framework of a University Degree (EQF level 6, or 5 in a 'short higher education cycle'). Alternatively it can also

³ European Union of Supported Employment. Toolkit for Diversity, EUSE 2014.

⁴ For more details, please refer to *"European Qualification Profile of Job Coach for Persons with Disabilities"* by Ewa Matuska, 2016 (Product 2 of the project)

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be designed for another EQF-level certificate in cooperation with a higher educational institution.

2 European Qualification Framework base for the programme

The *European Qualification Framework*⁵ (EQF) is a European-wide qualification base that allows mapping and comparison of qualifications developed in different EU countries. The EQF was formally adopted by the European Parliament in 2008 and since then has been accepted as the common European platform for understanding international relationships between different qualifications. This provided a key base for our international training programme for Job Coaches.

2.1 EQF levels addressed in the programme

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 formal, non-formal and informal learning. Descriptors reflect both specializations and generalizations. Thus, reaching a higher level does not necessarily imply that the required skills and knowledge will be more specialized, 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. 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 describe overall new ‘competence’ which should be developed together with completing a given educational programme. Competence, as defined by the EQF, generally means: “Proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development”⁶

⁵ European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, European Council, Official Journal C 111, 6.5. 2008.

⁶ European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning, European Council, *Official Journal C 111*, 6.5. 2008.

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The competence of graduates of any curricula is abbreviated with the term “KSC” , where K means acquired new specific knowledge, S means new social and technical skills, and C means new personal/social competence(see Table 1.)

Table 1. KSC descriptors defining levels in EQF

EQF Level	Knowledge	Skills	Competence
	In the context of EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual .	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)	In the context of EQF, competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy .
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

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			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 and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge	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 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	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

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	the interface between different fields		
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.

EQF levels 6 and 7 are marked in grey in Table 1, since these levels (depending on particular national qualification frameworks) seem to be the most appropriate for the location of the new Job Coach qualification. Additionally, EQF level 5 (SCHE -" short cycle higher education") could also be considered as potentially suitable in those countries where this option is available.

3 Target group for the qualification⁷

As the position of Job Coach is not strictly defined, individuals carrying out the task come from a variety of backgrounds and hold a range of qualifications that may be certified by a number of awarding bodies. Many organizations that provide employment support for people with disabilities welcome applications from people with relevant employment experience and a variety of qualifications to fulfil the role of Job Coach, and they then provide tailored training courses for successful candidates.

3.1 Prerequisite for the Job coach position

Given that individuals with disabilities should have as wide a range of employment opportunities as possible, people wishing to pursue a Job Coaching career should come from a variety of backgrounds but should then undergo specific training to fulfil the role.

⁷ The content is taken from the national concepts.

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As noted in the European Qualification profile (Product 2), a clear specification of the essential and desirable qualifications, and pathways to obtaining these, will be necessary. To this end, the framework of the European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) Internet platform can be used to determine the appropriate location of the Job Coach position in European occupational classification systems and design its job description and possible qualification pathways.

It was agreed by all partner institutions that an academic qualification for the position of Job Coach, such as a Bachelor's degree should be mandatory; in the longer term, however, higher level qualifications (e.g. a Master's degree) might be useful for those supporting individuals undertaking highly technical or complex work. It is anticipated that a dedicated academic Job Coach course will be developed in due course, but a relevant qualification may also be based on a Bachelor's degree e.g. in social work or occupational therapy, with mandatory postgraduate training (EQF Levels 5/6/7)

3.2 Target groups for the qualification

Given the need for an individually tailored, rather than a 'one-size-fits-all', approach to disability support, the Project focused on three specific disability groups: those with autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disability, and a range of mental health conditions (Product 5). These groups include the most frequently diagnosed forms of psychological/psychiatric conditions⁸; in addition, individuals diagnosed with these conditions (depending on the severity of their disability) are among those most likely to seek active participation in employment. However, people who have received these specific clinical diagnoses represent a wide spectrum of disability and therefore require a highly-specialized approach to Job Coaching.

