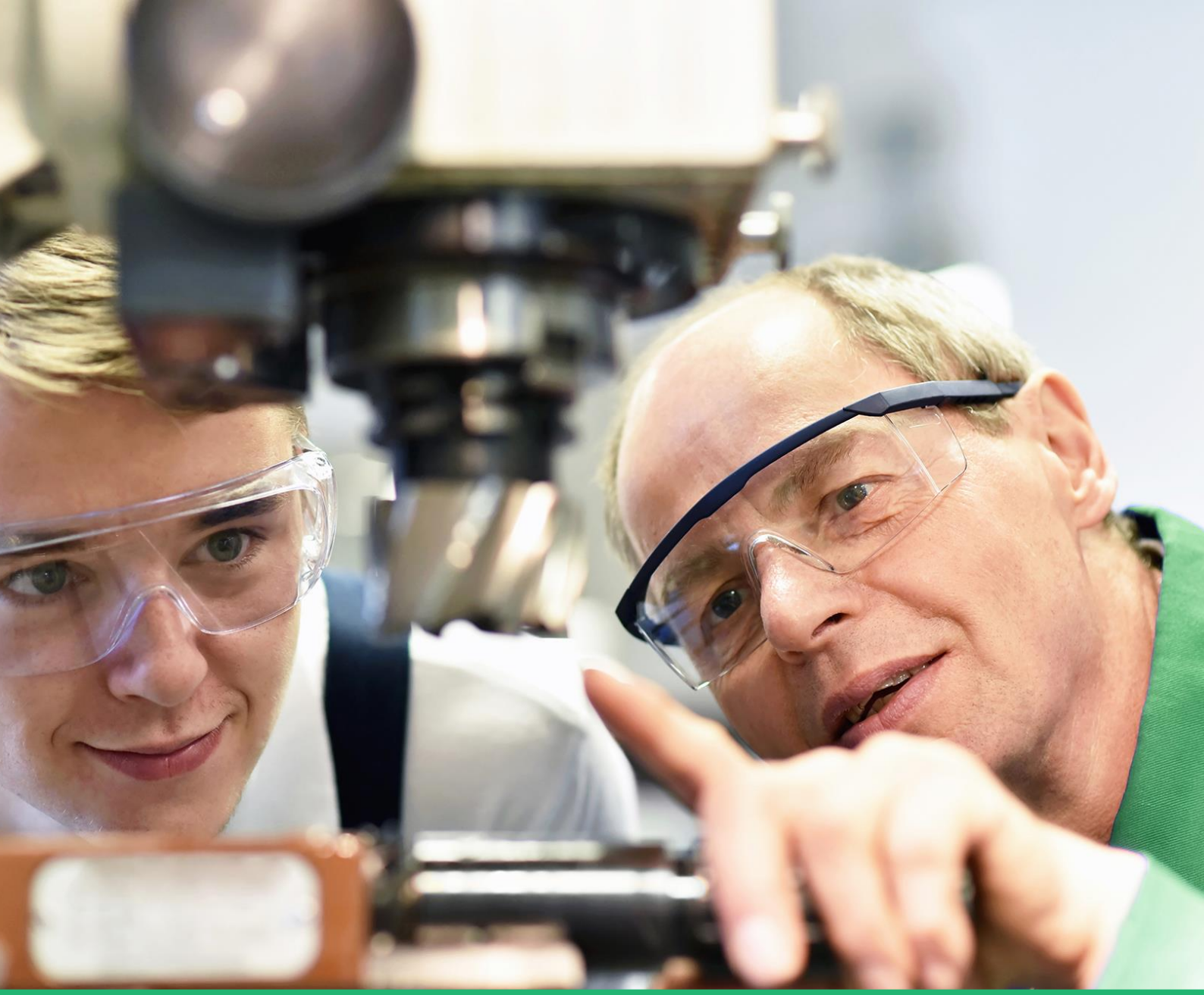

VET21001 Report

Development of the Rules for an Accredited Certification Scheme for ISO 21001-EQAVET integrated systems (VET21001 Protocol)

V2

VET21001

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Table of Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Context

VET21001[1] is an applied research project, designed to respond to the problem of the low European Quality Assurance Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET)[2] adoption since 2009 and is funded by the ERASMUS+ Programme, in the framework of the European priorities (European Union, 2019)

- Sustainable investment, quality and efficiency of education, training and youth systems: supporting the development of evidence-based policies and reforms that aim at delivering quality education and training more efficiently;
- Increasing the quality in VET through the establishment of feedback loops to adapt VET provision, in line with the Recommendation on the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET).

VET21001 has the **Mission** to

- contribute to a self-sustainable market dynamics, conducive to a widen adoption of the EQAVET criteria (VET21001 Consortium, 2019a).

and the **Vision** to

- contribute to the continuous improvement of European VET and HVET services and its worldwide recognition as a brand of excellence (VET21001 Consortium, 2019a).

To accomplish its mission and achieve its vision, the project includes five intellectual outputs:

IO1	Gap analyses of EQAVET Adoption
IO2	Competence Profiles for EQAVET Professionals
IO3	Rules for an EQAVET Accredited Certification Scheme
IO4	"Mastering EQAVET" Curricula
IO5	"VET21001" - A Standardised Toolkit for easy EQAVET integrated implementation

The relationship between these intellectual outputs is illustrated in figure 1 at the next page. This report describes the development of intellectual output 3 "Rules for an EQAVET Accredited Certification Scheme".

[1] At the application phase, the project was named »EQAVET+«. It was re-named VET21001 after approval, by request of the European Commission. See details here.

