# Training for VET, HE providers on RPL (R21)
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# Providing support for VET and HE institutions interested in RPL (22)

For more information on the project "RELATE" go to our website
www.relate-project.eu

# 1   Introduction

This document includes results (21 and 22) related to the training provided to HE and VET institutions and also to students and other stakeholders interested in RPL. The content and outcome of the meeting held in Germany at the AFBB (P0) will be extensively displayed. IN the Annex III and IV the training's and support's activities carried out in Finland are summarized. During the workshops of the Final Conference (R25) further supporting activities were provided to individuals and institutions interested in RPL.

# 2   AFBB meeting for support and training on RPL

Criteria can be useful in the context of RPL for the involved persons and institutions to identify potential applicants for the study in further education or VET. The application of criteria helps to identify competences acquired in VET of the applicant.

The knowledge about existing competences is necessary in the framework of individual recognition procedures performed in institutions of HE. Furthermore can the knowledge of existing competences used as basis to develop individual offers and counselling for students after RPL.

The purpose of the meeting is to give an overview of the regulation of RPL. Basing on that the participants of the meeting from VET, further education, HE and practice should discuss and test the presented potential criteria. On the basis of a systematic and transparent process it will be possible and understandable to find out the suitable trainees for study. The intuitions of VET and further education can make a recommendation. In so far the criteria should be useable as an instrument supporting the institutions.

## The process of the meeting

The meeting is structured into three parts:

- basic conditions of RPL

- criteria ensuring transparency of academic achievement of applicants, who are interesting for study after VET

- application of criteria

In the first step of the three hour meeting the framework conditions of RPL have been presented and discussed.

Basis of recognition of competencies framework conditions:

• two resolutions of the Conference of the German Cultural Ministers (2002/2008) and

• common structural guidelines of the Länder for the accreditation of Bachelor and Master study courses (2010)

• regulations concerning the professional law (health professions are regulated; (,reglementierter Beruf' ).

Basis and regulations make the recognition of competences acquired outside higher education towards higher education studies up to 50% of the study program possible.

Supposition for crediting of competences acquired outside higher education towards HE are the equivalence of the terms of contents and levels to the study requirements. The competences can be acquired from the field of vocational education, in the context of the professional activity or on the basis of other competence enhancing activities.

By RPL study and examination abilities will be replaced and the study period will be shortened regarding to the presence at the institution of HE.

The institutions of HE have to fix criteria regarded to terms of content, the level and the aims. These criteria have to be integrated in the regulatory instruments of the institutions of HE. They are reviewed within the accreditation process.

The three existing options for RPL were presented (general recognition, individual assessment, placement exam). Usually by bachelor programs with 180 ECTS, 60 ECTS (one year) will be accepted for recognition. Normally RPL up to a maximum of 50% of the duration of the studies/the study attainment is possible.

Condition for recognition is that the curriculum of VET shows competences is structured in modules with learning goals, contents and the form of examination.

The three version of RPL, their advantages and disadvantages were discussed.

Another point of discussion regards the importance of equivalence test in the context of RPL for the institutions of HE. The institutions of HE have to ensure with their offered courses that the students acquired the necessary competence for their professional activity after the study. Therefore it is important, that the shorten time of study can be used individual and effective for every student to acquire the needed competences. Condition is, to assess the available competences, to establish a counselling on this base and to perform an individual study planning.

After presentation and discussion of the framework conditions and basics of RPL the second part of the meeting aimed to speak about criteria to identify potential applicants. These criteria should help to get transparency of academic achievement of applicants, who are interesting for study after VET. Therefore the following criteria were presented and discussed. Altogether the criteria get consent. In the framework of the discussion some aspects were added. (They are marked in italics.)

1. Criteria of the interests in study

- professional perspective apparent?

  In this context it is important, to develop criteria as basic for answering this question.

- a further interest in theoretical and practical questions in the professional practice can be located?

- willingness to invest in study (time, effort)

- compatibility between job and study (by present professional activity) evident?

- the difference between VET and Study can be explained


2. Forms of teaching and learning

- what methods of teaching and learning are known?

- what methods of teaching and learning are best suited for the applicant? Are own experience available?

