Working Package n° 2

Primary and Secondary research on the desired skills of international officers & collection of best practices of internationalization in VET schools

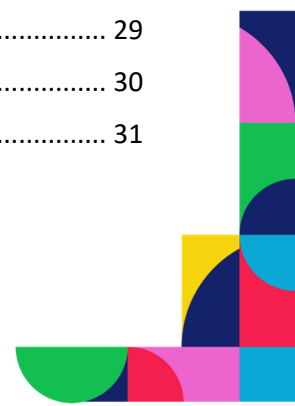| Project	InterVET
Deliverable	Primary and Secondary research on the desired skills of international officers & collection of best practices of internationalization in VET schools
Relevant Work package	Methodological Guide for Establishing International Offices in VET Schools
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Disclaimer

1- Framework

Within Work Package n° 2, "Methodological Guide for establishing International Offices in VET Schools", partners were required to conduct comprehensive research on International Officers' desired Skills.

This task contributes to the general objective of upskilling VET teachers / educators / staff on internationalization policies and opportunities by conducting desk research, interviews, and questionnaires to gather this information. It ensures that international officers are well-equipped to foster internationalization in their respective institutions. Hence, the overall goal is to understand the skill sets required for international officers in VET schools.

This report gathers the information gathered by the consortium partners during that comprehensive research.

2- Job Profiles

An International Officer is a position that can be full-time, or, in smaller organizations, is performed by someone who has another job. Moreover, international cooperation requires transversal cooperation throughout the organization. Therefore, the partners defined, not only the core profile but also looked for other ones directly connected to the latter.

2.1 – Headmaster / Headmistress

He / she works at the school's facilities, including in the Board department, reporting to the Ministry of Education, or any other similar educational public authorities; to the Administration, in the case of a private school.

The Headmaster / Headmistress is responsible for the strategic, pedagogical, personnel, administrative, and financial overseeing of the VET school/provider, ensuring a high standard of education and training. He / she will develop and implement strategies that promote the school's vision and mission, namely:
- ✓ Ensuring the quality of vocational education and training;
- ✓ Promoting an inclusive and innovative learning environment;
- ✓ Guaranteeing compliance with the educational, regulatory and working environment standards set by the competent authorities;
- ✓ Selecting and managing the school's Human Resources;
- ✓ Designing and controlling the budget;
- ✓ Supervising students' global outcomes.

This job's key responsibilities include:
- ✓ Defining and implementing the school's vision, mission and strategic objectives, including the ones related to internationalization.
- ✓ Ensuring compliance with national and European standards and regulations relating to VET.
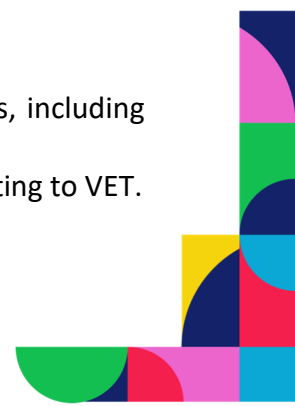
- ✓ Managing human resources, promoting ongoing training and performance evaluation of teaching and non-teaching staff.
- ✓ Drawing up and monitoring the annual budget and financial plans, including the chapters related to internationalization.
- ✓ Ensuring pedagogical quality and the suitability of curricula to the needs of the labour market.
- ✓ Establishing partnerships with business organisations, Higher Education Institutions, public bodies and other relevant community stakeholders, both national and international.
- ✓ Promoting a safe, inclusive and motivating school environment, focusing on students' well-being and achievement.
- ✓ Representing the school at events, meetings and institutional gatherings, both national and international.
- ✓ Implementing mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the quality of the services provided, implementing improvements when required.
- ✓ Communicating and reporting to the competent authorities / shareholders / stakeholders.

As for the required qualifications, the preferred minimum education level should be EQF Level 6 (degree) or 7 (master's degree) in Education, Educational Leadership, or a related field, with 6 to 10 years of experience.

When we look at the required key skills and competencies, here they are:
- ✓ Proven experience in curriculum development, staff management, and school administration.
- ✓ Strong leadership and management skills.
- ✓ Excellent communication and interpersonal abilities.
- ✓ Comprehensive understanding of VET systems and legislation.
- ✓ Strategic thinking and goal-focused skills.
- ✓ Ability to adapt to change and problem-solve skills.
- ✓ Mastery of technological tools applied to education and school management.
- ✓ Ability to build and maintain strong relationships with policymakers, shareholders and stakeholders.
- ✓ Proficiency in budgeting and financial management.
- ✓ Commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment.

The job offers:
- ✓ Full-time position with standard working hours, although occasional extra work may be required.
- ✓ Dynamic, collaborative, and innovation-orientated environment.
- ✓ Office-based role with some travel to industry partners, educational authorities, and community events.
- ✓ A supportive work environment with opportunities for professional development.

2.2 – Coordinator of International Activities at a VET School

He / she may work from home or at the school's facilities, as it may be developed in a hybrid environment, included in the International department, reporting to the Headmaster or Headmistress, or the CEO, if it is a private school.

The Coordinator of International Activities is responsible for managing and promoting the internationalisation efforts of the VET school / provider, like those related to the Erasmus+ Program, overseeing student exchanges, developing cooperation with international partners, and promoting Erasmus+ or similar national and international opportunities.

This role involves:
- ✓ Coordinating international partnerships.
- ✓ Supervising student and staff international exchanges (incoming and / or outgoing).
- ✓ Overseeing projects that promote and enhance the global engagement and intercultural competencies of the school community.
- ✓ Supporting students in their international mobility experiences.
- ✓ Promoting Erasmus+ and other international education programs.
- ✓ Ensuring compliance with the standards and objectives defined by the cooperation programmes.

Its key responsibilities are:
- ✓ Develop and implement the school's internationalisation strategy in line with the Erasmus+ Program and / or other international initiatives.
- ✓ Coordinate and manage student and staff exchange programs, including applications, placements, and logistical arrangements, both incoming and/or outgoing, ensuring smooth application and participation processes.
- ✓ Establish and maintain partnerships with international educational institutions and organizations.
- ✓ Stimulate international opportunities and programs within the school community.
- ✓ Promote the school's internationalisation through events, workshops and awareness campaigns.
- ✓ Collaborate with other school departments to integrate the international dimension into the curriculum.
- ✓ Provide support and guidance to incoming and/or outgoing students and staff participating in international programs, and assisting them in the adaptation to international experiences and overcoming cultural challenges.
- ✓ Manage and monitor budgets related to international activities and ensure compliance with funding requirements.
- ✓ Organize and promote intercultural training and events to foster a European or global mindset within the school.
- ✓ Supporting students and staff in applying for mobility funding and scholarships.
- ✓ Evaluate and regularly report on the outcomes of internationalisation activities, both internally and to the funding agencies or authorities.
- ✓ Ensure compliance with relevant regulations and policies, including those of the Erasmus+ Program.
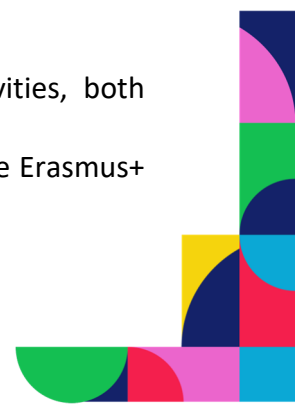
The preferred minimum education level should be EQF Level 6 (degree) in International Relations, Education, Management, or a related field. A master's degree (EQF Level 7) is preferred, with 3 to 6 years of experience.

This job's key skills and competencies are:
- ✓ Experience in managing international programs or projects, preferably within an educational setting.
- ✓ Deep knowledge of the Erasmus+ program or similar international initiatives is highly desirable.
- ✓ Proficiency in English, both oral and written.
- ✓ Strong communication and interpersonal abilities, namely in international settings.
- ✓ Excellent project management, time management and organizational skills.
- ✓ In-depth understanding of international education and its dynamics;
- ✓ Flexibility and adaptability to different cultural and educational environments.
- ✓ Ability to build and maintain effective partnerships with international institutions.
- ✓ Excellent negotiation and problem-solving skills.
- ✓ Proficiency in budgeting and financial management.
- ✓ Strong problem-solving skills and attention to detail.
- ✓ Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- ✓ Knowledge of relevant regulations and policies related to internationalisation and the Erasmus+ Program.
- ✓ Expertise in IT tools and international project management platforms.
- ✓ Willingness to travel abroad and a strong sense of personal autonomy.

Its working conditions represent:
- ✓ Full-time position with standard working hours, although frequent evening or weekend work may be required.
- ✓ Office-based role with opportunities to collaborate with national and international partner institutions and events, including frequent travel.
- ✓ A supportive, dynamic and multicultural work environment with opportunities for professional development.
- ✓ Engagement in a globally focused school atmosphere.

2.3 – Communication Manager

He / she works remotely as part of the International Relations department, reporting to the International Relations Coordinator.

The Communication Manager is responsible for developing and implementing the communication strategy related to internationalisation efforts, ensuring the promotion of global engagement opportunities, and maintaining the institution's visibility in international networks. The role includes:
- ✓ Developing and implementing a communication strategy tailored to international opportunities.
- ✓ Creating and posting content related to international exchange programs and mobility opportunities.
- ✓ Promoting international events and projects in which the VET school is involved.

✓ Acting as the first point of contact for potential international partnerships.
✓ Maintaining an active school presence on social media platforms.
✓ Managing internal communication regarding international activities.
✓ Supporting media relations and managing international partnerships.

This job's key responsibilities include:
✓ Designing and executing a strategic communication plan that aligns with the school's internationalisation goals.
✓ Producing and disseminating content about international opportunities through various communication channels, including websites, newsletters, and social media.
✓ Managing the institution's participation in international events and promoting Erasmus+ and other mobility programs.
✓ Strengthening relationships with international partners by ensuring timely and effective communication.
✓ Ensuring visibility and engagement through social media management and digital content creation.
✓ Developing academic content related to international projects and partnerships.
✓ Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of communication strategies and making necessary adjustments.
✓ Supporting the organisation of international events and dissemination campaigns.
✓ Collaborating with different departments to ensure a coherent communication approach across the institution.
✓ Managing and updating digital tools used for communication and content creation.

As for the required qualifications, the preferred minimum education level should be EQF Level 6 (Bachelor's degree) or EQF Level 7 (Master's degree) in Communication, Marketing, Public Relations, or a related field, with at least 3 years of experience.

The required key skills and competencies include:
✓ Strong written and oral communication skills.
✓ High level of flexibility and adaptability.
✓ Proficiency in English (both spoken and written).
✓ Experience or background in Erasmus+ and international mobility programs.
✓ Initiative and autonomy in work execution.
✓ Creativity and proficiency in digital content creation.
✓ Knowledge of communication and design tools such as Canva, Excel, and social media management platforms.
✓ Ability to engage with diverse audiences and promote institutional internationalisation.
✓ Strategic thinking and problem-solving skills.

The job offers:
✓ A remote position with a dynamic and international work environment.
✓ The necessity of a good internet connection and proper computing devices (computer, tablet, smartphone, etc.).

- ✓ Access to relevant communication and design software, including Microsoft Office, Canva, Adobe, Mailchimp, and social media management tools.
- ✓ Support for international collaboration, including access to training sessions and workshops.
- ✓ A flexible schedule with potential evening or weekend work when required.
- ✓ Opportunities for professional growth within the international education sector.

2.4 – Language Teachers involved in Internationalisation

He / she works in a school setting as part of the Culture and Language Department, reporting to the Language Coordinator. As a Language Teacher, the primary responsibility is to develop and deliver engaging language courses that enhance students' proficiency in the four core language skills: Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking.

This role involves:
- ✓ Designing curriculum materials.
- ✓ Supervising the implementation of language learning strategies.
- ✓ Ensuring alignment with institutional and educational standards.
- ✓ Mentoring and training instructors.
- ✓ Evaluating student performance, and providing constructive feedback to support continuous learning.
- ✓ Collaborating with academic departments, by integrating language learning into broader educational programs while fostering cultural exchange and international collaboration.
- ✓ Creating an immersive and effective learning environment through interactive and student-centred teaching methods.

This job's key responsibilities include:
- ✓ Designing and delivering language courses based on educational best practices.
- ✓ Assessing student progress and adjusting teaching methods accordingly.
- ✓ Implementing policies to improve language education within the institution.
- ✓ Coordinating with faculty members to enhance cross-disciplinary language applications.
- ✓ Organizing language workshops, seminars, and cultural activities.
- ✓ Maintaining high academic standards and ensuring compliance with institutional policies.
- ✓ Representing the institution in academic and language education forums.

The preferred minimum education level should be Certified Professional status with 10+ years of experience in language teaching and academic leadership.

The required key skills and competencies include:
- ✓ Extensive teaching experience in language education.
- ✓ Strong leadership and mentoring skills.
- ✓ Ability to design effective curricula and educational programs.
- ✓ Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- ✓ Proficiency in multiple languages is an advantage.
- ✓ Experience in managing academic staff and implementing educational strategies.
- ✓ Commitment to fostering an inclusive and dynamic learning environment.

The job offers:
- ✓ A structured and conducive work environment within an educational institution.
- ✓ Opportunities for professional development and academic research.
- ✓ Engagement in cultural and international language initiatives.
- ✓ A leadership role in shaping language education policies and practices.

2.5 – Administrative Assistant (Education)

He / she works in a school setting as part of the Vocational Education Department, reporting to the Head of Department. The Administrative Assistant in Education supports the daily operations of the department. The position involves a variety of administrative tasks that facilitate effective communication, organization, and coordination of educational programs and initiatives aimed at enhancing vocational skills.

This job's key responsibilities include:
- ✓ Managing scheduling and appointments for department staff.
- ✓ Preparing and maintaining documents, reports, and presentations.
- ✓ Assisting in the planning and execution of vocational training programs and workshops.
- ✓ Coordinating logistics for events, including venue arrangements and materials preparation.
- ✓ Maintaining records of participant enrollment and attendance.
- ✓ Serving as a point of contact for inquiries related to vocational education programs.
- ✓ Facilitating communication between staff, students, and external partners.
- ✓ Maintaining databases and filing systems for program records.
- ✓ Assisting in data collection and reporting for program evaluation.
- ✓ Supporting budget tracking and expense reporting for departmental activities.
- ✓ Processing invoices and managing procurement of supplies.

The preferred minimum education level should be EQF Level 5 and higher, with at least 3 years of experience in an administrative or educational support role.

The required key skills and competencies include:
- ✓ Ability to manage multiple tasks and prioritize effectively.
- ✓ Strong attention to detail in maintaining records and documentation.
- ✓ Excellent verbal and written communication skills for effective interaction with staff, students, and external partners.
- ✓ Proficiency in drafting emails, reports, and presentations.
- ✓ Familiarity with office software, particularly Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint).
- ✓ Strong ability to work collaboratively within a team.
- ✓ Empathy and understanding when dealing with students and community members.
- ✓ Capacity to identify issues and propose practical solutions.
- ✓ Resourcefulness in managing unexpected challenges.
- ✓ Ability to meet deadlines and manage time efficiently.
- ✓ Flexibility to adapt to changing priorities and schedules.
- ✓ Willingness to learn new skills and adapt to changing educational environments.
- ✓ Commitment to providing excellent service to students and partners.

- ✓ Ability to handle inquiries and resolve concerns professionally.
- ✓ Understanding of and sensitivity to the needs of diverse populations, particularly in rural communities.
- ✓ Ability to engage with individuals from various backgrounds and experiences.

The job offers:
- ✓ A structured and team-oriented work environment within an educational institution.
- ✓ Opportunities to engage with vocational education initiatives in rural development.
- ✓ A full-time role with standard office hours (e.g., 10 AM to 6 PM), with flexibility during peak activity periods.
- ✓ Some travel requirements for program-related events, including workshops and community engagement activities.

2.6 – Administrative assistant (Accountant)

He / she works in a hybrid setting as part of the Financial Management Department, reporting to the Chief Financial Officer. The Administrative Assistant (Accountant) is responsible for managing the financial aspects of projects, ensuring accurate bookkeeping, and maintaining financial records.

This role includes:
- ✓ Setting up cost centres for new projects.
- ✓ Performing bookkeeping and processing invoices.
- ✓ Generating financial reports to track costs and profits.
- ✓ Supporting financial planning and compliance with regulations.

This job's key responsibilities include:
- ✓ Managing financial transactions and maintaining accurate records.
- ✓ Assisting in budget preparation and financial forecasting.
- ✓ Preparing financial reports and ensuring proper documentation.
- ✓ Handling invoices and payments related to projects.
- ✓ Ensuring compliance with financial regulations and internal policies.
- ✓ Collaborating with project managers to track expenses and budget performance.
- ✓ Using financial software and tools to streamline accounting processes.

The preferred minimum education level should be EQF Level 5, with 3 to 6 years of experience in accounting or financial administration.

The required key skills and competencies include:
- ✓ Strong understanding of accounting principles.
- ✓ Proficiency in financial management software and tools.
- ✓ Good command of English for professional communication.
- ✓ Strong analytical and problem-solving skills.
- ✓ Attention to detail and accuracy in financial reporting.
- ✓ Ability to work independently and manage multiple tasks efficiently.

The job offers:

✓ A full-time position with a structured office-based environment.
✓ Own office at the school with minimal travel requirements.
✓ A stable work routine focused on financial management and reporting.
✓ Opportunities for professional development in financial administration.

2.7 – Erasmus Project Contact Person – KA 1 Mobilities and KA2 Partnerships

He / she works in a school setting as part of the International Relations Office, reporting to the Coordinator of Internationalisation Activities. The Erasmus Project Contact Person for KA 1 Mobilities and KA2 Partnerships acts as the key liaison between the VET school and external Erasmus+ partners, facilitating communication and providing support for students and staff participating in mobility programs.

