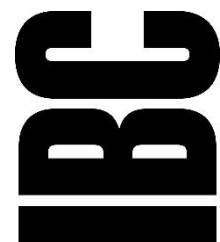


Work Package 5 Training HR management for SMEs  
Activity A5 Development and coordination of examination regulations

## Examination regulation and international recognition "SME executives and HR experts"



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## 1. Examination regulation

### 1.1 Introduction

In Germany, the Chambers have the legal competence to issue legally valid examination regulations for continuing vocational education and training with official, recognized continuing vocational education and training qualifications that have legal validity for the area of the respective chamber.

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Protection can establish such examination regulations with a recognized qualification for the entire federal territory.

The following examination regulations shall be adopted and enacted by a North German Chamber of Skilled Crafts.

The training program developed and implemented can be examined alternatively:

- On the basis of an official examination regulation leading to a state-recognized degree. The following examination regulations fulfil this purpose.
- As an internal audit, which is also carried out on the basis of the following examination regulations but does not lead to a recognized degree. In this case, the participants will receive a certificate and attestation showing the overall examination grade.

### 1.2 Official Examination Regulation

#### § 1 Purpose of the examination and designation of the degree

1) The examination for Personnel Development Manager is intended to determine whether the candidate possesses the necessary knowledge, skills and experience required for the Human Resource Management in small and medium-sized enterprises.

2) A successful pass in this examination leads to a recognized degree in Personnel Development Manager.

#### § 2 Requirements

The examination is to admit those who have:

- 1) Successfully completed vocational training and have at least five years' professional experience
- 2) Further to Paragraph 1, admission to the examination may also be granted on presentation of certificates or otherwise, as proof that the requisite knowledge, skills and experience have been acquired in previous activities and can justify admission to the examination.

#### § 3 Structure, content and duration of the test

- 1) Theoretical fundamentals

In the first part of the examination, basic knowledge in the following fields of activity must be demonstrated:

- a) Analysis of operational conditions with regard to their current and future human resource potential.
  - b) Submission of economically justified proposals for the anchoring of human resource measures in the company.
  - c) Activities for the implementation of operational measures of human resource management in the enterprise.
  - d) Examination of the operational suitability of operational measures of human resource management.
  - e) Development of optimisation proposals for the improvement of operational human resource management.
  - f) Demonstrate the right knowledge to modernise their human resource processes and ensure a sustainable and successful future for the company.
  - g) Recognise and assess the content, scope and importance of a human resource management strategy.
- 2) Planning, implementation and evaluation of measures of human resource management.

In the second part of the examination, the candidate should prove that he/she is capable of planning, implementing and evaluating a company-related human resource management. This includes:

- a) Recruiting, onboarding and job design of potential new employees in general and with regard to the changing needs and requirements of the new Gen Z entering the labour market specifically.
- b) Tracking and assessing staff performance and job satisfaction. Identify and address the needs of employees of all generations to ensure that individual employee goals and employer business objectives are aligned.
- c) Scaling effects and use of digital tools, organisation and management of digital work functions and design of an active learning culture.
- d) Demonstrating the necessary tools to achieve accelerated innovation cycles in the company.
- e) Identifying fields of action for human resource innovation in SMEs.
- f) The planning of operational innovation activities in the company.
- g) The presentation of advantages and disadvantages in the implementation of human resource activities in the company.

- h) The anchoring of human resource activities in the company as a project.
  - i) Measures to check the suitability of human resource activities in the company.
- 3) Project work

The third part of the examination is in the form of a project work, which is to be prepared as a written, extra-occupational term paper. The scope start and processing time of the project work is determined by the examination board.

- 4) The first part of the examination is oral and should not take longer than 30 minutes in total.
- 5) The second part of the examination is conducted in writing and should not exceed 60 minutes.
- 6) On the basis of the examination performances in the project work, a technical discussion is to be held in which the candidate is to show that he/she can demonstrate the technical connections underlying the project work, justify the course of the project work and present technical problems associated with the project work and their solutions. The technical discussion should not last longer than 15 minutes.

#### § 4 Consideration of previous examinations

- 1) The examinee can apply for exemption from the examination in individual areas of action, if he/she has passed a previous examination before a competent authority, a public or state accredited educational institution or before a state examination board whose content requirements correspond to the respective fields of activity.
- 2) A complete exemption is not allowed.

