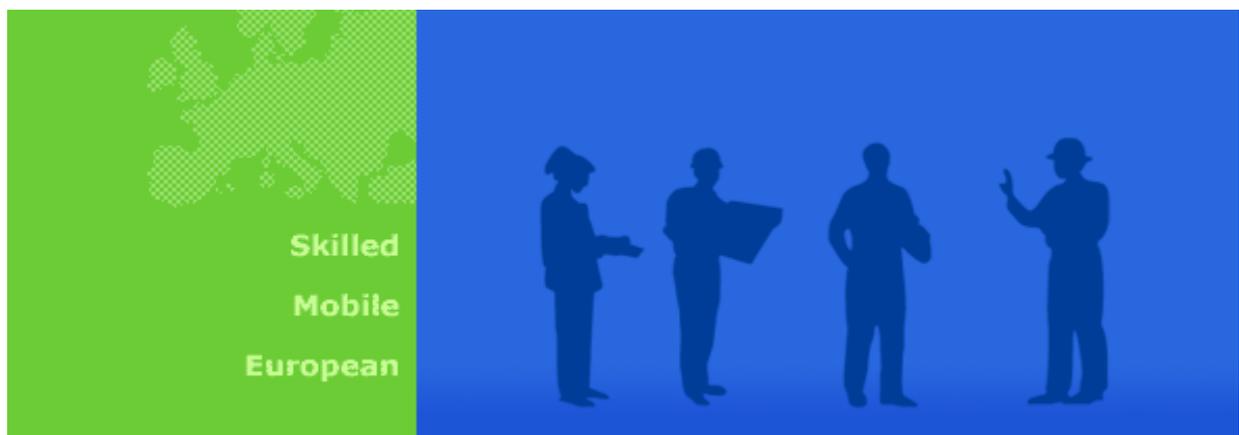




SME Master

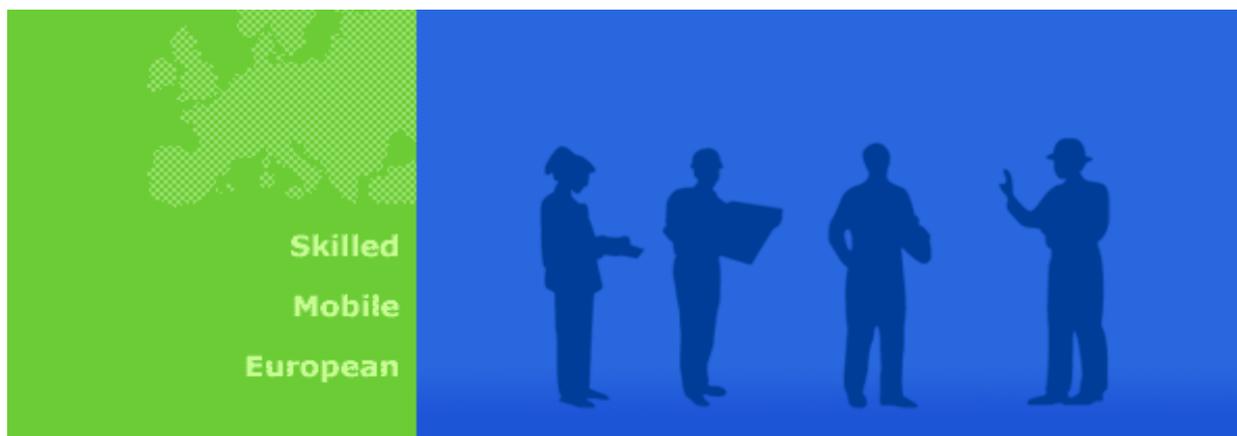
Skilled • Mobile • European

Project involving the practical application of ECVET to the baker master craftsperson qualification



Steering group members

- **Assemblée Permanente des Chambres de Métiers (APCM)** –
Permanent Assembly of Crafts Chambers, France
- **Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft (ibw)** –
Institute for Research on Qualifications and Training of the
Austrian Economy, Austria
- **Mesterbrevnemnda** –
Master Craftsman Certificate Committee, Norway
- **Zentralverband des Deutschen Handwerks (ZDH)** –
German Confederation of Skilled Crafts, Germany



