



## **Del.3: Country report**

Project: Practical Methodology for Acquiring Competences of European Reference Framework through Continuous Vocational Education and Training, PR-ERF Project number: 2013-1-SE1-LEO05-15265

Survey of curricula and methodologies on 8 ERF Key Competences for Personal Assistants

**Partner organisation: REVALENTO**  
**2014-02-24**

## Index

1. Methodology of the research	3
1.1 Introduction	3
1.2 Methodology of the research	3
2. Background on (C)VET in NL and the position of ERF key competences	5
2.1 Organisation of Initial VET and the position of CVET in NL	6
- Development of VET programs and their levels	6
- Vision of education in vocational education: a paradigm change	7
- Initial VET, CVET and the development of ERF key competences	8
- The role of VET in early school leavers	8
- Conclusions regarding ERF and approach	9
2.2 ERF in Doctor, Dentist and Pharmacist assistant	10
3. Survey of Training Courses	13
3.1 Resume	13
3.2 Detailed information	15
4. Recommendations by stakeholders	20
5. Reference list	22
6. Annexes	
6.1 Link between NLQF and EQF	23

## **1. METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH**

---

### **1.1 Introduction**

This research is done within the project Practical Methodology for Acquiring Key Competences of European Reference Framework through Continuous Vocational Education and Training; project acronym is PR-ERF. The project is implemented within the Lifelong Learning Program, Leonardo da Vinci sub-program.

The aim of the project is to develop the holistic methodology for recognition and development of 8 ERF Key Competences as a package of *Skills, Knowledge* and *Attitudes* that all individuals need to acquire through CVET for personal fulfilment, development, inclusion and employment. The proposed methodology will be linked to *level 4 of European Qualification Framework* in order to be compatible with CVET requirements. The methodology will comprise an assessment tool to validate competences according to EQF level 4 and identify the gaps towards the CVET program.

PR-ERF curriculum is sector specific and will be adapted to the field Personal Assistant.

### **1.2 Methodology of the research**

1.2.1. The goal of the research is to collect the best practices and examples of curriculum for 8 ERF Key Competences related to the field Personal Assistant. Each partner organisation collects the available curriculum for those key competences the organisation is responsible for according to the agreement at the kick-off meeting in Nicosia, namely:

**DOCUMENTA:**

Social/Civic  
Cultural and social awareness

**DIMITRA:**

Digital  
Entrepreneurship

**FOLKUNVIERSITETET:**

Foreign languages  
Mathematics

**REVALENTO:**

Learning to learn

**MMC:**

Mother tongue

1.2.2. The proposed methods for the research are the following:

**Desk research:** each partner organisation is responsible for collecting curriculum for those ERF competences they are responsible for (please see 1.2.1) in relation to personal assistant profession (if relevant). If there are no curricula available with focus on personal assistant profession general ERF curriculum shall be collected. The research shall be done on Internet and on the web-sites of VET providers / adult education providers as well as other stakeholders working with ERF. Taking into consideration copy right principle the partnership is obliged to get the permission of the above stakeholders in regards to presenting their curriculum in the national reports of partner organisations.

**Interviews with experts:** each partner organisation is responsible to interview the regional expert groups in regards to the relevance of the collected curriculum for the competence development of the personal assistants. The expert group shall comprise CVET teachers, CVET students, relevant decision-makers, employers, Public Employment Services and other relevant stakeholders. The expert group shall also give their feedback in regards to which Key Competences are relevant for the profession of personal assistant and how they can be acquired through PR-ERF curriculum.

**Other additional methods** for the research such as questionnaires can be used by the partners if there is a need. The partners shall include those methods in the final national report.

1.2.3 The geographical scope of the research is European level, meaning that each partner organisation will make a survey not only in their countries but also in other European countries (if relevant). The partnership is responsible to support each other in this part of research in case other partners find curriculum for their respective key competences.

## 2. BACK GROUND OF (C)VET IN NL AND THE CURRENT POSITION OF 8 ERF KEY COMPETENCES

This part of the report is addressing the subject of the current position and use of ERF in VET and CVET in the Netherlands. Special attention is given to the professions of Doctors - , Dentists and Pharmacists Assistants, the related qualification dossier and to some of the institutes which provide these curricula. Information is collected through desk research, web research and personal interviews. Interviews have been held in the period from March till May 2014. With the different institutes first contact was made in December, directly after the official start of the project. Below is presented a summary of the findings. The results are presented in two sections: one is describing the general position of ERF in initial vocational education and linked CVET. The other is describing more specifically findings in one profession. The conclusions of this section are used to select institutes and curricula which can be useful for the project.

### Themes in the interviews

The interviews had an open character. In the interviews information on the following themes have been collected:

- The organisation of initial VET and adult education in NL
- The position of CVET (Cursorsch onderwijs) in Dutch VET Education
- Back ground of this development
- Latest developments in MBO-institutes / secondary education
- Current Challenges in MBO-institutes / secondary education
- Developments in pedagogical / educational approaches, strength and weaknesses
- Developments in qualification dossiers / examination criteria of secondary education
- Orientation of MBO / secondary education on 8 ERF key competences
- Early school leavers, current policy and new challenges
- Early school leavers and ERF
- Citizenship courses for immigrants

Interviews have received a lot of additional attention in relation to what is sketched as deliverable in the original proposal. This type of additional investment for this wp was however required to give proof of the position of Learning to Learn competence and how to deal with this subject in the context of the project. The description part of the curricula found is therefore somewhat shorter, since it concentrates on Types of training. However the materials presented cover similar training offerings of more than 15 different institutes, still in line with the original intentions of this wp.

