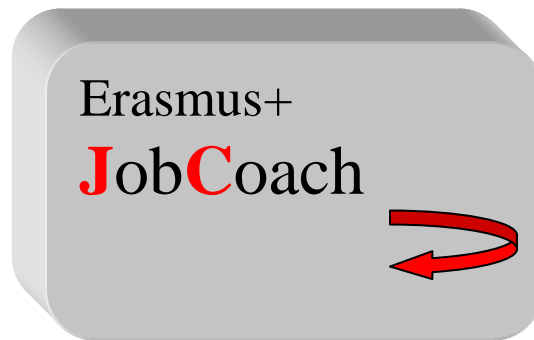


Erasmus+ - project

„Job coach for persons with disabilities“



of the qualification concept for the Job Coach
for persons with disabilities
in United Kingdom

Prof. Karola Dillenburger



Project coordination

Grone-Schulen Niedersachsen gGmbH
Anna Block
Tel.: 0049 (0) 4165 80370
Mail: a.block@grone.de
www.grone.de

Developed by the partner

Queen's University Belfast
Prof. Karola Dillenburger
Tel.: 0044 (0) 2890975985
Mail: k.dillenburger@qub.ac.uk

Content

1. Description of the VET system in UK.....	3
2. Proposals for implementation of the national qualification concept in UK	5

1. Description of the VET system in UK

There are a number of awarding bodies for academic and vocational training in the UK:

AQA (Assessment and Qualifications Alliance)

AQA

(Assessment and Qualifications Alliance) is an awarding body which is an independent education charity¹, operating in some 30 countries, including England, Wales & Northern Ireland (it sets and marks papers for approximately half of all GCSEs and A-levels taken every year in the UK regions mentioned). Qualifications include GCSEs, IGCSEs, A-levels, Tech-levels, the Extended Project Qualification and the AQA Baccalaureate. A number of voluntary organisations offer AQA-accredited training²

AVCE (Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education)³

A vocational qualification which can be undertaken at school or in a Further Education college, alongside A-levels if appropriate. Entry requirements: four GCSEs, grades A* to C. This is usually a two year course, which results in different awards.

BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council award)

BTECs are offered at a number of different levels⁴.

- *Entry* – for learners to develop confidence and initial skills
- *Introductory (Level 1)* – a basic introduction to a particular industry sector
- *Nationals (Level 3)* - specialist qualifications for students with a clear view of their future career or seeking progression to higher education
- *Foundation Diploma in Art and Design (Level 3)* – preparation for entry to higher education to study art and design
- *Higher Nationals (Level 5)* – higher education qualifications widely recognised by universities and professional bodies
- *Development and Professional Development qualifications (Levels 4-8)* – short courses needed for professional development

BTEC Short Courses - available at all levels

NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications) and SVQs (Scottish Vocational Qualifications)⁵

NVQs are based on *national occupational standards*, i.e. 'statements of performance that describe what competent people in a particular occupation are expected to be able to do' (City & Guilds 2016⁶). They can only be undertaken by people who are currently in employment. *Vocational qualifications* (progression awards, certificates, diplomas and other vocational awards) are classroom-based awards designed for people who are

¹ From <http://www.aqa.org.uk/about-us>

² E.g. for autism: http://www.aqa.org.uk/programmes/unit-award-scheme/units?collection=aqa-uas&profile=_default&num_ranks=100&form=uasUnitList&query=autism&loc=NULL&area=NULL&level=NULL

³ Information from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/justthejob/fe/gnvqavce.shtml>

⁴ Directly from <https://www.studential.com/further-education/vocational-qualifications/BTEC>

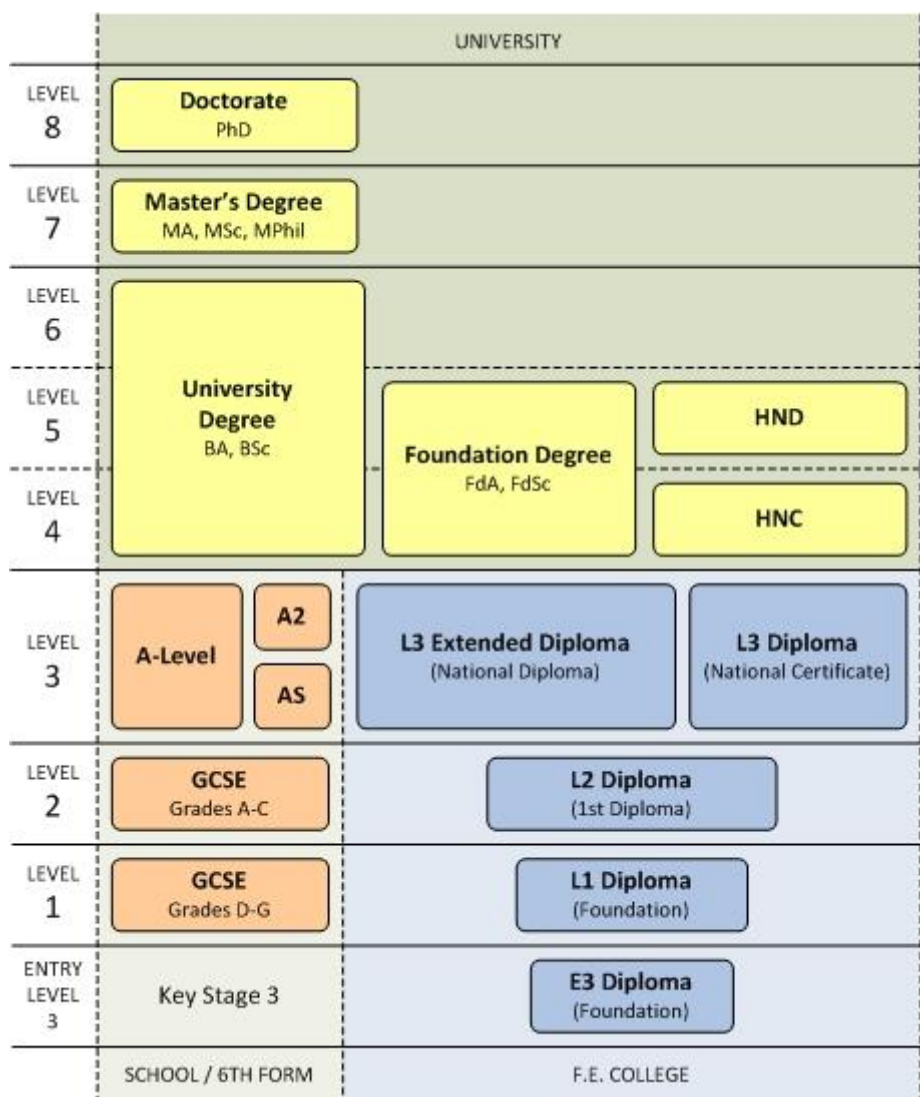
⁵ See: <http://www.cityandguilds.com/qualifications-and-apprenticeships/qualifications-explained/nvqs-svqs-keyskills-vocational-skillsforlife>

