



# In-company Learning Mobility and Quality Assurance Guidelines

## Creating a Community of Practice

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APCMA & partners



Project website: [www.euroapprenticeship.eu](http://www.euroapprenticeship.eu)

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## INTRODUCTION

The EQAMOB project was developed in the frame of the **Euro Apprenticeship network**<sup>1</sup>. Today more than 380 organisations from all over Europe (skilled craft chambers, training centers, professional organisations, regional authorities and nonprofit associations) are members of the network to promote, facilitate and enhance learning mobility for apprentices in Europe.

In a first phase 2from 2010-13, the network developed expertise and partnerships in particular by offering information and tools. Peer-learning events were organised to discuss topics related to the organisation of learning mobility. One particular event was dedicated to the mobilisation of companies and their role in the mobility organisation. As a result, members started to award a “label” to companies in the form of a customizable certificate and a sticker. A checklist with some basic criteria was proposed to member to evaluate the participation of companies in learning mobility and to increase the visibility of their activities.

In a second phase, the founding partners and most active members applied for ERASMUS+ partnership projects to investigate further quality assurance issues: How can the network strengthen mutual trust and the development of partnerships? As a result, the EQAMOB project, **European Quality Assurance for In-company Learning Mobility for Apprentices**, started end of 2014. EQAMOB focuses on the design, implementation and dissemination of a coherent framework of action for high quality “in-company learning mobility pathways”. With EQAMOB, the network took a step forward in quality assurance, as not only an individual learning process but also shared cognition between members of a sustainable community of practice. For this purpose a **concept paper (IO1), guidelines, and tools (IO2) for introducing and implementing quality assurance in “In-company Learning Mobility”** were developed. In the following you will find

- A **clear and effective definition of “In-company Learning Mobility”**, focused on apprenticeships schemes, yet usable in other work based learning contexts
- A **description of high quality “In-company Learning Mobility” and guidelines**
- A **set of checklists for accompanying the labelling process allowing a coherent approach for the establishment of learning mobility pathways**. These tools addressing all stakeholders, including hosting and sending companies (that train apprentices).

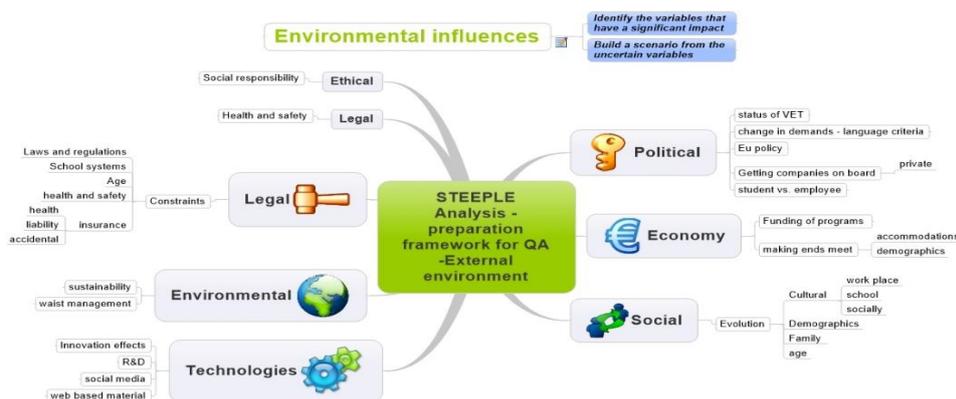
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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.euroapprenticeship.eu/en/home.html>

## 1 METHODOLOGY

**First Step:** In order to decide about quality assurance steps, it was important to define and characterise first the “in-company learning situation”. What are the aims and expected outcomes of this specific learning situation? What are the steps needed to reach the expected results? IDAN/IFA collected and analysed existing definitions close to “in-company learning mobility” and definitions, which describe the framework conditions of apprenticeship and apprenticeship mobility. The comparison made it possible to release an EQAMOB “In-company Learning Mobility” definition. In parallel EQAMOB partners analysed already existing approaches -/- tools -/- projects about quality assurance<sup>2</sup>.

**Second step:** A PEST / STEEPLE<sup>3</sup> analysis was applied: It is a simple way to consider in which way environmental & social influences may be particularly important and how these factors may or will affect performance and activities. It offered an overview of various external fields and domains to take into consideration before deciding what quality assurance steps would be important. As a result, the partners chose to focus in particular on the matching between apprentices and companies.



