

**THE CONCEPT OF
THE MODULAR
VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION AND
TRAINING
SYSTEM**



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INTRODUCTION

The provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003-2012 (hereinafter referred to as the “Strategy Provisions”) identify the measure that *“a flexible and open education structure combining general education, vocational education and training, studies and formal, non-formal and informal study modes to make a common education space is to be created”* in Lithuania. Significant action has already been undertaken to implement this measure: Lithuanian Qualifications Framework (hereinafter referred to as “LTQF”) has been developed and approved by Government Resolution No. 535 of 4 May 2010; the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania has validated *“the possibility to include modules of vocational education and training programmes”* in general and secondary education programmes; Order No. V-1435 of the Minister of Education and Science “On Approval of the Description of the Procedure for the Development and Validation of Formal Vocational Education and Training Programmes” of 27 August 2010 has established that all newly developed formal programmes of vocational education and training intended for obtaining a qualification have to be modular; “Description of Secondary Education Programme”, approved by Order No. V-1392 of the Minister of Education and Science of 21 July 2011 emphasises the importance of bringing general education and vocational education and training closer together. The concept of the modular vocational education and training system (hereinafter referred to as the “Concept”) has also been developed to contribute to the implementation of the abovementioned measure identified in the Strategy Provisions.

The breakdown of the process for obtaining a qualification into modules will increase the flexibility of vocational education and training system. It is useful for individuals wishing to obtain a qualification, the world of work and the education system as a whole:

- an individual has increased opportunities to independently construct his/her qualification through obtaining and developing it; to reduce studying period by validation of knowledge and competences possessed; to continue studying after a break at some other vocational education and training institution or even in a foreign country;
- it is easier for employers and labour exchanges to organise training by selecting employees where their qualification does not satisfy requirements of vacancies available; employers and professional associations can easier organise employees’ professional development;
- well-organised modular vocational education and training should be especially useful for education system: accessibility and attractiveness of vocational education and training should increase; numbers of young individuals early leaving education system should decrease; renewal of vocational education and training programmes as well as the implementation of prior learning assessment and validation etc. should become less

complicated. All this should contribute to the implementation of the idea of lifelong learning.

Transition to modular vocational education and training is in harmony with the European Union initiatives: “Common European Principles for Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning” published in 2004, “Recommendation on the Development of a European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for Lifelong Learning” approved by the European Parliament and the Council in 2008, “European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET)” adopted in 2009, etc.

Terms used in the Concept:

Responsible authority - an authority empowered by the Minister of Education and Science to manage vocational education and training system.

Competence assessment authority - a social partner accredited as provided in national law, a legal entity of the Republic of Lithuania, a legal entity of some other Member State or organisation without legal personality or their division, which have been granted the right to assess personal competences (*the Law on Vocational Education and Training of the Republic of Lithuania*, http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=404449).

Qualifications management authority – an authority empowered by the Minister of Education and Science to manage the qualifications system.

Central professional committee – a collegial advisory authority operating on the basis of partnership and coordinating strategic issues for qualifications system development.

Sectoral professional committee - a collegial advisory authority formed on the basis of partnership and coordinating issues on qualifications within specific sectors of the economy.

Competence - the ability to perform a specific activity with the help of obtained knowledge, abilities, skills and values (*the Republic of Lithuania Law on Education (Official Gazette, 2011, No.: 38-1804)*).

General competence – the formation of specific knowledge, abilities, skills and personal qualities that are typical of and can be applied in many careers (*Glossary of Vocational Education and Training Terms by R. Laužackas. – Kaunas, 2005*).

Credit for learning – a unit of learning volume, which is used to measure learning outcomes and the period of learning. One year of continuous learning corresponds to 60 credits.

Qualification – a set of personal competences or professional experience and personal competences necessary for a specific activity, which is recognised as provided in national law (*the Republic of Lithuania Law on Education (Official Gazette, 2011, No.: 38-1804)*).

Unit of qualification – a combination of competences making up a qualification, which is demanded in the labour market.

Module of vocational education and training programme – a part of vocational education and training programme which is identified in advance, intended for obtaining a special qualification.

Learning achievements – the consequence of studying, which can be demonstrated by an individual as a learning outcome (*Glossary of Qualifications System Terms prepared by R. Gatautis, R. Gudauskas, O. Gurskienė ... [et al.]. – Vilnius: Lithuanian Labour Market Training Authority under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, 2008*).

Learning outcomes – a brief description of what a pupil or a student should know or be able to do following the completion of a study unit, subject, module, programme (*Glossary of Qualifications System Terms prepared by R. Gatautis, R. Gudauskas, O. Gurskienė ... [et al.]. – Vilnius: Lithuanian Labour Market Training Authority under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, 2008*).

