



**LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME
European Qualifications Framework (EQF) Projects
Transversal Programme**

Key Activity 1: Policy cooperation and Innovation

Deliverable 4B
**Feedback report on tool and the overall
exercise**
(internal partnership document)

Project Acronym: VALLA

Project title: Validation of All Lifelong Learning in Aquaculture

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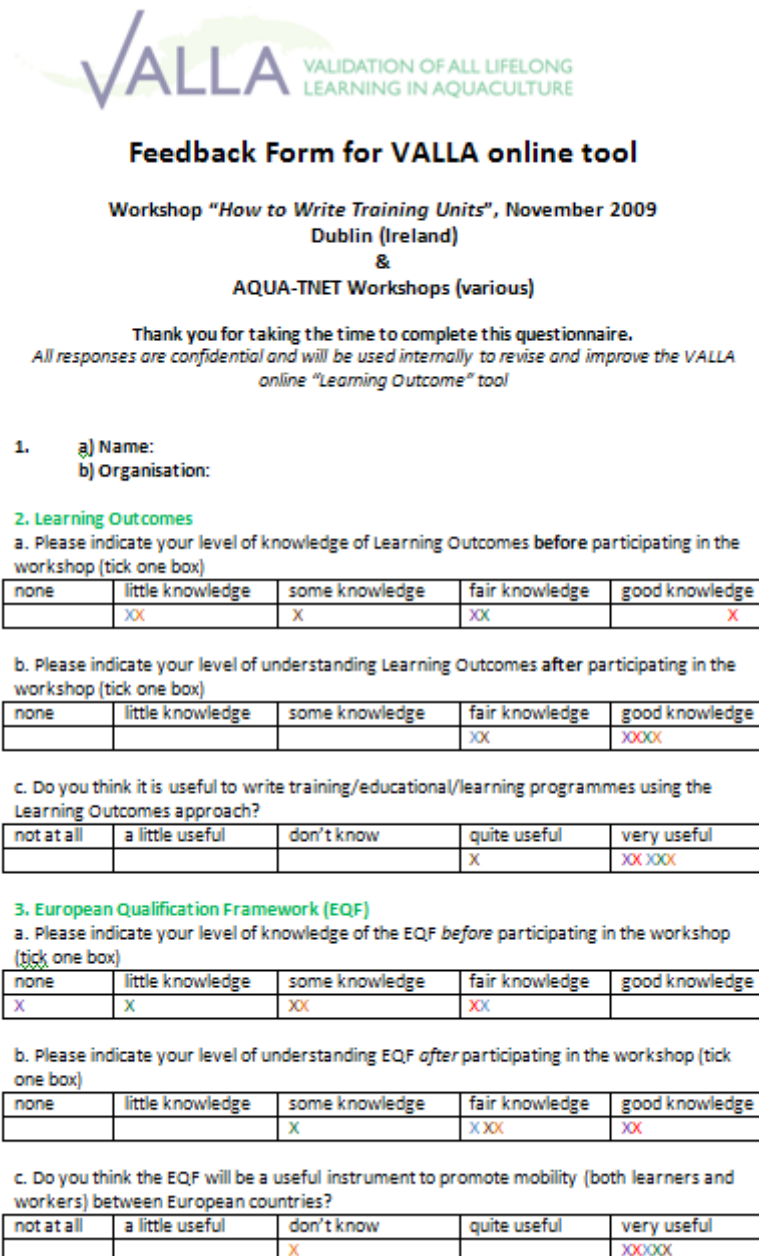


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4B) Feedback report on tool and the overall exercise:

After each workshop the “trainers” have been asked to complete a questionnaire detailing their experience of the exercise, online tool and the overall ambitions of the EQF. This feedback has been used to help adjust the online tool.

