

Hakamäki-Stylman, V. 2019. Vocational competence in the Vocational Qualification in Information and Telecommunications Technology. Helsinki: Finnish Education Evaluation Centre.

The evaluation focuses on vocational competence in the Vocational Qualification in Information and Telecommunications Technology. The evaluation data was obtained from competence demonstrations and supplementary data describing the arrangement of such demonstrations. The results describe grades awarded for the demonstrations and the activities relating to the arrangement of the competence demonstrations. The evaluation focused on all students who had started studying towards a Vocational Qualification in Information and Telecommunications Technology in vocational education and training (VET) in autumn 2015 and on all units providing such VET programmes. The evaluation data was collected over the entire duration of the programme until the end of spring term 2018. Information on grades and quantitative data on the arrangement of demonstrations were supplemented with the self-assessments of VET providers. In addition, the descriptions of demonstration contents were analysed. In the analysis of the data and results as well as in the interpretation of the results, the evaluation team drew on the expertise of teachers working in the field.

The evaluation of learning outcomes was based on demonstrations, thus focusing on vocational competence. The evaluation was based on the vocational competence requirements and the assessment criteria specified for the programme in the Qualification Requirements. In other words, the Qualification Requirements functioned as a key starting point for evaluation.

Evaluation of learning outcomes in vocational education and training is development-oriented by its nature, and the implementation of the evaluation emphasises VET providers' active involvement and the interactive nature of evaluation. The data was collected directly in demonstrations organised by VET providers. This development-oriented nature is also reflected in the self-assessments conducted by the VET providers and the feedback reports submitted to them, which the providers can use to compare their own results with national results.

The evaluation data was collected from all training providers (38). The data covered 1,266 students and 3,742 demonstrations. The evaluation also focused on special needs students. The data covered 174 demonstrations performed by special needs students. The material consisted of a total of 3,563 descriptions of competence demonstrations, including the demonstrations of special needs students. Self-assessment data was submitted by 30 providers.

Just under one half (44%) of the grades awarded for demonstrations were “excellent”, 43% “good” and 13% “satisfactory”. The average of the grades awarded for the demonstrations was 2.31. The

grades received by women were better than those received by men. There were also differences in the grades between the locations of the vocational competence demonstrations. Better grades were awarded for demonstrations performed at workplaces than for those performed in educational institutions.

Significantly more “satisfactory” and fewer “excellent” grades were awarded for demonstrations given by special needs students than for those given by other students. The most common grade awarded to special needs students was “good”, which accounted for 45% of the material.

There is still room for development regarding the working-life relevance of the programme. Only one in four demonstrations (27%) given in information and telecommunications technology were performed at workplaces and 80% of all demonstrations were assessed by teachers alone. Challenges were also detected in the integration of vocational subjects and common qualification units. The evaluation highlighted development needs related to workplace instructors’ assessment skills. In addition, development needs related to the planning, monitoring, assessment and development of demonstrations were observed.