

## **Observal – Review of Swiss publications (2005-2008)**

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Albornoz, A. et Dupuis, P. (2008). *Comment évaluer les acquis de l'expérience? Une analyse du travail des experts en VAE*. Genève: Université de Genève. (Cahiers des sciences de l'éducation, n° 120).

The validation of prior learning (VPL) is a new path leading to formal qualifications that gives importance to experience. The two main tools used in qualification procedures to validate prior learning are the assessment portfolio (list of the candidate's knowledge and competencies based on prior learning) and the competency profile (list of knowledge and competencies needed to obtain a formal qualification). The qualification procedure itself entails self-assessment (i.e. drafting an assessment portfolio listing all prior learning), assessment by experts (i.e. comparison of assessment portfolio with competency profile), complementary training (if required to fill observed gaps in training), and issuance of a formal qualification to successful candidates.

How do these experts manage to compare assessment portfolios, which are always individual and specific to a given context, with a competency profile, which is always general by definition? How do they define the prior learning that they seek to validate? And what activities enable the experts to weigh these two heterogeneous elements? The Swiss Vocational Teaching Institute (SIBP, now SFIVET) created an innovative observation and analysis tool to determine exactly how experts perform their assessments. This tool provides answers to the various questions mentioned above, which are important for all VPL stakeholders.

Inspired by theoretical notions taken from training assessment and VPL, this study presents two trains of thought concerning assessment activities and their focus. As the analysis is presented, it becomes increasingly clear that a change of paradigm is taking place, one that requires specific assessment activities and the joint efforts of all VPL stakeholders to find common ground so that they can carry out their respective tasks in a way that falls in line with VPL principles.

Bednarz, F. (2005). *Learning by problem solving: ICT skills between specialisation and entrepreneurship*. Paper - presented at the International Conference *What a Difference a Pedagogy Makes* (Stirling University - 24th – 26th June 2005) – Atti della Conferenza

A comparative study of German and Swiss VPL approaches in the ICT sector; presented to the above-mentioned international congress - EN

Bednarz, F. (2007). *Profili in frantumi, competenza da ricomporre. Cogito: riconoscere e trasferire la competenza nel lavoro edile* in *Professionalità*, n 95 / 2007, Editrice La Scuola, Brescia

A short presentation of the Interreg III Project COGITO, which seeks to develop a standard competency profile through joint efforts. Such a competency profile would include validation standards and assessment criteria for bricklayers working between Italy and Switzerland; the project forms the basis for further developments, both at the European and local levels (EU Lifelong Learning Project "Trasfobuilding", Interreg IV project VALID.O, a possible pilot VPL project in the building sector sponsored by the Cantons of Geneva and Ticino as well as by social partners within the framework of the VPL Platform)

Bednarz, F. (2007). *Certification of intercultural interpreters through recognition and validation of prior learning*. Paper - presented at the International Conference organised by Move: *Mutual recognition skills and competences gained through volunteering: towards a European debate* (EESC Headquarters, Bruxelles - 23th – 24th May 2007) – Atti della Conferenza - EN

A short presentation of the case study “Interpret”, which is a qualification procedure for community interpreters sponsored by the Interpret Association within the framework of a general project that is jointly funded by the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) and the Federal Foreigners Commission (FFC)

De Jonckere, S., et Ollagnier, E. (2008). *Validation des acquis en Suisse : des professionnels confrontés à une reconnaissance académique ou professionnelle*. Actes du 20<sup>e</sup> colloque de l’ADMEE-Europe, Université de Genève.  
<https://plone.unige.ch/sites/admee08/symposiums/j-s2/j-s2-2/>

Evéquo, G. (2006). Qualification professionnelle des adultes : quelle place pour la validation de l’expérience en Suisse ? *Panorama*, 4, 6-7

An understanding of political, legal, methodological and organisational aspects is required in order to assess and analyse the current VPL situation in Switzerland. This study shows that the VPL structure and know-how are already in place. All that remains is the desire to develop things further...

Fleischmann, D. (2006). La validation est-elle bien reconnue ? *Panorama*, 4, 3

Editorial taken from a special VPL section in issue 4 of the Panorama magazine.

