



## B. BECOME LICENSED

- To be able to offer a programme of study one must become licensed as a service provider.
- This licence is issued by the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE), the national authority responsible for the licensing of service providers and accreditation of programmes of study.
- Unlike past practices where the licence depended on the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) regulations, nowadays, the licence also depends on the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE) regulations, where a licence is only issued by the Commission for an education service provider when all the requirements for provider and programme accreditation are met.
- The licence can only be issued upon satisfying the standard criteria set for the following:
  - Accredited programme/s the institution is willing to offer,
  - The qualifications of the head of school and the academic staff,
  - The premises in which tuition or training will take place based on policies set by the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA),
  - The internal quality assurance system.
- The following are the different licence categories that one can apply for:
  - Further Education Centre
  - Further Education Institution
  - Higher Education Institution
  - University



## WHOM SHALL ONE CONSULT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

The National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE) for information on the accreditation of programme/s of study and licensing.  
Send an e-mail to [ncfhe@gov.mt](mailto:ncfhe@gov.mt) or visit our website on: [www.ncfhe.org.mt](http://www.ncfhe.org.mt)

More specifically refer to the *ECVET Conversion Manual* that offers guidance on how to design a programme of study compliant with national regulations. This Manual provides a comprehensive walk through on the inter-related processes involved, and instructions on how to design a programme of study. The Manual is downloadable from: [www.ecvetmalta.org.mt](http://www.ecvetmalta.org.mt) or visit NCFHE premises for a hard copy of the *ECVET Conversion Manual*. The Manual was produced through a European Union co-funded project aimed at introducing, testing and implementing ECVET in Malta in collaboration with eight project partners.



ECVET  
Malta

  
Just start delivering tuition or training the way you want it. Then simply undertake an aggressive marketing strategy full of gimmicks to attract applicants.

I would like to start offering a programme of study. But how shall I go about it? From where should I start? What does ECVET have to do with this?

  
Choose the right way immediately. Make sure that you abide by National laws and regulations on education provision. Abiding by National laws on education implies that the services you shall be offering satisfy quality standards, and that the programme/s of study is/are accredited and recognised at a national level by the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE).  
**I WILL GUIDE YOU THROUGH!**



Background  
Introduction



## FIRST OF ALL, WHAT IS ECVET AND WHAT DOES IT HAVE TO DO WITH NATIONAL REGULATIONS ON FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION PROVISION?

ECVET is a European tool which stands for **European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training**. It is a transparent credit system for Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications. On parallel lines to the ECTS credit system for academic higher education which is endorsed at a European wide level, the ECVET credit system has been designed for vocational education and training. With a common European vocational and academic credit system, a person can build a qualification progressively which can be recognised at a European wide level enhancing permeability, student mobility, and ultimately employee mobility across Europe. Hence the aim of the ECVET credit system for vocational education and training is to create vocational qualifications that are transparent, comparable and transferable from one learning context to another both locally and abroad.

ECVET as a credit system does not involve just one process; that of allocating ECVET points to VET qualifications. It should be seen as a tool involving multiple inter-dependent processes that lead to a student-centered educational approach through the creation of qualifications that are transparent, comparable and transferable. Essentially, all the processes involved ensure quality at each level of further and higher education. These processes have become part of Malta's National regulations for the accreditation of programmes. A license is issued to the prospective service providers. This further strengthens the relationship between ECVET and national regulations on Further and Higher Education.



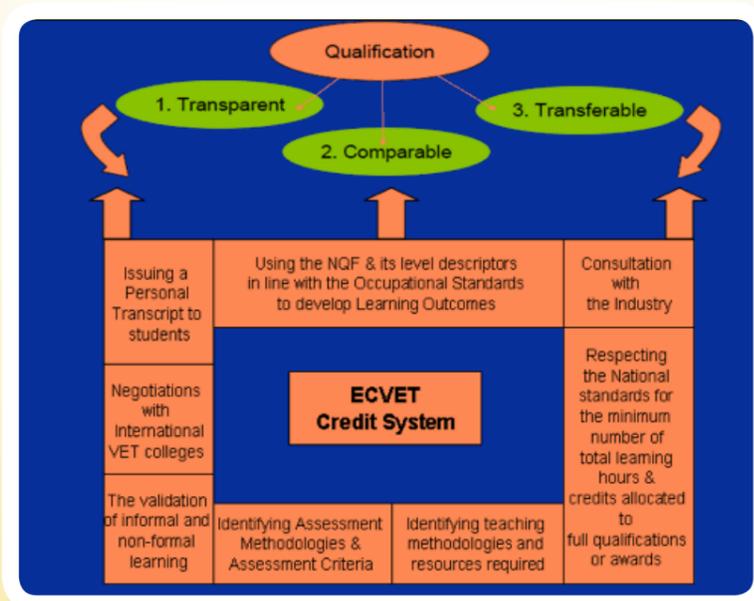
## WHAT ARE THE ECVET NECESSARY CONDITIONS?