The role includes:
✓ Acting as the primary point of contact for all Erasmus+-related activities.
✓ Facilitating communication between the VET school, Erasmus+ program coordinators, students, host institutions, and other project partners.
✓ Assisting students and staff in understanding Erasmus+ requirements and application procedures.
✓ Ensuring that all necessary documentation is properly completed and submitted to the relevant authorities.
✓ Monitoring and reporting on the outcomes of mobility and KA2 activities.
✓ Supporting students and staff with logistical matters such as visas, insurance, and financial support.

This job's key responsibilities include:
✓ Providing guidance and support to students and staff regarding Erasmus+ mobility.
✓ Assisting in the preparation and submission of Erasmus+ funding applications.
✓ Coordinating mobility activities, including travel arrangements and accommodation.
✓ Ensuring compliance with Erasmus+ regulations and funding requirements.
✓ Monitoring and reporting on program performance and impact.
✓ Developing partnerships with host organizations and international stakeholders.
✓ Supporting students in the transition process to mobility programs.

The preferred minimum education level should be EQF Level 6 or 7 in Pedagogy, Teaching, or Management, with 3 to 6 years of experience.

The required key skills and competencies include:
✓ Strong communication and organizational skills.
✓ Multicultural awareness and the ability to work in diverse environments.
✓ Problem-solving and teamwork capabilities.
✓ Proficiency in English and other relevant languages.
✓ Strong networking and relationship-building skills.

The job offers:
✓ A flexible work environment with a combination of remote and on-site tasks.

✓ Availability to work on weekends and evenings as necessary.
✓ Opportunities for professional development within international education.
✓ Access to international training and networking events.

2.8 – General and Administrative Services Director

He / she works on-site as part of the Administrative Office, reporting to the Principal.

The General and Administrative Services Director is responsible for overseeing the administrative operations of the institution, ensuring compliance with regulations, managing budgets, and leading administrative staff. This role includes:
✓ Organizing and overseeing administrative office procedures.
✓ Supervising administrative staff and ensuring efficient workflow.
✓ Managing budgets and financial planning.
✓ Ensuring regulatory compliance and adherence to institutional policies.
✓ Supporting the internationalization strategy, through supporting the institution's internationalization efforts by ensuring the efficient administration of international student and staff mobility programs, including handling the logistical and financial aspects of international exchanges, partnerships, and collaborations.

This job's key responsibilities include:
✓ Developing and implementing administrative policies and procedures. This task concerns both the general administrative procedures and the administrative ones that concern international students.
✓ Contributing to the internationalization of the institution: by giving guidelines about administrative processes related to international student exchanges and staff mobility, the General and Administrative Services Director directly supports the institution's global engagement and international partnerships.
✓ Monitoring and managing institutional budgets and expenditures.
✓ Reviewing and supervising the work of administrative staff.
✓ Ensuring compliance with higher education regulations and institutional requirements.
✓ Coordinating with various departments to enhance operational efficiency.
✓ Overseeing documentation, record-keeping, and reporting.
✓ Managing institutional resources and procurement processes.
✓ Representing the institution in administrative and regulatory meetings.

The preferred minimum education level should be EQF Level 6, with 3 years of experience in administration, budget management, or related fields.

The required key skills and competencies include:
✓ Strong leadership and management skills.
✓ Experience in budget management and regulatory compliance.
✓ Excellent organizational and communication abilities.
✓ Ability to work effectively in a team and manage multiple tasks.
✓ Knowledge of higher education administrative processes.
✓ Master's degree in Business Administration, Public Administration, or a related field.

The job offers:
- ✓ A full-time on-site position with a structured work environment.
- ✓ An individual office for administrative management.
- ✓ Opportunities for leadership in institutional administration.
- ✓ Engagement in strategic decision-making for the institution.

2.9 – Inclusion Assistant

He / she works in a school setting as part of the Administration Department, reporting to the Inclusion Manager. The Inclusion Assistant is responsible for supporting pupils with additional needs, working closely with professionals to ensure inclusive education.

This role includes:
- ✓ Supporting the Inclusion Manager in developing inclusive strategies.
- ✓ Assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with additional needs.
- ✓ Liaising with key staff members to intervene and support students not making progress.
- ✓ Assisting in statutory assessments and documentation for pupils with special needs.
- ✓ Ensuring compliance with policies related to child protection, health, safety, confidentiality, and data protection.
- ✓ Supporting the school's internationalization and diversity goals, ensuring that students from diverse cultural backgrounds, including international students, receive the necessary support to feel included and to achieve their best possible educational potential in the school environment.

This job's key responsibilities include:
- ✓ Promoting an inclusive ethos within the school community.
- ✓ Supporting pupils' access to learning opportunities and ensuring equity.
- ✓ Collaborating on inclusive practices for international and diverse students, by assisting in the development and implementation of strategies that address the needs of students from varied cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds.
- ✓ Coordinating involvement with external agencies for additional support.
- ✓ Participating in the development and review of individual learning plans.
- ✓ Assisting the pastoral team in fostering student well-being.
- ✓ Acting as a liaison for parents concerning student behaviour and discipline.
- ✓ Organizing and participating in meetings related to inclusion strategies.
- ✓ Supporting the school's administration with clerical and communication tasks.

The preferred minimum education level should be EQF Level 5, with 3 years of experience in inclusion support or a related field.

The required key skills and competencies include:
- ✓ Strong cultural awareness and sensitivity.
- ✓ Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- ✓ Proficiency in multiple languages is an advantage, especially for supporting international students and families.
- ✓ Project management and organizational abilities.

- ✓ Adaptability to diverse learning needs.
- ✓ Strategic thinking and problem-solving skills.

The job offers:
- ✓ A full-time position within a school environment.
- ✓ Working closely with the Inclusion Manager in a structured office setting.
- ✓ Opportunities to engage in training and professional development.
- ✓ A role that contributes to student success, well-being, and the school's inclusive education and internationalization efforts.

2.10 – Environmental Sustainability Advisor

He / she works in a hybrid setting, as part of the Direction, reporting to the Principal - Director. The Environmental Sustainability Advisor is responsible for developing and implementing sustainability initiatives within the international school office, ensuring environmental responsibility and compliance with global sustainability standards. This role involves promoting sustainable practices among staff and students, managing environmental projects, and collaborating with stakeholders to reduce the institution's environmental impact.

This job's key responsibilities include:
- ✓ Developing and executing sustainability policies and programs in alignment with the school's values and global environmental standards, within international activities.
- ✓ Conducting environmental impact assessments and recommending improvements.
- ✓ Collaborating with teachers and school leadership to integrate sustainability principles into the curriculum and extracurricular activities, that can be useful for the participants while in international mobilities.
- ✓ Providing training and awareness programs on environmental best practices.
- ✓ Identifying opportunities for energy efficiency, waste reduction, and resource optimization.
- ✓ Stay updated on global sustainability trends, green certifications, and industry standards, recommending innovative solutions for continuous improvement in the internationalization office.

The preferred minimum education level should be EQF Level 6, with 3 to 6 years of experience in inclusion support or a related field.

The required key skills and competencies include:
- ✓ Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science, Sustainability, Environmental Engineering, or a related field.
- ✓ A Master's degree or certifications in Sustainability Management, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), or Environmental Compliance is a plus.
- ✓ Technical and analytical Skills.
- ✓ Strong understanding of environmental sustainability principles and best practices.
- ✓ Ability to analyze sustainability data and generate meaningful insights.
- ✓ Proficiency in sustainability reporting tools.
- ✓ Communication and stakeholder engagement.
- ✓ Strong verbal and written communication skills to influence and educate stakeholders.

interVET
Enhancing the Internationalization and Erasmus
participation in VET Schools through staff training

Co-funded by the
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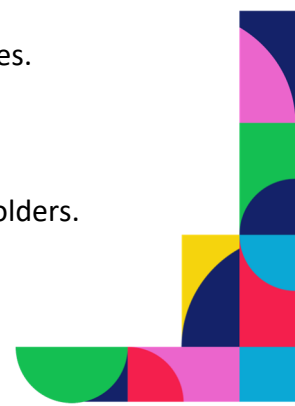
✓ Previous experience in sustainability planning, environmental management, or educational sustainability programs.

The job offers:
✓ Office-based role with regular interaction with staff, students, and school administrators.
✓ Occasional travel for conferences, workshops, or sustainability collaborations.
✓ May involve fieldwork for sustainability audits, waste management projects, or community engagement programs.
✓ Flexibility in work hours to accommodate meetings, events, and sustainability initiatives.
✓ Standard full-time schedule (e.g., 40 hours per week), with potential for flexibility depending on project demands.

2.11 – Class council teacher

He / she works in the school, reporting to the Principal, guiding and supporting students in their academic, social, and personal development. The Class Council Teacher plays a key role in fostering student engagement, well-being, and academic success within an international school setting. This position is responsible for mentoring and supporting both regular students and international exchange students, ensuring their smooth integration into the school environment. The role involves facilitating class meetings, promoting a positive and inclusive learning experience, and acting as a liaison between students, teachers, parents, and exchange program coordinators.
The ideal candidate is an empathetic, organized, and proactive educator who can support students' personal, social, and academic growth while fostering cultural awareness and international collaboration within the school community.

This job's key responsibilities include:
✓ Facilitating class council meetings, providing a space for students to express concerns, share ideas, and take an active role in their education.
✓ Providing mentorship and emotional support, ensuring that students feel heard, valued, and motivated.
✓ Acting as a bridge between students, teachers, parents, and school leadership, ensuring clear communication and collaboration.
✓ Promoting a positive and inclusive classroom environment that fosters respect, teamwork, and personal development.
✓ Assisting students in developing problem-solving, leadership, and social skills through structured activities and discussions.
✓ Addressing student conflicts and behavioural concerns, implementing conflict resolution and mediation strategies.
✓ Supporting international exchange students in adapting to the school's academic and social environment.
✓ Organizing and facilitating orientation sessions and integration activities for new exchange students.
✓ Acting as the primary point of contact for exchange students, host families, and program coordinators.
✓ Monitoring exchange students' academic progress and well-being, providing additional guidance as necessary.

- ✓ Fostering cross-cultural exchange by organizing cultural events, language support sessions, and peer mentoring programs.
- ✓ Ensuring that exchange students understand and comply with school policies, behavioural expectations, and academic requirements.
- ✓ Providing regular updates and reports on exchange students' progress to both internal school staff and external program coordinators.

The preferred minimum education level should be EQF Level 6, with 3 to 6 years of experience in inclusion support or a related field.

The required key skills and competencies include:
- ✓ Bachelor's degree in Education, Psychology, Child Development, International Relations, or a related field.
- ✓ Additional certifications in Student Counselling, Conflict Resolution, or Educational Leadership are a plus.
- ✓ Experience in teaching, student mentorship, or school leadership roles, preferably in an international or multicultural setting.
- ✓ Familiarity with student exchange programs, cultural adaptation strategies, and global education initiatives.
- ✓ Strong communication and interpersonal skills to engage with students, teachers, parents, and exchange coordinators.
- ✓ Ability to mentor and support both local and international students, ensuring their academic and social success.
- ✓ Experience in facilitating group discussions, managing student concerns, and leading class meetings.
- ✓ Excellent problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills, particularly in cross-cultural contexts.
- ✓ Strong organizational skills to oversee exchange student programs, class activities, and student progress tracking.
- ✓ Cultural awareness and sensitivity to diverse backgrounds, fostering an inclusive school environment.
- ✓ Proficiency in a second language.

The job offers:
- ✓ School-based role with regular interaction with students, teachers, administrators, and parents.
- ✓ Standard school hours, with occasional meetings, events, or extracurricular activities outside regular hours.
- ✓ Some evening or weekend commitments may be required for exchange program activities, cultural events, and parent meetings.
- ✓ Moderate physical activity, including walking around the school, leading student discussions, and supervising integration programs.
- ✓ Occasional travel may be required for exchange program coordination, student trips, or school-related events.
- ✓ Fluent English.
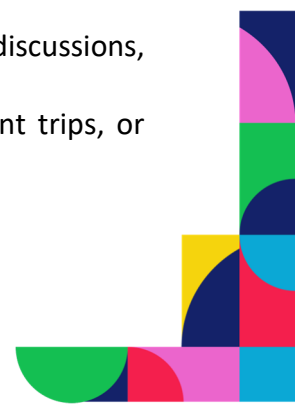
3 – Research Papers

Researching internationalisation in VET schools is a crucial step toward developing well-equipped International Officers. Research papers play a fundamental role in shaping the methodology, skills, and strategies required for fostering internationalisation within educational institutions.

As part of Work Package n° 2, "Methodological Guide for Establishing International Offices in VET Schools," partners conducted extensive research to identify the desired skill set for International Officers.

This research not only provides a foundation for upskilling VET teachers, educators, and staff but also ensures that International Officers have the necessary competencies to support international cooperation. The findings outlined in this report aim to strengthen internationalisation efforts by offering structured methodologies, key recommendations, and practical insights derived from comprehensive studies conducted across different institutions.

Thus, the objective of this section is to highlight the role of research papers in shaping internationalisation strategies, ensuring that VET schools can effectively implement and sustain global engagement activities.

3.1 – GO INTERNATIONAL: A Practical Guide for the Internationalisation of Schools, VET and Adult Education Providers

The *GO INTERNATIONAL* guidebook serves as a key resource for institutions in the school education, VET, and adult education sectors, providing strategic planning guidance for international activities. The document builds on EU cooperation, primarily through the Erasmus+ programme, while also incorporating global perspectives. It offers practical steps to help institutions, regardless of their size or stage of internationalisation, successfully embed international strategies into their everyday operations.

When we look at the main objectives of this guidebook, here they are:
- ✓ Supporting schools, VET providers, and adult education institutions in structuring their internationalisation strategies.
- ✓ Offering a non-theoretical approach with practical methodologies and best practices.
- ✓ Highlighting Erasmus+ accreditation and the Erasmus Plan as essential components of institutional internationalisation.
- ✓ Providing step-by-step guidance for both newcomers and experienced institutions.
- ✓ Addressing common challenges and solutions for successful internationalisation.

This guidebook plays a significant role in advancing the goals of the project, as it:
- ✓ Serves as a foundational tool for upskilling International Officers in VET institutions.
- ✓ Defines the key competencies and responsibilities required for successful internationalisation efforts.

- ✓ Demonstrates best practices and structured methodologies to support institutional global engagement.
- ✓ Emphasizes the importance of Erasmus+ accreditation and long-term strategic planning.

To ensure the successful implementation of internationalisation strategies in VET schools, the guidebook provides:
- ✓ A structured methodology for developing international action plans.
- ✓ A clear job description outlining the responsibilities of an International Officer.
- ✓ Strategies for integrating internationalisation into school curricula and daily operations.
- ✓ Practical examples of activities that strengthen global engagement within VET institutions.
- ✓ A roadmap for obtaining Erasmus+ accreditation and securing international funding.

It can be found here and its author is the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture.

3.2 – The Senior International Officer as Change Agent

The book *The Senior International Officer as Change Agent* explores the role of Senior International Officers in Higher Education Institutions, including VET schools, across the USA and Europe. It provides an academic framework outlining the evolution, significance, and diverse responsibilities of this role within different educational contexts. The book highlights the necessity of integrating internationalisation into institutional strategies while adapting to specific educational environments.

The key topics covered in this book are:
- ✓ Defining the role of the Senior International Officer (SIO) and its significance in modern educational institutions.
- ✓ Exploring the historical evolution and development of the position in European and U.S. contexts.
- ✓ Analysing the various functions of SIOs depending on institutional size, funding models, and national policy environments.
- ✓ Emphasizing the importance of strategic planning in aligning internationalisation with institutional goals.
- ✓ Identifying key skills such as creative thinking, negotiation, and stakeholder communication is essential for success in this role.

This book is highly relevant to the project, as it:
- ✓ Provides a structured academic perspective on the role of Senior International Officers in education.
- ✓ Highlights the importance of internationalisation as an institutional priority rather than a peripheral activity.
- ✓ Identifies critical skills necessary for effective internationalisation leadership, applicable to VET schools.
- ✓ Reinforces the need for stakeholder engagement, including students, teachers, administrative staff, and external partners.

To effectively integrate the insights from this book into VET school contexts, the following adaptations can be made:
- ✓ Encouraging institutional leaders to view internationalisation as a strategic priority rather than an isolated initiative.
- ✓ Training International Officers in strategic planning to ensure alignment with broader institutional goals.
- ✓ Developing negotiation and stakeholder management skills to strengthen institutional partnerships.
- ✓ Ensuring that internationalisation efforts are embedded into curricula, staff development, and student mobility programs.
- ✓ Promoting cross-departmental collaboration to facilitate international engagement and innovation.

It can be found here and its authors are John D. Heyl and Fiona J. H. Hunter.

3.3 – The Handbook of Practice and Research in Study Abroad

The book *The Handbook of Practice and Research in Study Abroad* presents a conceptual framework for global universities, which can be critically adapted to VET schools. It outlines key pillars necessary to fully integrate international and multicultural experiences into educational institutions and highlights the competencies required for an International Officer to facilitate these initiatives.

These are the fundamental components of the book:
- ✓ Defining the concept of a global university and its key pillars.
- ✓ Adapting this framework to the needs of VET schools.
- ✓ Identifying essential skills required for an International Officer to implement these strategies successfully

This book contributes to the project by:
- ✓ Providing a structured approach to internationalisation in VET schools.
- ✓ Highlighting essential competencies such as strategic planning, networking, and stakeholder engagement.
- ✓ Offering insights on integrating multicultural experiences into institutional structures.

To implement these insights effectively in VET schools, it suggests:
- ✓ Developing strategic planning skills to integrate internationalisation into institutional goals.
- ✓ Enhancing curriculum internationalisation through deep knowledge of the VET system.
- ✓ Strengthening networking and collaboration to create international internships.
- ✓ Encouraging proficiency in English and other languages to support global engagement.

It is available here and has several authors, edited by Ross Lewin.

3.4 – Building Knowledge on International Cooperation in VET

The study *Building Knowledge on International Cooperation in VET* examines Vocational Education and Training (VET) cooperation across EU / EFTA countries, analysing both developed and emerging

economies. It identifies key success factors, challenges, and recommendations to enhance internationalisation efforts at different levels—policy, organisational, and individual.

