

Before assessment

How to prepare and run an assessment

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2 How to prepare and run an assessment



2.1. Who can be an assessor ?

The Partnership project gave us the possibility of running assessments with different numbers and with different kinds of assessors:

Trainers, craftspeople, earth building specialists, members of our associations, persons speaking or not speaking the language of the candidates, persons having passed an ECVET exam or not ...

Our assessors all had a high level of competence in clay plastering. There was a difference between those who were used to assessment (i.e. teachers) and others, but the latter quickly progressed by practising. All performed well in the use of the criteria, indicators and evaluation sheet.

FAQ - Frequently asked questions

Q: How many assessors are required

A: The number of assessors depends upon the number of candidates.

It is best to have two assessors, one of them being a professional clay plasterer.

We recommend: one assessor for level 1 and 2, if possible 2 assessors for level 3 and 4.

If the trainer is also the assessor, it is best to have a second assessor.

Q: Can the trainer also be an assessor ?

A: Yes. But there are advantages and disadvantages to knowing the candidates well.

It is best if the assessor knows the content of the course (if there has been one before the assessment).

If the trainer is also an assessor, it is important to have a second assessor.

If the trainer is also an assessor, it is good to have a break between the training and the assessment (for example to let conflicts settle down).

Q: What are the assessor requirements ?

A: The assessor must know the ECVET units, criteria and indicators and the difference between the levels.

The assessor must agree to use the assessment work sheet.

The assessor should be familiar with the content of the course.

The assessor can be an external person, for example, from another partner organisation, or a craftspeople. From level 3 upwards, the assessment organiser has a responsibility towards the competence of future craftspeople. It is therefore helpful to organise a board of assessors (jury) with professionals familiar with clay plaster, and to give them precise criteria and indicators for assessment.

In each country, the Partners should offer education and training in ECVET Earth building principles and tools for trainers and assessors.

Q: Which persons are allowed to decide about certificates ?

A: Each LearnWithClay Partner organisation who signed the memorandum of understanding is authorised to deliver ECVET Earth Building certificates and to organise exams. But in each organisation, there are often many members or employees and only one or a few persons can be designated to carry out this job. Each partner organisation has to make sure:

(1) to have competent people to do this (the competent person might leave an organisation and must be replaced);

(2) to control who delivers or signs certificates (not every simple member of an association is allowed to deliver a certificate).

The assessors do not necessarily have to be top-practitioners or craftspeople: they do not all have to have a certificate at level 4 to be able to assess.

2.2. New tools

We have collected the conclusions of two years of shared experience of ECVET exams in the form of guidelines, recommendations, check-lists and work sheets, to facilitate the work of all the assessment organisers and assessors in the future. In the paragraph below is the list of these new tools, followed by some comments; the tools themselves are at the end of the handbook.

2.2.1. Overview

Name of the tool	For whom	For what
organiser check-list	organiser	to prepare all the steps and other aspects of the assessment
examinee pre-exam questionnaire	candidates	the organiser uses the information to fill in the certificate and the data base
examinee feed-back questionnaire	candidates	the organiser uses the information to improve its next assessment
trainer recommendations	trainer	to prepare the trainees for the assessment
assessor guidelines	assessor and organiser	to understand and respect the ECVET earth building principles and agreements.
assessor work sheet	assessor	to work with 1 single form to note down the assessment during the practical exam
criteria for method of work	assessor	use criteria to assess the method of work, difference between level 1 and levels 2+3+4
question pool	assessor	draw up the questionnaire for the written exam
units in brief	all	have an overview of the content of each unit, introduce the assessor work sheets

The tools figure at the end of this handbook, except for the question pool. They are available as pdf files only, the organisers will print out what they need.

The assessor work sheets are also available as Excel files, on our web platform.

The criteria to assess the method of work are integrated into the assessor work sheets.

2.2.2. Comments on the assessor work sheet

After the first ECVET exams run by the Partner, using the unit descriptions and the “evaluation sheet” (handbook part II), we decided make an improved, easier to handle assessment form. The new form:

- is a work sheet for the assessors
- shows all the candidates on one page (1 column per candidate, with room for 8 candidates)
- lists not only the criteria but also the indicators
- has a place to calculate average scores and percentages
- is available in Excel format.