Social stakeholders – individuals, groups or organisations having interest in the quality of the activity of a vocational education and training/vocational studies institution and able to influence it (students, teachers, employers, etc.) (*ETF Gloss. – Glossary of Labour Market Terms and Curriculum Development Terms, ETF, 1997*).

Professional standard – a description of qualifications of a special sector of the economy; competences necessary to obtain them; assessment criteria and methods (*the Law on Vocational Education and Training of the Republic of Lithuania (Official Gazette, 2007, No.: 43-1627)*).

Vocational education and training standard – the regulation on acquisition of a special qualification in vocational education and training system (*the Law on the Vocational Education and Training of the Republic of Lithuania (Official Gazette, 2007, No.: 43-1627)*).

1. PRINCIPLES OF THE MODULAR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

In order to ensure coherence across different sections of Lithuanian education system and a smooth transition to education and training based on education modules, the Concept is based on the principles of equal opportunities, contextuality, efficiency and continuity specified in the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as “LE”) and adapted in the Law on Vocational Education and Training of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as “LVET”) for this education system sector:

- 1. Equal opportunities** – vocational education and training system is socially fair; it ensures the equality of individuals regardless of their sex, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, beliefs or views; it guarantees everyone the opportunity to acquire an initial

qualification and allows further development of qualification obtained or acquisition of a new one.

2. **Contextuality** – vocational education and training system is closely linked to and renewed along with the national context of economic, social and cultural development, and meeting the ever-changing demands of the labour market.
3. **Efficiency** – by means of smart and cost-effective use of available resources, efficient management and appropriate timely decisions made together with social partners, vocational education and training system aims at achieving good vocational education and training outcomes.
4. **Continuity** – vocational education and training system is flexible, open and based on the interaction of diverse teaching modes and institutions; it allows everyone to engage in lifelong learning.

In addition, it is based on the following principles reflecting current topical issues of the education reform and particular features of modular vocational education and training system:

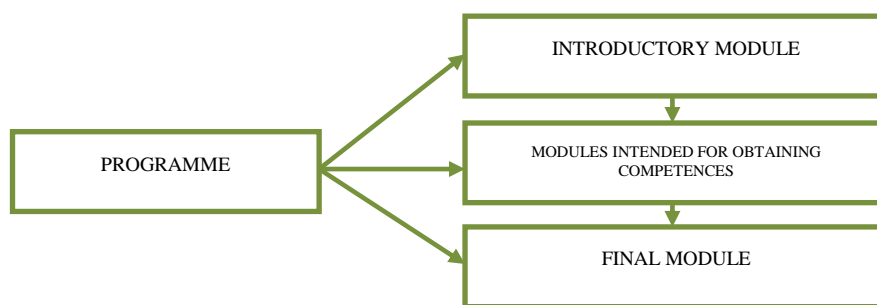
5. **Flexibility** – it is possible to select or change individual modules of vocational education and training programme (hereinafter referred to as the “Module”) according to personal needs and/or labour market demands and, in special cases, according to resources available at vocational education and training institution.
6. **Accessibility** – modular vocational education and training system allows the most accessible studying modes to be selected as well as shape studies according to labour market demands: thus, it provides individuals having different needs and abilities with more study opportunities.

2. PROVISIONS OF THE MODULAR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

Long-term factors guiding the change of modular vocational education and training system are established by general principles. The provisions presented below specify how the identified principles will be implemented in the transition from subject-based to module-based vocational education and training system. These principles are based on the analysis of module-based studying experience gained in Lithuania and other countries and reflect current Lithuanian vocational education and training context.

1. Programmes of formal vocational education and training intended for initial and continuing education and training are appropriate for different learning modes and contribute to further learning.

Picture 1 shows general structure of modular vocational education and training programme (hereinafter referred to as “Modular Programme”) required to obtain a qualification.



