



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

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Training module for frontline professionals in the VISKA project

Lead partner: ETSC

Deliverable 3.3

September 2018

Dissemination Level: Public

D3.3 Training module for frontline professionals in the VISKA project

This is a policy experimentation project developed within the VISKA project context to be tried out in the project field trials. Findings and results can be used to raise the awareness about the importance of training for people who are involved in conducting the validation processes. This document is open for further discussions and adjustments as fit in other national or local context to support the competence development of front-line staff in validation.

Introduction

This document presents a description of a training module for professional frontline staff in the VISKA project. The focus is on updating competences in order to better meet the needs of a diverse target groups, such as people who are migrants and who have low levels of qualifications. The learning outcomes and model description are based on needs analyses conducted by the partner countries.

Different national contexts

The VISKA partners have identified variable practices in the countries regarding training in validation procedures for frontline staff. In Iceland frontline professionals are obliged to attend a core course at a national level, in Norway and Belgium there are local variations of how training is conducted. In VISKA the focus has therefore been on identifying additional elements related to validation services for migrants and people with little formal education (see Example 2). In this document, an example of a core course in validation is presented, based on input from all VISKA partners. It can be adjusted to national needs and context as suitable.

During the national field trials, the VISKA partners will use parts of, or the whole, course in their training of frontline staff according to their local needs.

In Norway the frontline staff will be offered a training module on how to use interpreters in the validation process since the other subjects are already implemented in local routines for training of frontline staff (see Example 3).

In Iceland the frontline staff in VISKA will attend a course focusing on additional aspects for Validation services linked to migrant needs, for instance multicultural competences, how to work with interpreter, the tools for validation etc. (Example 2).

In Belgium-Flanders, the training will differ between the centers of adult education, because of the great autonomy granted to the centers, with regards to the validation of prior learning. There is a great difference in awareness about definition, vision and policy on VPL between the centers and therefore the training needs to differ between them as well. In this context, the main goal for VISKA in Belgium-Flanders for this aspect of the project is to focus on raising awareness about training on VPL among the centers of adult education and the pedagogical advisory services.

Module description

Content

The *European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning* serves as the basic material for the course, in addition to other European and national resources (including also other VISKA deliverables such as D3.4 on holistic quality measures, D3.2 on assessment criteria for Transversal Skills, D3.1 on self-assessment tool and D1.1 a briefing on Transversal Skills – see: www.viskaproject.eu). The course reviews the principles and characteristics of Validation of Prior Learning (VPL) at the EU level. The process of validation developed nationally is also reviewed as well as the roles of different validation staff (project manager; guidance counselor/mentor/advisor; assessor) and multicultural issues addressed. Ways to cooperate with interpreters and communication via them, their role and tasks, when working with migrants, are presented and discussed. Various tools are presented as are ways of selecting appropriate tools.

Method

Emphasis is placed on active participation of learners. Group work is focused on discussions and exercises, giving participants the opportunity to build skills in the four phases of the validation process focusing on assessing competences in a constructive and valid manner and finding solutions to issues that may arise. During the training, participants get an opportunity to discuss experiences of individuals who have gone through validation assessments and to reflect on their own attitude toward validation.

General learning objective

During the training period the general objective is to stimulate the VPL professional to strengthen their positive attitude towards VPL and its results and values for the individual and society.

Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and competences for the full course are listed below. Those can be adjusted based on the national or local context, for example through choosing the learning outcomes specifically from the ones listed based on context and situation.

Knowledge

On successful completion of this module the learner will be able to:

- describe the validation process and main principles as presented in the EU guidelines
- describe effective methods and quality measures applicable to validation processes
- identify diverse ways of assessing skills
- identify multicultural competences underlying services for various target groups (including migrants)
- explain the interpreters' role and tasks

Skills

On successful completion of this module the learner will be able to:

- define ways in consultation with peers and experts about where and how to obtain the additional knowledge needed
- prepare for working with interpreters and communicating via interpreters
- recognize appropriate tools for VPL participants based on knowledge of the aims and content of various tools (e.g. EU- Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals, Portfolio forms, Self-assessment forms etc.).

Competences

On successful completion of this module the learner will be able to:

- support the quality of VPL (based on the European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning)
- identify the importance of impartiality, fairness, validity and reliability in assessing competence
- act in a positive and supportive manner and promote constructive communication in their work
- identify solutions to issues that may arise in the validation process

Assessment of participants in the course

The learning outcomes from this course may be proven during the performance given by the VPL professional in their following practice. However, participants may also be assessed during, or at the end, of the course. It needs to be considered whether a certificate of attendance is handed out to participants or if an assessment of minimum requirements is conducted in a more formal way and specific learning outcomes confirmed.

Different assessment methods may be used:

- participants may express their knowledge of the details of the process, through oral presentations/discussions or written assignments.
- participants may conduct group assignments and analyses of cases.
- participants may conduct self-assessment of own competences based on the requirements set for frontline staff in the EU guidelines.

