

GUIDE TO DEVELOPING A SECTOR QUALIFICATION STRATEGY INCLUDING:

- **FUNCTIONAL MAPPING**
- **A COMPETENCE, SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE FRAMEWORK**
- **A QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESS**

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INTRODUCTION

This guide is for those in the Sport and Active Leisure Sector working at the European Level and with the responsibility or remit to develop work based competence frameworks and qualifications for their specific sub sector within the framework of the European Qualification Framework (EQF) and the European Credit and Vocational Education and Training System (ECVET).

EOSE has produced a guide to allow the subsectors of sport and active leisure to develop their own specific competence and qualifications frameworks against a common methodology. This common methodology, if followed, will allow for the identification of common units of competence across the various subsectors sport and active leisure. Adherence to this methodology will allow any Sport and Active Leisure sector to organise its vocational educational training (VET) system at the European level.

The approach adopted in this guide is based on a method – functional analysis – described in detail in “Towards a Competence Workforce” (by Bob Mansfield and Lindsay Mitchell, Publisher Gower, 1996) In addition the development of Occupational Descriptions is based on that described by the RESPECT Project at www.respectproject.org

The guide starts with a consideration of the changing labour market and the most important consequences: people at work, vocational education and training systems and methodologies for developing occupational standards.

Then it presents functional analysis, a clear method for specifying the current and future needs of employment in the sport sector. This is followed by the development of a detailed competence framework from the functional map followed by the allocation of knowledge and the use of units and credits. The final sections are then focused on the components of a quality assurance process.

Executive summary of the key products and processes of the EQF-Sport project

SECTION 1 – 2 of the Main Guide

MANAGING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND LABOUR MARKET CHANGE

A new step in the Education and Training policy in Europe was initiated by the European Council and the European Commission at the Maastricht conference in December 2004. In line with the Copenhagen declaration (2002) on VET, it has been decided to support the creation of a "European Qualification Framework" (EQF). A first document called "*Towards a European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning*" was approved in July 2005 and then submitted to a Consultation Process open until the end of December 2005.

In the light of that, the EOSE Board has taken the initiative to arrange a meeting in December 2005 in Brussels with the key stakeholders of the European Sports Sector to coordinate the contribution of the Sports sector to the EQF consultation and to form a permanent group to provide the strategic guidance towards developing, implementing and evaluating a European Sport Workforce Development Plan with short, medium and long term goals...

The strategic committee called "European Sport Workforce Development Alliance" known as "The Alliance" was created to bring together the major network organisations working in the sport sector to share and discuss issues around the development of the European Sport Workforce.

The mission of the Alliance is to provide a mechanism to coordinate the development of the European sport's workforce to ensure a workforce with the "right skills at the right time in the right place" and develop an active partnership between the major decision makers of the sector. The role of this Alliance will be to continue contributing to the implementation of EU policies but also to

guarantee that the Sport sector can present itself at the European level in a coherent way in demonstrating its positive and growing contribution to the social, health, economic and cultural development of the European Union.

SECTION 3 - 4

THE INDUSTRY/OCCUPATIONAL MAP

The occupational map should provide a frame of reference for the sector building on from the Functional Map. In the main this should relate to the key occupational profiles in the sector. However, to provide a sense of position in relation to the related areas with which the sector interacts, this occupation map includes a review of how the sector is organized to deliver its objectives/targets and how it operates at a range of levels including organisational and occupational and the key points where the sector overlaps with others.

OCCUPATIONAL DESCRIPTIONS

The approach of the Sport and Active Leisure Sector is to develop a simple document to identify the key tasks and attributes which relate to a specific occupation and equally as important to identify those tasks which are agreed to be beyond the competence of the occupation described thus setting out to identify career paths and competence requirements of a particular occupation including the EQF Level attributed overall across Europe. It is common practice to use this sort of tool to identify whether emerging occupations are actually different in character or merely a way of re-packaging an old occupation.

There are a number of ways of developing these descriptions but the current preferred method is to use surveys and focus groups of practicing professionals to identify overall task and activities undertaken which can then be compared with the emerging competence frameworks drawn from the sectors functional maps and ensure that the framework developed in line with current professional practice especially in the technical areas of the occupation.

The guide also describes methodology for testing potential new occupational descriptions to see whether they actually are different occupations or just a variation on a current occupation. An accepted benchmark is that to identify difference occupational areas at least 50% of the tasks should be different.

SECTION 5 - 12

FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS AND MAPPING

A functional map is a graphic representation of results of functional analysis related to a particular sector of industry. The map provides representation of necessary productive functions to fulfill key purposes in workforce environment. Functions are represented in the strict disaggregated hierarchical structure each disaggregation adding more detail to the original function.

The map starts with a **Key Purpose** and would normally expand through **Key Purpose**, **Key Roles** to **Key Functions** each level in more detail than the last. From the level of Key Functions the **Performance Criteria** and **Competence Framework** is developed again breaking each function down into quite detailed statements of competence which can be measured and evidenced.

DEVELOPING PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

A **Functional Map** will not give a detailed picture of what an individual will do at work, the level they are expected to work at or what they can be assessed against. For this you need **Performance Criteria** which takes the key functions and disaggregates them even further, adds to them the **Range** of the competence, the **Skill** which is developed and the **Knowledge** which is

required to be understood and all of this is set out in a **Competence Framework** based on the identified occupations.

Competences

In our framework competence referred to is “competence at work”. Competence can refer to bundles (or a bundle) of identifiable actions relevant to a function, role or occupation which are measurable. When you combine the competence, range, skill and knowledge into these units you have a set of **learning outcomes**.

The competence framework begins where the Functional Map left off and is divided into manageable units made up of learning outcomes – broken down by level into competences, skills and knowledge plus the range and scope of coverage required (in line with EQF). The competence framework described both the competences required in occupations and the competences to be achieved on learning programmes.

Skills and Underpinning Knowledge

With each unit of competence it should be possible to identify the skill required to demonstrate the competence and the knowledge and understanding required to achieve that competence in a range of different circumstances and with different groups or individuals.

This combination of skills and underpinning knowledge will often be used as the basis for developing training programmes for those entering the industry or transferring from other industries.

Units, Levels and Credits

Once an occupational area has been agreed the detailed competences identified from the functional analysis and the skills and knowledge specified they can be grouped into recognisable units. These units are given a level from the EQF and credit applied using an agreed methodology examples of which are described in the guide.

SECTION 13

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Mapping Toolkits and a Common Assessment Strategy

The assessment parameters required for delivery, assessment and quality assurance of qualifications and competence.

To include guidance on the required facilities, occupational competence of tutors, practical assessment, qualification structure and train the Trainer competences.

National Agreements

The ideal scenario for recognising qualifications at the European level is through a Memorandum of understanding and trust between the European body and a recognised National Authority and where possible a sector specific national competent body.

The agreement should comprise of guidance on the relationship with national authorities and the issues and solutions identified through the research carried out within EOSE. An example is included within the specific guide.

Sector verification unit

Guides to current practice and requirements in providing the accreditation of learning programmes in a sector by a verification unit operated through a European sport and active leisure body.

SECTION 14 - 15

RECOGNISING INFORMAL AND NON FORMAL LEARNING

A Conversion Strategy for dealing with current professionals

Most of the systems developed will apply to the development and implementation of learning programmes and their accreditation. This applies to NEW learners who achieve the qualifications. There are potentially millions of European citizens who operate in the sport sector without the newly acquired qualifications. Each sector must consider a conversion strategy to deal with these people, this may include a strategy for the accreditation of non-formal and informal learning.

European register of professionals

Each sector should consider the development and implementation of a European Register of Professionals. In the case where a register is established the four headings under the quality assurance section are especially important. An example from Fitness is part of the guide.

Europass

By 2012 job qualifications should be comparable and based on the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. By 2012 all new qualification certificates, diplomas and "Europass" attestation documents issued by competent authorities should contain clear reference to the corresponding EQF reference level.

Europass consists of five documents: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/>

Europass Curriculum Vitae
Europass Language Passport
Europass Certificate Supplement
Europass Diploma Supplement
Europass Mobility

The first two are usually completed by the individual holder and the third-fifth documents are issued by competent organisations. Europass is supported by a network of National Europass Centres in each EU State and was established by the European Parliament and Council in December 2004 to be a single transparency framework for qualifications and competencies.