## **2.1 Organisation of initial vocational education and the position of CVET in NL**

Since the mid 80's initial VET institutes have gradually developed toward a type of college which jointly offers regular initial vocational education for young adults and well as education in the domain of lifelong learning for adults (CVET) within one and the same institute. Also these institutes in general provide language and citizenship training for immigrants. The institutes name is officially BVE-instelling. In the Netherlands these institutes follow the model of "Community Colleges" in which initial vocational education ideal benefits from the impulses of AVET education (content, contacts with businesses etc.). Regular initial vocational education is primarily financed by the Ministry of Education. The Adult education (more specifically training programs directly linked to a profession or job) is paid by either: Employers, Werkpleinen (integral service of labour and income), integration organisations and insurance companies, or by the participants themselves. This whole model of education is rooted in Dutch legislation (laid down in: Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs; Ministry of Education, The Hague, 1995).

As part of the responsibility of the Ministry of Education the BVE institutes (recently called "MBO-instellingen") offer programs from level 1 tot level 4 (NQF, not completely parallel to EQF, see appendix). They have the obligation to accept every student (entrance of students should be without any threshold). To cover great potential gaps or more complicated learning issues each MBO-instelling has a specialised Education department. This Education department offers a lot of internal support to level 1 and 2 programs and support students / adults with specific learning needs / learning styles (however not being training for a specific profession!).

CVET is also offered by a small amount of commercial institutes (the big ones are: NCOI, LOI, NTI, Schroevers and Scheidegger for example). Although they can have a formally recognized quality certificate for some of their courses, they are in general not funded by the Ministry of Education. This means that participants, Werkpleinen ("labour office+") or companies pay for most of their courses. And if these customers are not happy with the outcome the institute will lose its right for existence. Due to their commercial position they are not a serious market for any European project on educational content of the current seize and aim.

### **Development of VET programs and their level**

For each profession or group of professions, at national level, sector organizations decide on what the entry levels for a profession are, and what the related competences, skills and knowledge levels need to be at the end of a curriculum. These sector organisations are therefore responsible for describing learning outcomes of educational programs of initial VET. Sector organisations consist of sector experts from businesses as well as from education and the Ministry. To meet their task sector organisations by law produce qualification dossiers (in NL: kwalificatiedossier. Currently a news organisation called SBB is controlling 12 sector chambers which are responsible for over 40 qualification dossiers, thus taking care of uniformity of process, content and description). Apart from sector specific input these Qualification dossiers need to pay attention to general regulation and requirements for education, for example the incorporation of ERF competences. Once recognized the Ministry makes the Inspection responsible for checking whether VET institutes deliver the required learning outcome and meet the official requirements. Qualification dossiers are regularly updated (each 2 years).

For assistants in the health sector (doctors, pharmacists, dentists assistants) the sector organisation which is responsible for the different qualification dossiers is Calibris. For administrative work, economic professions,

sales etc. it is for example Ecabo. There are over 40 separate sectors covering all learning options within initial vocational education.

Qualification dossiers for a group of related professions rarely address the full range of level 1 to 4 (NQF levels). This has to do with the fact that level 1 is not a professional level in the Netherlands. Also in some areas the businesses require a certain minimum level. For example in construction the minimum level is 2, but for doctors, dentists and pharmacists assistants the minimum level is 4. For lower levels there is no demand from employers, thus no recognized official education courses (For a description of each of the levels of NQF in respect of labour market significance, see appendix).

### **Vision of education in vocational education; a paradigm change**

How do VET institutes actually deliver their curricula to achieve the intended outcome that has officially been laid down in the qualification dossiers? During the last decade initial vocational education has made a major turn-around toward the implementation of competence based education. Educational programmes have changed their related training. Originally each profession consists of a set of tasks, and the target of education was to train participants to master these tasks. Instead now they focus on training the underlying competences which enable participants also to cope with dramatic changes in professions due to market demand, innovation, technology. From 2010 onward each MBO-institute is obliged to organize its education according to these principles. How they organize this competence based education is a matter of their own choice, but Inspection controls the quality of what is delivered. Actually this dramatic, almost paradigm-like change in education, is an answer to the challenges Europe is confronted with: becoming a knowledge based society which, through ongoing innovations, is able to compete on the world market. Also it intends to create a better connection of MBO with higher professional education. The shadow side and part of current debate is that the enormous attention for general competences has deteriorated the attention for real craftsmanship.

Part of the new competence based way the curricula now are described is what the programs of the VET institutes are offering as added value compared to the past. More and more participants are required to master problems, reflect on their results and describe ways to improve on their work for the next time. Actually competence based learning is only possible by putting into practice the competence of Learning to Learn. Results of this turn around have become visible during the last years in the scores in profession contests: Dutch students excel in problem solving but in general are somewhat less competent in specific professional skills (see EU Skills Masters). This last development is actually becoming more and more frustrating for some businesses. This is why there is currently a new appeal has risen from education as well as from parts of the businesses, to reinstall the value of "being a professional/ craftsman". In normal language this means: businesses and schools need to sit together once more and decide on what a professional really needs to be a master in (and how to develop this), without losing the added value of some core competences. Context specific education is becoming the key word again. If ERF is treated in general as being some general competences which can be trained without specific professional context it is in contradiction with this trend. In VET institutes this means for example that competences in English, Mathematics, Digital, Social /civic and for example Dutch are presented and learned in the context of the profession, and not in a generalistic way, but still helping students to gain development capacity for their careers. In many cases they are even trained by teachers with at least knowledge of that specific professional area to assure for a good adaption to the professional interest of the participants. To clarify: in Construction level 2 the accent of required Mathematic knowledge and skills is different compared to those in Administration level 2.

### **Initial VET, CVET and the development of ERF key competences**

In 2006 the European Commission has recognized 8 key competences for lifelong learning which European citizen's need to have. Within the Dutch policy on education the impact of the ERF is becoming visible at least at two levels of Dutch Education. In the route toward initial Vet and CVET (secondary education), and in VET and CVET itself.