Examples of different courses for VPL practitioners made by VISKA partners

Example 1; Core course for validation practitioners

The following is an example of an agenda developed as a core course for the training of project managers, career counsellors, assessors and other stakeholders.

Course description: The purpose of the course is to introduce the concept of validation to participants, train them in conducting validation of prior learning according to the national model for low-qualified people. The course is a part of anchoring the validation process, support quality and meet the needs for additional competence development for those who are involved in conducting validation. The course is usually covers two days.

During the course the definition of validation is presented and discussed based on the European Guidelines for Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning (CEDEFOP, 2015). National laws and regulations linked to validation are presented and the validation process as it is defined and described in the national model. Real cases/scenarios and exercises are used for creating a stronger insight into how VPL is conducted in practice. Professional assessors and guidance counsellors present their experience. Assessment methods and tools are reviewed and discussed. Active participation is encouraged in discussions and exercises where participants get a chance to build their competences in VPL in a constructive way and also find solutions to challenges that may arise in the process. Participants receive a certificate of attendance after the course.

1st day

Kl. 10.15 - 11.00	Validation – principles and definition of the Concept
Kl. 11.00 – 11.10	Coffee
Kl. 11:10 - 12:00	Implementation and Methodology
Kl. 12:00 - 13:00	Lunch
Kl. 13:00 -14.40	The assessment conversation/interview
Kl. 14:40 – 15.00	Coffee
Kl. 15.00 – 15.45	About the <i>Handbook for Validation staff</i> , Laws, regulations and other material (Handbook developed for national practices)
Kl. 15.45 - 16.00	Summary of the day

2nd day

Kl. 09:00 - 10:00	Assessors' experience (Experienced assessors introduce their methods, experience etc. from their work as assessors in validation)
Kl. 10.00 - 10.45	Project management in Validation Projects
Kl. 10:45 – 11.00	Coffee
Kl. 11.00 - 12.00	The role of the guidance counsellor – Guidance in Validation
Kl. 12:00 - 13:00	Lunch
Kl. 13:00 - 14:00	Workshop /Assignments
Kl. 14:00 - 14:20	Coffee
Kl. 14:20 - 15:00	Participants' experience (VPL participant introduces his experience of VPL and what he has done after validation, regarding education and/or work.
Kl. 15:10 - 15.45	Workshop/ Assignments and Summary
Kl. 15:45 - 16:00	Evaluation of the Course

Example 2 - Course for frontline staff in VISKA

The following is an example of an agenda for a course focusing on additional aspects for Validation services linked to the needs of migrants and low-qualified people.

Kl. 10.00 - 12:00	Multicultural competence
Kl. 12.00 – 12.45	Lunch
Kl. 12.45 – 13.50	Interpretation / Interpreter – how to work with an interpreter
Kl. 14.50 – 14.30	The Tools for Validation, EU – Skills Profile Tool, TS skills, Validation in sectors/other professions
Kl. 14.30 – 14.45	Coffee
Kl. 14.45 – 15.15	İDAN – Evaluation of formal education within the Certified/regulated trades
Kl. 15.15 – 15.45	ENIC / NARIC – The process of evaluation of HE from other countries
Kl. 15.45 – 16.00	Discussions – Evaluation of the Course

Example 3 - How to work with interpreters

The following is a web-based course module focusing on working with interpreters ([see pp-slides in Annex 1](#)).

1	The interpreters' tasks, what they do and what they don't
2	The interpreters' qualification, (country specific)
3	The National Register of Interpreters (if applicable in the national context)
4	Duty of Confidentiality
5	Different methods
6	Preparations – before, during and after the session

Resources for further development of tools and exercises

European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/3073>

Holistic guidelines of VPL procedures. Chapter 3.6 is focused on professional competences of practitioners.

Nordic Competence Profiles of Validation Practitioners and Competence Development – A mapping project 2014-15:

<https://nvl.org/Content/Nordiska-kompetensprofiler-for-de-som-arbetar-med-validering>

This report is the result of a Nordplus project where five members of the NVL Validation network have mapped the competences and competence development needed for those working with validation. The work has been carried out 2014-2015. All five Nordic countries are represented.

Guidance in validation within the Nordic region, NVL – 2015:

<https://nvl.org/Content/Guidance-in-validation-within-the-Nordic-region>

This report is produced by the Nordic Network for Adult Learning (NVL) through combined efforts of the Guidance and Validation networks. It provides information and discussion on how guidance in the process of validation of prior learning (VPL) is carried out within the Nordic region. The purpose of the report is to establish a common ground for discussing and developing guidance in validation, which will hopefully be a step towards seeking opportunities for improving the quality of guidance in Nordic validation systems.

Validation of prior learning in Norway

<http://www.kompetansenorge.no/English/Validation-of-prior-learning/>

Description of validation of prior learning in Norway; shared principles, the system, guidelines, glossary of terms and law and regulations.