The questionnaire presented below (Figs. 1-5) collects the feedback of the participants in the workshop:



Feedback Form for VALLA online tool

**Workshop “How to Write Training Units”, November 2009
Dublin (Ireland)
&
AQUA-TNET Workshops (various)**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.
All responses are confidential and will be used internally to revise and improve the VALLA online “Learning Outcome” tool

1. a) Name:
b) Organisation:

2. Learning Outcomes

a. Please indicate your level of knowledge of Learning Outcomes **before** participating in the workshop (tick one box)

none	little knowledge	some knowledge	fair knowledge	good knowledge
	XX	X	XX	X

b. Please indicate your level of understanding Learning Outcomes **after** participating in the workshop (tick one box)

none	little knowledge	some knowledge	fair knowledge	good knowledge
			XX	XXXX

c. Do you think it is useful to write training/educational/learning programmes using the Learning Outcomes approach?

not at all	a little useful	don't know	quite useful	very useful
			X	XX XXX

3. European Qualification Framework (EQF)

a. Please indicate your level of knowledge of the EQF **before** participating in the workshop (tick one box)

none	little knowledge	some knowledge	fair knowledge	good knowledge
X	X	XX	XX	

b. Please indicate your level of understanding EQF **after** participating in the workshop (tick one box)

none	little knowledge	some knowledge	fair knowledge	good knowledge
		X	X XX	XX

c. Do you think the EQF will be a useful instrument to promote mobility (both learners and workers) between European countries?

not at all	a little useful	don't know	quite useful	very useful
		X		XXXXX

Figure 1: Page 1 of the questionnaire

4. VALLA online "Learning Outcome" tool

a. Please indicate your feedback on the layout and set-up of the Learning Outcome tool:

	Not clear at all	Could improve quite a bit	Could improve a little	Very clear
Registration page		X		XXXX
Create module / course summary		X	XX	XXXX
Create units		X	X	XXXX
Write Learning outcomes		XX	XXX	X

b. Please give suggestions as to where you think these issues could be improved.

For a new user, first start up for creating a new course is too confusing. All entrance to the course should be made more user friendly. This could be done by an introduction text: "How to use the Valla tool"?

I had some initial confusion with create a course instruction. I have to say I don't see a way around it. It is probably just my ineptitude.

More examples and more simple text on how to write learning outcomes and direct it to EQF levels

I think in general there need to be more guidance on what verbs and terminologies could be used in outcome and what should be used to describe knowledge & skills (Performance criteria).

It is not clear to the user what the difference is between learning outcomes and units. Perhaps a small summary or example could be included about the consequences of constructing a course starting from learning outcomes and starting from units.

c. Could the VALLA tool be improved by the addition of the following features (open question)

- > Instructions on purpose of the tool: not needed. The user must know. X Could it be better to say 'Objective' or 'Summary' with more instructions will be useful XXXX
-
- > FAQ's section: X Will be useful
- > Database of exemplars: good idea X X Really important
- > Function to store units and courses for future editing: important! X X Yes, will be useful indeed

d. Will the tool be useful for you in the future to create or adapt courses/units?

Yes	Don't know	No
XXXXXX		

e. Do you think the tool is more appropriate for certain specific level s? E.g., better in vocational training contexts than in HE educational contexts?

Figure 2: Page 2 of the questionnaire

The concept is efficient as a communication tool for course creation worked on by multi linguistic-/cultural groups and groups with members working on different educational levels. An example is co-operation between universities and educators creating vocational training courses.

Useful in both contexts

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Although it suits better for vocational courses, the same model can be applied for certificate (HNC) level courses. SQA uses the same format. The format is simple and lays out clearly the structure for any level of course. Because it does not matter what level or what credits, it is laid out clearly and the code is different for every course and every unit, so it cannot overlap or cause any confusion

I think the tool serves both purposes equally well.

The tool is easier to deal with if the level is the same in the different units, but it can be used in any context.

f. What are the positive features of this tool (if any)?

We have a concept for course creation, based on units and student based learning outcomes. The tool is supporting multi-disciplinary groups in co-operating on basis of the student oriented concept and increasing the quality of the created courses. The tool and the concept fit perfectly to the ability to work over distances, enabled by the present information revolution.

Instruction in very new area for many potential users. It is very clear in its instructions, both telling what to do and how to do it.