Expert and policy partners

- **Wirtschaftskammer Österreich (WKÖ) –**
Federal Economic Chamber, Austria
- **Wirtschaftskammer Niederösterreich –**
Economic Chamber of Lower Austria, Austria
- **Chambre de métiers et de l'artisanat du Rhône (Lyon) –**
Lyon Chamber of Crafts and Trades, France
- **Fédération nationale de la Coiffure française –**
French National Hairdressers' Federation, France
- **Kjøttindustriens Fellesforening –**
Federation of the Norwegian meat industry (member of the Confederation of the Norwegian business and industry).
- **Folkeuniversitetet –**
Adult Education Association
- **Handwerkskammer Cottbus –**
Cottbus Chamber of Skilled Crafts, Germany
- **Städtische Berufsschule für das Bäcker- und Konditorenhandwerk München –**
Vocational College for the Trades of Bakers and Pastry-cooks
Munich, Germany

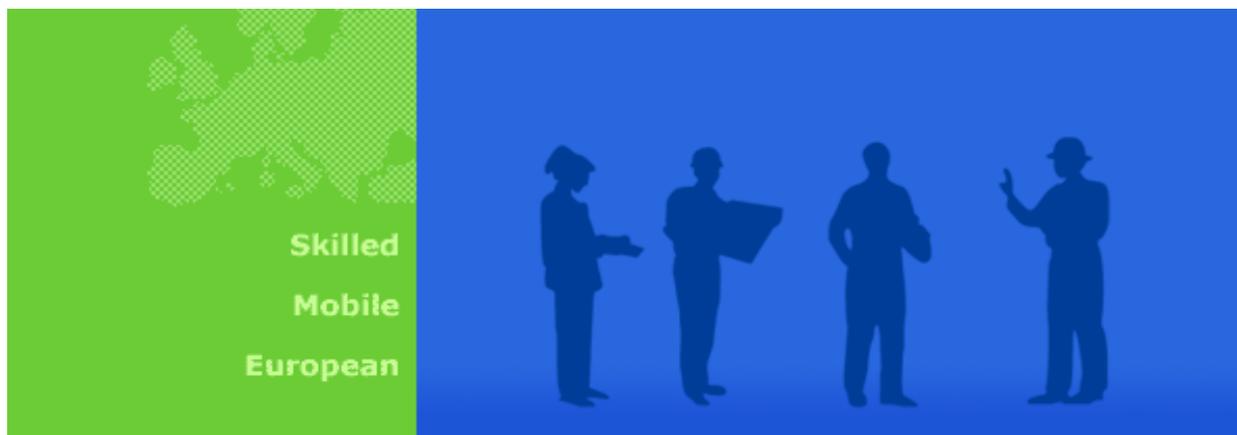
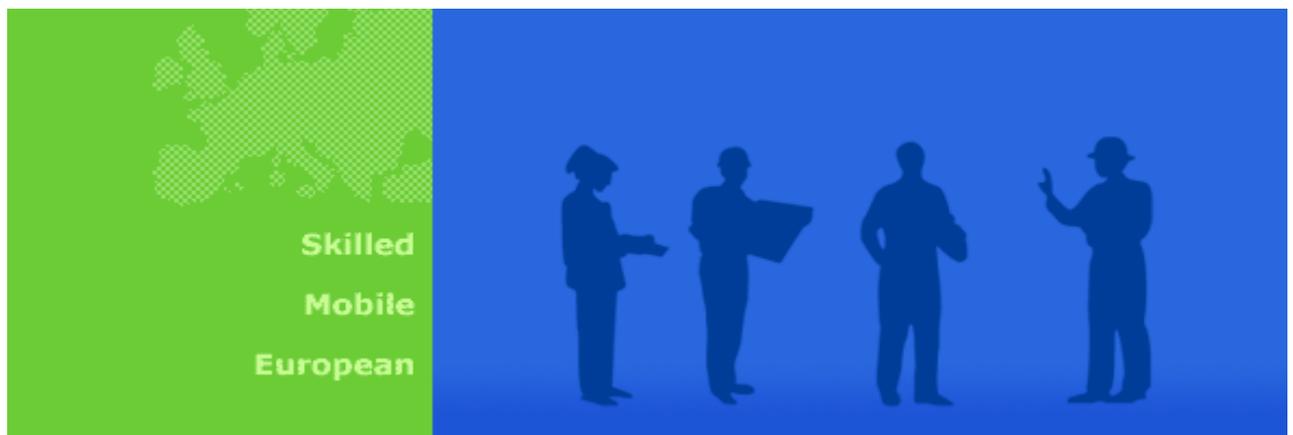


