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EUROPEAN CREDIT SYSTEM FOR VET (ECVET)

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

(REPORT OF THE CREDIT TRANSFER TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP)

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PREAMBLE

- BACKGROUND

One of the priorities in the joint interim report of the Education Council and the Commission on the implementation of the "Education and Training 2010" programme was to develop common European references and principles to contribute to the Lisbon strategy in order to "make lifelong learning a tangible reality", including "a European system for the transfer of learning credits for vocational education and training"[1]. The Council Resolution agreed on 12 November 2002[2] (Education, Youth and Culture) and the Copenhagen declaration of 30 November 2002 set the priority of developing a credit transfer system for VET[3] as one of the common measures necessary for promotion of "transparency, comparability, transferability and recognition of competences and/or qualifications, between different countries and at different levels"[4].

A mandate was therefore given to a working group to explore possible options for the design, implementation and development of a credit transfer system, compatible with specificities of vocational education and training. This technical working group (TWG) is composed of experts nominated by participating countries and social partners[5]. It has faced the challenge of laying the foundations of an ECVET system which allows dialogue and exchange between VET and qualifications systems, which are quite different from one another both in terms of conceptual and pedagogical organisation. In the interim report from November 2004[6] the main conclusions of the working group were presented and complemented the preliminary report from November 2003.

An ECVET system requires first a basic agreement at European level on its objectives, principles, scope and field of application, as well as on the essential rules and procedures for its implementation. As a result of in-depth investigations, the technical working group on credit transfer in VET[7] has developed proposals for the principles and rules of a European credit transfer system for VET (ECVET), which should ensure its effective implementation within a variety of mobility exchange initiatives, individual or institutional, while involving national authorities, competent bodies and VET providers. These proposals and elements were presented during the ministerial meeting at Maastricht.

In the Maastricht Communiqué (14 December 2004) on the future priorities of enhanced European cooperation in Vocational Education and Training (VET), the Ministers responsible for VET from 32 European countries, the European social partners and the Commission agreed to give priority to "the development and implementation of the European credit transfer system for VET (ECVET) in order to allow learners to build upon the achievements resulting from their learning pathways when moving between learning systems"[8].

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[1] "Education and Training 2010" — The success of the Lisbon Strategy hinges on urgent reform. Joint interim report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the detailed work programme concerning monitoring of the objectives of education and training systems in Europe. 26 February 2004.
[2] Council Resolution of 19 December 2002 on the promotion of enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training; JO C13, p.2-4, 18.1.2003.
[3] Copenhagen Declaration by the Ministers of Vocational Education and Training of the EU Member States, the EFTA/EEA and candidate countries, the Commission and the European Social Partners ;
[4] "Resolution on the promotion […]", page C 13/4.
[5] See list of experts (annex).
[6] "Principles and essential rules for implementation of a European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) ; Interim report of the working group", 23 November 2004.
[7] With contributions from experts and experts bodies contracted by CEDEFP on behalf of the TWG and the European Commission.
[8] The Maastricht Communiqué states that such a system "will be based on competences and learning outcomes, taking account of their definition at national or sectoral levels. It will take into account the experience of the experience of the ECTS in the field of higher education and the

- **CHALLENGES AND ENVIRONMENT**

One of the main challenges to be faced in the design of ECVET is that of the large number and diversity of

– stakeholders and authorities involved in the system
In vocational education and training, a large number of very diverse authorities and competent bodies are involved, be it in the definition of qualifications, the definition of training objectives and of arrangements for assessing and validating outcomes, the establishment of the number and content of the units or modules and the number of credit points, the implementation of training programmes, etc. Accordingly, a wide range of different providers, ministries (of education, employment, agriculture, etc.), agencies, branches of industry, enterprises, social partners, chambers of commerce, et al may be involved. In certain cases, a national authority accredits or authorises training providers or other players to design and award qualifications, credit points, etc. In any event, it is crucial to identify the legitimate authorities.

– qualifications in terms of both levels and specifications
In Europe there are a very large number and very wide variety of qualifications, diplomas, degrees, certificates, distinctions, etc. in vocational education and training. Many countries have systems with levels, and a classification of qualifications, in some cases linked to the organisation of the cycles of education or training, based on the accumulation of credits (with or without credit points). Moreover, depending on the system, qualifications may be obtained following just one type of programme of formal training or several types of programmes or regardless of the learning pathway, be it formal, non-formal or informal.

ECVET must be a European decentralised system based on voluntary participation of Member states and of the respective VET stakeholders according to the national legislation and regulations on assessment, recognition, certification and quality assurance. It is the Member states responsibility to decide on the implementation of ECVET at national level.