Picture 1: The structure of a Modular Programme

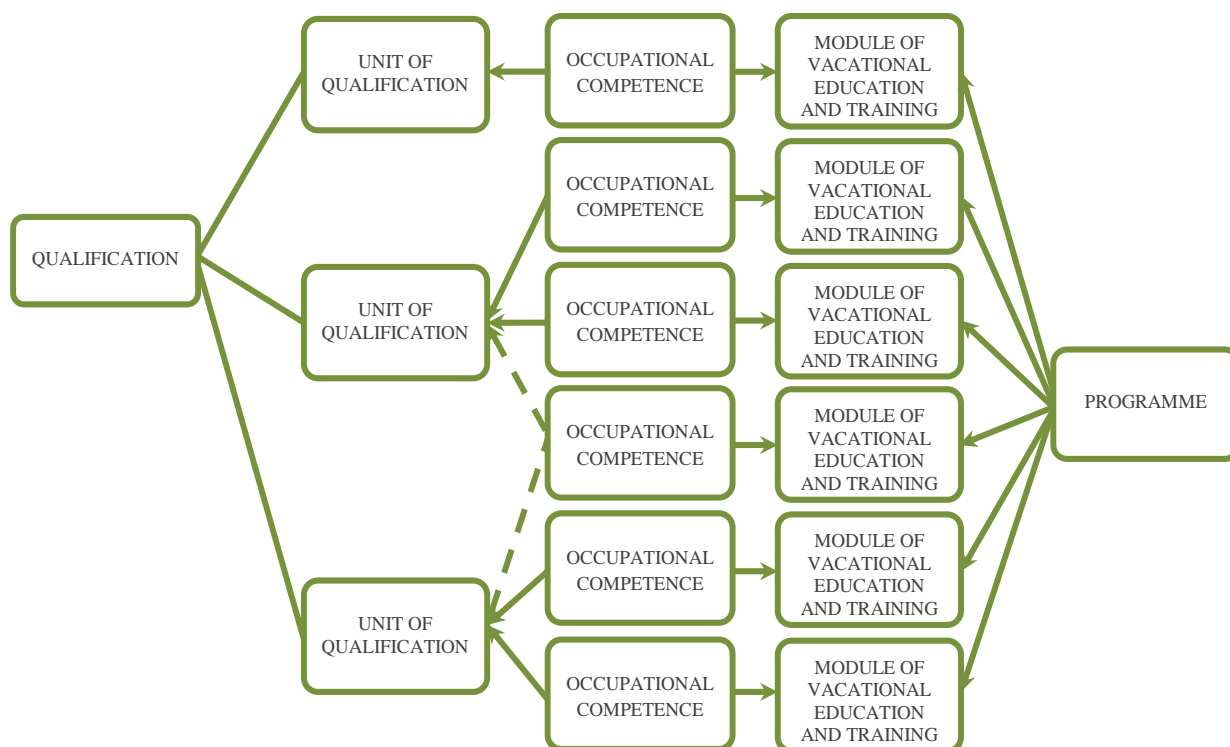
Initial Module is intended to become acquainted with professional activity and special features of vocational education and training. It also covers self-assessment of previously obtained competences with an opportunity of validating certain programme Modules after demonstration of respective knowledge and skills; when an individual is not ready enough to enrol into a study programme of his/her selection, it can be complemented with general education modules.

Modules intended for obtaining competences contain education and training content aimed at training individuals for the activity typical for a qualification that is awarded after successful completion of the programme. A respective professional standard or vocational training standard identifies competences necessary to carry out this activity.

The final Module is intended to generalise learning and develop skills necessary to integrate into the labour market. Having assessed individuals’ previous study or work experience, achievements and having performed validation of his/her knowledge and abilities, programmes may be individualised.

2. Relating Modules to competences allows organising learning in a flexible way and accumulating and transferring learning credits.

This is implemented in the programme section intended for obtaining competences (pic. 1) by splitting education and training content into Modules in the way presented in picture 2:



Picture 2: The structure of a programme section intended for obtaining competences

A qualification consists of units of qualification (hereinafter referred to as the “Unit”) to which LTQF levels are assigned. A qualification may contain Units of different levels. If the levels of Units differ, the level of qualification is estimated according to the predominant level, having assessed the input of Units within a qualification according to the number of credits assigned to these Units. Qualifications of levels 1 to 5 of LTQF may contain up to 5 Units. However, some qualifications, especially those of lower levels, may contain only one Unit.

A Unit of qualification combines 1 to 5 competences comprising a qualification. The same competence may be included in more than one Unit. An individual Module is formed within a programme for every competence to be obtained.

Education and training content formed this way allows individuals to plan their learning process according to the sequence that is suitable to them to obtain competences, provided that requirements for consistency of learning material acquisition are observed. It is also possible to acquire individual additional competences or even Units when an individual or employer requesting education and training shows interest. In addition, such programme structure provides favourable conditions for accumulation and transfer of learning credits.

