



GEMTREX – PROFESSIONALISING GENDER TRAINERS AND EXPERTS IN ADULT EDUCATION

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Professional Standards for Gender Work in Adult Education

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Introduction

Since Gender mainstreaming has become a commonly recognised cross cutting issue all over EU Member States a market for gender work has developed, a new profession, with a high demand for further education and professionalisation. Due to the fact that concepts of gender education have remained fragmented, a clear demand for professional gender work has emerged, based on specific professional standards with a mode for certification.

Up to now, quality assurance of gender work often happens in projects, round tables or networks of excellence on national and international level. GemTrEx works on development and improvement of existing quality standards and it is based on the experience of these networks and platforms. The international focus of GemTrEx was targeted in order to counteract the fragmentation and isolated positions of the attempts within the area of the gender professions.

The concrete aims and objectives of GemTrEx focus on the development of an international course for gender work in the system of further education. Quality assurance will be guaranteed through the development of quality standards for gender workers. These standards will function as a professional base for GemTrEx learning and training offers in the future.

Development of Professional Standards

The main target of the project GemTrEx has been to initiate a common process of professionalisation for the emerging market of “gender workers”.

During the first year of the project, the partners have been looking for quality criteria referring to activities in the area of gender mainstreaming and gender trainings. As had been expected, only little relevant material has been found. A big step forward was made by introducing the “European Qualifications Framework” (**EQF**) into the project, as a reference point to define what “gender workers” should be able to do. Different to the traditional approach with its focus on learning inputs (length of learning experience, type of institution etc.), the EQF emphasizes learning outcomes. *“As an instrument for the promotion of lifelong learning, the EQF encompasses general and adult education, vocational education and training, as well as higher education ... The EQF will function as a type of translation device to make relationships between qualifications and different systems clearer.”*

(http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/index_en.html)

(Newsletter No. 2)

Roles of a “Gender Worker” in Adult Education

The field of gender work is diverse. It encompasses well defined roles, such as teaching and training among others and basic roles on a rather low level of gender knowledge. Therefore we made a distinction between *Basic Gender Workers* and *Advanced Gender Workers*. In order to define their roles, a general definition of gender work will have to be described.

Gender Worker – General Definition

Gender Workers are described as ...

- People in *any professional paid work*,
- who are in *contact with people* (direct and indirect),
- and active in the field of *adult education*,
- with a special focus on *gender*.
- Therefore these people must have *educational competencies* in a wide sense (teachers, trainers, coaches, counsellors, psycho-therapists, nurses, ...)

Basic Gender Worker

Precondition

Any profession referring to the general definition of gender worker (see above).

Why basic?

A Basic Gender Worker is any professional member who has a multiplicatory role in his/her working field, referring to gender. It could be a nurse as a gender agent in hospital as well as a personnel manager who is responsible for the implementation of gender mainstreaming in a company.

The term basic refers to the fact that well defined knowledge, skills and competencies (described below) in the field of gender and gender mainstreaming are not required.

Advanced Gender Worker

Precondition

Any profession referring to the general definition of gender worker (see above).

Why advanced ?

The term advanced refers to the fact that well defined knowledge, skills and competencies in the field of gender and gender mainstreaming are required.

Advanced gender workers should be able to carry out at least one of the following functions/roles:

- Facilitator / trainer (group dynamics)
- Teacher / lecturer (knowledge transfer)
- Concept & programme developer (planning)
- Project manager (coordination, implementation)
- Researcher (analysis)
- Consultant and coach (accompanying function)

Professional standards for advanced gender workers will be defined in this paper. These standards will serve as a guideline for the development of a syllabus.

Working with the European Qualification Framework (EQF)

“Europe is characterised by a great diversity of education and training institutions and systems. This mirrors a widespread and strong consensus that education and training should reflect and respond to learning needs at local, regional and national level. This richness and variety of European education and training can be seen as an important asset and something which makes it possible to react rapidly and efficiently to technological and economic change.

The European Councils in Lisbon and Barcelona recognised increased transparency of qualifications as a necessary precondition for turning this diversity into an asset. A situation where education and training systems and institutions operate in isolation from each other could lead to fragmentation and hinder rather than enable citizens to develop their knowledge, skills and competences.”

(Brussels, 5.9.2006 COM(2006) 479 final 2006/0163 (COD))

In order to guarantee transparency and comparability of qualifications, a “*new way to understand qualifications across Europe*” has been established.

(http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/index_en.html / 24.04.2007)

In 2006 the European commission adopted a concept on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF). The EQF describes qualifications in a way which allows to compare qualifications across diverse education and training systems all over the EU Member States.