ECVET at once requires and promotes transparency of:
- qualifications and learning outcomes which are expected at the end of a VET programme or any type of learning pathway;
- procedures (e.g. quality assurance, assessment or recognition procedures);
- learning processes (e.g. formal, non-formal and informal learning processes and pathways…);
- structures (e.g. organisation of the VET systems, institutional responsibility of the stakeholders/practitioners…).

In comparison with this diversity, the environment for the development of ECVET is becoming quite favourable due to:
– the introduction of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), and especially the EQF reference levels;
– the adoption of common European principles in the area of quality assurance;
– the adoption of common European principles for pinpointing and validating the outcomes of non-formal and informal learning;
– the fact that users are being given access to tools and instruments for ensuring the transparency of qualifications (Europass) and information on training opportunities (Ploteus).

Europass framework. The practical implementation should include the development of voluntary agreements between VET providers throughout Europe. The system will be broad-based and flexible to enable its progressive implementation at the national level, with priority given initially to the formal learning system".

- **TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS**

In technical terms, ECVET is based on the description of qualifications in terms of knowledge, skills and wider competences, organised into <u>units</u> (units that can be transferred and accumulated), and the allocation of <u>credit points</u> to qualifications and units depending on their relative weight. These technical principles are matched by a method of operation (applicable provisions and methodologies) and by the instruments and tools needed for the practical implementation of the system for the benefit of citizens.

The document "technical specifications", should belong to a set of tools which will constitute the support and be useful for the introduction and further development of the ECVET system. Mainly based on the results of the TWG (interim report 2005), it presents a general overview of the system and its components. A test phase should be envisaged for applying, complementing and improving the solutions which are proposed hereunder. During the test phase, the Commission will ensure that this document is enriched and expanded for the purpose of providing a complete handbook for ECVET in 2006.

Contents of the document:
- description of the principal characteristics of ECVET system
- essential rules, conventions and procedures for its implementation
- presentation of the principal tools and instruments which can be used by learners, VET providers, authorities and competent bodies responsible for qualifications and validation of learning outcomes
- glossary
- questions and answers
- list of the ECVET technical working group members

Other instruments which will be added to these technical specifications are:
- A document « ECVET : key features »
- A learner's guide
- A provider's guide
- A « memorandum of understanding » (MoU) pack, containing:
        - an MoU template
        - a summary form, to be used to assemble a description of the relevant learning outcomes as produced from the ECVET tools (units, KSC …)
- A credit Transcript template

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1 - General issues

- ## 1.1 – General definition of a credit system

A credit system makes it possible to divide a qualification into units or into partial objectives the objectives of a programme of vocational and educational training. Each unit is defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences (KSC) and can be characterised by the relative level of the learning outcomes involved, which may be defined by a reference level and by its volume which may be expressed in points or other factors. Each unit may or may not[2] be awarded separately.

- ## 1.2 – PRELIMINARY DEFINITIONS

UNITS - A unit constitutes part of a qualification (certificate, diploma...). It can be the smallest part of the qualification being evaluated, validated and/or certified. A unit can be specific to a single qualification or common to several qualifications.

CREDIT POINTS - Credit points are one of the tools which are designed to facilitate the implementation of ECVET at national and European level. They are used by authorities, VET providers, competent bodies and learners to support arrangements for accumulation of recognition for learning outcomes towards a qualification and for transnational mobility. Credit points are allocated to the qualifications and to the units of which a qualification is made up.

- ## 1.3 – DEFINITION OF ECVET

ECVET is a European system of accumulation (capitalisation) and transfer of credits designed for vocational education and training in Europe. It enables the attesting and recording of the learning achievement/learning outcomes of an individual engaged in a learning pathway leading to a qualification, a vocational diploma or certificate.

It enables the documentation, validation and recognition of achieved learning outcomes acquired abroad, in both formal VET or in non-formal contexts. It is centred on the individual, based on the validation and the accumulation of his/her learning outcomes, defined in terms of the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for achieving a qualification.

ECVET is a system designed to operate at the European level, interfacing with national systems and arrangements for credit accumulation and transfer.

- ## 1.4 - TECHNICAL PRINCIPLES

The European system of credit for VET is intended for individuals who, throughout their learning pathway, want to accumulate the benefit of the KSC they gradually acquire to obtain a qualification, a vocational diploma or certificate and/or to transfer their learning achievements between qualifications, between qualifications systems or between countries, in conformity to the national rules for assessment and examination procedures.