- do you know the method of problem oriented learning? If so, what is the experience with them?


3. Evaluation of one's own competence?

The following aspects/questions should be formulated and send or distribute to the applicant/interested persons prior to the interview, so that he or she can prepare and deal with the issues. Introductory words to the questions should illustrate the aim of these questions and their importance for the development of the applicant.

- which of your one competences are useful for study?

Proposal is to formulate a list with competences with a multiple step scale and fields for marking.

- which competences are useful for VET?

- which competences are useful for the aspired professional activity?


4. Competences for study

- ideas for studying (necessary degree of autonomy)

- realization of the own strengths and weaknesses for the study.

- analytical capability, capability for structuring?

- questioning of facts and matters, what modes of arguments used or existing?

- comparing discussion of situations and themes

- explained decision making

- understandable decision making

- competence of balance between various arguments, ability to compromise

- reading/collecting of issues

- focussing the relevant aspects of texts or discussions


5. Resources/competences for the organisation of study?

Which resources/competences are available and which can be activated?

- personally?

- materially?

- socially?

- timely?

The third part of the meeting intended to test the criteria using fictional but typical case examples. Because of the intensive discussion of the criteria and their possibility of application, we don't use the cases for testing. The testing was done implicit in the context of the debate of the criteria.

All in all it was general consensus that a criteria-based choice of applicants and interesting persons for RPL is useful and supports the process. The presence of relevant and meaningful criteria helps in VET in general not only in the case of the transition from VET to HE.

It is recalled, that measuring and evaluating of competences is difficult and complex the same applies to the development of relevant criteria, but competence orientation is required and represents a meaningful action. However in practice is only little interest ‚for competences'. For example the trainees will be taken over from the institution (the competence doesn't matter).

Crucial for the use or criteria in the context of RPL is the attitude of the participants in the process (institution of VET, practice institution, institution of HE) and the number of applicants. The participants of the meeting recommend in the context to develop competence catalogues und their testing.

For the implementation of individual assessments in the framework of RPL the institutions of VET and further education have to have modules which make the competences transparent. On the suggestion of the participants the involved institutions should be develop a competence passport: The institutions of VET and further education and HE. We discuss it at the example of the study program business administration.

Inspired by the presentation of ‚simulation pedagogy' (SUAS) as a method used in the context of RPL the idea was developed to use ‚simulation pedagogy', as accompanying reflection in the courses. By this way the sustainability of recognition the transfer of the competences in an new or other context can be evaluated.

Competence orientation should be understand as questioning of the own knowledge level. Against this background a reflection of the knowledge level should be evident after every module.

At the end of the meeting was proposed to create a competences development plan and the evaluation of the materials and curriculums of the intuitions of the involved participants. The materials and educational institutions with regard to competence orientation were also reviewed.

## 3    ANNEX

**Annex I. Ablauf der Veranstaltung am 22.10.2015**

# Anerkennung von außerhochschulisch erworbenen Leistungen

# Seminar zu Hintergründen, Stellenwert und Anwendung

Das Seminar will auf der Grundlage der Regelungen zur Anerkennung außerhochschulischer Leistungen im Gespräch zwischen Fachschule und Hochschule Kriterien für die Anerkennung von Absolvent/-innen bzw. Auszubildenden von Fachschulen erproben.

Verbunden ist das Ziel, aufgrund kriteriengestütztem Vorgehen Kompetenzen und Potentiale bei Auszubildenden systematisch und nachvollziehbar zu erkennen, und auf dieser Basis eine ‚Empfehlung' für ein Studium aussprechen zu können. Insofern sollen die Kriterien und ihre Anwendung als ein Instrument zur Unterstützung der Fachschulen nutzbar sein.

**Datum und Ort:** 22. Oktober, 13.00-16.00 Uhr, AFBB; Blochmannstraße

**Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer** sind Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter der AFBB, der Studienorganisation der FHD und Vertreterinnen und Vertreter der beruflichen Praxis, Projektmitarbeiter/-innen.