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"Master Baker"



1. Starting point

The creation of a common European learning and working area is one of the key elements of the EU's Lisbon Strategy, the medium-term aim of which is to elevate Europe to the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economic area of the world.

Mutual recognition of qualifications is nonetheless often impaired by national restrictions. The reason for this is a lack of transparency among the various qualifications systems and vocational education and training (VET) programmes within Europe.

The European Union has in recent years been working on relevant information instruments, such as the EUROPASS, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), to be tested in various pilot projects. The aim is to provide suggestions for improvement, test the feasibility and practicability of these instruments and finally foster cross-border mobility of trainees and employees within the European single market.

2. Project objectives and target groups

The **Skilled-Mobile-European-MASTER** (SME Master) project focuses on cross-border mobility in the context of master craftsperson programmes in trade / small and medium-sized enterprises.

Within SME Master, the aim of the transfer of ECVET to the master baker craftsperson qualification is to develop a transparency instrument which should

- facilitate mutual recognition of individually acquired learning achievements,
- create the basis for transnational mobility measures in the context of master craftsperson training programmes and help to increase the learner's mobility rate,
- strengthen cooperation between the relevant players on the basis of mutual trust,
- and thus contribute to the concept of life-long learning.

Primary target groups of SME Master are, on the one hand, authorities responsible for awarding master craftsperson qualifications and, on the other hand, providers of master craftsperson training programmes, e.g. master craftsperson training institutions.

By means of a learning outcome matrix (see 4.5), the aim is to identify competence areas that lend themselves to cross-border mobility measures in the context of the master craftsperson training programme. This way, the mobility rate in the area of continuing vocational education and training (CVET) will not only be increased, but a significant contribution will also be made to the internationalisation of the master craftsperson qualification.

While in this case ECVET was put to the test using the master baker qualification, the model itself can be transferred to other qualifications. Other professional representations or trade federations can thus also adapt the method to qualifications in their respective fields.

SME Master is furthermore of benefit to:

- master craftsperson trainees who wish to complete individual training segments abroad,
- SMEs and trade establishments, which require internationally trained management personnel.

3. What is ECVET?

The ECVET credit system aims to facilitate the appraisal and recognition of VET segments completed in other European countries. The aim is for trainees to be able – throughout Europe – to have their learning outcomes which they obtained both documented and recognised.

In summary, the objective of ECVET is to develop an EU-wide valid information system which

- allows more transparency and makes transferability of learning outcomes easier,
- takes into account knowledge, skills and competences acquired in non-formal and informal learning contexts,
- fosters cooperation between the various training providers within Europe,
- is used on a voluntary basis and based on mutual trust,
- encourages cross-border mobility between qualifications systems,
- and thus contributes towards the concept of lifelong learning.

In simplified terms, ECVET can be compared to a toolbox, valid throughout the EU, that provides institutions responsible for VET (initial and continuous vocational education and training) with the corresponding tools for the mutual recognition of learning achievements.

ECVET is based on a learning outcome centred approach. Learning outcomes are assigned to units, to which ECVET credit points are allocated. By binding rules and on the basis of mutual trust, partnership agreements known as memorandums of understanding and individual learning agreements state that the learning outcomes assessed by the hosting organisation are recognised by the sending organisation. The objective is to create a voluntary and decentralised system which equally takes into account national regulations for the appraisal, recognition and certification of learning achievements.

The key elements of ECVET are as follows:

- learning outcomes,
- units of learning outcomes,
- ECVET credit points,
- Partnership agreements between two (or several) organisations (memorandums of understanding) and individual learning agreements.

