IO05.Tool Kit on the Development of Organisational Profile

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Introduction

The HCEU Erasmus+ Project aims at '*Fostering transparency and recognition of prior learning within geographical mobility of professionals in the healthcare sector'.* The concept of 'Organisational Profile' has been used as a key instrument to achieve this aim. The basic idea is that professional care refers to specific work processes apparent in all countries. Every qualification (degree/ diploma/ certificate) in professional care reflects the extent to which holders of the qualification are able to conduct these work processes at the time of graduation.

The 'Organisational Profile' aims to be precisely this: the 'total' of knowledge, skills, and competences, related with a specific qualification, as exhibited by the 'standard' holder of the qualification upon graduation. In turn, comparing Organizational Profiles virtually means comparing what fresh holders of various qualifications are actually able to do. It is believed that this is a much more reliable basis of comparison as contrasted for example with a list of subjects taught in a curriculum. Hence Organisational Profiles can turn to be very useful tool for recognition authorities and future employers across countries in assessing holders of various qualifications.

This tool kit is produced to provide guidelines and a research methodology on the construction of the organisational profiles. The kit incorporates the methodology applied in the project and also draws from the experience acquired.

Curriculum Background Information

It is reasonable the determination of an Organisational Profile to be combined with an overview of the standard curriculum that leads to this qualification. This section provides guidelines regarding this screening of the curriculum's background information. The background information is placed as an annex to the organizational profile after its determination.

Reported background information should make reference to official documents from which it is derived. Indicative such documents expected, include national laws or ministerial decisions, published in Official Government Gazette issues, Academic Institutions' Governing Body Decisions, and Academic Institutions' publications, including website pages and other electronic publicity material.

Once again it is noted that the background information provided is curriculum specific. Moving, however, from curricula to Organisational Profiles, researchers may confront three likely cases in every country:

Case 1: A nationally set curriculum, compulsory for all academic (and/or vocational) institutions of a kind in the country. This is the simplest possible case. This single national curriculum will lead to a single national organisational profile. This is probably not usual at the graduate level, but more so at the vocational 'assistant nurse' level.

Case 2: Individual curricula formed independently by each academic institution/education provider or other body in the country, without, however, important differences among them in terms of subjects taught and corresponding LO. Any differences may spring from individual university/institution subject preferences, electives, or minor sub-specilisations. This may prove the most frequent case. In this case one background information screening, only, will be provided from one single 'indicative' institution, while the OP that will be developed later will be considered 'national'. In case 2 some justification should be provided as for why the examined curriculum is 'indicative' and differences with other curricula in the country are minor.

Case 3: Individual curricula formed independently by each academic institution/education provider or other body in the country, but with important differences among them, despite the likelihood that qualifications are considered equivalent. In this case it is not possible to be led to a single 'national' OP, but to two or more. The final number of OP will depend on the extent to which institutions can be grouped according to their curricula. Partners confronted with such a case should provide some additional information on the differences of the curricula, some justification of any grouping of curricula they suggest, and of the likely exclusion of a curriculum(a) from their study.

Below follows an indicative content structure of curriculum background information:
Qualification's General Overview
(a template can be found in the Annex to this document)

Name of qualification	In English and in the national language
Awarding Institution	In English and in the national language
EQF Level	
Minimum duration of studies	In years/semesters/weeks
Minimum total teaching hours (overall, class-based, laboratory-based)	
Minimum external clinical practice	Duration of clinical practice in hospitals/clinics
Minimum total ECTS points (in case of a VET qualification, VET ECTS points to be used, if available)	
Assessment and quality assurance methods employed	
Law/decree/decision introducing the curriculum	(+date)
Brief presentation of the institution (in case 1 above this concerns the type of institution, rather than an individual one)	Location/structure/history/faculties// academic staff and students (100 words maximum)
Brief presentation of the awarding department (cases 2 and 3 only)	Academic and other staff/facilities (100 words maximum)
Number of students enrolled/graduated yearly (in case 1 this concerns the total numbers of students in all institutions of the type)	For the specific qualification only (rough numbers – if available).

Curriculum Overview

This part lists the subjects taught, per year/semester, the corresponding ECTS, and where available, hours per week with distinction between lectures, laboratory sessions, etc. The page(s) should take the form of a grid with the above content.

Clinical practice

This page should provide information on the clinical practice associated with the corresponding qualification. The information should relate with the clinical practice's duration, types, stage of studies when it takes place, fields, duties, assessment etc. In some countries/qualifications, it is likely clinical practice to follow the award of the qualification as a necessary step for the acquisition of the national professional license. In this case information should refer to this clinical practice.

Use of the Learning Outcome Approach

This part should provide information on the extent to which the Learning Outcomes approach is followed in the formation and application of the curricula. Exemplary issues to be considered:

- Use of the learning outcomes approach in the qualification framework.
- Use of the learning outcomes approach in qualification and education standards.
- Use of the learning outcomes approach in taught subject descriptors, clinical practice, and assessment methods.
- Use of the learning outcomes approach in the course quality assurance.

