



Valuing prior Learning, Building Qualifications



Shared VQTS Matrix for the Cleaning Sector

Valbuk - Deliverable n. 6

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1. Preface

This deliverable (n.6 of the Valbuk Project) aims to transfer the VQTS model¹ to the cleaning services sector in order to define flexible learning and qualification pathways and therefore, facilitate the recognition and accreditation of learning outcomes achieved in formal, informal and non-formal contexts.

The deliverable has been prepared by 3s research laboratory (AT) with the contribution of ECAP foundation, UNIA (Swiss inter-professional trade union), SVEB (Swiss Federation for CVT), Maison de la Propreté (CH), Studio Meta (IT), IRIV (FR), In Holland (NL), f-bb (DE) and CPZ (SK).

The VQTS model focuses on empirically derived work related competences, identifying core work tasks / competence areas within a particular occupational field. It also describes the successive steps of competence development (i.e. ‘beginner’, semi-skilled, skilled worker level) for each core task / competence area.

The Shared VQTS Matrix for the cleaning sector was developed as follows:

- definition of the scope of the Matrix – country characteristic information (gathered in the course of the Valbuk project) showed that there are similar sector-specific patterns in all partner countries, for example, the relatively high share of low-skilled employees as well as employees with migration background. Taking this into consideration, it was important that the Shared Matrix reflects basic levels of competences, including also knowledge of foreign language (in the case of employees with migration background).
- collection of background information– data was gathered through an on-line questionnaire, which referred to the description of sector-specific competence areas in the partner countries. During and after the Kick-off Meeting, partners selected the competence areas to be included in the Matrix.
- consultation with experts – each partner country took charge of two competence areas identifying steps of competence development for them. The identification of steps of competence development was supported by national experts in the cleaning sector.
- open discussion and work in groups – the activity took place during the II. Transnational Valbuk meeting and led to fine-tuning of the steps of competence development and elaboration of the (draft) final version of the Shared Matrix.

Structure of the Shared VQTS Matrix

The Shared VQTS Matrix for the cleaning services sector consists of twelve competence areas, which differentiate between various cleaning premises (business premises, sanitary facilities, health care premises, hotels, restaurants, public spaces etc.). For each competence area there are at least three steps of competence development reflecting basic, intermediate and higher skills levels. Soft skills and competences (such as language knowledge,

¹ The VQTS Model has been developed by 3s research laboratory within the framework of a Leonardo da Vinci project in 2003. The Model has been further elaborated in the VQTS II project (ended in 2006), and it has been successfully applied and transferred to various countries and sectors (see for further details <http://vqts.netletter.at/>).

organisation of one's own work, teamwork) are integrated within the steps of competence development.

Added value

The Shared Matrix is a precedent for the cleaning sector and therefore, an innovative model. It covers competence areas and steps of competence development relevant for the sector in six partner countries. On one hand, the competence areas and particularly, the steps of competence development correspond to the characteristics of the target group i.e. mostly low-skilled employees and also employees with migration background. On the other hand, the Matrix goes beyond these characteristics as it is an open and dynamic model that can be enlarged with additional competence areas as well as steps of competence development.

One particularity and at the same time added value of the Shared Matrix is that it represents work-related (and actually existing) competences differentiated according to competence areas and structured into gradual steps of competence development. This feature of the Matrix facilitates the modularisation of learning paths and potentially, the recognition and accreditation of prior learning.