Very good to basis for creating courses based on learning outcomes

It certainly gives a user the simplicity to develop a course without having to type everything and publish in a consistent format. It gives a new course developer a clear structure with simple terminologies to develop in a short time

I'm not sure about the mode of operating exactly, but I guess the biggest positive feature would be the possibility of generating a document which is "ready" for accreditation by an external body.

Can be used form the LO to the unit OR from the unit to the LO. It's very convenient to be able to draft first what the student/the audience is expected to know and then come back to the description of the units.

h. What are its present limitations?

The tool is to day only applicable for the initial steps in creating a new course and will be used by beginners only. All supporting material will be created in other software programs like Office. Lack of compatible speller will push users in direction of other software programs.

Somehow it is still easy for people to lose whole sections of their work.

Figure 3: Page 3 of the questionnaire

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Every EU nation might want to adapt or use a slightly different format. For example in Scotland we have to use the exact SQA format and the VALLA tool format is slightly different in the sense the SQA format is much more detailed. For example, SQA has a limit on how many outcomes you can have for one unit and also how many performance criteria (Knowledge and skills) we can have in one unit. And we have to give more information about the course delivery/assessment mechanism/alignment to other courses/etc.

.....

The levelling of the LO.

i. Do you have any comments/feedback on how the tool could be improved?

For creating and implementing a new course following steps are needed: 1) Definition of Units (with definition of EQF for each one) and learning outcomes. 2) Writing the course by use of the Valla tool. 3) Distributing the course description to lectures, that can theoretically be as many as the units. 3) Executing the course. Description of the units and outcomes must be sufficient for an outside lecturer to give him a clear picture of the students needs and in particular his EQF level.

Further development and/or improvement of the concept and the tool can only be done by creating a multi linguistic- and multi-disciplinary course and to implement it.

There needs to be a clear indication that you must put something in every box, in the outcomes pages. That way you are able to revisit and redraft as often as you need to.

.....

I think VALLA tool can include some sort of flexibility to use different terminologies used in each nation or the user can have the facility to make changes to the layout as preferred. In reality every EU nation should use a common format so there is no need for different formats.

Also the tool may have to include online learning/blended learning terminologies in addition to distance learning. Because at the moment institutes want to promote flexible learning by online learning (at home/work), while distance learning could mean studying off campus but have to come in regularly for certain laboratory work or to do exams.

More and more new terminologies are used for different purpose- Distance learning/Online learning/Flexible learning/Blended learning/etc. Valla might to have define these terms and give the choice for course builders to choose the right term to describe although sometimes more terms are used to mean the same type of delivery.

It might be useful to include an exemplary list of possible outcomes that are of interest to the industry.

Not before a better understanding at EU level of the levels

Figure 4: Page 4 of the questionnaire

5. Please feel free to make any other comments

I think the online tool is a very significant advance in helping potential users to meet new demands, which can take a huge amount of time. That is why the diplomas supplement was not a resounding success. Staff simply don't have the time to spend 3 or 4 days filling out such forms. The tool cuts down the time needed, which can be considerable even if the user is very familiar with the whole learning outcome scene.

The Wave project can be linked into the VALL tool, to provide course builders what competencies are expected for doing a particular task in Aquaculture industry whether it is a farm or hatchery.

This will help to define the units with more appropriate knowledge and skills (performance criteria) required.

The VALLA tool can have an option for user to choose which EU nation the course is developed so there is an appropriate link to the national frame work and to double check with EQF frame work.

Similarly the VALLA project can also include as options at the end for users to include whether the Course/Unit has similarities or aligned with other course/units but may be offered in a different level/different vocational/professional development award/Higher National Certificate course. This will help validation personnel and staff delivering the course to see how the course/units can be linked or useful for candidates to progress further.

Figure 5: Page 5 of the questionnaire

If we study each question separately, we can observe that:

Question 2: Learning Outcomes

a. Learning outcomes

In the figure 6 we can observe that a half of the consulted persons had little or some knowledge about learning outcomes while the other half had fair or good knowledge.