1. The Workforce and Labour Market Changes

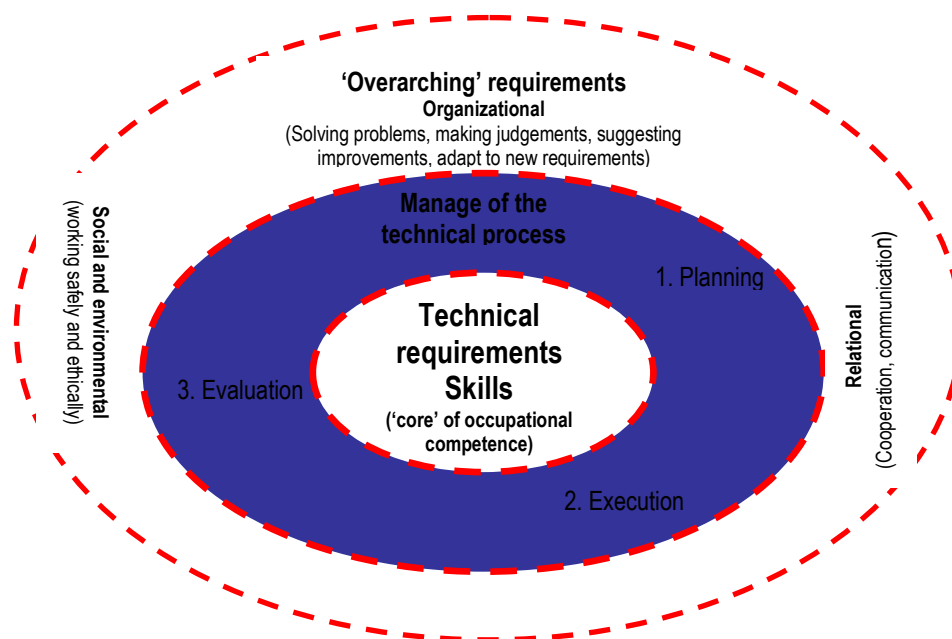
Fast economic and industrial changes, emerging from the 70s onwards, resulted in several modifications in the work activity and consequently in vocational education and training systems.

The consequences for people at work correspond to occupations having become more complex, employees having more responsibilities linked with a broader range of competencies and being ready and able to adapt to new requirements, which involve:

- more multi-skilled workers (capacity to adapt to new skills demands and methods of work);
- more highly skilled labour (particularly at technician level);
- people directly responsible for quality assurance and improvement and the control of own work activities;
- coordination of work activity at all levels (team work and cooperation).

Skilled work traditionally seen as the work done by a person who had undertaken a period of structured training in their occupation¹ ('qualified' = a person who have a certificate describing the occupation they have been trained in, the period of training and the 'level' of skill obtained) is, in currently modern economy, refer to particular descriptions of what a worker is **expected to be able to do** in employment, the outcomes he achieves, which international trends point towards the following model:

Figure 1: Representation of the modern requirements (trends) for a skilled person



Source: MANSFIELD, Bob, SCHMIDT, Herman (2001), *Linking Vocational Education and Training Standards and Employment Requirements. An International Manual*, Turin, European Training Foundation, p. 33

In the central circle there are the technical requirements and skills which is the “core” of occupational competence. Then, contiguous to this, we have the management of the technical processes, subdivided into three stages: planning, execution and evaluation. In the external circle we have the three “overarching” requirements (overarching because they are applied to all technical requirements and to the management of the technical process): organisational, relational and social/environmental.

Traditional processes of vocational education and training based on the design of curriculum (specification of the knowledge and skills the student needs to learn) was not enough to meet this new employment need. It became clear that training has to be linked to employment needs if

¹ Other criteria were also used to recognise skilled work, like the amount of time of training or the type of school attended.

training is to be relevant to the real world of work and that the modifications made to curriculum were not enough to meet these needs.

In response to this many countries in Europe have reformed their vocational education and training systems and the following changes were introduced in VET:

- broader descriptions of occupations (tendency for occupations to be grouped into broader occupational groupings or 'families');
- broader descriptions of work activity (trend for work activities to be expressed as 'functions/outcomes', which allows changes in technology and work organization);
- Key skills (general requirements, 'compétences transversales' specified as part of vocational curriculum to prepare people for future change and adaptability);
- flexible learning design (curricula and qualifications are broken into 'modules/units');
- flexible learning delivery (open or distance learning/work based learning);
- flexibility in the development of VET standards (to allow quick updating);
- analysis of labour market needs in terms of content of occupations.

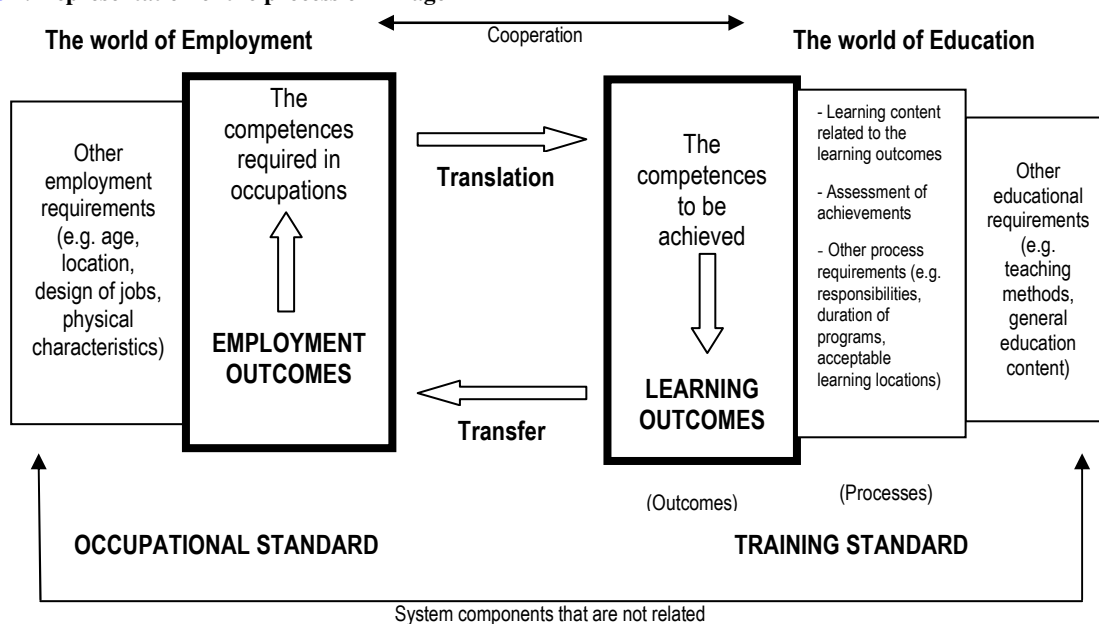
2. Linking Labour Market to the Vet Systems

The most important consequence of labour market changes, though, is that it became very clear that a closer link between the needs of the labour market and vocational education and training system was necessary and also new methods for defining that link.

However the development of this linkage is complex because it means linking two different logics (set of priorities, motivations and purposes): the logic of the world of employment and the logic of the world of education. In the logic of employment, employers are interested in what people need to do, how they will do it, and how well they do it (OUTCOMES). In the logic of education, education professionals are interested in what people learn, how they will learn it, and how the quality and content of learning will be assessed (INPUTS, process - teaching/learning methods - and assessment).

Figure 2 represents a process of developing this linkage where the needs of employment (occupational standards) must be translated into a language that can be understood in education and training. One immediate step is to develop learning standards and outcomes that describe what people will be able to do at the end of a learning program. Then learning outcomes can be linked to employment outcomes defined in occupational standards. The primary linkage is between the training standard outcome and the occupational standard employment outcome. If this direct linkage is made, employment requirements will directly determine the learning outcomes.

Figure 2: Representation of the process of linkage



Source: MANSFIELD, Bob, SCHMIDT, Herman, 1999 (not published), cited by FRETWELL, D. et al. (2001), *A Framework for Defining and Assessing Occupational and Training Standards in Developing Countries*, Turin, European Training Foundation, p. 32

Occupational standards are important instruments because they provide the basis for a variety of activities related to human resource management (recruitment, selection, promotion, remuneration, training, certification or assessment) but above all because they are currently the prime instrument for the elaboration of vocational education and training programs, since they ensure relevance, transparency and quality of the outcomes of the training process.

Occupational standard² are descriptions of the work functions to be carried out within the framework of a specific occupational activity, as well as the related:

- **Competences** (personal and ethical competences)
- **Skills** (functional competences);
- **Knowledge** (cognitive competences);

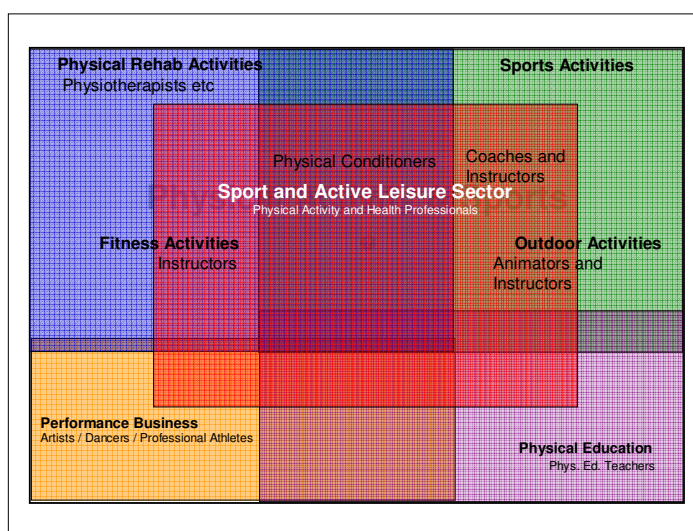
3. Drawing the Industry/Occupational Map and identifying footprint overlap.

