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the European Union**

Professional competences of internal corporate educators

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1. Corporate training and the role of internal trainers

Corporate training is a key element for developing and maintaining the competitiveness of modern companies. It includes a wide range of activities aimed at improving the skills, knowledge and competences of employees. This type of training is not only about imparting technical and professional knowledge, but also about developing soft skills such as communication, teamwork and people management. **Effective corporate training promotes employee adaptability to a rapidly changing work environment and technological advances.** In addition, it contributes to higher motivation and employee satisfaction, leading to increased productivity and reduced turnover. Companies that invest in the systematic training of their employees often experience improved performance and innovation, enabling them to better respond to market opportunities and challenges. Modern approaches to corporate training often include e-learning, interactive training and hands-on workshops that allow employees to immediately apply the knowledge they have gained in practice. As a result, corporate training is a strategic tool for long-term human resource development and the achievement of corporate objectives.

Corporate training encompasses a range of activities. In addition to compulsory training, these include induction of new employees into the workplace and upgrading of their skills, training of employees in the introduction of new technologies and changes in production, helping employees to adapt to a multicultural corporate

environment, and the overall development of the company's human resources. **Enterprises may pursue these objectives through an external trainer or from their own resources through internal trainers or instructors**, if knowledge of the specifics of the enterprise is required. In the case of recurrent training, the enterprise thus also addresses the cost of an external supplier. These include, for example, trainers of production operators, OSH and first aid trainers, forklift and crane instructors, and bindery workers. Employees are usually nominated for the role of in-house trainer based on the quality performance of their current profession. However, the new role encompasses a much wider range of competencies. In-house trainers are expected to be well versed in company processes and the organisation of corporate training, to use sufficient pedagogical and didactic skills in the delivery of training, to take account of socio-psychological aspects in their contact with learners and to be familiar with the relevant legislation. Employers also expect in-house trainers and trainers to have ICT competences such that they can prepare training activities to a high standard.

The employer is always responsible for the quality of employee training. According to the provisions of the Labour Code, employers are obliged to provide employees with training on legal and other regulations to ensure occupational safety and health, which complement their professional prerequisites and requirements for the performance of their work and relate to the risks with which the employee may come into contact at his/her workplace. As part of risk prevention, employers are also obliged to seek out risks, identify their causes and sources and take measures to eliminate or minimise them, and to provide employees with sufficient and appropriate information and instructions on occupational safety and health, in particular by informing them of the risks, the results of risk assessments and measures to be taken before exposure to risks relating to their work and workplace.

The employer shall have the option of providing training either internally, either directly by himself if he is sufficiently qualified, or through a designated sufficiently qualified employee, or externally through a sufficiently qualified trainer. **Sufficient qualifications of the trainer shall include, in particular, adequate theoretical knowledge, sufficient practical skills and appropriate teaching ability and skills.** In addition to theoretical knowledge and practical skills, the trainer must also have appropriate pedagogical skills. The aim of the training provided is to properly teach the trainees the tasks for which the training is provided. This is where the contradiction arises, since the positions of internal trainers in the field of vocational corporate training are often held by secondary-school-educated specialists, or individuals with an education certificate who have mastered the job perfectly and who

pass on their experience to colleagues who, however, have no pedagogical and pedagogical competences. In addition, they often work with a group of low-skills trainees who work in the lowest positions of production operators, warehouse workers, lift truck drivers, crane operators and bindery workers, where a different pedagogical-psychological approach is required to motivate the target group and to prepare the training so that it is adapted to the low-skills trainees.

Already in the survey conducted in 2021 and 2022, it was found that HR managers of enterprises are aware of the above contradiction and understand that **the lack of pedagogical-didactic competences of internal trainers brings problems to enterprises with the efficiency and effectiveness of internal training**. As a result of the research conducted in the framework of the project preparation, a requirement was made to define a qualification standard whose content would reflect the needs of corporate training as well as the needs and capabilities of specific groups of corporate trainers.

2. Development of andragogical and pedagogical competences of internal trainers

At present, there is only one qualification within the NQS of both countries that can provide evidence of pedagogical andragogical competences of an in-house trainer, and that is the professional qualification of **"Lecturer in Continuing Education"**.