The main aspects covered in this study are:
- ✓ Examining international cooperation in VET across various EU and EFTA countries.
- ✓ Identifying obstacles to VET internationalisation and providing recommendations for future EU actions.
- ✓ Highlighting cooperation mechanisms at policy, organisational, and individual levels.
- ✓ Analysing a successful case study but lacking in-depth practical resources for VET schools.

This study plays a relevant role in shaping internationalisation strategies in VET institutions, as it:
- ✓ Provides a broad overview of the current state of international cooperation in the EU.
- ✓ Lists key challenges VET schools face in expanding their international activities.
- ✓ Offers policy-level recommendations that could guide institutional-level adaptations.

To ensure the study's recommendations are effectively applied in VET schools, it suggests:
- ✓ Translating macro-level policy recommendations into actionable strategies for individual schools.
- ✓ Developing more detailed resources to support schools in implementing internationalisation strategies.
- ✓ Updating the study to include current developments and best practices in international VET cooperation.

It can be found here and its authors are Stephanie Oberheidt, Laura Eid, Daniela Ulicna, Hanne Shapiro and Karin Luomi-Messerer, published by the European Commission.

3.5 – Issues Facing International Program Offices and Strategic Management Solutions: A Literature Review

The paper *Issues Facing International Program Offices and Strategic Management Solutions: A Literature Review* explores the unique challenges faced by International Program Offices (IPOs) in higher education institutions. It emphasizes the importance of strategic management solutions to improve their efficiency and effectiveness, particularly in serving a diverse student population. The study highlights the critical role of faculty, financial planning, and institutional collaboration in developing successful international education programs.

Covered by this paper are these key topics:
- ✓ Identifying the challenges IPOs face in managing study abroad programs and international student services.
- ✓ Discussing the transformative nature of study abroad experiences and the difficulty students have in articulating their growth.
- ✓ Highlighting the importance of pre-and post-program evaluations to assess students' cultural competencies.
- ✓ Stressing faculty involvement in designing high-quality international programs, particularly in honours courses.

- ✓ Underlining the necessity of tailored approaches for international students, as domestic solutions may not always be effective.
- ✓ Advocating for strong advisor-student relationships as predictors of success, especially for graduate students.
- ✓ Emphasizing collaboration between IPOs and administrative departments to align services and expectations.

This paper is highly relevant for improving internationalisation strategies in VET institutions, as it:
- ✓ Provides a strategic framework for enhancing the efficiency of international programs.
- ✓ Highlights best practices for engaging students and faculty in international education initiatives.
- ✓ Reinforces the importance of transparent communication and collaboration within educational institutions.
- ✓ Offers insights on how VET schools can better support international students through tailored programs.

To integrate these insights effectively into VET institutions, the paper suggests:
- ✓ Implementing structured pre- and post-program evaluations to assess student growth.
- ✓ Encouraging faculty involvement in designing international programs aligned with vocational training needs.
- ✓ Providing mentorship training for VET staff to enhance advisor-student relationships.
- ✓ Strengthening collaboration between international offices and educators to improve program outcomes.
- ✓ Conducting regular assessments of international programs to ensure they remain relevant and effective.

It can be found here and its author is Kirsten Bilas.

3.6 – Guidebook of Internationalization Strategy in Vocational Education and Training

The *Guidebook of Internationalization Strategy in Vocational Education and Training* presents practical approaches to internationalisation in VET institutions. It compiles findings from workshops and existing materials, offering good practices and strategies that can be implemented in vocational colleges. The guidebook provides a structured framework to help institutions develop and enhance their internationalisation strategies.

When we look at the key topics covered in this guidebook, here is what it mentions:
- ✓ Offers a comprehensive overview of internationalisation strategies in VET colleges.
- ✓ Compiles findings from various workshops and best practices in international education.
- ✓ Focuses on practical and actionable approaches for implementing internationalisation.
- ✓ Highlights the importance of strategic planning in VET institutions.

It plays an important role in supporting internationalisation efforts in VET schools, as it:
- ✓ Provides a structured approach to integrating internationalisation into VET curricula.
- ✓ Highlights best practices that can be adapted to different institutional contexts.

✓ Reinforces the value of international strategies in enhancing the quality of vocational education.

To effectively implement the strategies outlined in this guidebook, VET schools should:
✓ Identify and apply the most relevant good practices suited to their institution.
✓ Develop structured internationalisation plans aligned with institutional goals.
✓ Provide training for staff to understand and implement strategic internationalisation.
✓ Foster collaboration between VET schools and international partners for knowledge exchange.
✓ Continuously evaluate and improve internationalisation initiatives based on successful models.

It can be found here and its authors are the partners of the ToVET project.

3.7 – English Language Skills Required by International Relations Officers: A Target Situation Analysis and Its Implications for English for International Relations Officers Course Design

The study *English Language Skills Required by International Relations Officers: A Target Situation Analysis and Its Implications for English for International Relations Officers Course Design* examines the essential English language competencies needed by International Relations Officers (IROs). It explores the linguistic demands of the role and offers insights into designing effective English courses to enhance the professional communication skills of IROs in vocational education and training (VET) institutions.

The key topics covered in this study are:
✓ Analyses the English language skills required by International Relations Officers in VET institutions.
✓ Identifies specific linguistic competencies needed for professional communication in an international setting.
✓ Explores how these skills impact the effectiveness of international cooperation and partnerships.
✓ Provides recommendations for designing tailored English courses to support IROs.

This study is highly relevant for improving the capabilities of International Relations Officers in VET institutions, as it:
✓ Highlights the importance of English proficiency in managing international partnerships.
✓ Emphasizes the need for structured training in business and academic English.
✓ Identifies key areas where language skills impact internationalisation efforts.

To integrate the findings of this study effectively, VET schools should:
✓ Develop and implement free business English courses tailored to International Relations Officers.
✓ Provide language training focused on professional communication, negotiation, and intercultural interactions.
✓ Offer ongoing support and language development opportunities for staff engaged in international relations.
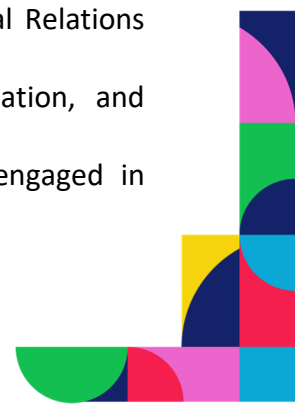
✓ Encourage the use of real-life case studies and role-playing exercises in language training.
✓ Integrate English language skills into the professional development programs for IROs.

It can be found here and its authors are N. Padermprach and W. Yaemtui.

3.8 – Best Global Practices in Technical and Vocational Education and Training

The study *Best Global Practices in Technical and Vocational Education and Training* examines diverse vocational education and training (TVET) models implemented worldwide to develop a skilled workforce. It highlights various approaches, including dual TVET systems, apprenticeship models, employer-led training, and the integration of TVET into formal education through credit systems. The study aims to showcase global best practices that can serve as references for enhancing vocational training strategies.

These are the key topics covered in this article:
✓ Analyses vocational education systems worldwide, highlighting innovative training models.
✓ Examines dual TVET approaches that combine education and hands-on apprenticeship.
✓ Explores employer-led training initiatives and private-public partnerships (PPP) in TVET.
✓ Investigates how credit systems integrate vocational training into formal education.
✓ Identifies global strategies for improving workforce readiness and employability.

This study is particularly useful for VET schools looking to improve their training models, as it:
✓ Showcases best practices that can be adapted to enhance VET curricula.
✓ Highlights the importance of collaboration between educational institutions and industry.
✓ Provides insights into successful vocational training policies worldwide.

To effectively implement insights from this study, VET institutions should:
✓ Identify and adopt best practices that align with their specific educational and labour market contexts.
✓ Strengthen cooperation with industry through apprenticeship and employer-led training programs.
✓ Explore integrating TVET into formal education using credit transfer systems.
✓ Develop partnerships with international vocational training institutions for knowledge exchange.
✓ Regularly evaluate and refine vocational programs following global models.

It can be found here and its author is the National Skill Development Corporation.

3.9 – Internationalization of Higher Education: A Literature Review on Competency Approach

The paper *Internationalization of Higher Education: A Literature Review on Competency Approach* examines the essential competencies required by university staff to effectively support international students. It focuses on the challenges international students face in adapting to new cultural and academic environments, while also addressing the difficulties faculty and administrators encounter in meeting the needs of a diverse student body. The paper highlights the importance of fostering

collaboration among institutional staff to create a more inclusive and supportive international education framework.

These are the key topics:
- ✓ Examining the difficulties international students face, including cultural adaptation, language barriers, and social isolation.
- ✓ Highlighting the challenges faculty and administrators encounter in understanding and addressing international students' needs.
- ✓ Emphasizing the importance of staff competencies in managing internationalization strategies effectively.
- ✓ Discussing the necessity of interactive teaching methods to accommodate diverse learning styles.
- ✓ Exploring the concerns about maintaining educational quality while increasing international student enrolment.

This study is highly relevant for VET institutions aiming to enhance their support for international students, as it:
- ✓ Reinforces the need for skilled personnel in implementing internationalization strategies.
- ✓ Encourages collaboration across all levels of staff, from management to teachers, for a cohesive international approach.
- ✓ Highlights the importance of language and cultural support programs for international students.
- ✓ Advocates for recruitment strategies that balance student diversity with academic standards.

To effectively implement the findings of this study, VET institutions should:
- ✓ Provide professional development programs to train staff in cultural awareness and international student support.
- ✓ Establish mentorship programs that pair local students with international students to foster social integration.
- ✓ Enhance language support services, such as English language courses or tutoring programs.
- ✓ Streamline administrative processes to make admissions and course registration more accessible for international students.
- ✓ Encourage VET instructors to adopt pedagogical strategies that promote inclusivity and active participation.
- ✓ Organize cultural exchange events, workshops, and group projects to encourage interaction between local and international students.
- ✓ Maintain high educational standards while ensuring diversity in enrolment strategies.
- ✓ Implement regular feedback mechanisms to understand and address the evolving needs of international students.

It can be found here and its author is Yee Chong Pui.

3.10 – Internationalization of Higher Education: Leadership Roles and Challenges Senior International Officers Face in Their Efforts to Internationalize Regional Comprehensive Universities in the United States

The study *Internationalization of Higher Education: Leadership Roles and Challenges Senior International Officers Face in Their Efforts to Internationalize Regional Comprehensive Universities in the United States* explores the leadership roles of Senior International Officers (SIOs) in driving internationalization efforts at regional universities. It examines the challenges they face, their leadership strategies, and the importance of internationalization in preparing students to be global citizens. The study applies a qualitative approach, using interpretive phenomenological analysis based on interviews with 12 SIOs from different U.S. regions.

Here are the key topics:
- ✓ Defining internationalization as a key strategy for preparing students for global challenges.
- ✓ Examining the leadership styles used by SIOs, primarily transformational and servant leadership.
- ✓ Identifying common challenges SIOs face in advancing internationalization at their institutions.
- ✓ Highlighting strategies used to overcome these obstacles and promote global engagement.
- ✓ Emphasizing the need for institutional collaboration and strong leadership in internationalization efforts.

This study is particularly useful for VET institutions looking to enhance their internationalization efforts, as it:
- ✓ Aligns with the goals of the InterVET Project, which promotes international collaboration and mobility.
- ✓ Highlights the importance of strong, adaptable leadership in advancing global education initiatives.
- ✓ Offers insights into leadership strategies that can be applied in VET schools to create more globally connected campuses.
- ✓ Recognizes the challenges faced by internationalization officers and provides solutions for overcoming them.

To effectively implement the insights from this study, VET institutions should:
- ✓ Promote internationalization as a way to develop students' global mindset and career readiness.
- ✓ Build strong partnerships with international organizations to offer global opportunities, such as internships and certifications.
- ✓ Apply transformational and servant leadership styles to secure funding and create sustainable international programs.
- ✓ Balance internationalization with local industry needs, ensuring that students are prepared for both domestic and global job markets.
- ✓ Develop real-world, skills-based international programs that align with students' career goals.
- ✓ Foster collaboration between international offices, educators, and industry partners to enhance the quality of global experiences.

It can be found here here and its author is Ibrahima Fatin Yaro.

3.11 – Vocational Education and Training in Spain

The report *Vocational Education and Training in Spain* provides a comprehensive analysis of the Spanish VET system, emphasizing its structured network of educational institutions, industry partnerships, and quality assurance mechanisms. It highlights the importance of an efficient and effective VET system and explores key components, such as vocational training within the education system and workforce training under active labour market policies. The report also discusses incentives for learners, particularly international internships, as a means to enhance skills and employability.

These are the key topics covered in this report:
- ✓ Providing an overview of the structure and organization of the Spanish VET system.
- ✓ Highlighting the dual role of VET in education and workforce training.
- ✓ Examining the role of regional authorities in implementing VET programs.
- ✓ Discussing public funding and policies that support vocational training.
- ✓ Exploring incentives for learners, particularly international internships.

This report is particularly relevant for VET institutions aiming to enhance their vocational training programs, as it:
- ✓ Highlights best practices in integrating VET education with workforce training.
- ✓ Emphasizes the importance of international internships in skill development.
- ✓ Provides insights into funding mechanisms and policy frameworks supporting VET.
- ✓ Showcases Spain's approach to aligning vocational education with industry needs.

To effectively implement the insights from this report, VET institutions should:
- ✓ Strengthen partnerships between educational institutions and industries to ensure relevant training.
- ✓ Develop structured international internship programs to enhance student employability.
- ✓ Align vocational training curricula with workforce demands and market trends.
- ✓ Leverage public funding opportunities to expand and improve VET programs.
- ✓ Foster collaboration with regional authorities to tailor vocational training initiatives.

It can be found here and its author is CEDEFOP.

3.12 – Implementing a VET Strategic Plan

The *Implementing a VET Strategic Plan* study examines the strategic development of vocational and professional education and training (VPET) at the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST). The plan focuses on both infrastructure and quality enhancement, aiming to improve the perception of VET while strengthening governance and management structures. Since its launch, the strategy has been translated into operational plans, thematic action plans, and department-specific initiatives, with continuous monitoring and biannual status reviews.

The key topics covered in this study are:

- ✓ Focusing on enhancing both the physical campus and the quality of teaching and learning in VPET.
- ✓ Strengthening the governance and management structures of vocational institutions.
- ✓ Developing operational, individual staff, and thematic action plans to support the strategy.
- ✓ Establishing continuous monitoring and appraisal systems for effective implementation.
- ✓ Conducting biannual reviews and generating status reports for institutional oversight.

This study is particularly valuable for VET institutions looking to develop structured internationalisation strategies, as it:
- ✓ Provides a model for implementing strategic plans within VET schools.
- ✓ Demonstrates best practices in governance, operational planning, and quality assurance.
- ✓ Highlights the importance of regular monitoring and assessment to ensure successful implementation.
- ✓ Serves as a practical example of how internationalisation strategies can be embedded in broader institutional development.

To effectively apply the insights from this study, VET institutions should:
- ✓ Develop a clear internationalisation strategy with defined objectives and implementation frameworks.
- ✓ Establish monitoring mechanisms to evaluate progress and make necessary adjustments.
- ✓ Create thematic and operational action plans to structure the implementation process.
- ✓ Align governance and management structures with strategic internationalisation goals.
- ✓ Conduct regular reviews and produce reports to track performance and inform decision-making.

It can be found here and its author is Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology.

3.13 – Internationalization in European Vocational Education and Training

The *Internationalization in European Vocational Education and Training* study explores the growing importance of internationalisation and mobility in vocational education across Europe. It examines how EU strategies, such as Erasmus+ and ET2020, drive internationalisation efforts and discusses key tools like Europass and ECVET that support the recognition of international learning experiences. The study also compares internationalisation trends in Germany and the Netherlands, highlighting challenges and opportunities within different VET systems.

Here are the key topics covered in this study:
- ✓ Analysing the EU's internationalisation strategy and its impact on VET education.
- ✓ Exploring mobility initiatives such as Erasmus+ and the Leonardo da Vinci program.
- ✓ Discussing barriers to mobility, particularly in dual-system VET models like Germany's.
- ✓ Highlighting standardisation tools (Europass, ECVET, EQF) to recognize international learning experiences.
- ✓ Examining best practices in Germany and the Netherlands to compare different internationalisation approaches.

This study is particularly relevant for VET institutions aiming to expand their internationalisation strategies, as it:

- ✓ Aligns with the objectives of the INTERVET project in promoting VET student mobility.
- ✓ Identifies funding mechanisms that VET institutions can use for international programs.
- ✓ Highlights the need for institutional commitment and proactive grant applications.
- ✓ Addresses mobility challenges and offers recommendations for overcoming them.

To effectively implement the insights from this study, VET institutions should:

- ✓ Design flexible mobility programs that account for the structure of dual-system VET models.
- ✓ Use Europass, ECVET, and EQF to ensure recognition of international learning experiences.
- ✓ Strengthen institutional strategies to integrate mobility into their curriculum and training programs.
- ✓ Encourage proactive participation in EU funding opportunities to support internationalisation.
- ✓ Develop stronger partnerships with employers to facilitate student mobility in work-based learning environments.
- ✓ Promote teacher involvement in mobility initiatives through platforms like eTwinning and Erasmus+ networks.

It can be found here and its authors are Kathrin Kaleja and Regina Egetenmeyer.

3.14 – Teacher Professional Development Under the Impact of Internationalization in VET

The *Teacher Professional Development Under the Impact of Internationalization in VET* study examines how internationalisation and student mobility influence the professional learning needs of vocational education and training (VET) teachers. It highlights the challenges educators face in adapting to increasingly diverse classrooms and emphasizes the need for structured professional development programs to enhance teaching quality. The research is based on empirical studies in Australia, where international education plays a significant role in the economy, and it identifies key areas where VET teachers require capacity-building to better engage international students.

