



MAPINE project

2009 – 1 AT1 – LEO04-01498 7

Guidelines for agreement on mutual recognition and accreditation of massage training and certification at bilateral/multilateral level

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June 2011

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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1. Introduction

This report has been realised in the framework of MAPINE project (2009 – 1 AT1 – LEO04-01498 7 Italia: LLP-LDV-PA-09-IT-0262) started last August, 1st 2009. The project has a duration of 24 months and its objective are:

- to collect a status-quo of massage training in terms of its organisation, its target groups and legal frameworks
- to make light on these professions improving transparency for the comparison, accreditation and recognition of massage training programmes throughout Europe by means of a mutual cooperation within the participating institutions
- to compare massage training programmes, certificates, professions;
- to create pre-condition for mobility actions of the same workers.

In particular with this guidelines we would like to explain how is possible to agree on mutual recognition and accreditation for massage training certification at bilateral/multilateral level.

2. Objectives

Objective of this report are:

- to give a raw explanation about the system and how implement it;
- to supply information concerning the opportunity to agree on mutual recognition and accreditation of massage training and certification at bilateral/multilateral level;
- to illustrate a practical example.

3. Methodology

In order to achieve the pre-defined objectives the following methodology has been realized:

1. synthesize discussions and agreement carried out during final meeting of MAPINE project in Ancona;
2. analysis of a concrete practical example.

4. Results

Massages profiles are growing professions. This is mainly related to the increasing of people choosing preventive approaches to healthcare. At the same time rising is the interest by people in complement traditional types of medical treatments with alternatives.

The demand for massage therapists is expected to increase in relation to both aging population and increased awareness of the existence of such emerging healthcare profession able to “produce” health benefits for further and specialized human services.

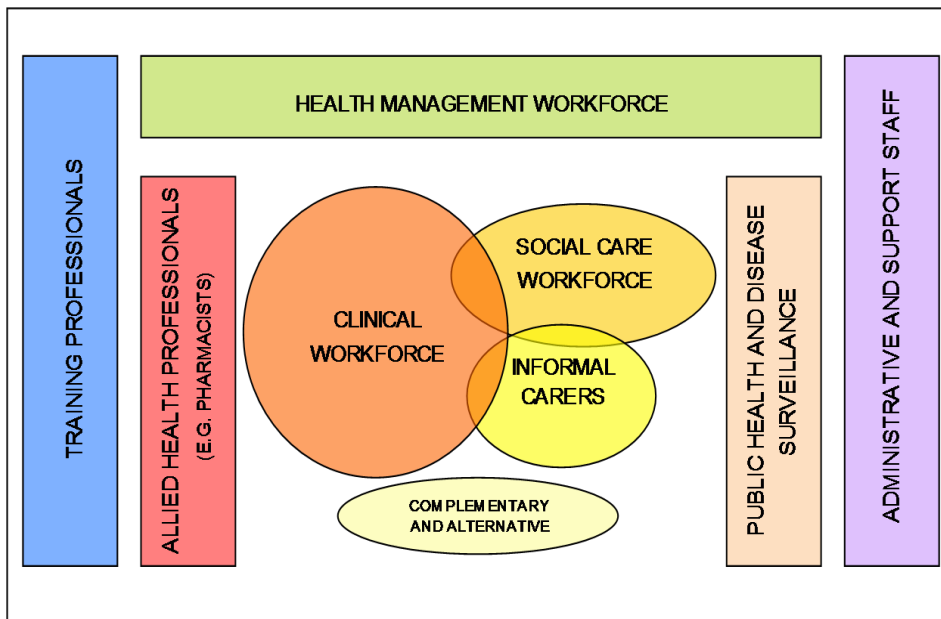
At the same time, vocational and educational training in all economic sectors is increasing and day by day new and deeply specialized professionals enter into the labour market.

Nowadays some massage therapists work in hospitals or on sports teams. Many work in private practice or in group clinics. Hours of work vary depending on the requirements of the workplace. Earnings also depend on the workplace and the skill and experience of the massage therapist. Earnings can vary widely. Many massage therapists work in a “blended environment” where they work in a variety of places on a given day¹.

From a juridical point of view, according to Green Paper On the European Workforce for Health [COM(2008) 725 def], most of these workers cannot be referred to “clinical workforce” even, as results in the below graph,:

- there are some overlapping areas among profiles and;
- profiles borders are not well defined.