This document should aim to provide a concise overview of the sector including:

- • The scope, footprint and limits of the sector including areas of overlap with other sectors.
- The Organisational Structure of the Sector including range, type, size of employers and key stakeholders, and their roles and responsibilities
- The Activities of the Sector and the occupations and opportunities for career progression, typical career routes and qualifications
- Statistics and Labour Market Information about the sector.
- The key trends and drivers for change within the sector
- Key characteristics of employment within the sector
- Typical qualifications available for those wanting to enter employment in the sector.

The Industry/occupational map should provide a frame of reference for the sector building on from the Functional Map. In the main this should relate to the key occupational profiles in the sector. However, to provide a sense of position in relation to the related areas with which the sector interacts, this occupational map includes a review of how the sector is organized to deliver its objectives/targets and how it operates at a range of levels including organisational and occupational and the key points where the sector overlaps with others.

Occupational Footprint and Overlap in Sport and Active Leisure Sector



² Different names are used in each country: in UK = ‘National Occupational Standards’; in France = ‘Référentiels Professionnels’; in Germany = ‘Ausbildungsordnungen’.

4. Occupational Descriptions

It is not possible to see a common and uniform European model for developing occupational descriptions. There are recent developments in this area including **Eurooccupations** which is a project whose partners include 10 Universities from across Europe. www.eurooccupations.org This project aims to build a publicly available occupations database, including information on approximately 1,500 occupations in 8 European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, UK). For a selection of 150 occupations, the database will also include amongst others, task descriptions, competencies, required education, certificates and 'on-the-job-training' for each of the 8 participating countries. In this way, the database offers insight into the comparability of occupational structures and occupational content within Europe. However at the moment of writing this guide no common profile, methodology or template was available from the project coordinators.

The approach of the Sport and Active Leisure Sector is to develop a simple document to identify the key tasks and attributes which relate to a specific occupation and equally as important to identify those tasks which are agreed to be beyond the competence of the occupation described thus setting out to identify career paths and competence requirements of a particular occupation including the EQF Level attributed overall across Europe. It is common practice to use this sort of tool to identify whether emerging occupations are actually different in character or merely a way of re-packaging an old occupation.

There are a number of ways of developing these descriptions but the current preferred method is to use surveys and focus groups of practicing professionals to identify overall task and activities undertaken which can then be compared with the emerging competence frameworks drawn from the sectors functional maps and ensure that the framework developed in line with current professional practice especially in the technical areas of the occupation.

The DACUM process is often used for this purpose. DACUM is an acronym for Developing A Curriculum. DACUM uses guided group discussion. A trained facilitator leads a small group of expert workers in a discussion of what they do on a day-to-day basis. The workers are guided to describe their activities in terms of tasks expressed as behavioural competencies that involve a verb, an object and usually a modifier. Each member of the group is encouraged to describe all of the activities in which they engage.

This whole-group brainstorming provides the basis for identifying the major duties of a job. The tasks that make up the duties are then specified. As each work activity is proposed, the group discusses it and comes to consensus on how it should be stated as a task. The results are then checked with other workers outside the discussion group. It is recommended to check them by surveying 50 or more similar workers and/or supervisors of such workers.

The DACUM process also includes the separate identification of work enablers, including general knowledge and skills, worker behaviours (personal traits and interpersonal skills), and tools and equipment used. The experts are also asked to identify future trends and concerns that may affect what they do and how they do it.

This document serves two key purposes. Firstly it allows different countries to use this simple document the descriptions to identify any differences they may have from the agreed standard description.

So far in the Sport and Active Leisure Sector we have used this "Mixed Method" described above in both the Fitness and Outdoor sectors. From this has come a template identifying key occupational profiles for the sectors.

This common approach allows comparison across sectors as well as across countries where there is a collective agreement and therefore a number of identified profiles in key sectors.

5. Steps towards a Functional Map and Competence Framework

Within the section below we will look at these tools and identify the critical pathway to develop the new tools required for implementing and testing the unit and credit framework.

5.1 General Principles

It is a generally accepted principle that the major components of a Sector competence, skills and knowledge framework include:

- **A functional map** covering the whole of the sector,
- **A work-based competence framework** developed from the functional map by disaggregating the identified competences to such an extent that they describe work tasks which can be measured, evaluated and linked to specific knowledge and skills.
- **Identified Skills** which need to be developed and which can be transferred to the work-place,
- **Body of Knowledge** written as outcome statements which underpins and supports the competence and skills framework. Knowledge is defined by (CEDEFOP 2008) as the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of study or work.
- **A common assessment strategy** needs to be in place to validate all of the above components

In addition to the documents described above it is advantageous to have a detailed body of knowledge extrapolated from the learning outcomes which describe, in detail, the breadth and depth of knowledge which has to be understood by the individual and which can be tested in a controlled situation. Whilst this is not included in the Sector Framework it is expected that each training provider will develop such a document as guidance for their own staff and students.

6. Functional Analysis

6.1. New Methodology

The fundamental change of economies and in the organisation of work affects also the methodologies for developing occupational standards. New methods for occupational analysis have been developed and attention has shifted from analysing discrete job tasks to analysis of broader occupational competencies.

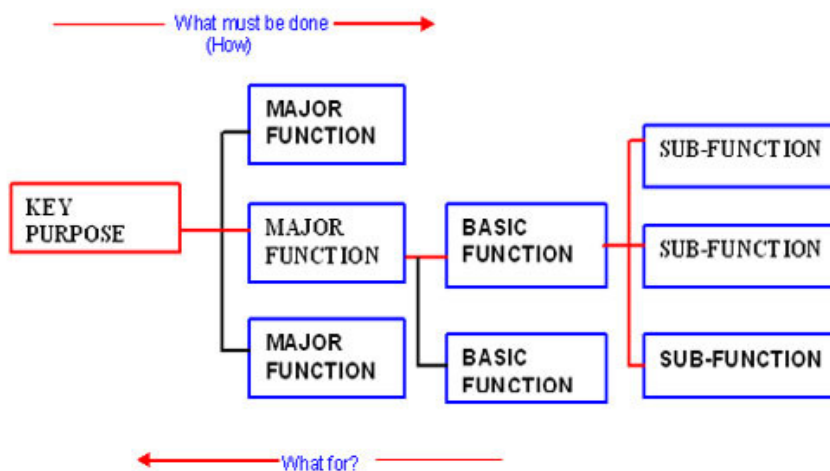
Functional analysis is a method used to identify the required competencies of a productive function by means of a deductive strategy (it is not an exact method). By concentrating on the functions or results/outcomes instead of the activities, the descriptions produced are independent of the technology or methods used to achieve the function. In other words, instead of describing what people are doing, functional analysis **describes what people have to achieve**.

Functional analysis is a flexible method since the productive function may be defined at the level of an occupational sector, an enterprise, a group of enterprises or a whole sector of production or services. Functional analysis may be developed with different initial levels: an occupational sector (eg. Health and Fitness); mainstream occupations at various sectors (occupational safety and health); or an occupation (eg. Fitness instructor).

6.2. Functional Maps

The functional map is the graphic representation of the results of the functional analysis. It is not a representation of work processes, but rather a representation of the necessary productive functions to fulfil the key purpose.

Figure 3:Functional Map



Source: ILO/Cinterfor accessed in October 2007 at <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/ampro/cinterfor/temas/complab/xxxx/10.htm>

It begins by establishing the key purpose of the productive function under study (as an outcome – what has to be achieved) and then questions are asked to find out what functions need to be performed in order for the previous function to be achieved.

If it is read from left to right we find the answers to "How?" a main function is carried out through performing the basic functions that compose it. Conversely, from right to left, we find the answer to "What for?" of each function, which is contained in the function of the immediately following level.

