



**DESIGNERS'  
KIT**

**HOW TO IDENTIFY  
THE PROPER EQF  
LEVEL TO  
LOCALIZE YOUR  
CURRICULUM**



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## Introduction

The European Reference Curriculum for CGE developed by the NECTAR Project **targets chefs (ESCO profile – EQF4) and is aimed at awarding EQF5 level**, although it can be **adapted to target and award a specialization in EQF4**.

A preliminary step for the localization of the curriculum is the **DEFINITION OF THE EQF/NQF LEVEL OF THE LOCALIZED CURRICULUM** and the relative **NUMBER OF AWARDED CREDITS**.

This step should be performed considering:

- national and local regulations;
- labour market requirements;
- the estimated workload of the course, which is related to the number of credits (ECVET points) you'll be able to award with the final certification.

In addition, you have to consider that the CGE qualification, where possible:

- should always lead to a certificate;
- should be a stand-alone qualification;
- could be awarded to students who got a recognition of prior learning through a formal validation process.

## EQF level

Level 5 qualifications provide advanced VET skills and competences, potentially responding quickly to new labour market demands. Many EQF level 5 qualifications are designed to upskill people already in employment and provide them with advanced technical and/or management skills.

As demonstrated by a study carried out by CEDEFOP<sup>1</sup> on qualifications at level 5, EQF level 5 operates across VET, higher and general education, with a heterogeneous range of qualifications awarded by a wide range of VET and higher education institutions.

When the qualification is part of, or closely related to, a bachelor's degree programme, progression (including credit transfer) is generally guaranteed. So, level 5 qualifications **can help progress to higher education**. By acting as a bridge between education and training institutions and subsystems they can promote interaction (vertically and horizontally) between VET and higher education. Many EQF level 5 qualifications are awarded through **SCHE (Short Cycle Higher Education)** programmes, which in the Bologna process were dedicated to providing an intermediate step towards bachelor's degrees.

SCHE are an intermediate level of the first level of higher education or at level 5 of the EQF. SCHE enables students to climb the ladder of higher education step by step. In the majority of countries surveyed students can use most of the credits earned in SCHE to progress to degree courses. In some countries students can even use all the credits earned to progress to a bachelor's award [EURASHE, 2011].

Not all EU countries that have developed higher vocational programmes at level 5 of the EQF consider these to be equivalent to SCHE [EURASHE, 2011].

According to CEDEFOP<sup>2</sup>, Post-Secondary VET programmes leading to EQF level 4 are usually set up for young employed and unemployed people and adults with an upper secondary education diploma, but they are open also to holders of a professional technician certificate or people who do not have an upper secondary education qualification, but had their educational, training and vocational experiences validated through a recognition of prior formal, nonformal and informal learning. These courses are usually set up by VET Providers, Schools or Enterprises.

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<sup>1</sup> CEDEFOP, 2014. Qualifications at level 5: progressing in a career or to higher education [https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/6123\\_en.pdf](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/6123_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/>

**Both EQF level 5 and 4 qualifications can be also obtained through validation of work experience.** Validation of nonformal and informal learning generally plays an important role at this level in many countries. It enables people to acquire a qualification or it shortens the duration of a programme that leads to the award of a qualification [CEDEFOP, 2014].

## Duration and Credits

As countries have been working to link comprehensive NQFs to the EQF5, qualifications at level 5 are very diverse and developing dynamically [CEDEFOP, 2014].

When EQF5 qualifications are linked to Higher Education they usually detail the duration of a programme in terms of ECTS. **The number of ECTS credits varies from 60 to 180 and the average is 120<sup>3</sup>.**

According to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), one academic year corresponds to 60 ECTS, credits that are normally equivalent to 1500–1800 hours of total workload, irrespective of standard or qualification type.

To enable a common approach for the use of ECVET points, a Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council <sup>4</sup> stated that ECVET points are allocated to a qualification basing on the following conversion: **60 points are allocated to the learning outcomes expected to be achieved in a year of formal training.**

Assuming that a year of formal training at EQF5 level can be compared to an academic year, we can infer that an average amount of 1500 hours can correspond to a year of formal VET.

**One year of formal VET = 60 ECVET points = about 1500 hours of workload**

ECVET points cannot be considered as a representation of the absolute value of a competence, but the total amount of ECVET points allocated to a qualification depends on the length of the training required to have such formal qualification.

Taking into account these premises, in order to support the instantiation of the CGE Curriculum we've identified 3 main CASES.