3.1 What are learning outcomes?

Learning outcomes are statements that define what a trainee knows and is able to do at the end of a learning period. They are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences:

- knowledge refers to theory and/or factual knowledge.
- skills cover cognitive skills (use of logical, intuitive and creative thought) and practical skills (skilfulness and use of methods, materials, tools and machines, etc.).
- competences are defined in the sense of assuming responsibility and displaying initiative.

In simplified terms, the emphasis is no longer on the learning site (i.e. school, university, company) nor on the length of the learning period, but on what learners are capable upon completion of a learning phase.

3.2 What are units of learning outcomes?

Units are meaningful sets of knowledge, skills and competences which make up a coherent part of a full qualification (e.g. master craftsperson qualification). Such units should be able to be separately assessed, transferred as well as – pursuant to national legislation – certified.

3.3 What are ECVET credit points?

ECVET credit points provide additional information in numerical form on the relative weight of a unit in relation to a full qualification.

In accordance with the ECVET concept of the European Commission, 60 credit points correspond to a one-year learning phase in a formal learning context. It is thus in line with the ECTS of higher education, at least in relation to the total number of points.

Non-formally or informally acquired competences are also taken into account in the context of ECVET and validated in comparison with formal qualifications.

3.4 What are partnership agreements?

ECVET is based on an agreement between two or several organisations, namely authorities responsible for VET programmes in their respective home country. Partnership agreements aim to regulate the manner in which learning outcomes, which are assessed by the hosting organisation, are recognised by the sending organisation.

4. The SME Master method

4.1 Introduction

SME Master provides a learning outcome oriented description of the master craftsperson qualification in baker's trade. It records the entire range of knowledge, skills and competences that a trainee has acquired upon completion of his or her training as a master baker.

The learning outcome oriented description of the master craftsperson qualification cannot be equated with the curriculum of a master craftsperson training programme, since the latter incorporates learning contents and learning period but not the acquired decision-making skills and sense of responsibility. In addition, the qualification profile of the master baker also includes competences or learning outcomes that were acquired in initial vocational education and training and as a direct result of the working process, and are thus equally recognised and recorded.

The methodical basis underlying SME Master is the learning outcome matrix (see 4.5) which displays all learning outcomes acquired upon completion of the master craftsperson training programmes of the four partner countries. In terms of methodology, SME Master thus bases itself on the VQTS-model, which provides a structured description of work-related competences in the field of mechatronics by means of a competence matrix.

Key elements of the learning outcome matrix are:

- units of learning outcomes,
- learning outcomes and steps of learning outcomes,
- ECVET credit points.

Within the learning outcome matrix, learning outcomes are allocated to particular units and – when appropriate – represented in steps of learning outcomes that build on one another. In the context of competence development, the intermediate steps are thus represented in a concise and understandable manner (see 4.3). This aims to facilitate recognition of already acquired learning achievements.

Finally, ECVET credit points provide additional information in numerical form on the relative weight of a unit in relation to the full master craftsperson qualification. They should always be interpreted in connection with the unit they refer to as well as in connection to the full qualification. They are allocated individually by the project partners (see 4.4).

4.2 Establishment of units

Starting point

Due to the diversity of the European VET landscape, the structure of the master craftsperson training in the four SME Master partner countries can appear very different at first glance.

That said, it proved an advantage that the job specification of master craftsperson is quite similar in all four partner countries: an entrepreneurial qualification for SMEs, combining commercial and personnel management skills as well as technical and vocationally-specific know-how.

Correspondingly, despite all differences, several overlaps can be identified with regard to the structure and contents of master craftsperson training. In addition to a vocationally-specific area (identical for all the master craftsperson training programmes of a country), in which particular emphasis is placed on imparting business administration as well as teaching and training skills, the training involves a

technical area in which the trade-specific competences of a vocation or a sector are imparted.

Identification of units

A unit comprises various learning outcomes which are required for the implementation of core work tasks in a particular area of activity of the master craftsperson. The size of a unit in turn depends on the complexity of the area of activity.