The key topics covered are:

- ✓ Analysing the impact of international student mobility on VET teachers' professional development needs.
- ✓ Highlighting the challenges educators face in teaching students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- ✓ Identifying gaps in teacher training programs related to international education.
- ✓ Recommending structured and systematic professional learning to enhance teaching practices.
- ✓ Emphasizing the importance of research-informed strategies to improve inclusivity in VET classrooms.

This study is particularly relevant for VET institutions aiming to strengthen their internationalisation efforts, as it:

- ✓ Aligns with the INTERVET project's mission to enhance mobility and skills development for both students and teachers.

- ✓ Highlights the importance of teacher training in ensuring the success of international VET programs.
- ✓ Addresses the need for evidence-based teaching strategies to support international students.
- ✓ Reinforces the value of cultural awareness and inclusive pedagogical approaches.

To effectively implement the insights from this study, VET institutions should:
- ✓ Develop structured, long-term professional development programs for teachers.
- ✓ Offer training on cultural awareness and cross-cultural communication.
- ✓ Provide up-to-date resources and best practices for working with diverse student populations.
- ✓ Encourage continuous learning and adaptation to improve the international student experience.
- ✓ Foster a supportive and inclusive classroom environment through student-centred teaching approaches.

It can be found here and its authors are Ly Thi Tran and Truc Thi Thanh Le.

3.15 – International Collaborations in the VET Sector: Motivations and Challenges

The *International Collaborations in the VET Sector: Motivations and Challenges* study explores the motivations behind international partnerships in vocational education and training (VET) and the challenges that institutions face in implementing these collaborations. Through interviews with teachers, program coordinators, and managers from VET providers in China and Canada, the study identifies key differences in how developed and developing countries approach internationalisation in the VET sector. It also examines barriers such as curriculum incompatibility, staff preparedness, and administrative hurdles.

These are the key topics in this study:
- ✓ Analysing the motivations for VET providers to engage in international collaborations.
- ✓ Identifies differences in approaches between developed economies (commercial focus) and developing economies (instrumental and developmental focus).
- ✓ Highlighting challenges such as curriculum incompatibility, lack of teacher preparedness, and administrative barriers.
- ✓ Exploring the role of industry partnerships in enhancing global collaboration in vocational education.
- ✓ Applying inter-organizational relations theory to understand how different institutions engage internationally.

This study is particularly relevant for VET institutions seeking to expand international partnerships, as it:
- ✓ Aligns with the INTERVET project's mission to foster international mobility and collaboration.
- ✓ Highlights mobility programs as a key strategy for developing global competencies in students and staff.
- ✓ Emphasizes the value of faculty exchanges in building international cooperation and professional development.

✓ Reinforces the importance of work-integrated learning and partnerships with industry to support global employability.

To effectively implement the insights from this study, VET institutions should:
✓ Selectively incorporate international content into existing curricula rather than fully adopting foreign models.
✓ Invest in cross-cultural training and international experience opportunities for teachers.
✓ Promote faculty exchanges and collaboration with international institutions to enhance teaching quality.
✓ Strengthen work-integrated learning models, ensuring that students gain both local and global industry-relevant skills.
✓ Advocate for policy reforms that reduce bureaucratic barriers and establish mutual accreditation systems to facilitate smoother international partnerships.

It can be found here and its author is Yuan Gao.

3.16 – Examining Barriers to Internationalisation Created by Diverse Systems and Structures in Vocational Education and Training

The *Examining Barriers to Internationalisation Created by Diverse Systems and Structures in Vocational Education and Training* study explores how national-focused policies and structures in VET limit international cooperation. It discusses the challenges VET institutions face in balancing their primary role—preparing skilled workers for local markets—while also ensuring that students gain international competencies. The study suggests that efforts to internationalise VET have had limited success due to systemic barriers and argues that granting more freedom to students, teachers, and employers to pursue international collaborations would be the most effective way forward.

These are the key topics covered:
✓ Highlighting how national policies and structures restrict the internationalisation of VET.
✓ Examining how limited international mobility affects VET students, teachers, and industries.
✓ Discussing the lack of qualification recognition as a barrier to skilled workers seeking opportunities abroad.
✓ Suggesting that allowing more freedom for students, teachers, and employers to pursue international collaborations could improve global engagement.
✓ Exploring how industries, rather than governments, have been more successful in setting international training standards.

This study is highly relevant for VET institutions aiming to strengthen international mobility and cooperation, as it:
✓ Aligns with the INTERVET project's goal of increasing VET student and teacher mobility.
✓ Reinforces the importance of mutual recognition of VET qualifications across Europe.
✓ Identifies the need for VET schools to move beyond a purely national focus and adopt a more global outlook.
✓ Highlights the role of industry partnerships in setting internationally relevant skill standards.
✓ To effectively implement the insights from this study, VET institutions should:
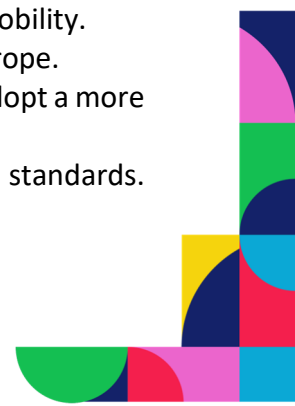
- ✓ Foster international collaboration among educators and trainers to exchange best practices.
- ✓ Advocate for mutual recognition of VET qualifications across different national systems.
- ✓ Work closely with industries to establish internationally recognized skill standards.
- ✓ Develop bridging programs to help students transition between different VET systems.
- ✓ Leverage digital platforms to facilitate global networking, collaboration, and research-sharing among VET professionals.

It can be found here and its authors are Angela Joy Shaw, Kieron John Shaw, and Suzanne Blake.

3.17 – The Leadership of Senior International Officers: A Qualitative Study

The Leadership of Senior International Officers: A Qualitative Study explores the roles, experiences, and leadership qualities of Senior International Officers (SIOs) at the California State University system. The study examines their professional backgrounds, motivations for entering the field of international education, and the challenges they face in managing international partnerships, student and faculty exchanges, and risk management. The research underscores the growing importance of international education in a globalized economy and highlights the need to prepare students as global citizens.

The key topics covered are:
- ✓ Examining the leadership roles and professional backgrounds of Senior International Officers (SIOs).
- ✓ Highlighting the increasing importance of international education and global engagement.
- ✓ Identifying key leadership competencies, including cultural awareness, strategic planning, and risk management.
- ✓ Analysing the challenges SIOs face in managing international partnerships, student exchanges, and faculty mobility.
- ✓ Providing insights into how SIOs navigate cultural diversity and global collaboration in higher education institutions.

This study is highly relevant for VET institutions aiming to enhance their leadership in internationalisation, as it:
- ✓ Provides a detailed analysis of the leadership qualities required for effective international engagement.
- ✓ Aligns with the need for strategic planning in VET internationalisation efforts.
- ✓ Highlights best practices in managing global partnerships, faculty exchanges, and student mobility programs.
- ✓ Reinforces the importance of cross-cultural competence in leading international VET initiatives.

To effectively implement the insights from this study, VET institutions should:
- ✓ Strengthen the role of SIOs in VET schools by developing stronger international networks with global organisations and industry partners.
- ✓ Focus on practical international partnerships by creating opportunities for student exchanges, internships, and work placements abroad.
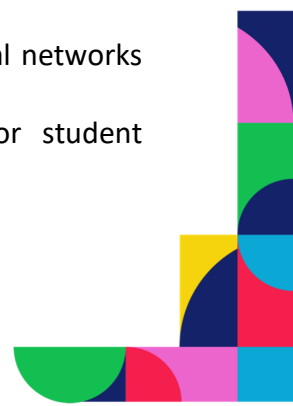
- ✓ Enhance cross-cultural competence by providing training for both students and staff to improve intercultural communication skills.
- ✓ Integrate global best practices into the curriculum by incorporating case studies, industry standards, and teaching methods from different countries.
- ✓ Develop a long-term vision for internationalisation by anticipating global job market trends and preparing students accordingly.

It can be found here and its authors are Linh Trang C. Tran, Barbara LaCost and Marilyn L. Grady.

4 – Best Practices

Identifying and implementing best practices in internationalisation is essential for ensuring the success and sustainability of global engagement initiatives within VET institutions. Best practices provide concrete examples of successful strategies, methodologies, and frameworks that can be adapted and applied across different educational contexts.

As part of Work Package n° 2, Methodological Guide for Establishing International Offices in VET Schools, partners were tasked with gathering and analysing best practices in the field of internationalisation. This process involved examining successful case studies, institutional strategies, and innovative approaches that enhance the effectiveness of international offices in VET schools.

By highlighting best practices, this section aims to equip VET institutions with applicative insights that can support the professional development of International Officers, streamline international cooperation, and improve mobility opportunities for students and staff. The findings serve as a reference point for institutions looking to refine their internationalisation strategies, ensuring alignment with global trends and policy frameworks.

Thus, the objective of this section is to provide VET schools with practical tools and proven methodologies that can be adapted to their specific needs, fostering a structured and efficient approach to internationalisation.

4.1 – Crossing Borders, Opening Minds: Enhancing Vocational Education and Training (VET) Mobility

This best practice focuses on cross-border VET exchange partnerships between institutions in the Rhine-Waal Euregio region, involving schools from the Netherlands and Germany. These tandem exchanges allow both learners and teachers to gain new perspectives on vocational training pathways, labour markets, and educational approaches in a neighbouring country.

The findings from this initiative highlight significant learning opportunities for both students and staff, including:
- ✓ Gaining insight into vocational training systems in a neighbouring country, encouraging reflection on their own VET experience.

- ✓ Developing an understanding of the cross-border labour market.
- ✓ Enhancing personal, social, intercultural, and linguistic competencies, particularly through alternating between host and guest roles.
- ✓ Addressing and reducing mutual prejudices between cross-border communities.

This best practice serves as an excellent example for VET schools aiming to initiate internationalisation efforts, particularly for newcomers, as it:
- ✓ Requires less funding compared to mid or long-range mobility programs, making it accessible for small VET institutions.
- ✓ Encourages the use of green travel, aligning with sustainability goals promoted by the European Commission.
- ✓ Introduces INTERREG as an alternative funding option to Erasmus+, increasing approval chances for mobility projects.
- ✓ Offers learning opportunities for both students and teaching staff, enhancing the internationalisation process at all levels.
- ✓ Provides a meaningful intercultural experience despite geographical proximity, particularly if family hosting is incorporated.
- ✓ Helps combat historical prejudices between neighbouring countries by fostering cooperation and understanding among young people.
- ✓ Demonstrates the importance of establishing an International Office or department rather than relying on a single teacher to maintain partnerships.

To successfully implement this best practice in VET institutions, the following adaptations should be considered:
- ✓ Encouraging small VET schools to start with cross-border partnerships before expanding to long-range exchanges.
- ✓ Promoting family-hosted accommodation to enhance linguistic and cultural immersion.
- ✓ Using INTERREG funding as a viable alternative for financing international exchanges.
- ✓ Integrating mobility recognition into the curriculum to ensure students benefit academically.
- ✓ Establishing an International Office or dedicated team responsible for mobility projects, ensuring continuity if key staff members leave.

4.2 – Portuguese National Agency (NA) for the Erasmus+ Education and Training Program

The Portuguese National Agency (NA) for the Erasmus+ Education and Training Program developed a regulation for recognizing and awarding Best Practices in Erasmus+ projects within the VET sector. This initiative highlights outstanding projects in mobility (KA1 VET) and cooperation partnerships (KA2 VET), ensuring that successful methodologies, strategies, and innovations are shared and promoted across educational institutions.

To receive the Best Practices Award, VET institutions must meet specific quality criteria, including:
- ✓ KA1 VET Projects: Evaluated based on institutional impact, innovation, sustainability, inclusion, international capacity building, and mobility quality.
- ✓ KA2 VET Projects: Assessed on impact, innovation, sustainability, financial management, communication, and inclusion.
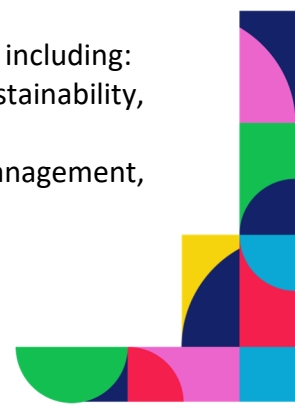
This initiative encourages VET institutions to strategically plan their international projects, ensuring they generate tangible results, are well-documented, and contribute to the broader Erasmus+ network. By providing structured evaluation criteria, the regulation incentivizes VET schools to integrate internationalisation as a core element of their educational strategies.

This best practice is particularly relevant to VET schools engaged in internationalisation, as it:
- ✓ Encourages structured strategic planning for Erasmus+ projects, ensuring long-term impact and sustainability.
- ✓ Supports the professionalisation of internationalisation offices by requiring institutions to document and evaluate their initiatives critically.
- ✓ Promotes high standards in Erasmus+ mobility and cooperation projects, ensuring best practices are identified, shared, and replicated across institutions.
- ✓ Aligns with INTERVET's objectives of fostering quality-driven international exchanges and institutional development in VET education.

To effectively integrate this best practice, VET institutions should:
- ✓ Develop a structured plan for Erasmus+ project implementation, ensuring alignment with the award criteria.
- ✓ Collect and document evidence of impact, innovation, and sustainability throughout project implementation.
- ✓ Enhance institutional capacity for internationalisation by training staff on Erasmus+ regulations and best practices.
- ✓ Promote collaboration between departments to ensure that international projects involve teachers, students, and administrative staff.
- ✓ Use the Best Practices Award as a benchmark to evaluate and improve their Erasmus+ projects.

4.3 – Using the Storytelling Tool to Identify the Internationalisation Process of VET Schools

Education Centre Brahe developed an innovative approach using storytelling and visual tools to document and reflect on its internationalisation journey. The institution gathered staff members who had participated in international activities and facilitated a collaborative session where they mapped out their international timeline.

This storytelling approach helps VET schools visualize their international growth, recognize achievements, and identify areas for improvement. It also serves as a powerful communication tool for attracting new international partners and engaging students.

This best practice is particularly valuable for VET institutions aiming to strengthen their internationalisation efforts, as it:
- ✓ Provides a clear historical overview of a school's international activities, ensuring continuity and informed decision-making.
- ✓ Helps schools leverage past experiences to shape future international strategies.
- ✓ Encourages participation from various stakeholders (Board members, teachers, students, alumni, and international officers).

- ✓ Creates a compelling visual representation of international achievements, enhancing visibility and credibility.
- ✓ Acts as a self-assessment tool to evaluate strengths, challenges, and necessary adjustments in the internationalisation process.

To effectively implement this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Form a dedicated team comprising representatives from management, teachers, staff, students, and alumni.
- ✓ Create an internationalisation timeline, highlighting key milestones, projects, and partnerships.
- ✓ Use free digital tools like Prezi or Canva to make the timeline visually engaging and accessible.
- ✓ Encourage reflection by answering key questions:
- ✓ What have been the most significant international milestones?
- ✓ Who were the key contributors to these activities?
- ✓ How have international projects evolved?
- ✓ What challenges and successes shaped the internationalisation journey?
- ✓ Publish the timeline on the school's website, annual reports, or organisational history book to showcase past efforts.
- ✓ Update the timeline periodically, evaluating what strategies have worked and which need improvement.

4.4 – European Pathway VET Consortium: Definition of Mission, Values, and Goals

Defining a clear mission and set of values is a fundamental step in developing an effective internationalisation strategy for VET schools. Institutions that establish a strong foundation based on these principles can align their international activities with their broader educational objectives, ensuring long-term success.

The European Pathway VET Consortium, a Finnish network of seven VET schools, serves as a best practice model for integrating internationalisation into a school's mission. Their approach involves:
- ✓ Translating the school's general mission into an internationalisation strategy by defining key objectives.
- ✓ Identifying core values that support international cooperation, ensuring that international activities align with the school's culture and commitments.
- ✓ Utilizing strategic planning tools, such as the Strategy Tree model, developed in the Responsible Global Agents project. This model helps schools visualise the connection between their mission, values, and internationalisation efforts.

The Strategy Tree model structures the planning process by:
- ✓ Defining the mission as the foundation of the tree.
- ✓ Establishing values as the roots, which sustain international activities.
- ✓ Mapping out the operating environment in the branches, identifying key external factors influencing internationalisation.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions seeking to strengthen their international strategy, as it:

- ✓ Ensures long-term alignment between internationalisation and institutional goals.
- ✓ Provides a structured methodology for defining and integrating international objectives into the school's vision.
- ✓ Engages stakeholders at all levels, including management, teachers, staff, and students, fostering collective ownership of the strategy.
- ✓ Encourages consistency and clarity, ensuring that international activities follow guiding principles and are embedded in daily operations.
- ✓ Supports professional development and institutional growth, reinforcing a culture of international engagement within the school.

To successfully implement this best practice, VET schools should:

- ✓ Define their internationalisation mission by adapting their existing institutional mission to reflect global engagement.
- ✓ Use focus groups or surveys to gather input from the school community.
- ✓ Draft multiple mission statements and select the most representative one through a voting process.
- ✓ Set core values aligned with internationalisation goals, ensuring they reflect the school's culture and commitments.
- ✓ Conduct brainstorming sessions with teachers, staff, and management to define shared values.
- ✓ Use interactive methods, such as Post-it Note exercises, to select and prioritise values.
- ✓ Activate the values by embedding them in the school's daily practices and culture.
- ✓ Create visual representations (posters, digital banners, documents) to reinforce values across the institution.
- ✓ Organise training sessions and workshops to ensure staff and students understand and apply these values.
- ✓ Celebrate achievements in internationalisation to encourage ongoing engagement.
- ✓ Regularly evaluate and update the mission and values to keep them relevant and responsive to evolving international trends.

4.5 – Guidelines for Internationalisation: How to Promote Internationalisation Amongst Adolescents and Young Adults

In autumn 2023 and spring 2024, the Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI) conducted a comprehensive study on the benefits and significance of international cooperation for young people. The project involved dialogues and discussion forums with education providers, policymakers, and societal influencers to explore ways to promote internationalisation among adolescents and young adults.