<sup>3</sup> CEDEFOP, 2014. Qualifications at level 5: progressing in a career or to higher education [https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/6123\\_en.pdf](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/6123_en.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), ANNEX II. ECVET — Principles and technical specifications <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:155:0011:0018:EN:PDF>



## Cases of localized CGE Curricula

### CASE A – EQF5

Instantiate CGE Curriculum at EQF5 assigning a range from 60 to 90 ECVET points, corresponding to a workload from 1500 to 2250 hours.

EQF LEVEL	ESTIMATED WORKLOAD	ECVET POINTS RANGE
5	From 1 year to 1,5 years of formal training From 1500 to 2250 hours of workload	60 to 90

CASE A can correspond to curricula linked to Higher Education, where 60 to 90 ECTS are awarded to students. An example of this case are courses set up in Italy by ITS, which are Higher Technical Education Institutes, defined by law, and organized by the central (national) government in collaboration with the territorial government of the regions. Courses organized by ITS usually last 4 semesters for a total of 1800/2000 hours<sup>5</sup>.

Validation of formal, nonformal and informal learning can be implemented enabling to acquire the qualification or shortening the duration of the programme that leads to the award of the qualification.

### CASE B – EQF5/EQF4

Instantiate CGE Curriculum in a course that envisages from 1000 to 1500 hours of workload (from 9 months to 1 year of formal training).

This course can be set at:

- **EQF5 level:** in this case the course is framed in a more comprehensive (and longer) learning path awarding an EQF5 qualification; anyway, where possible, CGE qualification should be a stand-alone qualification always leading to a certificate;
- **EQF4 level:** in this case the course will be a **Post-Secondary VET specialization course within EQF4 level** (targeting EQF4 students and awarding EQF4 certification)

Depending on the duration a range from 40 to 60 ECVET points could be assigned.

EQF LEVEL	ESTIMATED WORKLOAD	ECVET POINTS RANGE
4/5	9 months to 1 year of formal training From 1000 to 1500 hours of workload	40 to 60

CASE B at EQF5 level can be implemented for instance in courses which can be recognized as part of SCHE (Short Cycle Higher Education) programmes, although they award a stand-alone qualification and a certificate.

CASE at EQF4 level can be implemented, for instance, in Portugal in a VET course awarding certifications for pastry chef, veterinary technician, digital marketer and also some accountant courses.

Validation of formal, nonformal and informal learning can be implemented enabling to acquire the qualification or shortening the duration of the programme that leads to the award of the qualification.

<sup>5</sup> EURASHE, 2011. Short Cycle Higher Education in Europe Level 5: the Missing Link – Full Report. [https://www.eurashe.eu/library/modernising-phe/L5\\_report\\_SCHE\\_in\\_Europe\\_full\\_report\\_Jan2011.pdf](https://www.eurashe.eu/library/modernising-phe/L5_report_SCHE_in_Europe_full_report_Jan2011.pdf)



### CASE C – EQF4

Instantiate CGE Curriculum at EQF4 assigning a range from 30 to 40 ECVET points, corresponding to a workload from 750 to 1000 hours (6 to 9 months).

EQF LEVEL	ESTIMATED WORKLOAD	ECVET POINTS RANGE
4	Half year to 9 months of formal training From 750 to 1000 hours of workload	30 to 40

Instantiated courses will be **Post-Secondary VET specialization courses within EQF4 level** (targeting EQF4 students and awarding EQF4 certification) lasting from 6 to 9 months.

CASE C at EQF4 level can be implemented, for instance, in an Italian IFTS course (Higher Technical Education and Training); these courses are destined to young people and adults who, after having obtained a secondary education diploma, want to obtain a specialization corresponding to high level qualifications and specific professional skills. IFTS courses usually last two semesters for a total of 800/1000 hours.

Validation of formal, nonformal and informal learning can be implemented enabling to acquire the qualification or shortening the duration of the programme that leads to the award of the qualification.

## References

CEDEFOP, 2014. Qualifications at level 5: progressing in a career or to higher education [https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/6123\\_en.pdf](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/6123_en.pdf)

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EURASHE, 2011. Short Cycle Higher Education in Europe Level 5: the Missing Link – Full Report. [https://www.eurashe.eu/library/modernising-phe/L5\\_report\\_SCHE\\_in\\_Europe\\_full\\_report\\_Jan2011.pdf](https://www.eurashe.eu/library/modernising-phe/L5_report_SCHE_in_Europe_full_report_Jan2011.pdf)

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