2. Shared Competence VQTS Matrix for the Cleaning Sector



Competence area	Steps of competence development				
<p>1 Performing current and regular maintenance cleaning (waste removal, furniture, equipment-surfaces and soils) of business premises (offices, corridors, meeting rooms), collective housing (example?), classrooms and industrial premises (example?)</p>	<p>He/She can remove dirt and dust using cleaning materials and simple devices (vacuum cleaner), applying proper and safe working procedures. He/She has minimal notions about the types of materials and sidings and uses and doses products according to supervisor instructions. He/She can work in a team and communicate verbally with his/her superiors and other team members. He/She can organise, report and assess the result of his/her work. He/She is aware of client's comfort (avoiding noise, disturbance, etc.).</p>	<p>He/She can select and prepare the appropriate materials and sidings. He/She is able to read written instructions and intervene alone. He/She can show to other team members how to perform tasks, communicate with his/her superiors, and people in the premises.</p>	<p>He/She masters intermediate cleaning and can use machines such as burnishing machine, spray cleaning, carpet stain removal, etc. He/She knows the materials and the products and can select the suitable machines (single-disc) and cleaning accessories (discs, brushes). He/She is able to plan and adapt his/her work according to the needs.</p>	<p>He/She can plan instruct, explain and evaluate the work of a team, recruit and train new employees. He/She makes sure that team members know about, understand and comply with established cleaning procedures, safety, environmental and/or other standards. He/She is the spokesperson for the organisation with people in the premises/clients (in case of complaints). He/She can communicate and provide feedback to management.</p>	<p>He/She can set appropriate standards and establish correct cleaning procedures. He/She has extensive knowledge about products, equipment and facility management and makes sure that adequate supplies of all cleaning materials are always available. He/She is responsible for a large team and able to estimate the time required for the services. He/She can communicate with clients (prepare an offer, invoice, contract). He/She evaluates (with/without a client) the quality of the services provided.</p>
<p>2 Performing periodic cleaning and treatment of business premises including the use of complex machines or processes (stripping paint, installation of fillers or emulsion, shampoos, injection, extraction, waxing floors, crystallisation)</p>	<p>He/She has basic chemistry knowledge, can identify the types of materials and sidings and recognise the types of soils. He/She can select and dose products, use simple machines, equipment and accessories, and apply proper and safe working procedures. He/She can take care of the machines and fix simple breakdowns. He/she is integrated into an intervention team, follows supervisor instructions and can communicate verbally with his/her superiors and other team members. He/she is able to assess the result of his/her work and is aware of client's comfort (avoiding noise, disturbance, etc.).</p>	<p>He/She can select appropriate machines, equipment and accessories. He/She is able to plan and adapt his/her methods according to the needs and the deadlines. He/She informs his/her responsible about the progress/achievement of his/her tasks, difficulties and malfunctions. He/She can intervene alone, understand written instructions and communicate with his/her superiors, other team members and people in the premises. He/She can sign work orders and is able to assess the quality of his/her work.</p>	<p>He/She can set appropriate safety, environmental and/or other standards and establish correct cleaning procedures. He/She has extensive knowledge about products, equipment and facility management and makes sure that adequate supplies of all cleaning materials are always available. He/She can guide a team (plan, instruct, explain and evaluate the work of the team, recruit and train new employees). He/She is able to estimate the time required for the services and adapt it to the needs (unexpected risks and constraints). He/She can communicate with clients (reach an agreement on achieved work) and management. He/She is the spokesperson for the organisation with people in the premises/clients (in case of complaints).</p>		
<p>3 Performing regular maintenance cleaning of sanitary facilities (toilets, showers, changing rooms, kitchens, dining halls).</p>	<p>He/She has minimal notions about the types of materials, sidings and sanitary products and knows the sequence of cleaning procedures and basic disinfection. He/She doses products following supervisor instructions, uses simple devices (toilet bowl, glass cleaners) and can take care of his/her equipment. He/She can work in a team and communicate verbally with his/her superiors and other team members. He/She applies the safety regulations and is able to assess the result of his/her work. He/She is aware of client's comfort (avoiding noise, disturbance, etc.).</p>	<p>He/She has basic chemistry knowledge, can identify and select the appropriate materials and sidings. He/She can fix simple breakdowns of his/her equipment/devices. He/She can intervene alone, understand written instructions and communicate with his/her superiors, other team members and people in the premises. He/She is able to show to other team members how to perform work tasks and to assess the quality of his/her work.</p>	<p>He/She can plan, instruct, explain and evaluate the work of a team, recruit and train new employees. He/She makes sure that team members know about, understand and comply with established cleaning procedures safety, environmental and/or other standards. He/She knows the materials, the products and can adapt them to the needs. He/She can communicate with clients and management. He/She is the spokesperson for the organisation with people in the premises/clients (in case of complaints).</p>	<p>He/She can set appropriate safety, environmental and/or other standards and establish correct cleaning procedures. He/She has extensive knowledge about products, equipment and facility management and makes sure that adequate supplies of all cleaning materials are always available. He/She is responsible for a large team, plans, organises and adapts the work of the team according to the needs and is able to calculate the time required to perform the services. He/She evaluates (with/without a client) the quality of the services provided.</p>	