Based on these discussions, EDUFI developed a set of guidelines for VET institutions to enhance international engagement among students. The recommendations emphasize the importance of institutional commitment, strategic planning, accessibility of information, and financial support, ensuring that internationalisation is fully integrated into the educational experience.
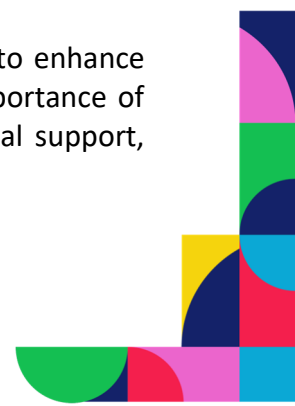
This best practice is particularly valuable for VET institutions as it:
- ✓ Provides a structured approach to integrating internationalisation into school strategies.
- ✓ Emphasizes the role of management in ensuring long-term commitment and resource allocation.
- ✓ Encourages student participation by addressing common concerns such as financial barriers, graduation delays, and accessibility.
- ✓ Highlights the importance of clear communication, ensuring that international opportunities are visible and easily understood.
- ✓ Aligns with INTERVET's objectives of expanding international mobility and fostering global competence among VET students and staff.

To effectively implement this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Engage school management to ensure that internationalisation is a priority, backed by financial and human resources.
- ✓ Integrate internationalisation into institutional strategies and curricula, making it a core element rather than an optional activity.
- ✓ Encourage staff participation by providing training and tools to help them guide students in international opportunities.
- ✓ Use peer success stories to inspire students and demonstrate the tangible benefits of international exchanges.
- ✓ Ensure accessibility of information, using clear and simple language to explain mobility options and funding opportunities.
- ✓ Offer flexible internationalisation options, such as short-term exchanges or virtual experiences, to accommodate students with work or family responsibilities.
- ✓ Promote financial support mechanisms, making sure students from different socio-economic backgrounds are aware of additional mobility funding.

4.6 – Paperless Erasmus+: Streamlining Mobility Management

KPEDU has developed a fully paperless system to manage the entire Erasmus+ student mobility process, eliminating the need for physical documentation. This digital transformation improves efficiency, reduces administrative errors, and simplifies workflow for both students and staff involved in international mobility programs.

By automating the process, the system ensures faster document processing, better tracking of student mobility activities, and enhanced accessibility for all stakeholders. This approach aligns with modern sustainability goals and digitalisation trends in education, making Erasmus+ mobility more seamless and environmentally friendly.

This best practice is highly relevant for VET institutions as it:
- ✓ Improves efficiency and reduces errors in managing Erasmus+ mobility.
- ✓ Eliminates paperwork, contributing to sustainability and digital transformation efforts.
- ✓ Ensures compliance with Erasmus+ requirements through automated record-keeping and document submission.

To implement this best practice, VET institutions should:
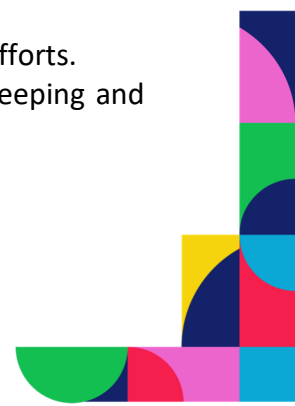
- ✓ Evaluate current Erasmus+ management systems to identify areas for automation.
- ✓ Adopt digital tools for processing applications, tracking student progress, and managing mobility documentation.
- ✓ Ensure staff training on digital platforms to facilitate a smooth transition to paperless mobility.
- ✓ Use cloud-based solutions to allow students and staff to access documents from anywhere.
- ✓ Monitor and refine the system regularly, ensuring that the digital process remains efficient and user-friendly.

4.7 – Foreign Friends: Online Mobility for Cultural and Language Exchange

The Foreign Friends project introduces an innovative approach to international cooperation through online mobility, allowing students to engage with peers from other countries without the need for physical travel. This initiative aligns with the core EU values of the movement of people and ideas, but instead of physical exchanges, it facilitates cultural and linguistic interactions through virtual meetings.

Students participate in online activities such as video calls, shared projects, photo exchanges, and language practice, fostering cross-cultural understanding and improving their communication skills in a cost-effective, accessible, and inclusive way. This method removes travel barriers while still offering the benefits of international engagement.

The project is particularly effective when integrated into foreign language lessons, as it provides a real-life application of language skills while enhancing motivation through direct interaction with native or fluent speakers.

This best practice is highly relevant for VET institutions as it:
- ✓ Expanding international opportunities to students who may not have the resources or ability to travel.
- ✓ Supports language learning by providing authentic communication experiences.
- ✓ Promotes cross-cultural understanding through direct student interactions.
- ✓ Increases accessibility and inclusion, ensuring that all students can engage in internationalisation activities.
- ✓ Encourages digital competencies, aligning with modern learning methodologies.

To implement this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Integrate online mobility into foreign language curricula, allowing students to practice communication skills with international peers.
- ✓ Use digital platforms such as Zoom, Teams, or Google Meet, to facilitate virtual exchanges.
- ✓ Encourage interactive activities, including joint projects, storytelling, and video collaborations, to keep students engaged.
- ✓ Establish long-term partnerships with schools in other countries to create structured and recurring online exchanges.
- ✓ Promote flexibility by allowing participation outside language lessons, and incorporating interdisciplinary learning opportunities.

4.8 – KV-TIIMI: International Teams for Mobility Coordination

At KPEDU, the KV-TIIMI (International Team) is an unofficial yet highly effective working group dedicated to managing and improving international mobility projects. The team meets every three months to discuss ongoing mobility projects, explore new tools, and address relevant topics. The meetings foster a strong sense of belonging and teamwork, encouraging collaboration despite members' primary responsibilities in teaching and administration.

KV-TIIMI maintains an informal and supportive atmosphere, where members freely share ideas, concerns, and experiences. The group also uses a WhatsApp channel for quick updates, making communication efficient and accessible.

This best practice is particularly valuable for VET institutions aiming to streamline their internationalisation efforts, as it:
- ✓ Ensures consistent coordination of international activities, even when staff members have other primary roles.
- ✓ Encourages cross-departmental collaboration, bringing together diverse expertise to support mobility projects.
- ✓ Creates a sense of community and shared responsibility, making internationalisation a collective effort.
- ✓ Improves communication and efficiency, using informal yet structured meetings and digital tools like WhatsApp.
- ✓ Promotes an open and supportive environment, where staff feel comfortable discussing challenges and sharing ideas.

To successfully implement this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Form an internationalisation team with representatives from different departments, ensuring broad institutional support.
- ✓ Designate a team leader (preferably the International Coordinator) to oversee meetings and maintain structure.
- ✓ Schedule regular meetings (i.e., every three months) to discuss mobility opportunities, challenges, and strategies.
- ✓ Maintain an informal approach, fostering collaboration rather than adding pressure to staff workloads.
- ✓ Use digital tools (i.e., WhatsApp or Teams) to enable quick communication and updates.
- ✓ Encourage a culture of inclusivity and support, making internationalisation an engaging and shared responsibility.

4.9 – Project Manager in Cooperation Projects

The Project Manager in Cooperation Projects role was created to coordinate international cooperation projects, handling partners, project ideas, development, and implementation. This position serves as a key pillar for the internationalisation of the school, expanding beyond mobility programs to include collaborative projects with institutions, businesses, and international networks.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions as it:

- ✓ Strengthens the school's internationalisation strategy by expanding beyond mobility to include cooperation projects.
- ✓ Ensures project sustainability, as a dedicated professional can oversee long-term initiatives.
- ✓ Encourages innovation by developing new partnerships and project ideas.
- ✓ Improves efficiency, as project management is handled by a specialist rather than being an additional responsibility for teachers or administrators.
- ✓ Enhances the institution's reputation in the international education network.

To successfully implement this best practice, VET schools should have a full-time professional dedicated to managing cooperation projects. This way, the school ensures:
- ✓ A structured approach to international project development.
- ✓ More opportunities for partnerships with organisations in different countries.
- ✓ Smoother project implementation, with a dedicated staff member overseeing logistics, compliance, and communication.
- ✓ Increased participation in European and global cooperation initiatives beyond Erasmus+ mobility programs.

4.10 – Erasmus+ Consortiums

Escola Pia de Mataró coordinates two Erasmus+ consortia aimed at expanding international mobility opportunities for students and staff in Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Higher Education (HE). These consortia provide a structured framework for managing mobility programs, ensuring effective coordination, funding distribution, and long-term sustainability.

The VET consortium includes 13 schools and offers Erasmus+ scholarships to students and staff in intermediate-level vocational training courses and initial training programs. The HE consortium consists of 6 schools and facilitates mobility opportunities for students and staff in higher-level vocational training cycles.

These consortia allow participants to engage in practical training periods abroad while providing staff with professional development experiences that enhance their international expertise. By combining resources and expertise, the initiative fosters collaboration among VET schools, strengthening internationalisation strategies across institutions.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions as it:
- ✓ Facilitates international mobility by creating a structured, well-managed system that benefits students and staff.
- ✓ Strengthens collaboration between multiple VET schools, allowing them to share best practices, resources, and expertise.
- ✓ Enhances institutional capacity by improving knowledge in handling applications, funding, partnerships, and logistics.
- ✓ Supports staff development, ensuring educators and administrators gain valuable international experience.
- ✓ Provides a long-term, sustainable model for internationalisation that extends beyond individual projects.
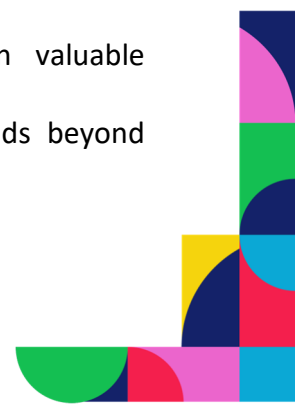
To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:

- ✓ Align international mobility with employment-focused objectives, ensuring that work-based learning and professional training are at the core of mobility programs.
- ✓ Offer flexible mobility formats, including short-term, long-term, and blended options, to accommodate diverse student and staff needs.
- ✓ Provide strong administrative and logistical support, such as dedicated guides, coordinators, and digital tools to simplify mobility processes.
- ✓ Invest in staff training and engagement, equipping teachers and administrators with the necessary skills to support international programs.
- ✓ Strengthen partnerships with companies and institutions at local, regional, and international levels to increase work-based learning opportunities.
- ✓ Ensure equal access to mobility opportunities, providing additional support for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

4.11 – Pilot of Hosting Department

Escola Pia de Mataró has launched a new Hosting Mobilities Department, aiming to improve internal coordination and structuring procedures for international mobility programs. Although the institution has over 10 years of experience in Erasmus+ projects, this initiative focuses on achieving excellence and sustainable growth by refining internal processes and increasing engagement among staff.

Key aspects of this pilot initiative include:

- ✓ Awareness campaigns through one-to-one and specialized meetings.
- ✓ Conflict prevention strategies.
- ✓ Developing educators' intercultural competencies and critical thinking through structured sensitisation activities.
- ✓ Encouraging staff engagement.

This approach acknowledges that staff-student interactions and international relations generate what may seem like chaos, but in actuality, these challenges provide valuable insights into effective and ineffective strategies.

This best practice is particularly valuable for VET institutions as it:

- ✓ Strengthens internal coordination by ensuring all stakeholders understand and support internationalisation objectives.
- ✓ Promotes staff engagement, which is crucial for the success of mobility projects.
- ✓ Develops conflict prevention strategies, allowing institutions to anticipate and resolve issues before they escalate.
- ✓ Encourages structured growth, making internationalisation efforts more sustainable and impactful.
- ✓ Aligns with INTERVET's goals of fostering high-quality mobility experiences through well-prepared and committed educational teams.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET institutions should:

- ✓ Conduct awareness campaigns to educate staff on the significance of internationalisation and their role in its success.
- ✓ Hold structured meetings with leadership, educators, and mobility coordinators to ensure alignment and engagement.
- ✓ Implement conflict resolution strategies, identify common tensions and develop solutions in advance.
- ✓ Encourage an adaptive mindset, viewing challenges as opportunities for improvement rather than obstacles.
- ✓ Incorporate long-term strategic planning, ensuring that despite short-term difficulties, the institution remains committed to internationalisation goals.
- ✓ Create space for reflection in every strategy meeting, recognizing achievements and maintaining a long-term vision for growth.

4.12 – Checklist of Required Documents for Students and Staff Undertaking Erasmus+ Mobility

To ensure a smooth and well-organized Erasmus+ mobility experience, Escola Pia de Mataró has developed a comprehensive checklist outlining all required documents for participants before, during, and after their mobility. This tool helps students and staff understand and manage the necessary paperwork while ensuring compliance with Erasmus+ regulations.

The checklist includes:
- ✓ Pre-mobility documents: Application forms, learning agreements, insurance certificates, travel arrangements, and consent forms.
- ✓ During-mobility documents: Attendance certificates, progress reports, and emergency contacts.
- ✓ Post-mobility documents: Final reports, evaluations, and certificates of completion.

This best practice is particularly valuable for VET institutions as it:
- ✓ Ensures participants understand their responsibilities, reducing the risk of missing paperwork.
- ✓ Improves efficiency in managing Erasmus+ documentation, making processes smoother for coordinators and participants.
- ✓ Increases compliance with Erasmus+ requirements, preventing issues related to incomplete or incorrect documentation.
- ✓ Provides a flexible tool, as the checklist can be easily adapted to individual participants or specific mobility programs.
- ✓ Enhances participant confidence, allowing them to focus on their mobility experience rather than worrying about administrative tasks.

To implement this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Create a standardized checklist that can be customized for different types of mobility programs (short-term, long-term, blended, staff training, etc.).
- ✓ Distribute the checklist well in advance, ensuring participants have enough time to prepare all required documents.
- ✓ Provide digital and printed versions, allowing easy access for participants and coordinators.
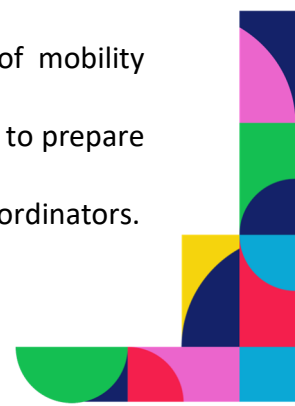
- ✓ Offer guidance sessions where international coordinators explain the importance of each document and how to manage it.
- ✓ Establish a tracking system where participants confirm document completion, ensuring all paperwork is in order before departure.
- ✓ Encourage post-mobility reflection, where participants review their experience and provide feedback to improve the checklist for future participants.

4.13 – Promotion of Erasmus+ Mobilities Through Dissemination and Skills Demonstrations

KPEDU has developed a strategy to promote Erasmus+ mobility opportunities by integrating skills demonstrations into the dissemination process. Students who participate in international work-based learning can choose an optional international examination component, which includes a presentation to their peers after their mobility period. By using peer learning and direct student experiences as a promotion tool, this initiative increases engagement, visibility, and motivation for Erasmus+ programs.

This best practice is particularly valuable for VET institutions as it:
- ✓ Strengthens the visibility of international mobility within the school community.
- ✓ Encourages student participation in Erasmus+ programs by showcasing real-life benefits.
- ✓ Provides formal recognition of international experiences, making mobility more attractive.
- ✓ Supports employability, as students can include the skills demonstration in their CVs.
- ✓ Promotes peer-to-peer learning, leveraging student testimonials as an effective communication tool.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Integrate an optional international examination component into their curriculum for mobility participants.
- ✓ Encourage student-led presentations to maximize engagement and create a relatable learning experience.
- ✓ Assess the presentations as formal skills demonstrations, linking them to academic or professional qualifications.

4.14 – Australian Government New Colombo Plan

The New Colombo Plan is an initiative by the Australian Government that provides university students with opportunities to experience the Indo-Pacific region. Its main objective is to enhance students' understanding of the region by supporting them in studying abroad, learning new languages, and gaining work experience. The program strengthens international ties between Australia and Indo-Pacific countries, equipping students with global skills and professional experience.

The New Colombo Plan offers the following opportunities:
- ✓ Study Scholarships – Funding for students to study in Indo-Pacific countries for up to a year, allowing them to immerse themselves in a different culture while continuing their education.
- ✓ Language Courses – Programs designed to enhance language proficiency, helping students better connect with other cultures.

- ✓ Internships and Mentorships – Work placements in businesses or organizations, allowing students to gain practical experience and mentorship from industry professionals.
- ✓ Flexible Mobility Program – Students can participate in short- or long-term study experiences or engage in research projects abroad.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions as it:
- ✓ Demonstrates a comprehensive approach to internationalisation, integrating education, work placements, and cultural exchange.
- ✓ Provides a structured model for developing global skills and international networks.
- ✓ Highlights the importance of cross-cultural learning, emphasizing the value of language training alongside mobility programs.
- ✓ Encourages work-based learning, ensuring students gain practical industry experience while studying abroad.
- ✓ Offers insights into how internationalisation policies can be effectively implemented, which can be adapted to VET schools.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Develop international work placements and internships, allowing students to gain hands-on experience abroad.
- ✓ Create educational programs that focus on skill development related to partner regions and industries.
- ✓ Offer cross-cultural language training, ensuring students are equipped to engage in international work environments.
- ✓ Expand mobility programs, including study visits, research projects, and industry placements, to provide diverse learning opportunities.

4.15 – Dual Degree Programs: India

The Dual Degree Programs are a collaborative initiative between Indian and foreign universities, allowing students to pursue one or two degrees from different institutions across multiple countries. These programs enable students to complete part of their studies in one country and the remainder in another, culminating in degrees awarded by both participating universities.