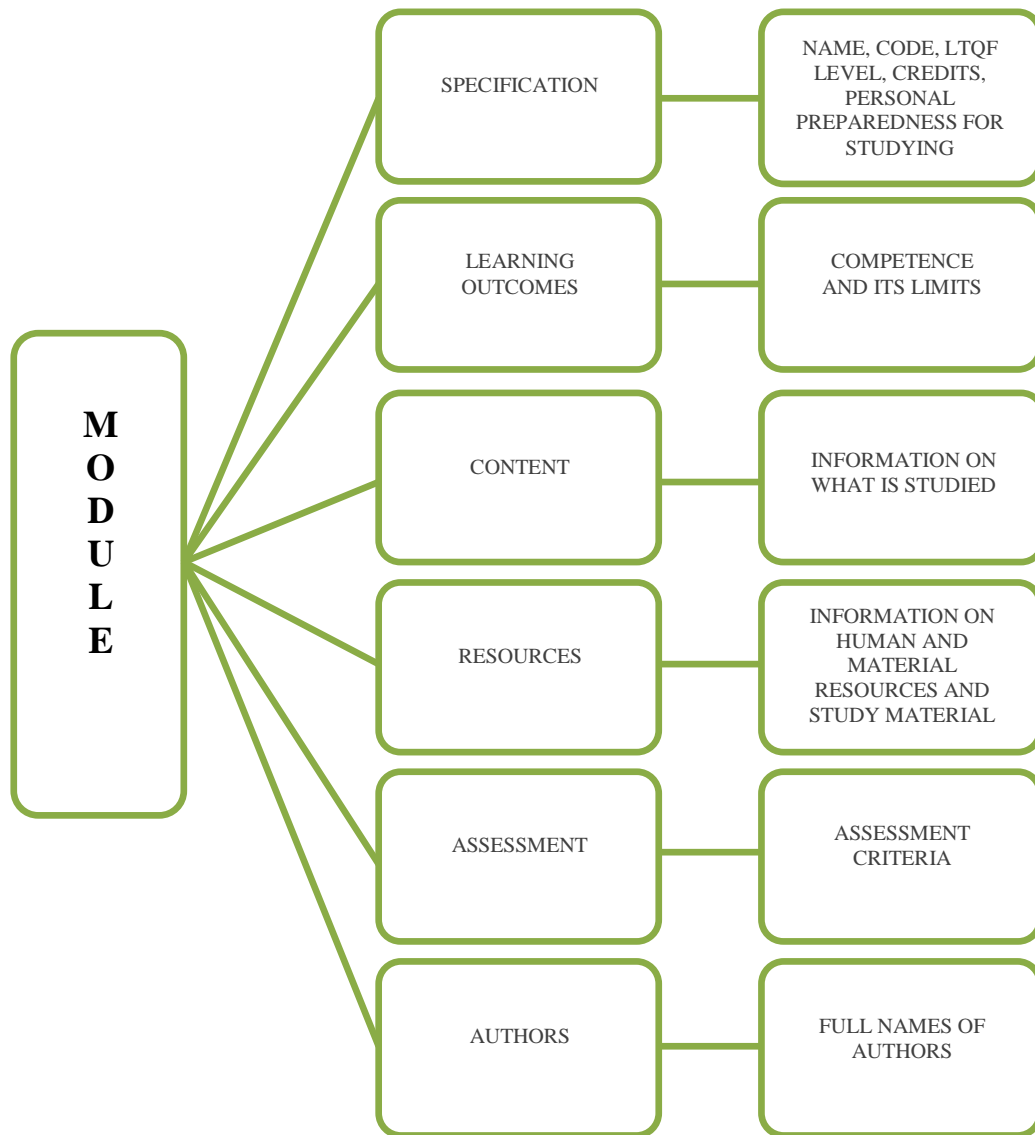
3. Mechanisms of assessment and validation of knowledge, abilities and competences acquired during non-formal and informal study process or while working are widely applied in planning processes and in implementing vocational education and training.

The culture of assessment and validation of previous learning outcomes is being developed in a consistent way throughout vocational education and training system. During the first stage, prior to starting study process, all providers of formal vocational education and training are legally obliged to assess which knowledge, abilities and competences planned in the programme the learner has already acquired.

4. Publicly available information on Modular Programmes is complete and allows taking advantage of all opportunities available in the vocational education and training system.

One of the goals of the vocational education and training system is to provide an individual, wishing to acquire or develop a qualification, or an employer, requesting education and training, with an opportunity to perfectly match the training and education being planned to individual needs, in terms of both - content and study location. This can be achieved through modelling a study programme of distinct modules. Therefore information on each Module (description at national level, providers and descriptions at provider level) has to be made publicly available. The descriptions of Modules at national level and providers licensed to submit them are published in the Modules Catalogue included in the Register of Studies, Training Programmes and Qualifications, whereas the descriptions of Modules at provider level are published on the websites of providers.