<p>4 Cleaning and disinfection in health care premises such as patient room, patient exam room, waiting room, dining area</p>	<p>He/She can perform general cleaning (dirt and dust removal, scouring powders, toilet bowl, glass cleaners, etc.) and disinfection. He/She is able to use appropriate cleaners, according to the surface type (floor, blood pressure equipment, bed, exam table, etc.). He/She can perform his/her tasks following a schedule and supervisor instructions. He/She can work in a team and communicate verbally with other team members and his/her superiors. He/She applies the relevant safety regulations, can save the working means after work, fill in control documentation, report and assess the quality of his/her work.</p>	<p>He/She has basic chemistry knowledge and is able to select appropriate cleaners and equipment. He/She can work in a team or intervene alone, understand written instructions and communicate with his/her superiors, patients, visitors and medical staff.</p>	<p>He/She can supervise, monitor and keep records of cleaning and disinfection procedures; evaluate the results and prepare work schedules, including time and facility management. He/She can select and purchase cleaning chemicals and make sure that adequate supplies of all cleaning materials are always available. He/She can plan, organise and adapt the work of a team according to the needs (can change the plan under unexpected circumstances).</p>
<p>5 Cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation in ultra-sanitised building and healthcare premises (surgery rooms, pharmaceutical and medicine manufacturing premises etc.)</p>	<p>He/She can perform general cleaning and disinfection using the appropriate disinfectant (for tile floor, trash can, wall equipment, window, operating table, etc.). He/She is able to perform sterilisation of rooms under direct supervision. He/She can apply proper and safe working procedures and remove and store cleaned items to prevent re-contamination. He/She can work in a team and communicate verbally with other team members and his/her superiors. He/She is able to save the working means after work, fill in control documentation, report and assess the quality of his/her work.</p>	<p>He/She is responsible for a team, can supervise and monitor cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation procedures, evaluate the results, prepare work schedules, and report on the work of the team to his/her superiors. He/She is capable to instruct others and make sure that team members know about, understand and comply with established cleaning procedures, safety, environmental and/or other standards.</p>	<p>He/She has an extensive knowledge about materials, products, equipment and facility management, can select and purchase cleaning chemicals. He/She makes sure that adequate supplies of all cleaning materials are always available. He/She is responsible for various small teams, can plan, organise and adapt the work according to the needs (and change the plan under unexpected circumstances). He/She is able to calculate the time required to perform the services.</p>
<p>6 Performing maintenance cleaning of hard floors using mechanical equipment: sweeper, industrial floor-cleaning machine</p>	<p>He/She has basic chemistry knowledge, can identify the types of materials and sidings, select and dose products according to instructions and select accessories (discs, brushes). He/She can select the machines (sweeper, industrial floor-cleaning machine, ride-on, etc.), drive and manoeuvre them, ensuring the safety instructions (also in presence of public). He/She is able to mark the work area and fix simple breakdowns of his/her equipment (maintenance, batteries, engine, etc.). He/She can intervene alone, understand written instructions and communicate in a simple way with his/her superiors and people in the premises. He/She is aware of client's comfort (avoiding noise, disturbance, etc.) and is able to assess the result of his/her work.</p>	<p>He/She knows the materials, the products and the facility management and can adapt them to the needs. He/She can plan, instruct, explain and evaluate the work of a team, recruit and train new employees. He/She makes sure that team members know about, understand and comply with established cleaning procedures safety, environmental and/or other standards. He/She can communicate with clients and management and is the spokesperson for the organisation with people in the premises/clients (in case of complaints).</p>	<p>He/She has extensive knowledge about materials, products, equipment and facility management and makes sure that adequate supplies of all cleaning materials are always available. He/She is responsible for a large team, plans and organises the work and is able to estimate the time required to perform the services. He/She can communicate with clients and management. He/She is able to evaluate (with/without a client) the quality of the services provided.</p>
<p>7 Cleaning metallic and stone facades and surfaces, using proper equipment</p>	<p>He/She can differentiate between acidic and alkaline cleansers and knows about their effects on different surfaces. He/She can use specialised cleaning methods (high pressure cleaning, sand blasting, etc.) following supervisor instructions. He/She can work in a team and communicate verbally with his/her superiors and other team members. He/She can work safely at all times and all places complying with health and safety regulations.</p>	<p>He/She can identify different types of facades and surfaces and select and use appropriate cleansers. He/She can safely arrange and use (moving) platforms. He/She masters specialised cleaning methods for removing dirt from facades and surfaces. He/She can work in a team or intervene alone, understand verbal and written instructions.</p>	<p>He/She is responsible for a team, can monitor the cleaning process, plan and organise the work and estimate the time required to perform the services. He/She can judge the effects of a cleanser on the surface; preserve historic buildings (their facades and surfaces) and maintain electrically driven cleaning utensils (i.e. for high pressure cleaning). He/She knows facility management and can communicate with clients.</p>



