

Result 14
Piloting – Content of Learning Outcomes Framework & Accreditation Processes



Lifelong Learning Programme

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Foreword

This document has been produced by the Leonardo da Vinci CLO2 –project “Professionalising training and mobility for outdoor animators in Europe bridging the gap between sector competences and learning outcomes”.

At a European level, the outdoors sub-sector is a fast growing and developing activity area. The outdoors thrives in a wide range of delivery and employment contexts including public sector, commercial, charitable, not-for-profit and voluntary. As a consequence, workforce needs (both paid and voluntary) are increasing rapidly and organisations operating within the sector are seeking well trained, quality workers (animators in this context), able to match the requirements of more and more demanding clients and users.

One of the CLO2 project’s main objectives was to discuss, develop and propose a set of learning outcomes for the outdoor animator and an associated range of accreditation/verification processes for the outdoors in Europe. This activity is important as it will help to ensure the proper implementation and use of the innovative set of European occupational standards developed for the outdoors, and so the sustainability of the work.

This document discusses the piloting of the learning outcomes matrix that was developed (including its embedded levels and credits) plus the piloting of the suggested accreditation and verification processes. This paper should be read in conjunction with the associated CLO2 project papers:

- Learning Outcomes Framework;
- Accreditation and Verification Processes from a European Perspective for Outdoors Sector Vocational Education and Training.

PART 1 - PILOT THE CONTENT OF THE LEARNING OUTCOME FRAMEWORK

The CLO2 project had the objective to develop a Learning Outcome Framework for the outdoor animator according to the work based on the Competence Framework originally produced through the EQFOA¹ project and refined during the follow on CLO2 project.

The Learning Outcomes Framework for the outdoor animator developed by the partnership highlights the skills and knowledge required but also some proposals regarding the teaching, learning and assessment strategies.

The commitment of the training providers and universities involved in the CLO2 project was essential and substantial during the CLO2 project. It was agreed from the start that to ensure that the content fits with the realities of the sector it would be necessary to test the developed framework against a minimum of 2 existing training programmes within Europe.

This document constitutes a description of the methodology used by the CLO2 partners to fulfil that task, that is to say to properly test/pilot the Learning Outcome Framework developed by the CLO2 partners against 2 existing systems in place in Europe.

The plan of action was discussed amongst partners during the Full Partner Meeting in Greece (May 2010) during which it was agreed that the two chosen training providers involved to run the test would be the French UCBL² and the Finnish Vierumäki.

A first attempt was made with these training providers during the summer 2010. Vierumäki and the rest of the partners realised that the programme run by the Finnish partner was not necessarily the closest one to the framework developed, since it was more orientated towards sporting activities rather than outdoor active leisure ones; further discussions lead to the decision that the second test would be run with the Hungarian Semmelweis university³ instead.

Discuss and agree a detailed plan to pilot the content of the Learning / Knowledge Outcomes and Competence Framework

The original work plan was to first collate the lists of learning outcomes acquired by students of the chosen training programmes from the 2 selected universities (from France and Hungary) and to then organise the translation into English of the main “items” or “modules” and if available “sub-modules” of the training programmes. The second step was then to identify the corresponding learning outcomes and their matching credits and, if available, to finally split these credits within 3 categories of learning efforts, that is to say “directed learning”, “self learning” and “work place learning”.

The next phase of this testing exercise was to compare the identified “modules” and match them with those developed by the CLO2 partners in order to check correspondence not only with the “module” contents but also with the identified credits and ideally with the various learning efforts acknowledged.

¹ Leonardo da Vinci Project – European Qualification Framework for Outdoor Animators (EQFOA) - www.eqfoa.eu

² See <http://deust.apn.univ-lyon1.fr/>

³ See <http://english.sote.hu/>

Finally the analysis of the testing exercise was to be presented within this report and lead to possible final adjustment of the framework if required.

Develop corresponding tools to conduct the pilot process

The tools required for the testing/piloting exercise, comprised mainly of the content of the training programmes themselves, elaborated and issued by the French and Hungarian training providers and hence the description of the corresponding learning outcomes delivered and acquired by the students after completion of the learning process.

The 2 universities and their respective outdoors training programmes involved in the “testing exercise” can be presented as follows:

The UCBL “DEUST”

The Université Claude Bernard - Lyon 1 (UCBL) is a French university that has developed in 1999 a degree called DEUST⁴ (Diplôme d’Etudes Universitaires Scientifiques et Techniques) which is a post “Baccalauréat” run over 2 years. It is a vocational degree offering direct access to the labour market and in our case to the outdoors. It is placed at a French NQF level 3, which corresponds to an **EQF Level 5 and it is worth 120 credits**.