The descriptions of Modules have to be detailed. They have to include learning outcomes and their assessment criteria, a brief description of learning content and study conditions. Learning outcomes have to include information on what will be achieved through the development of general competences. The structure of the description of a Module is presented in picture 3.



Picture 3: The structure of the description of a Module

5. Modular Programme is made up of compulsory and optional Modules with regard to specific features of a qualification, personal needs and labour market demands.

The core of a programme consists of compulsory Modules intended for obtaining the essential competences of a qualification and optional Modules giving the opportunity to flexibly meet personal needs and labour market demands. Specialisations may be included in programmes intended for obtaining qualifications of levels 4–5 of LTQF. An individual wishing to study has to select one of specialisations offered.

Compulsory and specialisation Modules must comprise not less than 75% of the total volume of the programme. Of this 75%, 10-25% is assigned for specialisation Modules.

The remaining part of the programme consists of Modules selected from the Modules Catalogue by a provider and/or an individual wishing to obtain a qualification. They may be either related or not related to the qualification being sought (e.g. construction finisher training

programme may include a Module from plumber training programme or salesperson training programme). Should there be a need, a provider may include in the programme a Module meeting local labour market demands provided that its volume does not exceed 10% of the total volume of the programme. An individual wishing to obtain a qualification may also select up to 10% of the total programme volume.

The provider does not have to offer all specialisations envisaged. The provider also publishes which optional Modules he is prepared to provide.

6. Modular Programmes are at national or provider level.

Modular Programmes at national level are validated by the Ministry of Education and Science and registered at the Register of Studies, Training Programmes and Qualifications, whereas their electronic versions are published on the website of the Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre. Modular Programmes developed at national level are benchmarks for all vocational education and training providers in developing programmes at provider level, within which learning content is presented and curriculum is developed in accordance with resources available, local labour market demands and needs of an individual wishing to obtain a qualification. Programmes at provider level are published on the websites of providers. Table 1 illustrates essential similarities and differences of programme descriptions at national and provider levels.

Table 1: Descriptions of programmes at national and provider levels.

	Programme at national level	Programme at provider level
Specification	Indication of: - programme name; - programme code; - qualification awarded; - LTQF qualification level; - volume in credits; -personal preparedness for studying.	Indication of: - programme name; - programme code; - qualification awarded; - LTQF qualification level; - volume in credits; -personal preparedness for studying.
Introduction	Description of qualification goals, its structure, essential general competences, special features of future occupation.	Description presented in the programme at national level is adapted to local context.
Introductory Module	Identification of study goals reflecting the purpose of the Module.	Description of the Module “Introduction to Occupation”. Should there be a need, bridging courses of general education are

		indicated.
Compulsory vocational education and training Modules	Descriptions of all compulsory vocational education and training Modules.	Detailed descriptions of all compulsory vocational education and training Modules.
Vocational education and training Modules intended for obtaining specialisation	Descriptions of vocational education and training Modules intended for obtaining all specialisations envisaged.	Detailed descriptions of vocational education and training Modules intended for obtaining specialisations offered.
Optional vocational education and training Modules	Descriptions of all optional vocational education and training Modules linked to qualification.	Detailed descriptions of all optional vocational education and training Modules selected by the provider, including vocational education and training Module intended for meeting local market demands provided such a Module has been envisaged. Indication of names and codes of vocational education and training Modules which a school is prepared to provide as optional provided that learner choice has been envisaged.
Final Module	Presentation of learning outcomes necessary to understand special features of integration in labour market.	Description of the Module “Introduction to the Labour Market”.
Curriculum	-	Preliminary curriculum
Programme authors	Indication of full names of programme authors.	Indication of full names of programme authors.

Programmes may be individualised for individuals with work experience who have already achieved a number of learning outcomes necessary for obtaining a qualification and individuals with special learning needs.

The Module description at national level differs from the Module description at provider level (pic. 3). The main differences are as follows:

- the content of a Module in the description at national level is presented in a concise manner indicating topics of the theoretical part and practical tasks. It should be noted that the presented list of topics and tasks is not obligatory. By adapting Module description at national level to its needs, the provider may develop learning content in a different way. The only condition to be observed is that the content of a Module has to provide the learner

with the possibility of achieving all learning outcomes of a Module and obtaining the competence envisaged. In addition, the content in the Module description at provider level has to be more detailed so that any interested individual can reasonably select the provider that is most suitable for him;

- the description at national level covers minimal requirements for human and material resources and study material, whereas the description at provider level has to contain information on resources available;
- criteria for assessment of learning achievements enabling the determination of 3 learning achievement levels of an individual who has completed the Module are established at national level. The three learning achievement levels are as follows: *sufficient* (corresponds to threshold requirements), *good* and *excellent*. A ten-point grading scale is allowed at provider level.