Leitung des Seminars: Prof. Dr. Bärbel Dangel

## Zum Ablauf

**1. Kontext der Anerkennung außerhochschulisch erworbener Fähigkeiten:**

Vortrag (B. Dangel)

45'

- Rahmen

•• Festlegung der KMK

•• Durchlässigkeit und Transparenz, Entwicklung EQR/DQR

•• Bedingungen aufgrund der Berufe (bundeseinheitlich geregelt Pflege/landesrechtlich geregelt, reglementierte Berufe (Erzieher)

•• Akkreditierung

•• Verfahren der Anerkennung

• Probleme und Vorteile, die mit Anerkennung verbunden sind

## 2. Kriterien für die Anerkennung                                    30'

Was sind Kriterien, die für die Anerkennung genutzt werden können und zwar seitens

- der Fachschule für Empfehlungen Auszubildender für ein Studium

- der Hochschule, als Assessment und Grundlage für die Einschätzung vorhandener Kompetenzen?

Vorstellung von Kriterien, die in Fachhochschule bzw. Hochschule Grundlage für die Einschätzung der vorhandenen Kompetenzen von Auszubildenden bzw. Studienplatzbewerber/-innen sein können.

Feedback und Diskussion zu den Kriterien

*Pause 15'*

## 3. Training zur Anwendung der Kriterien                              60'

Erprobung der Kriterien anhand jeweils typischer Biographien von Auszubildenden der Fachschule und als Bewerber/innen für das Studium (Biographien werden vorbereitet)

In kleinen Arbeitsgruppen sollen die Kriterien (2.) erprobt werden. Hierzu sollten vier Arbeitsgruppen (je zwei fachschulische und hochschulische) je einen Auszubildenden bzw. Studienbewerber anhand der Kriterien „analysieren"

Ziel                                                                    30'


Jede Arbeitsgruppe soll

• skizzieren, wie sie vorgegangen ist, wie die Kriterien angewendet wurden

• die Ergebnisse der „Analyse" des Interessenten vorstellen

• die Konsequenzen für die Umsetzung im jeweiligen Alltag formulieren

**Annex II. Handout zur Kriterien und Anwendungsbeispiele**

**Kriterien zur Transparenz von Studierfähigkeit bei Bewerberinnen und Bewerber, die nach einer beruflichen Ausbildung sich für einen Studienplatz interessieren**

1. Kriterien zum Studieninteresse

• Berufliche Perspektive erkennbar?

• In der beruflichen Praxis kann weitergehendes Interesse an theoretischen oder praktischen Fragen verortet werden?

• Bereitschaft zur Investition in ein Studium (Zeit, Aufwand)

• Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und Studium (bei beruflicher Tätigkeit) ersichtlich?

• Differenz beruflicher Ausbildung und Studium kann erläutert werden

2. Lehr- und Lernformen

• Welche Lehr- und Lernmethoden sind bekannt?

• Welche Lehr- Lernmethode ist für mich am besten geeignet? Bestehen eigene Erfahrungen?

• Ist die Methode des Problemorientierten Lernens bekannt? Wenn ja, was sind die Erfahrungen?

3. Einschätzung der eigenen Kompetenzen?

• Welche der eigenen Kompetenzen sind nützlich für ein Studium?

• Welche Kompetenzen sind nützlich für die berufliche Ausbildung?

4. Kompetenzen für das Studium

• Vorstellungen zum Studieren (erforderlicher Grad an Selbständigkeit)

• Werden eigene Stärken/Schwächen für das Studium gesehen?

• Analysefähigkeit, Fähigkeit zum Strukturieren?


• Hinterfragen von Sachverhalten, Begründungsmuster?

• Vergleichende Erörterung von Themen, Situation

• Begründete Entscheidungsfindung

• Nachvollziehbarer Weg der Entscheidungsfindung

• Kompetenz des Abwägens, Kompromißfähigkeit

• Lesen/Erfassen von Sachverhalten

• Fokussieren von relevanten Aspekten aus einem Text, einer Diskussion


5. Ressourcen/Kompetenzen für die Organisation des Studiums?

• persönlich?

• materiell?

• sozial?

