



Annex 1

IO1A5 Peer-Review of Indicators & Measurement Criteria

Authors

Jasmina Poličnik, Alicia-Leonor Sauli-Miklavčič, Andreja Bizjak

Contributors

Norman Apsley, Lucien Bollaert, John Andy Bonar, Terence Clifford-Amos, Dominik Fellner, Eva Fernandez, Päivi Granfors, Johanna Jalonen, Bryan Keating, Milena Kolářová, Antonella Miletić, Gregor Rebernik, Andrea Trink, Satu Tuoriniem, Helena Žnidarič

Editors

(C) 2018, Apprentice Track Consortium

Layout

Tara Drev

Copyright

(C) 2018, Apprentice Track Consortium

The Apprentice Track Consortium

The Association of Slovene Higher Vocational Colleges	SKUPNOST VSŠ	SI
European Association of Institutions of Higher Education	EURASHE	BE
Celje School of Economics, Higher Vocational College	ES CELJE	SI
Knowledge Innovation Centre (Malta) Ltd	KIC	MT
Sdružení profesního terciárního vzdělávání	CASPHE	CZ
VERN University of Applied Sciences	VERN	HR

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Table of Contents

1	Aim and Methodology.....	4
2	Results.....	5
2.1	Setting the Learning Objectives of the Overall Programme	5
2.2	Identifying and recruiting placements	8
2.3	Negotiating the Agreement.....	8
2.4	Monitoring of Apprenticeships	9
2.5	Assessment of Apprenticeships	9
2.6	Recognition of prior learning.....	10
2.7	Other.....	10
2.8	Activities and projects related to the Indicators & Measurement Criteria in different countries.....	11
	Annex I	13

1 Aim and Methodology

The aim of the conducted Peer-Review of Indicators & Measurement Criteria was to assure maximum consensus amongst independent experts on IO4 Indicators & Measurement Criteria.

Each consortium partner was responsible for nomination and engagement of 3 independent peer reviewers which have provided feedback on standardized template in comments and/or suggestions form (see Annex I).

In this report the consortium presents summarized comments, experiences, suggestions of peer reviews that significantly contribute to the topic of Indicators & Measurement Criteria and could not be concretely and substantially integrated into **the published document Indicators & Measurement Criteria (IO1)**.

2 Results

The overall overview of the peer reviews from project partners shows that the indicators and measurement criteria are:

- very thorough and comprehensive;
- some elements are a welcome and innovative novelty;
- the framework provides excellent foundation for further strengthening the elements of apprenticeship in higher vocational education;
- reasonable and realistic;
- clearly stated and understandable;
- explanation of indicators and measurement criteria is very well and thoroughly elaborated.

According to the peer reviewers the objective or aim of the criteria is furthermore:

- clear and understandable and follows a logical process and steps necessary for both goal achievement and quality assurance setup;
- clearly stated and the project will help to make better connectivity of all participants in the future. Criteria define the essential understandable elements against which sustainability is assessed of the project. The idea is awesome and very understandable, so this project can be very helpful for all participants. The project can match students with employers and help them to find one another.

The project is very realistic and well – designed. The document gives a very detailed insight to the aim of the project and to the whole process. Also the recommendations are very good and some of the contributors especially support the aim to reduce the form filling and bureaucracy.

Other relevant suggestions and comments collected through peer reviews are structured according to the identified apprenticeship processes and according to thematic topic.

2.1 Setting the Learning Objectives of the Overall Programme

DEFINITION OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Concerning “*Involvement of stakeholders in designing*” and “*Methodology used to define learning objectives*” some additional questions arise:

- Do the involved universities have obligatory apprenticeships in their curricula?
- If yes, aren't the learning objectives defined in the curricula?

Some of the universities have obligatory apprenticeships in all of the Bachelor programmes. Reflecting these questions and answers, the adequacy of differentiation between learning objectives for overall programme and for apprenticeship learning objectives applies. Although in general, the differentiation is reasonable and very useful, but for the purpose of the project and simplicity of the digital tool, it would be sufficient to speak about apprenticeship learning objectives.