Some other general characteristics of functional maps are:

- Functions do not represent a hierarchy, but simply different and separate functions;
- Disaggregation of functions does not generally go beyond four or five levels;
- The final level of analysis is referred to as the 'Units of competency', which represent a specific action of the productive process;
- Unit of competency are further described in 'Elements of competency' (detailed aspects of function which are written in terms of "the worker will be capable of...");
- Codes are used to show the level of detail and position in analysis:
 - Major functions (use a letter) → 'A, B, C'
 - Next stage (add a nr) → 'A1, B1, C1'
 - Further stage (add another nr) → 'A11, B11, C11'

The statements in functional maps follow the next similar grammatical structure:

Figure 4

ACTION (a Verb) Do what?	OBJECT OF ACTION (a Noun) To what?	CONDITION OF ACTION For what purpose? With what? To whom? What type?
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Eg.³: <i>Provide and improve</i>	<i>health and fitness related activities</i>	<i>that will meet the individual's needs, help them achieve their potential and enhance their quality of life</i>
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Functions in functional maps should be written in the form of a sentence, following the rule of beginning with a **verb** in the infinitive (preferably); then it describes the **object** on which the action is performed followed by the **condition** of the action regarding the object (not always necessary).

6.3. Performance Criteria (Competences and Learning Outcomes)

When the functional map is complete it should be concluded with the performance criterion, an extension of the functional analysis process, which includes the following three specifications:

Figure 5

EMPLOYMENT SPECIFICATION		TRAINING SPECIFICATION		ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION
(What people in employment are expected to do)		(What students in vocational education and training must learn in order to meet these expectations)		(How the competences of the students will be judged)
Performance requirements	Range	Skills ⁴	Knowledge ⁵	Evidence needed to demonstrate competence
The performance requirements described as workplace competences	The range	The skills the individual needs to acquire to do this	The knowledge the individual needs to learn to do this	The evidence needed to demonstrate competence

Performance requirements are a specification of what has to be achieved in employment to meet the outcomes described in units of competency (what the worker should be capable of...) and the **Range** describe the field of application, which are the tools, equipment, materials, methods or processes needed to achieve the performance requirements.

Skills are the evidence that proves performance has been achieved and **Knowledge** describes the necessary knowledge needed to achieve performance.

³ Source: EHFA, *Setting the standards for the European Health and Fitness Sector* (2005), accessed in October 2007 in <http://www.ehfa.eu/sect/lib/Library2.php?docatno=17>

⁴ In the context of EQF, “skills” means the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems. Skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) or practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

⁵ In the context of EQF, “knowledge” means the outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of work or study. Knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.

The **assessment specification** describes the quality with which performance have to be achieved.

In the following table there is an example of the performance criterion for a unit of competency from functional map of the European Health and Fitness Industry⁶:

Figure 6 B123: Deal with accidents and emergencies

EMPLOYMENT SPECIFICATION		TRAINING SPECIFICATION		ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION
The performance requirements	The range	The skills the individual needs to learn to do this	The knowledge the individual needs to learn to do this	The evidence needed to demonstrate competence
<i>a) Deal effectively with injuries and signs of illness</i>	<i>Injuries: Illness:</i>	<i>Identify injuries and signs of illness</i>	<i>Types of injuries and of illness</i>	<i>Injuries and signs of illness effectively assisted</i>
<i>b) Follow appropriate emergency procedures efficiently</i>	<i>Materials and instruments: Emergency procedures:</i>	<i>Apply emergency procedures</i>	<i>Materials and instruments Emergency procedures</i>	<i>Emergency procedures efficiently followed</i>

Another more specified example of the performance criterion for a unit of competency from a functional map for a restaurant waiter⁷ (the key purpose is Prepare the restaurant, serve food and drinks and process accounts) is presented in the next table:

Serve food and drinks to customers

EMPLOYMENT SPECIFICATION		TRAINING SPECIFICATION		ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION (**)
The performance requirements	The range	The skills the student needs to learn to do this	The knowledge the student needs to learn to do this	The evidence needed to demonstrate competence
<i>a) Welcome customers politely, take and store coats and other personal items</i>	<i>Customers: individuals, groups, special needs (disability)</i>	<i>Recognising and responding to customers' special needs</i>	<i>The characteristics and needs of different types of customers</i>	<i>Customers (as stated in the Range) welcomed politely and personal items stored</i>
	<i>Storage of: garments, bags, briefcases, valuables</i>	<i>Effective communication with customers</i>	<i>The principles of effective communication Storage of customers property and</i>	<i>State the principles of effective communication in dealing with customers</i>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ MANSFIELD, Bob, SCHMIDT, Herman (2001), *Linking Vocational Education and Training Standards and Employment Requirements. An International Manual*, Turin, European Training Foundation, p. 54-55.

			<i>legal responsibilities</i>	
<i>b) Check reservations , offer options where tables are not available and show customers to a table</i>	<i>Options: waiting for a table to clear, later reservation, suggesting an alternative restaurant</i>	<i>Effective communication with customers</i> <i>Interpreting reservation books</i>	<i>The principles of effective communication</i> <i>Reservation systems</i>	<i>Reservation records</i> <i>Options offered as stated in the range</i>
<i>c) Take orders for drinks</i>		<i>Clear and accurate recording of information</i>	<i>Types of drinks typically served in restaurants</i>	<i>Drinks orders taken</i>
<i>d) Take orders for food, explain menu items accurately, inform customers about special dishes and advise on customer choice when asked to do so</i>	<i>Taking orders: for passing on to the kitchen, personal service (e.g. sweet trolley, cheese board)</i>	<i>Effective communication with customers</i> <i>Advising and explaining clearly</i> <i>Personal food service</i>	<i>The principles of effective communication</i> <i>Characteristics of dishes offered on the menu, including special items, regional dishes, etc.</i>	<i>Food orders taken for all courses</i> <i>Menu items explained</i> <i>Personal food service as stated in the range</i>
<i>e) Pass orders on to the kitchen and monitor the progress of the preparation of dishes</i>		<i>Passing on information accurately</i> <i>Checking on progress</i>	<i>The principles of effective communication</i> <i>Kitchen procedures</i>	<i>Food orders passed on</i>

(**) The assessment specification identifies both what the student must do and the knowledge which must be tested. Descriptions of what the student must do – usually to produce something which will be inspected or observed – always start with a NOUN (e.g. Table, Food). The knowledge to be tested always starts with a VERB (e.g. State). Methods of assessment are not described, only what will be assessed (how the assessment will be made is determined locally).

7. The Workplace Competence Framework – An Example from Fitness

7.1 What is a Competence Framework and how does it work?

Work place competency standards can be equated to measurable industry benchmarks in that they specify what workers must be able to do at different levels of qualification or job responsibility. They should relate to recognisable job roles within the industry. The key areas identified in the Functional Map were derived following a functional analysis of the professional role and responsibilities of the workers within the broader industry framework. The competence framework is the most disaggregated and detailed section drawn from the functional map and should be developed to include clear detail of the skill, range and the knowledge required for and delivered by that individual unit.

As an example the health and fitness instructor competence framework is based on **Unit B1** from the **functional map** and is a framework that specifies the minimum skills and competencies required by the instructor to safely carry out the instructional role at different levels within the European Health and Fitness Industry. The competence framework is accompanied and supported by the knowledge frameworks which outline the knowledge necessary to support the

minimum standards for these skills and competencies and here we see the introduction of levels in the learning process which in this case are shown as **EQF 3 Fitness Instructor and EQF 4 Personal Trainer**. Together with the assessment mapping document these allow training providers around Europe to match their qualifications to the agreed industry standards

It should be noted that a competence framework allows for workers to be assessed in the workplace as to their competence against the competence framework where normally units are grouped together to form a recognised occupational role. For this to happen there needs to be competent assessors in the workplace or specialist assessors brought in to observe and assess the competence of an individual. The primary purpose of the Workplace Competence Framework at the European Level however is to set a benchmark of competence, skills and knowledge by which training providers can measure themselves to demonstrate that they are producing a cohort of individuals with the correct minimum competence to enter the labour market. It can also be used to check that those already in the industry have the up to date skills and knowledge to continue to call themselves professionals.

7.2 How is the Competence Framework structured?

The competence framework in Fitness is divided into the following components:

I. Units B1.1 to B 1.7

The framework is made up of seven functional units, each unit relating to one of the key roles or functions of the health and fitness instructor in the workplace.

II. Competencies

Each unit is made up of blocks of competencies that the instructor must have to safely and effectively fulfil the key role or function. The competencies refer to the ability of the instructor to consistently apply knowledge and skills to a set standard in a variety of work situations. Competencies are descriptions of general outcomes from the performance of work related functions in one of the key roles of the health and fitness instructor.

III. Skills

Underpinning each competency is a range of skills that the instructor must possess and demonstrate to provide evidence of competent performance. Skills are detailed specifications of what must be demonstrated and together with the competencies, they form the minimum standards.

IV. Range

Range, as the name suggests, is the coverage of the work identified in the competence statement when testing a particular unit competence, and the associated skill.