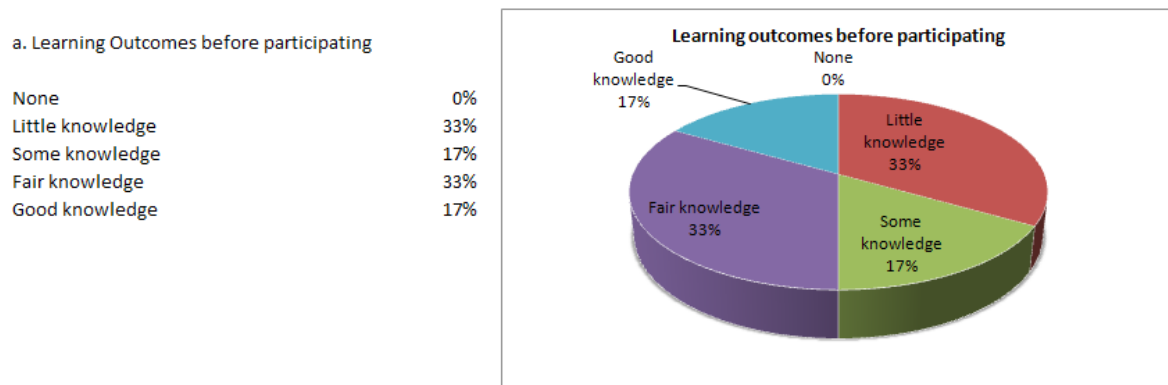


Figure 6: Obtained results for the question 2a.

b. Level of understanding Learning Outcomes after the workshop

The figure 7 shows that most of the participants have acquire a good level of understanding Learning Outcomes after the workshop, while only the 33% have acquire some knowledge.

b. Level of understanding Learning Outcomes after the workshop

None	0%
Little knowledge	0%
Some knowledge	0%
Fair knowledge	33%
Good knowledge	67%

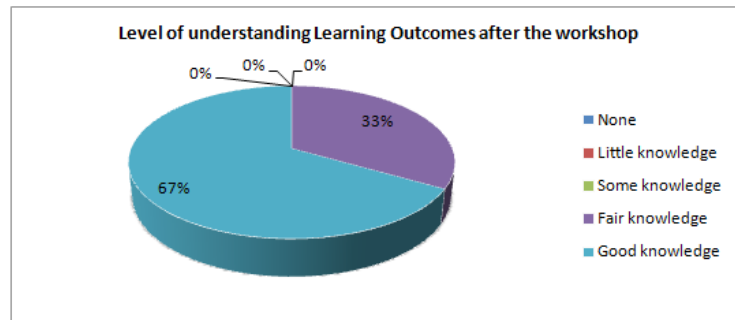


Figure 7: Obtained results for the question 2b.

c. Usefulness of the Learning Outcomes approach

Almost all the participants think that the Learning Outcomes approach is very useful to write training/educational/learning programs (Fig. 8). Only the 17% think that it is quite useful.

c. Usefulness of the Learning Outcomes approach

Not at all	0%
A little useful	0%
Don't know	0%
Quite useful	17%
Very useful	83%

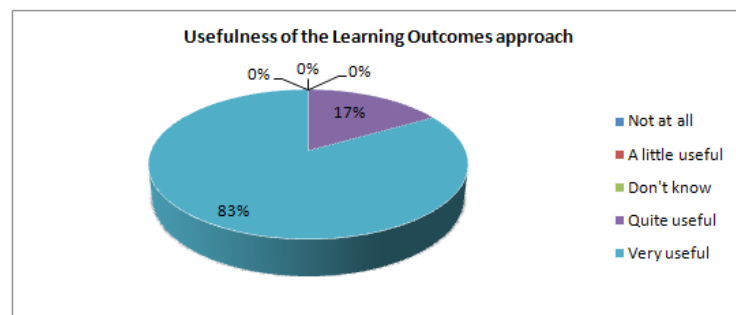


Figure 8: Obtained results for the question 2c.