**1. Fall:** Mann, 23 Jahre alt, Ausbildung zum Altenpfleger kurz vor dem Abschluss, Fachhochschulreife

• hat Informationen erhalten, dass ein verkürztes Studium zur Anerkennung möglich ist und sieht das Studium als Möglichkeit „von der Arbeit am Bett" wegzukommen.

• Die Ausbildung hat er absolviert, weil er nichts „Besseres" gefunden hat, der Beruf interessiert ihn nicht besonders.

• Die Idee, durch ein verkürztes Studium einen Hochschulabschluss zu erwerben, findet er hoch attraktiv, und er ist überzeugt, dass er das Studium ohne Aufwand schaffen wird und anschließend einen tollen Job findet.

• Die Ausbildung hat er mit minimalem Aufwand absolviert „sowenig wie nötig" Zeit und Engagement investiert.

• Er ist fest entschlossen, unmittelbar nach der Ausbildung in ein Studium einzutreten und kommt sehr überzeugt in die Beratung.


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**2. Fall:** Mann 24 Jahre alt, kurz vor dem Abschluss der Ausbildung, Abitur


• Er hat gehört, dass es ein Studium im Bereich Pflege gibt und will sich informieren

• Im Rahmen der Ausbildung ist er durch Zurückhaltung und Unsicherheit aufgefallen, zum Teil Ängstlichkeit, wenn es darum ging sich zu exponieren

• Er ist sehr reflektiert und nachdenklich, will ‚alles' verstehen und liest entsprechend intensiv Fachliteratur

• In der Ausbildung (theoretisch und praktisch) ist er aufgefallen durch Motivation und Kreativität

• Ihm fehlt allerdings an Selbstvertrauen, und er ist hinsichtlich einer Entscheidung zögerlich

**3. Fall:** Eine Frau, 29 Jahre, Ausbildung Sozialassistentin und berufliche Erfahrung (5 Jahre) und nunmehr kurz vor dem Abschluss der Ausbildung zur Erzieherin, aufgrund der beruflichen Voraussetzungen kann sie ein Hochschulstudium nach einer Hochschulzugangsprüfung beginnen

• Im Rahmen der Ausbildung zur Erzieherin sind Probleme bei theoretischen Kontexten und dem Transfer von Wissen in die Praxis deutlich geworden, komplexere Sachverhalte sind schwierig für sie zu verstehen und in einen Kontext zu bringen

• Die Interessentin hat einen starken Ehrgeiz ein Studium anzuschließen und sieht es Fortsetzung ihrer beruflichen Ausbildung an

• Sie hat keinen Zweifel, das Studium zu bewältigen, und vergleicht es mit der Ausbildung zur Erzieherin, die sie als Fortsetzung der Sozialassistinnentätigkeit sieht.

## Annex 3. PRACTICAL TRAINING, SUAS Nursing education

At SUAS there are 4 practical training teams that are responsible for guiding nursing students while they are practicing during their studies. Each team has one coordinator and 2-4 other teachers who are guiding the students.  The teams are built on the base of the substance of the training, so teachers are experts on that training area.  Each team decides from two options by which way they organize the guidance of the students.  The options are designed for 5 weeks training period, but if the length of training is different, then the decided option will be applied.

| Option 1 | 1 week | 2 week | 3 week | 4 week | 5 week | Obs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | -Student's competences in the beginning of the training and the training plan will be defined during 1-3 days, the student, mentoring nurse and  teacher together<br><br>-Week meeting of a small group | -Week meeting of a small group | -Guidance of the individual student: interim evaluation together with student, mentoring nurse and teacher<br><br>-Week meeting of a small group | -Week meeting of a small group | -Guidance of the individual student: final evaluation together with student, mentoring nurse and teacher + composition about student's feedback | Orientation for training 1-2 weeks before the training period<br><br>Students' blogs are not used as a guidance tool during the training period. Anyway students can write descriptions about their training to their blogs |

| Option 2 | 1 week – 2 week | 3 week | 4 week | 5 week | Obs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | – Guidance of the individual student: teacher gives feedback in student's blog about student's description of her/his competences in the beginning of the training and about her/his preliminary training plan<br><br>–Group guidance: discussion about learning objectives of the training, what do they mean in different training surroundings | – Guidance of the individual student: interim evaluation together with student, mentoring nurse and teacher | –Group guidance: seminar day at school or group discussion about agreed theme | – Guidance of the individual student: final evaluation discussion in student's blog ( student + mentoring nurse and teacher) or if needed in student's training place | Orientation for training 1–2 weeks before the training period<br><br>Students' blogs are used as a guidance tool during the training period and the students have to describe their learning experiences in their blogs |