[2] EQAVET first emerged from the 2009 Recommendation of the European Parliament and Council, which invited Member States to use indicative descriptors and indicators to strengthen the quality of VET provision. It was meanwhile substituted by the 2020 Recommendation on vocational education and training for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience. The VET Recommendation describes how EQAVET can be used to strengthen the quality of initial and continuing VET and presents the complete EQAVET framework.

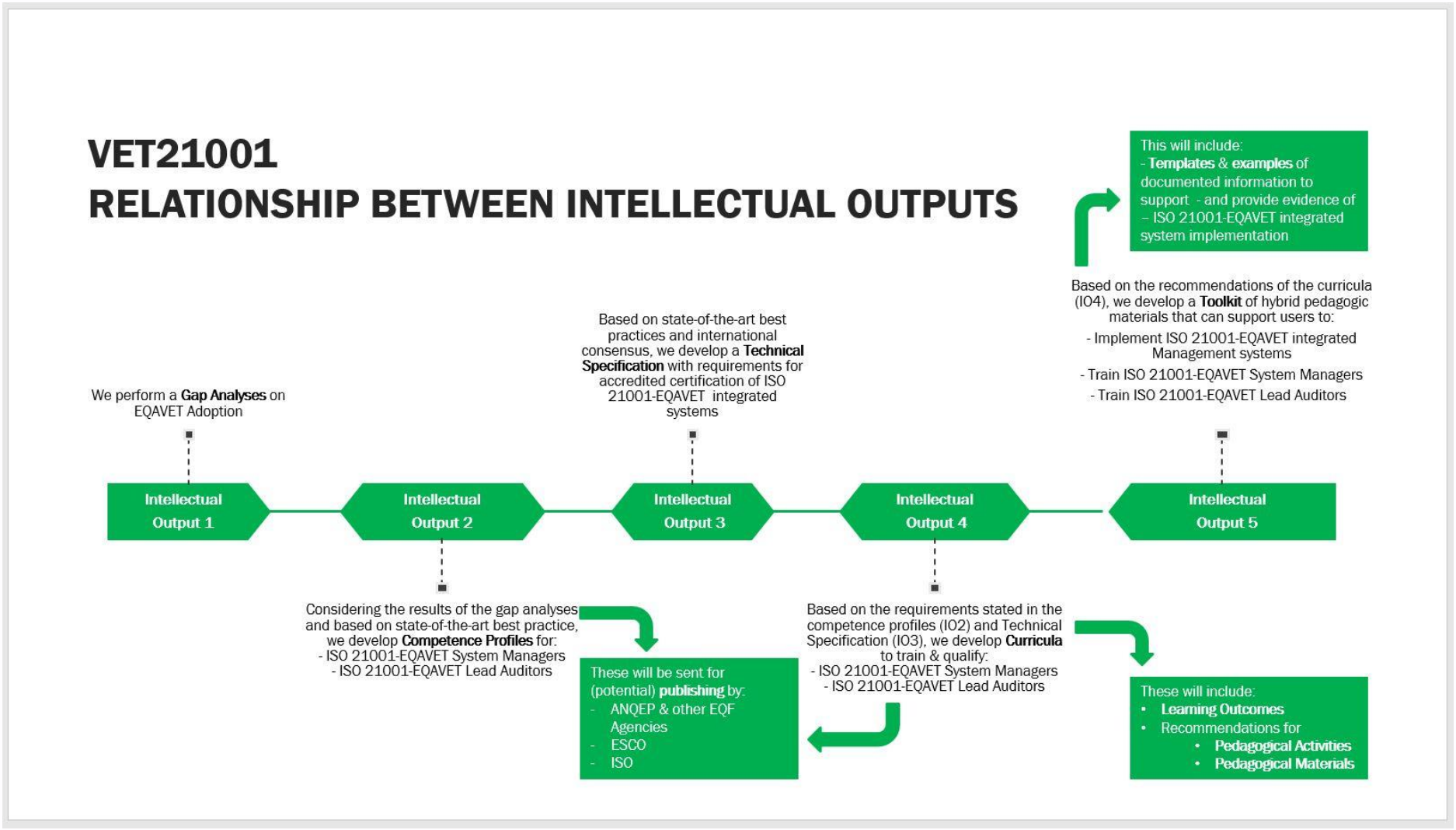
VET21001
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTELLECTUAL OUTPUTS
We perform a Gap Analyses on EQAVET Adoption
Based on state-of-the-art best practices and international consensus, we develop a Technical Specification with requirements for accredited certification of ISO 21001-EQAVET integrated systems
This will include:
- Templates & examples of documented information to support - and provide evidence of – ISO 21001-EQAVET integrated system implementation
Based on the recommendations of the curricula (IO4), we develop a Toolkit of hybrid pedagogic materials that can support users to:
- Implement ISO 21001-EQAVET integrated Management systems
- Train ISO 21001-EQAVET System Managers
- Train ISO 21001-EQAVET Lead Auditors
Intellectual Output 1
Intellectual Output 2
Intellectual Output 3
Intellectual Output 4
Intellectual Output 5
Considering the results of the gap analyses and based on state-of-the-art best practice, we develop Competence Profiles for:
- ISO 21001-EQAVET System Managers
- ISO 21001-EQAVET Lead Auditors
These will be sent for (potential) publishing by:
- ANQEP & other EQF Agencies
- ESCO
- ISO
Based on the requirements stated in the competence profiles (IO2) and Technical Specification (IO3), we develop Curricula to train & qualify:
- ISO 21001-EQAVET System Managers
- ISO 21001-EQAVET Lead Auditors
These will include:
• Learning Outcomes
• Recommendations for
• Pedagogical Activities
• Pedagogical Materials

Figure 1

1.2 Initial aims and objectives

VET21001 Intellectual Output 3 (IO3) was designed to respond directly to one of the causes of the low EQAVET adoption problem - namely, the non-integration of EQAVET Criteria in the Qualification (Conformity Assessment) national quality infrastructures – by developing a technical document (the VET21001 Protocol) with the rules for an accredited certification scheme for EQAVET. It planned to offer this document to the institutions of the national, regional and global quality infrastructures, with the following objectives (VET21001 Consortium, 2019a, 2019b):

- To stimulate the launching of national accredited certification schemes for EQAVET.
- To contribute to internationalize European branded products such as EQF and EQAVET;
- To stimulate the publication of an ISO 17021-x standard with the consensually agreed rules for accredited certification for joint ISO 21001-EQAVET educational management systems;
- To facilitate peer-recognition between European and non-European VET, HVET/PHE providers.