¹ http://docs.fairnesscommissioner.ca/docs/massage_therapists.htm



Source: Green Paper On the European Workforce for Health [COM(2008) 725 def]

The implementation of a system based on a common competency framework with which can be possible to define all profile related to massage professions in terms of learning outcomes (both the old ones already ruled such as physiotherapist but also the new one arising from the labour market demand such as Ayurveda specialist or personal trainer) can give the opportunity to compare massage training programs, certificates and professions.

Of course beside the individuation of a common competency framework:

- it is essential to implement others European tools created for the purpose by UE and in particular:
 - ECVET system: European Credit system for Vocational and Educational Training;
 - an agreed system for the identification of standards professional competencies (according to learning outcomes);
 - a further agreed system for the recognition of common principles able to validate those competencies acquired (personal competencies will constitute an individual portfolio);
 - the adoption of a sort of Europass;
 - the agreement on both VET standards and VET quality standards;
- it is preferable to reflect about how profiles can be linked to European Qualification Framework (EQF) and of course to the National Qualification Framework (NQF).

Methodology for the realisation of a common competency framework is clear: it is described in "Roadmap for implementation of mobility in massage training programmes" report as well below:

1. definition of core competencies;

2. definition of job description (professional activities and work-processes, work place description, responsibilities, quality assurance measures);
3. assignment of learning activities to each competence;
4. definition of units and assignment of credit points;
5. definition of a Memorandum of mutual trust.

In deeply for the implementation of such system, first of all, it needs to **define core competencies**. It is a very crucial theoretical work that should be realized by experts in Vocational and Educational Training pathways design. The involvement of different professionals already working in the profiles is absolute necessary in order to clarify needs, requirements and characteristics of the profiles.

The model has been realized in the framework of MAPINE project and it is just an example: it could be a starting point for the production of a further detailed one.

Moreover, since competencies are dynamics and varies according to the technology evolution a continuous monitoring of the scheme has to be planned.

Once defined core competencies of different profiles begins the most decisive activity the **involvement of stakeholders**. It is a crucial activity and from this, depends the future implementation and effective functioning of all the system.

Introduction and implementation of all this system, like ECVET one it is voluntary.

Overlapping competencies should be clarify and solved with and by stakeholders involvement (who can do what and how).

Like the definition of core competencies, the involvement of stakeholders needs important theoretical assessments in which single and practical aspects discussions could help in the achievement of an agreement about core competencies.

During the design of a border between a profile and another some difficulties have been expected but the increase of culture and awareness about different profiles will be functional to reach an agreement.

The constitution of a permanent round table finalized to the management and the steering of such thematic network in these issues could be best method for the purpose.

The production of **job description** is also an essential tool to clarify professional work processes and competencies considering that responsibilities and quality assurance measures individuate the limits of the profile.

Job description describes activities sequences a profession requires. A good job description also includes information on entry conditions, the training duration and opportunities of developments.

Only describing professional activities and work processes the competencies framework is complete.

Job description should be realized by both experts in human resources and professionals already working in the profiles.

Of course a progressive involvement of stakeholders in the identification of mutual job descriptions it is recommended. To know whether the described profession represents individual skills, requirement profiles by the employer will help.

A job description is, however, never all-encompassing, the profession is always.

According to what stated for competencies, job description are dynamics and varies according to the technology evolution; for this reason a continuous monitoring of the scheme has to be planned.

The **assignment of learning activities to each competence** as well **the assignment of credit points** are quite easy activities for those experts in Vocational and Educational Training pathways design involved at University level during the implementation of Bologna processes.

In particular the assignment of learning activities should follow the already known model for the production of VET pathways:

- identification of contents e.g. assignments, knowledge...;
- planning of tailored methods e.g. frontal lessons, internship, tutorial, seminar, colloquium ...;
- recognition of appropriate and where possible innovative tools e.g. books, multimedia document, ...

An examination should give the possibility to evaluate the competence level reached for a single training unit.

Training unit can be expressed in credit points (ECVET). The average expected learning outcomes of a year of formal full time vocational training can be measured by definition, with 60 points. The significance of the ECVET points is always related to the specific learning outcomes achieved, in numerical form, they give additional information about the extent of learned skills, but have no other "value".

Each competence is strictly linked to a learning outcome and the sum of competencies is a vocational and educational training pathway. At the same time, according to Bologna process, the sum of learning outcomes reached in a vocational and educational training pathway can be articulated in credits (ECVET) and each competence has a credit value.

At the end of a vocational and educational training unit a guy should provide, through an examination, his/her competence that means the achievement of a specific and personal credit (ECVET).

An example of ECVET certificate is attached (annex I)

Credit Points are used for the quantitative measurement of certain parts of the training program or of a qualification. Credit Points are always based on the "student workload" necessary to achieve the program's objectives.

