

Credit attribution when designing a course: theory, practice and a case study

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ABSTRACT

The EU project ADLAB PRO has been devised with the main aim of creating free-access, flexible, didactic materials of a modular and customizable nature for the training of an extremely important yet little known professional figure with a key role in the field of media accessibility: the audio describer. One of the most important and challenging stages of the construction of the ADLAB PRO course curriculum for expert audio description professionals has been the attribution of ECTS and ECVETS to each of its educational components. ECTS and ECVETS attribution is in fact crucial when producing a course that aims at being transparent and easily recognized in formal and informal education and training systems. In this paper, the process of ECTS and ECVET attribution to the ADLAB PRO course is described in detail and it is complemented by general reflections on the role of accreditation. Besides affecting directly prospective trainer and trainees interested in audio description and the audiovisual translation market, this paper contributes as possible reference for the growing number of EU projects that nowadays set curriculum design as their main goal.

KEYWORDS

ECTS, ECVETS, training, accreditation, recognition, audio description.

1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, a number of European projects in the field of accessibility and audiovisual translation (AVT) have set course design and production of training materials as one of their main outcomes. The reason for this is that some types of AVT, such as subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing, also in the form of live subtitling or respeaking, and audio description (AD) for the blind and visually impaired patrons are fairly new fields of research and practice, and as such are not yet established or taught consistently throughout Europe. What's more, coherent training materials and specific settings for the formation of new skilled professional profiles are still scant or even missing (ADLAB 2012; ADLAB PRO 2017a; Díaz Cintas et al. 2010).

To mention a few recent examples, suffice it to think of the following EU projects in the field of media accessibility. ACT (2015-2018, <http://pagines.uab.cat/act/>) purposed the definition of the Media Accessibility Expert/Manager for the Scenic Arts, and the various types of training activities associated to this professional figure (ACT 2016, 2017). ADLAB PRO (2016-2019, <https://www.adlabpro.eu/>) developed a course curriculum and training materials to cater for the formation of the AD professional to be used both in academic and in vocational contexts (ADLAB PRO 2018a, 2018b). ILSA (2017-2020, <http://www.ilsaproject.eu/>) will identify the skills and profile of the interlingual live subtitler, and it will develop, test and validate the first training course on interlingual live subtitling, and it will provide a protocol for the implementation of this discipline in three real-life scenarios, namely TV, political/social settings and the classroom (ILSA 2019). EASIT (2018-2021, <http://pagines.uab.cat/easit/en>) will explore the effects of simplified (or “Easy-to-Understand”, E2U; EASIT 2019) language on AVT products and will develop three skills cards, curricula and relative training materials for three different professional profiles: expert in E2U subtitles, expert in E2U audio description, and expert in E2U audio visual journalism. The LTA project (2018-2021, <https://ltaproject.eu/>) aims to design an effective and certified curriculum for real-time intralingual respeakers and velotypists in order to meet both current to meet labour market and societal needs.

When designing a course, especially within the framework of a EU project, it is crucial that both the course curriculum and the educational components produced (such as course units, dissertations, work-based learning and work placements; EU 2015: 15) can be officially recognized at a European level. This in fact guarantees the quality of the course and the sustainability as well as the resilience of the project. To illustrate how this recognition can take place, in this paper I will focus on the experience of the project ADLAB PRO, which, through specific research activities, has dedicated special efforts to this aim thus delivering two different types of suggested credit attribution: ECTS to be used by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and ECVETS to be used by companies involved in vocational (e.g. company in-house) education and training (VET).

In the following paragraphs, I will briefly outline the main features and research activities of the EU project ADLAB PRO. I will then move to define ECTS and ECVETS based on their official definition according to the *ECTS User's Guide* (EU 2009, 2015) and I will outline their major differences based on the research outcomes of the EU project Be-TWIN (2009-2012), focused on researching the compatibility and comparability between ECVET and the ECTS. I will then illustrate how the ADLAB PRO course has developed and I will focus on its modular structure and resulting benefits for prospective users. To conclude, based on the internal structure and components of the course modules, I will move to the description of process of both ECTS and ECVET attribution.

2. THE ADLAB PRO PROJECT

Successfully concluded on 31st August, 2019, the ADLAB PRO project (Audio Description: A Laboratory for the Development of a New Professional Profile), coordinated by the University of Trieste and financed by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Programme, Key Action 2, Strategic Partnerships, aimed at profiling a new professional figure – the AD expert – and developing an effective and reliable curriculum for the training of this new profile embedded in the digital era. AD, an accessible, inter-semiotic type of AVT, is the insertion of short verbal descriptions illustrating the essential visual elements of any audiovisual product (including films but also such audiovisual phenomena as art galleries, museums, live events, etc.) for the blind and visually impaired community (Fryer 2016; Peregó 2014; Remael et al. 2015; Snyder 2007, 2014).