In a first step two major areas of activity – “management” and “technology” – could be identified which were then subdivided into several units. Following a further differentiation, those ten units listed below were established corresponding to the essential areas of activities of the master craftsperson:

- **Accounting and Controlling**
- **Budgeting and Calculation**
- **Entrepreneurship and Financial Management for SME**
- **Human Resources Management**
- **Tutoring**
- **Marketing and Sales Management for SME**
- **Production of Bakery Products**
- **Food Safety and Hygiene**
- **Quality and Security Management**
- **Vocationally-specific Business Administration**

These ten units form the vertical axis of the learning outcome matrix (see 6).

Difference between unit and course subject

As can easily be recognised, the above-listed units correspond only in a very limited way to the subjects or learning modules that make up the study curriculum at master craftsperson institutions.

Example:

In some of the partner countries the competence area “Law” is granted a self-contained course subject or learning module as part of the curriculum. SME Master, on the other hand, does not foresee a corresponding learning unit. The explanation for this lies in the fact that the various legal forms and fields treated in the preparatory courses leading up to the master craftsperson examination deal exclusively with knowledge, not with learning outcomes in the stricter sense. For this reason, legal knowledge has been allocated to the relevant units (e.g. labour law knowledge is incorporated in learning unit 4 entitled “HR Management”).

Nonetheless, the learning outcome matrix can in no way replace national curricula, nor does it claim to do so. The aim is to create a working process based representation of qualifications that are acquired upon completion of the master craftsperson training rather than an output-centred description of course subjects and learning contents, which are essential for the appropriate conveying of competences. It therefore had to be ensured that only those competences that are an actual part of the daily working life of the master baker were incorporated into the learning outcome matrix.

Conclusion and outlook

It must be pointed out that the above list of units represents the current status quo of the master craftsperson qualification in the SME Master partner countries. In order to take into account future developments of the master craftsperson qualification profile and to remain open to other countries, this list must be seen in a flexible light. This means that the learning outcome matrix can, as a matter of principle, be extended by adding new units. The existing units must be regularly reviewed and, if necessary, amended or removed altogether.

4.3 Formulation of learning outcomes and steps of learning outcomes

Representation of learning outcomes

As mentioned in the introduction, learning outcomes are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences. Thus they make up a coherent part of the master craftsperson qualification. As such, a learning outcome displays a core working task of the master craftsperson.

With reference to the representation of the learning outcomes, it was decided to abstain from differentiating them into knowledge, skills and competences. While this form of representation would correspond to the ECVET recommendation of the European Commission, learning outcomes should – following the agreement of the SME Master partners – reflect professional capacities in a comprehensive and transparent manner. A further division of the learning outcomes would have been contrary to both these claims.

Accordingly, learning outcomes have been integrally represented in close relation to the working process. It was important to show how learning outcomes can be concretely applied in a working context. This explains the continuous use throughout the description of the learning outcome of “S/he is able to...”.

Example:

S/he is able to use and maintain vocationally-specific machines, tools and materials.

Development and function of steps of learning outcomes

Learning outcomes have been represented on the horizontal axis of the learning outcome matrix in form of successive steps of learning outcomes in order to illustrate the competence development within certain core activities. Since the number of steps depends on the nature of the learning outcome itself, it was not possible to establish a consistent number of steps of learning outcomes. The number therefore ranges from one step (i.e. representation of the complete learning outcome) to a maximum of three steps.

The progressive representation of learning outcomes is thus the dynamic element of the learning outcome matrix and serves the purpose of enhancing learner's mobility. This provides a learner who wishes to continue an already started master craftsperson training abroad, with the opportunity to reproduce his or her personal "performance level". This way, unnecessary redundancies can be bypassed for the individual learning path.

Conclusion

Initially, the description of learning outcomes and steps of learning outcomes proved difficult since the description of master craftsperson qualification in the partner countries is largely input-centred, i.e. it is based on the structural specifications of the curricula (learning contents and duration). The learning outcome oriented approach is comparatively new and required all partners to perform a paradigm shift. There is also no uniform approach for the description of learning outcomes and the representation of competence development.

Difficulties also arose in terms of the volume allocated to the description of learning outcomes. The learning outcomes could not be described in a too detailed, nor in a too general way in order to remain comprehensible to users. For this reason, not every specific detail of the master craftsperson qualification could have been taken into account. Consequently, in the eyes of the expert, some learning outcome may have been written too succinctly. As a result, attention must once again be drawn to the model character of SME Master.