4 Targeted learning outcomes in terms of competence

In a line with EQF expectations of learning outcomes that need to be demonstrated by graduates of educational programmes, which should be defined in terms of acquired knowledge, skills and competences (KSC), the project partners agreed the common European profile of KSC for job coaches⁹. This general profile of competence can be

⁸ As indicated by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th edition (DSM-V; American Psychiatric Association, 2013) / International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10; World Health Organisation 2016)

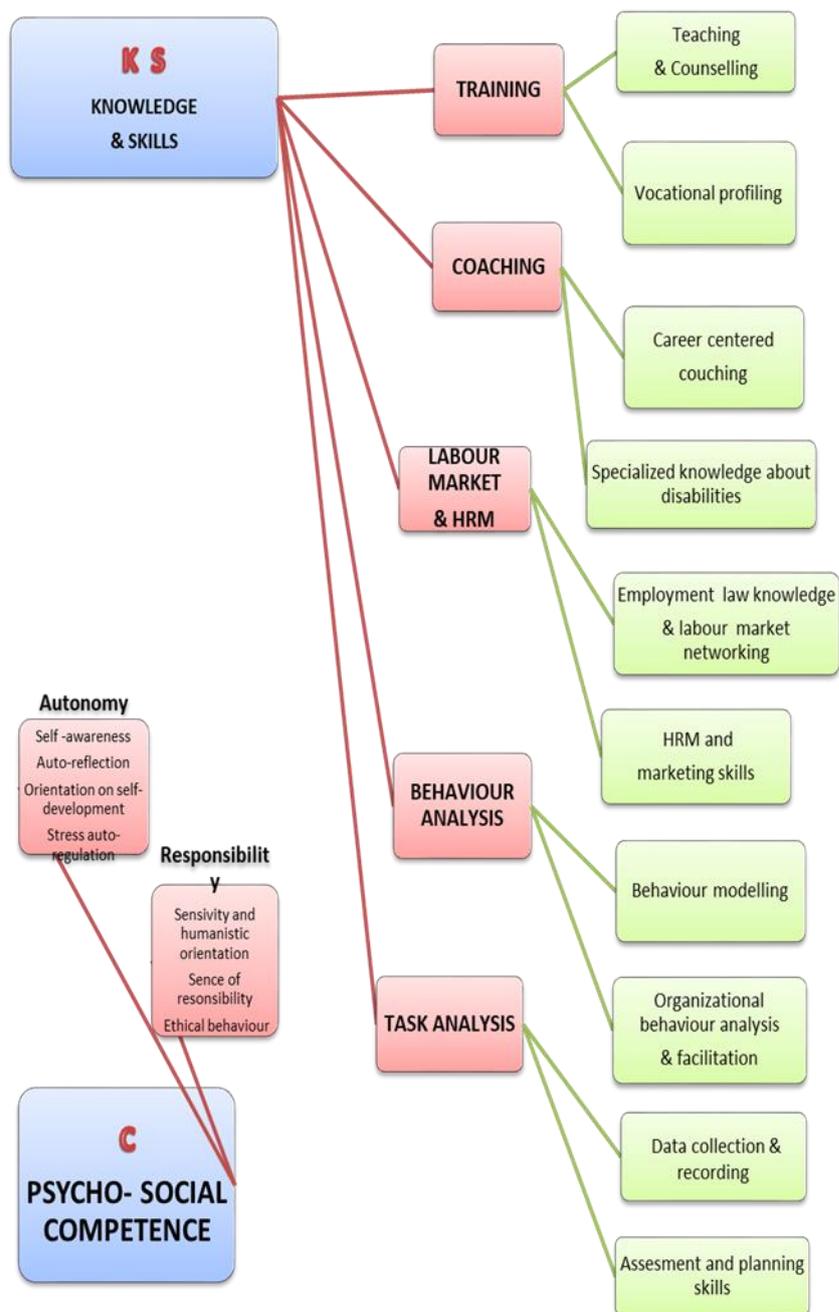
⁹ See "European Qualification Profile of Job Coach for Persons with Disabilities" by Ewa Matuska, 2016 (Output ? 2 of the project)

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more or less specifically defined, depending on the level of education and on the content of educational programmes proposed for job coaches.

The schema of overall competences of job coaches is shown in Diagram 1.

Picture 1. Overall competence profile of Job Coaches



Source: E. Matuska (2016). *Job Coach for persons with disabilities KSC competence model*, in: *European Qualification Profile of Job Coach for Persons with Disabilities*, page 13 (Appendix to Product 2 of the project).

4.1 Learning success, examinations, graduation

Given that there are currently no agreed standards, there is also no guidance on learning outcomes, examinations or graduation levels. Thus, our training proposal is confined to existing general European standards.