Its implementation is based on:

- progressive validation of the learning outcomes: the KSC acquired (in formal, non-formal contexts) are evaluated and validated. They are attested – where possible - by the progressive delivery of units and allocation of credit points for the respective units according to the performance or progress of the individual's learning.

- accumulation (capitalisation) of units and credit points for the units achieved, once allocated, the units and points are definitively acquired by the individuals[9],

- transfer of the learning outcomes: units and credit points obtained are transferable (for example from one VET provider to another and, where agreed, from one country to another)

- transparency and mutual trust between the partners: the authorities responsible for the qualifications or its implementation and/or the VET providers involved establish memorandum of understanding which sustains trust which is essential for the effective implementation of ECVET.

The technical principles and specifications of the system are defined at the European level. The system is not intended to replace existing national systems for credit accumulation and/or transfer. The decision to implement ECVET, on a voluntary basis, the conditions for application and the necessary legislative and lawful provisions are taken by each country at the relevant institutional level.

It is a system which may operate in, across and between all countries, whether:
- a national system (or several systems) of accumulation and transfer of credit/units for VET and
- a national qualifications framework or any other equivalent system, are existing or not.

An agreement on a European Qualifications Framework and an outcomes based grid of reference levels is regarded as an important instrument for the ECVET-system to become effective[10]. That is why the TWG has taken the initiative to elaborate a first grid of reference levels[11], which has been taken as a basis for the EQF proposal.

- **1.5 – ECVET FUNCTIONS**

The ECVET system comprises two generic functions, which can operate simultaneously or not:

i) - **accumulation and capitalisation function:**

A credit system makes it possible for any person to accumulate, capitalise, transfer and put forward his/her achieved learning outcomes, to claim for their recognition and validation, throughout the individual learning pathway. For this purpose, recognition for the acquired units throughout the learning pathway which are validated, preserved, cumulated and may be

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[9] respecting national rules
[10] See the current consultation process on the EQF proposals made by the EQF expert group and the Commission.
[11] See QCA study on behalf of CEDEFOP on reference levels (in print).

gradually complemented until the qualification (certificate, diploma...) is achieved in conformity with applicable rules and examination procedures in the Member state.

At European level ECVET enables an individual in case of mobility to accumulate his/her learning outcomes achieved abroad.

ii) – **transfer function:**

A credit system makes it possible to establish the comparability and equivalence between learning which may be undertaken in different contexts and at different times. This means for example that training programmes are interchangeable or can replace each other and that validated learning outcomes can exempt a person of whole or part of a training programme and so on.

ECVET enables an individual to carry out learning in various situations and at various times while putting forward his/her achieved learning outcomes by receiving credit, to pass from one training situation to another, where agreed, from one system of VET to another (e.g. from a non formal situation of training to a formal one etc), while transferring and keeping the benefit of his/her achieved learning outcomes for accumulation until the qualification (certificate, diploma…) is achieved, especially in the case of transnational mobility.

- **1.6 – BENEFITS OF CREDIT SYSTEM**

By its methodological logic and its requirements and beyond its direct purposes, any system of accumulation and transfer of credit represents a benefit for individual learners, qualification/certification systems, VET systems and providers, sectors and companies. ECVET promotes and facilitates the development of credit systems at the national level while providing for an added value of a system designed to be implemented and to be developed at the European level.

i) – **For individuals**

A credit system makes it possible for individuals to obtain a vocational diploma or certificate or any award qualification step by step, according to national rules. Thus, individuals (Young learners, adults, job seeker…) can obtain units at the most appropriated rate/rhythm. It improves the accessibility of qualifications and is a factor of motivation and encouragement for individuals to maintain their efforts and to follow and to lead their learning pathway up to the end. It enables them to conceive their individual training project and pathway, and to enrich their professional profile within a lifelong learning perspective.

At the European level, ECVET makes it possible for the individual to fully benefit from periods of transnational mobility.

ii) – **For qualification systems**

A unit based credit system facilitates the legibility and the comparability of knowledge, skills and competences which characterise qualifications. It thus supports in these respects the authorities, institutions and VET providers responsible for the design and implementation of

qualifications, to design, organise and give information about qualifications in the perspective of a better legibility and a greater transparency.

Therefore, a credit system contributes to the improvement of the quality of processes of validation and more especially of validating vocational training. Such a system reinforces the links between the system of qualification and the labour market. It also enables the evaluation and the validation of non-formal learning outcomes.

iii) – **For VET providers**

The implementation of a credit system leads VET providers to define clear and precise learning objectives and, consequently, support them to design a more attractive and relevant VET supply and provision (programmes, contents, organisation...). It supports the adaptation of VET provision to learners following individualised, tailored and flexible pathway (for example organised in training modules) and innovative programmes.