This approach promotes international cooperation in education, offering students diverse academic credentials and exposure to different educational systems. Through mobility programs, students adapt to varied workplace cultures and learning environments, enhancing their global employability. Additionally, these programs facilitate the exchange of best practices between educational institutions, supporting the development of international curricula.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions as it:
- ✓ Promotes international cooperation in education, strengthening global partnerships.
- ✓ Enhances students' employability, as dual degrees provide broader career prospects.
- ✓ Encourages flexible learning models, allowing students to combine theoretical and practical education across different institutions.
- ✓ Facilitates knowledge exchange between institutions, helping develop more competitive and globally relevant curricula.
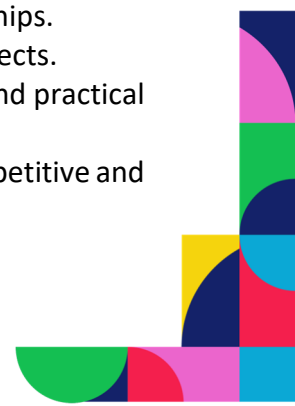
✓ Supports international mobility, providing students with firsthand experience in different educational and work environments.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Develop partnerships with foreign institutions, ensuring alignment in course content and degree requirements.
- ✓ Introduce modular or hybrid learning models, enabling students to take theory-based courses in one institution and practical training in another.
- ✓ Incorporate short-term mobility programs, allowing students to experience international education without the need for long-term relocation.
- ✓ Collaborate on curriculum co-design, ensuring that learning objectives align with industry demands in both countries.
- ✓ Work towards dual certification agreements, providing students with globally recognized qualifications.

4.16 – Cultural Adaptation: USA

Cultural adaptation is a key practice implemented in U.S. universities and VET schools to better serve international students and learners from diverse ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds. This approach ensures that educational content and teaching methods are adjusted to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all students.

By integrating cultural adaptation strategies, institutions can enhance internationalisation efforts within their schools, fostering a learning atmosphere that respects diversity and promotes global competencies.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions, as it:
- ✓ Supports the internationalisation of schools by making them more inclusive and welcoming for students from different backgrounds.
- ✓ Encourages cultural awareness among both students and staff, preparing them for global careers.
- ✓ Improves student adaptation and retention, ensuring that international students feel supported in their educational journey.
- ✓ Strengthens workplace readiness, as students learn to navigate culturally diverse professional environments.
- ✓ Provides a model for integrating international students, which can be replicated in VET schools across Europe.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Modify curricula to include global industry perspectives, ensuring students receive internationally relevant training.
- ✓ Provide multilingual resources and language support, making education more accessible for international learners.
- ✓ Offer internships that consider cultural differences, ensuring that international students receive workplace training suited to their needs.

- ✓ Develop mentoring programs, pairing international students with local peers to ease adaptation and encourage cultural exchange.
- ✓ Host cultural events and training sessions, promoting an inclusive school environment that values diversity.
- ✓ Train instructors in intercultural teaching methods, equipping them to work effectively with diverse student populations.

4.17 – TAFE: Australia

Australian Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes are government-owned providers of VET courses, offering qualifications ranging from certificates to postgraduate levels. TAFE has become a valuable case study in internationalisation, successfully integrating global education strategies with strong industry partnerships and work-based learning opportunities.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions as it:
- ✓ Demonstrates the importance of international partnerships, providing a framework for student and staff mobility programs.
- ✓ Highlights the role of digital tools and remote learning, making education more accessible and flexible.
- ✓ Encourages work-integrated learning, ensuring that students gain relevant, industry-based experience before graduation.
- ✓ Promotes curriculum innovation, aligning vocational training with international standards and modern workforce needs.
- ✓ Strengthens collaboration between education and industry, helping students transition smoothly into employment.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Develop global partnerships to establish exchange programs and mobility opportunities for both students and staff.
- ✓ Integrate international skills into curricula, such as digital literacy, intercultural communication, and industry-recognized certifications.
- ✓ Offer international internships or virtual work placements, allowing students to gain hands-on experience with global companies.
- ✓ Leverage online learning tools, fostering collaborative learning environments and virtual cultural exchanges.
- ✓ Align vocational qualifications with international standards, ensuring students' skills are globally recognized.

4.18 – Ciência sem Fronteiras – Brazil

Ciência sem Fronteiras (Science Without Borders) was a Brazilian government program that provided scholarships for students and researchers in STEM fields to study abroad. The initiative, which ran until 2017, promoted international exchange and collaboration, allowing around 100,000 Brazilian students to study at top universities worldwide.

The program played a crucial role in expanding Brazil's global presence in research, innovation, and education, focusing on key internationalisation components such as:
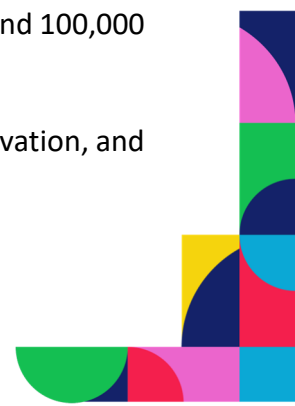
- ✓ Partnerships with International Institutions – Establishing agreements with leading universities and research centres to facilitate student and faculty exchanges.
- ✓ Skill Development – Collaborating with global stakeholders and educational institutions to enhance the development of critical skills in STEM and other fields.
- ✓ Cultural Competency Building – Encouraging students to study and work in international environments, equipping them with intercultural skills necessary for a globalized workforce.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions as it:
- ✓ Demonstrates how large-scale mobility programs can promote international collaboration and skill development.
- ✓ Provides a model for establishing partnerships with universities, training centres, and industry stakeholders abroad.
- ✓ Encourages student participation in study and work placements abroad, strengthening their employability.
- ✓ Promotes intercultural competencies, which are essential for students working in diverse, international industries.
- ✓ Highlights the role of public funding in supporting mobility programs, offering insights into potential funding mechanisms.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Establish international partnerships with VET institutions, universities, and companies to create exchange and internship opportunities.
- ✓ Develop scholarship or funding models to support student and staff participation in mobility programs.
- ✓ Incorporate international learning experiences into VET curricula through collaborative projects, apprenticeships, and dual certifications.
- ✓ Enhance cultural competency training, preparing students to work in multinational teams and diverse workplaces.
- ✓ Promote industry collaborations, ensuring that students' international experiences align with labour market needs.

4.19 – Bottom-up strategy for internationalisation

The Bottom-up Strategy for Internationalisation is an approach where internationalisation initiatives originate from faculty, students, and other stakeholders rather than being imposed through top-down administrative decisions. This strategy encourages active participation, ensuring that internationalisation efforts are sustainable, innovative, and widely accepted within the institution.

By engaging teachers, staff, and students in decision-making and program development, institutions can create more inclusive and impactful internationalisation strategies. A bottom-up approach fosters creativity and collaboration, leading to richer, more diverse international programs that align with the actual needs and interests of the educational community.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions as it:
- ✓ Empower teachers and staff to take an active role in shaping internationalisation strategies.

- Encourages student engagement, making internationalisation efforts more effective and impactful.
- Supports flexibility in program design, allowing VET institutions to respond to evolving global trends.
- Fosters a sense of ownership, ensuring that internationalisation becomes a core institutional value rather than a peripheral initiative.
- Strengthens collaboration between departments, leading to more innovative and effective global partnerships.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:
- Encourage teachers and staff to initiate international projects, integrating them into the curriculum and daily activities.
- Create student-led initiatives, allowing learners to shape international programs, mobility opportunities, and cultural exchange events.
- Promote cross-department collaboration, ensuring that different academic areas contribute to internationalisation efforts.
- Establish feedback mechanisms, gathering insights from teachers and students to continuously improve internationalisation initiatives.
- Leverage personal networks of staff to build global partnerships that align with institutional goals.
- Allocate resources to grassroots initiatives, ensuring that projects with high engagement receive proper support.

4.20 – University of Reading's Internationalisation and Global Engagement Strategic Framework

The paper presents a comprehensive plan aimed at enhancing the university's global presence and reputation.

The framework identifies two primary goals:

1. Community: growing and supporting our international community:
- Increase international student enrollment: targeting 25% by 2026/2027 and 30% by 2030.
- Support academic success: ensuring international students achieve academic outcomes comparable to domestic students.
- Enhance student experience: improving integration and providing work-related opportunities.
- Leverage alumni networks: engaging alumni globally to support recruitment and mentorship.
- Attract international staff: recruiting diverse academic talent and providing professional development.

2. Excellence: delivering excellence through internationalisation in research and education:
- Increase international research collaborations: Invest in partnerships that align with research strengths.
- Develop market-led academic programs: aligning offerings with global market demands.
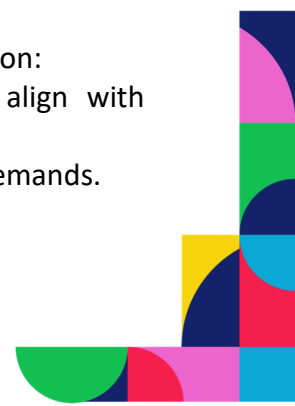
- ✓ Enhance global brand profile: improving academic and employer reputation in global rankings.
- ✓ Establish global engagement hubs: utilizing existing international assets to create regional centres for global engagement.

The framework also emphasizes the need to improve the university's global recognition, as evidenced by its academic and employer reputation rankings.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions as it outlines several best practices that can be adopted by Vocational Education and Training (VET) schools to enhance their internationalisation efforts.

By integrating these practices, VET schools can enhance their international presence, improve student outcomes, and contribute positively to the global educational landscape by:
- ✓ Aiming to boost the proportion of international students by implementing targeted recruitment strategies and enhancing conversion activities.
- ✓ Ensuring that international students receive adequate support to achieve academic outcomes comparable to domestic students. This includes providing tailored academic oversight and resources.
- ✓ Focusing on initiatives that improve the overall experience of international students, such as comprehensive orientation programs, integration activities, and the establishment of multicultural centres like a Global Lounge.
- ✓ Engaging international alumni to support the recruitment, integration, and employability of current students. Developing regional alumni chapters can facilitate mentorship and networking opportunities.
- ✓ Recruiting qualified staff from diverse backgrounds and providing professional development to equip all staff with skills necessary for a multicultural educational environment.
- ✓ Encouraging and investing in research partnerships with institutions abroad to enhance global engagement and institutional reputation.
- ✓ Aligning educational offerings with global market demands to attract a diverse student body and meet international workforce needs.
- ✓ Utilizing existing international assets to create regional hubs that serve as centres for global engagement, benefiting both the institution and the local communities.

4.21 – Bologna Process as a Catalyst for Internationalisation

The Bologna Process, initiated in 1999, is a key framework for enhancing the internationalisation of higher education across Europe, including Italy. It has transformed the educational landscape by aligning academic structures, promoting mobility, and fostering collaboration among institutions.

By embedding internationalisation objectives within its core action lines, the Bologna Process has created a more inclusive, diverse, and globally connected education system. The approach ensures that institutions actively engage in international partnerships, enhance student and staff mobility, and develop strategies for global engagement and collaboration.

This best practice is highly relevant to VET institutions as it:

- ✓ Encourages structured funding for internationalisation, ensuring sustainable mobility programs.
- ✓ Promotes English-taught courses, making VET programs more accessible to international students.
- ✓ Strengthens global partnerships, enabling exchange programs and collaborative projects.
- ✓ Enhances academic and vocational mobility, ensuring that students and staff benefit from cross-border learning experiences.
- ✓ Aligns VET education with international standards, increasing recognition and employability of graduates in the global market.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Secure funding for internationalisation initiatives, linking financial support to strategic global engagement plans.
- ✓ Develop English-language training programs, ensuring that students and staff can effectively engage in international projects.
- ✓ Establish bilateral agreements with global partners, facilitating student and staff mobility opportunities.
- ✓ Encourage short-term and long-term exchange programs, promoting collaborative learning and work-based experiences abroad.
- ✓ Integrate Bologna Process principles into VET curricula, ensuring alignment with European and international education standards.

4.22 – Canada's International Education Strategy: A Multifaceted Approach

Canada's international education strategy is a comprehensive framework designed to enhance internationalisation in higher education. It focuses on two-way mobility, quality student services, internationalised curricula, and global partnerships. By implementing structured policies and innovative funding models, institutions can equip students with global competencies and foster strong international collaborations.

This best practice is highly relevant for VET institutions, as it:
- ✓ Provides a structured model for integrating internationalisation into VET strategic planning.
- ✓ Encourages student and staff mobility, strengthening global competencies.
- ✓ Promotes curriculum internationalisation, ensuring that VET students gain exposure to global perspectives.
- ✓ Enhances support for international students, facilitating integration and academic success.
- ✓ Encourages ethical engagement and social responsibility, ensuring that internationalisation efforts are equitable and inclusive.
- ✓ Expands digital learning opportunities, allowing VET students to access international experiences remotely.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Embed internationalisation in strategic planning, ensuring that it aligns with institutional goals.
- ✓ Develop structured mobility programs, securing funding to support student and staff exchanges.

- Introduce global themes into the curriculum, integrating cross-cultural and multilingual learning approaches.
- Enhance support services for international students, facilitating adaptation and community integration.
- Encourage cross-border research collaborations, promoting knowledge exchange in vocational fields.
- Leverage distance learning platforms, offering virtual internationalisation opportunities to increase accessibility.

4.23 – Addressing Intercultural Competence as a Student Learning Outcome

This best practice focuses on integrating intercultural competence as a defined learning outcome across academic programs, ensuring that students develop the skills necessary for effective global engagement. Recognizing that intercultural learning is a lifelong journey, institutions must embed these competencies into curricula, campus activities, and institutional frameworks.

By adopting this approach, institutions foster a culture of continuous learning, equipping students, faculty, and staff with the intercultural awareness and skills needed to navigate diverse social and professional environments.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions, as it:
- Prepares students for multicultural workplaces, increasing their adaptability and employability.
- Encourages experiential learning, aligning with VET's focus on practical education.
- Enhances student and staff mobility, ensuring that international experiences contribute to skill development.
- Promotes equity and inclusion, fostering a diverse and globally aware educational environment.
- Strengthens language and communication skills, helping students navigate multicultural professional contexts.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:
- Define clear intercultural learning objectives within VET courses and mobility programs.
- Develop multicultural learning materials, integrating case studies from diverse professional sectors.
- Provide work-based learning experiences in international or multicultural workplaces.
- Encourage mentorship programs, pairing students with professionals from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Train teachers and staff to effectively support intercultural learning and communication.
- Leverage technology for virtual cultural exchanges, expanding international engagement opportunities.
- Host cultural events and guest lectures, promoting cross-cultural dialogue within VET institutions.

4.24 – LTA EuroApprentices

The EuroApprentice Network is a European initiative under Erasmus+ that connects apprentices from various countries to promote mobility in vocational education and training (VET). Established in 2017 by the National Agencies for Erasmus+ in Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Finland, and Italy, the network has since expanded to include Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, and Spain.

Its main objective is to enhance the visibility and impact of learning mobility in VET while fostering European values, inclusion, and active citizenship. EuroApprentices act as Erasmus+ ambassadors in VET, using social media, events, and outreach activities to share their experiences and encourage other apprentices to participate in international mobility. They engage with enterprises, VET schools, and training centres, participate in European events such as the European Youth Event, VET Skills Week, and the Forum of Vocational Excellence, and organize local networking activities. The initiative emphasizes inclusion by ensuring opportunities for participants from diverse backgrounds and supporting those with fewer opportunities. Additionally, it contributes to democratic participation by promoting civic engagement among young Europeans.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions, as it:
- ✓ Directly supports InterVET's objectives by promoting mobility experiences, strengthening European cooperation, and encouraging apprentices to take part in international learning opportunities.
- ✓ Offers capacity building for VET learners and staff. The InterVET project aims to train VET educators and establish internationalization offices in VET schools, and the EuroApprentice model demonstrates how peer-led ambassador networks can effectively encourage mobility.
- ✓ Supports the inclusion and diversity priorities of Erasmus+, which InterVET seeks to integrate into its internationalization strategies.
- ✓ Has an approach to social media engagement and outreach activities that could serve as a model for InterVET's dissemination efforts, helping to increase awareness of international mobility opportunities among VET students and educators.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ To integrate the EuroApprentice model into VET schools participating in InterVET, several adaptations can be considered. First, creating a local network of VET ambassadors within schools could encourage more students to participate in mobility programs. Inspired by the EuroApprentices, these ambassadors could share their experiences through school events, online platforms, and peer-to-peer mentoring.
- ✓ Second, incorporating mobility success stories into VET curricula by inviting former mobility participants to speak in classrooms or collaborating with enterprises hosting apprentices abroad can help raise awareness about Erasmus+ opportunities. Schools could also use social media more actively to promote Erasmus+ experiences, following the EuroApprentices' example.
- ✓ Third, partnering with national Erasmus+ agencies to train VET staff on how to promote international mobility could enhance schools' ability to support students in applying for
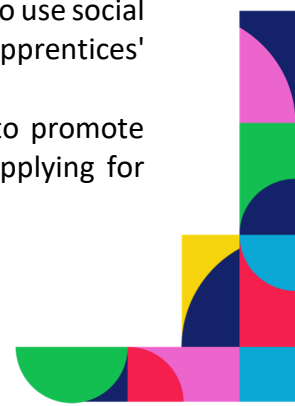
Erasmus+ opportunities. This would align with the InterVET goal of upskilling VET educators in internationalization strategies.

✓ Finally, participation in European-level events such as VET Skills Week and the Forum of Vocational Excellence could be encouraged among VET schools. These events provide valuable networking opportunities and increase student and staff engagement in internationalization efforts.

✓ By adopting these strategies, VET schools can strengthen mobility promotion, build a culture of internationalization, and ensure that more apprentices take advantage of Erasmus+ opportunities, ultimately contributing to a more connected and inclusive European VET sector.

4.25 – VET Worldwide

VET Worldwide (AusbildungWeltweit) is a German government-funded initiative designed to support international mobility for vocational education and training (VET) students and professionals. It provides financial assistance for VET learners and staff to undertake placements outside the European Union, complementing the Erasmus+ program.

