



# EOSE INFONOTE

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*For skills matters!*

FEATURED IN THIS NOTE : # GENERIC  
INFORMATION ABOUT EQAVET#

## European quality assurance framework for VET (EQAVET)

EQAVET aims to increase the transparency, relevance, consistency and transferability of vocational education and training qualifications across Europe. It addresses both VET systems and VET providers.

Quality assurance can be defined as “a process through which accredited status is granted to a programme of education or training, showing it has been approved by the relevant legislative or professional authorities by having met predetermined standards” (Cedefop, 2008).

Quality Assurance forms the backbone on which mutual trust and recognition across the different EU Member States can be established and fostered. It is for this reason that in working towards European integration in VET, the Copenhagen process has created the policy context for voluntary and sustainable cooperation between Member States to promote common trust, transparency and recognition of competences and qualifications.

Quality assurance systems are being developed throughout Europe at the national level. This is often in conjunction with national qualification framework developments and is the responsibility of national qualifications agencies.

When looking at the sport sector as a whole, it is essential that there is trust and confidence from

all stakeholders in the education and skills system. Across the sport sector it is important to promote confidence amongst employers, professionals, providers and the public and to ensure education and training providers issuing certificates are subjected to a quality assurance process that can be trusted to ensure consistency.

In addition to national initiatives in quality assurance linked to qualifications framework, it is also possible and desirable to put in place quality assurance and accreditation systems within the sport and active leisure sector itself at the national or European level.

An example of a pan-European quality assurance system within a particular sport comes from the sport of golf. Through the PGAs of Europe, national professional golfers' associations (PGAs) who have qualifications to train new golf professionals can submit and be accredited at the European level within the sport. Therefore, as with links to qualifications frameworks, sport offers a complex picture of national and European/ international options and situations in the realm of quality assurance.



### Implementation in the sport sector

The extent to which sport qualifications in Europe are subject to robust quality assurance systems. Sport qualifications in higher education and vocational education are increasingly subject to quality assurance in line with European principles, either from the national or European level.

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### Key ideas and facts

There are a range of European tools and principles for vocational education and training, their implementation will increase transparency of qualifications, support mobility and benefit citizens by providing a systematic way to validate and document their knowledge, skills and competence.

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# Implementation in the sport sector

Across Europe there are well-established systems of quality assurance for higher education and these apply equally to the sport sector alongside all other sectors. Internal quality assurance carried out to the requirements of a governmental department or body is the norm. This was confirmed by EOSE members in a recent consultation, including Bulgaria where it was confirmed state accreditation is in place, and Cyprus where a new quality assurance agency for higher education will monitor all HE qualifications including in sport.

At the vocational level there are three possibilities for quality assurance and between them it can be said that most vocational sport courses receive adequate levels of quality assurance to ensure trust and consistency.

1) Vocational courses sit on the national qualifications framework and as part of NQF processes are verified and accredited with

appropriate checks to quality, either from an awarding body or state regulator.

2) Vocational courses may or may not sit on the national qualifications framework but are part of a sport specific qualifications framework and as such receive quality assurance from a national sports authority.

3) Vocational courses, mainly in coaching or officiating, link to the European or international sport federation who provide direct quality assurance, accreditation or other quality support mechanisms.

All of these scenarios exist in the sport sector in different nations across Europe.



In some countries for short courses, normally in the private sector and sometimes linked to the non-formal training sector – there can be some gaps in quality assurance. However it remains in the best interest of providers to submit their awards for external verification to achieve the stamps and badges of endorsement that result from accreditation and can be used to market the course as meeting industry standards.

## Milestones



- ⇒ 2002 – [Copenhagen Declaration](#). First agreement of Member States to aim to improve the performance, quality and attractiveness of vocational education and training through enhanced cooperation at European level.
- ⇒ 2009 - [Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a European quality assurance reference framework for vocational education and training](#).
- ⇒ 2008: EOSE completes [EQF Sport project](#) to develop lifelong learning strategy (7 Step Model) for the sector and promote links to EQF. Quality assurance is Step 7 of the model.
- ⇒ 2010 – [Bruges Communiqué](#). Long-term strategic objectives for European cooperation in VET for the period 2011-20 set by Member States.