The National Qualifications System (NQS) is the system used to recognise the results of non-formal and informal learning in the Czech Republic, and a similar system exists in Slovakia. This system allows people to gain qualifications based on practical experience and skills without having to undergo formal training programmes.

The National Qualifications Framework includes various vocational qualifications, which are divided into several sectors and areas. Each qualification is described in detail in a 'qualification standard', which contains the knowledge, skills and competences required for the qualification. There is also an assessment standard which sets out the criteria and assessment methods for checking whether a candidate meets these requirements.

The Professional Qualification in Teaching and Teacher Education named **"Lecturer in Continuing Education"** defines the requirements for the **following competences** that the candidate must demonstrate in the examination:

- be able to analyse the educational needs of the target group and, on the basis of these analyses, determine the objectives and content of educational programmes, including the design and adaptation of curricula and materials to best meet the requirements and expectations of the participants,
- must be able to use group work and discussions and other teaching methods and techniques to ensure that trainees acquire the necessary knowledge and skills, as he/she is responsible for conducting classes and lectures,
- must be able to develop and apply tools to assess learning outcomes and provide feedback to trainees on their progress and performance, analyse the effectiveness of the learning process and make necessary adjustments to the course to improve the quality of learning activities; and
- be able to manage administrative and organisational matters related to the implementation of training activities, which includes ensuring the material and technical conditions for training and coordinating work with other trainers and experts.

The qualification of 'Lecturer in Continuing Education' is level 7, which is the equivalent of a university degree and requires in-depth theoretical knowledge of pedagogy and andragogy. For in-house trainers in enterprises, foremen and frontline workers who have practical experience but not theoretical pedagogical training, **this qualification is difficult and unfeasible** as it covers a wide range of pedagogical skills, including planning, implementing and evaluating training activities, and many employees who work as in-house trainers and trainers in enterprises have practical training experience but may not have sufficient training in complex pedagogical methods and techniques. Furthermore, the Lecturer in Continuing Education qualification emphasises the organisation and administration of training programmes, which includes managing administrative matters, ensuring material and technical conditions and coordinating with other trainers. Internal trainers do not deal with this, as these processes are managed by the HR or training and staff development departments in companies. Similarly, the formal assessment methods used in corporate training are pre-set, managed and administered by the HR department.

These reasons clearly show the need to adapt the qualification standard to the specific requirements and conditions in enterprises, which contributes to more effective and accessible training and development of in-house trainers and trainers in andragogy, pedagogy and psychology. The above-mentioned reasons have led to the **creation of the new qualifications „Trainer of VET Skills in Production “ and „Entrepreneurship VET Instructor“**. The division into these two professions and the separate degree of difficulty of the verification of knowledge corresponds to the needs of business practice. This is in line with the objectives of the National Qualifications System (NQS), which aims to ensure quality and recognition of education through the provision of vocational qualifications that meet the needs of the labour market.

3. **Trainer of VET Skills in Production**

The qualification "Trainer of VET Skills in Production" has been designed as a specific occupational qualification that addresses the practical needs of foremen, foremen and trainers of practical skills in enterprises. This qualification standard is based on the need to provide these professionals with the opportunity to gain recognition and extension of their skills in vocational teacher education without the need to undertake demanding theoretical programmes.

The qualification and assessment standard for this new qualification is described below and can be found at <https://www.lasertneedle.cz/erasmus-100007/>.

In the case of the qualification standard for trainers of vocational skills in production, who will mainly train newcomers and broaden their range of skills, the competences required are oriented towards the level of secondary vocational school without a high school diploma. In terms of content, particular attention is paid to business processes, pedagogical skills, psychological aspects of teaching, especially psychomotor learning and respectful communication with learners and orientation to legal regulations.

In order to be oriented to business processes and the organisation of skills training in the workplace, candidates must fulfil two assessment criteria. The first is the ability to explain the content and significance of each business process in relation to production. The second is a description of the forms and organisation of skills training in the enterprise. Verification of these skills shall take the form of an oral test. To pass this part, the candidate must be able to explain and describe both the business processes and the organisation of skills training in the workplace in a comprehensible manner.