⁶ <http://www.cityandguilds.com>

e.g. looking for work or changing career, that form the basis for job skills and/or undertaking an NVQ in due course.

Completing an NVQ: NVQs do not have to be completed in a specified amount of time. They can be taken by full-time employees or by school and college students with a work placement or part-time job that enables them to develop the appropriate skills. There are no age limits and no special entry requirements. SVQs operate in the same way as NVQs, but are used exclusively in Scotland.

Schematic of system⁷



As the position of Job Coach is not strictly defined in the UK, individuals carrying out the position may come from a variety of backgrounds and with a range of qualifications, which may be certified by a number of awarding bodies. As noted above, the National Occupational Standards (NOS) which currently exist are laid down within the framework of a supported employment model. It aims to ensure 'high quality, personalised support for people with disabilities and/or disadvantages which enables them to seek, access and retain

⁷ <http://www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/qualifications-and-credit-framework-qcf.html>

employment in the open labour market. It is a "place and train" approach that does not rely on long periods of pre-vocational training or a basic level of qualification or experience' (LSI SE00, p.8). However, the NOS performance criteria 'do not equate directly to qualifications, but can be used to inform and underpin relevant competency-based qualifications for supported employment practitioners' (LSI SE00, p.2).

2. Proposals for implementation of the national qualification concept in UK

Given that the UK partner is a University, the focus of proposed implementation focusses on training of job coaches. There are a large number of pathways into Job Coaching positions, and a number of options for training provision. However, while flexibility in skills is desirable, a standardised framework for training is necessary and the first step should be a clear definition of what the position of 'Job Coach' entails. Thereafter, the training programme should be designed to meet the demands of the position.

Many organisations which provide employment support for people with disabilities welcome Job Coach applications from people with relevant employment experience, and a variety of qualifications, and will then provide bespoke training courses for successful candidates. In Northern Ireland, The Open College in Dublin⁸ provides certification in supported employment training for Job Coaches. This is a 12-week course, offered by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), which aims to provide the skills required to facilitate job seekers into work experience/job sampling and/or supported employment opportunities. Successful completion leads to a Certificate in Supported Employment (QQI⁹ Level 7 Special Purpose Award). QQI awards align with the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) standards, and are referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)¹⁰. The course is designed for those already working/experienced as Job Coaches who are seeking accreditation in Supported Employment.

The British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) also offers a specialist training course which is delivered over 4 or 5 days, depending on the particular local demand. It was designed to conform to the European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) five-stage Supported Employment process and the current NOS. The five areas of training comprise • Client engagement • Vocational profiling • Employer engagement • Job matching • On and off the job support¹¹

In terms of providing support for those with learning disabilities, mental health issue and/or autism, the needs of the service users will be very individual, but a common curriculum should include the following:

- Disability-specific knowledge
- Job matching: functional assessment, creating a vocational profile, promoting strengths and addressing skills deficits using behaviour-based interventions (e.g. shaping, video modelling, use of apps)

⁸ See <http://www.jobs.ie/TrainingCourses/Certificate-in-Supported-Employment-Learning-Together-with-the-Open-Training-17391.aspx>

⁹ Quality and Qualifications Ireland: see <http://www.qqi.ie/Pages/NFQ-Standards-and-Guidelines-.aspx>

¹⁰ See [http://www.qqi.ie/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-\(NFQ\).aspx](http://www.qqi.ie/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-(NFQ).aspx)

¹¹ http://base-uk.org/sites/base-uk.org/files/page/11-11-miscellaneous_files/training_brochure.pdf

- Providing support structures in the workplace, fading and maintenance over time
- Recording and monitoring progress
- Data protection
- Protection for vulnerable adults (e.g. anti-bullying measures and sexual exploitation prevention)
- Employment, disability and benefits legislation
- Changes in labour force requirements - engaging with emerging and existing markets
- Accessing educational support for people with disabilities