Students can either join the university for two years and look for a company within which they find a job as a trainee and gain “workplace” experience or they can be employed by a company under the French national apprenticeship VET programme for a 2 year period; their employer then sends them to the university to follow the course on a part time study / part time work system. Whichever way is chosen by the students, they follow the same course at the university, which is the one that has been tested through the pilot.

On top of the “animator” training, the DEUST also includes quite a few hours of training in the field of “Management”.

In order to analyse what is comparable, the DEUST modules corresponding to “Management” have been **removed from the testing**; as per the functional map of the EQFOA and the Competence framework and Learning Outcome Framework developed by the CLO2 partners, only the “Animation”, that is to say the “deliver the service” aspect of the animator has been taken into account, although partners fully agree that an animator **may** do other things, such as participate in management, notably in SME’s.

The Semmelweis University “Recreation BSC” + “Outdoor animator” specialisation

In Hungary, the “animation training” programme developed by the Semmelweis university for outdoor animators, is run over 1 year only but is **exclusively available** to students holding a Bachelor degree (BSC) run over 3 years. It is perceived at national level as corresponding to a **Level 4/Level 5 EQF** although being worth 180

⁴ See <http://deust.apn.univ-lyon1.fr/>

credits for the bachelor and another 60 credits for the Outdoor specialisation, which **totals to 240 credits**.

As for the DEUST from France, the programme analysed (BSC) in Hungary includes other study areas than just “Animation”; but unlike DEUST, the Hungarian BSC includes a **rather large part dedicated to “Management”**. Similarly to the DEUST, the management modules of the BSC have therefore been removed from the test. The BSC management credits were worth nearly 50 credits.

The modules taken into account to run the Hungarian test is therefore worth a total of 190 credits, that is to say 130 for the BSC programme (180 – 50), plus an extra 60 credits for the specialisation as an outdoor animator.

Pilot the Learning Outcomes and Competence Framework with at least 2 training providers from 2 different EU countries

Level of training

The first points that could be drawn from the test in both cases were as follows:

The positioning of the outdoor animator at an EQF⁵ level 5 seems relevant in both cases; the DEUST is placed at NQF⁶ (fr) level 3 i.e.: level 5 EQF.

The quite comprehensive Hungarian course – split over two sets of programme –, is “evaluated” at level 4/5 EQF.

It seems however that the reasonably theoretical programme set by the Hungarians, in the light of the much stronger alternation system set both by the DEUST and the essence of the CLO2 vision clearly based on VET, may bring questions as to the “practical effectiveness” of the Hungarian animator “in the field” and hence may allow to evaluate him/her at a 4/5 EQF level. The volume of training however (240 credits) compensates this situation and it is reasonable to think that after a few months in activity, the holder of the Hungarian qualifications could in effect be employed at a level 5 EQF.

Duration and credit

The DEUST is, as mentioned, run over 2 years and is based upon 120 credits, which matches the theoretical approach – although backed up by very strong practical experience of the partners – envisaged by the CLO2 project. It also fits very well with the idea of alternating between work and lectures i.e.: “In the field” and “In the classroom” corresponding to the VET concept.

The BSC + animator programme presented, although including strong parts directly involved with the work place, is not built on a similar alternating method, making it, as mentioned above, a less “practical” training programme than the DEUST.

Once the 50 credits allocated to management issues are removed, it should be looked at more over 3 years, if we take into account the usual 1 year = 60 ECTS credits correspondence.

⁵ The European Qualification Framework – see http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc44_en.htm

⁶ National Qualification Framework

A first chart can consequently be drawn to sum up this presentation on level, duration and credit:

Name	Country	EQF Level	Duration in years	Credits	Theoretical/practical
CLO2	European	5 ⁷	2	120	++
DEUST	France	5	2	120	++
BSC + animator	Hungary	4/5 to 5	3	190	+

Correspondence of the modules

The CLO2 Learning Outcome Framework for outdoor animators built from the work based Competence Framework identified during the EQFOA project has been developed through 8 modules and 42 sub-modules (*see the full version of the Learning Outcome Framework itself for further details*).

The header titles of the 8 modules of Learning Outcomes are presented here under

Headings of the 8 Modules	Number of Credits	
	DEUST (France)	BSC+ (Hungary)
1. Animation skills	39	50
2. Safety management	11	16
3. Technical resources management	11	30
4. Regulation & management of safety	3	8
5. Pedagogical strategies	21	28
6. Work practice	20	22
7. Environment	8	16
8. Human components	7	20
TOTAL	120 cts	190 cts

In both cases (French and Hungarian), every single module found its correspondence within the framework of the CLO2; some discussions were required to ensure the correct understanding of the modules content, but the corresponding matching exercise was effectively made within the 8 modules of learning outcomes.