All the criteria and indicators must be used (see § 1.2.3. practical exam).

The previous evaluation sheet, in the Handbook Part II, that is specific to each trainee, will still be used to mark the score obtained for each unit during the practical, theoretical and oral exam.

To make it easy to transfer the score obtained in the practical exam from the work sheet to the evaluation sheet, we did not change the order of the indicators, although there was a proposal for this to make it more logical.

2.2.3. Comments on the question pool

We have collected a pool of questions for use in the ECVET written exam. This pool is available for use by all Partners; it is not freely available to the public.

The partners of the ECVET LearnWithClay memorandum are allowed to select questions from this pool to draw up their written exams. They agree not to disseminate the questions, i.e. not to hand out the questions or the responses either for support in any way, or to any person; not to leave the questionnaires with the candidates after the exam, in order to guarantee the future value of the exam.

Below you will find out more about this pool, such as how to use it and how to add new questions to it. We encourage you to submit your own questions and answers to the pool to give us all greater choice and keep the written exam up to date.

2.2.3.1. The language and format of the Pool

The Pool is stored in two formats :

- as a Word.doc file for each Unit and level
- as an Excel.xls file for all Units and levels, with one tab per Unit.

The Word documents are in separate languages and the Excel file contains translations of the languages for all questions. At present the languages are:

English, French, German, Czech.

It is hoped that there will be more translation of the questions as the Pool is used, but this is beyond the scope of the 2010-2012 LearnWithClay Partnership Project.

The country/language of origin and if possible the author of each question will be visible in the pool.

2.2.3.2. Adding new questions to the pool – what information to supply

First, is the question relevant?

If it is, then with the question you should also state the following :

- a. What type of question it is e.g. :*
 - i. Decision: yes/no; correct/wrong*
 - ii. Closed: only one answer is expected*
 - iii. Open: requires a description (e.g. of a technique) or an opinion or justification (e.g. of a choice).*
- b. The Unit and level to which it belongs.*
- c. If it is relevant for more than one Unit or level.*
- d. What is the expected answer, depending on Unit and level ?*
- e. The translation of the question into English (to give a good sense of the meaning – more precise translation can be done later).*
- f. The translation of the question into any other languages, if possible.*

2.2.3.3. Adding new questions to the pool – how to submit them

There is a file for new questions that is kept by 3 adjudicators. You can submit new questions to any one (or all) of these 3 via email. The question should be accompanied by the answers to the statements above.

The adjudicators are :

Irmela Fromme (Germany)
irmela.fromme@web.de

Ivana Zabickova (Czech)
zabickova@gmail.com

Barbara Jones (UK)
strawworks@gmail.com

2.2.3.4. How questions are adjudicated

a. If there is no disagreement between the person who submits the question or any of the adjudicators:

the question is added to the Word.doc file and Excel sheet, with translation into as many languages as possible but definitely into English and the language of the originator.

b. If there is disagreement between any of the parties e.g. as to which level is relevant for the question:

The adjudicators and the originator try to settle the disagreement between themselves through discussion by email or phone/Skype.

If this is not possible, the question is added to a new tab in the Excel file called 'suggested questions' with the various arguments about it from each party, and all Partners are invited to add to the discussion.

After this process the adjudicators and the originator of the question have a final discussion where it is hoped agreement can be reached. If not, this is recorded in the 'suggested questions' tab and the question remains there

c. All administration e.g. adding to documents, emailing Partners will be done by Germany (Irmela Fromme).

2.2.3.5. Making changes to existing questions

It may be that as the questions are used it becomes clear that they are more relevant to a different level, or they need to be changed slightly so that they are clearer. In either case, the changes should be submitted as though they are a new question, stating the original question and the changes proposed, following the guidelines in point 2.1.3.4. above.

2.2.3.6. How can an assessors or an assessment organiser access the questions?

a. To access the questions, you must contact one of the 3 adjudicators by email and ask for the questions in either Word or Excel format.

b. You must give at least 3 weeks notice, otherwise there is no guarantee that you will receive an answer.

c. You may need to translate some of the questions. If so, send the translations to the adjudicator for use by others.