**Third step:** In addition, assessment checklists were developed and discussed. However, the EQAMOB quality assurance framework has to be convenient to use and efficient. Multiplier events organised for testing the results and promotion allowed an external feedback before finalising the prototypes. **2. FROM THE EXISTING**

<sup>3</sup> STEEPLE analysis is a strategic planning tool that offers an overview of external fields – social, technological, economic, environmental, political, legal and ethical – giving insight to each factor and how they can affect our project.



## 2. FROM THE EXISTING EURO APPRENTICESHIP LABEL TO EQAMOB&CO

This chapter describes the step from the first generation of the label to EQAMOB&CO. One of the main problems raised by all mobility coordinators is the difficulty of mobilising companies. The first generation of the EAS “label”<sup>4</sup> for companies was developed to make the participation of companies in learning mobility more visible and to raise interest among companies and sector organisations. Since 2013, the EAS label is part of the European Alliance for apprenticeship pledges and more than 500 labels have been awarded since.

As a promotional tool, the “standards” to get the “label” were simple and most companies could potentially fulfil them. The recommendation was not to create supplementary barriers to be admitted as a sending or hosting company, but to develop a mark of recognition. The training centre or stakeholder close to the company awarded the certificate. In this sense, the EAS “label” is a source of information for externals: “this company respects/complies with certain criteria” and it is a symbol of belonging: “my company is member of the community supporting the transnational learning mobility”.

The company agrees to the following **basics**:

- The company should agree to learning goals, be involved in the positioning and (professional) preparation of the candidates and participate in the evaluation / assessment process of the mobility period.
- Hosting companies offer suitable and high quality learning and work environments matching previously identified learning goals or learner profiles. A tutor should be appointed for organising support and the follow-up of the learner.
- Hosting-/sending companies should participate in the evaluation and assessment of acquired competencies and the learner’s progress.

These basics are agreed upon with the company before the mobility takes place. The commitments are associated with **criteria that** can be used by the sending training institutions for monitoring the respect of these commitments. While the commitments are broads and general, the criteria’s which are used for evaluation are concrete and measurable.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.euroapprenticeship.eu/en/mobility-label-2.html>

Quality Commitments The company	Criteria's for the monitoring by the training centres -/- members
1/ ... respects regulations and laws	Formal agreement, (about salary agreements if salary is paid or not during the exchange, insurance information, learning agreement signed).
2/ ... provides a safe work and good training environment	Apprentice has been informed about the work program and environment (their tasks, products, tools, machines they will handle etc. ...) and the health and safety rules Hosting company has liability insurance for the incoming apprentice.
3/... participate in all phases of mobility (before, during, after)	Yes -/- No
<b>Sending company</b>	A learning agreement is signed (company has contributed to the definition of the learning objectives and working tasks) Participation in a debriefing.
<b>Host company:</b> Provide a learning situation / work situation corresponding to the agreed learning objectives	A learning agreement is signed (company has contributed to the definition of the learning objectives and working tasks, a work programme / activities and tasks are defined and accepted).  A contact person or tutor ( <i>trained, skilled, sufficient experienced</i> ) / coaching is provided  There is a set of "formal" evaluation situation and the company participates in evaluation set up by the training centre  The participation is attested/documentated (prepared by the training centre)
4/ ... cooperates with the "competent body"	The company co-operates with the training provider, which coordinates the exchange. The company uses the agreement forms provided by the training provider.
5/ ... promotes mobility and share the benefits / the outcomes –takes outcomes into consideration in its company / valorises, gives value to the benefits.	The company takes part evaluation such as debriefing with apprentices and take part in promotion activities if there are some organized and share experiences.



After the sending-/hosting EAs member organises the evaluation of the placement with the company and awards a certificate and sticker to the sending - / - hosting companies in their country. The certificate is available online: EAS member's needs to customise and download the certificate. The information is stored in a database but not published. The certificate and an adhesive - / - sticker can be issued to the company.

### **Further development: from basics to a label**

The EQAMOB project aims to further investigate the "back office" of the awarding process and to explore possibilities to upgrade the existing label. However, there is still a need to also welcome newcomers, both inexperienced mobility coordinators and companies sending or hosting for the first time or occasionally involved. There is still a need to "spread the word" about mobility opportunities and convince companies of the benefits that learning mobility can bring.