Similarly to the VQTS-model, this type of description must be viewed as an attempt "to bridge the terminological and ideological gap between the world of education and the world of work"¹.

¹ See K. Luomi-Messerer, J. Markowitsch, VQTS model, Vienna 2006, 17.

4.4 Allocation of ECVET credit points

Starting position

The allocation of points to the various units was the responsibility of the each partner country and therefore undertaken separately. Nonetheless, certain framework conditions were laid down to ensure that consistent and binding standards were adhered to.

With regard to the allocation of ECVET credit points to units, the recommendation of the EU Commission proposes a convention of 60 credit points which corresponds to an individual learning achievement within a one-year formal learning context. The SME Master partners decided to follow this recommendation.

On the one hand, the allocation of credit points highlights interesting differences concerning the varied emphasis placed on the various master craftsperson training programmes. On the other hand, the number of points provides certain additional information about the relative weight of a unit within the full master craftsperson qualification.

Establishing an overall points total

In a first step, a total number of points was determined for the master craftsperson qualification. Initially, this was the responsibility of each partner.

The establishment of the points total was based exclusively on the competence acquisition linked to the master craftsperson qualification. Only secondary importance was placed on the duration of learning (input criterion), despite the 60-point convention is based on a timeframe of one year and the time factor obviously is representing some kind of objective criterion.

It must be acknowledged that the establishment of an overall points total for the master craftsperson qualification was carried out at the discretion of the experts, even though this is a subjective criterion. Following an extensive consultation process, the agreement was reached between three SME Master partners to establish a points total of 180 for master craftsperson qualification which consequently corresponds to three years in a formal leaning context. This does not mean that the master craftsperson training in the corresponding countries lasts three years according to the curricula. In addition to the regular time provisions of the formal master craftsperson training, non-formally and informally acquired learning achievements have also been incorporated; i.e. an average “learning time” has been acknowledged for competences acquired in a non-formal or informal manner.

The number of 180 credit points is thus based on the agreement of three partner countries. It must be pointed out that the French partner – due to its master craftsman training currently is undergoing reform – was unable to take part in this process. In order to achieve a conclusive transparency, it is therefore necessary to continue to develop and test the SME Master model.

Allocating points to units

In a second step points were allocated to the several units. Here too the expert opinion was decisive in the end. The aim was to determine what relative weight was to be granted to a unit in relation to the full qualification. As with the allocation of the overall points total, the time factor could not be the decisive assessment criterion. Rather, the importance that each unit assumes within the master craftsman qualification profile had to be taken into account; i.e. the value a particular activity area has within the “day-to-day business” of a master craftsman.

A second vertical axis on the learning outcome matrix represents the number of points, together with a country code.

Conclusion

It was not possible to conclusively determine whether the exclusive allocation of credit points to units does indeed increase the transparency of the corresponding unit in international comparison. The reason for this is above all the high number of learning outcomes within certain units (e.g. unit 7 “Manufacturing of bakery products”). The allocation of points to the entire unit does not reveal to what expert level the various competences have been acquired and how they relate to one another.

Example:

The manufacturing of pastry (learning unit 7) has a greater significance in the Austrian baker's trade than it has in Norway. It is therefore taught in a more comprehensive way in Austria. This means that this competence is “better” mastered by Austrian bakers, something that is not obvious from the points allocated to the whole unit.

There are basically two options to solve the above:

- on the one hand, to further break down some units, which would however impair the transparency of the learning outcome matrix and also contradict the definition of units as “meaningful sets of knowledge, skills and competences”,
- on the other hand, to allocate points directly to learning outcomes.

Concrete exchanges would be required to clarify which of these two options would lead to a satisfactory result.

In addition, ways must be found to take into account non-formally and informally acquired competences appropriately. Due to the short duration of the project, SME Master was unable to provide sufficient answers for this.

