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Flexible VET pathways to boost employability

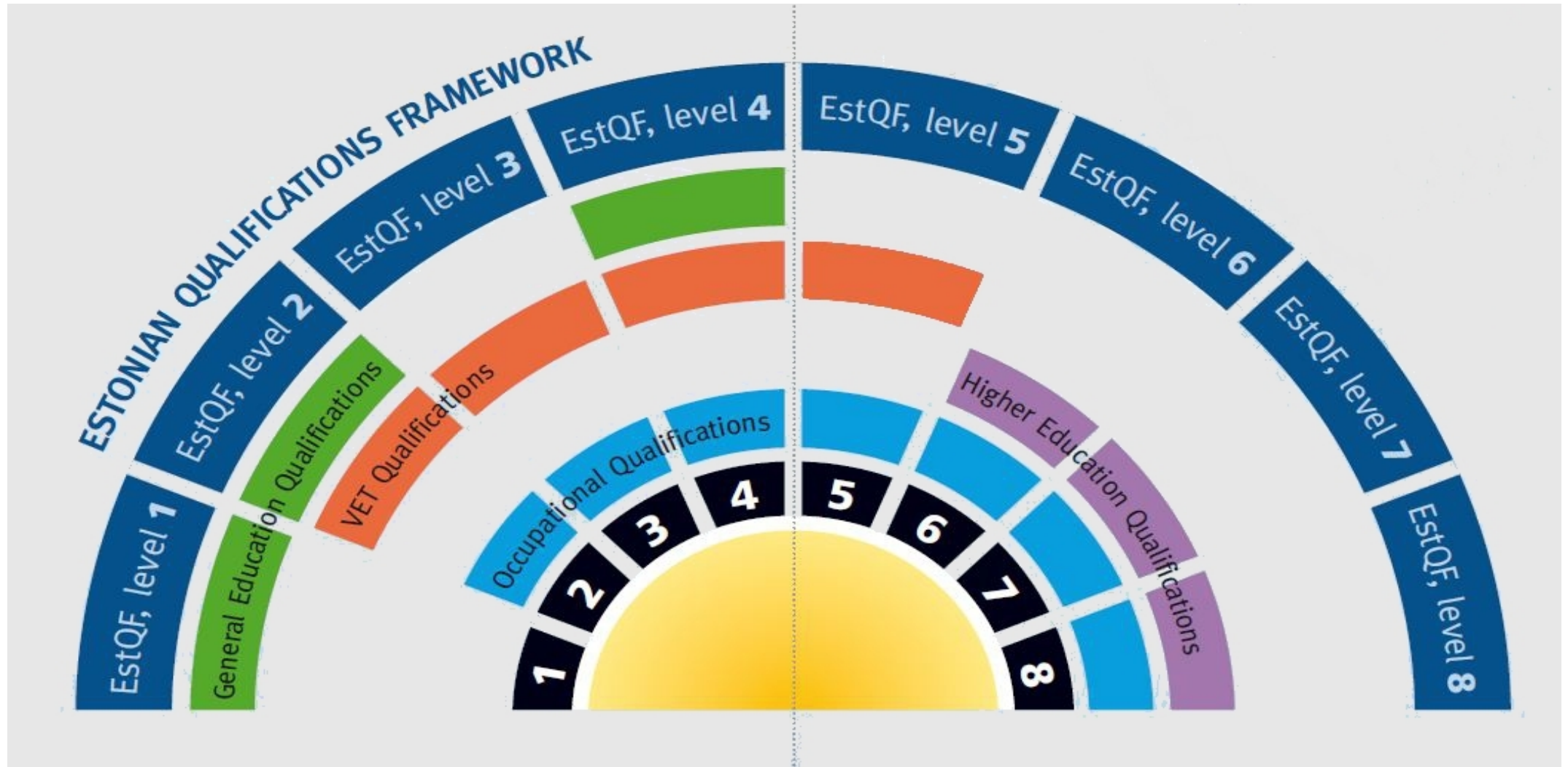
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Estonian Qualifications Framework



