

# Vocational Education and Training – Emerging Issues? Voices from Research May 13-14. 2013

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## Programme

<b>Monday, May 13.</b>				
<b>17.00</b>	Participants arrive at the terminal. Check-in, boarding-cards and cabin keys. Viveca Lindberg cell phone: 0703 803 031			
<b>18.00</b> <b>18.10</b> <b>Conf.room</b> <b>Stockholm</b>	<b>Welcome &amp; introducing remarks</b> <b>Keynote 1: <i>Knowing Work. Challenges in relation to Working and Knowing in Vocational Pedagogy</i></b> Professor emerita Liv Mjelde, Norway			
<b>19.00</b> <b>A: Stockholm</b> <b>B: Stockholm</b> (the room will be divided)	<b>Paper session 1</b> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;">                     Session A                      Chair / discussant: Christian Helms Jørgensen                      - Kaja Reegård, Norway                      - Ingrid Berglund, Sweden                      - Franz Kaiser, Germany                 </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;">                     Session B                      Chair / Discussant: Michael Gessler                      - Maud Baumgarten &amp; Katarina Sipos, Sweden                      - Hiroshi Numaguch &amp; Etsuo Yokoyama, Japan                      - Viveca Lindberg, Sweden                 </td> </tr> </table>		Session A Chair / discussant: Christian Helms Jørgensen - Kaja Reegård, Norway - Ingrid Berglund, Sweden - Franz Kaiser, Germany	Session B Chair / Discussant: Michael Gessler - Maud Baumgarten & Katarina Sipos, Sweden - Hiroshi Numaguch & Etsuo Yokoyama, Japan - Viveca Lindberg, Sweden
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<b>20.30</b>	Dinner & social evening			

### PAPER SESSION 1A

Chair/discussant: Christian Helms Jørgensen, Denmark

### Vocational identities at work in a knowledge society. A dynamic approach to vocational identity development in Norwegian upper secondary VET

*Kaja Reegård*, University of Bergen

Notions of the 'knowledge society' are contested, but widely accepted, yet denoting very diffuse aspects. The term implies a shift of balance where human capital and theoretical knowledge supersede traditional production, labor and capital as the fundamental source of productivity and power. Still, knowledge societies need vocational skills; alternatively this kind of labor is to be imported. Despite acknowledgement of this, vocational tracks are assigned lower status when compared to academic tracks. In this article I examine students who chose a vocational track – either as a negative choice in

opposition to more school or as a positive choice driven by occupational and vocational interests. Data are based on two VET programs in Norway directed towards very different sectors of the labor market; Technical and Industrial Production (TIP) educating for the traditional industrial sector and Sales and Communication (SAC) for the rapidly growing service sector. I use these two vocational programs as a prism to understand how young VET students relate to the knowledge society's somewhat academic regime. The main objective is to generate knowledge on how occupational identities are developed and constructed within a knowledge society. How do the students interpret the wider society's interpretations of their endeavor? How do they take on and internalize the roles and subject positions offered by their vocation, occupation and the wider society?

### **Introducing an apprenticeship pathway in Swedish VET – chances and difficulties in workplace learning**

*Ingrid Berglund*

Department of Education, Stockholm University  
ingrid.berglund@edu.su.se

This paper explores challenges when introducing an Apprenticeship Education pathway in the Swedish upper secondary VET. It draws on research on a national pilot project on Apprenticeship Education funded by the Swedish National Agency for Education. The paper emphasizes on the workplace learning and illuminates some challenges that were recognized during the pilot project. One main challenge was finding workplaces that wanted to participate in the apprenticeship training. Another concerned the production of the participating workplaces which was commonly not broad enough to give a wide VET education according to the curriculum requirements. A third main challenge was the supervision and guiding structures at the workplaces. The study concludes that there were fundamental differences in the quality of the Apprenticeship Education. It is also concluded that Apprenticeship Education has great potentials if accessible resources are provided – in schools as well as at workplaces.