The rational for this, as explained at the application (VET21001 Consortium, 2019b), was:

> *"Although the EQAVET criteria was published as an European Recommendation a decade ago, so far no accredited certification scheme has been published based on it. In the consortium understanding, based on market experience with other quality standards, this is one of the causes of its lower adoption. Accredited certifications schemes have the power to boost the market as they provide implementers with a tool for public recognition of their efforts and by involving other actors - certification bodies and accreditation bodies - the dissemination of the standard in which the accredited certification scheme is based is increased.*
>
> *For this reason, by developing a technical document with the rules for such accredited certification scheme for EQAVET, the consortium is trying, with this intellectual output, to proactively contribute to kick-off such market. The technical document developed will be delivered to the relevant stakeholders who have the authority to adopt it, publish it, disseminate it and exploit it, taking this project output to the next level, both at national and international levels. By involving Associated partners inserted in European and International networks, whom will support the project by disseminating its intellectual outputs, the infrastructure for easy transferability is assured, being a question of translations in different languages."*

Therefore, the consortium envisioned attempting to publish the (to-be-developed) VET21001 Protocol as a formal[3] standardization document by exploring the synergies of the EQAVET Recommendation with ISO 21001, the first ISO management system standard for education. This standard was published in 2018 containing an annex with a matrix indicating the correspondence between EQAVET criteria and ISO 21001 requirements to help users do integrated implementations of them.

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[3] *"Formal" standardization documents are those published by Bodies who are signatories of the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement (WTO-TBT Agreement) (WTO, n/d), containing the Code of Good Practices for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards (WTO-TBT Code of Good Practices). Three examples of such Bodies, with different geographic scopes (national, regional and international) are the Ente Italiano di Normazione (UNI); the European Standardization Committee (CEN); and the International Organizational for Standardization (ISO), respectively.*

Pairing EQAVET with ISO 21001 in this way, can boost EQAVET adoption and, by handing it over to the formal standardization bodies, it would put the content of the protocol in the national standardization archives of one – or more – countries, thus assuring not only the transferability of the VET21001 Protocol to other countries, but also sustained dissemination and exploitation post-project funding lifetime.

The strategy deployed to achieve the above objectives, included three activities aligned in sequence:

IO3A1 Desk research on good practices for accredited certification schemes
IO3A2 Development of a technical document with the rules for an accredited certification scheme for EQAVET
IO3A3 Publication of a technical document with the rules for an accredited certification scheme for EQAVET

The development of these activities, as well as their evaluation, is fully described at section 3.

1.3 Adaptations made

1.3.1 Taking advantage of the *momentum*

In September 2019, just a few weeks after VET21001 project started, the School of Management and Technology of Porto Polytechnic (ESTG-PP) in Portugal hosted two international events: the Annual Plenary meeting of ISO/TC 232 (the ISO technical committee on Education and Learning Services) and the Workshop "Feedback on ISO 21001". Both would positively impact the VET21001 project, particularly IO3 and its timeframe. The workshop was considered by the consortium as a dissemination opportunity and the VET21001 project was presented there by partner KIC, leader of IO3. The presentation generated curiosity from other participants, among which were Maurício Cárdenas Flores, the CEO of ACCM America (a Mexican Certification Body) and Emanuele Riva, the President of ACCREDIA, the Italian National Accreditation Body. Furthermore, the conclusions of the Workshop, which were taken as an input for the ISO/TC 232 Annual Plenary, emphasized the urgent need for harmonization of accredited certification schemes for education, particularly ISO 21001, around the world, as the experiences shared in the workshop clearly pointed for different approaches, which posed a threat for the comparability of certifications and internationalization of certified educational organizations. Considering this, ISO/TC 232 decided to issue a global call for ISO Members to come forward with a proposal to develop an ISO deliverable with such specifications. In other words, ISO was asking, in 2019 already, what the VET21001 project had envisioned to propose to them by 2021.

Considering the above and to take advantage of the momentum, the VET21001 Consortium anticipated the timeframe for IO3, onboarded additional associate partners (see section 1.2.2) and kicked-off the development of the rules for accredited certification schemes for ISO 21001 and EQAVET. This process is fully described I section 3, where more details on the adaptations made on each activity of IO3, are also provided.

1.3.2 Onboarding more Associate Partners

To the associate partners already supporting the consortium since the application phase (IPQ, the Portuguese national standardization body and ANQEP, the Portuguese national Agency for EQAVET), this momentum brought three additional associate partners: ACCREDIA, the Italian National Accreditation Body; ACCM America, a Mexican Certification Body; and VALOR@, a Mexican Consultancy company with expertise in accreditation, which collaborates often with EMA, the Mexican National Accreditation Body. The experienced technical views of these three new partners were of major importance to assure the development and validation of IO3 in such a way to enable its immediate transferability into ISO and the global arena of quality infrastructures, as described in section 3.

Figure 3 illustrates the current composition of the VET21001 Consortium, including full and associate partners.