Of course, differences do exist in the timing and organisation of the lectures and/or in the organisation of practical experiences, as well as in the split of the modules. For instance, a French trainee may follow a lecture during the 1st term of his/her programme, where in Hungary an identical lecture would be addressed during say the 3rd one; a French student may follow 3 lectures in the “animation skills” (French system) module, where a Hungarian student will follow 5 lectures within a similar module (Hungarian system). Either way this has no effect on the final learning outcome.

⁷ Level 5 was chosen by the partnership as a starting point, though it was noted that significant numbers of partners had identified animator roles at lower EQF levels, and some above

The test did not investigate this issue further, since the main idea was to check whether the modules were addressed, **focusing on the fact that the minimum number of credits should be there**. It is of course down to each training provider to organise its programmes according to its own specifications, providing **the right learning outcomes are acquired at the right level**.

In fact it has always been clear amongst the partners that CLO2 was looking at **minimum standards at a minimum level and for a minimum amount of credits**, and **NOT** at setting a common training programme, that is to say a common qualification. Indeed, our objective was to develop a framework, outlining the minimum core skills and knowledge required to carry out the role of outdoor animator that should be flexible enough to allow individual European countries and training organisations to interpret and apply the model to their national systems

Further to this first analyse, a similar approach was run over the 42 sub-modules identified.

This exercise, it must be admitted, was a much more difficult one and deeper discussions with the representatives of the DEUST and the BSC + animator training programmes were required to assess the proper positioning of each sub-module in comparison with the CLO2 framework.

Moreover, as mentioned above, we were more interested in testing the learning outcomes resulting from the training programmes than the contents of the programmes themselves!

After lengthy discussions assessing “national learning outcomes” drawn from “programmes”, most of the sub-modules could be compared with those of the CLO2 framework.

Collate and analyse feedback from the pilot session

All in all, it can be said that the areas addressed through the modules of the tested programmes, whether in France or in Hungary, **match to the areas identified** by the CLO2 partners.

As for the sub-modules, although a few could not be identified as a strict equivalence due to the cultural dimension, the wording and/or the translation from French and Hungarian into English, **all the sub-modules have been identified** and allocated credits with both programmes in comparison to the CLO2 framework.

It must be admitted here, that a strict comparison between the CLO2 sub-modules and those of the French/Hungarian programmes could not be systematically made and presented within a “matching” chart; however, each sub-module of the national programmes were analysed and either allocated to one of the sub-modules of the CLO2 framework or split amongst 2, sometimes 3 different ones, the corresponding credits and when applicable “learning efforts” being split accordingly of course. Consequently, it can be said that the 2 programmes **correspond** and strongly match the CLO2 framework in terms of subjects and/or matter addressed, but are not necessarily **similar** in the wording/semantics used and/or their internal organisation and/or presentation.

Reproducing the discussions that lead to this “matching exercise” would have required the recording of hours of talks with each partner and many more hours of rewriting notes, which would be inappropriate compared to the objective of this exercise.

Once again, the essence of the exercise is the conclusions that can be drawn, including the slight reservations that have been presented.

The results of the testing were very positive and they can be summed up as follows:

- 1) As presented above, the minimum standard of 120 credits is matched;
- 2) As presented above, the minimum EQF level 5 is matched;
- 3) As presented above, the minimum time required for acquisition of 2 years post “A” level / Baccalauréat is matched;
- 4) As presented above, the principle of alternating between “lectures” and “work place” essential to match the VET requirements, is addressed and/or matched;
- 5) All modules included within the French and Hungarian programmes match those envisaged by the CLO2 partners;
- 6) All sub-modules of the national programmes, although requiring reorganisation within 1, 2 or sometimes 3 sub-modules of the CLO2 Framework have been matched to the CLO2 framework;
- 7) The minimum number of credits per modules and most sub-modules is matched.

Another final analyse of the two programmes tested, needs to be done.

The following chart has been produced by reducing the credit of the Hungarian BCS + Animator down to 120 credits, each credit of each module being reduced in a proportional way.