The following are the necessary conditions of ECVET:

A programme of study leading to a full qualification or award should be structured in **study units** also referred to as modules. Each and every study unit should be described in terms of **learning outcomes** that are statements of what a learner **knows, understands, and is able to do** at the end of a learning process. Study units described in the learning outcomes approach should be given additional information in a numerical form, representing the weight of the learning outcomes in a qualification by assigning **ECVET points**. Predefined **teaching methodologies, assessment methodologies** and **grading criteria** are also part of this system. If, through assessment one proves that s/he has achieved the predefined learning outcomes, the ECVET points for the study units achieved would turn into ECVET credits. ECVET credits are then **transferred** and **accumulated** to a person's personal transcript. On the basis of the learning outcomes approach, the assessed outcomes and their credit can be **validated** and **recognised** by another competent institution locally or abroad. **Informal and non-formal learning** is to be validated and be given credit based on predefined testing methodologies by authorised professional and competent bodies. There are other conditions that form part of the ECVET system, and they essentially represent mechanisms aimed at student mobility. These include the mechanisms for a service provider to make negotiations with other service providers locally or abroad through a **memorandum of understanding**, designing a personalised **learning agreement** between the student and the institutions involved (the hosting and the home institution). Finally, an institution has to have mechanisms to provide a personal transcript to all students who successfully finish their studies, documenting what the learner has achieved.

Refer to the ECVET-Malta website for more details on the ECVET tool on [www.ecvetmalta.org.mt](http://www.ecvetmalta.org.mt)

Refer to the published material on ECVET downloadable from the above mentioned website.



Checklist of the processes involved when planning to provide tuition or training at Further or Higher level based on national laws, policies, and procedures.



## A. GET YOUR PROGRAMMES ACCREDITED

- Accrediting a programme involves a systematic process.
- Consultation is made with NCFHE in order to guide prospective applicants. This assists a prospective service provider plan a programme of study based on national standards and criteria.
- After consultation with NCFHE, a service provider is to start planning the programme of study. One is to become familiarised with the information provided on the National system for the accreditation of Further and Higher Education programmes of study. The service provider is to understand the Malta Qualifications Framework which is a hierarchical representation of all recognised qualifications in Malta and its level descriptors. For further guidance on programme design processes reference should be made to the published material by NCFHE.
- The service provider is to draw up the curriculum plan. In order to plan well, one should imagine the end product so as to determine the means to that end. The service provider should establish the sector and career area of the qualification and assign to it a name/title. The duration of the programme and the MQF level of the qualification based on the MQF level descriptors should also be ascertained at this stage.
- There are several types of programmes of study categories:
  - Further Education Programme (MQF 1-4 – Full Qualification)
  - Further Education Module (MQF 1-4 – Award -part of a full programme)
  - Higher Education Programme (MQF 5-8 – Full Qualification)
  - Higher Education Module (MQF 5-8 – Award -part of a full programme)
  - Approved Foreign Further Education Programme
  - Approved Foreign Higher Education Programme
- After the determination of the programme category, one should start drafting the learning outcomes of the programme of study, based on the level descriptors making reference to occupational standards pegged to the level of training the service provider is willing to offer. The service provider should identify areas in the programme of study which will be covering the Key Competences, Sectoral Skills, and Underpinned Knowledge.
- One should consult with industry to identify current and future industry needs to help design programme/s of study/ training that meets the industry's needs.
- Having decided the name and title of the qualification together with the MQF level of the programme of study, the service provider should structure the programme into study units/ modules.
- The training provider should allocate points to each study unit based on the national credit system (ECVET for vocational education and training or ECTS for academic higher education). This is based on the National system of 1 credit = 25 hours of total learning for both ECVET and ECTS, and based on the minimum number of hours and credit assigned to each level of qualification or award on the MQF. For higher education qualifications, Malta fully endorses the Bologna Process European Credit System.
- One is to indicate the entry requirements for the programme of study. Reference is to be made to the MQF for setting realistic entry requirements.
- The training provider should start developing ideas on teaching and assessment methodologies, considering grading criteria. One should be creative but realistic.
- The service provider is to identify whether the necessary resources are mobilized in order to provide tuition, subject to quality standards.
- One should make plans on internal quality assurance and external quality assurance measures
- Based on consultation with NCFHE, the thorough guidelines provided and the plans, ideas, research and consultation with key stakeholders, one should start compiling the Application Form for the Accreditation of a National Qualification.
- The general details of the institution are required.
- The general course description is also required such as the title of the course, the qualification, the sectoral field and career area.
- The application form reserves a separate section for each study unit of the full qualification or award.
- The learning outcomes structured into knowledge, skills, and competences should be written down for each study unit. The distribution of the total learning hours and ECVET points (or ECTS) allocated to each study unit as well as the full qualification (or award) should also be indicated.
- Other features such as the teaching and assessment methodologies, reading list, academic experience/background and training of tutors should also be stated.
- Together with the above information, the description of Quality Assurance standards to be used are also required.
- NCFHE evaluates the application. If successful, accreditation is granted.