Question 3: European Qualification Framework

a. Level of the EQF knowledge before participating in the workshop

The 77% of the participants in the workshop were not familiar with the EQF, while the 17% had fair knowledge.

a. Level of the EQF knowledge before participating in the workshop

None	17%
Little knowledge	17%
Some knowledge	33%
Fair knowledge	33%
Good knowledge	0%
	100%

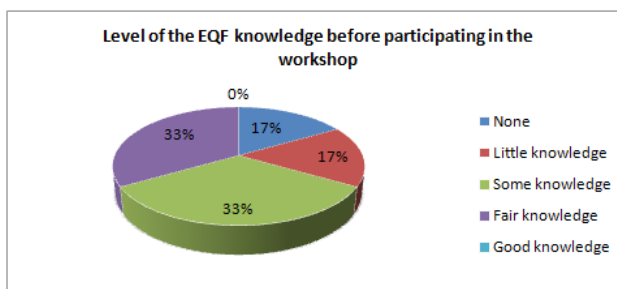


Figure 9: Obtained results for the question 3a.

b. Level of understanding EQF after participating in the workshop

After the workshop 83% of the participant admits that they have good or fair knowledge about the EQF. Only the 17% didn't arrive to this level of knowledge (Figure 10).

b. Level of understanding EQF after participating in the workshop

None	0%
Little knowledge	0%
Some knowledge	17%
Fair knowledge	50%
Good knowledge	33%

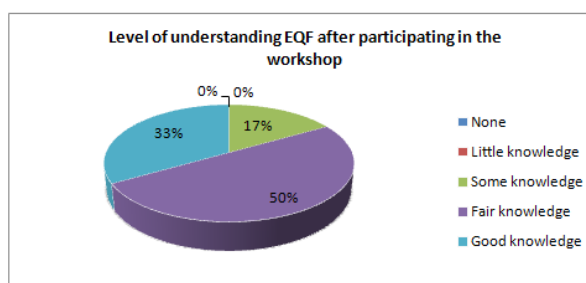


Figure 10: Obtained results for the question 3b.

c. Usefulness of EQF as instrument to promote mobility between European countries

Almost all the participants (83%) in the workshop think that the EQF will promote mobility between European countries (Figure 11).

c. Usefulness of EQF as instrument to promote mobility between European countries

Not at all	0%
A little useful	0%
Don't know	17%
Quite useful	0%
Very useful	83%

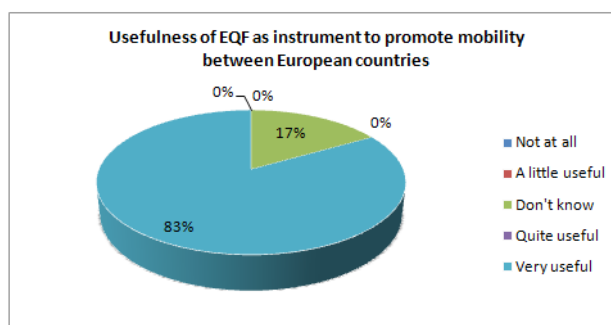


Figure 11: Obtained results for the question 3c.

Question 4: VALLA online “Learning Outcome” tool

a. Feedback on the layout and set-up of the Learning Outcome tool

Almost all the interviewed think that the registration page is very clear. However, the procedures to create module/course summary, create units and write learning outcomes should be improved.

a. Feedback on the layout and set-up of the Learning Outcome tool

	Not clear at all	Could improve quite a bit	Could improve a little	Very clear
Registration page	0%	17%	0%	83%
Create module / course summary	0%	17%	33%	50%
Create units	0%	17%	17%	67%
Write Learning outcomes	0%	33%	50%	17%

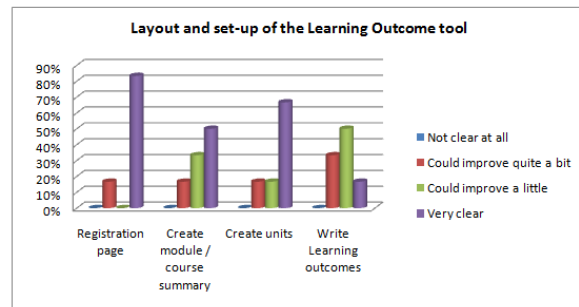


Figure 12: Obtained results for the question 4a.

b. Suggestions for improvement

All the participants think that there should be an introduction explaining how to use the VALLA tool. The instructions given were not so clear for all the participants. They suggest giving more examples and a definition of the different terms used. Furthermore, the link between the learning outcomes and the EQF was not very clear.

c. Improvement of VALLA tool by the addition of the following features.