The creation of such a new curriculum has been carried out by a virtuous and well-established consortium made of four HEIs (The University of Trieste as the lead partner, the University of Antwerp, the University Adam Mickiewicz in Poznan, and the Autonomous University of Barcelona) in cooperation with four industrial partners and service providers (Utopian Voices in the UK, Soundfocus in The Netherlands; RTV Slovenija and the Royal National Institute for the Blind)¹ to ensure that the profile meets multiple market needs and that the curriculum designed to train future experts is efficient, flexible in implementation, and of high quality. Benefitting from the expertise of a diverse range of both universities and non-educational partners, the project managed to create a modular course that can either be implemented at university level within MA's or be used as a stand-alone course.

1 Utopian Voices is a small AD company also offering training in this sector. Soundfocus is a post-production facility specialized in sound design and media accessibility; RTV Slovenija is a Public Institution and non-profit organisation rendering public service in the field of radio and television activities. The Royal National Institute for the Blind is a membership organisation with over 10,000 members who are blind, partially sighted or the friends and family of people with sight loss. More details on <https://www.adlabpro.eu/people/partners/>.

The three-year project activities have been organized into six “Intellectual Outputs” (IOs), each led by a specific partner (Table 1). Specifically, the project has produced a detailed snapshot of the current AD training practices in Europe (IO1); it has outlined the AD professional profile along with its required skills and its competences (IO2); it has designed a course curriculum based on different types of AD (IO3) – including screen AD, AD of dynamic performances and events, recorded AD for static arts and environments, AD integrated in revoiced translation modes, AD for new audiences and AD interacting with new technologies – and it has created open, free, modular and fully customizable training materials (IO4) based on constant internal and external evaluation and testing (IO5). The project has also looked at the accreditation of the educational components for both academic and vocational scenarios through the attribution of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) and ECVETS (European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training) to each of the six modules constituting the whole course (IO6).

IO	Full title	Partner in charge
IO1	Assessment of current AD training practices	University Adam Mickiewicz
IO2	AD professional: Profile definition	University of Trieste
IO3	Course design	University of Antwerp
IO4	Development of course content	Autonomous University of Barcelona
IO5	Evaluation and testing	Utopian Voices
IO6	Course evaluation, recognition and accreditation	University of Trieste

Table 1. ADLAB PRO’s Intellectual Outputs details

Details on each IO (premises, theoretical and methodological background, results and raw data) are included in the IO reports that are available on the project website (<https://www.adlabpro.eu/intellectual-outputs/>).

3. WHAT ARE ECTS AND ECVETS

According to the ECTS User’s Guide

ECTS credits express the volume of learning based on the defined learning outcomes and their associated workload. 60 ECTS credits are allocated to the learning outcomes and associated workload of a full-time academic year or its equivalent, which normally comprises a number of educational components to which credits (on the basis of the learning outcomes and workload) are allocated. (EU 2015: 11)

ECVET points, on the other hand, express the competences needed by the learner to complete a qualification in numerical form (EU 2015).

ECTS and ECVETS are quite different, and they are used in different contexts, as clearly demonstrated in the outcomes of the Be-TWIN project, which has been invaluable for the development of IO6 and specifically for the attribution of ECVETS to the educational components of the ADLAB PRO course curriculum. In fact, the European project Be-TWIN² has devoted all its activities to facilitate the compatibility and comparability between ECVET and the ECTS, which is used in the higher education sector, thus contributing to a greater permeability between levels of education and training, and it has developed innovative tools and methodologies linking both credit systems (cf. Be-TWIN 2010a, 2010b, 2011).

As illustrated in one of the most important outcomes of the European Be-TWIN project (*Be-TWIN 2010b*), ECTS were first experimented in 1989 in the framework of the Erasmus programme and only later were they incorporated in the Bologna process, whereas ECVETS points were first experimented 20 years later, in 2009, in the framework of pilot projects, and they were later incorporated into the Copenhagen Process through a Recommendation of the EP and Council. If ECTS are normally used by HEIs and are based on learning content and student workload (and are therefore input oriented), the field of application of ECVET points is vocational education and training, including continuing education and informal learning, and they are based on learning outcomes or competences (they are therefore output oriented). The major objective of ECTS is the recognition of student mobility within the European Higher Education Area, whereas the major objective of ECVET points is putting in place a credit system compatible and in line with the specificities of vocational education and training.

The main limitation of these credit system is that they do not seem to be compatible: ECTS are not applicable to vocational education at tertiary level, nor to alternative learning pathways and no connection has been determined so far between ECTS and ECVET points. However, assigning both ECTS and ECVETS to each educational component of a course is a crucial process that can ensure the comparability of programmes and awarding qualifications, the transparency of studies and courses and consequent recognition of academic qualifications obtained abroad, and overall accreditation standards and quality.