7. Modular vocational education and training system will be implemented gradually. The transition period will be used to prepare pedagogical staff of providers for work based on Modular Programmes. The review and implementation of programmes will be performed in close collaboration with social stakeholders.

The state ensures that pedagogues of providers, who are engaged in implementation of Modular Programmes, have access to special courses on modular vocational education and training and contributes financially to this training.

At national level, social stakeholders are engaged in programme development and implementation through the system of Central Professional Committee and Sectoral Professional Committees as well as by selecting experts to develop and assess programmes.

At provider level, specialisations, the list of optional Modules offered, possibilities for studying specific Modules or their elements at the work place and the procedure for organising the implementation of the final Module intended for integration in the labour market are coordinated with employers or their professional associations.

8. The development of modular vocational education and training system is encouraged presenting it to the society and implementing active measures intended to increase the attractiveness of vocational education and training.

All opportunities provided by media and information technologies are used to inform society about modular vocational education and its advantages. Social partners are also engaged in information transmission. An efficient professional guidance system is created to serve youth and adults. The following measures are undertaken to increase the attractiveness of vocational education and training: professional skills competitions are organised; during lessons of technologies held in workshops of vocational education and training institutions students from general education schools

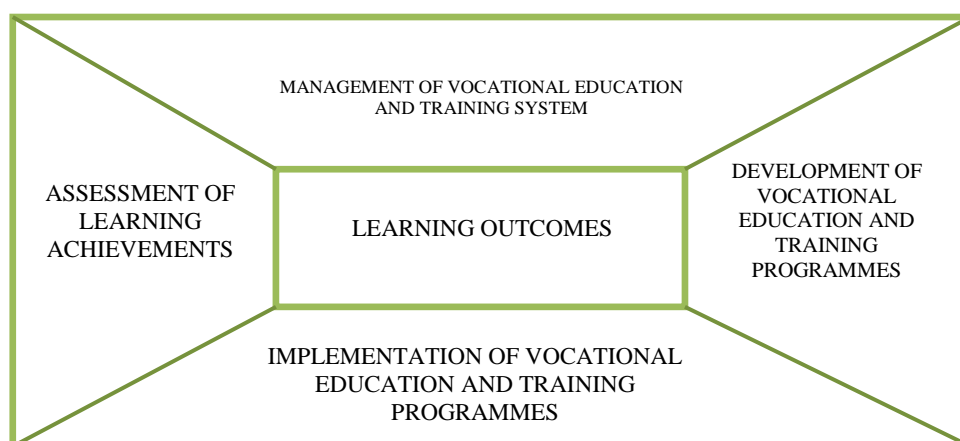
are invited to acquire specific Modules valued in the labour market; those already employed are offered the opportunity to study Modules intended for development of their qualification by taking evening or weekend classes at vocational education and training institutions; unemployed individuals are offered the opportunity to study Modules enabling the fastest return to the labour market; all individuals, including pensioners, are informed of the opportunities to study at vocational education and training institutions and acquire Modules providing the competences necessary for everyday life.

9. *The efficiency of modular vocational education and training system is ensured by timely legal regulation, definite distribution of responsibilities among all responsible authorities and social stakeholders as well as regular monitoring of system development.*

Necessary legal basis, that is expeditiously prepared, clearly defines the responsibility of all vocational education and training participants. Targeted qualification development of employees of responsible authorities is implemented. Responsible authorities perform regular assessment of the condition of modular vocational education and training. Assessment outcomes are made publicly available and used for further activity planning.

3. COMPONENTS AND PROCESSES OF THE MODULAR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

Vocational education and training system has to assist an individual to acquire a qualification, to develop and change it and ensure the conformity of qualifications with the demands of the national economy (*Law on Vocational Education and Training of the Republic of Lithuania, Article 3*). This indicates that vocational education and training system is closely related to qualifications system. Therefore we will use the scheme of picture 4 to introduce modular vocational education and training system. This scheme is similar to the scheme of the National Qualifications System (*The Concept of National Qualifications System of Lithuania, Lithuanian Labour Market Training Authority, 2007, Vilnius, p. 51*).