**Annex IV.  RELATE-project piloting recognition of prior learning (RPL) in competence tests**


Arrangements of competence tests for RPL and information about the tests

RPL from VET to HE have two different purposes: firstly, to allow students to gain admission to a higher education institution and, secondly, to allow students to demonstrate that they have met, partially or completely, the requirements of a higher education program. In higher education institutions (e.g. Savonia University of Applied Sciences) the process consists of application, identification (evidence), assessment and accreditation. In case if there is no documented evidence, RPL-demonstrations (AHOT-näyttö) are used. However, the RPL demonstrations have been rare.

The VET and HE curricula in Finland are competence-based. The competence-based curricula define the learning outcomes of the degree and thus indicate what kind of knowledge, skills and competences students should reach during the learning process. The RPL-process started by comparing learning outcomes of Vocational Qualification in Social and Health Care and Degree Program in Nursing and Paramedics. Competence tests were created based on common learning outcomes.

In the Relate project (LDV DOI) Savonia University of Applied Sciences (SUAS) and Savo Vocational College (SAKKY) developed practical methods to foster RPL of VET graduates when they start studies at SUAS in nurse or paramedic programs. The students, who had graduated from Clinical nursing and care or emergency care degree programs from VET, had a possibility to take part in competence tests. The students could show their knowledge, skills and competences in authentic situations in skill labs, simulations and case studies. The methods were first pilot tested with two practical nurses in May 2015 and minor changes were done. The competence tests were arranged in the courses Customer-oriented social and health care services and Nursing assessment and interventions. A successful completion of the test entitled to receive a part of the course/ the whole course accredited and to go straight to other courses in their study program. Totally 25 students participated in the tests.

Students were informed about the competence tests on the website of Savonia University of Applied Sciences. Tests were held before the start of the HE studies and after four weeks the studies have started. The students were able to enroll on the tests when they were chosen to study nurse (Iisalmi / Kuopio) or paramedic degree programs at Savonia University of Applied Sciences. The aim of the tests was to assess the adequacy of the prior competences. All those who applied for to the competence tests had an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the objectives and the contents of the HE course descriptions: Customer-oriented social and health care services and Nursing assessment and interventions. The students received a list of study material. If the expertise of the student was sufficient based on the earlier degree or work experience, it was possible to pass the test.

The following text describes in detail how the competence tests were carried out and assessed the usability of the tests in overall skills assessment.

Implementation and assessment of the Customer-oriented social and health care services
The main learning outcomes of Customer-oriented social and health care services -course were to describe the European welfare strategy, to explain social, health, rehabilitation and paramedic services as well as eHealth services and patient safety.

The competence test was divided into three parts: Essay task in pairs, Individual online test and conversation with assessing teachers. The customer case of an elderly couple was the basis for the essay. The themes of the essay were social- health and rehabilitation services for the couple, eHealth services for them as well as the safety factors of the clients. Students described what customer-orientation means and how it is possible to support individuals to take an initiative of their own health and welfare. The student group had 1.5 hours' time to prepare the essay. Afterwards the students had a possibility to clarify and expand the answers during the conversation with the teachers.

Working as a nurse requires the use of patient information systems and patient records archive. Important contents are privacy protection and information security. In Finland it's possible to study these contents online (www.kanta.fi) and make competence tests and receive certificates. The students carried out the online tests if they hadn't a certificate of passing the test during the last 6 months.

After tests and conversations the evaluators assessed the answers according to the criteria drawn up in advance. The students received the grades from 0 to 5. Participants performed the tests successfully and the grades varied from 4 to 5.


Implementation and assessment of the Nursing assessment and interventions
Nursing assessment and interventions course forms the basis for subsequent studies of nursing and paramedic education and it consists of health care clinical, ethical and professional nursing interventions. The course includes e.g. the application of nursing values and principles, professional interaction and patient safety. Clinical nursing and asepsis are key areas of the expertise of the course as well.