At the European level, ECVET helps VET providers:
  - to communicate about their training supply and provision
  - to co-operate at an international level
  - to manage, to plan and to organise mobility of individual learners
  - to design and to implement the guidance provision for mobile learners

iv) – **For sectors and companies**

A credit system makes vocational training supply and provision more transparent for the economic actors (social partners, firms, branches, sectors...) and facilitates partnerships and interaction. It enables firms to select and design training courses and modules which answer to the training needs of their employees. It facilitates matching between the skill and competence needs of sectors and firms and the design of qualifications or VET provision. It may support the development of adult continuing training, at the level of sectors or firms.

At the European level, ECVET makes vocational training supply and provision in other EU Member States more transparent for employers and companies. It enables them, on the basis of the units and credit points achieved, to understand the learning outcomes obtained in the learning field of other EU Member States.

2 – TECHNICAL PROVISIONS

- **2.1 - UNITS**

At the technical level, ECVET is based:

  - on the division of qualifications into units.
  - on the description of the contents of units (expected learning outcomes) in terms of knowledge, skills and competences (KSC).

The definition and the description of learning outcomes in terms of KSC and the organisation of the unit have to be done at national level by the competent body responsible for the relevant qualification and its implementation.

i) – *Characteristics of units [12]*

A unit is characterised by the description of learning outcomes in terms of:
- knowledge, skills and competences of which the unit is made up
- EQF-level of reference. This level is usually the same as the level of the qualification of which the unit is a component, but this may not always be the case.

The characteristics of a unit are independent of all specific methods of training or learning approaches.

Units can be characterised according to the KSC associated with a whole qualification. It is possible to identify different types of units, for example: transverse or specific, general or specialised, optional or mandatory etc

Units can be interdependent (for example: ordered, hierarchical, progressive) or independent and autonomous.

In addition, units can be specifically related to a period of mobility, e.g. for skills and competence in foreign languages or intercultural competence.

Units must:
- be legible and understandable
- be built up and organised in a coherent way
- allow for evaluation and validation

ii) – *Three main functions of the units*

- Information for stakeholders

A unit carries essential information about the qualification for the individuals as well as for the VET providers, because it presents part of the characteristics of the qualification in terms of knowledge, skills and competences

- Assessment of learning outcomes

A unit describes the expected learning outcomes of whole or part of the learning activities, carried out within a module, training programme etc. It specifies the requirements and the criteria of evaluation.

- Validation of the learning outcomes

When credit for a unit is allocated to an individual, it expresses in a concrete way the validation of acquired knowledge, skills and competences achieved by the learner. It also shows the progression of the individual in his/her learning pathway.

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[12] About definitions, see « operational typology » in « first report of the technical working group ECVET », chart 2, p.10.

iii) – *Components of a unit*

A unit is made up of a coherent set of KSC, in relation to a vocational profile and/or future field of professional activity, and that is the subset of the full package of learning outcomes required for a qualification. KSC corresponding to a unit are expressed in a standard, a catalogue, a reference frame or any other type of document at national level. A set of common principles regarding qualitative and quantitative aspects of unit development is provided at European level by ECVET.

The formulation and the presentation of units can nevertheless vary according to the methods adopted by the competent body responsible for the qualification. They always give a set of information such as:
- the generic title of the unit,
- the EQF level of reference (usually, but not necessarily always the same as that of the qualification),
- the list of KSC concerned,
- the criteria of evaluation, and
- the relative weight of a unit in comparison to a whole qualification.

iv) – *Number and size of the units*

The total number of units composing a qualification and the size of each unit are fixed by the competent body responsible for the qualification (or certificate or diploma).

The number and the format of units depend on the level of complexity, proficiency and the diversity of knowledge, skills and competences required for the qualification concerned.

However :
- too great a number of units, atomising the qualification in a multitude of "micro-units", can only lead to loss of legibility of the system, and
- too small a number of units can inhibit the accumulation of learning outcomes.

So, it is possible to join units in sets of units or to divide units into sub-units.

v) – *Evaluation and validation of the learning outcomes*

Units are validated following the evaluation of the learning outcomes (on the basis of expected achievement of knowledge, skills and competence). The results of evaluation must be in conformity with the requirements of the qualification pursued by the individual, in accordance with the rules and agreed national provisions for the validation of learning outcomes.