An example from Fitness is “Collect information about your **clients** using approved methods. For clients the range is specified as: experienced, inexperienced, mixed ability, low fitness, individuals, groups

V. Knowledge

The outcome of the assimilation of information through learning. Knowledge is the body of facts, principles, theories and practices that is related to a field of study or work.

Source: Cedefop, 2004; European Commission, 2006a.

VI. Levels

Levels can be denoted by Occupational title but are more frequently now described by allocating a notional level from the EQF eight level framework using the common descriptors. By identifying the key words in the descriptors and mapping them to the occupational standards and supporting knowledge a level can be identified. It can be advantageous to develop an interpretive document which sits between the EQF descriptors and the sectoral frameworks and extrapolates the generic EQF descriptors into sectoral language. It should be noted that many of the competences identified in the functional map are similar for each level and the differentiating factor is the knowledge breadth and depth of detail linked to the particular competence which differentiates one level from another.

8. The Knowledge Framework – in support of work place competence.

The knowledge framework should reflect the theoretical and practical outcomes required to support a unit of competence.

The knowledge framework is expressed in terms of required outcomes and is cross referenced to the competencies and skills in the competence framework.

The knowledge is what you must know and understand in order that a skill can be developed and a competence demonstrated. This can be either directly linked to a specific competence or shown in a separate document as in the Fitness model. The separate document mapped back to the competence framework allows one knowledge outcome to be identified as supporting any number of competences relevant to this particular outcome without repeating the individual outcomes many times.

It should be noted that in the **common assessment strategy**, discussed later in the guide, developed for the purpose of accrediting training providers there is a third way of presenting the competence framework which better reflects the learning units and modules used by training providers but these units still relate back to the competence framework and from there to the functional map to ensure that all the knowledge in the framework is a requirement of skill and competence development not an additional but unessential piece of learning.

9. Developing a Learning Outcome Structure using Units, Credits and the Principles of ECVET.

9.1 Definition of Learning Outcomes

The set of competence, skills and knowledge an individual acquired and/or is able to demonstrate after completion of a learning process. Cedefop 2003

How does the framework accommodate differences between qualifications and training programmes?

While the framework outlines the **minimum** core competencies and skills required to carry out specific roles it should be flexible enough to allow individual European countries and training organisations to interpret and apply the model to their own National standards. For example, the model should accommodate differences between countries, training programmes and qualifications regarding the range of disciplines and modes covered at the different levels and occupational areas of the framework. The aim of the model therefore is not to specify which options should be covered on any training programme, but to specify the minimum competencies, range and skills that are required by the job.

9.2 Definition of a Learning Outcome Unit

A set of knowledge, skills and competence which constitute a part of a qualification. The unit can be the smallest part of qualification that can be assessed, validated and possibly certificated. A unit can be specific to a single qualification or a common to several qualifications.⁷

Source: Cedefop, 2003.

As indicated in an earlier section this definition is only fulfilled in the Sport and Active Leisure Sector when you combine the knowledge outcomes with the workplace competences and skills they support.

9.3 Identification of Units of Learning

The initial task in developing units should be to review the current tools and instruments already available to the sector to establish their value and currency when developing a unit and credit

framework. The goal should be to identify and define **meaningful and transferable** units and allocate a credit value to those units.

What do we mean by meaningful and transferable units? Realistically, you are looking at a practical scenario, where one training provider from one country could work with a training provider from another and where students would transfer between the providers for their training experience. Units need to be meaningful for one provider to acknowledge and recognise the value of the unit in the journey of the student towards full competence. This is a notoriously difficult area and one which in the University sector has proved successful but this has not been the case in general in the vocational area across Europe.

Training for workers in the Sport and Active Leisure Sector comes from a variety of education institutions across Europe including higher education, further education and private training providers. The sector occupational standards represent the minimum knowledge, skills and competence that a worker needs to be able to perform the role identified in the occupational description. In order to ensure the transferability of learning and achievement, those developing a unit and credit framework have to consider the practicalities of chunks of learning that could stand alone but be part of a the bigger suite of learning opportunities that make up the whole occupation.

Training providers across Europe would need to understand exactly what had been achieved if a learner transferred either from one training provider to another or from one country to another or from one employer to another. This could be confirmed through a “Memorandum of Understanding” or mutual trust discussed in Section 14.4.

In the example of Exercise and Fitness it was acknowledged that the Exercise and Fitness Industry required exercise instructors to have a basic knowledge and understanding of the human body and how it works and the ability to apply this knowledge in a range of disciplines to a range of individuals. The depth of knowledge required is different for the basic and advanced instructor, not surprisingly the advanced instructor/personal trainer needed a deeper understanding of the human body to be able to provide complex and varied programmes of exercise to progress and regress exercise to meet the disparate goals and needs of an individual. Therefore the exercise and fitness knowledge learning outcomes were deemed to be an appropriate transferrable unit that would underpin the disciplines identified.

For a more detailed understanding of the generic approach to ECVET please consult the “Recommendations produced by the European Commission in April 2008” http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc50_en.htm

10. The Allocation of Credit

Once the units have been agreed the discussion related to credits can commence.

The first discussion should centre around the numeric calculation of **credit related to hours** versus **the weighting of units against each other**. It should be recognised that these two areas are not mutually exclusive, and that each could be considered as an indicator of value within a credit framework, but for the Exercise and Fitness Sector it was felt that the more pressing requirement was to demonstrate to students, employers, and training providers the depth of learning required for each of the occupations identified and its purpose. A credit framework based on hours of study was therefore felt to be the priority.

Providing initial training to workers in the Sport and Active Leisure Sector to acquire a Licence/Certificate to practise is often a competitive commercial business across the whole of Europe. Training providers compete with each other to attract students into their programme, and students are presented with a bewildering array of programmes without any concrete mechanism to compare one with the other. It is therefore an opportunity for a unit and credit framework to identify that common mechanism for training providers to demonstrate the breadth and depth of their programmes and at the same time to identify within the programmes the key learning outcomes, and competences as identified in the Accreditation framework and which could then be

transferrable and verified by different providers offering a range of accredited units from the framework.

Therefore the calculation of credit should represent the total number of student average workload hours needed to achieve the relevant knowledge, competence and skills for the role. This is inclusive of face to face formal learning, informal learning, revision time and practice time etc. These are called 'Student Average Workload Hours (SAWHs)'. Two approaches can be used to identify the total number of SAWHs required to achieve the learning outcomes:

10.1 Approach One



The first approach is to look at the units from an overall perspective and agree the amount of time the average student would need to achieve the knowledge and competences for a specific discipline (example: Basic Gym). In Exercise and Fitness this was discussed and finally agreed a ratio of 3-1. This meant that for every taught (face to face) hour there would be a requirement for a further 3 hours of revision, informal learning, practice etc. time in order to gain the knowledge and skills. This was an intuitive guess on the part of those developing the framework based on a huge amount of experience in the delivery of these types of programmes.

10.2 Approach Two

In this approach, the units can be broken down into the learning outcomes and then each learning outcome can be allocated a total number of SAWHs.

For the Exercise and Fitness Sector the final decision was to use approach two. This was based on extensive research of credit allocation in Europe. They felt that many higher education institutions allocate credit on a very intuitive, ad-hoc basis. It was important for EHFA that they were able to provide a strong rationale for the allocation of credit that stood up to European scrutiny but they wanted to adopt an allocation method which would be compatible across all **8 EQF Levels** and so they proposed that a unit would have the value of 24 credits. The UK is a country that is undergoing significant change to the education framework in relation to credit. The existing 'National Qualifications Framework' is currently being changed to the 'Qualifications and Credit Framework'. As the new name suggests, there is a serious amount of work being carried out in the UK to ensure a trusted and consistent framework is achieved. To achieve this aim training on 'best practice' in the allocation of credit is being offered and is indicative of the work that is going on in the UK to ensure that credit is awarded fairly and consistently.

ECVET-fitness

Definitions

- ❑ 1 Average Student contact hour (ACH) plus 3 practice/revision hours (PRH)
= 4 Student Average Workload Hours (SAWHs)
- ❑ SAWHs build towards Credits
- ❑ Credit = bundles of SAWHs which reflect time spent to acquire and demonstrate breadth and depth of knowledge, skill and competence required by an average student at the appropriate EQF level and reflected in Units of Learning Outcomes
- ❑ 1 credit = 24 SAWHs (based on ECTS principles)
= 6 Average Student contact hour (ACH) plus 18 practice/revision hours (PRH)

11. European Unit and Credit Frameworks and the Transfer Systems

There appear to be several systems for calculating credit across Europe, for example the UK has decided that one credit is equal to 10 student average workload hours. As this is a project based in Europe with outcomes that will be taken up by Europeans it was decided to test the possibility of using the European Credit Transfer System for the European Health and Fitness Association Unit and Credit Framework. In this ECTS system one credit is equal to 24 student workload hours. The rationale for this decision was the desire to use one single unit and credit framework developed by the project partners across all levels of the EQF. In doing so the sector would be able to compare and contrast the varied qualifications alleging to prepare individuals to enter the Fitness industry as Fitness professionals and thus giving them their “Competence to Practice”. It was acknowledged that those preparing individuals in the Higher Education Sector were doing so with a primary purpose of awarding first degree status but the group felt that even here it was not unreasonable for HE Institutions to demonstrate that the essential competence, skills and knowledge identified in the EHFA Framework was being delivered and therefore that these individuals would be recognised by employers as competent to enter the labour market and thus be awarded their “License/competence to Practice”. If this were to be possible then it seemed unhelpful to create a mechanism which was incompatible with the existing credit framework in higher education.

