



Erasmus+ - Projekt
„European Qualification Concept –
Specialist for Vocational Orientation”



Guideline for Implementation
of the European Qualification Concept
in Germany
(Lars Windelband/Heike Arold)

**Developed by the German partner
“Pädagogische Hochschule Schwäbisch Gmünd”**

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Introduction

The guideline for implementation of the European qualification concept "specialist for vocational orientation" (BOQua) shows possibilities and suggestions for the implementation and financing of the developed qualification concept in Germany. In the following chapters a description of the VET system in Germany will be given with the current status of the vocational orientation, then a description of the implementation proposals and the financing proposals.

1. Description of the VET system in Germany¹

The state tasks are divided in Germany between the federation and the 16 federal states. The federal states are also responsible for the public education and training, and thus for the VET schools, which are mostly supported by the federal state and a municipality. All school laws, including those for vocational schools, are federal state laws. The responsibility for in-company, extra-curricular vocational training, lies with the Federal Government. Here, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) have a general and coordinating competence (i.a. lead management for the Vocational Training Law responsibility for VET policy issues). In addition, new training regulations can only be passed in agreement with the BMBF and the social partners in Germany.

The full-time compulsory education in Germany begins at the age of six and lasts nine years (also ten years depending on the federal state). According to this, for young people who are no longer in a full-time school is the duty to visit a part-time (vocational) school for three years. After the common four-year elementary school, the educational paths are separated in the "structured school system" like secondary school, junior high school, high school and in almost all federal states also comprehensive schools.

In the dual system, graduates from different types of schools meet each other: special schools, secondary schools, junior high schools, comprehensive schools, vocational schools and high schools. The majority of the graduates of the dual system training take up work after the training as specialists ("skilled worker"). However, under certain conditions, graduates can also obtain the advanced technical college entrance qualification in a full-time school year and then study at a university

Dual System

The system is referred to as dual because the training is carried out in two learning locations: at a training company and at a vocational school. It usually lasts three to 3.5 years (there are also two-year training occupations).

The aim of training in the dual system is to impart a vocational competence which is necessary for the practice of a qualified occupational activity in a changing world of work as well as the acquisition of qualifications and competences in an orderly training course. The successful qualification qualifies the trainees to practice as a qualified specialist in one of the currently recognized 326 occupations (Status 2017, Source: Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training).

¹ See Hippach-Schneider et al. (2007): Berufsbildung in Deutschland. Kurzbeschreibung. Cedefop Panorama series; 136.



Full-time vocational schools

To the full-time vocational schools belong special schools providing vocational education, specialized secondary schools, vocational high schools/special high schools, upper vocational schools and other types of schools. The offers of the special schools providing vocational education are aimed at a basic vocational qualification for the continuation of a vocational training or the exercise of a professional activity. Depending on the desired educational aim, a certificate of Secondary Education or a final certificate of a junior high school is required.

Vocational training preparation

Vocational training preparation refers to qualifying offers for young people who have on one hand not completed their compulsory education or on the other hand have completed it but have not found a place of training or work in the education and employment market. It is taken over from various sides: (vocational) schools, free associations in youth work, qualification institutions and the Federal Employment Agency. A basic vocational education can be carried out in the form of a full-time school year or in cooperative form at a company and at a school, so-called year of vocational basic education (BGJ). By contrast, the vocational preparation year (BVJ) is a one-year training course, which is usually offered in full-time form. The in-company initial qualification (EQJ, introduction in 2004) is a preparatory vocational internship in companies of 6 to 12 months duration. Furthermore exist vocational preparation measures, financed by the Federal Employment Agency and carried out by e.g. institutions of free youth work (BvB) where young people without a school graduation or who could not find a training possibility will be prepared in different professional fields for different professions until they have find a training or job (these measures have a duration of nearly 10 months) .

Vocational education in the tertiary education

The tertiary field mainly covers the different types of higher education institutions and, to a limited extent, non-academic institutions. Thus, in addition to higher education institutions (universities), there are universities of cooperative education in some federal states which, as an alternative to a university study, offer vocational training courses for upper secondary graduates with at least an advanced technical college entrance qualification.

Further vocational training

The further vocational training usually requires a completed vocational training or an appropriate work experience or both. In the further vocational training is to differentiate between continuing/further education, which enables career advancement, and training aimed at acquiring or expanding professional knowledge, skills and abilities, or at adapting them to technical or economic developments (updating training).

The basis for an orderly and nationwide further vocational training and retraining are statutory ordinances with the regulation of exams requirements, the implementation of the exams as well as the admission requirements and the name of the degree, e.g. master, specialist, business economist, skilled worker Further vocational training measures are carried out by a variety of providers, such as e.g. companies, chambers, employers' and companys' organizations as well as employee organizations, vocational schools.



Vocational orientation in Germany

The execution of vocational orientation is mainly provided in the transition from school to work and for young people who have not found a training and young adults or adolescents who are not fit for a training after completing their schooling. In addition to vocational orientation at general education schools, the general vocational orientation is carried out by the Federal Employment Agency (BA) (presented in §33 SGB III Sentences 1 and 2). Furthermore it will be differentiated between the in-depth vocational orientation (shown in §33 SGB III Sentences 3 to 5) and the extended in-depth vocational orientation (shown in §421q SGB III)

1. General vocational orientation: The responsibility for the implementation lies with the Federal Employment Agency. It serves 1. the preparation of young people and adults for the choice of career and 2. for the information of the training seekers, jobseekers, employees and employers. It contains comprehensive information and advice on career choice issues, professions and their needs and prospects, ways and means of support in VET, and occupationally significant developments in companies, administrations and the labour market. These are purely informal consultations, which are held in one-on-one talks or partly also in the form of information events e.g. at schools.