EAS members already support companies during all phases of the organisation of mobility (before, during, after), but can the network take a step further to strengthen mutual trust and the development of sustainable partnerships among members of the network?

EQAMOB partners therefore took a step further both in quality criteria for the company and the quality assurance system in the back office for the mobility coordinators.

With EQAMOB, the network also takes a step forward in quality assurance, as not only an individual learning process but also shared cognition that results in the process of becoming a member of a sustained community of practice.

The full awarding process and the proposition of a community of practice will be described further in chapter 4 in relation with our selected quality criteria.



### 3. QUALITY ASSURANCE GUIDELINES

#### 3.1. Actors Involved and Criteria for Becoming an Awarding Body

Giving “In-company Learning Mobility” pedagogical depth is a challenge due to the diversity of actors involved. Different organisations with different profiles are involved in “In-company Learning Mobility” projects:

1. Sending “intermediary” organisation = training centres (coordinators)
2. Sending company
3. Hosting “intermediary” organisation = training centres (coordinators)
4. Hosting company

Each of these organisations has its own particularities, needs and roles in the process. The **well-structured and organised coordination** between these different actors and roles is therefore an important indicator for the quality of the process.

The **sending intermediary organisation** generally ensures the global framework: insurance, organisational, logistical matters and financing conditions. They take care of the information and selection process, the preparation of the learners, the providing adequate information to partners, the evaluation and if applicable, the recognition of the internship. As the apprenticeship (work) contract is usually maintained during the mobility period, the **sending company** stays legally responsible for the learner. This can also cover the maintenance of salary and social charges when applicable. Therefore, the sending organisation are also often heavily involved in disseminating information, formalising the agreement with the sending company, and providing further support to reduce administrative burdens for the company.

The sending organisation also negotiate also with the **hosting intermediary partners** who need to find suitable **hosting companies** able to offer adequate training/learning conditions including evaluation responsibilities when relevant. Regarding the companies involved, they should **prepare, follow and debrief** with the sending and hosting company to identify together how the participant **and** the company can benefit from the experience. Indeed, the creation of “In-company Learning Mobility” brings together different participants in a social learning system. As the scholar Etienne Wenger-Trayner<sup>5</sup> has pointed out, learning in the work-place is a complex structure of social settings and a dynamic practice: meaningful learning requires both **participation and reflection** in order to create value.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://wenger-trayner.com/>



In this context, we of course have to keep in mind that companies come in all sizes and each with their own social and work culture. Some companies may feel that they are well equipped to partake in mobility projects. Lorna Unwin and Allison Fuller<sup>6</sup> have studied companies in order to find a way to improve the quality for apprentices in the UK. In their studies, they have developed a company profile that characterises restrictive and expansive environments for apprentices in In-company Learning. The aim of the EQAMOB label is of course not to analyse companies if they offer a restrictive or expansive learning environment. However, awarding bodies should be aware of this continuum and through the quality assurance guidelines can offer support for those involved.

Furthermore, a company can approach “In-company Learning Mobility” in different ways, depending on the characteristics of the mobility. Meaning that there can be a difference in the approach depending on the duration, the level of expertise (intermediate - / - advanced) and the age of the apprentice. This has to be taken into consideration in the planning of the placement<sup>7</sup>.

Among the numerous activities - / - capacities listed above, all of which may seem in a way equally important to mastering the organisation of high quality mobility, we found that some stand out with regard to our aims for in-company learning: **enhance professional, international and transversal skills** and **foster the ability to identify (and question) and reflect on work practices and learning processes**. The following criteria cover all aspects of a high-quality In-company Learning Mobility, but be aware of the fact that in some mobility projects **not all aspects are relevant**:

- Capacity to “match” all players involved; sending and hosting intermediary partners act as **matchmaker** between sending companies and hosting companies making a coherent link from the sending context to the hosting context and back again.
- Ability to prepare and provide all partners with clear, accurate and up-to-date information concerning all requirements
- Ability to apply knowledge about transparency and recognition of competencies acquired abroad
- Ability to evaluate placements in companies by taking into consideration the training focus of the trainees and the possible recognition of the training period and the competencies & learning outcomes acquired abroad as part of the training in the home country.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.tlrp.org/pub/documents/apprenticeshipcommentaryFINAL.pdf>. The idea of expansive learning comes from the work of Yrjö Engeström<sup>6</sup> and as he says: “*The object of expansive learning activity is the entire activity system in which the learners are engaged. Expansive learning activity produces culturally new patterns of activity. Expansive learning at work produces new forms of work activity.*”

<sup>7</sup> A flow is what happens before/during and after an in-company learning mobility placement



The future awarding bodies need to prove their professional know-how and experiences in international In-company Learning Mobility in the fields of funding- / - financing of placement for apprentices as well as in the organisation of mobility stays abroad from starting point to evaluation and recognition.