### **Single job-oriented versus comprehensive occupational competencies. Different approaches in Germany, Switzerland and Sweden in business and administration occupations**

Dr. Franz Kaiser, BIBB, Germany

The different objectives of vocational education and training are depending on the perspective, either of the apprentices, the companies or the society. To merge and to achieve this set of goals is closely related to the national education systems.

During a four year research project at the Federal Institute for VET in Germany (BIBB) we surveyed the training regulations in the business and administration area. Using qualitative Content analyses and hermeneutic studies we identified the main subjects and tasks. Then we compared them with the professional experience of skilled workers based on a representative survey. It could be shown that in Germany the training regulations fit very much to the workplace requirements.

Exploring the training regulations in Switzerland, supported by a business association of employees in Switzerland (KV), we could see that the profiles are not as specialized as in Germany. They represent a wider range of qualifications and a lower level of specialization, comparable to the orientation of the school based system of VET in Sweden.

The presentation concentrates on the methodological approach and the main findings.

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#### **PAPER SESSION 1B**

Chair/discussant: Michael Gessler, Germany

#### **Workplace learning in elder care**

*Maud Baumgarten & Katarina Sipos*  
Stockholm University, dept. of Education

##### Context:

Elder care is facing new challenges. Europe's aging population has various mental and physical illnesses. This requires different and deeper skills of the care workers, but also of institutions to prepare for development. Learning is considered important both for the organization and the individual.

##### Research aims:

The aim of the research project is first to highlight the skill of the care workers and how they have learned their skills. Second we will elaborate enabling and constraining aspects of a learning environment in elder care.

##### Theoretical framework:

The point of departure is the concept of working environment. An ideal workplace is designed for learning and will have learning readiness. That means that it affords opportunities for the individuals to engage in and be supported in learning at work. The structural aspect is important but also how these structural aspects are experienced and evaluated by the individuals in a working group (Billett 2001, 2004; Ellström 2001, 2006; Ellström, Ekholm and Ellström 2008; Ellström 2012).

##### Research design:

The study is inspired by a participant oriented research design. The study is based on interviews with managers, focus group discussions with managers and teachers, as well as focus group discussions with staff in care. We have participated in workplace meetings and training sessions conducted by staff. We have also actively contributed in strategies of forming workplace learning. The study includes four different institutions in home care and in nursing homes during 2011-2013h.

#### **Findings from the research**

The conclusion so far is that learning activities are rarely organized and the informal and formal learning are not well integrated. There are little organized opportunities for learning, ie meetings that provide space for reflection. To summarize; the managers are crucial as well as the co-workers in creating a working environment in terms of having learning readiness.

## **On the Transforming of Vocational Education and Training in Japanese Automobile Companies at Turning Point!**

*– focus on Changing the Way of Vocational Education and Training at A company-*

*Hiroshi Numaguchi, Daito Bunka University*

*Etsuo Yokoyama, Nagoya University*

Globalization and domestic market reductions attack not only Japanese Automobile companies, but also many of industrialized companies. So Vocational Education and Training in Japanese Companies are force them to be shortened and lightened. But they would not essentially to like to discard their Ways, those have built up their ways during high economical development in Japan. So we would like to make them clearly and present with this presentation.

A company changed its Vocational Training from simultaneous training to problem solving method training, and company training policy changed from attaching importance to Potentiality to evaluate Competency. Company training are composed by combination of Required Training and selected training. And self development is supported by company.

Then, Company makes an occasion to evaluate a person changing their Career Developing every 3 years and evaluate them. Vocational Training make much of self-responsibility for their training, it is very important point of transformation concerning training in the Company.

We have gotten some transformations throughout our analyzing. That is a self-responsibility and Competencies. This Model is still continuing now in A company.