An individual obtains credit for KSC corresponding to the validation of one or more units, whatever his/her learning pathway (in a formal or non formal context, during work experience …). An individual might obtain credit for one or more units on the basis of the validation of his/her experiences-based and non formal learning activities.

According to the national legal and technical provisions, each unit, sub-unit or set of units may be assessed, validated and certified individually.

In the case of mobility, these rules and provisions are specifically mentioned in the memorandum of understanding agreed between the relevant authorities, institutions or VET providers.

vi) – *Accumulation (Capitalisation) of credit for units*

Units are awarded whatever the learning modes because:

- The same learning outcomes may be achieved through different programmes, modules …, with different duration and different modes of delivery
- The same learning outcomes may be achieved through non-formal learning (programmes, modules or units outside the formal education and training system)
- The same learning outcomes may be achieved through informal learning (self-study, learning on the job, learning from life experience).
- Typical programmes may be followed by all types of learners (part-time, slow-track or fast-track).

As units are achieved by individuals, credit for the units achieved is recorded, held and capitalised and accumulated towards the award of the relevant qualification.

Provisions are specified to establish the period of validity of awarded units which a person can use credit allocated to contribute to the requirements for a whole (where possible) or partial qualification. These provisions are determined by the competent body responsible for the qualification or its implementation.

Example:

> All useful informations about units

Qualification and units

- Qualification: Vocational qualification in Hotel and Restaurant service
- Occupational field : Hôtel and catering

Level		Units	Title/Description[13]	Charactéristiics[14]		
EQF	Nal	7 units				
3	Upper secondary	Qualification	Restaurant cook	Nature	Validity	
3		Unit 1	Basic hotel and restaurant service	Compulsory	5 years	
3		- Sub unit	Hotel service	Compulsory	5 years	
3		- Sub unit	Restaurant service	Compulsory	5 years	
2		Unit 2	Restaurant kitchen functions	Compulsory	5 years	
3		Unit 3	Preparation of restaurant dishes	Compulsory	5 years	
3		Unit 4	Staff restaurant services	Optional	5 years	
3		Unit 5	Native language	Optional	3 years	
3		Unit 6	Physics and chemistry	Compulsory	5 years	
3		Unit 7	Foreign language	Compulsory	3 years	

vii) – *Transfer of credit for units*

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[13] Here, there is only the title of the units. The complete description of the qualification and of the units (in terms of KSC) is available in a specific document (see above § iii).

[14] Characteristics which are presented in this table are only notional examples.

Transferring credit for units enables the learner to keep the benefit of credit allocated for the achievement of units (after assessment of learning outcomes achieved in formal, non formal or informal context) while changing his/her learning pathway, his/her vocational specialisation in accordance with the rules provisions of the national system.

The transfer of credit for units can occur when individual learning pathways comprise periods of mobility, within or between different VET systems. The units for which credit is transferred are expressed in the "memorandum of understanding".

viii) – *Units and formal VET provision*

A VET provider may design training programmes and studies corresponding to KSC required for a whole qualification and for each unit. For this purpose, a VET provider may take into account all of the relevant parameters such as content (or programme), pre-attainment, prior requirement, duration, rate/rhythm, alternation, individual workload envisaged...

The learning outcomes of a learner in non-formal learning can be compared with the expected outcomes (KSC) of a unit of a certain qualification in formal learning and so the KSC achieved in non-formal learning can be accepted for allocation of credit.

Thus, the course and studies can be organised in modules and, if necessary, be individualised.

- **2.2 - CREDIT POINTS (CREDITS)**

i) - Convention at European level:

A qualification and each unit are represented by a specific number of credit points. Credit points supplement the units (or sub-units). They express the volume of learning outcomes involved in each unit and also give information on the relative weight of the units which make up a qualification.

Example :

Qualification/units	Credit points
Qualification	80 points
Unit 1	40 points
Unit 2	20 points
Unit 3	15 points
Unit 4	5 points

Credit points, like credit for units, are awarded whatever the learning modes[15]. They are awarded:
- at the same time as the units or sub-units;

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[15] See § 2.1 vi) "Accumulation-capitalisation of units".

- if necessary, after assessment of learning outcomes which are part of a unit.

The variations have no influence on either the characteristics of the qualification and units or on the credit-value of the qualification and of the units.

ii) – Credit points and EQF-levels:

Credit points are characterised by an EQF-level.