In secondary education renewal of education and focus on ERF has had as a consequence that from year 2014 onward all graduates need to comply to new attainment standards. Depending on their exit level of education graduates need to have an average score of 6 for English, Mother Tongue as well as Mathematic competences (3 of 5 ERF competences). Failing to meet this standard means no graduation, a rerun of the last year and/or finishing education on a lower level. Currently the market of educational materials and methodology development is dominated by test developers and method developers. On one side the publishers who develop new training books and methodology on all these three subjects (see Revalento visit report of IPON fair 2014). Similarly, on the other side institutes in assessment offer assessment programs specifically for these competences (for example CITO, EDCL)). In NL assessment and curriculum development are strictly split in terms of expertise to assure that attainment levels in testing are objective and are in line with official EQF levels throughout the country.

In vocational education most of the 2014 qualification dossiers have incorporated ERF competences explicitly, more specifically the competences: English (all level 4), Mother Tongue, Mathematics, Digital, Social /Civic, Cultural and Social Awareness. Especially Learning to Learn and Entrepreneurship are not defined as a separate competence since these currently are treated as a necessary part of the professional attitude, skills and competences of the professional. They are therefore considered to be more generic competences which are developed and assessed through the way professional education is offered and evaluated. For example: able to note whether client are not dealt with effectively, whether there are some inconsistencies; able to report this to proper person, not wait till somebody tells you to do something etc etc (see section in which the profile of doctors assistants is presented). Interviewees indicate that there is no need for separate treatment of each of the 8 ERF competences, since this is not the way how education is organized or dealt with efficiently. MBO institutes train and assess these competences in a combined way, often through professional work situations.

Interviewees indicate that in NL no VET institute will make use of training programs which will address one ERF competence at a time. Only exception might be English, Mother tongue and mathematics, for participants with serious gaps in these areas. These programs however will require a high level of specialist input.

### **The role of VET in early school leavers**

Early school leavers lack a minimum qualification required to be able to enter the labour market. Thus they might also miss the minimum level of the 8 ERF competences for lifelong learning. This is one of the specified target groups which might be of relevance for the current PR ERF project.

Each year in NL approximately 30.000 students are leaving education without a start qualification (the minimal level required to either enter the labour market or initial vocational education. (Latest Figures: "Aanval op de uitval", Ministry of Education 2014: 27.900). This early school leaving has different reasons: capacity and

learning issues, motivation and boredom, personal issues, mental issues, family issues, lack of information on education, lack of guidance, push of parents to too high level of education etc. It is the responsibility of the local authority to keep track on early school leavers in the age of 18 – 23, and guide them either toward the labour market or toward (work based) education. Schools on their turn are developing new joint programmes (a combination of secondary education and vet institutes program at level 2) to reduce drop out. If local authorities succeed in motivating the school leaver to return to education, this early school leaver in general will enter a program of a MBO institute. Since these institutes offer threshold less education for everybody, with specialist support for learning gaps and specific learning needs. Most of these participants then will follow work based learning routes toward a NQF level 2 or (very rarely) level 3 profession. Classroom teaching, instruction, ICT based learning etc. is kept to a necessary minimum due to the characteristics of this target group. In the end this target group will then again follow a curriculum that is controlled by one of the qualification dossiers, this means again that they will learn again the ERF competences which are integrated in these programs.

If the school leaver however has found a job, further professional development has become the responsibility of both employer and employee.

### **Conclusions regarding ERF and approaches**

In general the education policy of NL has succeeded in incorporating ERF competences in vocational education and in CVET. However it will take time before the policy will be implemented in secondary education and in MBO institutes and will have its full impact. Also current plans which have been put in action are becoming part of new educational debate, taking of the sharp edges of too much focus on general competences instead of on knowledge.

At the moment secondary education is in the process of adapting its education to the new attainments standards which assure the incorporation of English, Mother tongue and Mathematics. A development cycle in education will at least take a four years period of time to see the reflection of new training courses in the exam results of the participants. It is also relevant to note that the interviewees indicate that the current choices made regarding English, Mathematics and Mother Tongue are probably too strict. They instead opt for an approach which is more flexible and gives credit to individual's own development route. Too strict European policy guidelines are felt as chains for the development of some individuals. It does not offer more or equal chances for all, but in fact limits chances for some. In general: not everybody needs to speak English at a certain minimum level before he/she can be called a good professional.

In professional education the qualification dossiers are actually the vehicle for assuring the inclusion of ERF competences in each professional area.

In general as a national policy, by the year 2014 all dossiers are required to include the ERF competences. Interviewees indicate that there is some room for improvement in this area. Some sector organisations have done a good job and have updated their dossiers with these new competences already. Some others are still in the process of change. Control of this process is in the hands of the sector organisations and the Inspection, thus forcing schools to adjust the education likewise in the next few years.

Again interviewees indicate that this process will still need some time to see its effectiveness in the attained learning outcomes of the participants. Also interviewees indicate that ERF competences are not dealt as separate competences but in most cases are integrated in the definition of the professional attitude for a

## **REVALENTO**

### *PR-ERF project - Report on survey of curricula and methodologies on 8 Key Competences for Personal Assistants*

---

profession. Therefore Entrepreneurship, learning to learn, social/civic, cultural and social awareness do not form separate competence in the profile. And there is no need to do so, since it does not offer added value to the current profiles of the qualification dossiers. Mother Tongue, English, Digital and Mathematics are already defined in the qualification dossiers and thus are defined as learning outcome. Each competence however is specified within the requirements of the professional context. Interviewees do not see any current gap which might be needed to get covered. All interviewees however make a plea for another type of competence which combines some of the ERF competences: the career development competence and study skills. National support programs currently help primary education, secondary education as well as Vet to implement these kind of competences within the new curriculum. Interviewees therefore suggest for NL not to focus on Learning to Learn competences but instead on Career development competences and Study competences.