Picture 4: Scheme of vocational education and training system

Learning outcomes are located in the centre of vocational education and training system in order to emphasise that any learning has to be intended for achieving results foreseen. If learning is formal, learning outcomes are identified by a respective standard. By now we have had professional training standards developed for every individual qualification. In the future these standards are planned to be replaced by professional standards which, following their coordination with social partners, will identify requirements for the main qualifications that are typical for specific economy sector and cover all levels of LTQF. If learning is non-formal, learning outcomes should be developed within non-formal studying programme itself.

Further this section expands on how vocational education and training system procedures should be carried out after implementation of modular education and training within formal education and training system, focusing on what has to be done so that the implemented modular vocational education and training system is efficient and facilitates the achievement of qualitative vocational education and training outcomes. The processes discussed include programme development and implementation, assessment of learning outcomes after programme completion, and management of vocational education and training system.

3.1. Development of Modular Programmes

Modular Programmes are developed at national and provider levels.

The essential goal of developing programmes at national level is to make sure that the qualifications provided correspond to Lithuanian Qualifications Framework and meet the demands of Lithuanian economy and labour market. Programme descriptions are developed in accordance with professional standards or, in the event of their absence, vocational training standards. Programme development and validation is governed by a respective order of the Minister of Education and Science, identifying responsible authority, programme parameters (e.g. the minimum number of credits needed to obtain a qualification of certain level of LTQF) that are subject to regulation, and programme validation procedures. Responsible authority develops and, following coordination with Central Professional Committee approves national Modular Programme development methodology covering detailed programme development process.

The quality of national programmes is ensured by consulting Sectoral Professional Committees, at least once every 5 years finding out the opinion of social stakeholders on how programmes meet their needs and updating the programmes accordingly.

The essential goal in developing programmes at provider level is to specify the content of programmes taking into account available human and material resources and study material as well as local demands and the needs of individuals wishing to obtain a qualification. The authority responsible assists providers by developing *The Methodology for the Development of Modular*

Programmes, organising respective trainings for teachers of vocational subjects and consulting them. It is ensured that every provider of vocational education and training has access to this type of assistance.

Both internal and external mechanisms are applied to ensure the quality of programmes. Firstly, every provider of formal vocational education and training is encouraged to implement internal quality assurance system taking serious account of the quality of programmes developed. Secondly, prior to starting education and training, provider must coordinate developed formal education and training programme with the responsible authority and obtain a licence from the Ministry of Education and Science. Thirdly, external assessment and monitoring is performed in relation to the management and academic activities of vocational education and training providers.

3.2. Implementation of Modular Programmes

The implementation of Modular Programmes covers all formal vocational education and training and non-formal and informal studying processes during which learners acquire specific qualifications or competences described in professional standards or vocational training standards. The objective of vocational education and training system that moves towards modular vocational education and training system is, with the use of increased flexibility of education and training process, to better attract youth and employed persons to study at vocational education and training institutions, to assist companies in their search for appropriately qualified employees and thus contribute to increasing the competitiveness of Lithuanian economy. Implementation of this objective mainly falls on the shoulders of vocational education and training providers. Other participants of vocational education and training are supposed to help providers in achieving it.

Transition to modular education and training substantially changes the organisation of education and training process. Essential changes are as follows:

- initial vocational education and training offers validated opportunity to commence studies at times other than the beginning of academic year matching specific study demand with provider possibilities;
- Modules are independent and integrating knowledge and practical training necessary to obtain the competence envisaged. Therefore a certain Module is most often delivered by more than one teacher;
- assessment of practical experience, non-formal and informal studies is validated and, if necessary, programmes are individualised;
- in intermediary evaluation the assessment of knowledge after completion of a certain subject and abilities acquired during practical training is replaced by assessment intended to

determine whether, after completion of a certain Module, the competence envisaged has been acquired;

- programmes at provider level are developed with Module selection options and studying of distinct Modules included in the Modules Catalogue is validated.

Respective changes are introduced in the legislation on vocational education and training and, if necessary, new legislation is developed to ensure smooth implementation of the abovementioned and other changes.

A lot of attention is paid to training vocational subject teachers and developing their qualifications. During the transition period all teachers of vocational subjects have access to training courses, which provide them with the knowledge and abilities on how to organise modular education and training. Respective changes are made in programmes intended to train vocational subject teachers.

One more activity, which will determine the success of the implementation of modular vocational education and training system, is supplying education and training process with training material and equipment adjusted for modular vocational education and training and intended for learners and teachers of vocational subjects. For this purpose, new mechanisms are introduced to ensure that each Module included in the Module Catalogue has appropriate training material and equipment, which will be accessible to institutions and persons concerned.

