

Abstract

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Vocational competence and pedagogical activities in the Vocational Qualification in Social and Health Care

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The evaluation focuses on the Vocational Qualification in Social and Health Care and examines the pedagogical activities of VET providers and the competence produced by it. A total of 48 VET providers participated in the evaluation.

The evaluation was implemented in 2020 as part of piloting FINEEC's new learning outcomes evaluation system for VET. The system has been developed for several years on the basis of meta-evaluation, external evaluation and workshops organised for different stakeholders, taking into account the changes that have taken place in the operating environment of VET. In line with the new evaluation system, the role of students and working life in producing evaluation data has been strengthened in this evaluation and already existing national data repositories have been used as much as possible.

FINEEC's evaluations follow the principle of enhancement-led evaluation, which emphasises active participation of the evaluated organisations and the interactive nature of the evaluation. The evaluation process is implemented in a way that enables the participants to already enhance their activities during the evaluation. The enhancement-led nature is visible especially in the self-evaluation conducted jointly by the VET providers and workplaces, which produces information on the pedagogical activities of the VET provider. In addition, students assessed their competence in a self-assessment at the end of the education. In the evaluation, interviews were also implemented at workplaces on themes such as planning the education organised at the workplace, induction, guidance provided to students, the assessment of demonstrations of knowledge and skills, and students' competence. Furthermore, already existing data repositories such as Koski and VET feedback (Amispa-laute) were used in the evaluation.

According to the evaluation, the pedagogical activities of the VET providers were on average at a developing level on the scale absent-emerging-developing-advanced. There are differences in the quality of the pedagogical activities between VET providers especially in the verification of the guidance and assessment competence of workplace instructors and the professional and working life competence of teachers, in the allocation of resources to the guidance of students in education provided in the workplace, and in the monitoring, assessment and development of pedagogical activities. VET providers are still at fairly different stages of introducing the competence assessment plans into the practical assessment activities. The practices and process of the personal

competence development plan were on average found to be working well. However, room for development was still found in how the agreed instructions and procedures were complied with in practice and in the harmonisation of operating practices.

In general, the evaluators were satisfied with the demonstration activities. Almost all the demonstrations were carried out at workplaces by carrying out genuine work tasks and they were mostly considered to meet the vocational skills requirements in the qualification requirements. The evaluators also found that assessment was mostly implemented according to the criteria. However, cooperation between the VET provider and the workplaces should be intensified in the planning and implementation of VET organised at the workplace. Especially the participation of workplace instructors in drawing up the personal competence development plan should be enhanced with regard to work-based learning and demonstrations to ensure the quality of the training provided in the workplace. The visits made by teachers to the workplace to support students and workplace instructors should also be enhanced.

When measured by the grades given for the vocational and common units, the competence of students in the field of social and health care is very good. The most common grade given for vocational units was excellent (5) and for common units good (4). Depending on the background variables used, there were some differences in the grades, especially when examined by students' age and gender. The grades of female students were higher than male students both in vocational and particularly in common units. The oldest age groups (35-44 years, 45-54 years, and 55 years and over) received higher grades for both vocational and common units than younger age groups (under 18 years, 18-24 years, 25-34 years). According to the evaluation, the key strengths in students' competence were the basic skills of the profession, such as practical skills in the daily activities and competence related to the use of working methods and tools. Cooperation and interaction skills were also considered strengths in their competence. The main competence development needs in turn were identified in the command of the theoretical knowledge that the work is based on, medication competence, cooperation and interaction skills, and working life skills.

According to the nationwide VET feedback, the majority of the students were satisfied with the education in the sector and found that the education had provided them with competence and vocational skills they could use. A clear majority also found that the education had improved their capabilities for moving to the world of work, working or further studies. The students' self-assessment also showed that the education had on average provided good capabilities for the world of work and relatively good capabilities for studies in higher education.

Based on the evaluation results, the report proposes development recommendations for enhancing the implementation of students' personal competence development plan and individual study paths in practice, improving the competence of workplace instructors and teachers, intensifying the cooperation between education providers and workplaces in training provided in the workplace, and for the monitoring, assessment and development of pedagogical activities. The development needs in students' competence were identified in the command of theoretical knowledge, medication competence, cooperation and interaction skills and mathematical competence, among other things.

Keywords: Vocational Qualification in Social and Health Care, vocational education and training (VET), pedagogical activities, vocational competence, competence specific to vocational field and generic competence, parts of common units, grades, demonstration of knowledge and skills