<p>8 Performing cleaning of glasses and glazed facades</p>	<p>He/She can remove dirt and dust using different glass cleaning techniques (incl. 'American window cleaning'). He/She can identify the types of materials and sidings following instructions. He/She is able to settle the work area, using a pole (up to 4m), safety step grate and ladder (up to 4m) and unsettle it after completing his/her work. He/She can maintain his/her equipment and materials. He/She uses personal protective means (gloves, safety shoes, safety helmet, safety harness, safety rope, safety snap hook, etc.). He/She can work in a team and communicate verbally with his/her superiors and other team members. He/She can apply client-oriented behaviour (dress code, correction measures, etc.) and is aware of client's comfort (avoiding noise, disturbance, etc.). He/She performs his/her work following safety instructions, can assess and correct its result.</p>	<p>He/She can select types of materials and sidings and means of lifting according to the characteristics of the work site, constraints and safety instructions. He/she can install, move and use specific means of lifting (ladder, including drawer slide, elevated work platform - Cherry picker, scaffolding, ropes, etc.). He/She can intervene alone and adapt his/her methods according to the needs. He/She can understand written instructions (operation sheet) and communicate with people in the premises and client representatives. He/She can show to new employees how to perform the tasks. He/She can report to his/her superiors about the progress of his/her tasks, difficulties, malfunctions and client claims. He/She can sign work orders and evaluate (with/without a client) the quality of the services provided.</p>	<p>He/She has extensive knowledge about materials, products and facility management and can adapt them to the needs. He/She can organise the positioning of the rented means (bucket truck, elevated work platform, scaffolding, etc.) on the work site. He/She can guide a team (plan, instruct, explain and evaluate the work of the team, recruit new employees). He/She can communicate with clients (reach an agreement upon achieved work) and management. He/She is the spokesperson for the organisation with people in the premises/clients (in case of complaints). He/She is able to calculate the time for the services and the costs for specific materials. He/She is in charge of the application of safety and environmental standards.</p>	
<p>9 Cleaning in hotel rooms and catering premises such as restaurants, cafés, etc.</p>	<p>He/She can perform general cleaning and disinfection (empty garbage cans, separate waste, sweeping, vacuum and floor cleaning, making the bed/change sheets (hotels), cleaning napkins and tablecloths (restaurants). He/She has minimal notions about the types of materials and sidings and uses and doses products according to supervisor instructions and safety rules. He/She can work in a team; communicate verbally with his/her superiors and other team members. He/She can organise, report and assess the result of his/her work.</p>	<p>He/She can select and prepare the appropriate types of materials and sidings. He/She has basic knowledge and skills for textile cleaning (beddings, curtains, carpets, etc.). He/She can read written instructions, intervene alone or in a team and can show to other team members how to perform tasks. He/She can communicate with his/her superiors and clients. He/She has knowledge about emergency rules.</p>	<p>He/She is in charge of optimisation of work processes. He/She can plan, instruct, explain and assesses the work of a team, recruit and train new employees. He/She is the spokesperson for the organisation with people in the premises/clients (in case of complaints). He/She is in charge of the application of safety and environmental standards.</p>	<p>He/She has extensive knowledge about materials, facility management, can select and purchase products and equipment. He/She is responsible for a large team and able to estimate the time required for the services. He/She can communicate with clients (prepare an offer, invoice, contract, etc.) and management. He/She can evaluate the quality of the services provided.</p>
<p>10 Cleaning in food industry premises</p>	<p>He/She can select appropriate equipment and chemicals, apply proper and safe working procedures (incl. use of personal protective equipment) and prepare surrounding area (remove or cover food). He/She can remove loose and easily removed soil by sweeping, wiping or pre-rinsing, wash the surface using a detergent and appropriate hand tools (brushes, clothes, etc.). He/She is able to use heat or a suitable chemical disinfectant, remove and store cleaned items to prevent re-contamination. He/She can remove, clean/disinfect, dry and safely store cleaning equipment and as necessary, repair and maintain/ replace defective equipment, followed by safe storage. He/She can intervene alone or in a team, communicate verbally with his/her superiors and other team members.</p>	<p>He/She can identify the cleaning chemicals and equipment required, set appropriate safety, environmental and/or other standards, establish the correct cleaning procedures. He/She is responsible for a team and makes sure that team members know about, understand and comply with the standards and procedures. He/She can train and instruct employees in the safe and efficient use of cleaning chemicals, equipment etc. He/She can communicate with clients and management and is the spokesperson for the organisation with people in the premises/clients (in case of complaints).</p>	<p>He/She is responsible for a large team, can ensure that adequate supplies of all cleaning materials are always available and is able to monitor standards and keep records. He/She can motivate employees to maintain hygiene standards by refresher training/instruction, displaying publicity material, direct supervisory contact, taking any necessary disciplinary action. He/She can take any corrective action (i.e. re-cleaning) that may be necessary.</p>	