Figure 3

2 Method

The methods followed by the Consortium to develop IO3 were:

1) comparative analyses during the desk review activity (IO3A1); and
2) the iterative method of developing and publishing formal standards at formal standardization bodies during the development and publishing activities (IO3A2 and IO3A4).

As previously mentioned, “Formal” standardization documents are those published by Bodies who are signatories of the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement (WTO-TBT Agreement) (WTO, n/d), containing the Code of Good Practices for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards at its Annex 3, also known, for short, as WTO-TBT Code of Good Practices. Three examples of such Bodies, with different geographic scopes - national, regional and international - are the Ente Italiano di Normazione (UNI); the European Committee for Standardization (CEN); and the International Organizational for Standardization (ISO), respectively.

The WTO-TBT Code of Good Practices is reflected at these bodies’ internal operational procedures (UNI Procedures, CEN Internal Regulations; ISO Directives Part 1 and Part 2), as well as in the internal procedures of circa 200 standardization bodies from over 154 countries around the world (ISO, N/Da). In practice this means documents published by these bodies are developed in strict respect of principles such as

- Openness and Transparency;
- Effectiveness and Relevance;
- Coherence;
- Impartiality and Consensus;
- Sustainable Development.

as determined by WTO, which increase its credibility in the market. Documents published by other entities are considered “proprietary” standardization documents and do not have a way to assure users of their method of development. This can negatively affect its exploitation.

In this framework, the VET21001 Protocol (VET21001 Consortium, 2020), published as an ERASMUS+ Project deliverable, is considered a proprietary standard and, in order to evolve into a formal standardization document, it has to go through the formal standardization process, to assure its content will reflect the above principles.

There are several types of formal standardization documents – standards, technical specifications, technical reports, international workshop agreements, guides, etc – and, regarding accredited certification (or conformity assessment, as it is referred to in the quality infrastructure arena), these can be broadly categorized in two main groups:

- Management system; and
- Competency based.

A management system is a set of interrelated or interacting elements of an organization to establish policies and objectives and processes to achieve those objectives; therefore, a management system standard describes those interrelated or interacting elements that should be implemented for an effective management system, containing criteria for organizations to implement in their daily practices. This is the case of ISO 21001 and EQAVET.

Competency based standards specify the requirements for an organization (or person) to demonstrate its competence to perform specific activities. Most of these standards are currently for organizations performing conformity assessment activities such as testing, inspection and certification. These organizations are usually called conformity assessment bodies. It is essential that conformity assessment bodies are competent to ensure that the outcome of their activities is reliable and mutually recognized by peers across borders, to facilitate mobility of people, products and services.

Figure 3 (ISO CASCO, N/D) shows where competency based standards and management system standards apply in the conformity assessment framework.

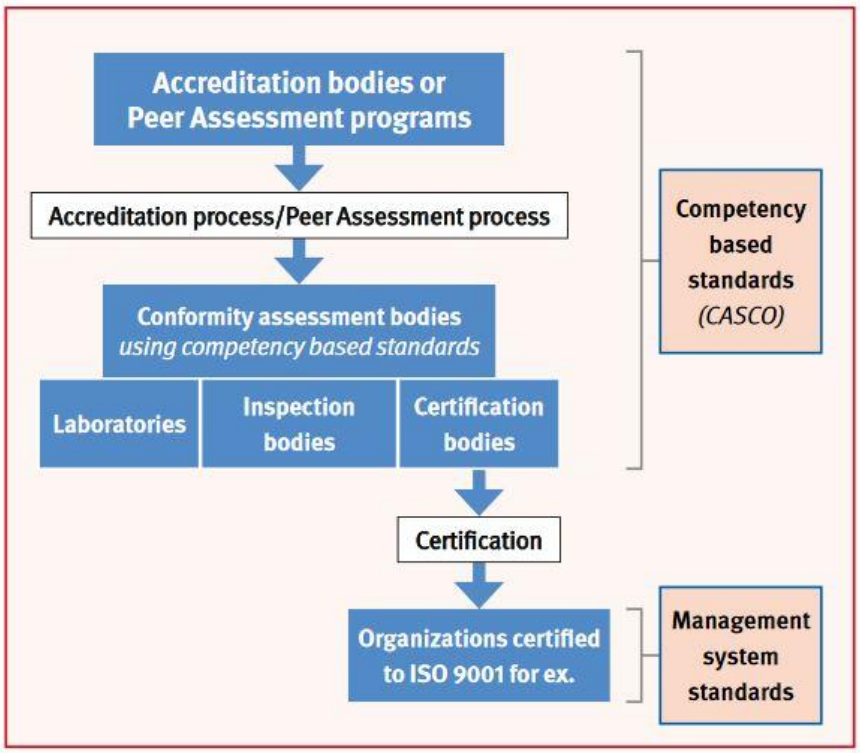

Figure 3

Given the nature of the VET21001 content, which complements, with more specific requirements for the education and training sector, another already published ISO standard *(ISO 17021-1:2015 "Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems — Part 1: Requirements"*); and considering that ISO 21001 is new in the market and that ISO 21001-EQAVET integrated management systems are an innovation brought by the VET21001 Project, the option taken by the consortium after carefully considering the characteristics of different ISO deliverables (ISO, NDb,c) was to go for a normative, competency based document, namely, a Technical Specification (TS).

A TS addresses work still under technical development, or where it is believed that there will be a future, but not immediate, possibility of agreement on an International Standard. A Technical Specification is published for immediate use, but it also provides a means to obtain feedback. The aim is that it will eventually be transformed and republished as an International Standard (ISO, N/Db).

Technical Specifications shall be subject to review by the technical committee or subcommittee not later than 3 years after their publication. The aim of such review shall be to re-examine the situation which resulted in the publication of a Technical Specification and, if possible, to achieve the agreement necessary for the publication of an International Standard to replace the Technical Specification.