The initiative aims to enhance intercultural competencies, professional skills, and global networking by allowing participants to gain first-hand experience in international work environments. Through structured learning agreements, participants engage in well-defined training programs that ensure the transfer and recognition of acquired skills. The program also emphasizes inclusivity, offering additional support for individuals with disabilities or special learning needs.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions, as it:

✓ Aligns closely with the objectives of the InterVET project by providing a structured approach to internationalization in VET education.

✓ Both initiatives emphasize the importance of global mobility as a means to enhance professional competencies, intercultural understanding, and institutional cooperation.

✓ VET Worldwide serves as a model for designing mobility programs that are accessible and effective, offering structured learning agreements, financial support, and quality assurance measures—elements that InterVET seeks to incorporate into VET schools through internationalization offices.

✓ Additionally, while InterVET focuses on increasing participation in EU programs, VET Worldwide provides a complementary pathway for expanding mobility opportunities beyond the EU, helping VET institutions establish a more comprehensive and globally oriented mobility strategy.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:

✓ Simplify administrative processes, making mobility programs more accessible. Many VET institutions struggle with the complexity of international agreements and funding applications, so providing standardized templates and mobility toolkits could ease the process.

✓ Additionally, encouraging VET schools to explore non-EU partnerships through structured collaboration networks would allow them to diversify their mobility programs beyond Erasmus+.
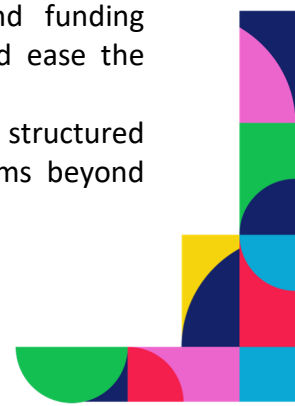
- ✓ Training VET staff in effective mobility management is also crucial, ensuring that schools have dedicated personnel to oversee internationalization efforts.
- ✓ Lastly, integrating non-EU mobility opportunities into existing curricula would provide students with a seamless transition between classroom learning and global work experiences, making internationalization a core component of vocational education.

4.26 – VET institutions recognise professional qualifications acquired abroad: Lithuania

Lithuania introduced a legal framework for the academic recognition of foreign VET qualifications, allowing individuals to continue their studies or enter the labour market. Previously, Lithuania lacked a dedicated service for recognizing VET qualifications from abroad, creating obstacles to mobility. The new resolution ensures that foreign qualifications can be aligned with the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework (LTQF), provided they meet general national standards. The recognition process is overseen by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Sport, with the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) handling evaluations.

A key change is that VET institutions now have the authority to assess and recognize foreign qualifications for students wishing to enrol in VET programs. This decentralization makes recognition more accessible, especially for returning Lithuanian citizens, migrants, and EU citizens. Additionally, all VET institutions must integrate recognition procedures into their internal quality assurance systems, which will be assessed during external evaluations.

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions, as it:
- ✓ The Lithuanian model of academic recognition aligns with the goals of the InterVET project, which seeks to enhance the internationalization of VET schools, increase participation in Erasmus+ programmes, and develop strategies to integrate international learning experiences into vocational education. One of the key priorities of InterVET is to facilitate the mobility of VET students and educators while ensuring that international experiences and qualifications are recognised across different education systems. The Lithuanian system supports this objective by providing a structured legal framework for recognising foreign VET qualifications, making it easier for students with international experience to continue their education or enter the workforce.
- ✓ Furthermore, the decentralisation of recognition procedures to VET institutions in Lithuania serves as an important case study for InterVET. The project aims to establish international offices in VET schools, which could take on a similar role in facilitating the recognition of qualifications obtained through international mobility programmes. The Lithuanian example also highlights the importance of quality assurance mechanisms in VET institutions, which aligns with InterVET's goal of providing professional development and training for VET educators to handle internationalization processes effectively.
- ✓ Additionally, by recognising foreign qualifications, Lithuania supports the European priority of removing obstacles to the free movement of people and services, which is also a core aim of Erasmus+ mobility actions promoted by InterVET.

The Lithuanian model provides valuable insights for adapting academic recognition processes in other VET institutions. To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:

- First, be empowered to handle recognition procedures for international qualifications, similar to the Lithuanian approach. Instead of relying solely on central agencies, giving VET schools the authority to assess and validate foreign qualifications can streamline access for international students and returning migrants. This would make VET systems more flexible and responsive to student needs.
- Second, encourage the integration of recognition procedures into VET schools' internal quality systems. Lithuania now requires all VET institutions to incorporate qualification recognition into their quality assurance frameworks, which ensures transparency and consistency. VET schools could adopt a similar practice by establishing clear guidelines for assessing international qualifications and linking them to national qualification frameworks.
- Third, introduce training for VET educators and administrators to help them manage recognition processes effectively. Lithuania's reform has expanded the responsibilities of VET institutions, making it essential for staff to have the necessary knowledge and tools.
- Include modules on academic recognition and validation of foreign qualifications.
- Finally, strengthening cooperation with national and European networks such as ENIC-NARIC could provide additional support for VET institutions. Lithuania's model benefits from its participation in these networks, which offer expertise and best practices in qualification recognition. VET schools could collaborate with similar organizations to ensure that their recognition procedures align with European standards and facilitate smoother transitions for internationally trained students.

4.27 – International competence as part of VET: Finland

The Finnish National Agency for Education has introduced "Working in International Assignments" as an optional module in all vocational upper secondary qualifications. This 15-credit module aims to develop international competencies among students and help them articulate these skills for future job applications.

The module consists of four key areas: preparation for international work, interaction in international networks, working in an international environment, and utilizing and sharing international expertise. A significant feature of this module is that students do not need to travel abroad to complete it. Instead, international competencies can be gained through local opportunities, digital learning, and participation in international networks from their home country.

This approach ensures that all students, including those in fields traditionally not associated with internationalization, can develop global skills. The module also focuses on communication, cultural awareness, and ethical work practices in diverse environments, making internationalization accessible and applicable across various vocational sectors.

Like the Finnish model, InterVET seeks to integrate international skills into VET curricula and create structured internationalization roadmaps. This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions, as it:
- Emphasizes making international opportunities available to all students, not just those who can travel abroad.
- Focus on helping students recognize and articulate their international skills aligns with InterVET's goal of upskilling VET educators and improving students' employability.

- ✓ Highlights the role of digital tools in fostering international exposure, which is relevant for InterVET's plans to develop online resources and training programs for VET staff. By studying how Finland has successfully implemented this module, InterVET can adopt similar strategies to strengthen its internationalization efforts.

The Finnish model demonstrates a practical and inclusive way to integrate internationalization into vocational education. To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:

- ✓ Embed internationalization as an optional but structured component within all vocational qualifications. This ensures that students in all fields, including those where internationalization has not traditionally been a focus, can develop global competencies.
- ✓ Replicate the Finnish module, which shows that students can gain international skills without leaving their home country, by incorporating projects with international elements, such as virtual collaborations, digital networking, and local multicultural work environments.
- ✓ Follow this model by incorporating similar practical learning objectives - real-world skills, such as adapting to international work environments, interacting with diverse teams, and sharing international expertise - into their programs.
- ✓ Ensure that internationalization modules are accessible to all students, regardless of their initial language proficiency - the Finnish initiative does not require specific foreign language skills to participate, though improving communication abilities is a key objective.
- ✓ Implement similar assessment and reflection methods - Finland's model encourages students to recognize and articulate their international skills for job applications, helping students understand and showcase their global competencies when entering the job market.
- ✓ Integrate online platforms, virtual exchange programs, and digital learning materials to provide students with an international perspective, even if they do not travel abroad - the Finnish approach highlights how digital solutions can make internationalization more accessible.

4.28 – Exploring new study visit concepts: The Netherlands' Digital Nomad programme.

The Netherlands has been a leader in VET student mobility, exceeding the EU's 2020 target of 6% but facing challenges in reaching the 2025 target of 8%. Dutch VET students typically spend nearly 10 weeks abroad, more than twice the EU average of 4.4 weeks. Mobility is especially high in the Food & Green and Hospitality & Tourism sectors, due to strong international industry connections.

To explore new mobility concepts, the Digital Nomad programme was launched in the spring of 2024. Two groups of 13 students from Yuverta, a VET school in the green sector, travelled through Eastern Europe for a month. They combined online coursework with experiential learning, visiting companies, and NGOs, and participating in excursions. Students played an active role in organizing the trip, including selecting destinations, booking accommodations, and planning activities. Some students balanced the experience with internships, completing relevant assignments remotely. The programme promoted self-reflection, flexibility, and digital learning, demonstrating that mobility does not always require long-term physical stays abroad.

The Digital Nomad programme aligns with the InterVET project by:
- ✓ Introducing innovative mobility approaches that combine flexibility, digital learning, and international exposure. One of InterVET's main goals is to increase international mobility in

VET while making participation more inclusive and adaptable. The Dutch model provides an alternative for students who may not be able to commit to long-term mobility but still want an international learning experience.

✓ Additionally, the student-led approach in organizing the trip aligns with InterVET's focus on empowering learners and enhancing their soft skills, autonomy, and problem-solving abilities. The integration of online learning in the mobility experience also reflects InterVET's goal of developing digital competencies for both students and teachers.

✓ Furthermore, the collaboration with companies and NGOs demonstrates how mobility programs can be enriched through partnerships, which is also a key aspect of InterVET's strategy for increasing workplace learning opportunities abroad.

To integrate the Digital Nomad model into VET schools, several adaptations can be considered:

✓ First, introducing short-term digital mobility experiences can help increase accessibility for students who may face financial or personal barriers to long stays abroad. Schools could offer blended mobility options, where students combine remote coursework with short but intensive international trips.

✓ Second, encouraging student involvement in planning mobility experiences can enhance engagement and responsibility. Like the Dutch example, VET schools could allow students to propose destinations, organize logistics, and design learning activities, making the mobility experience more meaningful.

✓ Third, integrating mobility with existing internships could offer greater flexibility. Schools can collaborate with businesses and NGOs to allow students to temporarily work remotely while travelling, ensuring continuity in their professional development.

✓ Finally, strengthening the use of digital learning tools can help expand internationalization efforts beyond physical travel. VET schools can adopt platforms that enable virtual exchanges, remote collaboration, and digital project work, ensuring that international learning remains accessible to a wider range of students.

✓ By incorporating these elements, VET schools can expand mobility opportunities, develop digital learning strategies, and support more inclusive participation in international experiences.

4.29 – A healthy perspective for reducing tensions

The relevance of reducing tension is not only for the results of the projects but also for living a healthy procedure. This comes from the way we treat each other inside the organisation. Having a healthy perspective on the value of each person is essential to reducing tension. Someone has to start reducing the volume of tension in the department; having international expectations from different types of partners or different countries makes its leader a focus of expectations.

However, that person is part of a structure made of other people and we need each other to make the balance and a good result for all parties. The healthy perspective is that someone starts to give the true value and stands for that purpose. This way we contribute to slowly unfolding true and genuine ways based on real value to work with less tensions that reduce focus on the objective tasks without all the noise of the negative thoughts or stress that is in the procedure.

Tensions in educational environments, particularly in VET schools, can arise from a variety of sources, including academic pressure, interpersonal conflicts, cultural differences, and adaptation challenges. A healthy perspective on tension management involves implementing proactive strategies that focus on emotional well-being, clear communication, and conflict resolution mechanisms.

Hence, here are some practical strategies for reducing tension.
- ✓ Promoting Emotional Intelligence and Mindfulness
  - Integrating stress management techniques such as mindfulness, breathing exercises, and guided relaxation into daily school routines.
  - Encouraging students to recognize and express emotions constructively, helping them develop self-awareness and resilience.
  - Establishing Open Communication Channels
  - Organizing regular student forums where learners can openly discuss concerns, challenges, and expectations in a structured and respectful environment.
- ✓ Implementing Conflict Resolution Strategies
  - Training students and teachers in mediation techniques, encouraging dialogue and compromise rather than confrontation.
  - Establishing student ambassadors or mentors who can help mediate peer conflicts and promote a positive atmosphere.

This best practice is relevant as a proactive approach to tension reduction is crucial because excessive stress and unresolved conflicts can negatively impact students' learning outcomes, motivation, and mental health. In VET schools, where students often prepare for real-world employment scenarios, developing conflict-resolution skills and emotional resilience is just as important as technical training.

By fostering a supportive and emotionally intelligent educational environment, schools can help students develop better interpersonal relationships, enhance collaboration, and improve overall school well-being. A healthy perspective on tension management not only creates a more positive and inclusive school climate but also prepares students for workplace challenges, where stress management and teamwork are essential.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should:
- ✓ Develop Conflict Resolution as a Core Competency
  - Include conflict resolution and teamwork skills as part of the curriculum, ensuring that students learn to navigate professional challenges effectively.
  - Partner with local businesses and industries to simulate workplace conflict scenarios, teaching students how to handle real-life professional tensions.
- ✓ Create a Culture of Support and Psychological Safety
  - Establish well-being committees that involve students, teachers, and administrative staff in monitoring school climate and identifying stress triggers.
  - Implement feedback mechanisms where students can express concerns anonymously, allowing the institution to take proactive measures.

4.30 – KPEDU's International Strategy (Digi)

KPEDU has always had its own international strategy in addition to the main strategy of the VET College. It has many pages. Some years ago, it renewed the whole idea; that strategy should be something very easy to understand even if you are not involved in international action. Something easy to present, and that way ensures that people around can have a clear idea of WHY and WHAT, concerning international activities in VET Colleges.

So, it created a very simple ThingLink photo. Thinglink is an interactive media platform that allows users to create and share images, videos, and 360° images with clickable tags or hotspots. These tags can contain text, links, videos, and other media, making the content more engaging and informative.

- ✓ Free version: it has limited features, such as fewer customization options, limited interactive elements, and lower content storage. You can create basic interactive media but with restrictions on advanced tools and analytics.
- ✓ Non-free version: it provides access to advanced features, such as more customization options, analytics tools, higher storage capacity, and the ability to remove branding or watermarks. It also often includes options for collaboration and embedding on websites.

The best thing about ThingLink is that it is so easily shareable - just send the link via WhatsApp, etc. No more heavy PowerPoints are needed. The main photo, as the starting page, is the core of everything. Here is the link for one example: https://www.thinglink.com/scene/1378264777821782018

This best practice is particularly relevant for VET institutions, as it:
- ✓ Makes your international strategy clear and understandable.
- ✓ Offers a good promotion tool for international activities / the work that international offices are doing.

To implement and adapt this best practice, VET schools should design their international strategy in a simple way. Usually, strategies are very heavy, with lots of text. It is of course important to consider all parts of internationalization / international actions but the best way is to start drawing a mind map and give titles to the heading, imagining the big picture first. After working with strategy, it can change but the red thread, the core, should be easily seen and very clearly understandable.

4.31 – Long-Term Student Mobility

This best practice involves a 60-day student mobility program where students fully integrate into a European host school. Participants attend at least 22 hours of lessons per week, with English as the primary language of instruction, while also receiving one-on-one lessons in the local language.

A key aspect of this initiative is its reciprocal nature — students who travel abroad also host an international student for 60 days. This creates a deep intercultural exchange, fostering strong academic, linguistic, and personal development.

This best practice is highly relevant for VET institutions, as it is considered one of the most challenging Erasmus options. Long-Term Student Mobility (LTSM) within the Erasmus+ program presents several unique challenges that make it one of the most complex mobility options for both students and institutions.

Unlike short-term exchanges, LTSM requires students to integrate into a new educational, cultural, and social environment for an extended period (several months to a year), which involves multiple logistical, academic, and emotional challenges:

- ✓ Academic Recognition and Curriculum Alignment
  - Ensuring that the coursework completed abroad is recognized and aligned with the home institution's curriculum is often complicated.
  - Differences in teaching methodologies, grading systems, and certification requirements between countries can create barriers to credit transfer.
- ✓ Emotional and Social Adaptation
  - Students face language barriers, cultural differences, and homesickness, making integration into a new school and society more difficult.
  - Living away from family and familiar support networks for an extended period can be emotionally demanding, requiring strong resilience and independence.
- ✓ Logistical and Administrative Challenges
  - Managing accommodation, insurance, visas, and financial support for long-term stays is significantly more complex than for short-term mobility programs.
  - Schools must coordinate with multiple stakeholders (sending and hosting institutions, local authorities, Erasmus+ agencies, and sometimes employers in the case of apprenticeships) to ensure smooth transitions.
- ✓ Teacher and Institutional Commitment
  - LTSM requires a higher level of commitment from teachers and administrators, who must provide ongoing mentoring, academic support, and monitoring.
  - Schools must maintain consistent communication between home and host institutions to track student progress and ensure well-being.

5 – Interviews

As part of Work Package n° 2, Methodological Guide for Establishing International Offices in VET Schools, partners conducted a series of interviews with VET educators, administrators, and internationalisation officers. These interviews served to identify the key challenges, best practices, and opportunities that institutions face when implementing global engagement initiatives.

The findings from these interviews offer a deeper understanding of the evolving role of International Officers, highlighting the importance of adaptability, networking, and cross-cultural communication. By capturing direct experiences from professionals in the field, this research strengthens the project's goal of equipping VET staff with the necessary skills to drive internationalisation forward.

Thus, the objective of this section is to present key takeaways from these interviews, ensuring that VET schools can effectively integrate internationalisation strategies into their institutional framework and daily operations.

It should be mentioned that, besides the countries already present in the consortium, we were able to receive contributions from several others, which demonstrate the benefits the project brings outside its borders: Armenia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, France, Georgia, Hungary, Mali, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Romania and Türkiye - from 18 Teachers, 15 International Coordinators, 11 Directors and 5 Project Managers.

We proceeded to a cross-analysis of their answers and achieved the following most common conclusions.

5.1 – The job definition of an international officer at a VET school
Concerning the respondent's definition of the role of an international officer at a VET school, the answers were grouped into 3 different categories:

A) Coordination & Management of International Activities
The International Officer is responsible for overseeing and managing the school's international initiatives, ensuring the smooth execution of projects, partnerships, and mobility programs. This includes securing funding, maintaining compliance with international regulations, and developing strategic plans for internationalization.