The provider ensures the quality of education and training process. One of measures to achieve this is regular self-assessment performed in accordance with internal quality assurance system implemented. Another measure to be undertaken is external assessment of the quality of implemented vocational education and training programmes, during which providers exchange good practice experience and, after assessment is generalised at national level, establish guidelines for further development.

3.3. Assessment of Learning Achievements

Everyone is provided with the opportunity to assess their competences regardless of how they have been acquired and obtain a respective certificate recognised at national level. Certificates are of the following three types:

- validating competence obtained;
- validating unit of qualification obtained;
- validating qualification obtained.

The objective of the assessment is to determine in a reliable way whether achievements of an individual satisfy formally established requirements for learning outcomes.

Assessment is performed by competence assessment authorities accredited by the Qualifications Management Authority in accordance with the procedures and requirements established by the Government. Contact information of all authorities accredited is published on the website of the Qualifications Management Authority and thus made publicly available. All concerned - individuals or providers of vocational education and training - may contact any assessment authority and agree on the assessment date and conditions. All professional guidance structures also provide information regarding assessment and validation opportunities of competences acquired. Assessment nature is different as splitting assessment into tests on theory and practical tasks is no longer applied. Theoretical preparedness is tested by members of the commission through communication with the person during the performance of a practical task. The assessment process is governed by *The Description of Procedure for Assessment of Acquired Competences* approved by the Minister of Education and Science. This description identifies general requirements for assessment initiation, assessment commission formation, development of assessment tasks, and performance of the assessment process and documentation of assessment outcomes. A professional standard or vocational training standard may contain certain assessment conditions typical of a specific qualification.

Competence assessment authorities are responsible for the quality of assessment. Assessment quality is ensured by appropriate selection and training of assessment commission members, the development of assessment process in accordance with constantly collected responses and suggestions of evaluators, as well as using possibilities provided by internal quality assurance systems of competence assessment authorities. Monitoring of competence assessment authorities is performed at national level according to certain indicators agreed on. The information obtained is annually analysed and made publicly available. On the basis of this information measures for assessment system development are planned.

3.4. Management of the Modular Vocational Education and Training System

The purpose of the management of modular vocational education and training system is to guarantee the quality of the system by means of management: distribution of authorising powers and responsibility, planning, monitoring and supervision.

On the one hand, by facilitating flexible adjustment to the demands of the economy and the needs of individuals seeking to obtain a qualification, modular education and training requires more steps to be taken in decentralising management and encouraging more active participation of social stakeholders in decision making. On the other hand, education and training process changes noticeably and its organisation becomes much more complex. Therefore it is very important to develop appropriate legislation in a timely and qualitative manner. This legislation must clearly

state the functions and responsibilities of all participants of vocational education and training. In addition, it is important not to forget that transition from subject-based education and training to modular education and training will be gradual, a transition period will apply, during which providers will have to provide programmes of both types.

At national level, social stakeholders are included in the management of vocational education and training system through the system of Central and Sectoral Professional Committees. Central Professional Committee has the right to initiate drafting of necessary legislation. It determines priority sectors for programme reconstruction or updating of Modular Programmes, and provides advice on questions relating to the accreditation of competence assessment authorities. Sectoral Professional Committees express agreement on the development of formal vocational education and training programmes representing a respective sector and intended for obtaining a qualification, assess how the programmes comply with the requirements set forth in the professional standard or vocational training standard. At provider level, social stakeholders are included in the activity through municipal institutions. In this field of activity, it is advisable to take advantage of the experience of those vocational education and training institutions, which have the status of a public institution.

The following two novelties are introduced when moving to modular education and training, the basics of which were demonstrated by only a few providers of the current vocational education and training system:

- National Modules Catalogue and Modules at Provider Level Catalogue are developed;
- the assessment and taking account of knowledge and abilities acquired due to work experience or during non-formal and informal studies are generally implemented in education and training process.

It is necessary to develop respective legislation, which would identify responsible authorities, and foresee appropriate resources.

In order to ensure smooth transition, a plan of action for the development of modular vocational education and training system is elaborated, clearly distributing responsibilities among authorities and social stakeholders in charge. One of the authorities is empowered to coordinate the entire transition process. This authority is obligated to annually report to the Central Professional Committee, which communicates the remarks to the Ministry of Education and Science.

Regular monitoring is performed in order to assess the progress of modular vocational education and training system and determine the fields that are subject to development. For the implementation of these activities a responsible authority is assigned. A respective list of criteria is determined and, following coordination with the Central Professional Committee, communicated to the Minister of Education and Science for approval. Monitoring outcomes are summed up annually

and a respective report is communicated to the Ministry of Education and Science, presented to the Central Professional Committee and published on the website of the responsible authority.