The term "student workload" designates the assumed time likely to be needed by a person in education to acquire the relevant competencies according to the training program or a qualification and includes all learning activities² relevant for the acquisition of a competence.

Finally for a concrete implementation for the process it needs a document finalized to evidence the system; a document where learner, vocational and educational organization as well all stakeholders can evidence the agreement to the whole system.

An example of Memorandum of mutual trust is attached (annex II)

Follows a concrete example about the system using the core competencies sheme agreed for MAPINE project.

If an Italian Massofisioterapista is interested in gets work in Germany after his studies working as Masseurin/Masseur und medizinsche/r Bademeisterin/Bademeister, it will concretize the following situation:

² For further details please see "Roadmap report"

Table 1: Italian Massofisioterapista and Germany Masseurin comparison

Core competencies		Massage profiles		Comparison
		Massofisioterapista	Masseurin/Masseur und medizinische/r Bademeisterin/Bademeister	
Communication and relationship	Communication and relationship with patient			Ok
	Communication and relationship with colleagues			Ok
	Negotiation and conflict management			Ok
Training and self training	Improve training and self training			Ok
Profession responsibility	Professional behaviour			Ok
	Respect of patients privacy			Ok
	Entrepreneur and management skills			Ok
Prevention	Prevention			Ok
Evidence Based Practice	E.B.P. evidence based practice study and research			Ok
Rehabilitation treatments	Identify needs			Ok
	Provide general evaluation			Ok
	Product functional diagnosis			Ok
	Product functional prognosis			Ok
	Design therapeutic plan			Ok
	Implement treatment			Ok
	Assess results			Ok
	Supply with suggestion and guidance			1
Specific knowledge and skills	Orthopaedic/Rheumatology rehabilitation			Ok
	Neurological rehabilitation			1
	Developmental age rehabilitation			2
	Cardio-respiratory rehabilitation			1
	Sphincter rehabilitation			2
	Visceral/Oncology rehabilitation			2
	Occupational therapy			2
	Patient positioning			Ok
	Therapeutic massage			Ok
	Sportive massage			1
	Functional rehabilitation in sports traumatology			Ok
	Manual treatment of soft tissue			Ok
	Orthoses and aids application			1
	First aid/assistance in field of athletes			2
	Acupressure			2
	Reflexologist			2
	Ayurveda			Ok
	Shiatsu			Ok
	Naturopathy			2
	Pranotherapy			2
	Lymphatic drainage			Ok
	Trigger point massage			Ok
	Therapeutic education	Therapeutic education		

Where:

1	Aware-getting started initiating -
2	Focusing – developing, prioritising -
3	Practicing – complying, executing -
4	Exploiting – sustaining, maximising within existing capability -
5	Transforming – advocating, achieving qualitative change -

Considering the pre-defined scale:

- Italian massofisioterapista is able to practice his/her own work for those competencies where compare "Ok" in last column. Please note that for Functional rehabilitation in sports traumatology Italian competence is higher than Germany one.
- Italian massofisioterapista needs additional training in order to acquire those competencies left reaching the same competencies level of his German colleagues. That is in those rows marked with 1 in the last column.
- Italian massofisioterapista needs to achieve through a specific training a complete unit of training for those rows marked with 2 in the comparison column.

Finally, each country is different ... each country has different professions ... each country has its own educational system ... BUT using a same competence based framework it could be possible the comparison of profiles yes ... each country can remain like it is!³

³ For further detail please see results of Leonardo project "Medical Assistant Professions – MAP – and ECVET" LLL-LDV-TOI-2007-AT-0029

Annex I



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



Certificate

Istituto Fleming Ancona

hereby certifies, that

Mr Roberto Penna

during his Vocational and Educational Training as:

Massofisioterapista

was assessed with **146** ECVET credit points

<i>Country</i>	<i>Italia</i>
<i>Course Duration</i>	<i>36 months</i>

Stamp

Date, signature

Present certificate is valid only unit with agreed competence framework and massofisioterapista job description

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Annex II



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



Memorandum of mutual trust

Vocational and Educational Training organisation

Istituto Fleming Ancona,

signing this “Memorandum of mutual trust” ensure the recognition of the Massage professions competencies has been assessed and identified according to criteria and processes related to MAPINE project.

Credits acquired in each Vocational and Educational Training organisation signing the same Memorandum are valid for any kind of transparency of training contents, professional qualifications mobility of masseurs, physiotherapists and all other profiles described in the project.

Memorandum always refers to the agreed competencies based framework as well as to the profiles job descriptions.

Stamp

Date, signature