"An international officer at a VET school is responsible for managing and facilitating international activities, partnerships, and exchanges. Their role includes coordinating student and staff mobility programs, building relationships with global partners, ensuring compliance with international education regulations, promoting cultural awareness, and supporting international students and visitors." (International Coordinator)

"Ensures the internationalization of the VET institution under the VET strategic plan and educational project." (International Coordinator)

B) Networking & Partnerships
This category focuses on establishing and maintaining relationships with international institutions, industry partners, and governmental organizations. The International Officer plays a key role in expanding the school's network and fostering long-term collaborations that enhance global opportunities for students and staff.

"The main role involves contact and communication in general where there is potential for cooperation, particularly with every institution that the VET school could cooperate with globally." (School Director)

"Public relations with international universities to make continuous contacts with well-known schools with a worldwide reputation." (School Director)

C) International Mobility & Global Engagement

This category encompasses both the practical and strategic aspects of internationalization. The International Officer facilitates student and staff mobility programs, secures funding (e.g., Erasmus+), and promotes global learning opportunities. Additionally, they advocate for the importance of internationalization within the school, ensuring that students and staff develop intercultural competencies and a global mindset.

"It is the person who coordinates, supports, and supervises students in teaching and professional training within the Erasmus+ program." (Teacher)

"A professional figure that supports the implementation of international projects and initiatives that can boost the learning experience for our current and future students, either in initial VET or adults involved in training. At the same time, being the connection to wider opportunities of internationalization for trainers and other workers in the VET sector." (Project manager)

5.2 – The international officer's job tasks

For question 5, we asked the participants to detail the international officer's main tasks. The data collected in the answers was processed and organised into a list of a 5-dimensional set of tasks that he / she needs to carry out during his / her work time.

A) Strategic & Program Management
- ✓ Develop and implement the school's internationalization strategy.
- ✓ Organize and coordinate international mobility programs (e.g. student/staff exchanges).
- ✓ Identify and manage international funding and collaboration opportunities.
- ✓ Handle project applications, contracts, and budgets.
- ✓ Prepare reports and evaluations for internal and external stakeholders.

B) Partnerships & Networking
- ✓ Establish and maintain relationships with international institutions and organizations.
- ✓ Negotiate agreements for exchanges, internships, and collaborative projects.
- ✓ Represent the school in international forums and networks.

C) Support for International Participants
- ✓ Provide orientation and support for incoming international students and staff.
- ✓ Facilitate cultural integration and adaptation processes for international participants.
- ✓ Manage logistics (visa, travel, accommodation) for mobility programs.

D) Administrative & Quality Assurance tasks
- ✓ Ensure adherence to international education regulations and funding requirements.
- ✓ Monitor and evaluate the outcomes of international programs.

E) Promotion & Dissemination
- ✓ Raise awareness about international opportunities among students and staff.
- ✓ Organize events (e.g., fairs, cultural workshops) to promote global engagement.

5.3 – The international officer's job working schedule

We wished to know, for question 6, if this role should be exclusive, or if it can be accumulated with a teaching position.

Only 8 out of 49 interviewees (16%) stated that the role should be accumulated – "*In my opinion, it should be accumulated with a teaching position; working directly with the target of EU projects on VET makes you understand what the real needs, can keep the motivation high and can be fundamental to let other people know better the importance of participating actively in such initiatives*".

29 out of 49 interviewees (60%) stated that the role should be exclusive – "*I believe this role not only should be exclusive but for this job a dedicated department is needed, including legal and educational teams, to effectively address the needs of recognition and marketing. It's definitely not something that can be handled by just a teacher, because the teacher has already much to do and can't handle this too. An economic team is also needed*".

Finally, 12 out of 49 interviewees (24%) think that the determination of the role depends on different factors – "*The decision depends on the school's priorities and resources. An exclusive role is ideal for schools with robust internationalisation strategies, as it ensures professionalism and focus. However, combining the role with teaching can be a pragmatic choice in resource-constrained environments, provided the individual has strong organizational skills and sufficient institutional support*". Another respondent clarified that "*It depends on the institution's level of international engagement. If there are frequent collaborations and mobility programs, an exclusive role ensures consistency and strategic development. Otherwise, it could be combined with academic or administrative responsibilities, provided there is dedicated time for its proper execution*".

5.4 – The international officer's job required qualifications, experience, skills and competencies

In the final question, we asked for the participants' views on the qualifications, skills, and competencies needed for the role of an international officer. Here's a summary of the most quoted from the answers collected.

A) Qualifications
- ✓ Bachelor's or Master's degree (preferably in Education, International Relations, Business Administration, or Languages).
- ✓ Additional training in Project Management, Erasmus+ programs, or European program management.
- ✓ Relevant certifications (e.g., teaching, international relations, EU programs).
- ✓ Experience with European programs (e.g., Erasmus+).
- ✓ Knowledge of vocational education systems, global industry needs, and international collaborations.

B) Skills
- ✓ Language Proficiency: English, and other languages are highly valued.

- ✓ Communication Skills: strong oral and written communication, ability to present, negotiate, and engage in discussions.
- ✓ Project Management: experience in managing international projects, coordinating mobility programs, and organizing international partnerships.
- ✓ Organizational Skills: ability to handle complex tasks, plan and manage projects, ensure quality assurance, and manage finances.
- ✓ Digital Competence: proficiency with Microsoft Office, project management tools (e.g., Trello, Google Drive), and European program platforms.
- ✓ Problem-solving: ability to identify issues and find solutions, adapt to changing circumstances.
- ✓ Intercultural Competence: sensitivity to cultural differences, and experience in working with international teams.
- ✓ Networking Skills: ability to build relationships with international institutions, companies, and stakeholders
- ✓ Leadership: ability to lead and engage teams, manage roles and responsibilities effectively
- ✓ Teamwork: High collaboration and cooperation skills, especially in a multicultural environment

C) Competencies
- ✓ Flexibility: adaptability to new environments, projects, and tasks.
- ✓ Cultural Awareness: understanding of diverse cultures and the ability to interact with people from different backgrounds.
- ✓ Attention to Detail: precision in project planning, documentation, and reporting.
- ✓ Resilience: ability to handle stress, maintain enthusiasm, and work under pressure.
- ✓ Proactiveness: initiative in driving projects and activities forward.
- ✓ Strategic Thinking: a long-term vision for international collaboration, with the ability to implement plans effectively.
- ✓ Empathy: strong people skills, including active listening and understanding of student and colleague needs.
- ✓ Autonomy: ability to work independently and make informed decisions.
- ✓ Experience in Teaching (optional): particularly useful if the role involves connecting international education with teaching practice.

6 – Questionnaires

As part of Work Package n° 2, Methodological Guide for Establishing International Offices in VET Schools, INTERVET partners sent a questionnaire to VET directors, teachers, training coordinators, campus coordinators, project managers, career officers, consultants, internationalisation officers and coordinators throughout Europe, with an obvious focus in the European Union. The questionnaires aimed to identify the skill sets required for international officers in VET schools.

Before that, the consortium did a thorough desk research to clarify the scope of the questions to be presented to the target groups. It was concluded that, as this tool is better suited for quantitative analysis, the scope of the questions should be adapted.
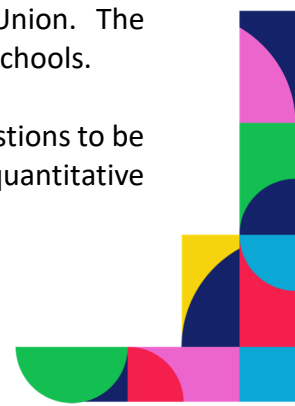
Therefore, considering the project goals, we narrowed them to three dimensions:
   I.   The proper definition of the role of an international officer at a VET school, using the ones from the UK, Iceland and Germany (the criteria was not to be one from a country already in the partnership).
   II. If the international officer should be an exclusive role or a part-time one. If so, how many working hours per week does it require?
   III. The 10 most relevant skills / competencies one should have, in order of relevance.

The answers gave the partnership a wider approach to this role, so it would be more suitable to work from now on.

We received 120 answers, not only from the countries already present in the consortium, but we were able to receive contributions from several others, which demonstrate the benefits the project brings outside its borders: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Chile, Georgia, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Palestine, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Türkiye.

Image 1
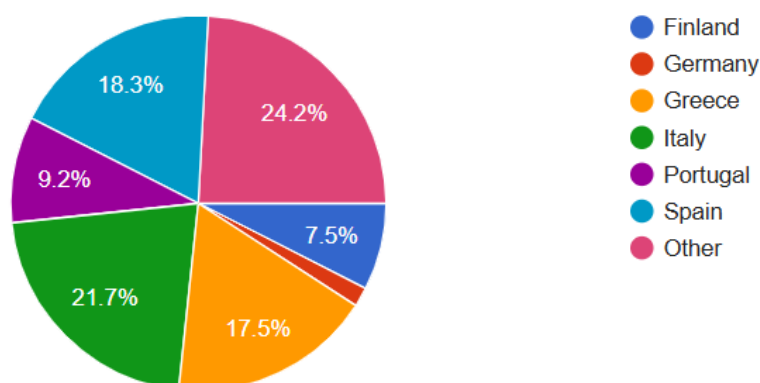
Concerning the role of the respondents in their organization, the International Projects Coordinator, VET Teacher and VET School / Provider Director were the majority. The other categories were Project Manager, Training Coordinator, Career Advisor, Student Welfare Coordinator, Campus Director, Customer Relationship Manager and Consultant.
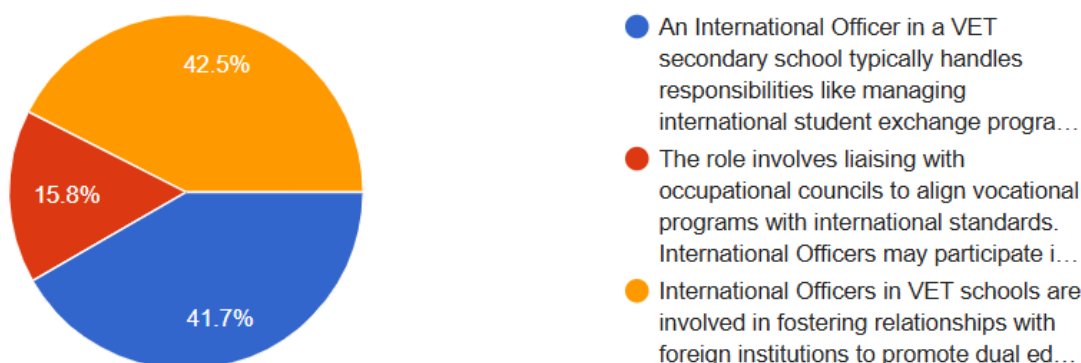
Image 2

Role of the Respondent
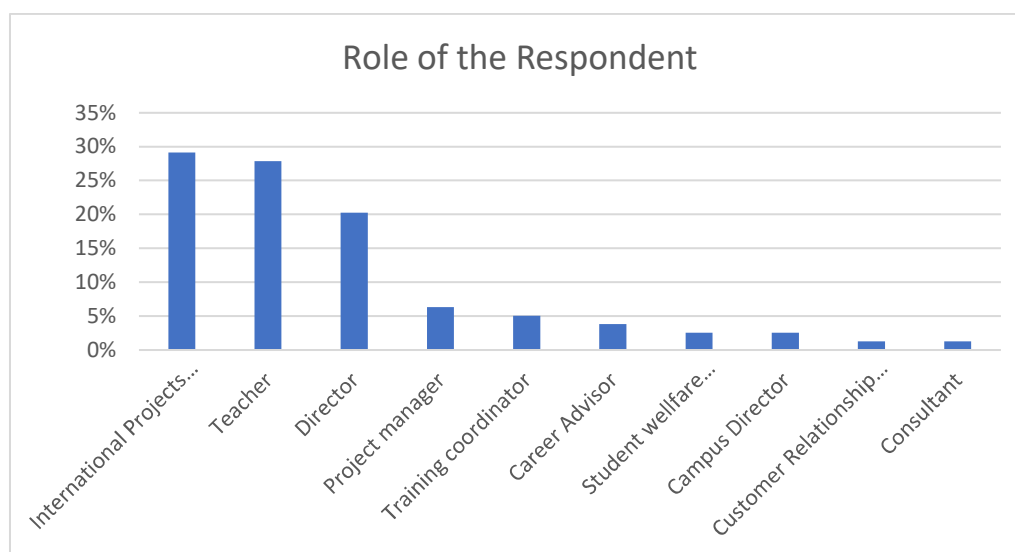
6.1 – The job definition of an international officer at a VET school

The respondents were given three alternatives to choose which is the more suitable definition of the role of an international officer at a VET school:

A. An International Officer in a VET secondary school typically handles responsibilities like managing international student exchange programs, supporting incoming international students, and promoting the institution abroad. Tasks include processing applications, organizing orientation programs, assisting with visa issues, and representing the school in international exhibitions. The role often requires fluency in foreign languages and expertise in student support services. The position emphasizes collaboration with other institutions to build international partnerships. (*Source: jobs.ac.uk*)

B. The role involves liaising with occupational councils to align vocational programs with international standards. International Officers may participate in designing qualifications and curricula for VET programs, ensuring they meet the needs of global labour markets. They collaborate with educators and trade organizations to facilitate international exchanges and support foreign students in adapting to hosting countries' educational and cultural environments. (*Source: Cedefop's structure and processes of VET in Iceland*)

C. International Officers in VET schools are involved in fostering relationships with foreign institutions to promote dual education models internationally. They manage student exchanges, support students going abroad, and help integrate international students into local vocational programs. Tasks include coordinating with local industries for internships and ensuring alignment with European qualifications frameworks. (International Officers in VET schools are involved in fostering relationships with foreign institutions to promote dual education models internationally. They manage student exchanges, support German students going abroad, and help integrate international students into local vocational programs. Tasks include coordinating with local industries for internships and ensuring alignment with European qualifications frameworks. (*Source: ETF and CEDEFOP document Germany's approach to VET*).

From these, 42.5% believe A) is the more suitable, closely followed by C), with 41.7%. Only 15.8% chose B).

Image 3

- An International Officer in a VET secondary school typically handles responsibilities like managing international student exchange progra…
- The role involves liaising with occupational councils to align vocational programs with international standards. International Officers may participate i…
- International Officers in VET schools are involved in fostering relationships with foreign institutions to promote dual ed…

Hence, the definition chosen to be more representative is the one that mentions: "*An International Officer in a VET secondary school typically handles responsibilities like managing international student exchange programs, supporting incoming international students, and promoting the institution abroad. Tasks include processing applications, organizing orientation programs, assisting with visa issues, and representing the school in international exhibitions. The role often requires fluency in foreign languages and expertise in student support services. The position emphasizes collaboration with other institutions to build international partnerships*".

6.2 – The time allocation of an international officer at a VET school

This dimension wished to determine if this job requires a full-time or a part-time professional. If the latter was selected, people were asked to evaluate how many weekly working hours were needed. This is important for VET providers, as although some can cope with a full-time job, others, due to their dimension or the number of international projects they wish to develop, may appoint a person who already has other responsibilities in the organization.

Almost half of the respondents (48.3%) answered that it should be exclusive, leaving the second most voted possibilities far behind: 16.7% believe that 6 to 10 hours are enough, and 12.5% chose 21 to 30 hours.

Image 4
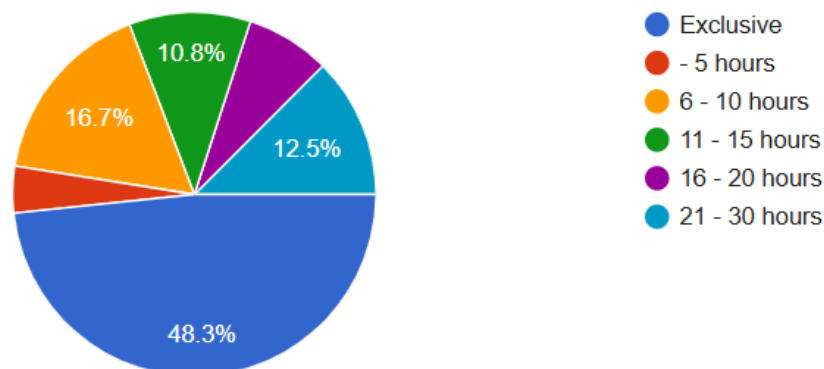
Consequently, a little more than 60% of the respondents are aware that this job encompasses a wide range of tasks that require a significant number of weekly hours to be properly executed (the sum of "Exclusive" with "21 to 30 hours").

6.3 – The most relevant skills / competencies of an international officer at a VET school

The desk research performed by the consortium led to the development of a required set for the job, with ten skills / competencies. We then asked the respondents to order them in an exclusive way, from most important (number 1) to least important (number 10).

These are the skills / competencies and how their relevance is seen by the target groups, following that order.

1. Networking and Relationship Building: the ability to establish and maintain partnerships with international institutions, businesses, and stakeholders to enhance project opportunities.
2. Project Management: proficiency in planning, executing, and monitoring international projects, including setting timelines, budgets, and resource allocation.
3. Cross-Cultural Communication: the ability to communicate effectively with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, fostering understanding and collaboration.
4. Language Proficiency: fluency in English and other foreign languages to facilitate communication with international partners and students.
5. Grant Writing and Fundraising: competence in researching, writing, and managing grant proposals to secure funding for international projects.
6. Knowledge of International Education Systems: Understanding of different educational structures and policies across countries, particularly in vocational education and training, and labour force development.
7. Problem-solving and Critical Thinking: the capability to identify challenges in international projects and develop effective solutions, along with the ability to think critically about project impacts and outcomes.
8. Digital Literacy: proficiency in using digital tools and platforms for project management, communication, and reporting, as well as an understanding of online learning technologies.
9. Cultural Sensitivity and Adaptability: awareness of cultural differences and the ability to adapt approaches and practices to varying contexts and audiences.

10. Research and Analytical Skills: ability to research international trends in vocational education, project outcomes, and best practices, and analyse data to inform project decisions.