## **Literacy practices in Swedish VET: preparing for vocational literacy**

Viveca Lindberg

Stockholm University, dept. of Education

The purpose of this paper is firstly to describe the literate practices within vocational education in Swedish upper secondary school, and secondly to discuss vocational literacy in terms of cultural historical activity theory (Leontiev 1986). The paper is based on a reanalysis of two previous studies (Lindberg 2003), where the assignments the students worked with were focused. Assignments in vocational subjects as well as so called infused tasks in academic subjects are included. In this paper, the issue is to illuminate the literacy required of the students in their working with assignments within these two kinds of subjects. Special attention is paid to the literate aspects of the assignments – what texts the students were given to read or write for the work with the tasks and how the texts were used in classrooms, workshops or kitchens. In both studies, classroom observations related to instructions for the assignments, and students' work with the assignments, were combined with sequential interviews with the teachers. In a first step, New Literacy Studies (Barton & Hamilton 2005; Hull 1997; Street 2003) inspired the analysis. In a second step, the literacy practices identified where related to Cultural historical activity theory has been used for interpreting the results.

In a broad sense, a variety of texts were used in the two studies. Most texts in the vocational subjects were vocational texts – texts produced for working life. These texts were used differently early in the programme and at the end of the programme. Early in

the programme they were part of the content – the students were instructed how to use them. Later on they became used in similar ways as within the vocation – i.e. as tools. School texts (e.g. text books) were in minority. When they were used, it was for the purpose of introducing new subjects or new content within a subject. Many of the texts used for the work with infused tasks in academic subjects were also used for work within the vocation. These texts were, however, not the same as those used in vocational subjects. Instead they were either imposed by others (e.g. national or local authorities) or informative texts about a company or a vocational area. In all, students within vocational education in Sweden read a lot during their education. The tasks they are given to work with in vocational subjects require ‘reading for learning’ as well as ‘reading for doing’ (Sticht et al 1977). However, this dichotomy is not enough for describing what kind of reading the students were actually involved in. Instead, a two-pronged model was developed in order to visualize the relations between vocational texts and school texts on the one hand and reading for learning vs. reading for doing on the other. The assignments indicate that changes in working life have had consequences for the content of work. This, in turn was reflected in VET, within vocational subjects as well as within academic subjects. In order to not only describe the literacy practices within VET, a further analytical question needs to be addressed: what is their purpose as part of educational activities, that is – in what ways do literacy practices contribute to realising the object of specific educational activities? The answer proposed here is that students were expected to learn how to use vocational texts as tools: exploring what they could be used for and how they were interrelated, for informing their manual work, for decision-making, problem solving, and vocational attitudes.

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## Tuesday, May 14.

<b>Conference room</b>	Breakfast 7.00-8.15		
<b>8.30 conf.room: Göteborg (?)</b>	<b>Keynote 2:</b> <i>Instrumental assessment and the 'fragile learner': A socio-cultural understanding of pressures on teachers' practice in English vocational education programmes.</i> Professor Kathryn Ecclestone, University of Sheffield, U.K.		
<b>9.30 Conf.rooms C: Göteborg D: Sandhamn</b>	<b>Paper session 2</b>		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td><b>Session C</b> Chair / Discussant: Lázaro Moreno Herrera - Christian Helms Jørgensen, Denmark - Eva Eliasson &amp; Helena Rehn, Sweden - Michael Gessler, Germany</td> <td><b>Session D</b> Chair / Discussant: Anna Hagen Tønder - Åsa Broberg, Sweden - Richard Daly, Norway - Philipp Gonon, Switzerland</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Session C</b> Chair / Discussant: Lázaro Moreno Herrera - Christian Helms Jørgensen, Denmark - Eva Eliasson & Helena Rehn, Sweden - Michael Gessler, Germany	<b>Session D</b> Chair / Discussant: Anna Hagen Tønder - Åsa Broberg, Sweden - Richard Daly, Norway - Philipp Gonon, Switzerland
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<b>11.00 Coffee 11.15 Conf.room Göteborg</b>	<b>Session 3</b> Two Swedish PhD-programmes on VET Chair: Viveca Lindberg Gunilla Berg-Christoffersson, Eva Klope, Pia Lindström, Ruhi Tyson		
<b>12.00</b>	Lunch		
<b>13.15 Conf.rooms F: Göteborg G: Sandhamn</b>	<b>Paper session 4</b>		
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td><b>Session E</b> Chair / Discussant: Franz Kaiser - Hester Smulders &amp; Aimée Hoeve - Torgeir Nyen &amp; Anna Hagen Tønder - Natasha Kersh, U.K.</td> <td><b>Session F</b> Chair / Discussant: Philipp Gonon - Ulf Olsson, Sweden - Cristina Miranda Santana, Spain &amp; Lazaro Moreno Herrera, Sweden - Petros Gougoulakis, Sweden</td> </tr> </table>	<b>Session E</b> Chair / Discussant: Franz Kaiser - Hester Smulders & Aimée Hoeve - Torgeir Nyen & Anna Hagen Tønder - Natasha Kersh, U.K.	<b>Session F</b> Chair / Discussant: Philipp Gonon - Ulf Olsson, Sweden - Cristina Miranda Santana, Spain & Lazaro Moreno Herrera, Sweden - Petros Gougoulakis, Sweden
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<b>14.45 15.00 Göteborg</b>	Coffee <b>Panel discussion:</b> VET: emerging issues and challenges for research Liv Mjelde, Kathryn Ecclestone, Lazaro Moreno Herrera (chair)  <b>Conclusions</b>		
<b>15.45</b>	Arrival in Stockholm		

