Sector Skills Alliances - EACEA 04/2017

Designers' KIT
How to set the proper EQF level?

This document is part of ENhANCE Project's D3.2.2

How to set the proper EQF level?

The EU Curriculum for FCN proposed by the ENhANCE Project **targets graduated nurses (with at least EQF6), aiming to take them towards EQF7. Thus it aims to award EQF7 level certifications through at least 60 ECTS, although it supports the design of curricula awarding more or fewer credits.**

N.B: Each academic year corresponds to 60 ECTS and in each semester 30 ECTS.

A preliminary step for the localization of the curriculum is the **DEFINITION OF THE EQF/NQF LEVEL OF THE LOCALIZED CURRICULUM** and the relative **NUMBER OF AWARDED CREDITS**.

This should be done considering national regulations and institutional and other (e.g. labour market) requirements and depending on how many ECTS points you can deliver. The choice should be in line with the local context and there are several aspects to be considered, such as:

- the FCN qualification should always lead to a degree or certificate;
- the FCN qualification should be a stand-alone qualification;
- the FCN qualification should leave the option to continue the studies in case the FCN curriculum does not provide enough ECTS to reach a degree.

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE LOCALIZED CURRICULA.

1. THE CURRICULUM IS DESIGNED ON EQF7 AWARDING 60 ECTS
This approach is feasible:

A. in countries where a **60 ECTS Second Cycle Degree that leads to EQF7 already exists** (e.g. Italy, Spain, and Sweden) and the qualification can be linked to EQF7 via the NQF.

B. in countries where a 6**0 ECTS Second Cycle Degree does not exist**; in this case, the curriculum:

B1. can be designed addressing EQF7 (meaning the LO reflect EQF7) but it will award **a certificate of continuous training**; the level and the content of the FCN courses should be mentioned in the certificate and a list and a description of LOs should be included (similar to a diploma supplement) for transparency reasons.

B2. can be delievered in the form of a **Second Cycle Degree awarding on the whole 90-120 ECTS**; in this way, the curriculum is integrated into similar study programs or extended by other LOs. FCNs will still receive a certificate and then will be able to continue the studies and gain more ECTS points.

2. THE CURRICULUM IS DESIGNED ON EQF7 AWARDING MORE THAN 60 ECTS

This approach is **similar to 1.B2**, but the curriculum covers more than 60 ECTS.

N.B.: If you select all the LOs described in the Curriculum and you address each of them at an advanced level, the maximum number of ECTS which could be awarded according to the Flexibility Table is 97,5 ECTS.

3. THE CURRICULUM IS DESIGNED ON EQF6 AWARDING LESS THAN 60 ECTS

This approach is feasible:

A. in countries where **the curriculum cannot be designed on EQF7** (for strategic/institutional reasons: maybe the institution already offers similar modules on EQF6 that can be easily transformed to suit the FCN curriculum); in this case, the curriculum will lead to a **certificate of continuous training**; the level and content of the FCN courses should be mentioned in the certificate and a list and description of LOs should be included (similar to a diploma supplement) for transparency reasons;

B. in countries where similar/comparable qualifications are on EQF6 and where these are **delivered in the form of a Bachelor's Degree** (EQF6, 180-240 ECTS); the curriculum can be integrated into similar study programs or extended by other LOs; FCNs will still receive a certificate and then be able to continue the studies and gain more ECTS.

WHEN LOCALIZING YOUR CURRICULUM USING THE TOOLS PROVIDED BY THE PROJECT, you may:

- *define a curriculum that doesn't reach 60 ECTS*: in this case, you have adapted the general EU Curriculum by selecting a subset of LOs from the list and/or by addressing many LOs at basic level**; awarding less than 60 ECTS means that the final course won't be able to certify an EQF7**; since the target users of the EU Curriculum are supposed to be EQF6, their EQF level will remain the same;

- *define a curriculum that goes beyond 60 ECTS*: in this case, you have adapted the general EU Curriculum by selecting more LOs than advised and/or by addressing them in an advanced way; awarding more than 60 ECTS doesn't mean to reach an EQF higher than 7, although the localized curriculum may be integrated in a Second Cycle Degree with 120 ECTS (two academic years).

Adapting the ENhANCE Curriculum to EQF6 (CASE 3) affects substantially the Curriculum itself, since the formulation of Learning Outcomes requires a modification, too. Since the description of Learning Outcomes should take into account the specific level of knowledge, skills and responsibility/autonomy identified by the European Qualification Framework (https://europa.eu/europass/it/description-eight-eqf-levels), the curriculum should be thoroughly revised not just in terms of number of LOs and ECTS but also the way in which LOs are stated and phrased.

How to manage the adaption from EQF7 to EQF6?

In order to adapt the FCN EU Curriculum to EQF6 you should revise:
- the number of LOs you've selected;
- their "level of study" and the related educational strategy;
- the assigned number of ECTS.

*N.B.: For the adaptation of the Curriculum to EQF6 it is necessary to **KEEP ALL MANDATORY LEARNING OUTCOMES** in order to equip FCNs with the Core Competences necessary for their occupation but to **REDUCE the COMPLEXITY of the LEARNING OUTCOMES.***

To this end, you should **revise also THE WAY in which LOs ARE STATED AND PHRASED following these suggested STEPS:**

STEP 1
Check all Learning Outcomes of the Curriculum and identify the ones that are clearly on EQF7, related to the EQF7 level descriptors. To this end you have to refer to the European Qualification Framework levels described at https://europa.eu/europass/it/description-eight-eqf-levels and/or the supplementary reading about EQF levels provided below.

Please consider not only the title of the Learning Outcome but also the description of knowledge, skills and personal and transversal competences for your decision.