Five criteria are assessed in the area of the use of basic pedagogical skills in working with learners. Candidates must describe and explain any three basic didactic principles used in the teaching of practical skills and use a model situation to explain the different stages of psychomotor learning. In addition, he/she must define the criteria for assessing the degree of mastery of the skill using a concrete example and carry out an instructional demonstration of a specific work activity. The last criterion is to define the physical and psychological prerequisites for successful mastery of the skill and to propose recommendations for minimising overload in the performance of a specific work activity. Verification of these skills includes both oral verification and

practical demonstration coupled with oral verification (for criteria. Candidates must demonstrate the ability to apply basic pedagogical skills theoretically and practically in the context of teaching practical skills.

Four criteria are assessed in the application of psychological aspects in contact with learners. Candidates must characterise the specificities of adult learning and apply the principles of respectful communication and propose solutions to conflict situations using model examples. In addition, they must motivate performance through communication, using a range of opportunities for reward, encouragement and appropriate ways of giving criticism. The final criterion is the characterisation of the personality requirements of a production skills trainer. Verification of these skills is in the form of oral verification and practical demonstration combined with oral verification. This part assesses the candidate's ability to use psychological aspects in working with adult learners, including motivation, communication and conflict resolution.

In the area of knowledge of the legislation applicable to the work activity, the candidate must fulfil two criteria. The first is the ability to explain the meaning of the professional qualifications system and its position in the education system. The second is to state the principles of occupational health and safety, including fire protection. Verification of these skills shall take the form of an oral test. Candidates must demonstrate a basic understanding of the legislation relating to professional qualifications and safety in the workplace.

The "Trainer of VET Skills in Production" qualification is designed to provide foremen and practical skills trainers in enterprises with practical andragogical tools in adult vocational training with an emphasis on low-skills trainees. The criteria and assessment methods have been designed to respond to real needs and conditions in enterprises, thus facilitating access to this qualification and promoting the professional growth of in-house trainers.

At the same time, a **preparatory training course for the professional qualification "Trainer of VET Skills in Production"** has been created to the qualification and assessment standard, both in full-time and online form. At the end of the project, a pilot training course was conducted, which was **attended by a total of 78 participants**, 42 of whom attended in full-time form, 22 in combined form and 14 online, beyond expectations (16 participants were expected, including 8 participants in full-time course and 8 participants in online training). The online version of the course is still available and can be taken until 30 October 2024 by completing the **registration form at <https://www.laserneedle.cz/erasmus-100007>**.

The preparatory course for the "Trainer of VET Skills in Production" qualification is structured to provide participants with the comprehensive knowledge and skills necessary to meet the requirements of this qualification. The course consists of several modules: legislative and organisational preparation, specifics of adult learning, psychological preparation and pedagogical and didactic preparation. Below is a detailed description of the different parts of the course and their relation to the assessment standard **The course programme can be found at <https://www.lasertneedle.cz/erasmus-100007/>.**

Legislative and organisational preparation covers key aspects related to enterprises and educational processes. Participants will learn about enterprise processes, the system of professional qualifications and the organisation of skills training in an industrial enterprise. Particular emphasis is placed on the ergonomics of psychomotor tasks, which is key to optimizing work performance and ensuring safety. Health and safety during training is also covered to ensure that participants are able to comply with all necessary regulations. This module is closely linked to the assessment standard, in particular the criteria for orientation to business processes and the organisation of skills training in the workplace. Participants will learn to explain the content and significance of the various business processes in relation to production and to describe the form and organisation of skills training in the enterprise, which is verified by oral examinations.

The module on the specifics of adult learning provides participants with knowledge of the different types of learning and the different phases of psychomotor learning. This module is dedicated to understanding how adults absorb and process new information and skills, which is crucial for effective training in a manufacturing environment. The content directly supports meeting the criteria of using essential pedagogical skills when working with learners. Participants will learn to explain the basic didactic principles used in teaching practical skills and to explain the different stages of psychomotor learning. Skills are verified at the end by both oral examinations and practical demonstrations.