Although it is again national education policy, interviewees indicate that also from MBO institutes and the parts of the labour market there is criticism regarding the way competence based learning outcomes are defined and their recognisability of future craftsmanship. Also critical comments are given on the strict attainment of certain levels of especially English and Mathematics. In the past it was possible to compensate to some extent between the exam grades for the different subjects, as long as the general attainment level is sufficient. Currently students can not compensate Mathematics and English anymore. This means that a good craftsman still can fail his/her exam due to not reaching the minimum attainment level of for example English. Interviewees indicate that this again limits chances of some individuals. They prefer a more flexible approach on this subject too.

Last but not least interviewees indicate that part of the problem regarding the attainment levels of English, Mother Tongue and Mathematics at MBO institutes is directly related to the failure of primary and secondary education to train participants to an accepted and required minimum level, as well as the push of parents to subscribe their children into a level of education that does not fit their competences. Now MBO institutes are obliged to accept every participant. Especially for the lower levels this creates specific problems, which easily lead to dropout. The causes of this are related to: methodological issues of educating youngsters in language and mathematics, reduction of finances, lack of flexibility in rules, the constant pressure of the national policy for education to include new subjects etc. However 8 separate ERF curricula are not seen as the answer for this. Instead interviewees indicate that special integrated educational approaches are required to close these kind of gaps especially for intended target groups like early school leavers, immigrants. To validate their effectiveness their impact needs to be assessed through independent assessments to assure for NQF levels attained. The current project does not guarantee independency of validation, a validation in respect of NQF and EQF levels and, interviewees indicate, therefore will miss a good framework for validation.

## **2.2 Example of ERF competences in NL qualification dossiers: The profession of Doctors- Pharmacists and Dentists assistants (NQF 4 - EQF 5)**

The below example illustrates the potential specifics of some professions per country as well as the way this quality dossier “translates” the ERF key competences into professional behaviour.

### **Qualification dossier developed under the responsibility of Calibris**

Calibris is active in improving harmonization between education and the labour market in the sectors health care, social care, welfare and sport. In this process, the organization considers both sides of the coin: education on the one hand, and professional practice on the other.

### **Doctor’s Assistant: NQF level 4 profession, 4 years program**

In the labour market there is no level 1, 2 or 3 professional area indicated. Therefore there is no training route through attainment of qualifications which help you enter the level 4 program.

### **General description of the profession**

The purpose of the doctor's assistant course is to produce an employee who can independently carry out some of the work of the doctor’s practice, prioritizes patients, and provide patients with information. In addition, s(h)e assists the treating physician in preparing, performing and completing medical treatments to enable that these can be carried out efficiently and effectively. The doctor’s assistant is responsible for the management of stocks and maintaining the administration.

### **Duties and field of work**

The doctor's assistant clarifies the request for care and advises the patient according to fixed protocols. She looks after intake, selects patients , provides advice and information, carries out simple medical procedures, is responsible for aftercare and organizing work processes and recording data. The doctor's assistant can work in a team or independently, deal with the interests of the patient and those of the treating physician and achieve a balance between quality requirements and what is possible.

### **Three defined core tasks of the professional**

As a starting professional the qualification dossier discerns three core tasks which for the core of the professionals competence, knowledge and skills.

1. Responsibility for Intake, Information and Advice (“Triëren”)
2. Acting on behalf of patients individual health care (standard medical treatments, assisting in more complex treatments; provide information and advice)
3. Carrying out organization specific tasks (in a combined Medical Centre, in office of Doctor)

## **REVALENTO**

### *PR-ERF project - Report on survey of curricula and methodologies on 8 Key Competences for Personal Assistants*

---

#### 4. Contribute to quality and professional development

Each core task is defined in 2 or more specific elements. For each of these elements the complexity of the element is defined, the responsibility and independency, as well as knowledge and skills.

For example: Re Core task 1 has two sub elements: To take the help request; Process patient related information

The core task "Triëren (To Judge, Sort)" is specified as:

##### *Complexity:*

The assistant at any time is capable to use his/her professionalism to asses actual health situation and to sort patients. The assistant acquire and combines (when possible) broad as well as specific knowledge, and thus analysis the request for a solid sorting. The assistant can judge risks and is able to investigate the nature and urgency of the request. The assistant assesses the urgency of a request and combines this with information from observations. Independently the assistant uses protocols and appointments regarding work processes. The assistant can make exemptions on processes based on using the proper arguments. The assistant is able to adapt to needs as well as diversity of patients. The complexity level of this kind of task is medium complex to high complex. Based on the above way of dealing the assistant determines next steps and is able to use the proper protocol or consult with the doctor.

##### *Responsibility and independency*

The assistant takes arguable decisions regarding next steps on the basis of the delegated responsibility and task. The assistant tunes the work with the patient, the doctor and other professionals in health care circuit while using the knowledge and experiences. During Judging/ sorting the assistant acts in a representative way, gives advice and is supportive. The assistant works independent, uses protocols, acts on behalf of professional directives and work appointments. The assistant can make exemptions based on professional knowledge and experiences. The assistant is responsible for the own behavior.

##### *Professional knowledge and skills:*

- Broad knowledge of communication skills
- Broad knowledge of most common treatment procedures
- Broad knowledge of population of patient regarding age, cultural background, chronically illnesses
- Broad knowledge of groups of medicine
- Broad knowledge of medicine usage and effects
- Broad knowledge of BIG (professional register)
- Specific knowledge of anatomy, physiology, pathology
- Specific knowledge on interview and conversation techniques
- Specific knowledge of ICT systems for the specific work area
- Able to apply triage techniques (judge and select)
- Apply communication facilities
- Apply communication and interview techniques
- Able to Tune to cultural back ground
- Apply social skills in contact with colleagues, network as well as patients
- Able in dealing with conflict and control of conflict as well as unacceptable behavior
- Apply ICT knowledge

## REVALENTO

### PR-ERF project - Report on survey of curricula and methodologies on 8 Key Competences for Personal Assistants

---

- Apply the options of the information systems
- Apply signals related to domestic violence and abuse, as well as social problems as is able to act accordingly (professional guidelines)
- Apply guidelines for privacy
- Apply directives, protocols agreements etc.