**PAPER SESSION 2C            9.30-11.00**

Chair/discussant: Lázaro Moreno Herrera

*“You came on the loser track?”*

### **Boys and other losers in education**

*Christian Helms Jørgensen*, PhD, associate professor  
Department of Psychology & Educational Studies  
Roskilde University, Denmark

The debate on social equality in education in Denmark has increasingly focussed on the so-called ‘the failing boys’ and has portrayed the general school system as less responsive to the requirement of boys than of girls. Vocational education has been assigned a key role in offering educational pathways especially for non-academic boys, but dropout rates in VET continues to be at a high level.

This paper will problematize the discourse of ‘failing boys’ and relate it to the general question of why a significant share of the students are losing – or are being lost – in the educational system in spite of political targets of getting the entire youth group (95%) to complete a higher secondary education (VET or Gymnasium). This paper will use three different theoretical approaches to explore the question of ‘failing boys’: theories of social reproduction in education, theories of boys resistance and anti-school culture and the differentiation- polarisation theory relating to institutional selection. Empirically the paper is based on interviews with 104 students and observations made in first year of VET (basic course) of whom half were reinterviewed after six month.

### **Challenges in being a health care teacher in upper secondary school**

*Helena Rehn & Eva Eliasson*  
Stockholm University, Department of Education

This paper is a part of a study where the overall aim is to explore nursing teachers understanding of vocational skills and vocational learning. Qualitative interviews with health care teachers, working with teenagers or adults in upper secondary schools, are used as a method. The criterions for selection of informants have been diversity in professional background, age, sex, years in profession and school forms.

In this paper the aim is to describe and analyze nursing teachers’ conceptions of challenges of teaching in health care in upper secondary school. These statements of challenges also give an insight of conceptions of the role as a teacher, the role of the vocational student and the future caregiver.

The result indicates some main challenges, where adaptation to the students, because of heterogeneity and deficiencies, is the most frequent. The teacher has to create motivation and interest, especially when some students are not motivated at start. They also have to handle differences in capacities, where linguistic and cultural factors are mentioned as a great part. Finally, they must deal with different ages, youths and adults, and differences in experiences from the health care sector.

Another challenge is to deal with the low status of the vocation. Teachers express that it is important to make the students understand the value of health care work. The last challenge is to provide an education where theory and practice are integrated in a suitable way.

The nursing teachers speak as representatives of school as well as vocational life and feel responsible for the creation of social vocational identities. The results also show that the construction of the caregiver implies an orientation towards existing Swedish/Western values and that it is central to be a carrier and representative of these.

### **“Werkschule” in Bremen: Integration of disadvantaged youths by practice-oriented learning – a preventive pre-vocational approach for career orientation and guidance**

Michael Gessler, professor

Universität Bremen, Institute Technology and Education

A pre-vocational education for career orientation and guidance, the “Werkschule”, has been developed in the pilot project “Development and implementation of a concept for promoting disadvantaged youths by practice-oriented learning”. The project was funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) between 2009 and 2012. A “Werkschule”, which lasts three years from the ninth to the eleventh class level, offer students the opportunity to develop their capability for vocational education and training and to receive a secondary modern school-leaving certificate. Since 2012 the “Werkschule” is a regular type of public school in the state of Bremen.