The psychological training is more extensive and covers two full days. The module covers important topics such as the role of the internal trainer, the physical and mental disposition to master the skills, respectful communication, conflict resolution and assertive giving of criticism and recognition. In addition, the personality requirements of a production skills trainer are discussed, which is crucial for effective leadership and motivation of learners. The module responds to the needs defined in the assessment standard for the application of psychological aspects in contact with

learners. Participants learn to characterise the specifics of adult learning, apply principles of respectful communication and motivate performance through appropriate methods of appreciation and criticism. These skills are tested through both oral examinations and practical demonstrations.

The last module, pedagogical and didactic training, focuses on didactic principles and principles in adult learning. Participants are introduced to different methods of adult education and learn how to conduct demonstrations and instruction effectively. This module is key to the development of practical teaching skills that are essential for the successful transfer of professional skills in production. The module is directly linked to the criteria for using basic pedagogical skills when working with learners. Participants will learn to define criteria for assessing the degree of skill mastery and to carry out demonstrations with instruction in specific work activities. These skills are verified through practical demonstrations and an oral examination.

The "Trainer of VET Skills in Production" preparatory course is designed to provide participants with all the knowledge and skills needed to meet the requirements of the qualification. Each module of the course is linked to specific assessment standard criteria, ensuring that participants are well prepared to successfully meet all requirements and effectively perform their role as vocational skills trainers in a manufacturing environment.

In the training evaluation questionnaires, participants expressed a high level of satisfaction with the content and format of the training. We consider both to be indicators of a well-defined social need and the practical usefulness of this qualification. In addition, the **quality of the preparatory course was positively evaluated by an expert reviewer; this review in English is freely available at <https://www.laserneedle.cz/erasmus-100007/> .**

4. Entrepreneurship VET Instructor

The qualification **"Entrepreneurship VET Instructor" is designed to provide trainers in enterprises with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively conduct employee training.** This qualification standard responds to the specific requirements of enterprise trainers who play a key role in the development of employees' skills and competences.

The qualification and assessment standard for enterprise vocational trainers corresponds to the requirements of a full secondary education with a secondary school leaving certificate. The content has been strengthened, in particular, with activating

methods in teaching, forms of organising discussions and ICT skills; attention is also paid to business processes, orientation in legal regulations, pedagogical andragogical skills and psychological aspects of teaching.

The qualification and assessment standard for this new qualification is described below and can be found at <https://www.lasertneedle.cz/erasmus-100007/>.

For orientation in business processes and corporate training, candidates must fulfil three assessment criteria. The first criterion is the ability to explain the content and role of individual business processes in relation to production. The second is to explain the meaning of compulsory and non-compulsory employee training. The third is a description of the organisational forms of training in the enterprise. Verification of these skills takes the form of an oral test for all criteria. In order to pass this part, candidates must demonstrate the ability to explain clearly the business processes, the importance of employee training and the organisational forms of training in the enterprise.

In the area of knowledge of the legal provisions applicable to the training profession, the candidate must fulfil two criteria. The first is the ability to explain the meaning of the professional qualifications system and its position in the training system. The second is an indication of the possibilities of using printed and internet resources in relation to copyright protection. Verification of these skills is by means of an oral test for both criteria. Candidates must demonstrate a basic understanding of the legislation relating to professional qualifications and copyright protection in the use of educational resources.

Four criteria are assessed in the area of the use of basic pedagogical skills in teaching. The candidate must characterise and explain the principles of adult education and present one of the classifications of didactic methods, describe at least three activating didactic methods and three ways of organising discussion. In addition, according to the subject area, the candidate must formulate three questions and two practical tasks to verify the level of competence of the participants and give an example of modification of the educational content and adaptation of the educational methods for low-skills participants in vocational enterprise training. The verification of these skills includes an oral verification and a practical demonstration linked to the oral verification. The candidate must demonstrate the ability to apply pedagogical skills, including adult learning principles, didactic methods and adaptation of educational content for different groups of participants.