The competence tests were held by using skill station and simulation methods, where the applicants worked with a partner, just like in real work. The tests included discussion, planning and sharing the work together with a pair. Before participating in the competence test there was clear guidance and support to work in a planned patient situation as naturally as possible.

Since the content of the course is varied and extensive, it was not possible to arrange only one test. Instead, four sub tests were arranged which consisted of two skill tests and simulations. The skill tests comprised of two basic nursing interventions, which had to be to planned and executed correctly. For the skill tests evaluation criteria were drawn up, which were used in monitoring for the preparation and implementation of the interventions. In the skill tests it was particularly essential to implement the needed functions technically correct, e.g. in accordance with proper aseptic technique.

In the simulations the aim was to identify the participants' situational awareness, the overall management of a one patient´s individual needs and appropriate communication skills. For the

simulations scenarios were drawn up to help the tests to progress like in real life. In the first simulation a standardized patient was used, and in the second a simulator. The focus in the first simulation was the professional encountering/care of the patient and the second assessment of the patient's vital functions. For the simulations evaluation criteria were drawn up, which were monitored during the simulations.

Skills and simulation tests took about two hours per one pair. There were two teachers evaluating each sessions. The situations were kept pleasing and safe for the students and thus before starting the test the students had time to explore the space, equipment and also become familiar with the working pair. After each partial test the students were given a brief oral feedback, and the participants were able to correct minor shortcomings in the discussion. After the tests the evaluators went through each pair's proceedings and gave the grades on the basis of the criteria drawn up in advance.

The competence tests of the Nursing assessment and interventions -course covered the crucial themes/topics of nursing expertise and thus they can be used in evaluating nursing knowledge both from the individual and the working team perspective. Testing the competence of the selected topics and contents, was enough to confirm us about the participating students' skills and know-how. Thus, there was no need to show all tasks and content of the course, but to pick up the key areas.

Summary of piloting competence tests and development needs

The competence tests showed up to be a fresh way to show and test expertise. After the test the short evaluative discussion was a good learning possibility as well. On the other hand the tests were also exciting and stressful events. This way the competence tests included an ability to show the tolerance of stress, which is naturally often included in the caring situations. The tests highlighted clearly participants´ differences in competence level and showed individual needs to strengthen skills or to acquire more theoretical knowledge. It was a surprise that performing the skill tests did not go very well, e.g. applicants had shortcomings in the overall management and in the smooth functioning of asepsis of the situations. Instead, professional interaction, patient needs assessment and decision making were mostly very well controlled. All the participants performed the tests successfully and the grades varied from 2 to 5.

The schedule for the tests was tight. This was done to try out the number of tests that could be implemented in a controlled manner during a one day. Besides having the tests the time was needed also for the preparation, setting up the environment and equipment, the orientation of the applicants and providing interim feedback. However, the overall use of time was significantly less than in the normal implementation of the course. Therefore these kind of tests as a prior learning assessment method are sufficiently efficient and economical for both students and educational organization.

Students gave verbal and written feedback about the tests. They found the competence tests a motivating way to show know-how and expertise. Finding information from SUAS website was difficult and often the information was found accidentally. However, the instructions for

registration and verbal instruction given before the tests were clear and sufficient. The tests were demanding and responded well to a course contents. Work experience was beneficial for passing the tests well. Students had prepared for the tests by reading the attached links and other information mentioned in the course content. Some said, after the tests, that they should have read more to succeed better. Working with a pair was seen as a good method to share knowledge and responsibility. Previously only one participant had experience of the simulation. However, all the participants found the experience good, positively exciting and the situations very realistic in nursing. The scheduling was found successful, even though some of the participants felt that the day was busy.

The implementation of the competence tests could be further developed, in particular as regards the following:

- Information for students should be clear online
- There is a need to continue the RPL-process in other courses of Nursing and paramedic programs (for example Infection control and basics of medication)
- There is a need to start RPL processes in other degree programs (for example degree program in social services and degree program of physiotherapy)