

# Work-based Learning in Finland

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# Vocational education and training (VET) in Finland

- Several **decrees and acts** regulate VET and teachers eligible to teach in vocational institutes.
- Responsible bodies **Ministry of Education and Culture, and The Finnish National Board of Education.**
- The aim of vocational education and training (VET) is to improve the **skills of the work force**, to respond to **skills needs in enterprises** and to support lifelong learning.
- VET comprises initial vocational training and further and specialist training. **Vocational institutes offer training for vocational qualifications.**
- **52 different upper secondary vocational qualifications** confirmed by the Ministry of Education and Culture.
- Different orientation for young learners and adult learners.

# Work-based learning today, VET

- All three-year programmes (120 credits, valid since 1999) in vocational education and training include **at least six months of work-placed (on-the-job training)** (20 credits) in a genuine working environment. On-the-job periods can be scheduled to take place during different study years.
- The educational objectives of on-the-job learning are **determined in the National Core Curriculum.**
- Is **goal-oriented, guided and evaluated study organised at workplaces.**
- Training instructions are **planned and implemented in co-operation** between the educational institutions and employers.

# Work-based learning today, VET

- The aim is to improve the vocational skills of students and their possibilities to enter into the labour market. It also **motivates students and thus prevents drop-outs**. One aim is to strengthen the attractiveness of vocational education and training.
- **Teachers organise the work-placed learning together with the workplace instructors who supervise the students at the workplace.**
  - Special training programme for workplace instructors, 120 hours
- **Assessment of the vocational skills of the students is made in cooperation (teachers, employers and employees) usually at the workplaces (skills demonstrations).**

# Apprenticeship training

- Apprenticeship training is a **work-based form of providing vocational training**.
- It is based on a **written fixed-term employment contract (apprenticeship contract) between an employer and an apprentice**, who must be at least 15 years old.
- Apprenticeship training accounts for about 10% of initial vocational education and training. **It is used mainly by adults** but the aim is to increase the amount of young students (Youth guarantee).
- Apprenticeship training is based on a **National Core Curriculum** or the requirements for the relevant competence-based qualification, according to which the student's individual learning plan is formed. It is drawn up so as to allow for the needs and prerequisites of the workplace and the student.

# Apprenticeship training

- **The learning plan is drawn up in co-operation between the student, the employer and the local administrative authorities,** so that it can be appended to the apprenticeship contract when the contract is approved.
- The training mainly emphasises work-places learning and integration of practical and theoretical instruction. **Approximately 70–80% of the time used for learning takes place in the training workplace.** The student works and learns in the working environment, where the student's training is entrusted to the responsible workplace instructor(s). **Theoretical education is mainly provided by a vocational institute.**

# Apprenticeship training, financial considerations

- **The employer pays the apprentice's wages** according to the relevant collective agreement for the period of workplace training.
- **For the period of theoretical studies, the student receives social benefits**, such as a daily allowance and allowances for accommodation and travel expenses.
- The **employer receives training compensation** to cover the costs of training provided at the workplace: 800 €/month for the first year, 500 €/month for the second year, and 300 €/month for the third year.



# Reform regulations in force on 1.8.2015

- Changing the scope of qualification (180 ECTS credits), revising the contents of core subjects and increasing the flexibility of qualifications, which enables students' individual choices.
- **Validation of prior learning, learning at the work place and quality assurance, that is, assessment of learning outcomes at work places in real working situations, are emphasised in the reformed qualifications.**
- **Prior learning acquired in training, working life or other learning environments has to be recognised as part of the qualification.**

# Work-based learning 1.8.2015

- Students familiarise themselves with practical assignments required in the occupation and achieve the core objectives of the occupation as laid down in the curriculum. It enhances young people's employment opportunities.
- **All 180 ECTS credit upper secondary vocational qualifications include a period of on-the-job learning with a minimum scope of 35 credits.**
- One of the aims of work-placed learning is **vocational skills demonstrations** (since August 2006) and they will mostly take place during periods of work-placed learning.

# Challenges of the work-based learning

Source: Tammilehto, M, 2014. Ministry of Education and Culture

- Developing the **quality and practices** of work-placed learning
- **Strengthening apprenticeship training for young people**
  - The increased training compensations to employers for the implementation of such apprenticeship training of students who have completed their basic education in the same year
  - Advance period of the apprenticeship training
  - Training of the workplace instructors (120 hours official programme)
- **Developing work-placed learning and educational models which combine education in educational institutions and apprenticeship training**
  - For example two years in institution-based VET and one year in apprenticeship-training

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