The awarding body needs to prove continuous staff and infrastructure for continuously evaluating companies that apply for an EAS label.

### 3.2 How to Become an Awarding Body?

The Euro Apprenticeship platform is coordinated by APCMA, Assemblée permanente des Chambres de métiers et de l'artisanat. APCMA physically maintains the platform but it is the project-funded community of the Euro Apprenticeship partners and network that are responsible for the quality and aims of the platform.

Members and future awarding bodies will have the possibility in the registration form - / - profile to choose to upgrade to or directly become an awarding body with full access to the EQAMOB tools. In this case an application form with supplementary information needs to be submitted. The application to be an awarding body is received, recorded and reviewed online. APCMA and the EQAMOB&CO partners will check the application. If the application is not valid or has to be improved, the applicant is notified. If the application is accepted, then the applicant receives a positive notification with access to all resources online. APCMA will issue the EQAMOB&CO charter to the awarding body.

The list of awarding bodies will be published on line and highlighted.

### 3.3. How to Award the Label to Companies?

The awarding body is responsible for mobilising sending companies and finding hosting companies / placements and monitor the process. Its task is therefore first to promote and explain the process and the label and what it entails for the company.

If the company wishes to receive the label a review is conducted. Assessment checklists are available on line to serve as tools to help awarding bodies review potential sending or hosting companies (see appendix). It should be noted that not all elements on the checklist are always applicable depending on the national context and situation of the awarding body.

If the review is positive, the awarding body registers information about the company online, the company receives a certificate and access to the toolbox with EQAMOB&CO items for promotion (stickers, banners etc.)

The label has a "lifetime". Companies are listed in a database but not published online.

### 3.4. How to Use the QAG & Developing a Community of Practice



The aim of the Quality Assurance (QA) guidelines is to not only support the members of the (EAS) network to establish a quality assurance process that encourages companies to engage in “In-company Learning Mobility”, but also to **develop consistent partnerships** developing collective competencies to be shared and learned from each other. Members should partake in joint activities and discussions, helping each other and sharing information to form a *community of practice*<sup>8</sup>. Members of a *community of practice* are practitioners with common interests and goals.

They develop tools and resources together in order to improve processes and address problems. EQAMOB aims to develop *practices* that address the quality of “in-company learning for mobility apprentices” and we identified six essentials of a CoP for in-company Learning Mobility

- Members of the community are genuinely interested in supporting and providing a setting for In-company Learning Mobility and at the same time improve the abilities and competencies of the community.
- In-company Learning Mobility has a thematic orientation to provide QA guidelines for the community that are displayed in a LABEL, representing the community and what it stands for.
- Each member has their own *practice* within the domain of CoP. Every member is aware of each other’s way of work and responsibilities. In order to sustain and improve the QA guidelines and the value of the label, all members need to reflect on their own practices in their daily work.
- Our *motivation* ensures the existence of the community of practice.
- Submitting an application form shows commitment to the CoP. The checklist defines the task at hand and expects measurable results. The checklist also frames the space for the level of commitment to the members of the CoP
- The structure of CoPs goes beyond organisational boxes. It finds a balance between formal and informal structure. Members can choose their level of activity in the CoP and hierarchy is not an issue.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.teaching-learning.utas.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/185605/CoP-Reader-Complete.pdf](http://www.teaching-learning.utas.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/185605/CoP-Reader-Complete.pdf)



1. Criteria of High Quality for **sending companies** – Guidelines of Quality Assurance in the Community of Practice for In-company Learning Mobility:  
The following table shows the requirements a high-quality sending company should fulfil.



REQUIREMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS & CRITERIA:	KEY ISSUES, MAIN MESSAGES & FACTORS FOR SUCCESS
	<p>... requirements for funding;</p> <p>... organisation of mobility stays abroad from starting point to evaluation;</p> <p>... recognition of acquired competencies &amp; learning outcomes in national/regional context;</p> <p>... pedagogical, cultural and international knowledge &amp; competencies;</p> <p>... national, regional and international networks and stakeholders and potential reliable partners;</p>	<p>The organisation of mobility stays abroad is very complex and includes a variety of aspects such as organisational, social, (inter)cultural and personal issues, including travel arrangements, knowledge about professions, economic developments, existing and expected learning outcomes as well as characteristics, needs and prospects of participating mobile apprentices and sending and hosting companies and partner institutions.</p> <p>Sending organisations take on high responsibility of all those aspects. Therefore, it is indispensable that they have employees / professionals in their institution with experience, knowledge and contacts to different stakeholders, companies and relevant institutions. They need to work closely with the respective national agency and/or other relevant funding institutions and stay “up-to-date”. Moreover, informal experiences, social and interpersonal, (inter)cultural as well as communication and language skills are considered as highly important for people working in high-quality transnational mobility projects.</p>



<p><b>A conjunction, a “matchmaker” that ...</b></p>	<p>... has international, national and regional contacts to relevant players.</p> <p>... is able to network and match all players involved, such as mobile apprentices, sending and hosting companies/schools as well as other relevant players and stakeholders.</p>	<p>It is not only the knowledge about funding processes, branches and economic developments, companies and schools nearby or active in hosting countries, etc. that makes an in-company learning mobility project successful. It is also about being able to bring the relevant people together.</p> <p>Since in-company learning mobility should respect individual knowledge and competencies, needs and possibilities of participants as well as of companies, in addition to formal processes much information is exchanged on an individual and often informal basis between sending and hosting partners and participants. Sometimes projects and placements arise from personal contacts, start on the basis of single experiences and only then grow into a formal long term in-company learning mobility project.</p> <p>In order to initiate in-company learning mobility projects and conduct them successfully with respect to individual needs, it is necessary to communicate with relevant partners and connect them.</p>
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<p><b>“Information point” – provide all partners with clear, accurate and up-to-date information about ...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>... social security and overall status of mobility apprentices in the home as well as in the sending country.</li> <li>... insurance matters (travel, liability, accident, etc.).</li> <li>... recognition – Are the competencies acquired abroad recognized as part of the training in the home country and under which conditions?</li> <li>... travel arrangements (ways of travel, local transports, etc.) and accommodation.</li> <li>... cultural differences, characteristics of the environment (working &amp; living), incl. working conditions.</li> <li>... funding conditions and requirements.</li> </ul>	<p>It is absolutely necessary, that every partner in an in-company learning mobility activity has all relevant information. There must be one organisation / institution that takes on responsibility over the work and information flow. Since only sending institutions can apply for European funding and usually know the mobility apprentices, the companies and partners, the sending organisation is responsible for the overall quality of the mobility project, which is only possible with extensive information on all sides.</p> <p>This includes all in the aspects mentioned in the middle column and the responsibility that every partner in the project has the information that they need for a successful in-company learning mobility activity.</p> <p>Keywords in this sense should be: <i>clear, accurate, up-to-date, in good time.</i></p>
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<p><b>Documents and agreements</b></p>	<p>Arrangement of the content and definition of who is responsible for what.</p> <p>Relevant documents are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) / Partnership Agreement</li> <li>- Learning Agreement – including knowledge and competencies at the beginning of the placement and expected learning outcomes during / at the end of the placement</li> <li>- Personal Transcript / Certification</li> </ul> <p>ECVET provides model agreements for those three. EUROPASS provides models and documents for CV, Language Passport, Europass Mobility, Certificate - / - Diploma Supplement. Reports according to funding rules and/or rules of the sending organisation, school or company. In addition, individual agreements, log-books and certificates can/should be used.</p>	<p>Some of these agreements and documents are obligatory for transnational placements that are funded by European, national, regional or sectoral programs.</p> <p>Some of them are designed for the phase “before” the placement (the planning phase), others for the phase “during” the placement (the implementation), and some for “after” (the follow-up).</p> <p>Funding structures and instruments as well as questions regarding recognition can be complicated and not in every European country, teachers, trainers and apprentices/students are used to formulate learning outcomes.</p> <p>A high-quality sending organisation knows which documents and agreements are necessary and relevant in which case, is able to arrange the contents and defines who is responsible for what.</p>
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## 2. Criteria of High Quality for **hosting companies** – Guidelines of Quality Assurance in the Community of Practice for In-company Learning Mobility