Example:

EQF levels	Credit points level
4	Points L 4
3	Points L 3
2	Points L 2
1	Points L 1

It is a matter of principle that credit points may be transferred, within certain limits as defined by national systems, between qualifications at different levels. Thus, the credit points allocated to a qualification may comprise a certain number of points from different levels.[16]

iii) - Methods for allocating credit points to qualifications and units[17]

At national level, several methods are possible for determining the number of credit points to be allocated to a qualification and to units[18]. For example, the number of credit points allocated to a qualification and units can be determined on the base of the following criteria:
- o The contents of a qualification in terms of range and/or volume of knowledge, skills and wider competences to be acquired.
- o With reference to a notional average length of programme leading to such a qualification
- o By the amount of notional learning activities and workload necessary for a learner to attain the set of learning outcomes corresponding to a part or whole qualification, (e.g. regarding a typical training programme or a training programme of reference[19]).

The competent bodies, at relevant institutional level (at national level and, if appropriate, at international level) fix the number of credit points to be allocated to a qualification and to units. The national qualification framework can include rules about credits.

Supplementary information can be provided about the volume of the learning activities associated with one or more typical learning pathways leading to the concerned qualification..

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[16] The competent body, responsible of the qualification, fixes the EQF-level of the qualification regarding criteria and descriptors contained in the EQF specifications.
[17] This chapter should be completed by a compendium of useful methodologies.
[18] There is a need for a very open system in terms of possible methods.
[19] A convention adopted for ECVET at European level, could be that a full-time learner can obtain 60 to 80 credit points on average at the end of a one year typical formal learning pathway or formal learning pathway of reference. See § 2.3 "Memorandum of understanding".

iv) - *Accumulation of the credit points and recognition.*

Credit points represent the volume of learning outcomes achieved by the individual. They are:
- acquired by the individual at the same time as the units, sub-units and, if necessary, part of a unit are achieved[20];
- accumulated within the learning pathway;
- used to indicate progress of the learners,
- used to indicate completion of an individual learning pathway leading to a qualification.

Credit points may be used to allow a learner:
- to move from one qualification to another within the same EQF level;
- to move from one level of qualification to another;
- to move from a learning system to another.

Credit points are not recognised automatically. Recognition is a decision taken at national level by the competent bodies responsible of the qualification or of its implementation (training institutions, employers, ministries, social partners, professional organisations, chambers of commerce...).

But, credit points linked to the EQF-levels might increase the predictability of recognition decisions. They might facilitate the conclusion of individual learning agreements and collective recognition conventions at sectoral, regional, national or European level. These recognition conventions are part of the memorandum of understanding[21] and/or of the individual ECVET learning agreement[22].

v) – *Examples for implementation*

The following examples are intended to illustrate the technical specifications. They do not correspond to real existing cases.

- **At national level:**

1- For a given qualification (or a set of units), at a given reference level, the competent body responsible for the qualification or its implementation allocates a number of credit points to this qualification.

Example 1:
- qualification: builder
- EQF level of the qualification: level 3
- number of credit points: 95 credit points at level 3.

Example 2:
- qualification: electrical technician
- EQF level of the qualification: level 4
- number of credit points: 120 credit points at level 4.

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[20] See § 2-1 "units"
[21] See § 2-3 "memorandum of understanding"
[22] See § 4 "Mobility and European credit for VET"

2- The competent body responsible for the qualification or its implementation allocates the ECVET credit points to each unit according to the relative volume, weight and level of knowledge, skills and competences to be acquired.

3- Some of the units can be at a level which is different to the level at which the qualification is awarded. The corresponding credit points have the same level as these units.

Example 1:

- qualification: builder
- EQF level of the qualification: EQF level 3
- number of credit points: 95 credit points at EQF level 3.
- number of units: 7, with one at EQF level 2.

Qualification	Credit points
Builder	**95 L 3**
Units	
U 1	30 points L 3
U 2	25 points L 3
U 3	15 points L 3
U 4	8 points L 2
U 5	8 points L 3
U 6	5 points L 3
U 7	4 points L 3

Example 2:

- qualification: electrical technician
- EQF level of the qualification: EQF level 4
- number of credit points: 120 credit points at EQF level 4.
- number of units: 9, with two at EQF level 3 and two optional.

Qualification	Credit points
Electrical technician	**120 L 4**
Units	
U 1	30 points L 4
U 2	25 points L 4
U 3	18 points L 4
U 4	12 points L 3
U 5	10 points L 4
U 6	8 points L 3
U 7	6 points L 4
U 8	5 points L 4
U 9 (optional)	3 points L 4
U 9 (optional)	3 points L 4

Example 3:

One can present in a summary table the whole of the data concerning a qualification and the units which constitute it. For a qualification at level 3, and which comprises 7 units, with:
- a unit with two sub-units
- a unit at EQF level 2
- two optional units.