#### § 5 Passing the written and oral examinations

- 1) The examination results in the parts stipulated in § 3 must be assessed separately.
- 2) The number of points obtained in the three papers for the oral and written examinations should be summarized into a total score. The final grade is therefore:
  - 15% from the first part of the examination,
  - 25% from the written examination in the second part of the test,
  - 40% of the project work in the third part of the test and
  - 20% of the technical discussion in the third examination.
- 3) The written examination of the second part of the examination must be supplemented by an oral examination if this can be decisive for passing the examination. The oral examination should not last longer than 15 minutes per examination.
- 4) The examination is passed if at least sufficient performance has been achieved in each examination part.

5) A certificate is to be issued on passing the examination, which must show the overall examination grade.

### § 6 Retests

(1) An examination which was not passed can be repeated twice.

(2) If the candidate has passed individual sections of the examination but has not performed at least adequately in sections in accordance with §3, the parts successfully passed must not be repeated on further application, provided that the candidate has filed for reassessment within two years from the date of the declared result of the failed examination. The assessment of the examination will be made with regard to this factor.

### § 7 Application of other provisions

For all craft and non-craft occupations, the respective training examination regulations apply in their currently valid version.

### § 8 Entry into force

These legal provisions enter into force with their publication.

## 2. Evaluation in the Qualification Framework and international recognition

### 2.1 Qualifications Framework “Baltic Sea Region”

A qualifications framework for the Baltic Sea Region was designed under the Project Leonardo “Baltic Education”<sup>1</sup>. By means of the European Credit Transfer System of Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), this “BSR-QF” provided the basis for the evaluation of two craft occupations – “carpenter” and “painter”. ECVET is a system which allows to characterize qualification (knowledge, skills and competence) by transferable and accumulable learning units and to assign credit points to the learning outcomes. The BSR-QF and the applied ECVET process for the two named occupations formed the basis for the evaluation of the advanced training program developed “SME executives and HR experts.”

The Maastricht Declaration of 2004, the Lisbon Strategy of 2000 as well as several other European Union initiatives, and in this context specifically dedicated funding to raise the geographical and labour market mobility and to promote lifelong learning, will yield increased employment and economic growth across EU countries. Rapid social, technological and economic changes along with an aging society make lifelong learning a necessity. For that reason, education is a major component to meet and to achieve the ambitious Lisbon goals. Hence, the European Commission has induced to develop a European Qualifications Framework and to establish National Qualifications Frameworks (hereinafter: NQF) by 2010. The modelling of National Qualifications Frameworks lies in the competence of national authorities, whereas the EU-Commission has recommended that the EU Member States implement NQFs. The European Qualifications Framework represents a meta-framework and is considered by the European Commission as crucial in meeting European objectives, set out in the Lisbon Strategy.

The main purpose of a qualifications framework is to improve transparency, quality and comparability of professional and academic qualification levels across differing education systems and European countries. The EQF itself does not constitute a formal recognition of occupational qualifications. A special feature of Europe is the enormous diversity of educational systems. A prerequisite to make this specificity an asset is to foster transparency.

Transparency can be considered as a fundamental prerequisite for the recognition of qualifications, and it improves comparability. Better comparability between countries is a decisive element to increase labor mobility and to ensure permeability of qualifications, whereby permeability constitutes a prerequisite for lifelong learning.

In the near future, qualifications frameworks must meet these criteria with concrete and well-designed concepts. A qualifications framework is an appropriate tool for the development and for classifying qualifications. The European Qualifications Framework was adopted in November 2007.

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<sup>1</sup> Hanse-Parlament, Baltic Education, Hamburg

Under the project “Baltic Education”, constructive and fruitful discussions at Euro-pean and national levels should be encouraged by a “Baltic Sea Region Qualifications Framework” (hereinafter: BSR-QF). This BSR-QF should be regarded as a supplement and contribution to the ongoing debate rather than a substitute for the shaping of National Qualifications Frameworks. The project “Baltic Education” has delivered a size-able contribution to this strategy.

The Baltic Sea Region (BSR) is an area with a considerable number of different coun-tries. These countries share common problems as they endeavor to cope with the same economic and demographic challenges and concerns. It is essential for this re-gion to further develop vocational training, to improve quality and to establish transpar-ency and recognition models. To solve these complex issues, the BSR-QF provides an orientation, allowing for classifications across the whole qualification range and also serving as a common ground for constructive discussions, conceptual considerations and individual progress.