<p>11 Cleaning of streets and public open spaces (bus and rail stations, underground, airports) including waste management</p>	<p>He/She has a basic knowledge about recycling and disposal rules and can work safely at all times and all places following safety and health regulations. He/She can entitle the manual equipment for collecting waste and cleaning streets and public places. He/She can work in a team and communicate verbally with his/her superiors and other team members.</p>	<p>He/She can master the separation and disposal of waste. He/She is able to handle manual equipment to collect waste and clean streets and public places. He/She can intervene alone or in a team and is able to show to other team members how to perform tasks.</p>	<p>He/She can monitor and judge cleaning and waste management and optimise work processes. He/She can guide a team (plan, instruct, explain and evaluate the work of the team)</p>	
<p>12 Deep cleaning and recovery, including after-disaster cleaning (fire, soot, smoke, water, oil, vandalism - graffiti removal) and cleaning after construction (removing trash and debris, sawdust and particles)</p>	<p>He/She can perform simple tasks i.e. remove trash, dirt and debris from the interior and around the exterior of premises and place it to the designated dumpster; clean tubs, toilets, inside of cabinets, scrape, wash, clean and polish the outside and inside surfaces of windows, clean and shine plumbing and electrical fixtures, vacuum carpeted areas, dust and wet mob hard surface floors, dust walls, etc. He/She can use simple devices, applying proper and safe working procedures. He/she is integrated into an intervention team, follows supervisor instructions and can communicate verbally with his/her superiors and other team members. He/she is able to assess the result of his/her work.</p>	<p>He/She can perform more complex tasks (bio-hazard decontamination and cleaning, cleaning and sterilisation of animal fouling areas, etc.). He/She has the required chemistry knowledge to select appropriate equipment and chemicals and can use complex machines or processes. He/She is able to plan and adapt his/her work according to the needs. He/she can intervene alone or in a team and can show to other team members how to perform tasks. He/She can communicate with his/her superiors and clients.</p>	<p>He/She can plan instruct, explain and evaluate the work of a team, recruit and train new employees. He/She makes sure that team members know about, understand and comply with established cleaning procedures safety, environmental and/or other standards. He/She is the spokesperson for the organisation with people in the premises/clients (in case of complaints). He/She can communicate and provide feedback to the management.</p>	<p>He/She manages operational and managerial tasks (marketing, policy, accounting, auditing, etc.). He/She has extensive knowledge about products, equipment and facility management and makes sure that adequate supplies of all cleaning materials are always available. He/She can communicate with clients (prepare an offer, invoice, contract) and evaluate (with/without a client) the quality of the services provided.</p>