For professional education this part is then divided in two elements: Take the help request and process the patient information. Each of these elements is then described in standard subjects: Task description; Result; Behavior.

#### Example of Behavior:

- Treats patients unbiased, with respect and with great care
- Clarifies the care question by asking specific questions;
- Demonstrates in non-verbal behavior the interest and attention
- Is able to process a great amount of information in a short time
- When in doubt consult the doctor to test the care question
- Deals delicate information in a trustful way
- Stays focused in stressful situations (unexpected, or urgent) and deals with matters in the required way
- Makes clear trade-offs and takes robust decisions

The VET institute who is offering the program for training these tasks and behavior descriptions, it is responsible for the competence based learning program which train participants to master the listed tasks and responsibilities. So the “what” is described and defined by social partners and Ministry, the “how” belongs to the domain of the institute. Meeting the end terms is checked by the Inspection.

In this example the 8 ERF competences are dealt with as follows:

1. Dutch, English and Mathematics: context based tested and obliged part of the curriculum. Official national exams guard the quality level of the exams;
2. Digital: required knowledge and skills is linked with the three core tasks and this trained in professional context
3. Entrepreneurship: required attitude is translated into professional behavior and assessed in professional settings
4. Learning to Learn: defined as professional attitude in core task 3 and assessed in professional setting
5. Social Civic: integrated in behavior and attitude in core task 1, 2 and 3 and assessed in professional setting
6. Cultural and social awareness: integrated in behavior and attitude in core task 1, 2 and 3 and assessed in professional setting

Again they are not dealt with separately but form a coherent whole with the other professional competences. They are not trained separately. Behavior and attitude demonstrated regarding the required professional attitude (communication, reflection, learning attitude etc) are scored by observation and feedback from work based learning. They form an integral part of the final exam.

## REVALENTO

PR-ERF project - Report on survey of curricula and methodologies on 8 Key Competences for Personal Assistants

### 3 SURVEY ON TRAINING COURSES RELEVANT TO THE FIELD “PERSONAL ASSISTANT” (8 KEY COMPETENCES)

Revalento task was to find good practice of courses on Learning to Learn. Google search engine does not generate any course in NL which addresses the subject of Learning to Learn. This is in line with the statements of the interviewees. Instead the search words “Study skills” offers a great amount of search hits. Similar for Career Development competence. Therefore below is a selection presented of some of these hits.

#### 3.1 RESUME

No	K C 1	NAME OF THE TRAINING COURSE	GENERAL AIM	TARGET <sup>2</sup>	GENERAL CONTENTS <sup>3</sup>	FORMAT & LANGUAGE <sup>4</sup>	DURATION
1	7	<b>Doctors Assistant</b>	Training to become assistant in Doctors practice	NQF 3	<p>To extensive to summarize, but in general:</p> <p>Communication theory and practice, interview techniques</p> <p>Medical treatments, procedures etc. side effects</p> <p>Medicine, groups, main substances, main effects, side effects</p> <p>Population, main characteristics, prevalence of illnesses and diseases</p> <p>Symptoms of illnesses, diseases</p> <p>Anatomy, physiology, pathology</p> <p>Use of ICT in health care</p> <p>Intercultural communication cultural differences.</p> <p>All in combination with tests and experiences in real practical situations</p>	FT / PT NL	4 years
2	7	<b>Study Skills</b>	Become more successful in passing a study	NQF 4,5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the role and influence of your own mind set</li> <li>- planning and the importance of planning</li> <li>- how to read efficiently</li> <li>- dealing with English written texts</li> <li>- how to summarize</li> <li>- making of proper division between main points and side issues</li> <li>- dealing with both sides of our brain</li> <li>- how to improve concentration</li> <li>- how to create a “brain friendly” study environment</li> <li>- how to train your memory</li> </ul>	Pt, NL In combinati on with following a study!	4 sessions (12 hours)

<sup>1</sup>Please write her the Number of the Key Competence that the content of this training course is relevant to

<sup>2</sup> To whom is the training directed to? What is the education level needed? (if any)

<sup>3</sup> General contents: main modules

<sup>4</sup> FORMAT: Full Time (FT) / Part Time (PT) / On-line (OL) / Mixed between.... (whatever of those 3)

**REVALENTO**

PR-ERF project - Report on survey of curricula and methodologies on 8 Key Competences for Personal Assistants

No	KC 1	NAME OF THE TRAINING COURSE	GENERAL AIM	TARGET <sup>2</sup>	GENERAL CONTENTS <sup>3</sup>	FORMAT & LANGUAGE <sup>4</sup>	DURATION
3	7	<b>Study competences</b>	Improve study competences for secondary education	NQF 3	Planning and organising homework A fast way to learn words and sentences of a foreign language Making a proper deviation between main points and side issues Summarize Mind mapping Making connections between different subjects Make notes How to learn for a test, how to test oneself	Pt, NL in combination with following school	8 sessions of 1,5 hours
4	7	<b>Study Skills</b>	Learning participants of the different sorts of education how to handle their homework, their study	NFQ 2,3,4,5,6	Not communicated on website in detail	Pf, NL, e learning and coaching	1,3,6,9 months