It is accepted that much of the work undertaken in ECTS was based on inputs and curriculum values rather than outputs and learning outcomes but nevertheless it was agreed that as many institutions had now converted their qualifications across to learning outcomes and still used the ECTS framework to calculate credits it would be beneficial to our framework to use this mechanism to calculate the notional time a student would take to acquire the knowledge and practice the skills identified in the EHFA Accreditation Framework.

12. Mobility and Mutual Recognition

Mobility and mutual recognition are two issues which can be considered vital to consider in a VET system. Within this guide it has been possible to consider both of these areas but not to fully evaluate the potential barriers.

The area of mobility is a real possibility for those developing unit and credit frameworks. Consideration should be given to the possibility of students from those training providers who had undertaken sector accreditation being able to undertake part of their qualification and therefore unit accreditation with another provider from another country. This is a relatively new area for VET especially those of us looking at this area from the sector perspective.

Consideration should also be given to the possibility of undertaking units and learning in a foreign language or to use English as a common language when delivering some of these units of learning. The feasibility of this is outside the scope of this guide and would require further work and potentially a new project to develop this initiative in a more detailed form.

The section above looks at the mobility of those striving to achieve their “Certificate to practise”. For those already in the workplace the situation is quite different and already we see quite an active European labour market for workers in the Sport and Active Leisure Sector. This is covered in detail in Section 13.

A further development has been to consider the proposal for the creation of the EOSE Unit Databank (UDB). The concept is that sectors developing a unit and credit framework such as in fitness and the soon-to-be completed outdoor framework will be able to add units to the UDB. These units will be quality assured based on the common credit mechanism and available for transfer to other sectors and qualifications within the sport and active leisure area. Units such as the exercise and fitness knowledge could well have a home with an outdoor qualification or a qualification for coaches and the unit developed in the outdoor sector related to customer service

could well be appropriate in fitness. In this way we envisage that workers within the sport and active leisure area will be able to develop multiple career pathways based on common units and competences.

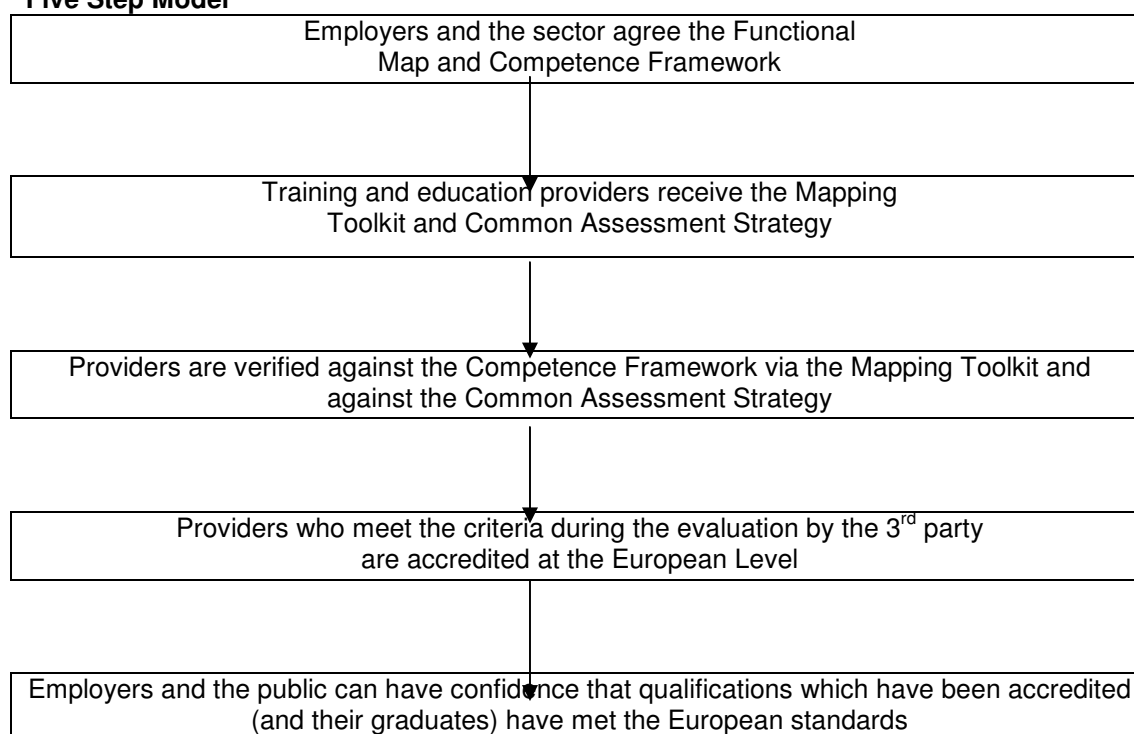
13. QUALITY ASSURANCE

13.1 Mapping Toolkit and Common Assessment Strategy

A Mapping Toolkit and Common Assessment Strategy are vital documents in achieving a quality assurance system in a sector at the European level. These documents are related to the “evaluation” and “accreditation” of actual qualifications being delivered by training or education providers. The monitoring of Quality Assurance is concerned with promoting confidence amongst employers, professionals, providers and the public that a programme of learning has met an agreed standard. It is particularly important that it can be proven, via a system of 3rd party verification, that providers and their qualifications are meeting the standards and expectations of the sector as defined in the functional map and competence framework.

The following diagram shows how training and education providers can interact with the competence framework

Figure 8
Five Step Model



13.2 Mapping Toolkit in detail

Through the process described in the earlier sections a sector will have articulated all the skills knowledge and competence required to work in the sector. This is contained in the agreed Competence Framework. A key part of the Quality Assurance process is the sector being satisfied that individual qualifications “cover” all the skills, knowledge and competence required by the sector.

The easiest way to ensure coverage of the European standards in an individual programme of learning is to expect the training or education provider to “map” their qualification to the learning

outcomes contained in the Competence Framework at the relevant European Qualifications Framework Level. This mapping can be facilitated by a Mapping Toolkit. The Mapping Toolkit will include all the units within the Competence Framework.

The way in which a sector expects providers to “map” and show coverage of the Competence Framework may differ from sector to sector. One way of allowing providers to map to the Competence Framework is via a document which lists all the knowledge, skills and competencies on one side of the page, with a blank column on the other side to allow the providers to insert the part of their qualification that maps to that part of the standards, this could be listed by page, chapter, module or day.

A sector could also decide not to produce a document with a blank column and could simply ask providers to map to the European standards and provide confirmation that they are all included in the learning programme or qualification.

13.3 Common Assessment Strategy

The Common Assessment Strategy sets out the requirements for assessment within qualifications which gives further confidence to the sector that not only has the Competence Framework been included in the course manuals and teaching but that the key elements of knowledge, skills and competence have been assessed to a consistent standard across Europe. The Common Assessment Strategy ensures that graduates from quality assured qualifications can perform at work to the standard agreed by the sector.

In addition the Common Assessment Strategy sets out some of the requirements for quality assurance and delivery which have been agreed to be important at the European level and to ensure consistency between qualifications and a quality experience of students.

All elements of the Common Assessment Strategy would be verified by the relevant 3rd Party Verification system in place in the sector.

The Common Assessment Strategy can be divided in to the following headings, each of which are expanded below:

- Facilities and Equipment
- Support Systems
- Occupational Competence of Tutors and Assessors
- Occupational Competence of Quality Assurance Staff
- Evidence Requirements
- Practical Assessment

Facilities

To provide a quality student experience it is necessary for a provider to ensure that qualifications are taught and assessed in appropriate facilities. This will often include access to a classroom and in some cases may include specialist facilities such as a gymnasium or a golf course. The exact requirements for facilities can be set by the sector and verified by a relevant 3rd Party.

Equipment

As with facilities a sector can determine what specialist equipment may be needed to teach and assess in a particular subject area. For example in the fitness sector this will include a range of cardio-vascular and resistance training equipment.

Support Systems

For a qualification to gain sector support the sector could reasonably expect that the support systems available to students reflect good practice. This would include policies for complaints and

appeals and for ensuring that there is no discrimination of students and that everyone has an equal chance to succeed on the course.