Qualification and units					Credit points	
- Title of the qualification : Vocational qualification in Hotel and Restaurant service - Occupational field: Hôtel and catering						
Level		Units	Title/Description[23]	Charactéristics		Number	EQF Level
EQF level	Nal				APL[24]		
3	Upper secondary	Qualification	Restaurant cook		x	120	3
3		Unit 1	Basic hotel and restaurant service	Compulsory	x	35	3
3		- Sub unit	Hotel service	Compulsory	x	20	3
3		- Sub unit	Restaurant service	Compulsory	x	15	3
2		Unit 2	Restaurant kitchen functions	Compulsory	x	30	2
3		Unit 3	Preparation of restaurant dishes	Compulsory	x	20	3
3		Unit 4	Staff restaurant services	Optional	x	20	3
3		Unit 5	Native language	Optional	x	20	3
3		Unit 6	Physics and chemistry	Compulsory		8	3
3		Unit 7	Foreign language	Compulsory	x	7	3

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[23] Only the heading appears here. The description of the qualification and the units in terms of knowledge, skills/know-how and wider competences is contained in a specific document.

[24] APL: accreditation of prior learning. This is only an example of possible supplement characteristics to be mentioned.

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- **2.3 – THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

The ECVET system provides users with a range of tools that can be used as required to identify the nature and quantity of any particular package of learning outcomes (i.e. the knowledge, skill and wider competences associated with a learning experience), thus establishing a 'credit value' for those learning outcomes. The tools are intended to be used in the context of a 'Memorandum of Understanding':
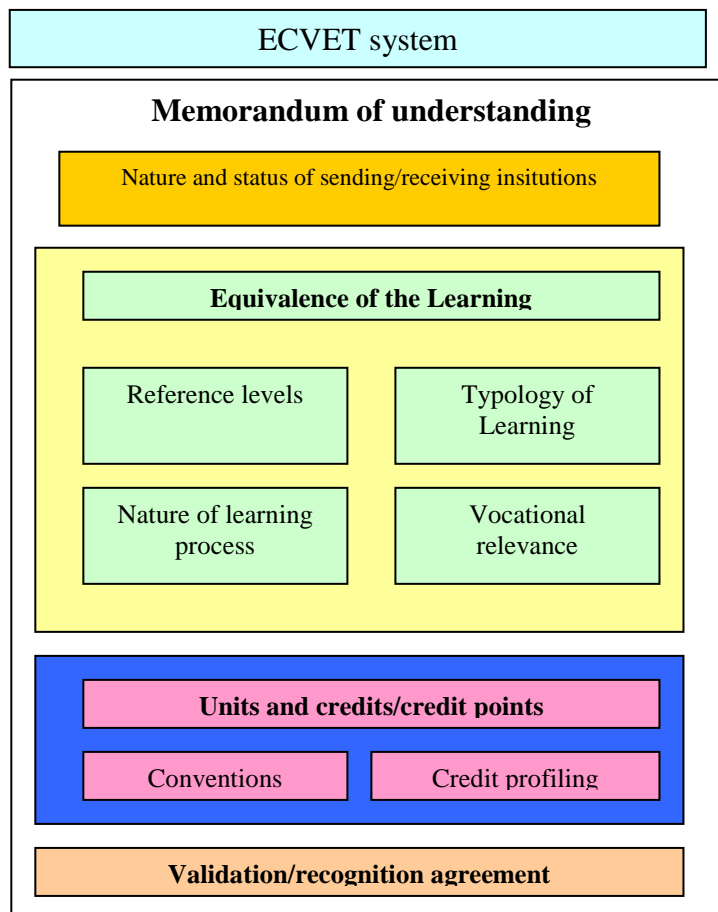
The **memorandum of understanding** is a key device which creates the climate of trust in which credit transfer can operate. The Memorandum is a document drawn up in accordance with ECVET rules by partner organisations. It provides information about:

- The **nature of the sending and receiving institutions** on either side of the transfer arrangement – each needs to be able to trust the other in relation to competence to make or give awards at the appropriate level, to assign or allocate credit. This need may be met through the quality assurance framework, or it may operate through a specialised process

- The **equivalence of the learning** involved on either side of the transfer arrangement. For this, a number of tools have been developed which are designed to define or identify the nature of the learning:

   o **Reference levels**, establishing the relative level at which the learning outcomes, for which units and credit is to be given, are placed

- o The **units** and the **typology of learning** (defined in terms of knowledge, skills and wider competences), enabling both partners to identify the relevance of the learning to the award or qualification involved on either side of the agreement

- o The **nature of the learning process** involved – i.e. the proportion of non-formal / formal learning (density) or the proportion of theory / practice (mode)

- o The **vocational relevance** or occupational profile associated with the learning outcomes involved.