## 2.2 Structuring and evaluation

### 2.21 Introduction

The objective of the Baltic Education Project was to develop, introduce and imple-ment a system for mutual recognition of professional qualifications. This will be achieved by using the European Credit Transfer System of Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).<sup>2</sup> ECVET is a system that enables describing qualifications by transferable and accumulable learning units (in the form of knowledge, skills and competence) and corresponding allocated credit units.<sup>3</sup>

ECVET also perfectly complements the European Qualifications Framework.<sup>4</sup> In its guidelines, the European Commission outlined the overall concept as follows:

- a) focus on learning outcomes expressed in terms of knowledge, skills and compe-tence.
- b) based on a process of qualification.
- c) adapted to the demands of lifelong learning and all learning contexts, on an equal footing.

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<sup>2</sup> EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC) (2006): European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). A system for the transfer, accumulation and recognition of learning outcomes in Europe. SEC (2006) 1431, Brus-sels, p. 3

<sup>3</sup> EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC) (2006): European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). A system for the transfer, accumulation and recognition of learning outcomes in Europe. SEC (2006) 1431, Brus-sels, p. 3

<sup>4</sup> cf. EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC) (2006): Implementing the Community Lisbon Programme. Proposal for a rec-ommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of the European Qualifica-tions Framework for lifelong learning. COM (2006) 479 final, 2006/0163 (COD), Brussels.



d) geared towards the mobility of people.<sup>5</sup>

Further ECVET consultation guidelines and regulations specify:

- a) mobility of people undertaking training.
- b) validation of the outcomes of lifelong learning.
- c) transparency of qualifications.
- d) mutual trust and cooperation between vocational training and education providers in Europe.<sup>6</sup>

The experience and methods of ECVET in the project "Baltic Education", form the basis for the evaluation of the training program developed "Recruiting the Young Generation Workforce: Innovative HR Management" (RE-GROW)".

In a first step, the individual training modules are evaluated according to the principle "25 training hours = 1 credit point". Based on this starting point, in a second step the significance and content of each training module is evaluated by project partners and experts and then the credit points for each module are determined in a group evaluation.

Within the framework of the "Baltic Education" project, a procedure for the mutual international recognition of vocational education and further training qualifications was developed and agreed with all countries bordering the Baltic Sea. Following this agreement, the project developed and agreed a procedure for the recognition of qualifications from all training courses. The following procedure then follows for the recognition of the degrees of all training courses of the project.

- Lecturers/examiner rates the courses by assigning credit points.
- Mutual recognition of completion in the Baltic Sea countries follows upon fulfilment of the following conditions:
  - a) The final exam was passed.
  - b) The assessment of the course has resulted in at least 80 % of the possible credit points shown in the table below (20% margin of tolerance).
  - c) Skills were acquired in all three mandatory modules
- Where they do not yet exist, each of the future participants will receive an EU education passport in which the results are documented.

## 2.22 Structuring and evaluation of further vocational training

<sup>5</sup> EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC) (2006): European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). A system for the transfer, accumulation and recognition of learning outcomes in Europe. SEC (2006) 1431, Brussels, p. 5

<sup>6</sup> EUROPEAN COMMISSION (EC) (2006): European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET). A system for the transfer, accumulation and recognition of learning outcomes in Europe. SEC (2006) 1431, Brussels, p. 35



In the project "Recruiting the Young Generation Workforce: Innovative HR Management" (REGROW) a continuing education program for SME executives and HR experts will be developed and implemented.

In the training all modules are classified as mandatory, in which knowledge and skills have to be acquired.

With regard to the assignment of the course in the BSR-QF, the classification of both trainings was made in competence level 5 "Experienced qualified professional".

The assessment in the project led to the following conclusions:

Evaluation training "SME executives and HR experts" by credit points system

Course parts	Credit Points
Training module A: Knowledge	2,5
Training module B: Learning and project implementation phase at the workplace	6,0
Training module C: Report and Reflection	1,5
Total	10,0

### 2.23 Internationally recognised educational qualification

Upon completion of the training courses and the final examination, the participants acquire the recognised professional further training qualification of " Personnel Development Manager".