5 Content of further education – The international concept “Job coach for persons with disabilities”¹⁰

All partners agree that the success of the international concept “Job coach for persons with disabilities” (JC/D) depends on a dual educational programme that integrates theoretical training and practice. It is most important that theory can be put into practice immediately. The final examination consists of both theoretical and practical elements consisting of reflection reports and practical implementation of the required skills in the art of job coaching. In terms of providing support for clients with intellectual disability, mental health issues, and/or autism, while the needs of service users will be very individual, a common curriculum should include at least the following modules:

- Module 1 – Labour market and disability: comprehensive and regulatory approach
- Module 2 – Knowledge of the clinical picture
- Module 3 – Disability and its implications for employability
- Module 4 – Social relations
- Module 5 – Creation of places of employment
- Module 6 – Job coach tools
- Module 7 – Support in the work place and transfer into employment
- Module 8 – Stabilising the employment
- Module 9 – Individual educational support
- Module 10 – Final presentation

In addition to these modules, the participant/student works independently to develop their own professional portfolio. A Personal Development Plan (PDP) and Personal Action Plan (PAP) form the foundation for this portfolio. The activities carried out within the framework of the skills portfolio, will be subject to interim assessment and feedback provided by an experienced teacher/coach. During this process, professional job

¹⁰ The content is taken from the national concepts.

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coaching competences such as collaborating, reflecting, planning and organizing, are developed.

The skills portfolio is completed during the final presentation in which the student's development as a job coach is presented and illustrated.

In order to participate in the final presentation:

- all tests must be completed and achieve the minimum required grade
- the portfolio of practical skills is compiled correctly and consists of a final conclusion.

5.1 Knowledge and skills acquired during Job Coach training

1.	Specialized knowledge about disabilities and different groups of people with disabilities
2.	Specialized knowledge about supported employment system regulations
3.	Specialized knowledge about labour market trends and job positions
4.	Specialized knowledge about training and coaching methods and techniques
5.	Basic knowledge about diversity management
6.	Understanding complex socialization processes
7.	Social - communicative and conflict resolution skills
8.	Technical - methodological skills
9.	Analysis of resources and obstacles
10.	Basic clinical diagnostic skills
11.	Task analysis skills
12.	Skills of client assessment
13.	Planning development of client's skills
14.	Maintaining client's documentation
15.	Analyzing labour market data and statistics
16.	Monitoring job offers
17.	Negotiating work conditions with employers
18.	Applying different techniques to obtain appropriate work placements
19.	Building up a social network
20.	Using behavioural training methods and techniques
21.	Using different coaching methods and techniques
22.	Teaching social acting in divergent situations

5.2 Competences acquired during job coach training

The expectation of a competent job coach is that he or she will be able to successfully use newly acquired knowledge and skills in work and study situations as well as in further professional and personal development. The overall expectation addresses the development of two main personal competences: responsibility and autonomy. The spectrum of new competences of job coaches covers the following:

1.	Self- awareness and auto reflection
2.	Understanding and sensitivity to divergence
3.	Empathy
4.	Creativity and ability to design variable solutions to the problem
5.	Ethical approach to professional tasks
6.	Stress autoregulation
7.	Skills of auto-presentation and self-marketing

5.3 Schedule for the further education of the “Job coach for persons with disabilities”

The learning outcomes KSC should not be read in isolation from each other, but should be collectively perceived. Similarities may exist between the categories (e.g. the column ‘competence’ includes certain skills; the column ‘skills’ also contains certain forms of knowledge) but this is in the nature of things.



Table 2: Schedule for “Job coach for persons with disabilities”