Hosting companies are the main body regarding In-company Learning Mobility in the hosting country. In many cases intermediary institutions, schools or training centres are involved. If such an organisation is involved in hosting apprentices, it is usually responsible for providing adequate framework conditions concerning accommodation, logistics, cultural activities, language classes in the hosting country and builds the bridge to the hosting company. Very often hosting organisations and hosting companies work closely together, especially in the areas of monitoring and recognition.

In any case, having a high-quality hosting company is the quintessential part of high-quality In-company Learning Mobility in the hosting country. The hosting company is where apprentices spend most of their time abroad and where they expand their knowledge, skills and competencies according to their job profile, which is the basis for the recognition of the in-company learning activity.

The following table shows the requirements a high-quality hosting company should fulfil.

REQUIREMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS & CRITERIA	KEY ISSUES AND BENEFITS
<b>Professional Know-how</b>	Requirements for hosting an In-company Learning Mobility apprentice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional standards</li> <li>- Communication skills</li> <li>- Social skills</li> <li>- Newcomer introduction</li> <li>- Definition and appointment of responsible staff</li> </ul>	A company hosting apprentices for the period of a work placement enhances its own professional skills through preparing and partaking in in- company learning experiences. In a high-quality hosting company, staff involved in the mobility project are prepared for organisational details of the mobility stay, training needs of the apprentice and special needs.



		Mobility apprentices are offered a “new-comer introduction”, including formal and informal procedures, checklists, characteristics of the company culture, etc. Mobility apprentices are often highly skilled and motivated in their tasks which benefits the company.
<b>Encourage skilfulness</b>	Company where apprentices can improve their competencies and skills. This fosters international and cultural skills in an authentic work setting.	Engaging in hosting a mobility apprentice encouraged the skilfulness of all involved. The person responsible for the mobility apprentice develops their skills and competence as a trainer and develop new knowledge at the same time. This in turn enhances the company as a whole.
<b>Defining and responding to the learners training needs</b>	<p>Before the placement:            Definition of tasks, expected learning outcomes and work areas for the learner; proper use of documents according to needs</p> <p>During the placement:            Assistance, regular monitoring and supervision, adaptations in tasks, fields of work, etc. if necessary;            Integration</p> <p>After the placement:            Documentation of the placement period and learning outcomes achieved by the mobility apprentice; feedback            (also basis for future processes)</p>	<p>A successful placement relies on careful preparation. The roles of everyone involved should be accurate and transparent. This benefits everyone involved and ensures that expectations are realistic and explicit.</p> <p>The correct handling of documents is necessary to protect everyone involved. These simple procedures that are put into place to assist all participants can benefit companies in their own domestic training schemes.</p>



<b>Assistance, support, supervision and monitoring</b>	<p>Hosting companies need to be willing and able to participate in assessment, learning and monitoring processes and need to use the required documents.</p> <p>The level of participation may differ according to the different characteristics of the mobility.</p>	<p>Companies that receive mobility apprentices will be provided with support for monitoring issues if required. This will be done by the local intermediate partner involved in the organisation of the mobility.</p>
<b>Improvement of future processes</b>	<p>Feedback should be given to the mobility apprentice and sending organisation</p> <p>Company review;</p> <p>Results and findings with respect to future hosting activities</p>	<p>Improvement of the process guarantees cohesion and promotes the sustainability of the In-company learning mobility scheme.</p> <p>It is important to monitor the mobility from all perspectives in order to develop the organisation. This should prevent unforeseen problems. The problem solving can be shared amongst partners in full anonymity.</p>

- **Checklists for recognition of awarding bodies**
- **Checklist for awarding bodies for awarding the label to sending companies**
- **Checklist for awarding bodies for awarding the label to hosting companies**
- **Application form**
- **Charter for awarding bodies**





1. Criteria of High Quality for **sending companies** – Guidelines of Quality Assurance in the Community of Practice for In-company Learning Mobility:  
The following table shows the requirements a high-quality sending company should fulfil.



REQUIREMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS & CRITERIA:	KEY ISSUES, MAIN MESSAGES & FACTORS FOR SUCCESS
	<p>... requirements for funding;</p> <p>... organisation of mobility stays abroad from starting point to evaluation;</p> <p>... recognition of acquired competencies &amp; learning outcomes in national/regional context;</p> <p>... pedagogical, cultural and international knowledge &amp; competencies;</p> <p>... national, regional and international networks and stakeholders and potential reliable partners;</p>	<p>The organisation of mobility stays abroad is very complex and includes a variety of aspects such as organisational, social, (inter)cultural and personal issues, including travel arrangements, knowledge about professions, economic developments, existing and expected learning outcomes as well as characteristics, needs and prospects of participating mobile apprentices and sending and hosting companies and partner institutions.</p> <p>Sending organisations take on high responsibility of all those aspects. Therefore, it is indispensable that they have employees / professionals in their institution with experience, knowledge and contacts to different stakeholders, companies and relevant institutions. They need to work closely with the respective national agency and/or other relevant funding institutions and stay “up-to-date”. Moreover, informal experiences, social and interpersonal, (inter)cultural as well as communication and language skills are considered as highly important for people working in high-quality transnational mobility projects.</p>



<p><b>A conjunction, a “matchmaker” that ...</b></p>	<p>... has international, national and regional contacts to relevant players.</p> <p>... is able to network and match all players involved, such as mobile apprentices, sending and hosting companies/schools as well as other relevant players and stakeholders.</p>	<p>It is not only the knowledge about funding processes, branches and economic developments, companies and schools nearby or active in hosting countries, etc. that makes an in-company learning mobility project successful. It is also about being able to bring the relevant people together.</p> <p>Since in-company learning mobility should respect individual knowledge and competencies, needs and possibilities of participants as well as of companies, in addition to formal processes much information is exchanged on an individual and often informal basis between sending and hosting partners and participants. Sometimes projects and placements arise from personal contacts, start on the basis of single experiences and only then grow into a formal long term in-company learning mobility project.</p> <p>In order to initiate in-company learning mobility projects and conduct them successfully with respect to individual needs, it is necessary to communicate with relevant partners and connect them.</p>
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<p><b>“Information point” – provide all partners with clear, accurate and up-to-date information about ...</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>... social security and overall status of mobility apprentices in the home as well as in the sending country.</li> <li>... insurance matters (travel, liability, accident, etc.).</li> <li>... recognition – Are the competencies acquired abroad recognized as part of the training in the home country and under which conditions?</li> <li>... travel arrangements (ways of travel, local transports, etc.) and accommodation.</li> <li>... cultural differences, characteristics of the environment (working &amp; living), incl. working conditions.</li> <li>... funding conditions and requirements.</li> </ul>	<p>It is absolutely necessary, that every partner in an in-company learning mobility activity has all relevant information. There must be one organisation / institution that takes on responsibility over the work and information flow. Since only sending institutions can apply for European funding and usually know the mobility apprentices, the companies and partners, the sending organisation is responsible for the overall quality of the mobility project, which is only possible with extensive information on all sides.</p> <p>This includes all in the aspects mentioned in the middle column and the responsibility that every partner in the project has the information that they need for a successful in-company learning mobility activity.</p> <p>Keywords in this sense should be: <i>clear, accurate, up-to-date, in good time.</i></p>
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<p><b>Documents and agreements</b></p>	<p>Arrangement of the content and definition of who is responsible for what.</p> <p>Relevant documents are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) / Partnership Agreement</li> <li>- Learning Agreement – including knowledge and competencies at the beginning of the placement and expected learning outcomes during / at the end of the placement</li> <li>- Personal Transcript / Certification</li> </ul> <p>ECVET provides model agreements for those three. EUROPASS provides models and documents for CV, Language Passport, Europass Mobility, Certificate - / - Diploma Supplement. Reports according to funding rules and/or rules of the sending organisation, school or company. In addition, individual agreements, log-books and certificates can/should be used.</p>	<p>Some of these agreements and documents are obligatory for transnational placements that are funded by European, national, regional or sectoral programs.</p> <p>Some of them are designed for the phase “before” the placement (the planning phase), others for the phase “during” the placement (the implementation), and some for “after” (the follow-up).</p> <p>Funding structures and instruments as well as questions regarding recognition can be complicated and not in every European country, teachers, trainers and apprentices/students are used to formulate learning outcomes.</p> <p>A high-quality sending organisation knows which documents and agreements are necessary and relevant in which case, is able to arrange the contents and defines who is responsible for what.</p>
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## 2. Criteria of High Quality for **hosting companies** – Guidelines of Quality Assurance in the Community of Practice for In-company Learning Mobility

