

Chapter 12

Assessment as Learning: A Model of the Entrepreneurial Competence Assessment in Initial Vocational–Technical Schools

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ABSTRACT

There are three types of assessment: assessment for learning, assessment of learning, and assessment as learning. Assessment as learning refers to the use of ongoing self-assessment, reflection, and deeper understanding. Within the entrepreneurial program of the initial vocational-technical schools, the role of assessment refers to the facilitation of the students' personality (commitment to self-assessment; tolerance to ambiguity, uncertainty, as well as creativity, self-reliance, adaptability, motivation to excel, leadership) that are expected to line skills for a successful entrepreneurial competence. This chapter analyzes the specific features of the assessment model for entrepreneurial education programs. The core of the model is an instructional dynamic and flexible strategy, based on integration formative and summative assessment. Thus, the course in entrepreneurial competence is divided into three modules. The finality of each module is measured by formative computer-based assessment tests.

INTRODUCTION

Our planet inundates with various types of data and intelligent digital technologies that change how we leaned and communicated a short time ago. What we are seeing now is only the beginning. Futurists argue that by 2025, we will lose over five million jobs to automation. Most of the actual automatic machines and tools did not even exist 15 years ago. Therefore, technological advances manifest themselves in economic and educational models, with the latest cutting-edge developments ever more quickly permeating students' behavior within learning (i.e. descriptors, learning outcomes, etc.).

New technologies that seemed unimaginable in the past are commonplace now and are playing an increasingly important role in initial vocational education and training programs. All these innovations require futuristic thinking in the development of successful strategies for training, learning, and assessment. In near future, the intelligence of the digital technologies will increase the speed and the performance currently required in many jobs and, therefore, jobs will look vastly different even by the time of graduation of the current students. On the one hand, the long-term programs for entrepreneurial education offer a range of possibilities to facilitate commitment to self-assessment, tolerance to ambiguity, uncertainty, as well as creativity, self-reliance, adaptability, motivation to excel, leadership, etc. On the other hand, programs for entrepreneurial competencies line the neural behavior of current students.

In Europe, the initial training in vocational-technical schools curricula needs to accomplish the EQF standards. Initial vocational education and training (I-VET) are usually carried out at the upper secondary level before students begin working life. It takes place either in a school-based environment (mainly in the classroom) or in a work-based setting, such as training centers and companies. One of the priorities is to develop quality assurance mechanisms in VET in line with the Recommendations of the European Parliament and the council (EU, 2019). According to these recommendations, the VET framework should comprise a quality assurance and improvement cycle of planning, implementation, evaluation/assessment and review/revision of VET, supported by common quality criteria, indicative descriptors, and indicators. (EUR-LEX, 2019). Currently, the common quality criteria are the competence pedagogy and learning outcomes as indicative descriptors of VET education and training.

In our understanding, the term “learning outcomes” refer to the self-regulation of learning and communication capacity through life. Instead of data, acquired by the summative assessment tests, the instructional design based on learning outcomes should articulate how students will be able to employ the material in the various contexts, environments and problem-solving for timely situations. Thus, the learning outcomes design embodies a common desire of most teachers in VET. Instead, once the business environment has set already the intelligent technologies for workplaces, VET pedagogy needs to take solid actions and follow these realities. Moreover, once the impact of digital technologies on jobs is crucial, skills proved by immediate feedback become more important than the structure of the competence.

How the current students of vocational education and training programs will work in an environment where smarter technologies exist? What competencies are required? How to assist, measure, and test the academic progress in life-long skills acquisitions? How “to integrate” skills development within the capacity to self-regulate learning? These are only a small amount of the research questions of pedagogy for vocational education and training programs. A specific issue for all these questions is the model of assessment, measurement, and testing in vocational-technical schools.

The general perspective of this chapter is to describe the impact of digital spillovers on I-VET education.

This research aims to support a broader initiative that will explore the possibility of developing a global approach on assessment as learning for the improvement of initial vocational education and train-

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