### 3.2 DETAILED INFORMATION

**NAME OF THE TRAINING:** Doctors assistant

**REFERENCE (REF):** 91310

<b>GENERAL AIM</b>	Training of Doctor Assistant NQF 4b (EQF 5)
<b>SPECIFIC AIMS:</b>	Training of relevant competences, skills and knowledge areas as indicated in the qualification dossier by the employer representatives, education and the Ministry of Education. Participants who succeed the training course are able to start a career as Doctor assistant and automatically are BIG registered. BIG registration requires a regular update of skills and competences to maintain the license to work in the sector. Therefore the curriculum also successfully addresses Learning to Learn competences and its relevance for the profession.
<b>DETAILED TARGET:</b>	The purpose of the doctor's assistant course is to produce an employee who can independently carry out some of the work of the doctor's practice, prioritizes patients, and provide patients with information. In addition, s(h)e assists the treating physician in preparing, performing and completing medical treatments to enable that these can be carried out efficiently and effectively. The doctor's assistant is responsible for the management of stocks and maintaining the administration.
<b>DETAILED CONTENTS:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Responsibility for Intake, Information and Advice ("Triëren") <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To get in a word with patients, priorities</li> <li>- Provide guidance and instruction and advice on basis of priorities made</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Acting on behalf of patients individual health care (standard medical treatments, assisting in more complex treatments; provide information and advice) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepare consulting room, materials en means for treatment</li> <li>- Supports doctor in performing medical treatment</li> <li>- Perform simple medical treatment</li> <li>- Guide and support patient</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Carrying out organization specific tasks (in a combined Medical Centre, in office of Doctor)</li> <li>4. Contribute to quality and professional development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contribute to own professional development</li> <li>- Participates and contributes and protects the quality of the care</li> <li>- Tunes activities</li> <li>- Takes care of management tasks</li> <li>- Takes care of the administration</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>Some of the subject areas covered in the curriculum:  Communication theory and practice, interview techniques  Medical treatments, procedures etc. side effects  Medicine, groups, main substances, main effects, side effects  Population, main characteristics, prevalence of illnesses and diseases  Symptoms of illnesses, diseases  Anatomy, physiology, pathology  Use of ICT in health care  Intercultural communication cultural differences.</p>
<b>TRAINING METHODOLOGY:</b>	Competence based learning approach making use of critical situations in the working life of a Doctor Assistant. Mixture of class room learning, literature, E-learning, work based learning

<b>DURATION:</b>	4 years
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<a href="http://www.scaldacollege.nl">www.scaldacollege.nl</a> <a href="http://www.summacollege.nl">www.summacollege.nl</a> Also at: Albeda College, Mondriaan College Willem I College Midden Nederland etc etc.
<b>CONTACT:</b>	Martin van der Plas G. Ehrismann
<b>WHY YOU CHOOSE IT:</b>	Example of the way 8 ERF competences are integrated in initial vocational education of a specific professional area. Also an example of how the basis of the learning content is defined through the qualification dossier which governs vocational education

**NAME OF THE TRAINING: TRAINING OF STUDY SKILLS**

**REFERENCE (REF):** no official course number / official QA accreditation

<b>GENERAL AIM</b>	Become more successful in passing a study
<b>SPECIFIC AIMS:</b>	For everybody who needs tips and advice which make it more easy to follow a study programme in a successful way (NLF 5, 6, 7)
<b>DETAILED TARGET:</b>	Students at VU or at higher professional education
<b>DETAILED CONTENTS:</b>	In the whole course the following subjects will be covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the role and influence of your own mind set</li> <li>- planning and the importance of planning</li> <li>- how to read efficiently</li> <li>- dealing with English written texts</li> <li>- how to summarize</li> <li>- making of proper division between main points and side issues</li> <li>- dealing with both sides of our brain</li> <li>- how to improve concentration</li> <li>- how to create a “brain friendly” study environment</li> <li>- how to train your memory</li> </ul>
<b>TRAINING METHODOLOGY:</b>	Group session, short introduction, exercises, video film
<b>DURATION:</b>	4 sessions, each taking app 3 hours
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<a href="http://vu.nl/nl/studenten/cursussen-stages-scriptie/cursussen/beter-studeren/studievaardigheden.asp">http://vu.nl/nl/studenten/cursussen-stages-scriptie/cursussen/beter-studeren/studievaardigheden.asp</a>
<b>CONTACT:</b>	VU, <a href="mailto:opleiding.dsz@vu.nl">opleiding.dsz@vu.nl</a> Similar offerings are at: Erasmus University Tilburg University Leiden University Maastricht University Saxion University etc
<b>WHY YOU CHOOSE IT:</b>	Example of one of the many in house offerings at higher professional education and at Universities

--	--

**NAME OF THE TRAINING: STUDIEVAARDIGHEDEN VERBETEREN**

**REFERENCE (REF):** no official certificate or accreditation

<b>GENERAL AIM</b>	Improvement of study competence for secondary education
<b>SPECIFIC AIMS:</b>	Train participants in secondary education to acquire effective study skills for secondary education
<b>DETAILED TARGET:</b>	NQF 3 having difficulties with homework and or their rates in secondary education
<b>DETAILED CONTENTS:</b>	An action plan will assist participants to train the following issues: Planning and organising homework A fast way to learn words and sentences of a foreign language Making a proper deviation between main points and side issues Summarize Mind mapping Making connections between different subjects Make notes How to learn for a test, how to test oneself
<b>TRAINING METHODOLOGY:</b>	Participants bring in their own homework and improve by doing and reflection there upon
<b>DURATION:</b>	8 weeks, once per week, each session 1.5 hours
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<a href="http://www.studiebegeleidingxl.nl">www.studiebegeleidingxl.nl</a>
<b>CONTACT:</b>	Studiebegeleiding XL, info@studiebegeleidingxl.nl
<b>WHY YOU CHOOSE IT:</b>	Example of study training skills for level 3