- The **validation (and recognition** if appropriate) **agreement**. The partners describe what procedures and processes are followed to ensure fair validation and recognition (units and credits) and equal treatment.

- The **quantification of the credit** allocation, on the basis of the European **conventions** (so that varying local, national or sectoral credit arrangements can be 'converted' into ECVET credits). It is also facilitated by a **credit profiling tool**.

- The **volume of the learning activities**, regarding one or several formal learning pathway of reference (typical formal learning pathway) and the number of credits to be obtained[25].

3 – CREDIT PROFILING

The real distribution of credit points associated with a qualification can be interpreted with the assistance of a "credit profiling" tool developed for ECVET. This involves the analysis by EQF level of the learning outcomes associated with each unit of the qualification and the notional attribution of the units to levels as appropriate. The resulting credit distribution can be illustrated in a simple diagram. This tool provides a method for the interpretation of the distribution of credit points in a given qualifications system. It is not intended to provide a common standard for content of units and linked credit points.

Details of the operation of Credit profiling are provided at appendix XX *(to be completed)*.

4 – MOBILITY AND EUROPEAN CREDIT FOR VET

- **4.1 The role of the VET providers, institutions, competent bodies … in the implementation of ECVET: the information package** *(annex 1)*

The information package of the institution or VET provider which is involved in ECVET contains the main information about units and credits, qualifications, degrees or objectives of a training programme. It also gives information about corresponding training offers.

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[25] Such a formal training pathway (or typical programme) includes all the activities which is expected that the learner will undertake in order to achieve the learning outcomes, including for example, as appropriate:
- Classes, training sessions, coaching, seminars, tutorials …
- Private study and research
- relevant IT activities
- training in companies
- assessment, evaluation and validation acitivities
- practical work in laboratories or other locations

The information package is published in two languages on web site and/or in hard copy in one or more booklets. It must contain the items of the checklist attached to this document, including information for host trainees from abroad.

- **4.2 The individual ECVET learning agreement**

In the case of a training pathway comprising a transfer of units and credits, the learning agreement is drawn up jointly by the sending and receiving institutions. The learning agreement must be agreed by the mobile learner. It contains the list of units and credits covered during the mobility period and the corresponding modules and courses to be proposed to the learner. These modules and these courses are regarded as forming an integral part of the programme envisaged by the sending establishment, even if they are presented differently.

The learning agreement is written in the languages of the sending and receiving countries. It is established before the learner's departure and must be updated immediately when changes in organisation and contents of modules or courses occur.

- **4.3 The transcript of records**

This transcript documents the learner's results in terms of acquired units (or not acquired), of ECVET credits gained and, if any, the local or national credits and grades. It also shows the list of modules or courses taken In the case of unit and credit transfer, the transcript of records has to be issued by the home institution for an outgoing learner before departure and by the host institution for an incoming learner at the end of mobility training period.

The transcript of records is written in the languages of the sending and receiving countries. It is a private document. It is used for mobility of the mobile learners in accordance with the rules of protection of personal data.

5 –ECVET LABEL[26]

- **5.1 Why an ECVET label?**

An ECVET label will be awarded at European level to institutions and VET providers which apply principles and rules of ECVET correctly and completely and the terms of reference of the ECVET label.
The ECVET label will give to VET users a quality guarantee regarding principles and rules of ECVET. It will raise the fame of the provider as a transparent and reliable partner in European and international cooperation.

- **5.2 How to obtain the ECVET label?**

The criteria for the label are:
- The design of the qualifications or objectives of training in units
- A training supply enabling the achievement of units.
- A complete information package
- Samples of learning agreements, transcripts of records
- Use of ECVET units and credits

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[26] The working group gave an agreement for ECVET label principle. But a complementary work is necessary.

▪ Proof of recognition of abroad learning outcomes.

- **5.3 Procedures for ECVET label.**

To be completed by TWG

6 – NATIONAL CONTACTS FOR ECVET AND EXPERIMENTATION/ TEST NETWORK

To be constituted by TWG

7 – THE EUROPEAN ECVET DATABASE FOR USERS

To be designed by TWG