- 2 Co-financed by the Lifelong Learning Programme (sub-programme Leonardo da Vinci) for three years (March 2009 – February 2012) under a specific call for proposals to test and implement ECVET. Coordinated by the Paris chamber of commerce and industry (CCIP), Be-TWIN gathered 14 partners from eight EU countries.

4. THE ADLAB PRO COURSE DEVELOPMENT: THE MODULAR STRUCTURE

The main result of the ADLAB PRO project is the ADLAB PRO course. The course and the training materials produced to implement it are currently fully accessible, free and online at <https://www.adlabpro.eu/coursematerials/>. Users, specifically AD trainers and trainees, can easily access a variety of training and reference materials and choose them according to their needs and existing educational or professional background.

The course design developed in the first stages of the project, under IO3 (ADLAB PRO 2018b). It is the result of extensive research in the field of the didactics of AD, both from a professional (e.g. Fryer 2016, Hyks 2005, Snyder 2014) and an academic (e.g. Orero 2005, Matamala 2006, Díaz-Cintas 2007, Matamala & Orero 2007) perspective, complemented by a number of more specific publications, relating to curriculum design and more in particular the formulation of learning outcomes, scaffolded learning and ECTS accreditation (Beetham 2013; Bloom et al. 1956; Kennedy 2007; Kiraly 2000, 2005; Laurillard 2012; Mayers et al. 2013), and by surveys carried out under IO1 and IO2. Specifically, the results of the IO1 surveys (ADLAB PRO 2017a) allowed to map most AD existing training practices in Europe and to pinpoint the gaps to fill and the needs to satisfy in training contexts. The results of the IO2 surveys (ADLAB PRO 2017b) enabled us to define the profile of the AD professional and to identify the competences that should be developed in focused training. The final curriculum devised by partners envisages six modules, each divided into units. Module are defined as regular size educational components. Units are defined as thematic blocks in which learning outcomes are related to a central topic. The content of the units of each module is briefly summed up and listed after each Module Table below (Tables 2 to 7), and serves to give an overview of the nature and the extent of the topics covered in the course.

Module 1. General introduction

Unit 1 discusses the challenges that audiovisual texts pose for AD users

Unit 2 gives a definition of AD, describes the different types of AD and offers an historical overview

Unit 3 focuses on AD research, research methodologies and provides examples

Unit 4 introduces some additional services, such as multilingualism, audio introductions and tactile exploration

Unit 5 explains the steps in the AD process and identifies the main experts involved

Unit 6 discusses the primary and secondary audiences of AD

Unit 7 gives an overview of different AD guidelines

Unit 8 provides a critical discussion of the central issues regarding creating ADs: what, when and how to describe

Unit 9 explains the importance of voicing for AD and what constitutes good voicing

Unit 10 offers an overview of the most relevant international and European legislation regarding accessibility and AD

Table 2. List of Units for Module 1

Module 2. Screen AD

Unit 1 looks at AD for different film genres
Unit 2 describes the process of creating AD
Unit 3 gives tips about using AD software
Unit 4 focuses on description of characters
Unit 5 examines the issues of time and space in AD
Unit 6 explains how culture can be rendered in AD
Unit 7 explores the language of AD
Unit 8 discusses how film language can be reflected in AD
Unit 9 gives an overview of Audio Introductions for film
Unit 10 describes the workflow of recording AD

Table 3. List of Units for Module 2

Module 3. AD of live events

Unit 1 looks at the challenges of describing different types of live performance
Unit 2 outlines the technical skills needed by a describer of live events
Unit 3 helps you select what to describe in a live performance
Unit 4 gives tips about scripting your description
Unit 5 tells you what you need to know about touch tours
Unit 6 charts the workflow of a live AD
Unit 7 examines the role of evaluation in the AD of live events
Unit 8 looks at ways to approach the AD of dance and opera
Unit 9 tells you what you need to know about audio introductions
Unit 10 looks at innovation in the AD of live events – principally integrated approaches

Table 4. List of Units for Module 3

Module 4. (Semi) live AD and recorded AD for static arts and environments

Unit 1 gives a definition of static arts and offers some examples
Unit 2 focuses on museums' history and new developments, giving examples of different types of museum
Unit 3 illustrates the main theoretical and practical notions for the description of static arts
Unit 4 enumerates the main AD strategies and provides examples of professional and nonprofessional AD scripts
Unit 5 outlines the main differences and shared aspects of live and recorded ADs
Unit 6 shows the best practices when giving directions in a descriptive tour
Unit 7 defines tactile tours, give you tips on their construction, and focuses on the overall significance of touch
Unit 8 tells you what descriptive tours are and guides you through the main practical steps to build one
Unit 9 highlights the importance and role of stakeholders in the description of art and environments
Unit 10 reports on the main fields of interest in AD for the arts