Figure 4 (video) explains in more detail what a technical specification is and how it differs from other ISO deliverables. Section 4.2 illustrates the ISO Process of developing a Technical Specification and its iterative method to reach global consensus, in more detail.

Figure 4

3 Results: Development of VET 21001 Protocol

3.1 Desk Research

Activity 1 of Intellectual Output 3 (IO3A1) *"Desk research on good practices for accredited certification schemes"* consisted in the identification and analyses of good practices to serve as input for the technical document to be developed at activity 2. What was initially planned, as well as any adaptations made and results obtained, is described below.

Planned	Adaptations & Results
The consortium will seek and analyse technical documents with rules for accredited certification schemes, from sources such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the International Accreditation Forum (IAF), European Accreditation (EA), Instituto Português de Acreditação (IPAC) - the Portuguese Accreditation body – and other national accreditation bodies.	21 documents from ISO were analysed, of which: 3 ISO Standards, 3 ISO Technical Specifications, 10 ISO Guidance, 2 ISO forms, 3 from ISO CASCO 27 documents from IAF were analysed, of which 22 were IAF mandatory documents (MD)
The consortium will also seek Reports from other credible sources that, although non-directly related with conformity assessment regulation, have been contributing to the development of national quality infrastructures, such as the United Nations Economic Cooperation for Europe (UNECE), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Network for Quality Infrastructures (INetQI).	1 classification document from UN, 1 from EU (EUROSTAT) were analysed 1 guidance document from WTO was analysed
A minimum of two technical documents/reports per partner country will be analysed, one of which should be preferably national, to assure more diversity of inputs. The output leader will control the activity to avoid the same articles to be analysed by more than one partner, performing a preselection of documents if needed and will also propose a standardized format to be used by all partners when performing the technical documents' analysis in order to facilitate the joint analyses of data and extraction of good practices. From this analysis, the consortium will extract the best practices on conformity assessment rules which are most adequate to apply to an accredited certification scheme for EQAVET.	This was no longer needed, as the approach was changed from down-top to top-down, as explained in section 1.3.1. In other words, instead of contacting the national accreditation bodies (NAB) in each partner country, by going through ISO directly, it was more important to base the VET21001 Protocol (which would be used as a proposal for a new ISO document) in already consensually agreed global documents, such as those from ISO, IAF, UN and EU. During the further development at ISO, national perspectives will be assured by the ISO iterative method of reaching global consensus (see section 4). Nevertheless, as two of the Associated Partners came from the only country who already had published a national accredited certification scheme for ISO 21001, that experience was used as good practice. These included: • 2 documents from EMA (Mexican NAB) • 2 documents from ACCM (Mexican Certification Body)
Activity Target: 8 documents	Target met and exceeded, as 55 documents were analysed, some of them in more than one language
Activity Monitoring Indicators: • Number of documents; • Number of national documents.	☑ 55 documents were identified, shared and analysed by the consortium, of which 4 had a national scope

3.2 Iterative development

Activity 2 of Intellectual Output 3 (IO3A2) *"Development of a technical document with the rules for an accredited certification scheme for EQAVET"* consisted in the development of the technical document based on the good practices identified at activity 1. What was initially planned, as well as any adaptations made and results obtained, is described below.

Planned	Adaptations & Results
The consortium will develop a technical document with the rules for an accredited certification scheme for EQAVET. This will reflect: - The results of IO1A4 – the Report on the users' frequent asked question (FAQ), most relevant difficulties with EQAVET and the most consensual interpretations of its requirements; - The results of IO2A2 – the competence profile for evaluators published; and - The results of IO3A1 – the best practices in conformity assessment schemes.	There was not enough content to produce a FAQ at IO1, so this was not applicable. However, other result of IO1 were considered. Also, at time of development and publication of the VET21001 Protocol, IO2A2 was not finished yet. However, verification of was done after IO2A2 was finished and the VET21001 Protocol reflect, as adequate, the results of IO1A4, IO2A2 and IO3A1. The method followed by the consortium to develop the VET21001 Protocol was an iterative method of reaching consensus, simiar to the ISO method (see section 4). The draft was kicked off by a small group of internal Experts nominated by partners that met face-to-face (pre-Covid-19 pandemic) and then via ZOOM. The Experts also worked remotely between meetings. When a consistent draft was achieved, it was circulated through all partners for analyses and commenting, using an ISO-like table of comments. In total: • 24 comments were received at different moments o 6 from ERIFO o 8 from AEVA o 7 from ACCREDIA o 3 from ISO CASCO which were anlysed, resolved and used to improve the document; and • 15 iterations were necessary to finalize it.
Activity Target: NA	NA
Activity Monitoring Indicators: • Consistency with the results of IO2A2 and IO3A1	☑ Published document is consistent with IO2A2 and IO3A1.

3.3 Publication

Activity 3 of Intellectual Output 3 (IO3A3) *"Publication of a technical document with the rules for an accredited certification scheme for EQAVET"* consisted in the Publication of the document developed at activity 2. What was initially planned, as well as any adaptations made and results obtained, is described below.