**NAME OF THE TRAINING: STUDIEVAARDIGHEDEN (Study Skills)**

**REFERENCE (REF):** not recognised

<b>GENERAL AIM</b>	Training of Study skills
<b>SPECIFIC AIMS:</b>	Training of Study Skills for: Secondary education Initial VET Higher professional education University
<b>DETAILED TARGET:</b>	Learning participants of the different sorts of education how to handle their homework, their study
<b>DETAILED CONTENTS:</b>	Content is not available, since much of these and similar institutes are commercially based. Some of them offer their services integrated in schools, and parents need to pay for it additionally. E learning content of this provider is offered for secondary and initial VET but is also in combination with a parents offer. In reality this means that dialogue and situation are considered being vital for effective development of these kind of competence (see conclusion of findings of interviewees). Either parents take this role or a teacher, external professional
<b>TRAINING METHODOLOGY:</b>	Combination of e-learning exercises, in combination with homework participants have from the education program they are following
<b>DURATION:</b>	1, 3, 6 or 9 month

<b>WEBSITE:</b>	www.malthastudiecoaching.nl
<b>CONTACT:</b>	Through website
<b>WHY YOU CHOOSE IT:</b>	Another example of commercial offering. It combines e-learning and coaching, this again stressing importance of dialogue for effective training of these kind of competences

## 4. RECOMMENDATIONS BY STAKEHOLDERS

---

### 1. Please describe shortly the main recommendations of the stakeholders in regards to curriculum for the Key Competences

Interviewees have indicated that a focus on separate raining modules for each ERF competence is not a proper approach for NL. The ERF competences are meant to have a kind of holistic approach: only their effective joint combination make citizens capable of career transitions, update their professional skills as well as contribute to active participation in labour throughout their life time: the essence of Life Long Learning.

The majority of ERF Key competences are already implemented in Dutch Education system, although additional time is required to make all policy visible in the outcomes of curricula and diploma's. English, Mother tongue and Mathematics are obliged part of secondary education meeting NQF level 3 and 4 and are assessed by independent institutes to assure for quality. Social, cultural, entrepreneurship and Digital are incorporated in the context of vocational education. Learning to learn is a competence that is part of the way competence based education is organised.

Very clearly, therefore there does not exist any training in Learning to Learn competence. Interviewees have indicated that Learning to Learn as a separate ERF competence is not likely to be effectively trained in a separate training module: it is a basic general competence trained through competence based learning in the professional context. Interviewees indicate for potential more relevant areas which still are in line with the original idea of the proposal.

However interviewees mention that in NL Education (primary, secondary as well as Vet) are paying a lot of attention to the training of Study Skills. This is strongly related to ERF Life Long Learning since this type of training increases the competence of participants to successfully finish a training or a study program. Study Skills also are a requisite for all citizens to be able to follow education during their life time. For this subject there is a lot of training on offer as well as support starting in primary education up to Universities. Much of this training however is done in practical situations: planning, prioritise, dealing with great amounts (English) text, summarizing, how to prepare for a test etc. on the basis of the actual study at hand. Study Skills competences however are not a single competence, but are a construction of different separate competences. Splitting them and train them separately would not make any sense.

A second attention area in NL is LOB (meaning: Career Development Competences; coping with (career and life) choices) in secondary education (level 1,2,3,4): the development of skills and competences which help people to become able to plan for their own career and to cope with issues when they encounter a cross road or obstacle in their career / life. Again, this type of training touches the essence of the meaning of Life Long Learning. Currently in NL a lot of effort is put on teaching teachers how to make students / participants more competent in dealing with career changes / planning and coping their career path. Elements of the Career Development "competence" (again this is also a set of underlying combined competences) consist of : discovering your own strength and weaknesses, knowing where you are standing, knowing what is inspiring you, translating ambition in realistic actions, knowing how to organize your resources and take active control. Since this type of competence is a competence we ideally would like everybody to have, in NL within education a large amount of resources is currently made available to integrate this type of thinking / training in ALL

education. There are however some dilemma's which need to be solved for this sort of training: if the competence relates to getting control on how to make choices, participants need to be in a situation in which they are required to make choices, and participants need to have a question regarding this. Also, and essential for learning to take place, it needs to be done in dialogue with the participant, with reflection as an extra essential premises. Typically therefore the approach in NL is now to train teachers to recognize these kind of situations during the school career and then organize coaching, activities, reflection and communication with participants in a meaningful way and at the proper level of their development (meaning a differentiation for level 1, 2, 3 and level 4 and situations). Only when the timing is right (and context, dialogue and reflection are assured) learning effects can be expected. Teachers then will use their acquired skills and competences in this area to help students develop themselves dealing with these kind of situations when and if they are in a choice situation.

Apart from Study Skills competence there is no standard training offer for students participants to acquire the Career development Skills, and certainly not ICT based! Since this would miss the central point of teaching these kind of skills: the joint existence of situation, choice, dialogue, reflection.

## **2. What main skills do stakeholders require from personal assistants in regards to the Key Competences?**

All interviewees indicate that in NL there does not exist any general profile for personal assistant. Different sorts of personal assistant can be found in many different professional areas (building and construction, economics, administrative, health care). And even at sector level there are important differences between assistants in the different job areas. Their profile, competences skills and knowledge are directly related to each of the professional areas, and therefore will vary in content greatly. Taking these differences in to account is important for NL say interviewees. Not only due to labour market needs of the specific sector they will be working in. Also due to the fact that competence education is always offered context based. Not only for a better meeting of labour market needs, but also to be of higher motivation to all participants. Interviewees indicate that there is no such general profile as "personal assistant" which will address any labour market need.

In this report the research done for Doctor Assistant (and similar for pharmacist and Dentist Assistant) indicate that all 8 ERF competences are already part of the current professional profile. Learning to Learn is part of the way vocational education is offered and does not require separate attention.