Table 5. List of Units for Module 4

Module 5. Additional services

Unit 1 explains what audio subtitling is and presents different types of audio subtitles
Unit 2 describes voice-over as an audiovisual transfer mode and explains its impact on audio description processes
Unit 3 presents dubbing and its main features, and explains its impact on AD tasks

Table 6. List of Units for Module 5

Module 6. Additional technical issues, developments and change

Unit 1 concerns the technology used by consumers of AD
Unit 2 concerns the technology used to deliver AD
Unit 3 focuses on translation as a means of producing ADs
Unit 4 explains how text-to-speech technologies can be used to voice ADs
Unit 5 deals with collaborative processes of AD production
Unit 6 explains how AD can benefit new audiences and how it can be used in new services
Unit 7 defines the concept of accessible production and the role of AD

Table 7. List of Units for Module 6

The major asset of the ADLAB PRO course is that it is fully customizable. It is in fact modular and modules are self-sufficient and can be mixed and matched by users according to their needs, background and teaching or learning styles.

For each module, competences and sub-competences, learning outcomes, levels of the units and expected class and individual workload were defined and have constituted the basis that enabled partners to attribute ECTS and ECVETS to each (for more details, see ADLAB PRO 2018a, 2018b, 2019).

Because there are many definitions of the term ‘competence’ and there does not seem to be a common understanding of what exactly the term encompasses, in the project we have opted for a working definition, shared with the *ECTS Users’ Guide* (EU 2015), whereby competences are a “dynamic combination of attributes, abilities and attitudes” (Kennedy 2007: 14). A main competence framework (Table 8) identifying the main core competences that an audio describer must acquire has been devised including a list of main competences and domain-specific sub-competences, i.e., is a more concrete, lower level rephrasing of one of the main competences from the framework within the context of a specific module. This sub-competence is then rendered more concrete and quantifiable in terms of Learning Outcomes. The following are the core competences audio describers should acquire for all types of AD, taking into account that for each type of AD, the core competences will include domain-specific sub-competences.

1	Insight into the history, developments and trends of AD practice and research
2	General knowledge of the concept of AD
3	Practice-oriented understanding of the functioning of audiovisual texts, in general and for different/selected types of AD
4	Technical knowledge and skills regarding software solutions for both the production and reception/distribution of AD for different/selected types of AD
5	Knowledge of the workflow and identification of the different people involved in the AD production process for different/selected types of AD
6	Skills for the production of an AD-script for different/selected types of AD
6a	Overall insight into the specialised knowledge required for the different AD contexts and of the challenges they pose
6b	Knowing what information to select/prioritize and how to go about this
6c	Knowing how much information is necessary and/or desirable
6d	Knowing how to formulate descriptions and choose the appropriate AD strategies to promote AD as a narrative, to ensure clarity and the production of an engaging text through linguistic and textual choices
6e	Knowing when to insert descriptions in the ST, respect synchrony with sound effects, interaction with dialogues, general intersemiotic cohesion
6f	Knowing and applying the formal requirements for an AD script so as to facilitate delivery/recording
7	Skills for the delivery of different/selected types of AD:
7a	Vocal skills & reading skills or awareness of the need to collaborate with a voice talent for recorded/live AD
7b	Identify the technical requirements and use technical facilities for recorded and/or live delivery
8	Knowledge of the parameters for a qualitative AD end product and skills for assessing/editing the AD
9	Knowledge of the use of Audio Introductions (AI) and what to include in them. Skills for writing and recording AI's
10	Knowledge of the use of AST's, dubbing and voice-over and the different applicable scenarios; skills for adapting, if applicable, and recording AST's/dubbing/voice-over
11	Knowledge of new developments and the capacity/willingness to stay abreast: the translation of AD's, use of MT, use of artificial voices
12	Knowledge of new developments in terms of new areas of applicability and new audiences
13	Knowledge of the needs of blind and partially sighted audiences in live interactions when leading tours and guiding

Table 8. Main competence framework for the ADLAB PRO course curriculum

Learning outcomes (LOs) were formulated in accordance with the guidelines of Kennedy (2007). The ADLAB PRO curriculum expresses the aims of the course in LOs. LOs can be expressed concretely, through active verbs, from a learner-rather than a teacher-perspective (e.g., Learners can define the fundamental multimodal character of AV text). LOs specify what the learner will be able to do as the result of a learning activity or whole course. LOs are expressed in the cognitive, the affective and psychomotor domain of learning (cf. ADLAB PRO 2018a: 9-13 and Kennedy 2007 for a more comprehensive explanation of these different domains). Moreover, as pointed out by Kennedy (2007), any learning process passes through various hierarchical levels of thinking, ranging from simple recall as the most basic level to evaluation as the highest level. In other words, when designing the ADLAB PRO curriculum, we had to make sure that we did not merely formulate LOs that developed the lower levels of thinking, but also the more advanced ones. By developing the curriculum this way, it would be guaranteed that it presented the scaffolded design we wanted.