Planned	Adaptations & Results
The consortium will publish the technical document with the rules for an accredited certification scheme for EQAVET in the project website as an open resource for download by users.	The consortium published a technical document with the rules for an accredited certification scheme for ISO21001-EQAVET integrated management systems in the project website, as an open resource for download by users
Each partner will also contact their national accreditation body and offer them the technical document with the rules for an accredited certification scheme for EQAVET, suggesting its adoption as the internal procedure that will rule their national accredited certification scheme to be eventually launched for EQAVET.	This was no longer needed, as the approach was changed from down-top to top-down, as explained in section 1.3.1. In other words, instead of contacting the national accreditation bodies (NAB) in each partner country, by going through ISO directly, ISO did the dissemination among the NAB of the 142 countries members of ISO CASCO.
Due to their possible interest in this document, the consortium will also contact a few relevant European and International stakeholders, such as: • International Accreditation Forum (IAF) – as they determine AB assessors' and CB auditors' competences internationally; • European Accreditation (EA) - same as IAF, but with a European scope; • International Organization for Standardization (ISO) – as they publish as international standards, proactively or by request of IAF, requirements for conformity assessment; • EQAVET Network - as they centralize information about all initiatives regarding EQAVET; and offer them the technical document with the rules for an accredited certification scheme for EQAVET published, suggesting they adopt it and re-publish it in their formal conformity assessment channels.	IAF and EA are Liaison Organizations to ISO and its members are members of ISO CASCO. The EQAVET Network is managed by EC-DG
Activity Target: 1 Publication	Target met.
Activity Monitoring Indicators: • Availability of the Technical Document at the project Website; • Number of organizations to which the consortium sent the Technical Document for re-publication and adoption	☑ Document is available at the project website and the consortium sent the document to ISO; ISO sent it to all ISO TMB members (15 countries) and all ISO CASCO members (142 countries). See details at section 4.

4 Dissemination and Exploitation: From the VET21001 Protocol to ISO TS 21030

4.1 Dissemination by the VET21001 Consortium

To disseminate the VET21001, the consortium used mainly its website and social media to promote its publication. This was done at different stages, such as

- During development, highlighting events and milestones at the events and news sections of the project website, which was also used to open the draft for public comments;
- After publication as a 'proprietary technical specification';
- When it was approved by ISO for further development as a 'formal' International Technical Specification, as illustrated in figure 5.

Figure 5

4.2 Exploitation by ISO and its members: The 'making-of' of ISO TS 21030

4.2.1 Making the Proposal

As explained in section 2, an ISO Technical Specification is a type of ISO deliverable that has particular applications and follows a slightly different, less bureaucratic development method. However, it still shares most of the operational stages of the ISO project approach to other deliverables. As such, it needs to go through a 'Proposal Stage' (ISO, 2020) as listed in Figure 6. This is the stage where one ISO member presents a new work item proposal (NP) to ISO, in which it suggests that a new deliverable – in this case, an International Technical Specification - should developed. To do so, it needs to provide ISO with the rationale for the NP, including:

- Title, scope and purpose (justified)
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) supported
- Relation with other ISO deliverables
- Identification of relevant pre-existing documents (at national, regional and international levels)
- Identification of affected stakeholder categories
- Development plan, including timeframe and project leader proposed
- Whether a draft from preparatory work is provided as a base for further development.

The above information is provided to ISO using a dedicated ISO template – Form 4 New Work Item Proposal (NP).

Considering these rules, the VET21001 Consortium developed an ISO Form 4 with the proposal to develop ISO TS 21030 – Educational organizations - Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of educational organizations management systems (IPQ and VET21001 Consortium, 2020). This proposal, together with two attachments – the VET21001 Protocol in ISO Template and a mini Bio of the project leader prosed - was then submitted to ISO by VET21001 Associate Partner IPQ, the Portuguese National Standardization Body, which is an ISO member.

ISO Project stage	ISO associated document	
	Name	Abbreviation
Preliminary stage	Preliminary work item	PWI
Proposal stage	New work item proposal	NP
Preparatory stage	Working draft(s)	WD
Committee stage	Committee draft(s)	CD
Enquiry stage	Enquiry draft	ISO/DIS
Approval stage	Final draft International Standard	FDIS
Publication stage	International standard	ISO

Figure 6 (Based on ISO, 2020)

4.2.2 Getting ISO Member's approval

After internal validation of the proposal received from IPQ, ISO, through its technical committee in Education and Learning Services (ISO/TC 232) launched an international Ballot (ISO/TC 232, 2020a) on July 27, 2020, so their member states could analyse the proposal and cast a vote of abstention, approval or disapproval, with or without comments. Simultaneously, CASCO, the ISO technical committee on Conformity Assessment, issued a circular letter (ISO CASCO, 2020a) to their members, informing them of the ballot.

Both the ballot announcement from ISO/TC 232 and the circular letter from ISO CASCO included all documents submitted by the VET21001 Consortium via its Associate Partner to ISO: The Form 4, the VET21001 Protocol in ISO template and the bio of the proposed project leader. This immediately disseminated IO3 to circa 150 countries around the globe, considering ISO/TC 232 has 51 member states and ISO CASCO has 142, although some are common. However, as these two technical committees

The ballot was open until October 22, 2020 and closed with 26 votes casted, of which 4 abstentions, 5 negative and 17 positive (ISO/TC 232, 2020b), which complied with the minimum approval by 2/3 majority necessary to start a new work item at ISO (ISO, 2020).

4.2.3 Establishing ISO CASCO/TC 232 JWG 58

A Joint Work Group (JWG) is a collaborative work group with Experts nominated by members of more than one ISO Technical Committee. JWG are established when the technical nature of the work item to be developed requires expertise of more than one scientific field, not possible to cover with the scope of only one technical committee. This is the case of ISO TS 21030 as the content of the VET21001 Protocol in which it is based, addresses management of educational organizations, and accredited certification, thus two different areas: Education, covered by ISO/TC 232; and conformity assessment, covered by ISO CASCO.

In this context and following the approval of the new work item ISO TS 21030, a joint work group between ISO CASCO and ISO/TC 232 had to be established. This was also balloted and confirmed by ISO members (ISO/TC 232, 2020c, 2020d) between November 27, 2020 and January 4, 2021. After its members confirmation, ISO Central Secretariat formally created JWG 58 at the ISO Online Platform, under the structure of ISO CASCO, as the secretariat of this group will be assured by CASCO[4], as illustrated by figure 7.