Policy initiatives 2013


Policy initiatives

new VET Institutions Act and VET Standard 2013
+ several new or amended regulations



New structure of VET programmes

LOs and threshold based assessment
Estonian VET Credit Point based on ECVET principles



Curricula development

Key measures of 2013 policy initiatives (1)

VET shall be more practical, well targeted, flexible, contemporary, available and of high quality

- curricula system based on NQF (EstQF)
- LO-based approach to describe learning content in study programmes and integration of LLL key competencies into training of professional skills
- more attention to the study programmes leading to advanced qualifications and entrepreneurship competencies

Key measures of 2013 policy initiatives (2)

- implementation of ECVET based credit system (EKAP) and threshold based assessment of LO's in VET
- more attention to the use and quality of recognition of prior learning and work experience
- more attention to the quality of training process – implementation of accreditation in formal VET
- more attention to the study programmes leading to advanced qualifications and entrepreneurship competencies

Estonian vocational education credit point

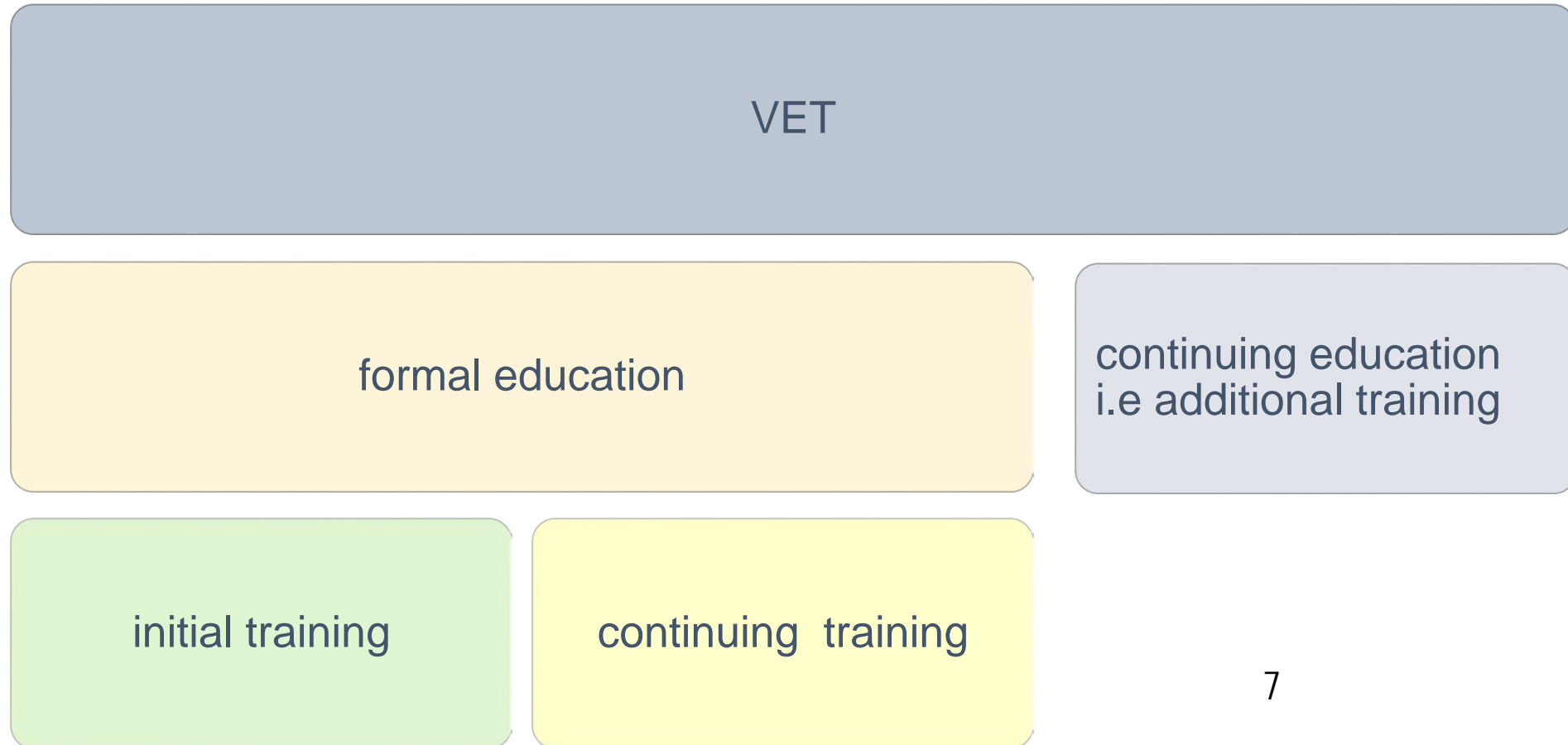
EKAP is the unit of calculation of study volume which provide complementary information about curricula and its modules in numerical form.