In the ADLAB PRO curriculum, some units are labelled 'basic', others 'advanced'. The basic units must be acquired by anyone wishing to work as a professional audiodescriber. The advanced units are to be taught to professionals and academics wishing to acquire more advanced and theoretical, research-based knowledge of AD and its prospective developments.

Finally, expected working load for each LO or group of LOs, indicating the estimated number of face-to-face training hours and the estimated number of hours to be spent on homework has been specified (EU 2015). The suggested number of face-to-face and of individual working hours needed to complete effectively a given unit, or set of LOs, is not a fixed or established figure but it is an estimate that has been decided based on what the consortium thinks is right and appropriate. HEIs that will decide to implement the curriculum will be free to maintain or modify this figure.

Table 9 provides a sample of the components defined for Module 1. This module provides an introduction to basic AD skills. It therefore covers all domains and it is advisable that all learners take it before proceeding to a more specific module. More generally, all learners should acquire the units labelled as 'basic' first (in all modules).

Main competence from framework	Domain specific sub-competence	Learning outcomes	Level	Suggested hours: Face-to-face	Suggested hours: Homework	Units
Competence 2 and 3	General knowledge of the functioning of audiovisual texts	LO1: Learners can define the fundamental multimodal character of AV texts	basic	2	8	Unit 1. Audio-visual texts
		LO2: Learners can differentiate between the different modalities interacting in a multimodal text	basic			
		LO3: Learners can assess the challenges of such texts for the main target audience of AD	basic			
Competence 1	Insight into the history, developments and trends of AD practice	LO4: Learners can define what AD is in different contexts (screen, live, museums, etc)	basic	3	12	Unit 2. Defining audio description
		LO5: Learners can explain how AD ensures the functioning of multimodal texts for the primary target audience	basic			
		LO6: Learners can discuss the historical development of AD practice internationally and within their own national context in broad lines	basic			

	Insight into the history, developments and trends of AD research	LO7: Learners can discuss the historical development of AD research internationally and within their own national context in broad lines	advanced	2	8	Unit 3. Audio description research
		LO8: Learners can identify main research topics and questions in the field	advanced			
Competence 9 and 10	More specific general knowledge of AD-related services: AI	LO9: Learners can identify and explain the limits of AD and name appropriate solutions	basic			
	Learners know what AI are, when they are used and how they can be delivered	LO10: Learners can define what an AI is and describe its different constituents	basic	3	12	
		LO11: Learners can evaluate to what extent an audio introduction is relevant	basic			Unit 4. Additional services
	More specific general knowledge of AD-related services: AST, dubbing, voice-over	LO12: Learners can identify the challenges of multilingual productions for AD	basic	1	4	
		LO13: Learners can enumerate the different solutions for resolving multilingual issues in AD	basic			
Competence 2, 4 and 12	General knowledge of the different types of AD and applicable scenario's	LO14: Learners can name the different types of AD, their presentation modes and the contexts in which they are used	basic	1	4	Unit 2. Defining audio description

Competence 5 and 8	More specific general knowledge of the role of the describer and VIP participants in the production process	LO15: Learners can identify the different steps in the AD work flow, including final editing and quality control	basic	2	8	Unit 5. The audio description process
		LO16: Learners can recognise the role and importance of different specialists in the AD workflow, including the VIPs and the artistic team	basic			
Competence 2	Specific knowledge of the needs of the primary audience (VIP) & secondary audiences	LO17: Learners can explain that the VIP audience is very heterogeneous	basic	2	8	Unit 6. The target audience of audio description
		LO18: Learners can explain why other, secondary audiences may also benefit from AD	basic			
Competence 2	General knowledge of the existence of standards and guidelines	LO19: Learners can list at least 4 existing AD guidelines	basic	2	8	Unit 7. Audio description guidelines
		LO20: Learners can assess and explain the differences between the different guidelines	advanced			
		LO21: Learners can identify various degrees of subjectivity in AD (depending on constraints)	basic			

Competence 6	General content-related knowledge of basic rules for all the different types of AD: what, when and how to describe?	LO22: Learners can name the content-related issues that an AD script must cover and the need for prioritisation of information	basic	3	12	Unit 8. Central audio description issues
		LO23: Learners can explain the importance of a well-timed AD script	basic			
		LO24: Learners can illustrate the need for appropriate AD script formulations	basic			
Competence 7	Knowledge and basic skills for the delivery and voicing of AD for different types	LO25: The student knows the importance of good vocal skills for delivery of AD	basic	2	8	Unit 9. Audio description voicing
		LO26: The student can speak clearly and effectively communicate oral information	basic			
		LO27: The student can name constituent elements of prosody and explain how they affect the communication of oral information	advanced			
		LO28: The student can demonstrate basic vocal warm-up exercises	basic			
		LO29: the student can recognise good microphone technique and demonstrate it in recording and live delivery	basic			

