

ECVET Key Concepts, Processes and Tools

Key concepts

ECVET	<p>ECVET stands for the “European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training”.</p> <p>It is a set of principles and tools which supports the recognition of learning in one context, so that it counts towards a qualification in another.</p> <p>The principles can be applied flexibly in different countries and in different educational contexts. Some countries have decided only to use ECVET in connection with transnational learning mobility, whereas others also use it nationally in connection with lifelong learning strategies.</p>
Formal learning	<p>Learning that occurs in an organised and structured environment, e.g. a training institution, and it is clearly designated as learning. It is an intentional activity and it typically leads to validation and certification.</p>
Informal learning	<p>This type of learning is a result of daily activities relating to work, family life or leisure. It is not structured and usually does not lead to certification. In most cases it is unintentional.</p>
Non-formal learning	<p>Learning that is not necessarily provided by an education or training institution and typically does not lead to certification. However it is intentional on the part of the learner and has structured objectives, times and support. For instance, work-based learning could be non-formal, if it happens as part of a job or internship.</p>
Competent institution	<p>Organisation responsible for designing and awarding qualifications, recognising units or other roles regarding ECVET e.g. assessment, validation and recognition of learning outcomes according to the rules of a particular country.</p>
Learning Outcomes	<p>Learning Outcomes are statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do upon completion of a learning process. Usually, qualification frameworks indicate the overall level of learning outcomes in a qualification. For ECVET purposes the European Qualification Framework (EQF) is used as a reference for levels.</p> <p>Learning outcomes can be used for various purposes such as to establish descriptors of qualifications frameworks, define qualifications, design curricula, assessment, etc. Learning outcomes are set out in various levels of detail depending on their purpose and context.</p> <p>Learning outcomes are developed in the process of designing qualifications. There are different approaches to identifying and describing learning outcomes depending on the qualifications system.</p> <p>Learning outcomes may be acquired through a variety of learning pathways, modes of delivery (school-based, in-company, workplaces etc.), in different learning contexts (formal, non-formal and informal) or settings (i.e. country, education and training system ...).</p>
Unit of Learning Outcomes	<p>It is a component of a qualification, consisting of a coherent set of knowledge, skills and competences that can be assessed and validated.</p>
Credit	<p>A set of learning outcomes that an individual has achieved, and which have been assessed and recognised. They can be accumulated towards a qualification or transferred to other learning programmes/courses or qualifications</p>
ECVET points	<p>Numerical representation of the overall weight of learning outcomes in a qualification, and the relative weight of units in relation to the qualification. One year’s full-time VET corresponds to 60 ECVET-points. Yet, not all countries use ECVET-points.</p>

Qualification system	<p>All aspects of a Member State's activity related to the recognition of learning and other mechanisms that link to education and training to the labour market and civil society. This includes the development and implementation of institutional arrangements and processes relating to quality assurance, assessment and the award of qualifications.</p> <p>A national qualifications system may be composed of several subsystems and may include a national qualification framework.</p>
Qualification framework	<p>An instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications and subsystems and improve the transparency, access, progression and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society.</p> <p>There is a European Qualification Framework (EQF), which serves as a reference point for the comparison of National Qualification Frameworks, but the two are not necessarily identical in structure.</p>

Processes

Credit accumulation	Process by which a learner acquires qualifications progressively by successive assessment of learning outcomes
Credit transfer	Process by which learning outcomes achieved in one context can be taken into account in another context. It is based on the principles of assessment, validation and recognition.
Assessment of learning outcomes	Methods and processes used to establish the extent to which a learner has achieved particular knowledge, skills and competences
Validation of learning outcomes	The process of confirming that certain assessed learning outcomes achieved by the learner correspond to specific outcomes which are required for a unit or a qualification
Recognition of learning outcomes	The process of officially verifying achieved learning outcomes through the awarding of units or qualifications.

Documents and tools

Memorandum of Understanding	A document which is signed by two or more collaborating institutions (e.g., for a mobility project, the sending organisation and host partner organisation). This document establishes the credit transfer system and formalises the ECVET partnership.
Learning Agreement	An individual document, specific to each learner, which defines learning objectives and sets out conditions for their achievement. By this document the competent institutions guarantee that if the learning outcomes are achieved, they will be recognised.
Personal Transcript	A record of a learner's learning achievements. It contains information regarding: the learner's assessed learning outcomes; units and ECVET points awarded (in cases where they are being used). The document belongs to the learner.
Europass	<p>A set of five documents that aims to help European citizens make their knowledge, skills, competences and qualifications clearly and easily understood. It comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europass CV – Curriculum Vitae template • Language Passport – a self-assessment tool for language skills and qualifications • Certificate Supplement – describes the knowledge and skills acquired by holders of vocational education and training certificates • Diploma Supplement – describes the knowledge and skills acquired by holders of higher education qualifications • Europass Mobility – records the knowledge and skills acquired in another European country

For more information, see the **ECVET Questions & Answers** document on the **ECVET Secretariat website:**
www.ecvet-secretariat.eu