Occupational Competence of Tutors, Assessors and Quality Assurance Staff

A sector at the European level can expect that tutors, assessors and quality assurance staff involved in qualifications approved across Europe are qualified and competent to teach those qualifications. The sector may wish to outline the minimum level of qualifications and experience which they would expect to see and this could be verified by the relevant 3rd party verification system.

The following is an example of the requirements for personnel involved in the teaching of Fitness Instructor qualifications.

Fitness Instructor

Tutors/Assessors/Quality Assurance personnel required criteria:

- A discipline specific qualification in Gym, ETM or WBE Instructing
- A minimum of 2 years industry experience

Evidence Requirements

Evidence Requirements refer to the proof that a graduate of a qualification is knowledgeable and competent to gain a qualification in the sector and take up a position of employment. Evidence Requirements state that certain vital elements of skills and knowledge are assessed. Evidence Requirements may also state that only a proportion of the range of skills needs to be evidenced to achieve the qualification.

Example from Fitness

In the fitness sector the Evidence Requirements include the following:

There must be evidence that the candidate has planned and instructed for participants to use a minimum of three of the following types of cardiovascular equipment:

- Upright cycle
- Recumbent cycle
- Treadmill
- Stepper
- Rowing machine
- Cross/Elliptical trainer

Candidates must also show they have planned and instructed for a minimum of four exercises from each of the following (**eight** in total):

- Resistance machine lifts
- Free weight lifts

Candidates must demonstrate correct lifting and passing techniques, including dead lifting the barbell safely from the floor.

Practical Assessment

The Common Assessment Strategy can state that a sector expects certain skills to be assessed practically, as opposed to being tested solely by theory papers. Most areas of sport including fitness instruction and coaching are highly practical and it is reasonable that nobody is allowed to enter these sectors until they have been assessed in practical fitness instruction or coaching. The element of practical assessment required can be determined by the sector in the Common Assessment Strategy and verified via the 3rd Party verification system adopted by the sector.

13.4 The Accreditation Process. Example from Fitness

Agreements between European Sector Bodies and National Qualification Systems and Sector Specific Independent 3rd Party Accreditation.

13.4.1 Memorandums of Understanding and Trust and Independent Accreditation

The fitness sector is the most advanced area when it comes to tackling the issues of recognising the value of different instructor training programmes at a European level. Due to the total deregulation of the fitness sector EHFA decided to set up an independent verification process introduced to bring some clear guide to employers, individuals and training providers in the sector. EHFA decided to implement a third party verification system through which training providers could apply for accreditation direct to EHFA this will be described in the section below. A recent development has also seen the acceptance of the concept of a “**Memorandum of Understanding and Trust (MoUT)**” leading to mutual trust where there exist National social partner Associations working with the recognised National Qualification Authority with a mandate from the government of the country. These can be seen in Belgium and the UK. The EHFA Verification Unit has produced processes and a mapping document based on the competence framework and learning outcomes documents described above to aid this work. The difference between a MoUT and an independent verification is that in the case of Belgium and the UK the identified authority signs an agreement stating that the qualifications they have submitted to EHFA meet or exceed the European Standards and adhere to the common assessment strategy. No actual authentication takes place hence the agreement on trust. A more recent development is to look for such an agreement in a country where there is no sector body recognised by the National Qualification Authority. Here the agreement would be directly with the National Authority itself. Under this system it is not possible to have an agreement with a sector body without the support of the National Qualification Authority which can be a ministry or body with delegated powers such as The Qualification and Curriculum Authority www.qca.org.uk as in the UK. The full documents can be found on the EHFA website at www.ehfa.eu

13.4.2 Sector Specific 3rd Party Accreditation

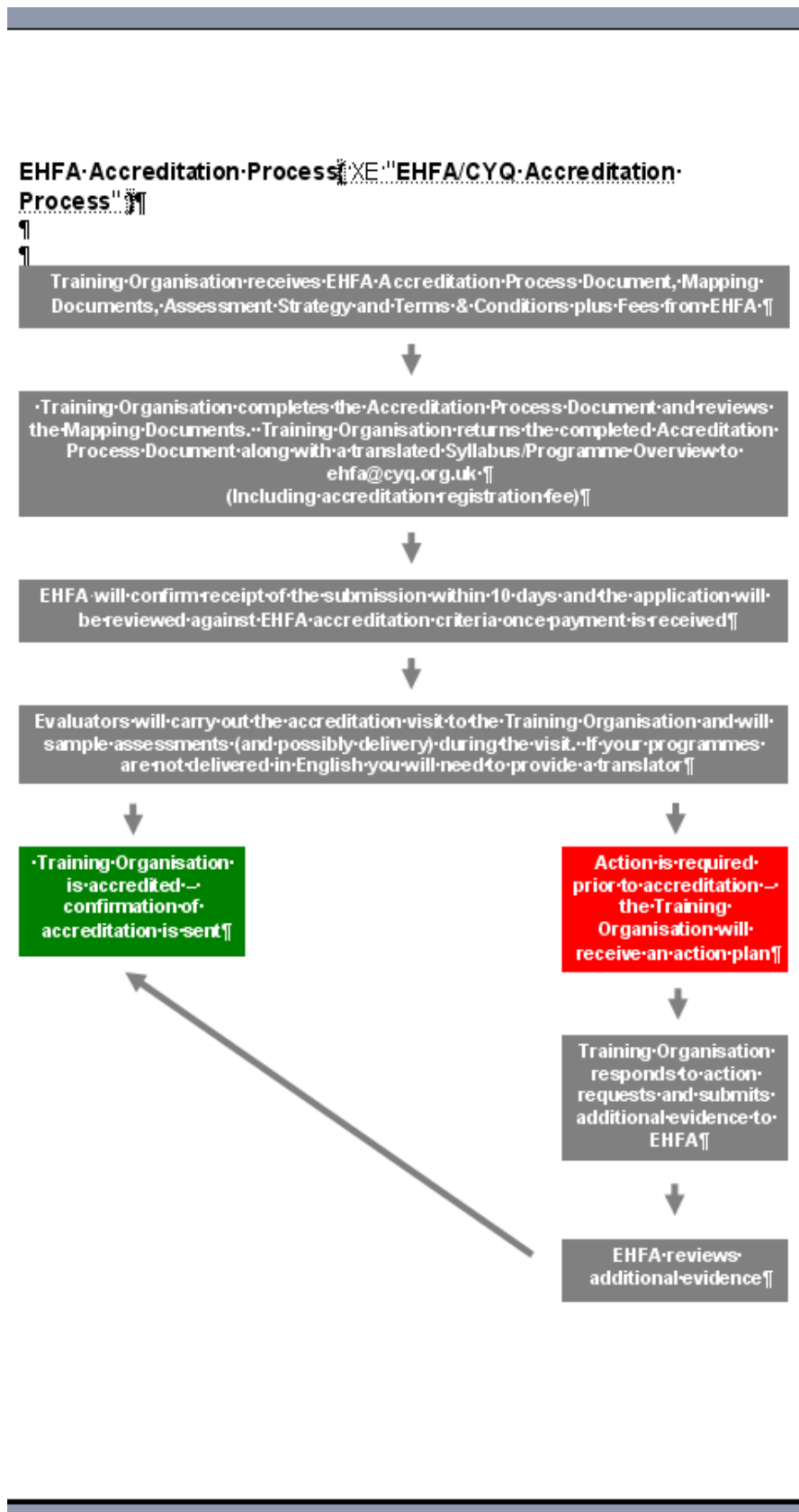
Where it is not possible to implement a system of mutual trust the concept of a sector specific third party accreditation process should be considered. The third party element of this process is vital as the body allocated to carry out accreditation should be clearly and transparently independent of any body or bodies which could unduly influence the process. Ideally, this independent body would work to a standards Council or committee made up of stakeholders from the sector who have expertise and practical experience of working within the sector and an ability to articulate the key competencies skills and knowledge required by those working in the sector.

All of the components of a qualification framework identified in the sections earlier are required before any accreditation can be considered but in addition this independent body must have individuals who are competent in assessing individual training programmes to ascertain whether the content of the programme meets or exceeds the standards requirements and adheres to the common assessment of the specific sector. The key question during an accreditation visit is “will this training programme deliver a competent individual as identified in the standards to work in the specified occupational area?”.

Fitness is the only sector so far to implement an independent accreditation process. Their strategy is not to rate one training provider against another the purely to identify that the training programme will deliver the competent individual against the standards set. In this way it doesn't matter whether the provider is from the private sector, higher education or an employer's own specific training programme the process is the same and makes no judgement about the content of the specific programme which is outside the remit of the standards produced at the European level thus a three year degree programme can be assessed as easily as a six month VET programme.