“*The core of the EQF is its eight reference levels describing what a learner knows, understands and is able to do - their 'learning outcomes' - regardless of where a particular qualification was acquired. The EQF reference levels therefore shift the focus away from the traditional approach, which emphasises learning inputs (length of a learning experience, type of institution). Shifting the focus to learning outcomes*”

(http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/index_en.html / 4.12.2007)

The EQF encompasses an entire span of qualifications from general education, adult education, vocational education and training to the highest level of education.

“*The EQF foresees that Member States relate their national qualifications systems to the EQF by 2010 and that their qualifications contain a reference to the EQF by 2012. It will therefore enable individuals and employers to use the EQF as a reference tool to compare the qualifications levels of different countries and different education and training systems, for example vocational training and higher*

education.” (http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/index_en.html Stand: 4.12.2007)

Quality Standards for Advanced Gender Workers with Reference to the EQF Learning Outcomes Level 5

EHEA & EQF – Explanatory Statements for Level 5

In compatibility with the *Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)*¹, the Descriptors for *Learning Outcomes EQF Level 5* correspond to the Dublin Descriptors (2004) for the higher education short cycle (within or linked to the first cycle), developed by the Joint Quality Initiative as part of the Bologna Process.

“The identification of first and second cycle studies, within the Bologna Declaration (1999), was the first step towards developing an over-arching qualifications framework for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). By creating this initial division between cycles the first elements of a qualifications framework were established.”²

One of the key elements in contemporary qualifications frameworks is the specification of outcomes, especially the various ways in which the range of outcomes can be categorised and specified.

“The descriptors for a European framework must of necessity be quite general in nature. Not only must they accommodate a wide range of disciplines and profiles but they must also accommodate, as far as possible, the national variations in how qualifications have been developed and specified. For practical purposes, the descriptors should be short and easy to understand. They should avoid technical language, bearing in mind that they will be used in reference to national qualifications systems expressed in a variety of languages.”³

“The Dublin descriptors were built on the following elements:

- knowledge and understanding;
- applying knowledge and understanding;
- making judgements;

¹ A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks. Published by: Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Bredgade 43 DK-1260 Copenhagen. <http://www.vtu.dk>

² A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks. Published by: Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Bredgade 43 DK-1260 Copenhagen. <http://www.vtu.dk>. P. 17

³ A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks. Published by: Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Bredgade 43 DK-1260 Copenhagen. <http://www.vtu.dk>. P. 64

- communications skills;
- learning skills.”⁴

„Qualifications that signify completion of the **higher education short cycle (within or linked to the first cycle)** are awarded to students who:

- have demonstrated knowledge and understanding in a field of study that builds upon general secondary education and is typically at a level supported by advanced textbooks; such knowledge provides an underpinning for a field of work or vocation, personal development, and further studies to complete the first cycle;
- can apply their knowledge and understanding in occupational contexts;
- have the ability to identify and use data to formulate responses to well-defined concrete and abstract problems;
- can communicate about their understanding, skills and activities, with peers, supervisors and clients;
- have the learning skills to undertake further studies with some autonomy”⁵

Knowledge, Skills & Competence – Quality Standards for Advanced Gender Workers (EQF Level 5)

In order to improve professionalisation in the field of gender work, we recommend the following standards for advanced gender workers. These professional standards are based on

- Results of the previous GemTrEx Needs Analyses with prospective user groups in all participating countries
- Specific survey results about professional standards in the field of gender work on national level
- Existing concepts of professional standards in the European education system (EQF)
- Theoretical reflections on gender theory and quality assurance
- Reflections on pilot module units in the network of gender excellence (GemTrEx project members in all participating countries)
- Reflections and comments on previous drafts of the present paper.

⁴ A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks. Published by: Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Bredgade 43 DK-1260 Copenhagen. <http://www.vtu.dk>, p. 65.

⁵ A Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks. Published by: Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Bredgade 43 DK-1260 Copenhagen. <http://www.vtu.dk>, p. 66

The learning outcomes relevant to Level 5 are:

Knowledge	Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge
Skills	The ability to apply expertise in a comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills in developing creative solutions to abstract problems
Competence	Competence in Management and Supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change

Source: (http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/eqf/index_en.html / 18.4.2008)

Core Values in Gender Work

The core values set out below are those that inform the professional standards for gender workers that follow. In some instances direct reference to the values is woven into the standards in order to reinforce their indispensability. Notwithstanding this all aspects of the standards should be understood as being underpinned by these values, which must form part of any assessment arising out of learning programmes developed on the basis of the standards.

Individuality and diversity

Gender work concerns itself with the value of human beings both as individuals and as members of particular groups or categories. Individuals are to be valued in their own right and differences between people are to be valued as assets and celebrated rather than being exploited as spurious reasons to devalue and disadvantage individuals and groups. “Different but equal” is the sentiment that lies at the heart of this belief.