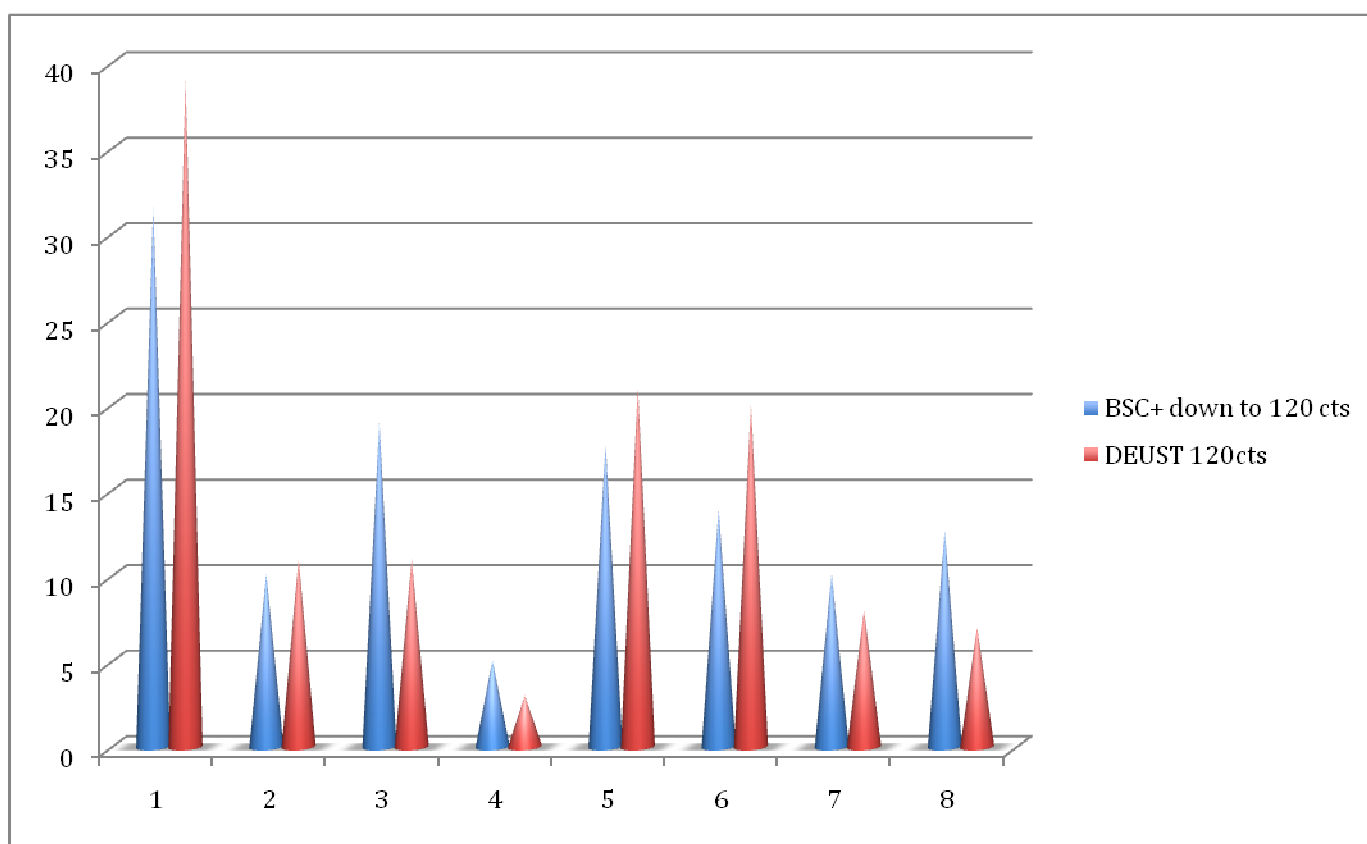
Comparison of DEUST and BSC+ at 120 crédits

	BSC+ 190 cts	BSC+ down to 120 cts	DEUST 120cts
Animation skills	50	32	39
Safety management	16	10	11
Technical resources management	30	19	11
Regulation & management of safety	8	5	3
Pedagogical strategies	28	18	21
Work practice	22	14	20
Environment	16	10	8
Human components	20	13	7
TOTAL credits	190	120	120

When comparing the 8 modules of each programme, it appears that the respective volume of each module is extremely similar from one programme to the other in terms of “weight” of each module in itself and also in terms of “weight” of each module in its proportion to each other.

This clearly shows that although the Hungarian training programme is worth 1.58 times more credit than the French DEUST (190/120), both approaches, **when compared at a similar scale of 120 credits**, are allocating **similar importance to similar modules**, in due proportion.

The chart below speaks for itself; it compares each module to the others on a “120 credit scale” and the similarity of the general patterns and trends of the graph is quite obvious.



Adjust the content of the Learning Outcomes and Competence Framework

As a conclusion, it can be said that the last two years of analysis and discussions have clearly lead to a Framework that is confirmed in its essence and in most of its formal presentation by the “test case” that has been run.

Although improvement is always possible, the Learning Outcome Framework produced by the CLO2 project should be kept as it is, in the light of the two tests organised.

However, from the point of view of the 120 credits mentioned above, the tests highlighted a need to **split credit** between each module and sub-module. This was confirmed by the **training hours** suggested by the two programmes analysed and

the consequent **confirmation of the possible split of credit** amongst the modules and sub-modules.

This “confirmation” of the possible split of credits highlighted by the test requires some explanation:

The tests gave indication of **the “directed learning” hours** corresponding to 1200 hours and a good idea of the split of these hours amongst the 42 sub-modules.