Module	Knowledge	Knowledge & Skills	Competences	hours	Credit points
1 Labour market and disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> acquiring a comprehensive vision of the local labour market and work environment (recent labour market data, trends) engaging with emerging and existing markets identifying stakeholders analysing labour market resources how to update knowledge concerning the evolution of business sectors how to create a database of potential employers cooperating with employers cooperating with employment offices relevant laws and regulations recent developments of social security strategies to facilitate re-integration to work legal foundations of supported employment provisions for financial support for employees and employers, benefits legislation 	2, 3, 5, 8, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18	3, 4, 5, 7	70	
2 Knowledge of clinical picture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the International Classification of Functioning Disability and Health (ICF, DSM) specific disabilities and their potential impact in seeking work medical and diagnostic aspects psychological aspects the areas of mental limitations, learning disabilities, ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder), mental health problems (depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder) developmental and behavioural characteristics and their implications for the work environment 	1, 8, 10	2, 3, 4, 5	40	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creation of profiles according to ICF classification 				
3 Disability and implications for employability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • symptoms of the main disabilities and consequences in everyday and professional life • care methods • educational support for persons with disabilities • methods of assessment for persons with disabilities • how to anticipate the consequences of each disability on people's abilities and their employability • description of neurodevelopmental disorders and their implications for employability • case study of two clinical cases with exercise: possible implications for employability • description of mental disorders and their implications for employability • case study of two clinical cases with exercise: possible implications for employability • establishing the work profile of the employee • respectful and positive presentation of the employee on the basis of his/her real professional potential 	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	70	
4 Social relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification of conditions for the successful assumption of a work place with regard to the social life of the supported person • methods of supporting social inclusion, e.g. joining a sports club or taking part social activities arranged by the employer • mechanisms of creating and sustaining social relations • the importance of family in the supported employment process • guidance on cooperation between the Job coach and the family of the person with a disability 	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 19, 21, 22	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	20	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • functional assessment • vocational profiling 	1, 2,	1, 2,	40	

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<p>Creation of work places</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruiting companies interested in employing a person with disabilities • networking • manual for interviewing an employer • tailoring employment around the company policy (how to move within a company, requirements and experience) • the method of job carving • analysing the work environment's ergonomic characteristics to ensure its suitability for the specific disability of the supported person • best-practice-examples: newly-created work places in direct relation to the strengths of the person with disability • matching the demands of the workplace with the skills and the knowledge of the person with disabilities • promoting strengths and addressing skills deficits using behaviour-based interventions (e.g. shaping, video modelling, use of apps) • 	<p>3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18,</p>	<p>3, 4, 5, 6, 7</p>		
<p>6 Job coach tools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • background of the method of Supported Employment • coaching tools and techniques and practical exercises • leading effective communication • guiding a conversation (Moderation techniques, standards of easy language, dealing with resistance, conveying bad news, emotional regulation) • training for different types of interviews • techniques used during the interview to create a trusting relationship and practical exercises • writing techniques for a cover letter, CV, etc. • crisis management techniques (e.g. prevention of an interruption of the employment, motivation) • problem-solving strategies and practical exercises 	<p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21,</p>	<p>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7</p>	<p>70</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • giving and receiving feedback • introduction to Applied Behaviour Analysis and practical exercises • self-marketing (e.g. website, network strategies, memberships, supervision) • using modern technologies for job searching • building a network of relationships • documentation and reporting • evaluation and quality assurance 	22			
7 Support in the work place and transfer into employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sensitive information and personal data protection • identification of tools and techniques needed to ascertain the wishes of the supported person in terms of employment (occupation, location, working time, ...) • contract conditions and employment procedures • Training/Information tools for preparation of the employer and future co-workers for the arrival of the supported person • how to prepare the supported person for the job interview • elaborating Coaching Schedules with goals • elaborating the Coaching Plan into phases and translation into learning activities • Coaching styles and methods: among others various social skills development tools and practical exercises, solution focused coaching, appreciative inquisitive attitude • creation and implementation of the “Individual Action Plan” • how to provide relevant training to optimize the supported person’s working capacity in their chosen workplace • supporting hands-on experience directly in the work place • how to identify resource people in the field of evaluation • protection for vulnerable adults (e.g. anti-bullying measures and sexual exploitation prevention) • tools for recording and monitoring 	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	40	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tools for the evaluation of professional competences and soft skills 				
8 Stabilising the employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the responsibilities of the Job coach in the process of supporting the person with disabilities to fulfill his/her working duties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> methods to ensure sustainable employment, such as a regular analysis of conditions in the workplace instruments for continuous monitoring of job performance awareness of new technologies and research that can contribute to a stable working environment 	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	40	
9 Individual educational support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accessing educational support for persons with disabilities evidence based practice continuous professional development: awareness of new technologies and research that can contribute to a stable working environment 	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	24	
	<p>Each module will conclude with a written exam. Modules 1 to 9 will be validated by taking Multiple Choice Questionnaires (MCQs) After each module the participant/student will receive a written evaluation from his/her tutor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validation of the 9 modules will be necessary to be accredited to module 10. the portfolio is handed in correctly and consists of a final conclusion 				
10 Final presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The presentation of a case study will be formalized in a professional dissertation. Mentoring hours will allow trainees/students to be accompanied through this module. (presentation of expectations in terms of content for the 	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,	1, 2, 3, 4,	8	

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	professional dissertation 2 hours, exchanges with trainees/students, assistance and advice 5 hours) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The case study will be presented to a panel (0,5 hours). 	9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22	5, 6, 7		
			total	422	hours

Validation of the 10 modules will be necessary to obtain the Job Coach title.