EKAP is an estimation of student's work amount for achieving LO-s:

- ✓ **1 EKAP** means for average student **26 hours** of learning
- ✓ average student achieves **60 EKAP** of LO-s **per one school**

Curricula system

- based on the EstQF, correspond to qualification levels 2-5 of the EstQF



VET curricula

Vocational training curricula determine the following:

- ✓ the goals and tasks of vocational studies
- ✓ attainable learning outcomes
- ✓ requirements for commencing and concluding studies
- ✓ curricular modules and their studyload together with learning outcomes
- ✓ options and conditions for choosing modules
- ✓ specialization opportunities if there is any
- ✓ specific qualifications acquired during studies

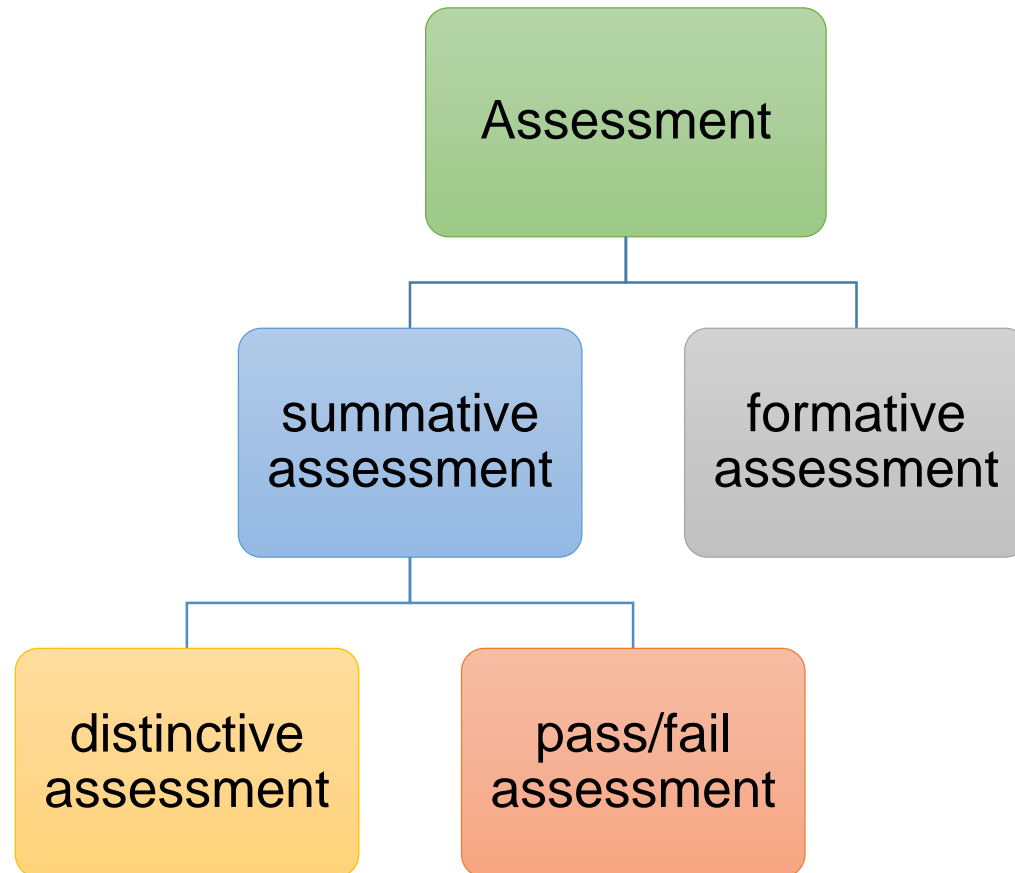
Implementation plan has to be prepared for each modul and consist of the following information:

- the target group of the studies and the study form
- generic title of the module and the credit points associated with the module
- the goal of studies
- requirements for commencing studies
- **learning outcomes with the assessment criteria in threshold level**
- **assessment of LO (method(s), task(s) and passing criterias)**
- learning content topics

Assessment of LO

Outcome-based assessment is defined as an evaluation of the level and scope of knowledge, skills and competence acquired by students based on assessment criteria.

Methods and criterias of assessment based on occupational qualification standards



Positive developments

Using outcome-based approach has brought about changes in

- a) cooperation and relationships
- b) approaching to the learning process and planning the methodology
- c) carrying out learning process
- d) learning content
- e) assessment of learning outcomes
- f) regarding students

Challenges

As many important developments were simultaneous, it was challenging:

- to be systemic and transparent in changing the structure of VET programmes
 - ✓ complicated to define the criteria for initial formal training and work related courses
 - ✓ to have unified approach in curricula design in VET institutions and within different curriculum groups
 - ✓ to take account specific aspects of study forms (school based or work based etc.)
 - ✓ specializations, partial qualifications, how wide or deep should VET curricula be?
 - ✓ how detailed should the implementing plan in school curricula be?
 - ✓ assessment and recognition of LOs during the studies
 - ✓ availability of methodological support
- to connect curricula developments with school network planning and changes
- to give more responsibility to VET institutions on curricula development
- avoid excessive bureaucracy and too narrow VET curricula

Possible solutions

- Curriculum system has been mapped according to the ISCED-F 2013 mentioned fields of study

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- Curriculum system has been mapped according to the ISCED-F 2013 mentioned fields of study
- Different guidelines have been developed to support VET providers
 - ✓ Handbook for VET Curriculum Developers
 - ✓ Guidelines for outcome-based assessment
 - ✓ Guidelines for counselors and assessors of RPL
 - ✓ Guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning
 - ✓ Guidelines for assessment and recognition of learning outcomes during the studies

Possible solutions

- Curriculum system has been mapped according to the ISCED-F 2013 mentioned fields of study
- Different guidelines have been developed to support VET providers
- Comprehensive agreements have been concluded to harmonise curricula within a study field
 - ✓ Unified structure of curriculum and its' implementation plans
 - ✓ Instructions for curriculum development in particular field of specialization

Possible solutions

- Providing counseling and guidance
- Organizing the networking seminars and thematic workshops
 - ✓ Leading employees of teaching
 - Academic Directors of VET Schools
 - Leading teachers of different specialties
 - Department managers
 - ✓ VET teachers and trainers
 - ✓ Project managers (Erasmus+)
- Close cooperation between various parties

Conclusion

- The principles of outcome-based approach are accepted by the VET providers, but there is a need to develop specific skills in implementing it
- There is still a need to
 - ✓ provide support in developing the skills in formulating learning outcomes
 - ✓ improve teachers skills in assessing the relevancy and assessability of learning outcomes
 - ✓ provide methodological support to teachers and trainers in understanding the assessment that supports outcome-based learning
 - ✓ intensify the knowledge of the concept of assessment criterion in threshold level from the viewpoint of outcome-based learning



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Thank You!

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