Equality of opportunity and non-discrimination

Fundamental to gender work is the belief that all human beings are entitled to enjoy the basic human right of equality of opportunity unhampered by prejudices associated with gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, age or religion. In some circumstances powerful measures may be required to secure this equality. Gender workers are committed to working towards the removal of all disadvantages and barriers to equality of opportunity that arise from prejudice and discrimination.

Co-operation and collaboration

Positive change is the primary goal of all gender work. Genuine change in the direction of equality of opportunity and non-discrimination necessarily requires all stakeholders to co-operate and collaborate in the quest to build a society in which unfair disadvantage is removed and equality of opportunity is safeguarded. Gender workers need not only to co-operate and collaborate with a diversity of stakeholders

to achieve this goal, but also to generate the desire to co-operate and collaborate in the stakeholders themselves.

Empowerment and self-advocacy

Gender workers seek to remove gender-related disadvantage in organisations and in society in general. Beyond this they seek to enable individuals to gain independence by helping them to acquire the confidence and the ability not only to represent their own interests and to defend their own entitlement, but also to support others in doing the same.

Reflective practice and professional development

Gender work focuses on bringing about positive change in the lives of individuals and therefore carries a significant burden of responsibility. To be effective gender workers need to continuously evaluate their own practice and achievements. This entails constant reflection and continuous professional development in the form of scholarly activity and intellectual exchange with peers.

1. Knowledge

1.1. Understand theories of gender and their historical development

- a) Evaluate a range of theoretical approaches to gender (feminist theory, gender theory, queer theory, critical men's studies)
- b) Outline the historical development of theoretical approaches to gender
- c) Identify political and socio-economic influences on the development of such approaches
- d) Analyse a range of key concepts relating to gender discourses including:
 - gender power relations
 - hegemonic masculinity and femininity
 - “doing gender”
 - sex, gender and sexual orientation
 - intersectionality
 - diversity

1.2. Understand theoretical approaches to gender-political themes in European societies

- a) Compare and contrast the gendered structure of European societies:
 - at a macro-economic level (e.g. indicative content)
 - at a legislative level (e.g. equality laws, human rights)
- b) Compare and contrast strategies and concepts relating to a range of gender-political discourses (e.g. gender equality, equation, gender equity)
- c) Evaluate gender-political strategies for achieving equality of opportunity (e.g. gender mainstreaming, gender equality duty)
- d) Analyse the gender related dimensions of a range of socio-political undertakings (e.g. mobility, traffic, regional planning, care & health)

1.3. Understand theoretical approaches to the analysis of the gendered structure of organisations

- a) Apply theories of gender to the analysis of the structure and development of organisations
- b) Define gendered processes in organisations and illustrate implementation tools and strategies for gender equality measures
- c) Use gender analysis methods in organisational analysis

1.4. Understand theoretical approaches to gender within interpersonal relationships

- a) Analyse the dynamics of the behaviour of humans in groups
- b) Identify and analyse influences on the formation of individual gender identity (e.g. gendered socialization, self concept changes, family, body, sexuality, sexual orientation)
- c) Analyse the gender related behaviour of individuals in diverse relational settings (e.g. friendship, networks)
- d) Analyse and evaluate the gender dimensions of a range of modes of codified representation (e.g. spoken and written language, pictorial, musical, symbolic)
- e) Evaluate both formal and informal educational influences on individual perceptions of gender and gender identity

1.5. Understand the relevance and significance of current debates to questions of gender

- a) Engage in current debates about change and development in various areas of society and the environment (e.g. mobility, traffic, regional and municipal development, water and sustainable development, urban planning and architecture)
- b) Identify the gender-related repercussions of current debates and contribute constructively to them by the transfer of own and others' gender knowledge and expertise

2. Skills

2.1. Academic Skills

a) Methods

- i) Apply appropriate methods to the analysis of gendered structures in different areas of society
- ii) Use a variety of methods/tools to develop and implement gender equality measures

b) Knowledge Transfer

- i) Transform theory into practice: Illustrate the application of theoretical concepts to practice using appropriate methods/tools
- ii) Apply practical skills using a variety of appropriate methods
- iii) Develop methods and skills for the transfer of knowledge

c) Analysis and Evaluation

- i) Apply different analytical methods/tools at macro, meso and micro levels and developing variants of the methods/tools
- ii) Develop evaluation strategies for use in gender analytical activities (targets, indicators, evaluation criteria for quantitative and qualitative analysis)
- iii) Draw clear distinctions between critical concepts in the interpretation and analysis of situations and problems relating to gender

d) “Meta” Skills

- i) Analyse social phenomenon in terms of different social categories and their interrelationship (e.g. relate and describe one's personal life in connection with social structures)
- ii) Reflect critically on dual gender concepts, gender stereotypes and on prejudice and its consequences (inequality and discrimination)
- iii) Explain, compare, contrast and classify the knowledge and ideas of (gender) experts
- iv) Engage continuously in reflection and scholarly activity