The confusion of who sets up the requirements for the apprenticeships should be avoided. It has to be clearly determined, whether the university or the enterprise are the decision-makers in the process of defining the learning outcomes and the tasks that need to be accomplished during the apprenticeship. **It should be clear what kind of graduates the economy/industry needs in general, what graduates of a certain study program should know and be able to do, then these findings should be integrated into the curricula in order to be able to define the need for an apprenticeship.** If done so the apprenticeship is not accomplished or seen separated from the rest of the study program.

COOPERATION WITH THE EMPLOYERS

PHE institutions and relevant stakeholders should keep in mind that employer's engagement is difficult and it is not to be taken as a given/ assumed automatically.

Additionally, the inclusion of stakeholders is crucial. Large companies and organisation will be easy to catch but not so SMEs. More attention needs to be given to gathering them into the schemes, maybe through existing industry lobby groups or special purpose training groups could be established with government/EU support under the rule that allows different industries to be supported to create common competences.

For example, grouping private sector employers in “sectoral partnerships” such as Advance Engineering or Accountancy allows them to address common skills needs which enhances the experience and employability of apprenticeships.

The draft assumes the employers are willing to co-operate and are actually driven to participate on the internship preparation process. There should be a back-up plan to saturate the project needs in case the employers will prove inactive to the point of uselessness.

Also providing extra personnel to the agenda may become a resource problem for educational institutions as well as small enterprises, whether a contact person or a human resource specialist is involved.

Despite having a quality website, social media and ad campaigns on TV, there is still an ignorance of what apprenticeships can do for a company and how to find them. But a number of already published reports show the financial benefits to companies that have apprentices and over what time they become positive contributors – these reports should be taken into consideration.

BENEFITS

While focusing on apprenticeships real benefits for individuals, their employers and to society of having such a system in place should be laid out. For example, it would help to make the case to Industry Boards and Owners, if private sector employers were grouped in “sectoral partnerships “such an Advance Engineering or Accountancy allows them to address common skills needs which enhances the experience and employability of apprenticeships. Also small SMEs less than 50 people with no full time human resource personnel find it very hard to recruit and absorb Apprentices. Ways to service centrally perhaps through a local FE college or EURASHE member, the needs for number of small SMEs in different regions can also be considered more effectively.

Benefits for Students

- They receive a recognized and portable (throughout the region and maybe all of EU?) qualification.
- They achieve it in a manner that particularly suits kinaesthetic (learning style is active and “by doing”) who are known not to suit the normal academic process.
- They may often earn while they learn.

Benefits for Employers

- Staff are trained faster and in the context of others, learning new ideas and building their network at the same time.
- Even if they leave one employment, they may enter the supply chain of the larger companies and all benefit.
- Well respected staff are more likely to join in/engage with company values and quality processes.

BIG DATA and LONGITUDINAL STUDIES

Some of the targets are only ever short-term replacements for the real purposes, in this case better employability/ better company performance/ better economy. **Longitudinal studies are now very feasible in this era of big data and should be included from the outset.**

SOFT SKILLS

Related to apprenticeship, PHE institutions should measure and report also on:

- **soft skills** and attributes like growing confidence, communication skills (all channels), team work, loyalty, integrity etc.;
- **longitudinal outcomes; personal growth, societal benefits** etc.

One area common across all apprenticeships in different countries is the development of transversal/softer skills and therefore this software tool could be very beneficial in recognizing and validating these skills. The skills should be taken from the UNESCO transversal skills.

2.2 Identifying and recruiting placements

SPECIFICS OF THE SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED COMPANIES

The ability of private sector companies to recruit and absorb apprentices, even if they are fully aware of the value they can add to the company's bottom line, depends in large measure on their size. Small SMEs with no full time human resource personnel are particularly at a disadvantage.

AGE OF THE APPRENTICES

It is important to realize that not all Apprentices are young. There is an issue of finding funds for the over 25s, together with the fact that older people will have greater responsibilities (family/mortgage etc.). Since all regions and societies need increasingly skilled workforces to compete, it is a serious problem.