Hosting companies are the main body regarding In-company Learning Mobility in the hosting country. In many cases intermediary institutions, schools or training centres are involved. If such an organisation is involved in hosting apprentices, it is usually responsible for providing adequate framework conditions concerning accommodation, logistics, cultural activities, language classes in the hosting country and builds the bridge to the hosting company. Very often hosting organisations and hosting companies work closely together, especially in the areas of monitoring and recognition.

In any case, having a high-quality hosting company is the quintessential part of high-quality In-company Learning Mobility in the hosting country. The hosting company is where apprentices spend most of their time abroad and where they expand their knowledge, skills and competencies according to their job profile, which is the basis for the recognition of the in-company learning activity.

The following table shows the requirements a high-quality hosting company should fulfil.

REQUIREMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS & CRITERIA	KEY ISSUES AND BENEFITS
<b>Professional Know-how</b>	Requirements for hosting an In-company Learning Mobility apprentice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional standards</li> <li>- Communication skills</li> <li>- Social skills</li> <li>- Newcomer introduction</li> <li>- Definition and appointment of responsible staff</li> </ul>	A company hosting apprentices for the period of a work placement enhances its own professional skills through preparing and partaking in in- company learning experiences. In a high-quality hosting company, staff involved in the mobility project are prepared for organisational details of the mobility stay, training needs of the apprentice and special needs.



		<p>Mobility apprentices are offered a “new-comer introduction”, including formal and informal procedures, checklists, characteristics of the company culture, etc. Mobility apprentices are often highly skilled and motivated in their tasks which benefits the company.</p>
<p><b>Encourage skilfulness</b></p>	<p>Company where apprentices can improve their competencies and skills. This fosters international and cultural skills in an authentic work setting.</p>	<p>Engaging in hosting a mobility apprentice encouraged the skilfulness of all involved. The person responsible for the mobility apprentice develops their skills and competence as a trainer and develop new knowledge at the same time. This in turn enhances the company as a whole.</p>
<p><b>Defining and responding to the learners training needs</b></p>	<p>Before the placement:            Definition of tasks, expected learning outcomes and work areas for the learner; proper use of documents according to needs</p> <p>During the placement:            Assistance, regular monitoring and supervision, adaptations in tasks, fields of work, etc. if necessary;            Integration</p> <p>After the placement:            Documentation of the placement period and learning outcomes achieved by the mobility apprentice; feedback            (also basis for future processes)</p>	<p>A successful placement relies on careful preparation. The roles of everyone involved should be accurate and transparent. This benefits everyone involved and ensures that expectations are realistic and explicit.</p> <p>The correct handling of documents is necessary to protect everyone involved. These simple procedures that are put into place to assist all participants can benefit companies in their own domestic training schemes.</p>



<b>Assistance, support, supervision and monitoring</b>	<p>Hosting companies need to be willing and able to participate in assessment, learning and monitoring processes and need to use the required documents.</p> <p>The level of participation may differ according to the different characteristics of the mobility.</p>	<p>Companies that receive mobility apprentices will be provided with support for monitoring issues if required. This will be done by the local intermediate partner involved in the organisation of the mobility.</p>
<b>Improvement of future processes</b>	<p>Feedback should be given to the mobility apprentice and sending organisation</p> <p>Company review;</p> <p>Results and findings with respect to future hosting activities</p>	<p>Improvement of the process guarantees cohesion and promotes the sustainability of the In-company learning mobility scheme.</p> <p>It is important to monitor the mobility from all perspectives in order to develop the organisation. This should prevent unforeseen problems. The problem solving can be shared amongst partners in full anonymity.</p>



## APPENDIX

- [Checklists for recognition of awarding bodies](#)
- [Checklist for awarding bodies for awarding the label to sending companies](#)
- [Checklist for awarding bodies for awarding the label to hosting companies](#)
- [Application form](#)
- [Charter for awarding bodies](#)