2. In-depth vocational orientation: It includes the possibility to prepare pupils of general education schools for their career choices by means of measures. The duration of the measures covers a period of more than 4 weeks and takes place during the lesson-free period. The measures must be promoted to 50% by third parties.

3. Extended in-depth vocational orientation: It includes the possibility to prepare pupils of general education schools for their career choices by means of measures and to support them. The duration of the measures covers a period of up to 4 weeks and takes place during the lesson-free period. The aim is to increase the vocational choice competence of young people in order to promote their orientation and decision-making process. These are supplementary offers in addition to the general vocational orientation of the BA and at schools, which give the young people a deeper insight into the professional and working world and support them even better in choosing a career. These are measures which enable young people to gain direct experience by trying out and getting to know training companies and professions. The measures must be promoted to 50% by third parties.

2. Proposals for implementation of the European qualification concept in Germany

The implementation options of the European qualification concept "specialist for vocational orientation" range from the integration into an academic education (in the teacher training and further education, training of career counselors) up to the implementation as further education offer for actors of the vocational orientation in Germany.

Integration into academic education

An integration of the European qualification concept "specialist for vocational orientation" into the academic education (in the teacher training) represents a significant implementation option, because the teachers in the schools of the secondary level I become more and more involved in the process of vocational orientation. This is e.g. currently being implemented at the University of Education Schwäbisch Gmünd. Since 2015/2016, a professional orientation profile area has been firmly integrated into the curriculum as a mandatory elective field. In



the profile field, students have the opportunity to acquire certain vocational orientation skills in addition to studying subjects, educational sciences and school practice. Here, in the academic year 2017/2018, first parts of the European qualification concept were involved and implemented into concrete offers. The integration of selected modules of the qualification concept into the curricula of teacher education at colleges and universities can therefore also be considered as relevant for other universities.

Currently, the qualification of vocational orientation teachers is carried out at a few universities in Germany (including the Karlsruhe University of Education). The European qualification concept could complement or expand the already existing offer of teacher training and further education in the field of vocational orientation (with new contents / modules).

Continuing training and further education for teachers is organized differently in the individual federal states. In addition to the state teacher training institutes and the school supervision also other public and private institutions are involved. Below are mentioned e.g. the higher education institutions (universities), which in addition to the teacher training of the first phase (teacher training) often also are responsible for the third phase (further teacher training). If a release of the teaching staff is necessary, the offered training must be official accepted by the Ministry of Education.

The **vocational guidance / orientation** does not only take place in schools but is integrated in different institutions. An integration of the European qualification concept is therefore also possible in fields of study for social workers who deal with questions of vocational orientation. Parts of the qualification concept can also be integrated for other relevant degree programs in the general education, the educational sciences and the psychology. Possibilities would be here in the form of elective courses, specializations within the study programs or in the form of additional qualifications.

The Federal Employment Agency is training its career counselors at an own kind of university (HdBA). The prospective career counselors complete an interdisciplinary bachelor's degree program in which the theory is closely linked to practice in the Federal Employment Agency. Here, and also in the other vocational guidance courses of other universities, components of the European qualification concept can be integrated. First contacts regarding this were made with the Federal Employment Agency within the project.

Continuing and further education at (free) educational institutions

Measures for in-depth vocational orientation are by now an integral part of the career choice process in Germany. Many schools and providers of occupational youth welfare services regularly carry out measures for in-depth vocational orientation at different age levels. The teachers and educators themselves are active or the measures are carried out by employees of external supervisors

With reference to the developed European qualification concept, new seminar formats can be developed by the implementation of the concept in which, for example, special vocational fields or special developments in the selected sectors are in focus. For the example of "digitization and its consequences for the world of work and vocational education", there are already regular offers from the University of Education Schwäbisch Gmünd (i.a. Conference of Technical Education in Baden-Württemberg). This example could be followed by other



institutions. Target groups are teachers from schools, responsible for vocational orientation and career counseling as well as actors / responsible persons for training from companies

3. Proposals for financing the European qualification concept in Germany

With the shown implementation options for the European qualification concept are linked different possibilities for funding. In the case of integrating the European qualification concept into academic degree programs, the funding for public universities and colleges of education (existing only in Baden-Württemberg) would be financed predominantly by public funds. A funding of courses of studies by tuition fees is currently only available in some states for long-term students (Bremen, Lower Saxony, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia) and for a second degree (Baden-Württemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate), and for non-EU foreign students (Baden-Württemberg). Private universities may be charged higher fees for (further) education. This is at the discretion of private universities to set the amount of study / course fees.

Seminar / course / course offers, which are freely offered to the actors of the vocational orientation as (further) educations are largely financed by self-pay. Here often participation fees are to be refunded. However, these can be supported by funding for education and further training. For this exists different funding programs of the federal states, the federal government and the European Union. The range of funding offers and resources includes both support offers such as grants, loans or participations.

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