

## Netherlands – EC-VPL and IVC den Helder

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<b>Institution</b>	<b>EC-VPL and IVC den Helder</b>
<b>Interviewed Person</b>	Carolin (24), from Sri Lanka

### I – Preparation

Carolin (24) is from Sri Lanka. She lives in the Netherlands since July 2015, so for two years now. She works as a volunteer in the IVC, the library and ROC.

### II – Awareness

Carolin was not aware of most of her skills before she came to the Netherlands. She already knew she liked working in healthcare and the job as nurse satisfied her so she decided to work as a nurse in the Netherlands as well.

*“I worked for three years as a nurse in Sri Lanka before I came to the Netherlands. I really liked this job but at first, I did not know how the healthcare system in the Netherlands was regulated. The “spreek je uit!” and competence training provided by the IVC helped me to get a clear view on the Dutch situation.”*

When she came to the IVC they offered her several VPL trainings that provided guidance in using her capacities for learning in the Netherlands. They also gave her advice on validating former learning.

*“I was not informed on the meaning of competences, but in Sri Lanka we use qualities. We had to think about our positive qualities but not in the way I had to do during the VPL training. Here it goes further, what are my strong but also my weak competences”.*

### III – Starting up

During the several trainings she attended at the IVC, Carolin built up a portfolio on basis of her former learning. Although she trusted the validating she did not have any expectations of the outcomes. The validating also focused on her personal interest besides her former education and work experiences. It made her realise she had more to offer than she was aware of.

*“I am very good at making nice looking PowerPoint presentations to present my work. I never realised I am creative, but while doing the training I got aware of it and started to see it as a competence”.*

### IV – Documentation and support

A problem for Carolin was that she lost her original list with grades while leaving her country of origin. During the guidance of the training this was taken into account and she was stimulated to look further than traditional documentation. Guidance was limited to giving advice on possibilities to ask a third party for proof.

*“I had my diploma which was validated at MBO level three. But my biggest dream was to study nursing at HE level, but there was one problem. I did not have any proof of my grades from my education back in Sri Lanka. So, when I went to the University of Applied Science they offered me to do a three months pre-school to study Dutch, biology and chemistry.”*

But also in her former work-experience was taken into account for validation. She had to be more creative on this one, since she lost her original documentation.

*In Sri Lanka, it is normal to receive a letter from your boss with your competences when you leave your job. I did not have those letters here, so I asked the people at the library and the IVC where I work as a volunteer to write a letter about me”.*

#### V – Assessment

The assessment was in Dutch, what did not really stress Carolin. She prepared a PowerPoint presentation based on her personal capacities and former experiences. Also, her portfolio was part of her presentation.

*“I was not nervous at all, I am used to do a lot of presentations and I like it. I am not afraid of the people staring at me and I am really good at presenting. I have done presentations in front of 200 people. I do not have a problem with talking about myself so doing the presentation about my personal capacities was really easy”.*

#### VI – Impact

Carolin has used VPL training to gain more information on how to set her goal and how she could accomplish this within the Dutch society.

*“I want to continue working in healthcare but I realize I first have to go back to school to learn the Dutch medical terms. I had my diplomas translated and validated. In a few weeks, I start pre-courses in Dutch, biology and chemistry. During the intake interview they spoke to me and noticed I already had a lot of knowledge. Although they do not have my original list of grades they allow me to drop some courses. I probably have to study three years now instead of four”.*

At this moment, she is almost on the last step of the participation ladder. She travels every day to Amsterdam by train for the pre-courses.