



A workbook for the joint planning of competence modules

Stages and templates of the operational model

Introduction

The key objective of the national AVOT project (“Open university education with a professional focus”) was to construct competence modules from open universities’ nationwide supply. The starting point was to create an agile and sustainable operational model for organising tuition at open universities which would meet the needs of sectors of growth or restructuring. The operational model is described at <http://avothanke.fi/in-english/>.

A workbook describing the operational model was prepared. The workbook summarises the operational model and it has been drafted to support the operators at open universities in the planning and implementation of competence modules. The workbook contains the key points of each of the model’s seven stages. The workbook can be filled in electronically, for example, in a shared online folder.

The operational model and workbook follow a numerical order, although the different stages are interconnected. The need may arise to return to the earlier stages while working, and to have a dialogue between the different stages.

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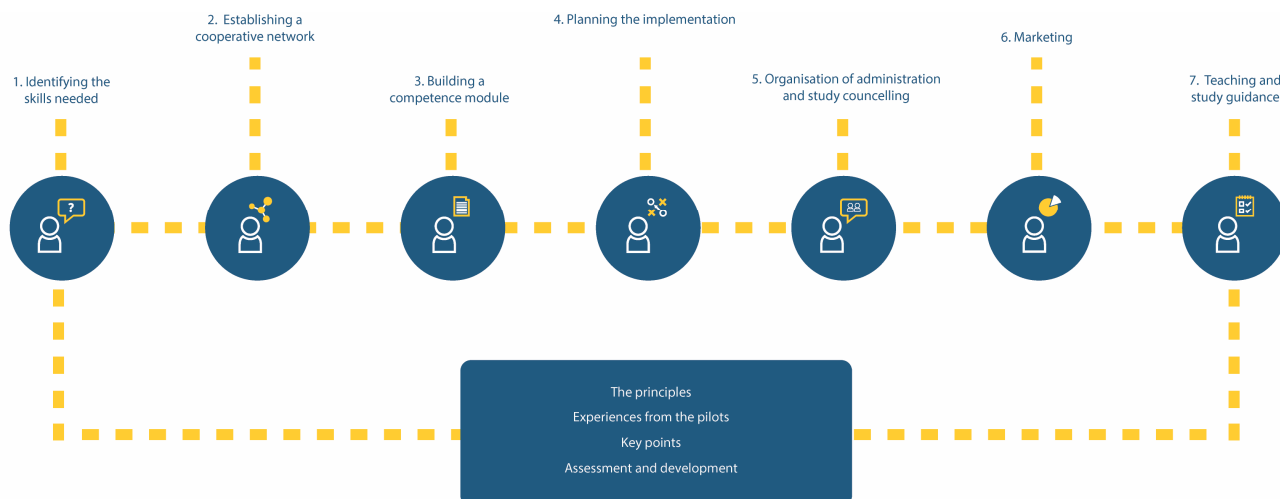
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The operational model

The operational model consists of seven different stages. A summary of the operational model can be found below.



1. Identifying the skills needed

Identify the competence and educational needs with partners from the world of work. On the basis of this review, new competence modules will be cooperatively designed for experts of different fields from the supply available.

Which methods will be used for identifying the competence needs (for example, interviews, surveys, company visits, social media, workshops, collaboration with other projects, foresight reports)?

What kind of cooperation will take place with the stakeholders and labour market organisations in order to identify the competence needs?

What kind of competence needs arise from the reports?

Which competence need/s will be selected as the subject of the competence module?

Who is the competence module directed at (target group)?

2. Establishing a cooperative network

The executors of the competence module will be selected from the network of universities, taking into consideration their network profiles and mapping out the national supply of available studies. The planning and implementation of the competence module will require parts of degrees from different universities' curriculum.

Which methods will be used to map out open university studies offered by different universities (e.g., contacting different universities, getting acquainted with websites, using platforms of cooperation)?

Which universities offer content which meets the competence needs defined in section 1, and which other universities will participate?

How will the work be divided between different universities? Which university will coordinate the activities?