Competence 13	General knowledge of the existence of tactile exploration and touch tours	LO30: The students can define what tactile exploration and touch tours are and describe their main features	basic	1	4	Unit 4. Additional services
Competence 2	General knowledge of legislation for different types of AD	LO31: Learners can find relevant international and European AD legislation	basic	1	4	Unit 10. Audio description legislation
		LO32: Students are aware of the existence of legal rights concerning authorship of AD	basic			
		LO33: Learners can research whether and how international and European legislation is implemented in their national context	advanced			
Competence 11	Awareness of the need to and the capacity to remain informed of legal requirements, technical evolutions and their impact on practice	LO34: Learners appreciate the need to remain up to date with ongoing legal and technical developments of AD	advanced	1	4	

Table 9. Components of the ADLAB PRO course Module 1. General introduction

5. CREDIT ATTRIBUTION

A specific IO has been devoted to the attribution of credits to the ADLAB PRO course components (Table 1). The University of Trieste has led IO6, with all partners taking active part in this process. In particular, the HEI partners have been essential for the definition of the LOs and the quantification of the ECTS to assign

to each educational component (or unit). Non-educational partners have been essential to work along HEI partners to quantify ECVETS.

IO6 has developed along with other IOs from January 2018 to August 2019. While the educational components have been designed (IO3), created (IO4), tested and evaluated (IO5), they have also been assigned a possible number of credits to ease future accreditation within any formal education and training system (IO6). Each partner has defined the expected LOs (i.e. what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process), skills and competences to be acquired but also the workload needed for each educational component to be completed, and has calculated its credit value attributing a number of ECTS and therefore ECVETS to each course unit.

The ADLAB PRO curriculum has been developed in order to meet the requirements of 30 ECTS that normally correspond to the credits to be acquired for half-academic year (EU 2015). Such number has been divided into 6 ECTS/ECVETS for modules 1 to 4 and 3 ECTS/ECVETS for modules 5 and 6 (cf. ADLAB PRO 2018b and Figure 1).