The exercise then consisted in evaluating for each sub-module, the hours of “**self learning**” and of “**workplace learning**” according to the following simple system:

First of all, the employers groups had worked independently to the training providers in evaluating for each sub-module, the different learning ways they thought were most appropriate. In order to easily track their assessment, they used a simple colour system: for each sub-module, a green square identified the fact that the employers thought the learning method concerned was the main – or substantial – one; when the employers thought that a learning process was bringing students “some” outcomes to a module, they marked it as “orange”; finally if they thought the learning process was not relevant or did not give students any significant competences, they marked it as “white”.

From this chart, the reference used was the “Directed Learning” hours which had hours allocated due to the test that was run.

When “directed learning” was indicated “green” that is to say when it was considered as the main way to acquire the learning outcomes corresponding to the sub-modules:

- if another learning process was “green”, the hours allocated were the same;
- if another learning process was “orange”, the hours allocated were halved;
- if another learning process was “white”, the hours allocated were brought to “0”;

when “directed learning” was marked “orange”:

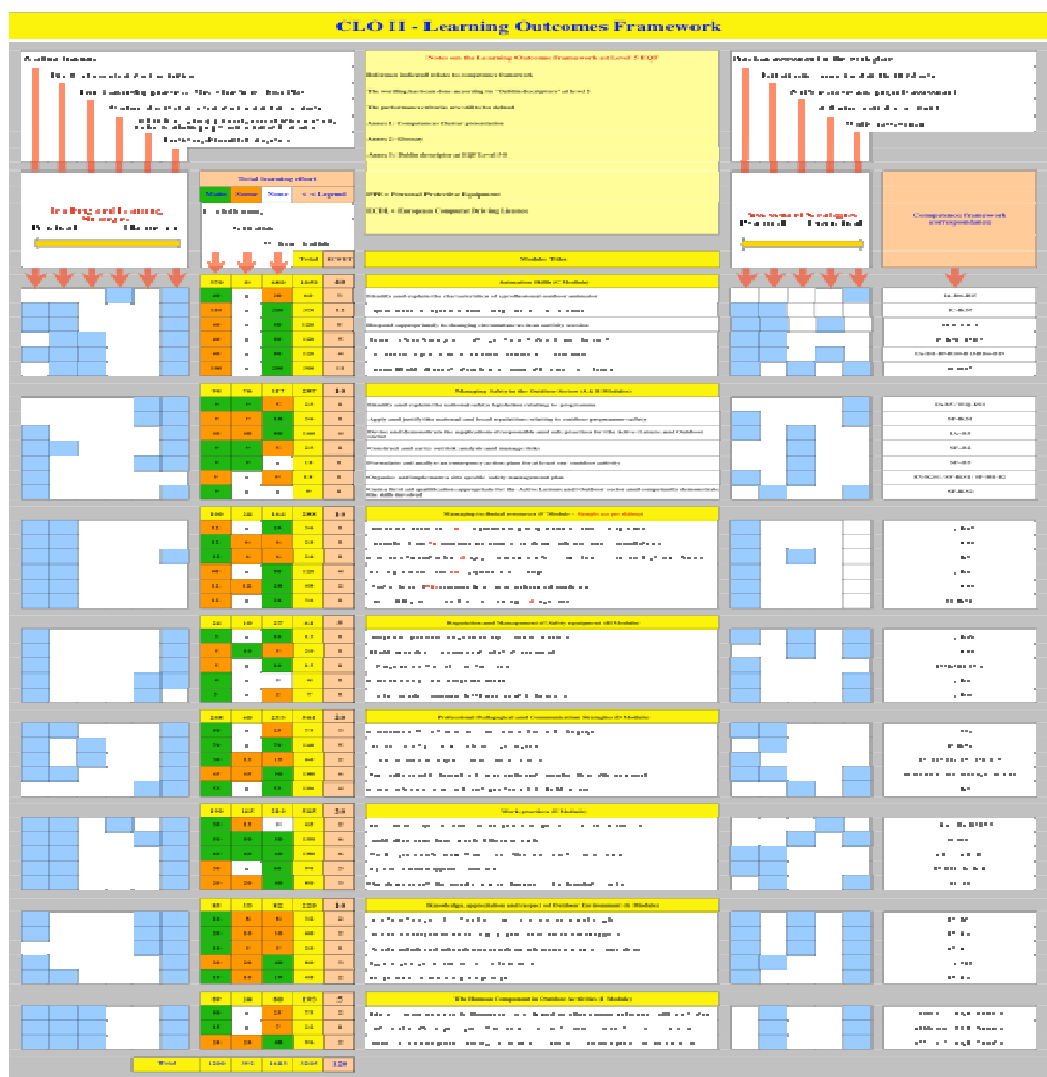
- if another learning process was “green”, the hours allocated were doubled;
- if another learning process was “orange”, the hours allocated were the same;
- if another learning process was “white”, the hours allocated were of course “0”;

Note: employers organisation never allocated “no learning” (white square) to any “Directed learning”.

