

Learning Outcomes in Focus

Experiences from Foodpro –project (LdV IVT, 2011-2013)

Foodpro-project is a Leonardo IVT project which aims at offering the students of food processing a possibility to learn part of their qualification abroad. Foodpro-network consists of the following VET schools in the western part of Finland: Vocational Education Centre Sedu (the coordinator of the project), Winnova, Tredu, Kokkola Vocational Institute, Turku Vocational Institute and Oulu Vocational Institute. International partners of the project are from Austria, Germany, Ireland, Latvia and Lithuania.

The starting point for the learning mobilities in Foodpro-project is that they are integrated and fully recognized part of the studies of **Vocational Qualification in Food Production** (120 Finnish Credits). The mobility form part of an optional module of the qualification called 4.3.6 Manufacturer of Food Products in an International Environment (10 Finnish credits).

When mobility includes **both learning at school environment and in the workplace (1)**, the planning and carrying out the mobility involves the learner, the teacher in charge of learning mobility in home institution, a teacher in the partner school abroad and a workplace tutor from the company abroad.

If the learning mobility consists of **a placement in the company with no intermediary school (2)**, the workplace tutor from the company abroad is the main counterpart for planning and implementing the mobility.

In Foodpro –project both of these above mentioned models of learning mobilities have been in use.

[1] Mobility consisting of Learning both at School Environment and in the Workplace

The Process:

- 1) Renewing partnership with Valmieras Profesionālā Vidusskola from Latvia for the new Leonardo da Vinci IVT project Foodpro early 2011. Valmieras Profesionālā Vidusskola from Latvia is a long term partner for the network of VET schools from the western part of Finland providing qualifications in food production.
- 2) After the project proposal was approved and the first mobilities planned, discussions concerning formalising the cooperation by signing a Memorandum of Understanding. Due to long term relations it was decided that the student specific learning agreements would be adequate paper work to guarantee the quality of the learning mobilities.
- 3) After application process coordinated by international coordinators of network schools in Finland, a group of five food processing students from Vocational Education Centre Sedu and Kokkola Vocational Institute formed the group heading to Latvia in spring 2012.
- 4) Discussions in both sending schools with the students and the teacher of food processing about the learning outcomes planned to be achieved during the mobility to Latvia. Writing down the Learning outcomes.
- 5) Contacting the partner school and discussing about the possibilities to achieve the learning outcomes in a partner country. It was agreed that the first two weeks of the mobility would take place at school and two weeks in the workplace.
- 6) Preparation of Learning agreements in which the following things were described and agreed:
 - a. the learning outcomes already achieved
 - b. learning outcomes to be achieved while abroad
 - c. assessment of achieving the learning outcomes
 - d. validation and recognition.

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Tool for Assessment (including the skills requirements and assessment criteria
Evaluation Form for Skills Demonstrations

- 7) Preparing for the learning mobility. Language and cultural preparation by the international coordinators in sending schools (face to face and Moodle course). Vocational preparation by the teacher in charge of the period abroad. The students achieved 2 Finnish credits from this part.
- 8) Sending out the students, communication during the placement with the students and with the teacher from the partner school.
- 9) Evaluation in the workplaces by the company work placement tutor and the teacher of the partner Latvian school.
- 10) Transcript of the assessed learning outcomes by using Europass Mobility Document and the Evaluation form of skills demonstrations.
- 11) Feedback discussions with the teacher in charge of the mobility period about the learning outcomes and the mobility in general.
- 12) Recognition and validation including life long learning skills (6 credits)
- 13) Teacher in charge of the on-the-job learning period in home institution, in common understanding with the education director and the guidance counsellor of the department, makes sure that the learning outcomes of the mobility are recognized as part of the qualification by taking them to the study record of the student.
- 14) Completing the module: Manufacturer of Food Products in an International Environment (10 credits) by preparing a presentation about the study period abroad and teaching the preparation of some of the Latvian bakery products for the fellow students in home institution. (2 credits). The whole module finished by the students.

[2] Mobility consisting of Learning in the Workplace

The Process:

- 1) Two Baker-confectioner students from Vocational Education Centre Sedu are interested in on-the-job learning in Ireland.
- 2) Discussions with the students and the teacher of Baker-confectioner studies about the learning outcomes planned to be achieved during the mobility to Ireland. Writing down the learning outcomes.
- 3) Contacting the bakery in Ireland. Discussing about the possibilities for on-the-job learning period in the bakery. Agreeing on the timetable. Sending out the learning outcome descriptions and discussing about the work tasks that can be offered by the bakery. Both the students and the teacher of Baker-confectioner studies are in contact with the employer.
- 4) Preparation of Learning agreements in which the following things were described and agreed:
 - a. the learning outcomes already achieved
 - b. learning outcomes to be achieved while abroad
 - c. assessment of achieving the learning outcomes
 - d. validation and recognition.

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- 5) Preparing for the learning mobility. Language and cultural preparation by the international coordinators in sending schools (face to face and Moodle course). Vocational preparation by the teacher in charge of the period abroad. The students achieved 2 Finnish credits from this part.
- 6) Sending out the students, communication during the placement with the students and with the workplace tutor.
- 7) Evaluation in the workplaces by the company work placement tutor and the owner of the bakery.
- 8) Transcript of the assessed learning outcomes by using Europass Mobility Document and the Evaluation form of skills demonstrations.
- 9) Feedback discussions with the teacher in charge of the mobility period about the learning outcomes and the mobility in general at home institution.
- 10) Recognition and validation including life long learning skills (6 credits)
- 11) Teacher in charge of the on-the-job learning period in home institution, in common understanding with the education director and the guidance counsellor of the department, makes sure that the learning outcomes of the mobility are recognized as part of the qualification by taking them to the study record of the student.
- 12) Completing the module: Manufacturer of Food Products in an International Environment (10 credits) by preparing a presentation about the study period abroad and teaching the preparation of some of the Latvian bakery products for the fellow students in home institution. (2 credits). The whole module finished by the students.

Lessons Learned During the Project

In ECVET mobility the vocational teacher of the mobile student, is playing a central role in planning and implementing the mobility. Differing from the past, the role of the international coordinator is more in connecting people and the quality check-up concerning the documentation.

The more comprehensive assessment of life long learning key competences, which is in many case very central part of the actual learning outcomes, is easier to carry out when there is an intermediary school involved in the mobility.

The need to assure the receiving companies about the importance of assessing of the learning outcomes and making their paper work “burden” as light as possible, is important for safeguarding the motivation of the companies to receive foreign learners. In some countries there is a tradition that part of learning of the students takes place in companies. Where this is not the case, the role of the intermediary partner school is much more central. Learning outcome based rhetoric which rely more on description on actual work tasks and not so much on curricula language, is important in all communication with companies.

The ECVET documentation has brought the important quality factors of mobility in focus and this way it has supported the quality of the mobilities in general. According to our experience in Foodpro-network, in ECVET-mobility the student is more involved in preparation of the learning mobility. It is therefore easier for them to see the period abroad as an integrated part of their studying path. This also allows them to evaluate the benefits and impact of studying abroad and to set their own personal goals.