2.3 Negotiating the Agreement

AGILE SYSTEM IS NEEDED

Developing an 'agile' system to deliver real and relevant skills to apprentices is exactly what is needed in today's companies, while solving the issues of multiple standard qualifications in different regions of the UK and EU.

STUDENT/MENTOR 'DIARY'

Consider the possibility of an implementation of the student/mentor 'diary' based on experience which could provide the opportunity for writing an assessed piece of writing based on experiential learning.

2.4 Monitoring of Apprenticeships

The monitoring process appears sound. The web platform to support the monitoring and evaluation of apprenticeships should be fully established as soon as possible. The Quality of the apprenticeship training criteria are quite 'admirably' outlined.

2.5 Assessment of Apprenticeships

COMMON INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

There is a need to establish a common framework concerning recruitment and entry point for apprentices - across the countries.

DIFFERENCIES ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

On the other hand, apprenticeships in different countries vary in nature and scope. For the UK, the apprentice must be an employee. In other countries, they could be trainees on work placement. In some cases, the apprenticeship programmes are set in law and linked to pay scales and job promotions. It is difficult, therefore, to have a 'one size fits all' approach such as with tracking. Therefore, **the project may be of more use in countries setting up apprenticeship systems.**

The cultural issues need to be paid attention to. Considering that the Indicators & Measurements Criteria are transferable into Finnish settings, the real circumstances show that there's not much possibilities to choose the placements - apprentices need to take what is available.

AWARDS

Consider to implement the Apprenticeship of the Year award, as they are very successful in some countries. They really showcase how valuable apprentices are to their employers and vice versa. The high regard the employers have for them and the three-way role the trainers have in the mix. The greatest success for all is when there is a true 3-way partnership involved. To seek the development/provision of an EC label for colleges who achieve apprenticeship excellence. Include also awards for outstanding achievement.

Fundamentally apprenticeship programmes in different countries are not uniformed, even within jurisdictions, and this makes it difficult for any solution to address.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

As far as the assessment is concerned there should be a **difference made between the assessment of the learning and the assessment of the placement**, although they are linked.

Assessments should also include team processes; recent work in the d-school has shown that individuals can be assessed even if the submitted work has been performed in a team.

2.6 Recognition of prior learning

It needs to be **more defined what kind of prior learning** might be expected for this apprenticeship scheme in terms of recognition.

2.7 Other

COMMUNICATION

Structured communication channels between enterprises and students, robust management systems and clear evaluation protocols are necessary to manage such a complex system.

The government and local government level are very important, because they should have a coordinating person to facilitate the communication for the region between the triangle, between students and employers.

POSSIBLE CHALLENGES

Challenges may, among other things, arise in providing a sufficient number of suitable learning places in companies, financial stimulations, systematization of the work coordinator, adequate training of providers.

Indicators & Measurement Criteria are realistic, since most of the activities even if partly implemented are the regular ones in apprenticeships. Another aspect to take into account is that some implementation issues can only be solved if additional funding is available, like governments providing some economic incentives to companies.

2.8 Activities and projects related to the Indicators & Measurement Criteria in different countries

SLOVENIA

In **Slovenia**, the development, implementation and piloting of apprenticeship forms of education at the level of secondary vocational education is in progress. In 2017, a new Apprenticeship Act was adopted, which regulates apprenticeships in secondary vocational education and in continuing vocational and technical education programs.

Some elements / areas that support the process of planning and implementing apprentices are already developed and prepared. Thus, a methodology was prepared for the preparation of a catalogue of practical training, which defines the national standard of necessary practical training for each educational program and is the basis for the implementation of the entire practical training process, from preparing practical training plans to the very implementation and monitoring of the achievement of planned competences. An apprenticeship contract was prepared. An apprenticeship plan was developed. The online platform for a single register of learning places has been set up.