The result of this exercise, lead to a chart presenting the modules as per the allocated “learning process” hours which looked as follows:

Very interestingly, the hours, once added, matched exactly those required for 4 semesters i.e.: two years of study and work placement, that is to say 3200 hours (excluding holidays).

The CLO2 framework therefore reads as follows:



Although the tests have brought further very interesting improvement in terms of split of credit amongst the sub-modules, it has not changed or altered the essence of the work done so far.

It can be said that the tests have brought improvement but that no element from the framework had to be removed or significantly altered.

As a consequence, the EQFOA Competence Framework that was used as a base for CLO2 and the Learning Outcome Framework that derived from it, can be kept as it stands for now.

Considering the elements in our possession at the present time, further improvement of the CLO2 framework would not be substantial if at all necessary.

The CLO2 management team would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in this process over the last 2 years.

PART 2 - ACCREDITATION AND VERIFICATION PROCESSES: PILOTING

Methodology

As identified in the accompanying paper, 'Accreditation and Verification Processes from a European Perspective for Outdoors Sector Vocational Education and Training', a range of processes may be used to accredit training providers who benchmark their training against CLO2's standards.

The word accreditation can cause some confusion. Within the world of vocational education and training (VET), accreditation can be associated with institutions, programmes, qualifications and even individuals. As well as European level accreditation processes, each partner country has its own national accreditation system. These are usually regulatory processes that a CLO2 'accreditation' process cannot exercise authority upon. Given this, it is useful to think of CLO2's accreditation process in a slightly different light. Any process recommended by the project needs to be a transparent layer through which other official accreditation systems can be viewed. An approval process with an external viewpoint (or measuring tool) is needed which allows the mapping of relevant aspects of training providers' programmes against the learning outcomes from CLO2. Where there is a match and a programme is successfully benchmarked against CLO2's standards, approval (or accreditation) can be given.

The paper also acknowledged the significant issue of who actually oversees the accreditation? The outdoors sector in Europe lacks a single body willing to represent all aspects of the outdoors equally and/or a willing and cooperative alliance of relevant organisations to provide this overseeing 'umbrella' function. This is a considerable hurdle, and one that any pilot must recognise and work with.

Given this, it was felt that the pilot should look towards the varied make up of the project partnership for a solution. The work package leader for the pilot has a relatively unique position, whereby it is an integral cog within its home nations' accreditation mechanisms. Specifically, it holds the authority to approve vocational qualifications for entry onto national qualification frameworks, as part of an in-depth and rigorous national qualification accreditation system.

In addition to this, the CLO2 partnership was made up three distinct groupings of partners:

1. Employer/deployer representative unions
2. Key sector European level organisations
3. Training providers

The first two groups were fully involved in the refining of the competence framework and the subsequent validation of the learning outcomes that evolved from this framework. With this work in mind, it is reasonable to state that collectively these groupings can act as the 'overseeing endorsement body' for the purposes of the pilot.

This then left the training providers to act as the physical test bed for the accreditation processes themselves. The Sport Institute of Finland (SIF) and Lithuanian Academy of Physical Education (LAPE) were selected to trial and report on their experiences. Both are exemplar institutions with significant experience of accreditation of active leisure and learning activities at the national level.

Geographically and culturally, the two providers have some similarities whilst being sufficiently different to allow meaningful comparison of their respective accreditation experiences.

Accreditation Process Pilots

The key accreditation processes proposed were assessed by the Sport Institute of Finland and the Lithuanian Academy of Physical Education. Both institutes compared in practice how these models fit to the Finnish and Lithuanian national requirements, and also what are the benefits and strengths of each. The findings are presented in the tables below.

A detailed methodology for each of the pilots is presented in the CLO2 paper 'Accreditation and Verification Processes from a European Perspective for Outdoors Sector Vocational Education and Training'. This paper was used as a methodological guide by SIF and LAPE to assist with the management of both the detail and the practical elements of the pilots.

In all, the selected training providers were asked to look at three different methods of accreditation:

1. The 2009 Cedefop model
2. A proposed CLO2 specific model
3. A Peer Review model

Here are the findings.

Pilot One – Sport Institute Finland

Please see the table on pages 17 and 18 for a brief summary of SIF's views on the suggested accreditation processes.

SIF found that all three of the processes had the potential to be workable within a CLO2 style outdoors context. Each had its own strengths and weaknesses, and any final model put forward for further development and adoption should acknowledge this.

Cedefop model

As a paradigm European model published by a respected body, this has wide acceptance across the EU. SIF found the model easy to understand and to implement, particularly given the increasing amount of advice, support and experience available to call upon.