2.2. Planning and problem-solving skills

- a) Agree clear achievable (SMART⁶) goals, informed by the core value set, with stakeholders
- b) Gather relevant information, schedule activities and allocate roles for the efficient achievement of goals
- c) Apply a range of appropriate theoretical and practical approaches, consonant with core values, to the management of and solution to complex problems
- d) Adapt problem-solving strategies/concepts to specific situational and/or organisational circumstances
- e) Develop clear and practical applications of the central concept of equality and its accompanying core values to concrete problems
- f) Contribute to the development of planning and problem-solving skills in others

⁶ Specific, Measurable, Achievable and/or Agreed, Realistic and/or Relevant, Time-constrained

2.3. Communication

- a) Listen actively and elicit information through the skilful use of questions
- b) Express ideas and arguments on complex gender-related issues clearly and appropriately for a given audience both orally and in writing
- c) Use examples from the learners' life experience, their knowledge and professional experience to explore gender themes
- d) Structure and facilitate group discussions and identify barriers to communication
- e) Identify and analyse some of the roots of inequalities, stereotypes and prejudices within communication
- f) Use a range of communication methods and media to conduct discourses on gender and diversity (e.g. knowledge transfer through lecture, map exercises, role games, body work)
- g) Analyse and discuss difficult gender related situations that trainers encounter in their work place, personal life and strategic change processes such as e.g. gender mainstreaming and change management
- h) Work within the context of different (academic) disciplines
- i) Employ and encourage the use of a gender sensitive language (writing, speaking, picturing)
- j) Foster core values through own communication

2.4. Self-awareness and interpersonal skills

- a) Reflect analytically on own gender identity and motivation
- b) Identify and discuss power relations in group dynamics (e.g. in-group/out-group-interrelationship) and enable learners to effectively explore power-relations
- c) Establish rapport and empathy with others through skilful listening techniques
- d) Adjust responses in accordance with the individual needs of learners
- e) Foster independence and self-advocacy in others
- f) Identify diverse characters of group members and deal with difference
- g) Promote teamwork, networking, exchange of experts and supervision in the field of gender work
- h) Assist others in coping with difficulties associated with gender-related change processes
- i) Deal fairly and assertively with inappropriate interpersonal behaviour (e.g. use of discriminatory language)
- j) Encourage the development of self-awareness and good interpersonal skills in others
- k) Recognise own strengths and limitations in dealing with gender-related issues and seek support from other agencies accordingly

2.5. Pedagogical Skills

- a) Set (SMART) learning objectives which are appropriate for the subject specialism (gender-related topics and themes) and the learner(s) and which are consistent with core values
- b) Minimise barriers to learning by providing differentiated support to individual learners in accordance with their diversity
- c) Establish a learning environment where learners feel safe, secure, confident and valued equally
- d) Create a motivating environment which encourages learners to reflect on gender identity in a personalised manner
- e) Encourage learners to use their own life experiences and professional experience as a source for their development
- f) Make use of supervision and/or coaching in order to guarantee positive professional development in the field of gender work
- g) Use different training materials (e.g. cards, drawing) in practical activities, to support the learners' needs in an effective way
- h) Use a range of effective and appropriate teaching and learning techniques to engage and motivate learners and encourage independence
- i) Identify with learners the transferable skills they are developing, and how these might relate to their professional practice

3. Competences

The following competences are indicative and relate to the work roles, defined for advanced gender work. Similar competences may be added to the list.

a) Overarching competence

- Consult/negotiate with clients and/or stakeholders in a range of organisational settings in order to:
- Identify gender related problems and challenges
 - Agree targets for individual and/or organisational change
 - Develop and implement strategies to achieve agreed targets
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies and their implementation

b) Specific examples

- Plan, prepare, execute, assess and evaluate agreed gender-related learning and development events with groups and individuals (teaching, training)
- Plan, develop, implement and evaluate agreed gender-related development and change strategies in organisations (strategy planning)
- Design, develop, co-ordinate and evaluate gender-related project work in collaboration with specified clients/stakeholders (project management)
- Design, execute, evaluation and report on gender-related research/investigative activities (research)
- Negotiate, develop, execute and evaluate personal support and learning and development strategies for individuals and teams in organisations (consultation and coaching)