[4] ISO CASCO is considered a critical technical committee due to dealing with conformity assessment. It is the only ISO TC that is allowed to use ISO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, as a meeting venue. It is also the only ISO TC whose secretariat is assured directly by the ISO Central Secretariat and not decentralized into member bodies. Likewise, CASCO keeps the secretariat of all JWG that establishes with other ISO technical committees (whose secretariat is decentralized into a member state – e.g. DIN, the German National Standardization Body, holds the TC 232 Secretariat.

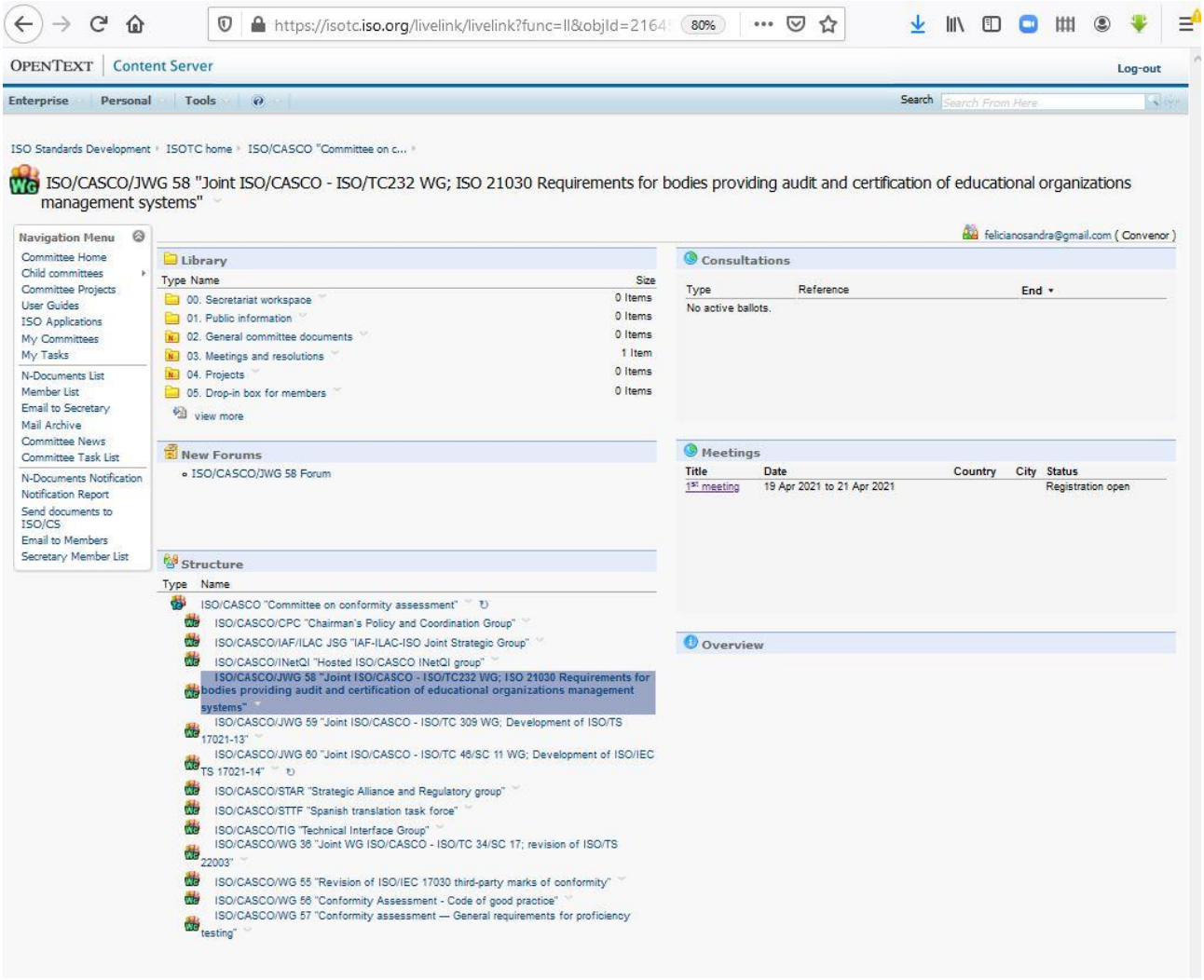

Figure 7

4.2.4 Appointment of Co-Convenors

The ISO Directives consider different types of leadership roles depending on the level of technical work. At work group level, the leader is called a Convenor, and its responsibilities include (ISO, 2020b):

- **Lead meetings effectively and fairly** - Directing delegates and experts towards consensus, making sure that all views receive equal treatment.
- **Act purely in an international capacity** - A Convenor is impartial and does not represent any one country.
- **Project management** - Ensuring that projects are man-aged according to agreed target dates and in accordance with the project plan. Managing documents and sharing them via e-committees.
- **Know the subject, the sector and market needs** - Proposing decisions to progress or stop work based on market needs.
- **Know and follow ISO procedures** - Ensuring that the ISO/IEC Directives are followed.
- **Foster and value cooperation with other ISO and IEC committees and partners** - Reaching out to and working cooperatively with other committees in the case of joint or related projects.

The Convenor or a workgroup is usually the project leader appointed by the member body when submitting the new work item proposal, but not necessarily. Furthermore, in the case of JWG, two Co-Convenors are usually nominated, one from each technical committee. Following this ISO tradition, two Co-Convenors were nominated for JWG 58: ISO CASCO nominated Maurício Cárdenas on November 12, 2020 (ISO, 2020c) and ISO/TC 232 nominated Sandra Feliciano on December 21, 2020 (ISO/TC 232, 2020e, 2020f).