What might be of relevance addressing separately is again Study Skills competence.

## **3. Additional comments, if any.**

NL research indicates a refocus is required in the project for the Learning to Learn competence which has been under scrutiny in the Netherlands. Interviewees argue for a focus on either Study Skills or Career development competence. The last competence however requires a different learning environment compared to what the project will be offering. There is yet no experience at all in NL of training of this competence through e-learning. Study Skills preferably also can only be trained most effectively in context and with practical approaches and feedback. This will put extreme high constraints on the development of a proper e-learning environment.

## 5. REFERENCE LIST

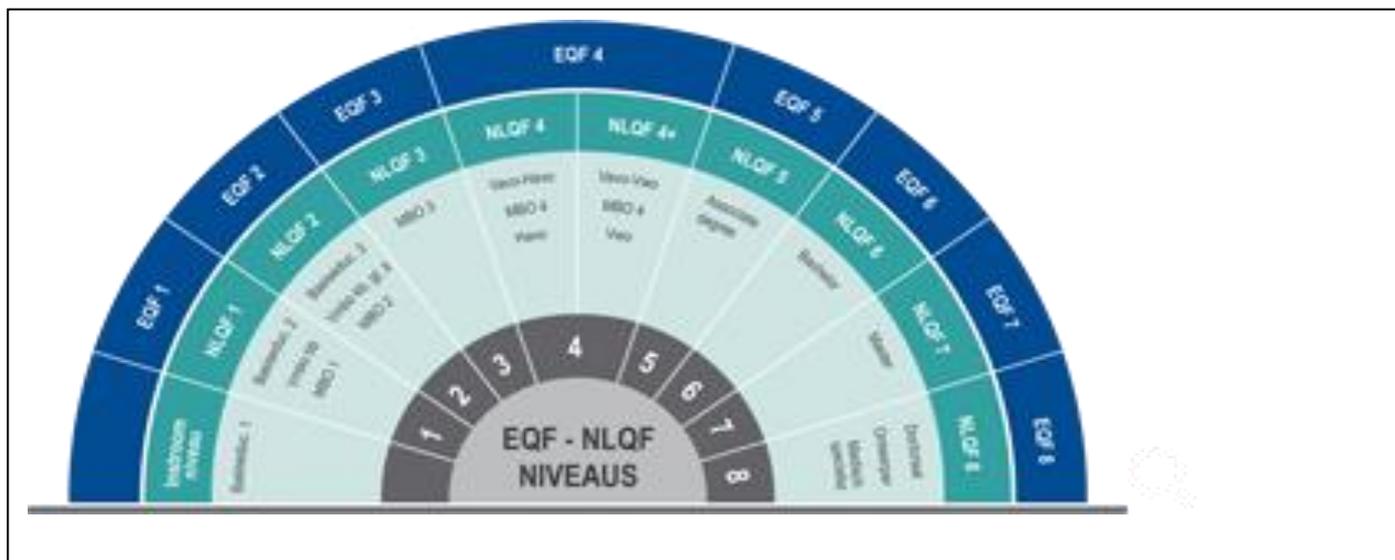
---

- "Aanval op de Uitval", Ministry of Education, The Hague 2014.
- Beeld van het tweede ronde tafelgesprek over een leven lang leren, Learn for Life, 2012
- Doktersassistent: crebo 79140; Kenniscentrum Calibris, February 2014
- Kuijpers, M. & Meijers, F. (2006). *Loopbaanleren in leerloopbanen. Onderzoek naar succesfactoren van loopbaanontwikkeling van lerenden in VMBO en MBO*. Ongepubliceerd onderzoeksverslag. 's-Gravenhage: Haagse Hogeschool/Lectoraat Pedagogiek van de Beroepsvorming
- Kuypers, M.(2010). *Loopbaandialoog: Over leren kiezen (en) leren praten*: Haagse Hogeschool / Lectoraat Pedagogiek van de Beroepsvorming
- Nationaal Coördinatiepunt NLQF, Den Bosch, 2014
- OER, Onderwijs en Examenregeling Apothekers-, Dokters-, Tandarts Assistent, Scalda College, sector Gezondheidszorg en Uiterlijke verzorging, 2013
- OER, Onderwijs en Examenregeling Apothekers-, Dokters-, Tandarts Assistent, Summa College, sector Gezondheidszorg en Uiterlijke verzorging, 2013
- Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs, Ministry of Education, The Hague, 1995

## 6 ANNEXES

### ANN 6.1. Link between NL NLQF and EQF

The scheme below is a graphic presentation of the link between the level of Dutch education system and EQF



In general level 1 is considered not being a professional level. Employees and Vet participants at level 1 are in need for clear instructions, work under continuous supervision, having a short time span of being focused. In education also most participants are hindered by psychic issues / learning issues and therefore need special education.

In time and in the right motivating environment these participants could develop to level 2, having some form of professional education. They will however rarely progress to level 3 or 4 education due to limits in behavior, capacity and motivation.

	Characteristics of initial work:	Learning means:
NQF 1 – EQF 1	Unskilled work, Activities with high repetitive character, work under strict supervision and high intensity control	Able to signal when one is ready Accept correction Able to apply correction
NQF 2 – EQF 2	Artificial work level, covering work with very low skills demands. Short time span of concentration	Accept correction Able to apply correction Able to ask for feedback
NQF 3 - EQF 3	Working under supervision with a limited area of independence. Addresses simple tasks of a profession making use of standardized procedures, recognizes simple problems in the profession, carries responsibility for simple tasks. Translated in qualification dossier.	Needs support for developing oneself
NQF 4a – EQF 4	Translated in professional behavior in quality dossier	Part of professional attitude
NQF 4b- EQF 5	Translated in professional behavior in quality dossier	Part of professional attitude