In the project we've identified two main types of LOs:

- LOs which concern an FCN ACTUAL SPECIALIZATION which is needed to perform FCN KEY ACTIVITIES (named LOs "TYPE X"); these LOs are targeted at EQF7 level.

- LOs which are not directly related with a "specialization in Family and Community Nursing" (named LOs "TYPE Y"); although fundamental for the overall curriculum, they CAN (but not MUST) be targeted at EQF6; so some of LOs "TYPE Y" are already addressed at EQF6 level.

See the type we've identified for each LO in Annex 1. You can use this list as a support for identifying the LOs you have to modify.

STEP 2
Adjust knowledge, skills, personal and transversal competences to make it suitable for EQF6, for example by reducing one or all of the following:

A. knowledge (concepts, procedures, etc.)

B. skills (e.g. with regards to role model/leader/mentoring and tutoring activities)

C. complexity of situations (e.g. with regards to networks and contexts to act in)

D. responsibility and autonomy (affecting mainly leadership, mentoring and management tasks).

During this step, you can use other study programs from your institution or similar programs from other institutions to compare the Learning Outcomes.

NB: In the ENhANCE Curriculum C and D are detailed under "PERSONAL AND TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES"

STEP 3
(If applicable)

Rephrase the Learning Outcomes to match the content.

STEP 4
Communicate the level and complexity of the FCN's knowledge, skills and competences (e.g. in the diploma supplement or certificate) with the aim to create transparency and comparability among FCNs and their qualifications.

How to use the EQF levels description

The use of the EQF and its eight levels (https://europa.eu/europass/it/description-eight-eqf-levels) as a "translation tool" between national qualification systems enables educational designers to describe learning outcomes units in such a way that they are comprehensible across countries and systems. At each level, the knowledge, skills and competence required to achieve the level are described.

The EQF thus also provides a taxonomic orientation for the description of learning outcomes that are assigned to each level. However, the EQF does not describe specific qualifications or an individual's competences but levels of qualifications. Learning outcomes in EQF are therefore defined a little differently than in ECVET, including the dimension responsibility and autonomy (in addition to knowledge and skills).

N.B: The description of Learning Outcomes for the curriculum should take this into account and describe the level of responsibility/autonomy under "PERSONAL AND TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES" as to facilitate the reference to the EQF.

Hence, to adapt the EU Curriculum from EQF7 to EQF6, all three dimensions – knowledge, skills and responsibility/autonomy – should be considered and line up with the official descriptors and requirements for EQF level 6.

	Knowledge[1]	**Skills[2]**	**Responsibility and autonomy[3]**
EQF6	Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles	Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study	Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups
EQF7	Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the	Specialised problem-solving skills required	Manage and transform work or study contexts that are

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[1] In the context of EQF, knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual.

[2] In the context of EQF, skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments).

[3] In the context of the EQF responsibility and autonomy is described as the ability of the learner to apply knowledge and skills autonomously and with responsibility

	forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields	in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields	complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches; take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams

The description of Learning Outcomes according to ECVET

The **description of Learning Outcomes according to ECVET** aims at ensuring a better understanding and comparability of qualifications and learning achievements across countries, institutions within a country or across qualifications.

It is therefore important to use a common language and common concepts when it comes to describing what a learner is able to do. It is a systematic way of structuring the qualifications acquired regardless of learning duration and learning location.

There are USEFUL GUIDELINES to support the description of Learning Outcomes:

- Guideline "Defining, writing and applying learning outcomes – a European handbook." by the European Center for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop 2017), available at http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/4156
- "Get to know ECVET better - Questions and Answers" (ECVET User's group. 2011.), available at http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/ECVET_QUESTION_ANSWERS_Feb_2011_en(download_ID_17648).pdf
- ECVET toolkit website: http://www.ecvet-toolkit.eu/

LOs Types

UNIT OF LEARNING	LO code	LO TYPE
UNIT OF LEARNING A: NEEDS ASSESSMENT	LO1a	X
	LO1b	X
	LO1c	X
	LO3a	X
	LO3b	X
	LO3c	X

	LO19a	X
	LO19b	X
	LO21a	Y
UNIT OF LEARNING B: DECISION MAKING PROCESS	LO2a	Y
	LO2b	X
	LO11a	X
	LO22a	Y
	LO22b	X
	LO23a	X
UNIT OF LEARNING C: HEALTH PROMOTION AND EDUCATION	LO4a	X
	LO4b	X
	LO5a	X
	LO16a	Y
	LO16b	X
	LO17a	Y
	LO17b	X
	LO18a	X
	LO18b	X
	LO25a	Y
UNIT OF LEARNING D: COMMUNICATION	LO6a	X
	LO15a	Y
	LO15b	Y
UNIT OF LEARNING E: NAVIGATION AS CARE	LO8a	Y
	LO8b	Y

COORDINATOR AND PATIENT ADVOCATE	LO13a	Y
	LO13b	Y
	LO14a	X
	LO20a	Y
	LO20b	Y
	LO27a	Y
	LO27b	X
UNIT OF LEARNING F: EVIDENCE BASED APPROACH	LO9a	X
	LO10a	Y
	LO10b	X
	LO12a	X
	LO12b	X
	LO12c	X
	LO12d	X
	LO26a	Y
	LO26b	X
UNIT OF LEARNING G: ENHANCE AND PROMOTE INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY HEALTH INCLUDING E-HEALTH TO SUPPORT THE QUALITY OF NURSING CARE	LO24a	X
	LO24b	X
	LO7a	X
	LO7b	X
	LO28a	Y
	LO28b	X
	LO28c	X