



FILING CARD GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLE
European Network 'Career & AGE'

Identification of the 'Practice'

TITLE of the good practice: VAE- Platform

Country/Region: French community of Belgium -

Nature: Programme – Measure – Project – Other:

ESF- AXE 2 Measure 4 - project - VAE-Universités

Period*: 2008-2013

Budget*: 5,600,000 EUR

In which language(s) available: French

Final beneficiary: CIUF (Interuniversity council of the French Community of Belgium "Conseil interuniversitaire de la Communauté française")

Leading partner: CIUF (Interuniversity council of the French Community of Belgium "Conseil interuniversitaire de la Communauté française ")

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*: If known/if available

Description of the 'Good Practice'

What was the problem?

For many people, employed or unemployed, the access to lifelong learning (LLL) is difficult. The diplomas are usually an obstacle for those people who want to follow a university curriculum. Indeed, they may have the required experience in a specific field that would allow them to successfully follow a certain curriculum, but they do not have the degree or certification that would allow them to enter the training. This is a huge obstacle to access to lifelong learning.

The Decree of November 7 of 2013 concerning the "Valorisation of acquired experience" (VAE) allows adults who want to follow university courses to capitalise on the experience they have gained along their professional life.

The VAE in the French-speaking part of Belgium:

- The "VAE admission" allow adults who lack the required degrees to enter a Master's programme or other lifelong learning curricula. To do so, they have to prove they have 5 years of professional and/or personal experience (this includes the validated years of superior(???) education). The adults can be exempted from some of the classes of the curricula.

On the one hand, the VAE process was not very known, and not very readable/understandable by the audience it targeted. On the other hand, only very few curricula were found using the VAE process.

What were the objective(s)?:

The VAE targets the active workforce, regardless of their status, i.e. they can be unemployed, employed or self-employed. Their aim is to acquire new competences so that they can keep their job, develop their career or reorient it. In the end, individuals can increase their employability and mobility on the labour market.

To ensure the VAE is of high quality and equity, the project aimed at harmonising the VAE process among all the universities in the French-speaking part of Belgium. The coordination is done by the « Conseil Interuniversitaire de la Communauté française (CIUF) » (= The interuniversity council for the French-speaking part of Belgium). All together they designed a common process, so that people can resort to VAE more easily

What did you do?:

The project standardised and harmonised the VAE process, to simplify it for candidates, and thus, make it accessible to a larger audience. The project consisted of the following steps:

1. Information

The CIUF centralises the information available for VAE candidates:

- Contact points provide information on curricula and universities;
- The CIUF issues several brochures;
- A website is dedicated to the VAE to help candidates in their procedures.

2. Orientation :

This step helps the candidate to clarify and highlight his endeavour. The project's contact point can assist him with this task. An analysis is made on the admissibility of his request. In case of a negative answer, he is offered other options.

3. Commitment:

If the first analysis proves to be conclusive, the request is transmitted to the university.

The university commits itself to carry out an in-depth analysis of the candidate's request, to answer it, and in case of a positive answer, to welcome the candidate in its curricula.

The candidate commits himself to invest in the process.

4. Evaluation :

The jury of the curricula chosen by the candidate evaluate the professional and personal experiences acquired by the candidate. The jury decide which experiences can be valuable for the candidate's admission, or exemption from classes.

5. Communication of the results :

The jury communicate their decision to the candidate and may make recommendations regarding his further training path.

This global support helps VAE candidates to find the necessary information to step into the VAE process, and in the end to increase their employability.

Was there a specific focus on gender, diversity? :

There was no specific focus on gender.

However, some research was done on gender issues. (see projet VAE-Universités – Résultats et Perspectives 2008-2013 – p35. Bruxelles, 2013 – CIUF)

Moreover, one university developed a communication plan on gender.

What did you achieve?

- Improvement of the VAE process;
- Development of tools for adult employees' career guidance;
- Increase in the number of universities committed to the VAE project;
- Since 2008, there have been about 700 VAE applications from candidates annually, and about 500 of them have been admitted into university curricula.

What were changes or effects of the good practice? :

- Easier access to the VAE process for the candidates;

- Increase in the number of VAE candidates and, hence increase in the number of persons entering an LLL process;
- Improvement of their employability and mobility.

What were the critical points to get the project running?

- A sound legal base, allowing this kind of process;
- Commitment of Universities to offer diverse and high quality training corresponding to VAE candidates' needs;
- Effective communication strategy;
- Development of adapted tools for adults 'career guidance.

Transferability:

Which part of your approach could be used in another context?

Which conditions are needed to optimize the transferability of the project?

The VAE system as a whole could be transferred. The only condition is the willingness of public authorities and universities to step into such process. This system has already been recognised by other European networks of universities as best practices to be replicated.

Link with the focus of the network (Tick more than one box if necessary):

SYSTEM level

ORGANISATIONAL level

INDIVIDUAL level

Life phase

Career phase

Generation

Other information

Any other useful information on the Good Practice see:

<http://www.eucen.eu/BeFlexPlus/CaseStudies/CIUF.pdf>

www.vae-universite.be

Projet VAE-Universités – 2008-2013, Résultats et perspectives, Bruxelles, CIUF.