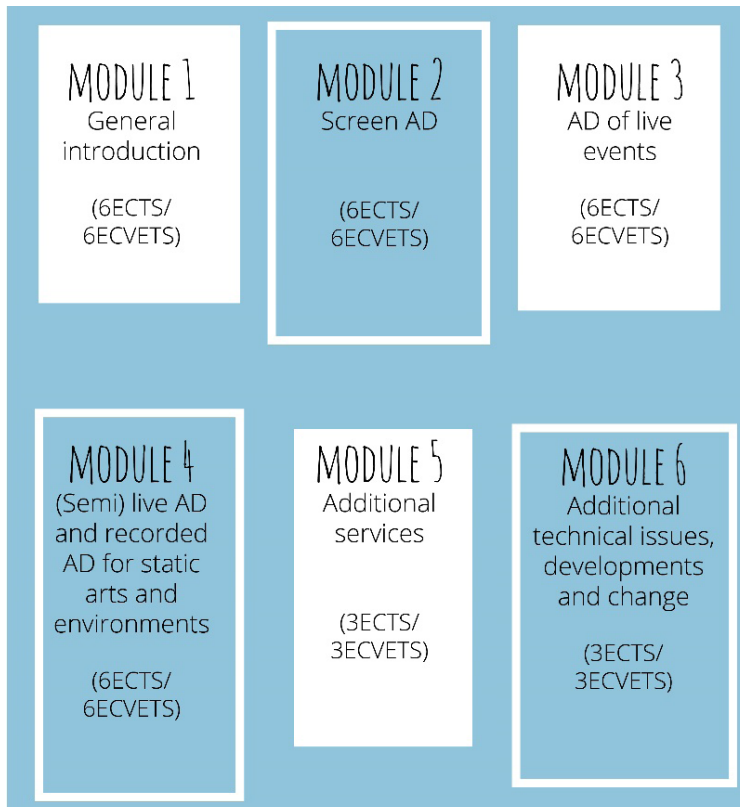


Figure 1. The ADLAB PRO course: Module structure and attribution of ECTS/ECVETS

The suggested number of ECTS and ECVETS (EU 2015) will enable those institutions that will use the course to consider whether to adhere to it or to customize it according to their training needs. Based on the consortium's suggestion, 1 ECTS would correspond to 5 face to face hours and 20 hours of individual work at home, therefore a 6 ECTS module would entail an overall of 30 + 120 hours of work. It is crucial to specify that these numbers only offer an indication, since the weight given to any one unit or LO can be expanded or reduced depending on the depth of the teaching and the type of learning method applied (Laurillard 2012). Trainers wishing to use the curriculum can use the suggested weight as a guideline and adapt it to their needs, or simply become conscious of the extent of the workload expected from both trainers and trainees. HEIs can also use the course depending on their needs. HEIs wishing to offer the entire curriculum can do so easily because it equals a 30 ECTS package (equivalent to the workload of half academic year or a semester), but they and other institutions can as well decide to offer only part of the curriculum and integrate that within existing educational components. Still, the curriculum has been designed in such a way that all should be taught Module 1, which offers all the skills the other modules will build on (cf. the simplified structure of the course curriculum ADLAB PRO 2018b and IO6 report with more suggestions on the appropriate number of ECTS per Module; ADLAB PRO 2019).

Final attribution of ECTS has taken place after individual research on the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (CEDEFOP 2014; de Lavigne 2011; EU 2009, 2015) and applied work carried out by each partner under the supervision of the University of Trieste, the IO6 leader, and finalized during an internal workshop in Antwerp (March 2018). Here partners have combined the IO3 related results with the requirements of IO6 and have started considering the working load for each LO or set of LOs, and estimating both the number of face-to face training hours required to satisfy traditional classroom learning (involving live interaction between a learner and an instructor), and the estimated number of hours to be spent individually on homework.

Final attribution of ECVET points has taken place after thorough research work by each partner under the coordination of the University of Trieste and finalized during the Transnational Project Meeting 6 in Barcelona, in March 2019. IO6 activities related to ECVET point attribution have included analyzing the state of the art of the existing methodologies regarding ECVET and ECTS and agreeing on the concepts and definitions using the existing key documents such as: the ECTS User's Guide (EU 2009, 2015); ECTS and ECVET comparison documents (Be-TWIN 2010a, 2010b; de Lavigne 2011; Ryan et al. 2018; Wagenaar s.d.); specific documents (EU 2011a) and recommendations on ECVET (EU 2011b) including documents of testing the system (Be-TWIN 2011); and the CEDEFOP glossary on the "Terminology of European education and training policy" (CEDEFOP 2014).

To attribute ECVET points, partners have relied upon the innovative tool (a Matrix) produced by as a main result of the Be-TWIN project (see § 3). The Matrix articulates the learning pathway approach (ECTS) and the learning outcomes approach (ECVET) and it stipulates that the translation device between both credit systems are LOs. The Matrix is made of a double entry table enabling to better depict and present a qualification by detailing the LOs and the learning activities of a curriculum. The Matrix can be used from different entry points and it is compatible with the specificities of higher education and of vocational education and training. Table 10 shows an adaptation of the Be-TWIN Matrix made on Module 3 of the ADLAB PRO curriculum:

MODULE 3 – (SEMI-) LIVE AD OF DYNAMIC PERFORMANCES AND EVENTS		COMPETENCES														ECTS CREDIT POINTS					
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6				C7	C8	C9	C10	C11		C12	C13			
Units of Learning Outcomes	Unit 1: Live performances																				
	LO1 The Learner can characterize challenges specific to live performances and LO2 The Learner know how audiovisual assets for live performances function from a theatre semiotics and multimodal point of view			X			X														
	LO3 The Learner can list and define all the elements included in a described live performance or event (audio introduction, Access information, touch tour, dynamic AD script)			X			X														
	LO4 Learners can exemplify how AD requirements (in terms of context, scripting, workflow and technical issues) differ depending on genre, number in the cast, performance space															X					
	Unit 2: Technical skills																				
	LO1 The Learners can list the technical equipment needed for a live AD					X															
	LO2 The Learners can operate a small mixing desk					X															
	LO3 The Learners can describe two common methods of AD "broadcast" and reception in live performance venues					X															
	Unit 3: Content selection																				
	LO1 Learners understand the function of the different types of information that can be included in the live AD script (e.g. narrative, spectacle, humour, character)							X													
	LO2 Learners can distinguish between more important and less important							X													
	Unit 4: Scripting																				
	LO1 The Learners can write an AD script for a live performance and defend their choices										X										
	LO2 The Learners can write a commentary defending the choices in their live AD script with reference to relevant literature										X										
	LO3 The Learners can adapt their script to accommodate the unexpected									X											
	Unit 5: Touch tours																				X
	LO1 The Learners can explain the purpose of a touch tour for live events in their country																				X
	LO2 The Learners can compile an appropriate wish list of items desired for a touch tour for a specialized production																				X
	LO3 The Learners can lead a group of visually impaired people (with sighted companions) along a specified route, successfully negotiating hazards and keeping the group together																				X
	Unit 6: Workflow																				
	LO1 The Learners can create a timeline identifying everyone involved in producing a live AD at each stage of the process					X															
	Unit 7: Evaluation																				
	LO1 The Learners can list 5 macrocriteria on which quality in live AD can be evaluated and 2 deviations from each of those criteria															X					
LO2 The Learners can deliver constructive criticism of their own and other															X						
LO3 The Learners can amend their own work in response to peer/teacher/peer evaluation or feedback															X						
Unit 8: Dance																					
LO1 The Learners is an employ technical terms and application to write AD suitable for ballet or other dance forms				X			X														
LO2 The Learners can combine ASL and descriptive language to write AD suitable for opera				X			X														
Unit 9: Audio introduction																					
LO1 The Learners can distinguish descriptions of characters and settings for an audio introduction for a live performance																			X		
LO2 The Learners can collaborate to write an audio introduction for opera, incorporating information from the general programme such as a synopsis divided between Acts																			X		
Unit 10: Innovation																					
LO1 Learners can summarize and evaluate new developments related to AD for																			X		
ECVETS CREDIT POINTS																				6	