3. Building a competence module

At the stage of building competence modules, concrete study periods will be defined which will be connected in the competence module.

What kind of model will the new competence module be based on (e.g., a) a structured model with defined study periods and order of progress, b) a model including optionality, c) a model beginning with orientation and moving on to content thereafter)?

What is the title of the competence module?

What are the module's competence goals?

Which study periods will the competence module contain (title, scope and university in charge)?

How will the background of members in the target group be taken into consideration in the planning of the competence module (for instance, previous education, work experience, field of work, previous knowledge about the topic)?

What kind of cooperation will take place with business partners and other stakeholders in the planning of the competence module?

4. Planning the implementation

At this stage, detailed agreements are made regarding the implementation of the competence module into practice. The planning covers the order of study periods, ways to earn credit, schedule and teachers.

What kind of implementation will be most suited for the target group?

How will flexibility be ensured in the practical implementation of studies (for example, online studies, amount of contact teaching, time frame)?

How will the competence module be scheduled?

What are the key differences between universities and how to ensure a smooth operation between different systems (for example, electronic systems, registration procedures, ways to organise teaching)?

How will the networks' work-related expertise be used in the implementation of the studies?

5. Organisation of administration and study counselling

Study management covers the registration process, right to study, student fees, registration of completed modules and certificates and transcripts of studies.

Smooth study management

How will the students register (to each university separately or to one joint university, registration schedule)?

What is the duration of the right to study?

What do the fees consist of and how will they be charged?

How will the students receive a user name to the information system?

How will the registration of completed study modules be organised and what kind of certificate will the students receive at the completion of the competence module?

How will the universities organise mutual communication regarding study progress (completed courses, suspension of studies, problems)?

How will feedback be collected from the students regarding the competence module?

Organising study counselling

Which issues will the study counselling address (e.g., registration process, study fees, duration of the right to study, ways to complete the studies, questions relating to students' time management and coping, the overall smoothness of studies)?

How will the tasks be divided in terms of study counselling?

How will the counselling be organised to make it as accessible as possible?

How will it be ensured that the study counsellors have enough information about the competence module in question?

6. Marketing

The marketing of competence modules with a professional focus needs a new type of planning, as the competence modules are new studies available at open universities.

Which methods and channels of marketing will best reach the competence module's target group and partners from the world of work?

How will the competence modules be marketed as a network of cooperation (universities, partners from the world of work)?

What is the key message to be conveyed, and how will it be visualised?

What are the resources available for marketing (employees, time, money)?

Which procedures will take place in terms of marketing? How will the tasks be divided and in what schedule?

7. Teaching and study guidance

In teaching and study guidance, e-learning environments will be effectively used in various ways (electronic materials, documents, online meetings, tools) in order to meet the adult learners' educational and guidance needs as thoroughly as possible. On the other hand, different e-learning environments and students with diverse backgrounds require transparent guidance services.

The implementation of teaching

How will professional focus and flexibility be taken into account in the pedagogical solutions (projects, practical training, study visits, specialists, putting theory into practice, development projects relating to work, mentoring etc.)?

What role will the partners from the world of work play in the implementation of studies (for example, specialist lectures)?

How will the cooperation and exchange of information be organised between different universities and teachers (e.g. logical progression of study content, emphases, interconnections between study periods, division of labour between teachers, assessment principles)?

What should be agreed in terms of drafting the study materials, their use and sharing?

How will the studies' accessibility be improved?

What will the relationship be between independent study and studying in a group in the competence module? What is the significance of, for instance, groups and peer learning?

Study guidance

How will study guidance be arranged (for example, a person in charge, tools)?

How will orientation to the competence module and study periods be organised, and what is agreed about the division of labour? How will the necessary study skills be ensured (such as scientific writing, e-learning, referencing skills)?

How will guidance relating to the content of the study period and the ways to earn study credit be organised?

How will a smooth transition between different universities be ensured?

How can the students' attachment to their studies be supported by the cooperation between universities and businesses?