Häni, E. (2006). Les tâches familiales et activités bénévoles : un obstacle à la carrière ou un facteur de réussite ? *Panorama*, 4, 10-11

How to identify and assess competencies developed while performing household chores, raising children and taking part in volunteer activities? How to give professional recognition to these competencies? The UND Centre has developed a working tool for this purpose. The results show that only a few more challenges still need to be overcome. The new framework directives issued by the Confederation should help improve the situation.

Lévesque, V., Lohner, B., Stoffel, B., Voit, J. et Weber Guisan, S. (2007). *Validation des acquis en culture générale*. Lausanne : IFFP. (Cahiers IFFP, 1)

This OPET-commissioned report presents a general overview of VPL practices in the area of general education throughout Switzerland together with corresponding recommendations. The report shows that there is a lack of consensus regarding the meaning of “adult education”, which has resulted in a fragmentation of VPL practices. The report recommends that “general education”, “adult education” and “VPL in general education” concepts be clearly defined. Specifically, this would entail the following: • clarifying the legal framework • describing the meaning and purpose of adult education and the competencies that adults need to develop • positioning “other qualification procedures” in relation to upper-secondary level VET programmes • proposing complementary training based on adult training principles • respecting VPL principles in qualification procedures and assessment approaches • bringing the three main partners within the VET/PET sector (i.e. Confederation, Cantons and professional organisations) together to decide what position general education should hold in qualification procedures.

Office fédéral de la formation professionnelle et de la technologie et Thomas, R. (Coord.) (2008). *New OECD Activity on Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning, Reconnaissance et validation des acquis : Etat des Lieux, rapport de la Suisse à l’OCDE*. Berne : OFFT

Office fédéral de la formation professionnelle et de la technologie (2008). *Validation des acquis : donner une valeur à l'expérience. Guide national*. Berne : OFFT.

National VPL Guidelines drafted on the basis of lessons learnt from OPET's national VPL project. The National VPL Guidelines serve as a reference and working tool for anyone wishing to establish qualification procedures to validate prior learning in the upper-secondary level VET or tertiary-level PET sectors. The publication contains national directives ensuring the comparability and quality of qualification procedures, two characteristics that are critically important for long-term acceptance. When necessary, the experience and knowledge gained from (pilot) projects to develop and introduce qualification procedures are used to periodically update the National VPL Guidelines.

Office fédéral de la formation professionnelle et de la technologie (2008). *Document complémentaire au guide national. Validation des acquis : donner une valeur à l'expérience. Précisions sur les instruments de validation et les méthodes de vérification supplémentaires*. Berne : OFFT

The National VPL Guidelines Supplement provides clarifications of competency profiles, assessment criteria and general education requirements, which are basic tools in the VPL process. The supplement also includes comments on additional verification methods along with practical examples and recommendations.

Office fédéral de la statistique (2006). *Apprentissage tout au long de la vie et formation continue : Etat des lieux de la diversité des indicateurs internationaux et sélection de résultats*. Neuchâtel : OFS  
<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/news/publikationen.Document.80513.pdf>

Petrini, B. et Stoffel, B. (2007). Kollektive Anerkennung von Bildungsleistungen : auf dem Weg zum EFZ Logistikkassistent-in. *NetzWerk : die Zeitschrift der Wirtschaftsbildungs Schweiz*, 4, 11-17.

This article presents the scientific results obtained from an OPET project to introduce a collective qualification procedure for the validation of prior learning at SwissPost. This project was intended to enable identification of the competencies of a group of SwissPost employees with the same professional experience. Once identified, these competencies were compared with a competency profile to determine eligibility for a Federal VET Diploma in logistics management.

Salini, D. (2008). *Le procedure di validazione degli apprendimenti esperienziali in Svizzera. Evoluzione delle pratiche e quadro legislativo* in *Professionalità*, n 99 / 2008, Editrice La Scuola, Brescia

A short presentation of Swiss experiences in the area of VPL and RPL, including detailed references to the National VPL Guidelines drafted by the VPL Platform.

Schreiber, K. (2006). Validation des acquis à la Poste : de nouveaux chemins vers la certification professionnelle. *Panorama*, 4, 8-9.