3. Glossary

Cleaning

removal of dirt, food residues, grease and other objectionable matter (known in cleaning terminology as 'soil'). There is a differentiation between regular maintenance cleaning (ordinary, daily cleaning), 'deep cleaning'; 'intermediate cleaning' (weekly, monthly, normally using machines).

Competence

means cognitive competences (knowledge), functional competences (skills) as well as social competences (behaviour); the holistic concept of competence refers to vocational or professional competence in the sense of expertise. The competence description refers to the sector, the domain, the context and the occupational task (VQTS I)

Competence area

comprises various forms of competences necessary for completing core work tasks in a certain occupational field and in the Competence Matrix they are listed in the left column of the table (VQTS I and II).

Competence Matrix

displays work-related competences descriptions structured in a table, according to core work tasks and the progress of competence development i.e. 'steps of competence development' (VQTS I and II)

Disinfection

reducing the number of microbes on a surface to very low levels

Occupational field

in the context of the VQTS model, occupational fields are understood as 'groups of family like occupations' or 'families of occupations' sharing common characteristics such as activities, tasks, tools, requirements language, attitude to work. In the Competence Matrix, the occupational field is structured according to common tasks (VQTS I and II)

Sector

a grouping of professional activities based on their main economic function, product, service or technology (VQTS I and II)

Step of competence development

represents the horizontal structure of a Competence Matrix and illustrate the competence development process within certain core tasks - competence areas (VQTS I and II)

VQTS

vocational qualification transfer system; the VQTS model is a proposal for a structured description of work-related competences

4. Sources

VQTS I: Luomi-Messerer, K. & Markowitsch, J. (Eds., 2006): ‘VQTS model – A proposal for a structured description of work-related competences and their acquisition’. 3s, Vienna, <http://www.vocationalqualification.net/mmedia/2008.05.07/1210162936.pdf>, 2013-07-17

VQTS II, Luomi-Messerer, K. (Ed., 2009): ‘Using the VQTS model for mobility and permeability – Results of the Lifelong Learning project VQTS II’, http://3s.co.at/download/VQTS%20model_VQTS%20II%20results.pdf, 2013-07-17