4.5 Learning outcome matrix

Development of a learning outcome oriented core qualification profile

The learning outcome matrix was established in two steps: firstly, learning outcomes were formulated for the "management area" and subsequently for the "vocationally-specific area". The first matrix – entitled "management matrix" – comprised units one to six. The second matrix – entitled "technical matrix" – contained units seven to ten. At the end of the process, both matrices were combined to one qualification profile.

Essentially, the learning outcome matrix represents those learning outcomes featured in the master craftsperson qualification of all SME Master partner countries. Specific competences of individual qualification profiles (e.g. foreign language skills in France) remained unconsidered. The result is thus a learning outcome oriented representation of the "smallest common denominator", i.e. of a "core qualification profile" of the master baker.

This does not, however, present any restrictions in the fostering of mobility in the area of master craftsperson training, since national features are, on the one hand, not part of the actual core qualification of the master craftsperson (rather, they are soft skills) and, on the other hand, enforced only when a master craftsperson trainee also wants to sit his or her final examination in a partner country. This can for instance be regulated via supplementary examinations and thus lies at the responsibility of the competent institutions. Since the SME Master partners are essentially competent institutions for the master craftsperson examination or else the political representatives thereof, corresponding recommendations can be made to implement the above.

In addition, as already outlined, the dynamic structure of the learning outcome matrix allows additional units and learning outcomes to be added.

Comprehensive learning outcomes

During the development of units and learning outcomes, it was noted that certain competences, owing to their close link to several units, could not be categorised into a self-contained unit (e.g. social and ecological responsibility, IT-technology). A solution would have been to repeatedly list these competences as part of several units. In order to avoid redundancies and ultimately do justice to the comprehensive character of these competences, it was agreed to precede the learning outcome matrix with learning outcomes of a comprehensive character.

5. Results

The learning outcome matrix has succeeded in achieving a learning outcome oriented representation of the core qualification of the master baker. The model has been flexibly designed and can be adapted and further developed by other countries and professional federations.

With regard to ECVET, only a few elements of this information system were able to be satisfactorily transferred. These include:

- representation of the learning outcomes,
- development of the units.

Difficulties arose with the allocation of credit points. Due to the exclusive allocation to entire units, it was not possible to clearly illustrate to what expert level the various learning outcomes are taught and how they relate to one another. The learning outcome matrix is also incomplete due to the absence of credit points by the French partner.

To fully transfer the instruments of ECVET, a model for partnership agreements would also have to be developed among the competent institutions for the master craftsperson training and examination. Owing to the short duration of this project, however, it was impossible to look into this essential element of ECVET in more detail.

6. SME Master –Learning Outcomes Matrix "Master Baker"

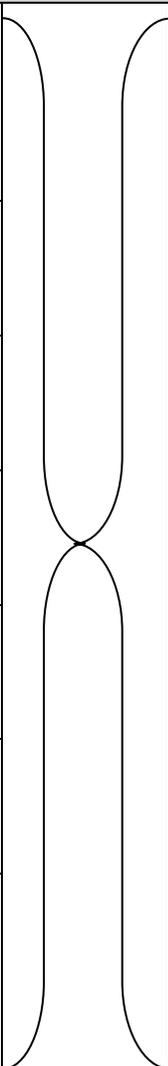
To acquire the learning outcomes properly the following cross sectional qualifications are essential:

- S/he is able to act with social and ecological responsibility,
- S/he is able to adopt a quality management,
- S/he is able to use information and communication technology.

Units	Credit Points	Learning Outcomes		
U1 Accounting and Control- ling	AT 12 DE 10 NO 6	S/he is able to apply basic rules of accounting.	S/he is able to carry out company-specific cost accounting including profit and loss summary, depreciations, operations account and audit.	S/he is able to interpret a balance sheet.
		S/he is able to provide a profit and loss calculation, transfer its results into a balance and draw conclusions out of it.	S/he is able to control the cost and performance calculation.	S/he is able to plan and implement actions to control and reduce effects of deviations.
U2 Budgeting and Calculation	AT 10 DE 10 NO 14	S/he is able to plan a budget by taking into account the relationship between operational accounts, calculations and results deviations.	S/he is able to control the bases of investment budgeting and liquidity as well as the ways of financing.	S/he is able to provide a financial programme for the liquidity of SME and to define and quantify the needs in investment.
		S/he is able to draw up a profit and loss calculation, calculate the contribution margins and bring the results in an economic balance.	S/he is able to produce operational accounts for SME.	
			S/he is able to calculate the costs of products and services and to analyse profitability.	
		S/he is able to calculate prices.		