As previously explained, and is also emphasised at the ISO Directives, part 1 (2020), ISO Convenors and Project Leaders shall act in a purely international capacity, divesting him- or herself of a national point of view and should be prepared to act as consultant, when required, regarding technical matters arising at the proposal stage through to the publication stage. It is no surprise, therefore, that both Technical Committees - CASCO and TC 232 - opted to appoint as JWG 58 Co-Convenors, Experts that have been involved in the development of the VET21001 Protocol, the first in representation of ACCM, an Associate Partner of the VET21001 Consortium and the second in representation of the Knowledge Innovation Centre (KIC), a full partner of the VET21001 Consortium and the leader of intellectual output 3.

4.2.5 Capacitating the joint work group

An ISO work group is as strong as the joint expertise brought by its members. ISO Member Bodies nominate Experts in the scientific areas of the work items being developed at each work group in order to populate them with the technical expertise needed to develop the project. These experts act in a personal capacity and not as the official representative of the member state by which they have been appointed. However, it is recommended that they keep close contact with that member state in order to inform them about the progress of the work and of the various opinions in the working group at the earliest possible stage (ISO, 2020). Experts are usually also members of the mirror technical committees on their countries and there is where they are fed the national interests which they then defend when working in an international setting.

ISO members can appoint Experts to a work group at any time, starting with the moment a new work item is balloted. In the case of ISO TS 21030, 16 Experts were nominated for the joint work group at time of the international ballot (ISO/TC 232, 2020b). To increase this number, ISO CASCO issued an international Call for Experts (ISO CASCO, 2020b). Currently, JWG 58 has 26 Experts nominated by 15 Countries, 22 of which as Committee Members and 4 as Document Monitors. These last usually do not attend meetings but help scrutinize the documents produced. The leadership team is composed of the 2 Co-Convenors previously identified, supported by 4 Secretary Support Team Members, all of them ISO Programme and Project Managers from the ISO Central Secretariat.

4.2.6 Preparing the first meeting

Preparing a meeting of an ISO work group involves some technical and administrative work (ISO; 2020a). The meeting dates need to be agreed between the leadership team. Then, relevant preparatory documents need to be identified, collected and prepared. This includes both technical and administrative documents that the work group will need to start the work. Also, an agenda

needs to be prepared and distributed to the WG members at least six weeks in advance of the meeting date (ISO, 2020).

In the case of JWG 58, the two Co-Convenors held several virtual meetings and asynchronous discussions via email and:

- Agreed on the dates of April 19-21, 2021 for the first meeting of the work group;
- Identified the relevant technical and administrative documents, which were uploaded to the documents' section of the ISO Livelink area of JWG 58;
- Elaborated an agenda (ISO CASCO JWG 58, 2020a) for the meeting and distributed it among the work group members via the automated email list of the ISO platform;
- Discussed the comments already received from members on the content of the new work Item proposed - at time of the international ballot, 29 comments were received with the votes casted (ISO/TC 232, 2020b) - and prepared clarification and suggestions on how to resolve them, to be discussed with the group Experts;
- Revised the work plan for ISO TS 21030 ((ISO CASCO JWG 58, 2020b) based on the results of the approval ballot[5].

4.2.7 Next steps

The immediate next steps are:

- The realization of the first meeting of JWG 58;
- Continued efforts to populate the JWG with more Experts from different member states to increase participation and assure global relevance.

After the first meeting, ISO TS 21030 will follow the ISO iterative process of development: during meetings comments and suggestions to improve the draft are discussed transparently and resolved in consensus. After each meeting a new version of the draft, incorporating the chnages decided at the meeting is circulated for a new round of comments. These are collected, compilled and the compilation distributed to the Experts to allow preparation for the next meeting. Annd the cyles repeats itself until the draft is considered sufficiently mature to be balloted for publication.

This Report will be updated periodically to reflect the status of ISO TS 21030.

[5] ISO approval ballots for new work item proposals include several additional information for members to approve or suggest alternatives, such as the stage in which the work item draft should be positioned, the development timeframe, etc.

5 Conclusion

The VET21001 Protocol, Intellectual Output 3 of the VET21001 Project is an example of how the worlds of academia and standardization can collaborate and cross-impact each other positively.

By handing over the VET21001 Protocol to ISO, the VET21001 Consortium bridged the world of European applied research and the world of international standardization with benefits for both:

- ISO received a new work item proposal (NWI) for a Technical Specification (TS) with an unusual level of maturity (as it had been developed by a consortium of European and Mexican Experts), which will facilitate and shorten the development and publication time of the TS;
- The partners of the VET21001 Consortium were given the opportunity to participate in the development of an ISO deliverable and acquired new competences, such as the organization of quality infrastructures (standardization, metrology, conformity assessment) and the ISO methodologies of collaborative work in the framework of the WTO-TBT Code of Good Practices;
- the VET21001 Consortium assured global dissemination, exploitation, and long-term sustainability of the project results after the project timeline and independent of EU funds.

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About the VET21001 Project and this publication

The VET21001 project aims to develop a capacity building program, an accredited certification scheme and an implementation toolkit to motivate a wider EQAVET adoption. The VET21001 toolkit will use a standardized approach based on the recently published ISO 21001:2018, capitalizing on its already internationally consensually approved content and expecting that, by associating the ISO brand to EQAVET, all players in the market, including those of the standardization, accreditation and certification worlds, will become more curious about it, as well as willing to contribute to its dissemination and assuring its sustainability.

This document describes the development of VET21001 Intellectual Output 3, *Rules for an Accredited Certification scheme for ISO 21001 and EQAVET*, later renamed the **VET21001 Protocol** and accepted by ISO for further development as a new technical specification for conformity assessment (**ISO TS 21030**).

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