By default, an established European level model makes a significant contribution to cross-border communication on vocational education and training (VET). As this outcome is expected of CLO2 at sectoral level, it would be foolish to dismiss the Cedefop work.

SIF found that the pilot artificially reduced their involvement in the early planning stages within a Cedefop style model. Assessment criteria must be clearly communicated in good time to allow an early self-assessment of the training programme element to be assessed. This was not possible within the pilot.

CLO2 model

The mapping exercise built into the CLO2 model proved to be extremely useful in allowing a training provider to analyse 'gaps' in their programme against the CLO2 standards. This could help to support appropriate future programme development if desired.

The pilot was easy to implement, although it was recognised that this could in part be due to SIF's substantial involvement in CLO2 and its predecessor project. SIF did find that the model worked better on generic aspects of the benchmarked programme. National and environmental specificities such as animation learning outcomes relating to the Finnish winter environment did not mesh easily with the model. On a pan-European scale, this would require further development to overcome.

SIF felt that the model would help to promote further co-operation between training providers and relevant organisations that might make up an accreditation body, but that further development work was still needed. Accreditation costs have not been investigated or tested by the pilot, and there was a stated concern that unreasonable and out of proportion costs would be off-putting.

Peer Review model

Peer Review works particularly well as an accreditation process within Finland, in part due to its recognition by the Finnish Board of Education. Given the previously discussed issue of 'CLO2 accreditation' needing to complement existing, often statutory national systems, this comprehension is beneficial.

As a training provider seeking to continually improve its offer, SIF appreciated the developmental environment encouraged through Peer Review. "Learning by doing" was cited as being a particular bonus, as was working with like-minded training bodies within the sector.

Peer Review though is not as widely accepted at the European level as some models. This was felt to be a disadvantage, although all new initiatives have to start somewhere – look at the Euro!

Please go to page 19 for details of the Lithuanian pilot.

**PILOT EXPERIENCES - ACCREDITATION & VERIFICATION PROCESS
SPORT INSTITUTE OF FINLAND**

ACCREDITATION & VERIFICATION MODEL	PILOT ASSESSMENT	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OTHER REMARKS
General EU: CEDEFOP's 2009 Model	A fundamental document for use at the European level.	A good model to follow for the quality assurance of VET work. Easy to understand and implement. More widely accepted.	The training provider must be involved early in the accreditation process to allow sufficient preparation & self-assessment against predetermined criteria.	EU models make a significant contribution to the ease of international communication.
CLO2 Model	<p>The mapping exercise showed the differences between the SIF training programme (VET / level IV) and the CLO2 model.</p> <p>The model shows where the existing training programme needs updating.</p> <p>Offers an international perspective for programme accreditation</p> <p>In Finland, the status can only be based on quality; the official accreditor is the Finnish Board of Education.</p>	<p>The assessment aspect worked very well.</p> <p>Mapping & assessment provide a means to allow the SIF programme to be updated and implemented.</p> <p>Detailed accreditation model, which was very easy to pilot.</p>	<p>There are national aspects to the SIF training programme which cannot be evaluated easily at an international level.</p> <p>The status offered by the accreditation can only relate to quality, and can therefore only be used for marketing purposes.</p>	<p>Future co-operation with partners is essential.</p> <p>Further development work is needed.</p> <p>The costs for the accreditation should be reasonable and proportional.</p>

ACCREDITATION & VERIFICATION MODEL	PILOT ASSESSMENT	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OTHER REMARKS
Peer Review Model	<p>This model is used widely for VET in Finland.</p> <p>The Finnish Board of Education encourages the use of this model.</p>	<p>Recognition by the official Finnish accreditation body.</p> <p>Promotes aspects of development.</p> <p>Learning by doing.</p> <p>Self assessment.</p> <p>Ongoing co-operation and networking with peers.</p>	Not widely in use yet	Good materials relating to Peer Review are available in Finnish.

Pilot Two – Lithuanian Academy of Physical Education

Please see the table on page 20 for a brief summary of LAPE's views on the suggested accreditation processes.

LAPE echoed many of SIF's comments. The following comments relate more to the specifics of the Lithuanian experience within the pilot.

Cedefop model

Although wide EU acceptance is a good thing, it can sometimes be at the expense of small sectors and/or countries where a 'one size fits all' approach may not work smoothly. Taking an alternative viewpoint, common language and principles can help small sectors such as the outdoors to adopt accreditation, particularly given the lack of resource and experience available to create sector specific solutions.

CLO2 model

As with SIF, LAPE was very aware that they already operate within a national accreditation system. It was felt that the CLO2 model could work within this landscape, but that it must be seen to add 'value' both from the training provider's and employer's outlook. Equally, this could also apply to the learner.