Units	Credit Points	Learning Outcomes		
U3 Entrepreneurship and Financial Management for SME	AT 16 DE 15 NO 16	S/he is able to make a production site analysis, to develop a start up concept and draw up a medium- and long-term business plan.	S/he is able to implement organisational and operational structures and methods.	S/he is able to evaluate and optimise organisational and operational methods, structures and processes.
		S/he is able to apply SME related regulations of corporate, civil, trade, tax and competition law.		
		S/he is able to organise cooperation with other companies.		
		S/he is able to apply instruments of self-organisation.		
		S/he is able to assess the company investment needs and its financial resources.	S/he is able to select the appropriate way of financing.	
		S/he is able to calculate company's performance ratios and take them in consideration.		
U4 Human Resources Management	AT 10 DE 6 NO 5	S/he is able to apply labour law.		
		S/he is able to plan personnel requirements and use appropriate ways of searching and recruiting staff.		
		S/he is able to lead and motivate staff, to deal with conflicts and plan and organise the work process.		

Units	Credit Points	Learning Outcomes		
U5 Tutoring	AT 6 DE 15 NO 4	S/he is able to apply the regulations concerning apprenticeship.	S/he is able to tutor and instruct apprentices technically and pedagogically.	S/he is able to tutor and instruct teams of apprentices.
				S/he is able to prepare apprentices for examination.
				S/he is able to organise the tutoring in SME.
			S/he is able to solve conflicts concerning apprenticeship.	
U6 Marketing and Sales Management for SME	AT 7 DE 4 NO 10	S/he is able to interpret market analyses and market studies.	S/he is able to draw up a marketing plan and use marketing and PR instruments.	S/he is able to use instruments for price, product and service policies.
			S/he is able to perform a segmentation of the market with target groups and adequate methods.	
		S/he is able to negotiate and to handle contracting.	S/he is able to use sales and after sales techniques.	

Units	Credit Points	Learning Outcomes			
<p>U7 Production of Bakery Products</p>	<p>AT 60 DE 70 NO 80</p>	<p>S/he is able to choose ingredients and production methods. S/he is able to apply the recipes.</p>	<p>S/he is able to produce various types of white, brown and mixed bread.</p>		<p>S/he is able to carry out product testing.</p>
			<p>S/he is able to produce various types of traditional, specific and organic bread.</p>		<p>S/he is able to design, decorate and present bakery products according to customers' orders.</p>
			<p>S/he is able to produce different types of small breads and rolls.</p>		
			<p>S/he is able to produce different types of cakes/torts.</p>		<p>S/he is able to modify and develop recipes and production methods.</p>
			<p>S/he is able to prepare snacks including sandwiches.</p>		
			<p>S/he is able to produce various types of pastries.</p>		
			<p>S/he is able to produce various types of cookies.</p>		

Units	Credit Points	Learning Outcomes	
U8 Food Safety and Hygiene	AT 23 DE 20 NO 15	S/he is able to apply the regulations of food safety, bacteriology and hygiene.	S/he is able to control storage, production and conservation processes.
		S/he is able to assess the physical, biological and chemical condition and development of ingredients and products.	
U9 Quality and Security Management	AT 17 DE 15 NO 15	S/he is able to use and maintain vocationally-specific machines, tools and materials.	
		S/he is able to apply the vocationally-specific regulations concerning environmental protection.	
		S/he is able to apply the regulations of personal and physical work protection.	
U10 Vocationally- specific Business Administration	AT 20 DE 15 NO 15	S/he is able to plan customers' orders and to select suppliers.	
		S/he is able to promote products and services.	
		S/he is able to carry out vocationally-specific calculations.	
		S/he is able to carry out vocationally-specific personnel accounting and payment calculations.	

Abbreviations:

- AT – Austria (Österreich)
- DE – Germany (Deutschland)
- NO – Norway (Norge)