Three criteria are assessed in the area of application of social psychological knowledge in contact with learners. Candidates must state the basic social psychological approaches to personality and explain the advantages and disadvantages of applying them in vocational corporate training. In addition, he/she must communicate appropriately verbally and non-verbally within ten minutes on an independently chosen topic according to the field and apply the principles of respectful communication and propose a solution to a conflict situation using model examples of difficult-to-manage learners. Verification of these skills is again in the form of both oral verification and practical demonstration for the criterion and practical demonstration combined with oral verification. Candidates must demonstrate the ability to apply social psychological approaches and effective communication skills when working with learners, including conflict resolution.

The application of basic ICT skills in teaching and learning includes four criteria. Candidates must create a five-page presentation with correct text layout, multimedia content (image, graph, video) and a functional link to an online survey, including the use of a QR code. In addition, they must prepare three pages of text material with embedded illustrative images and links to resources. The third criterion is to set up a learning group or meeting on the chosen distance learning platform, share the presentation, embed the question in the chat and create an online survey or questionnaire. The last criterion is demonstrating how to work with a text generator, translator and proofreading using AI tools. Verification of these skills is done through practical demonstrations for all criteria. Candidates must demonstrate the ability to use ICT tools to prepare and deliver teaching, including the creation of presentations, text-based materials, the organisation of distance learning and the use of modern AI tools.

The new qualification "Entrepreneurship VET Instructor" provides trainers in enterprises with the practical and theoretical tools necessary to effectively deliver vocational training to employees. The criteria and assessment methods have been designed to respond to the specific needs and conditions of enterprises, increasing the accessibility and relevance of this qualification. This qualification supports the professional development of trainers and contributes to the development of the professional skills and competences of employees in enterprises.

At the same time, a **preparatory training course for the professional qualification "Entrepreneurship VET Instructor" has been developed** in addition to the qualification and assessment standard, both in full-time and online form. At the end of the project, a pilot training course was held, which was **attended by a total of 26 participants**, 12 of whom attended in full-time form, 6 in combined form and 8

online, beyond the expectations (16 participants were expected, including 8 participants in full-time form and 8 participants in online training). The online version of the course is still available and can be taken until 30 October 2024 by completing the **registration form at link <https://www.laserneedle.cz/erasmus-100007/>**.

The preparatory course for the "Entrepreneurship VET Instructor" qualification is designed to provide participants with the comprehensive knowledge and skills necessary to effectively train employees in a corporate environment. The course is divided into several modules: pedagogical-didactic preparation, psychological preparation, legislative-organizational preparation and ICT skills of the trainer. Below is a detailed description of each part of the course and its relation to the assessment standard. **The course programme can be found at <https://www.laserneedle.cz/erasmus-100007/>**.

Legislative and organisational training provides participants with a basic overview of business processes and the professional qualifications system. It also covers mandatory and optional training for employees and health and safety principles for training. The module is closely linked to the assessment standard, in particular the criteria for orientation in company processes and company training. Participants learn to explain the content and role of each business process in relation to production and to clarify the importance of mandatory and non-mandatory employee training. This knowledge is tested by oral examinations.

The pedagogical and didactic training covers the key principles and principles of adult education. Participants are introduced to didactic principles, organisational forms of corporate training, adult education methods and activation didactic methods. In addition, they will learn how to effectively lead discussions and apply evaluation and assessment methods. This module directly supports the fulfilment of the criteria for the use of basic pedagogical skills in teaching. Participants learn to characterize and explain the principles of adult education, introduce the classification of didactic methods and describe activating didactic methods and the possibilities of organizing discussions. Skills are tested by oral examinations and practical demonstrations.

Psychological training focuses on key psychological aspects of learning and communication. Participants will learn about the psychology of learning, social psychological approaches to the learner's personality, respectful communication and conflict resolution. Also included are the topics of managing impact, the specifics of low-skill participant learning, and the personality requirements of a professional business process trainer. The module is linked to criteria for the application of

psychological aspects in contact with learners. Participants learn to characterize the specifics of adult learning, to apply principles of respectful communication and to motivate performance through appropriate methods of appreciation and criticism. Skills are tested by practical demonstrations and oral examinations.