Figure 9 Fitness Example of the 3rd Party Accreditation Process

Diagram produced courtesy of EHFA



14. Informal and Non Formal Learning

14.1 Dealing with Current Professionals

As new qualifications, linked to the EQF, are developed and accredited, qualification and employment patterns in sport will become clearer. There will be transparent ways of becoming qualified and having competencies recognised at the European level increasing both employability and mobility across the sport sector.

However new qualifications and recognition schemes affect individuals who study and achieve qualifications *in the future*. No sector can adequately set up systems for the recognition of workers at the national or European level without considering all those who are *currently* working in the sector and who will have a huge array of qualifications, training and experience, often spanning many years of work.

For this reason it is necessary for the sport sector and any sub-sector of sport which wishes to develop a qualifications strategy at the European level to consider the concept of the validation of informal and non-formal learning.

Validation of informal and non-formal learning is closely related to the increasing importance of lifelong learning. The combination of a rapidly changing labour market, an ageing population and intensified global competition makes it necessary to use all available knowledge, skills and competences – irrespective of where and how they have been acquired. The interest in validation can be seen as closely linked to efforts to create more flexible qualifications systems – making it possible for individuals to build learning careers stretching ‘from cradle to grave’.

A growing number of European countries now emphasise the importance of making visible and giving appropriate value to learning taking place outside formal education and training institutions, including that gained in the work place.

- Informal learning can be defined as: Learning resulting from daily activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not organised or structured in terms of objectives, time or learning support. Informal learning is in most cases unintentional from the learner’s perspective.
- Non-formal learning can be defined as: Learning which is embedded in planned activities not explicitly designated as learning (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support). Non-formal learning is intentional from the learner’s point of view.

Cedefop (2000) distinguishes between three main phases of the validation process: identification, assessment and recognition of non-formal and informal learning. This distinction reflects that even where validation results in a formal certificate or qualification, the identification and assessment stages preceding the formal recognition are critical to the overall process. The quality of the validation process very much depends on how the initial identification and assessment of the learning is handled. Learning taking place outside formal education and training systems can be characterised as non-standardised and is frequently based on complex, individually specific learning experiences and pathways. Ensuring the quality of identification and assessment processes, expressed in terms of validity, reliability and credibility, requires careful consideration of the methods and approaches developed to handle the identification and assessment stages.

The methods for the validation of informal and non-formal learning include:

- Tests and examinations: identification and validation of informal and non-formal learning through or with the help of examinations in the formal system.
- Declarative methods: based on individuals’ own identification and recording of their competences, normally signed by a third party, in order to verify the self-assessment.
- Observation: extracting evidence of competence from an individual while performing everyday tasks at work.
- Simulation and evidence extracted from work: simulation is where an individual is placed in a situation that fulfils all the criteria of the real-life scenario to have their competences

assessed. To extract evidence from work, a candidate collects physical or intellectual evidence of learning outcomes. This may relate to work situations or voluntary activities. This evidence forms the basis of a validation of competences by a third party.

- Portfolio method: using a mix of methods and instruments employed in consecutive stages to produce a coherent set of documents or work samples showing an individual's skills and competences in different ways.

In the validation of informal and non-formal learning, assessment encompasses the validation of competences acquired regardless of any structured education and/or training processes. The assessment consists of a validation of what is described in the employment specifications (or occupational standards). The quality procedures have to be robust to ensure that the competence assessed can actually be reliable and transferable.

The validation of informal and non-formal learning can also:

Improve access to and efficiency in the formal education system.

Providing direct ways to gain formal qualifications or 'door openers' to education courses and so avoid repetition and inefficiencies in the education system is a key reason for validating informal and non-formal learning. Several countries have introduced validation to make mobility easier and provide individuals a 'second chance' to reach their full learning potential. These developments are closely linked to efforts to open up qualifications to a wider range of learning outcomes and learning settings, in many cases leading the development of national qualifications frameworks.

Support economic factors

Labour markets have had to become more flexible and have innovation, with ensuing challenges for the development of paid and unpaid workers. Validation can be used to address needs in different economic sectors, such as skills shortages or compliance with regulations regarding professional qualifications. Increasingly, private sector stakeholders – social partners as well as individual companies – recognise the benefits of validation. Validation is increasingly used for staff development and to ensure the most effective allocation of resources within the business.

It is vital that new qualifications systems in the sport sector support the millions of workers who are currently employed across Europe. Current professionals must be afforded the same opportunities for recognition of skills, mobility of labour and career progression as those new graduates obtaining new formal qualifications with level and credit, linked to the EQF.

It is especially important that current professionals are able to access Registers of Professionals if these are in place in any sub-sector of sport so that they are not disadvantaged in the job market. Often these workers will be the most skilled and experienced workers in the sector.

Current professionals will have a wide variety of training, qualifications and experience. Qualifications obtained in the past may not exist any more or may have been obtained in any country in the world. Skills and knowledge will have been gained and built up often over many years. The consideration of the principles of validation of informal and non-formal learning will allow all these things to be taken in to account when formulating a sector qualifications strategy.

14.2 Volunteers

The sport sector relies heavily on the contribution of work by volunteers. From coaches to officials and stewards, sport in Europe would grind to a halt without the time and effort of volunteers. These volunteers will be drawn from every socio-economic group and could have paid employment outside sport in any other occupational sector. Often they will be qualified in the sector where they have their main career outside of sport.

In many cases volunteers will not have gone through formal sport based education and qualification structures. They may have accessed some courses and will often have built up skills over many years of volunteering in sport.

As with the case of current paid professionals in the sport sector, volunteers also need to be taken account of in new qualification strategies in sport. The validation of informal and non-formal learning can also be the solution to recognising the achievements of volunteers in sport. What

must be considered here is that although volunteers are not paid for their work they are increasingly under pressure to conform to the competences required by those paid to undertake different occupational roles in the sector. It is this pressure which should lead emerging sport specific sectors considering competence led qualification frameworks to consider how they will deal with volunteers in any conversion programme developed under this common strategy.

The consideration of these principles, using the methods described above will ensure that volunteers in sport are given their rightful recognition in qualification and registration systems which are developed.

Some of this section drew on the document “Validation of informal and non-formal learning – A snapshot 2007” (Cedefop)

16. Europass

16.1 Introduction to Europass

By 2012 job qualifications should be comparable and based on the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning. By 2012 all new qualification certificates, diplomas and “Europass” attestation documents issued by competent authorities should contain clear reference to the corresponding EQF reference level.

Europass consists of five documents: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/>

Europass Curriculum Vitae
Europass Language Passport
Europass Certificate Supplement
Europass Diploma Supplement
Europass Mobility

The first two are usually completed by the individual holder and the third-fifth documents are issued by competent organisations. Europass is supported by a network of National Europass Centres in each EU State and was established by the European Parliament and Council in December 2004 to be a single transparency framework for qualifications and competencies.

Higher Education uses the Diploma Supplement, and the question has been asked if the Certificate Supplement can be used to add details of vocational training and qualification to Europass. This work is at an early stage but it is recommended that anyone developing an accreditation framework at the European level should consider using this well established tool.

16.2 Current use of Europass Diplomas and Certificates

Currently in HE the Europass diploma is widely used to identify the specific skills and competences developed throughout the degree programme. Not all countries have followed Ireland's example and made this a compulsory part of the degree documentation but those who have are on the increase.

The use of the Europass Certificates is less clear and partners reported that even in countries where the certificate is used little information is recorded and therefore the current value of certificates to the sector are severely limited.

16.2.1 The Certificate Supplement: At present Certificate Supplements are of limited use to the sector; however there is considerable scope to expand the uses for the betterment of the Fitness Sector and associated standards but it involves negotiations with CEDEFOP &/or National Agencies with responsibility for the development of the supplement. The Certificate Supplement is issued to individuals who complete a programme of vocational training linked to a predefined standard of skill knowledge and competence, The certificate supplement is a generic document related to the skills and competencies the programme of study aims to develop and the range of

occupations accessible to holders of the certificate, together with modes of study available to acquire the certificate.

16.2.3 The Diploma Supplement:

The Diploma Supplement has potentially significant uses for the sector. The Diploma Supplement is unique to the individual as it contains a transcript of results. The diploma supplement records nature, level, context, content and status of the individually named student of the original qualification to which the supplement is appended. Thus the marks and grade that student has achieved are visible. It is used in higher education and is generally managed by the exams office. We may have the opportunity to write the sector into the higher education diploma supplement, under the additional information title, once that higher education establishment has been verified by an independent body. This information in combination with the transcript of results which is indicated on the diploma supplement could be used to determine eligibility for entry onto the European Register of Fitness professionals for example.



Flowchart for Work based Competence Frameworks and Accreditation Structure

Appendix 1