All the participants think that there should be a very good idea to include all the features proposed in the questionnaire:

- Instructions on purpose of the tool.
- FAQ's section.
- Database of exemplars.
- Function to store units and courses for future editing.

d. Usefulness of the tool to create or adapt new courses/units.

All the participants think that this tool will be very useful for them to create or adapt new courses/units.

e. Appropriated level to use this tool (? E.g., better in vocational training contexts than in HE educational contexts?)

All the participants think that this tool can be useful for both levels: in vocational training and HE education.

f. Positive features of this tool.

They think that this tool is a very good basis for creating courses based on learning outcomes, they stress that it is very easy to use and that it will be very useful for new trainers.

h. Limitations

The tool is only applicable for the initial steps in creating a new course and will be useful only for beginners. Furthermore, every EU nation might want to adapt or use a slightly different format.

i. Comments/feedback to improve the tool

The main improvements proposed are related to:

- The possibility of creating a multi linguistic- and multi-disciplinary course and to implement it.
- The inclusion of some sort of flexibility to use different terminologies used in each nation.
- The inclusion of online learning/blended learning terminologies in addition to distance learning.
- The inclusion of an exemplary list of possible outcomes that are of interest to the industry.

Question 5: Other comments

One of the participants think that the online tool is a very significant advance in helping potential users to meet new demands, which can take a huge amount of time. That is why the diplomas supplement was not a resounding success. Staff simply hasn't got the time to spend 3 or 4 days filling out such forms. The tool cuts down the time needed, which can be considerable even if the user is very familiar with the whole learning outcome scene.

Another participant establishes that the Wave project can be linked into the VALLA tool, to provide course builders what competencies are expected for doing a particular task in Aquaculture industry whether it is a farm or hatchery. This will help to define the units with more appropriate knowledge and skills (performance criteria) required.

The VALLA tool can have an option for user to choose which EU nation the course is developed so there is an appropriate link to the national framework and to double check with EQF frame work.

Similarly the VALLA project can also include as options at the end for users to include whether the Course/Unit has similarities or aligned with other course/units but may be offered in a different level/different vocational/professional development award/Higher National Certificate course. This will help validation personnel and staff delivering the course to see how the course/units can be linked or useful for candidates to progress further.

OTHER

Feedback from Frederik de Decker via e-mail: Please find herewith some suggestions regarding the VALLA-tool. In general I think you did a great job and I hope it will find its way to many interested parties.

- COURSE level

- o The description “what a student should be able to do after completion of the course” under the heading “Summary” could imply that people list the course learning outcomes; for reasons of clarity and comparability (with the unit level), this could be an interesting option
- o As far as I understood ECVET means (only) European Credits for VET (and is not (yet) a system)
- o The item “Delivery Method” for me seems strange only at the level of a course and not at the level of units; also I think a possibility to give some more open input would be interesting.

- UNIT level

- o why is there not the possibility to indicate the number of credits at the level of a unit (or did I overlook this?)
- o the term “purpose” at the level of a unit could in my opinion best be supplemented by another term e.g. outcomes of objectives, since these are explicitly asked for as well
- o the term modules is still used, e.g. in the extra information provided under “evidence if you selected “per unit” above.
- o At the end of the section, a part “checkpoint questions” is mentioned, but there is only a number “1”, that seems somehow strange
- a few typing errors:
 - o unit: examples of “evidence” (number 2) “outcomes 1” should be “outcome 1”
 - o course: “course type”, the first word is “in” and should be “if”