SPAIN

At Unibasq, **Spain**, we are working on the awarding of a “dual learning” label to the study programmes, or its paths to fulfil a set of requirements

(<https://www.unibasq.eus/en/degrees-dual/>). In addition, one of the organizations we collaborate with, Fundación Novia Salcedo provides specific trainings for mentors at companies for apprenticeships' supervision

(<http://www.noviasalcedo.es/en/empresas/taller-tutores-jovenes-en-practicas/>).

FINLAND

In **Finland** there's an online platform for nursing placements called Jobiili (<https://www.jobiili.fi/#/>). Students book two times a year placements by the platform. That's an easy way and saves time but not all placements are in the Jobiili and teacher needs to book them separately.

In some universities (and soon also in SAMK) they use an online evaluation form for clinical practice called Worksheed (<https://www.workseed.fi/web/en/>) for the students' objectives, mentor's and teacher's feedback. So pen and paper are past and every document is saved in web.

PROJECT BUILDPHE

Project BuildPHE and its outputs (namely the Framework for development of self-reflection methodology on achievement within criteria of PHE – especially the similar criteria which are

used in this document) could be inspiring and inspirational for this part of the project – and also the part of case studies – best practice examples.

PROJECT DOVOS

Another project to take into consideration is named **DOVOS**. The project is based on digitalised ECVET and it is a tool for schools to prepare an agenda – broken down to units of learning outcomes, to assess the learner’s performance during the internship or work-based learning experience, provide personal evaluation, and then export the data back to IS of the institution. Students also received a badge with “baked” information about the experience and links to prove their efforts. Info: <https://help.dovos.cz/cs/aplikace-dovos/>.

Annex I



PEER REVIEW TEMPLATE on Indicators & Measurement Criteria	
Name and Contact details of the reviewer – such as email	
Name of the institution of the reviewer	

Thank you for taking part in the Apprentice Track project. Now that you have carefully read the Indicators Report and the Indicators & Measurement Criteria table, we kindly ask you to answer the following 6 questions to your convenience with any relevant ideas, comments, suggestions you might have from your perspective and experiences using the space and number of words that suit you. Try to think of positive, encouraging, supportive ideas as well.

- 1) Do you see the objective/aim of the Indicators & Measurement Criteria clearly stated? Is it understandable to you?
- 2) Based on the information provided, do you believe that the Indicators & Measurement Criteria are realistic? (i.e. achievable in terms of aims, methods, timeframes, resources, etc)?
- 3) According to you, is there any unclear aspect? Are there any important missing elements?
- 4) Are you, or any of your colleagues, aware of any work similar to the Indicators & Measurement Criteria? (e.g. documents, statistics, links, good practice cases, etc)
- 5) Do you have any personal experience with the topic that you would be willing to share?
- 6) State 3 recommendations -any suggestion- that would fit well AND/OR that should be avoided in the process.
- 7) Any other comment you would like to add/share?
- 8) Would you be willing to spread the word about the project, especially at this stage, Management system for apprenticeships in terms of indicators and criteria? Would you be interested in other results of the project?

Further results to be developed: consortium will propose technological methods to strengthen management of apprenticeships and will also create a tool-prototype for management of apprenticeships which will be tested and validated in live environments. Consortium will also develop and implement a course on apprenticeship-management.

More information on project Apprentice Track: <https://apprenticetrack.eu/>.

About the Apprenticeship Track Project and this publication

Apprenticeships allow students to build up skills and knowledge, while providing companies with a reliable way to evaluate potential future hires and the benefit from fresh perspectives offered by academia. Despite their advantages, apprenticeships are challenging to manage, as the needs of students and of specific enterprises are difficult to match, particularly when organizations need to deal with massive amounts of students and, consequently, data. Structured communication channels between enterprises and students, robust management systems and clear evaluation protocols are necessary to manage such a complex system, are therefore needed to enable the launch of valuable, steady and sustainable Apprenticeship Programmes.

This publication is an overview of Peer-Reviews of Indicators & Measurement Criteria to assure maximum consensus amongst independent experts.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union