5.4 Competences and modules correlation table¹¹

Table 3 below specifies in which modules the different knowledge and skills are studied:

		Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Module 6	Module 7	Module 8	Module 9	Module 10
Training	Teaching and counselling				X		X	X	X	X	
	Vocational profiling					X	X	X	X		X
Coaching	Career centred coaching			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Specialized knowledge about disabilities		X			X	X	X	X	X	X
Labour market	Employment law knowledge and labour market networking	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X
	marketing skills					X	X	X	X	X	X
Behaviour Analysis	Behaviour modelling			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Organizational behaviour analysis and facilitation			X	X	X	X	X			X

¹¹ The content is taken from the national concepts.

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Task	Data collection and recording	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Analysis	Assessment and planning skills	X			X	X	X	X	X	X

5.5 Places of education

JC/D education and qualification can be provided in a range of settings, including Universities and other educational institutions, the work place of the supported person with disability.

6 Conclusion¹²

To secure professional qualifications and consumer protection, it is necessary to develop a legal framework for a JC/D. Taking account of the necessary skills and knowledge, an academic qualification should be mandatory in the longer term. We regard a Bachelors' degree (EQF 6) as adequate, although a Masters' degree might be helpful for supporting people with disabilities working in complex work environments, e.g. in scientific or technical fields. An academic qualification could be based on a dedicated JC course of studies while a JC/D qualification might also be based on a Bachelor's degree in social work, ergotherapy, occupational or therapeutic subjects with mandatory postgraduate training. Here, different national curricula will be designed.

For those already working as a JC, transitional arrangements for professional qualification will be needed. Here, different national traditions of a non-academic approach exist: experienced craftsmen and technicians are known to work with persons with disabilities in a manner comparable to a JC/D, some of these have psychological or educational training.

“New standard” academic JC/D staff will not be available in sufficient numbers in the immediate future, so a transitional period in which a non-academic approach to JC/D should be kept open. This transitional period should be taken into account in the national curricula.

Additionally, an EQF 5 option (SCHE- “short cycle higher education”) should remain available in those countries in which SCHE programmes are available. Here, the contents of the SCHE modules can be derived from our curricular propositions; this option should be integrated in the national curricula where applicable.

¹² Taken from „European quality standards for the profession - Job Coach for persons with disabilities, (product 1 of the project), Röttgers, Hanns-Rüdiger und Metje, Caterina, 2017

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International adapted qualification concept for the Job Coach for Persons with Disabilities

We also deem mandatory supervision and continuous postgraduate qualification to be necessary, regardless of the formal access to a JC position; here, a parallel to health care professionals may be drawn.

7 Outlook

A final decision whether the qualification for Job Coaches should be an advanced vocational training, e.g. for craftsmen or technicians to work with persons with disabilities, or further education for students (Bachelor's or Master's degree) was not reached in the course of this project. The differences between the specific requirements in the different countries represented among the project team were too great. At the beginning of the project, the French partner, for example, considered that vocational training only was sufficient. However, following exchange with their international partners the French partner decided on a work-based vocational training programme for trainers, and an undergraduate programme for JC/Ds. The German partner recommended further education for students e.g. as specialisation of a Bachelor's degree in social work. The Polish partner however recommended a higher education level of education (Bachelor's degree) and the United Kingdom partner favoured a higher education on a Master's degree. In the Netherlands the basic Job Coach qualification is a Bachelor's degree authorized by the professional association of job coaches and it is already regulated by national law.

In conclusion we regard common European standards for the necessary professional knowledge and skills of job coaches for disabled persons to be internationally required. It is highly desirable that the tools ~~and supplies for work~~ for vocational training as well as for a specialized training at Bachelor's and/ or Master's degree level will be elaborated and finalized in subsequent European projects. An application for funding to undertake this further work has already been made.

It is also expected that agreed European Standards for Job Coaches will soon be adopted in each of the project's participating countries and throughout the European Union area.