Page 5. Background Information on the Curriculum Formation and Application

This should be a short text describing the way the curriculum is shaped and introduced. Exemplary issues to be considered:

- Is the curriculum developed by the Ministry of Education and mandatory for all relevant institutions?
- Is the curriculum developed by the Awarding Institution independently?
- What are the margins within which instructors can determine the content of the subjects (e.g. weekly topics, core textbooks), the teaching and the assessment methods etc.?
- Have stakeholders like Association of Nurses, Association of Employers, and/or other social partners been involved in the formation of the curricula? To what extent and in which way?

Guidelines for the OP Determination

Determining the Organisational Profile (OP) of a specific degree/ diploma/ certificate requires consultation with experts in the field and the national educational and professional context of nursing. For this purpose a questionnaire survey is designed. The key aspects of this survey design are hereby discussed in turn.

Questionnaires

The survey makes use of six questionnaires. All of them appear as an Appendix to the Kit.

Since the underlying basis of the research is the Competence Development Matrix (see section 2), the competence development steps virtually constitute the 'questions' of the Questionnaires. More specifically the questionnaires (apart from a common introductory part asking the identity, the relevance, and the experience of the interviewee) are structured as follows:

The first five questionnaires correspond to the five Competence Areas for which lists of Learning Outcomes are provided. The interviewee is given these lists and responds with a 'Yes or NO' to questions asking, if specific Learning Outcome have been achieved by a standard graduate upon conclusion of studies. If 80% of the learning outcomes of a development step are given a 'Yes', than the step is included in the specific Organisational Profile.

The sixth questionnaire corresponds to the remaining Competence Areas. For the latter the interviewee is given all development steps of the composite competences and is asked to specify what step is reached by the 'standard' graduate.

Targeted Expert Groups

For each qualification examined at the national level in each country we turn to at least three expert target groups for interviews/consultations. These are:

- Academics/VET instructors involved in courses of the specific qualification. Academics/ instructors are definitely the group with best knowledge of the educational curricula. In the same time, however, their opinion may be based more on the curricula and less on actual professional competence.

- Employers/ human resource officers/ directors of professionals that hold the specific qualification. This group aims to represent the employers' opinion on the competences of fresh graduates. Their opinion is expected to be more objective as for what new graduates 'actually' know and are able to do.

- Professionals, holders of the specific qualification who have accumulated a reasonable experience and are always active (employed) in the field. This group aims to provide the experience of active professionals as for what they knew and were actually able to do on their 'first day of employment' after studies'.

For each qualification examined the following numbers of interviews are considered necessary:

- 2 to 3 interviews among the first target group (academics/VET instructors).

- 4 to 6 interviews among the second group (employers/ human resource officers/ directors).

- 4 to 6 interviews among the third group (professionals).

Contacting the Interviewees and Collection of Responses

The aforementioned questionnaires can be forwarded to the interviewees in two ways:

• Printed hard copies to hand or electronic pdf files attached to an email.

The major advantage of this approach is that the interviewed expert can answer the questions gradually over time by preserving his/her given answers after each answering session.

The filled questionnaires will be returned to the interviewer in hand writing, in a separate answer sheet, or on the pdf file, if this is of an interactive form. Here comes the negative aspect of this approach, i.e. the interviewer has to process all responses him/herself in order to present the outcome.

• Electronic interview form available for completion on a digital platform (e.g. Google Forms)

The major advantage of this approach is for the interviewer. He/she will be in position to retrieve the results of the research easily, processed, and in a consolidated form. Furthermore he/she will be in position to present the results in a user friendly form (charts, tables, etc.) without additional effort.

In the same time this approach exhibits important disadvantages for the interviewee. First and foremost the platform does not allow saving answers and returning to the questionnaire at a later time. The questionnaire should be completed entirely or, if abandoned, prior answers are lost. Second important disadvantage is that the platform does not allow overlooking all questions, something that might prove disturbing in providing thoughtful answers by the expert. Finally the platform may be restrictive to processing large amounts of data.

An electronic platform that does not present the above three deficiencies could be the ideal tool for this research.

Overcoming Different Expert Opinions

It is not unlikely at all the answers provided by the experts on certain learning outcomes or competence development steps to differ, to a greater or lesser extent. In such a case it is recommended a small panel of experts to be created and determine the best response that fits the Organisational Profile of the qualification.

Reporting of the Findings and the OP Determination

Afterwards it is very helpful to write a final report in order to make the procedure and evaluation comprehensible and to document the work.

Background information - qualifications general overview

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HCE

Name of qualification	In English and in the national language
Awarding Institution	In English and in the national language
EQF Level	
Minimum duration of studies	In years/semesters/weeks
Minimum total teaching hours (overall, class-based, laboratory-based)	
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Number of students enrolled/graduated yearly (in case 1 this concerns the total numbers of students in all institutions of the type)	For the specific qualification only (rough numbers – if available).
Additional notes	