## Key ideas and facts



The European Commission, Member States, and the social partners, have established common European tools and principles for vocational education and training. Namely:

- ⇒ European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
- ⇒ European credit system for VET (ECVET)
- ⇒ Europass
- ⇒ European quality assurance framework for VET (EQAVET)
- ⇒ Principles and guidelines for identifying and validating non-formal and informal learning
- ⇒ Principles on lifelong guidance and counselling

These tools and principles constitute an integrated framework, their implementation will increase transparency of qualifications, support mobility and benefit citizens by providing a systematic way to validate and document their knowledge, skills and competence. All are based on learning outcomes which make it easier to understand what the holder of a certificate or diploma knows, understands and is able to do.

The EQF and ECVET operate at the systemic level to make easier the recognition of

qualifications across Europe. By supporting quality assurance, EQAVET provides a basis for confidence and trust in national VET qualifications and their international comparison through the EQF. Europass, ECVET, validation and guidance support individuals looking for a job or applying for training.

All of these tools and principles have had an impact on the sport sector at the European and national level.

## National examples

### Bulgaria

Sport qualifications are subject to internal quality systems but have state accreditation, particularly in higher education.



### Cyprus

In Cyprus for higher education there is a newly established quality assurance agency which will apply to all sectors including sport.



### UK

In the UK there are a large number of sport qualifications in higher education subject to quality assurance standards of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

Also for vocational courses most sport qualifications are on the national qualifications framework, awarded by awarding bodies and subject to the quality assurance requirements of the government regulator, Ofqual.



### FOR MORE INFO

EOSE has developed a State of Play report in 2015. Available on demand.

GET IN TOUCH WITH EOSE SECRETARIAT :  
[EOSESEC@ATJESE.ORG](mailto:EOSESEC@ATJESE.ORG)

# To go further

EQAVET website  
[www.eqavet.eu](http://www.eqavet.eu)

Cedefop (2009), *Accreditation and quality assurance in vocational education and training - Selected European approaches*  
[www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/4089\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/4089_en.pdf)

Golf project (2012), *Quality Assurance Strategies and Guidelines for Vocational Education and Training in Golf in Europe*  
<http://eose.org/wp->

## DOWNLOADS

[content/uploads/2014/03/7.-Golf-Stand-Quality-Assurance-Strategies-EN-Single-Pages.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/content/uploads/2014/03/7.-Golf-Stand-Quality-Assurance-Strategies-EN-Single-Pages.pdf)

Cedefop (2015), *Ensuring the quality of certification in vocational education and training*  
[www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publication-s-and-resources/publications/5551](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publication-s-and-resources/publications/5551)



# Latest developments

## European Commission Sport Unit Expert Group

With the introduction of the new EU Work Plan for sport 2014 - 2017, the Sport Unit in DGEAC of the European Commission updated its structure and set up five reformed expert groups to look at particular areas related to sport policy. One of the Expert Groups is for Human Resource Management in Sport, which deals with education, training, employment and volunteering in sport. This Expert Group continues to take an active interest in the implementation of national qualifications frameworks in the sport sector and the relationship between national sport federations and requirements for education from international federations.

## Sector Skills Alliances (SSAs)

Sector Skills Alliances are an initiative designed to promote European cooperation within a specific sector of the economy. SSAs develop vocational skills from the perspective of labour market needs, ensuring cooperation between education and employment.

In the sport sector EOSE led a Consortium supported by the Directorate-General Employment and Social Affairs to carry out a feasibility study on setting up a Sector Skills Council for skills and employment for the sport and active leisure sector in the EU (the designation of council later changed to alliance with the launch of a new funding programme under Erasmus+ KA2 in 2016). This was supported by the whole sector.

## European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO)

The EC through the DG Employment and Social Affairs has launched a new portal and database to support employment and recruitment services in all member states as they seek to tackle unemployment and assist job seekers. The system is called ESCO.

The ESCO classification system identifies key occupations in the labour market and categorises the skills, competences and qualifications relevant for the EU labour market and the education and training pathways.

In the sport and active leisure sector 25 occupations have been defined under the headings of: Sports coaches and instructors; Sport managers and operations; Sportspeople, Fitness; and outdoors. This work would be greatly enhanced by the work of an SSA.



# EOSE INFONOTE

EOSE is an international organisation working towards the development of the sport and active leisure sector, expert in building bridges between the worlds of education and employment and ensuring the development of a competent workforce with the right skills.

Its vision has been defined as "A sport and active leisure sector that is playing its full part in the economic, health and social development of Europe and its member states." And its mission consists in "facilitating and supporting the development of the sport and active leisure sector workforce, to ensure people working and volunteering in the sector have the right skills to perform and enable the sector to fulfil its potential as a social, health and economic driver".

+33(0) 437 431 577

+33(0) 437 430 988



@eosesec@eose.org

@EOSE\_skills

www.eose.org