SwissPost employees who completed SwissPost's internal training programme now have the possibility of obtaining a Federal VET Diploma. Prior learning is taken into account and targeted complementary training provided if necessary. This qualification procedure was developed through the joint efforts of SwissPost, the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET) and other partners.

Thomas, R. (2006). Cadre national pour la validation des acquis : un important projet prend forme. *Panorama*, 4, 4-5

Adults lacking a formal qualification in a given occupational field now have the possibility of obtaining a formal qualification if they can demonstrate that they have at least five years of experience in the given occupational field. The qualification issued through a qualification procedure to validate prior learning must be equivalent to a qualification issued through traditional training plan routes. In order to do this, a national VPL framework is absolutely essential.

Voit, J., Weber Guisan, S., Cortessis, S., Petrini, B., Stoffel, B. (2007). *Analyse de compétences du personnel de distribution de la Poste Suisse : Expertise servant de base à une procédure de validation collective d'acquis professionnels en vue de l'obtention du CFC de gestionnaire en logistique*. Zollikofen : IFFP.

The two main tools used in qualification procedures to validate prior learning are the assessment portfolio (list of the candidate's knowledge and competencies based on prior learning) and the competency profile (list of knowledge and competencies needed to obtain a formal qualification). The qualification procedure itself entails self-assessment (i.e. drafting an assessment portfolio listing all prior learning), assessment by experts (i.e. comparison of assessment portfolio with competency profile), complementary training (if required to fill observed gaps in training), and issuance of a formal qualification to successful candidates.

The ValiPoste project sponsored by the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET) and SwissPost, in partnership with the Cantons and professional organisation enables SwissPost employees to obtain a Federal VET Diploma in logistics management on the basis of their prior learning (i.e. experience working at SwissPost and completion of SwissPost's now obsolete internal training programme).

The ValiDist subproject described in this publication led to the introduction of a qualification procedure for distribution personnel who have at least five years of professional experience in this field and who completed SwissPost's now obsolete internal training programme. Within this framework, the Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET) was commissioned by OPET and SwissPost to conduct a study to determine the knowledge and professional, methodological and social competencies that all SwissPost distribution personnel share. This information was then used to draft the competency profile used in the qualification procedure.

The scientific and methodological underpinnings of this project led to a two-tiered approach: a practical one based on the collective validation of shared professional knowledge and competencies as well as a theoretical one based on an equivalency procedure to assess training content.

## Useful Web sites:

Confederation

[www.admin.ch](http://www.admin.ch)\*

[www.bbt.admin.ch](http://www.bbt.admin.ch)\*

[www.validacquis.ch](http://www.validacquis.ch)

Cantons

[www.cebig.ch](http://www.cebig.ch)

[www.csfp.ch](http://www.csfp.ch)

[www.edk.ch](http://www.edk.ch)\*

[www.geneve.ch](http://www.geneve.ch)

[www.orientation.ch](http://www.orientation.ch)

Tertiary-level type A institutions

[www.cohep.ch](http://www.cohep.ch)\*

[www.crus.ch](http://www.crus.ch)\*

[www.hes-so.ch](http://www.hes-so.ch)

[www.iffp-suisse.ch](http://www.iffp-suisse.ch)\*

[www.kfh.ch](http://www.kfh.ch)\*

[www.oaq.ch](http://www.oaq.ch)\*

[www.sassa.ch](http://www.sassa.ch)

[www.sbf.admin.ch](http://www.sbf.admin.ch)\*

[www.unige.ch](http://www.unige.ch)\*

Non-formal and informal sector

[www.alice.ch](http://www.alice.ch)\*

[www.arra.ch](http://www.arra.ch)

[www.ch-q.ch](http://www.ch-q.ch)

[www.dossier-benevolat.ch](http://www.dossier-benevolat.ch)

[www.ecap.ch](http://www.ecap.ch)

[www.educa.ch](http://www.educa.ch)\*

[www.effe.ch](http://www.effe.ch)

[www.inter-pret.ch](http://www.inter-pret.ch)

[www.retravailler.org](http://www.retravailler.org)

[www.valida.ch](http://www.valida.ch)

\* Content also available in English.