Legislative and organisational training provides participants with a basic overview of business processes and the professional qualifications system. It also covers compulsory and noncompulsory employee training and health and safety principles for training. The module is closely linked to the assessment standard, in particular the criteria for orientation to company processes and company training. Participants learn to explain the content and role of each business process in relation to production and to clarify the importance of mandatory and non-mandatory employee training. This knowledge is tested by oral examinations. The module on ICT skills for trainers consists of two days of intensive training. Participants will learn basic word processing, structured text processing, multimedia work and document revision. They will also focus on spreadsheets, presentation preparation, survey and questionnaire tools, and the use of translators and proofreading using artificial intelligence. The module meets the criteria for the application of basic ICT skills in teaching and preparation. Participants will learn how to create presentations, prepare text-based materials, set up learning groups on distance learning platforms and work with text generators and AI tools. These skills are tested through practical demonstrations.

The "Entrepreneurship VET Instructor" preparatory course is designed to provide participants with all the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the requirements of the qualification. Each course module is linked to specific assessment standard criteria, ensuring that participants are well prepared to successfully meet all the requirements of the qualification exam.

In the training evaluation questionnaires, participants expressed a high level of satisfaction with the content and format of the training. We consider both to be indicators of a well-defined societal need and the practical usefulness of this qualification. In addition, **the quality of the preparatory course was positively evaluated by an expert reviewer; the review is freely available in English at <https://www.laserneedle.cz/erasmus-100007/>.**

5. Conclusion

The qualification and assessment standards for the professional qualifications „Trainer of VET Skills in Production “ and „Entrepreneurship VET Instructor“ were developed and co-financed within the Erasmus+ project "Creating of the new VET qualifications for entrepreneurship education", reg. no. 2022-2-CZ01-KA210-VET-000100007, whose beneficiary is the Czech educational agency LASERneedle CZ s.r.o. and partner is the Slovak educational agency TOPCOACH s.r.o.

These new qualifications are designed with the practical needs of production and enterprises in mind. They focus on skills and knowledge that are directly applicable in the work environment, thus better matching the experience and needs of in-house trainers and trainees. „Trainer of VET Skills in Production “ and „Entrepreneurship VET Instructor“ are targeted qualifications that focus on specific areas and competencies needed for effective education and training in a company setting. This allows a focus on relevant skills without having to master a wide range of pedagogical competences. At the same time, the new qualifications have lower requirements for theoretical education and place more emphasis on practical experience and skills. This facilitates access to the qualification for people with long experience without a teaching background. By being better adapted to the needs and experience of in-house corporate trainers and trainees, these qualifications support their professional development and career growth. They allow them to gain formal recognition of their teaching skills and to enhance their andragogy-pedagogical qualifications without having to complete demanding university programmes.

Resources

LOVASOVÁ, Vladimíra, PEROUTKOVÁ, Pavla, ŠTEFKOVÁ, Soňa a KORIM, Veronika. **Profesní kvalifikace v odborném podnikovém vzdělávání** [online]. 2024. Dostupné z: <https://www.laserneedle.cz/erasmus-100007/>

LOVASOVÁ, Vladimíra, PEROUTKOVÁ, Pavla, ŠTEFKOVÁ, Soňa a KORIM, Veronika. **Zpráva o nové kvalifikaci „Trenér odborných dovedností ve výrobě“** [online]. 2024. Dostupné z: <https://www.laserneedle.cz/erasmus-100007/>

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Co-funded by
the European Union

Project ERASMUS+:

Creating of the new VET qualifications for
entrepreneurship education,
reg. No. 2022-2-CZ01-KA210-VET-000100007

- **TRAINER OF VET SKILLS IN PRODUCTION**
- **ENTREPRENEURSHIP VET INSTRUCTOR**

Made by ERASMUS+ project “Creating of the new VET qualifications for entrepreneurship education”, reg. No. 2022-2-CZ01-KA210-VET-000100007.

Funded by the European Union. The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect official position of the European Union or the European Education Executive Agency. The European Union and the EACEA are not responsible for the views expressed.

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