The pan-European element was welcomed by LAPE at outdoor sector level. The specificity of the model suited outdoor training programmes, and could be seen to be ultimately contributing to sector staff mobility through an accredited recognition.

Conversely, LAPE highlighted the need for this accreditation process to be seen in context. It could not replace or overrule the statutory national system, and therefore was best used as a marketing tool for a sector-specific audience.

The accreditation process encouraged staff to identify gaps within the training programme. This was felt to enhance the process and for it to be seen as a significant development tool.

As with SIF, LAPE would need to consider the cost of accreditation and reflect on whether or not it added sufficient value to their programme to justify the resource allocation required for a meaningful commitment to the model. A query was raised about who would be doing the accrediting. As previously highlighted, this is an obvious and significant flaw that must be addressed for the sector before any proposed accreditation process could be embraced.

Peer Review model

The Peer Review accreditation process is in wide use within Lithuania's higher education institutions, and also more significantly for the CLO2 project its vocational education and training field. As with Finland, it is a recognised process supported by Lithuania's official higher education accreditor - the Centre for Quality Assessment in HE.

LAPE found the involvement in the self-assessment process empowering for staff, and the feedback from partnered training providers was extremely useful for programme development. On the negative side, there were concerns raised by LAPE staff about the potential subjectivity that could be prevalent amongst a peer group.

**PILOT EXPERIENCES - ACCREDITATION & VERIFICATION PROCESS
LITHUANIAN ACADEMY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

ACCREDITATION & VERIFICATION MODEL	PILOT ASSESSMENT	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OTHER REMARKS
General EU: CEDEFOP's 2009 Model	A significant development that cannot be ignored.	Wide acceptance makes for easier implementation. Promotes uniform accreditation principles across sectors.	A 'one size fits all' approach can sometimes be inflexible to specific sectoral or national needs.	A common accreditation 'language'.
CLO2 Model	A good platform for refining training programmes to meet end user (employer) needs. Introduces a pan-European accreditation option to the outdoor sector in Lithuania. In Lithuania the official accreditor is the Centre for Quality Assessment in HE. This model must be seen to complement/add value to this body's process.	Sector specific. Very easy to administer within the pilot. Allowed a gap analysis of the relevant training programmes to identify areas for improvement and development. Encourages sector mobility.	Concern about the strength and recognition of the accreditation status. How much would accreditation cost? Who would be responsible for accrediting?	Acknowledgement that this is a prototype requiring further development. A national standard is being developed.
Peer Review Model	Wide use within both VET and HE in Lithuania. Official recognition.	Recognition by Lithuania's official accreditation body. Peer review is based on programme self assessment. Empowering.	The issue of subjectivity exists.	Wide use and recognition at the national level beneficial.

Conclusions

Employers and deployers of paid and voluntary staff will not wish to be entrenched in the detail of accreditation processes. As a group they will be more interested in knowing about the employer input into the training standards via the initial competence framework, and will wish to feel assured that this follows through to the award of any accreditation mark. It is this assurance that makes the end result of the accreditation process (an appropriately benchmarked training programme) so critical.

The pilots have highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of three different accreditation processes. All have potential to work within an outdoor sector VET scenario, although consideration must be given to selecting a 'best fit' for the sector: currently, no single process is deemed 'perfect'.

Both training providers felt that accreditation helped to contribute to positive programme evolution, although elements of some accreditation processes were better at this than others. Given that ongoing improvement –the kaizen principle - is a good thing, this subsidiary benefit of accreditation cannot, and should not be ignored.

A major factor for the ultimate success of any accreditation process is the authority and credibility of the accrediting body. As identified by Cedefop, and discussed in the previous paper (Accreditation and Verification Processes from a European Perspective for Outdoors Sector Vocational Education and Training):

“...there must be two different parties involved in this process: the VET provider and an external body which is recognised to perform the external assessment and to award accreditation as a result of (positive) evaluation.” Cedefop, 2009.

Currently within the European outdoor sector this is a vacuous area, with no one body being able to claim the mandate of the European outdoor sector as defined and used in CLO2 and its forerunning project EQFOA (European Qualification Framework outdoor animator, 2006-8). Given the reliance on an overseeing group to refine, maintain and promote accreditation of the CLO2 standards, its representative make-up is critical. In the eyes of the sector, a body with the widest outdoor representation would be well placed to add value to existing statutory accreditation schemes.

This probable impediment should be viewed as one of a number of potential development areas for future work to focus on. A valid accreditation process is key to the CLO2 standards becoming widely accepted and integrated into outdoor animation training programmes across Europe. The accreditation research and pilots within the CLO2 project have made a significant contribution to establishing what could work, but have also emphasised those areas that require further graft to get it right.

References

Cedefop, 2009, Accreditation and quality assurance in vocational education and training. Available from the internet; www.cedefop.eu/publications