Table 10. Be-TWIN-Matrix-based attribution of ECVETS to Module 3 of the ADLAB PRO curriculum. Note: In the table, C = competence as per Tab. 8

Table 10 shows that the acquisition of competences is linked to the obtainment of ECTS, while the acquisition of LOs is linked to the obtainment of ECVETS. For instance, “Module 3 Competence 5 - Knowledge of the workflow and identification of the different people involved in the AD production process” corresponds to LO15 “The learners can create a timeline identifying everyone involved in producing a live AD at each stage of the process”. To be able to assign the suggested number of ECTS (and respective ECVETS) to the full module it is necessary to perform the same process to all the competences listed for each unit in the module.

Both ECTS and ECVETS are key instruments for the accumulation and transfer of knowledge, skills and (wider) competences expressed and measured in terms

of credits (Wagenaar, s.d.). They facilitate different types of learning (informal, non-formal, formal, part-time, etc.) and increase the flexibility and appeal of the course. Working with the Matrix, on the basis of the correspondence of competences (ECTS) and learning outcomes (ECVETS), the same number of ECTS and ECVETS was attributed to each course Module. Each partner in charge of a given module has worked on the correspondence between competences and learning outcomes, thus producing the final ECTS/ECVETS matrix – for each module – for the full ADLAB PRO curriculum (ADLAB PRO 2019).

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Currently, AD training in Europe is offered unsystematically both in academic and in vocational setting, where the focus normally is on the same skills, competences and activities – with academic courses being as practice-oriented (vs. academised) as nonacademic courses (ADLAB PRO 2017a). In either setting, training takes several forms, e.g. AD courses within master's or bachelor's programmes, courses offered as a separate course or module or as part of it. The majority of courses are offered as traditional in-class instruction with some exploiting remote or blended learning as a teaching mode (ADLAB PRO 2017a: 8-9). In the nonacademic environment, workshops, in-house seminars or one-on-one instruction sessions are widespread (ADLAB PRO 2017a: 11).

Given the variety of the current training types in Europe, the ADLAB PRO curriculum (and its materials) have been developed to fit in effectively and easily in all of them. Their flexibility and suggested accreditation through ECTS and ECVETS make them in fact usable both in higher education institutions and in vocational, in-house courses, and assures their customizability in line with the current training scenarios, where both academic and professional training institutions find themselves having to satisfy diversified trainee groups and provide opportunities for individual learning pathways and different modes of learning (EU 2015: 44).

As far as AVT and specifically AD are concerned, delivering training that accomplishes what clients and the market require is essential. As far as the ADLAB PRO course is concerned, HEIs may decide to formally adopt the whole course or part of it (selecting just the modules they would like to implement), use it as a guideline, integrate it in their curriculum and teach it after deciding on the exact number of ECTS they wish to assign to each module. Other institutions, such as vocational institutions, can decide to exploit and adapt the ADLAB PRO curriculum and training materials assuring learners can rely on ECVETS points to weight their qualification. This is one reason why, as a major objective of the ADLAB PRO project, we have decided to attribute both ECTS and ECVETS to our

training materials. The advantages of this process however are several and include the promotion of mutual trust and mobility in academic training as well as in vocational education; simplification of both validation and recognition processes; the possibility of easily using the ADLAB PRO training materials both at HEI's and in vocational training; and last but not least the sustainability of the course and of the project through its results.

Assigning ECTS and ECVET points to a course curriculum is not a straightforward process, and it entails a thorough break down of all the course components to eventually advance a proposal for future accreditation. In this paper, I have tried to illustrate the path followed during the three-year lifespan of the ADLAB PRO project, with the aim of producing a document that can help other similar and much needed initiatives.

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