Topics of the presentation will be (1) the concept of the “Werkschule” and (2) the results of the final survey of the pilot project. 65 staff members and 194 (out of 385) students of eight “Werkschulen” were interviewed in 2012. The findings of the survey as well as the 85% graduation quota of the first cohort point out the success of this concept. Students whose graduation was rather unlikely a few years ago regained interest in school and finally got their degree. Others, who had social problems at former schools or had to leave their former school due to several problems strengthened their social competencies and identified themselves with the concept and the institution. It is hoped that a similar preventive approach for the vocational education and training will be found. Prevention is the purpose of preventing potential problems ahead. This principle applies equally to the career guidance and orientation in secondary education as for the subsequent vocational education and training.

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**PAPER SESSION 2D            9.30-11.00**

Chair/discussant: Anna Hagen Tønder, Norway

**The vocational education experience from a historical perspective – possibilities and problems**

*Åsa Broberg*, PhD candidate

Department of education, Stockholm University

In this paper I present an initial exploration of the theoretical perspective materiality of schooling and an empirical material not often used in the history of vocational education. I turn to photographs and artifacts from the early vocational schools in Sweden in an effort to understand the experience of vocational education and schooling in an environment different from the modern day vocational education. The everyday objects and milieus of school, according to this perspective need not be silent things from the past. They become the point of departure for questions about the pedagogical order, how materials and spaces mediated the curriculum, how it shaped the lived reality of the students and teachers in the past. As I present a pilot interpretation of a small sample of material, I also address problems and possibilities pertaining to both material and methodology.

**Emancipating and Profit-taking: Aspects of Vocational Training in a Christian Colonial Utopia in Western Canada**

*Dr. Richard Daly*,

Freelance Anthropologist, Oslo, Norway

dalybred@online.no, www.richarddaly.net

The politics of economic interest is woven deeply into vocational education; opposing economic agendas permeate skills acquisition and training both in schools and apprenticeships. This paper examines the delivery and consequences of vocational training in a colonial situation in northwest Canada 150 years ago where Mr. Duncan, a Christian social reformer from Britain sought to bring Aboriginal Canadians into common humanity with Europeans, by means of both religion and vocational education. Duncan applied craft and industry training in what was an economy based on a resource frontier comprised of furs, timber, paper, fish and other land produce. He and his followers formed an independent community of skilled practitioners and responded to the regional market. However, they became too prosperous in the eyes of the colonial elite. By virtue of their skills and business ability, the converts threatened other enterprises of the day and ultimately were forced to 'come under control' by both governmental and church authorities. Vocational pedagogy seeks to provide skills and education for those who often enjoy little power or democratic influence in class-divided society, so that they can lead a better life and become more integrated citizens by virtue of their ability to respond rapidly to the changing demands of the economy and the labour market. However, when such vocationally trained responses happen to take the form of entrepreneurship, they run the risk of competing with the profit-taking of regional employers. This suggests vocational educators need a sober analysis of power relations in the economy. Otherwise, trying to build a better society by 'educating the many in order to bring freedom' faces challenges from the interests of the few.

## Policy borrowing in VET the Case of Switzerland

*Philipp Gonon*, Professor Dr  
University of Zurich

Comparative assessments of schooling began with world fairs, which since 1873 have had a tremendous impact on national policy debates in education. The success of technologically and aesthetically appealing products at these exhibitions led observers to compare national approaches to education, which was more and more seen as a means of enhancing the industrial power of a nation.

The movement for manual work in primary schools was one outcome of these comparative observations and international debates. Introduced in French primary schools in 1880, education reformers pleaded for the establishment of this new subject in their own country's schools. The new organisation of vocational education was also of great interest and, again, France was one of the role models.

Switzerland borrowed these ideas in building up a new vocational education system. Even the establishment of the now dominant dual model of vocational education and training was based on thoroughly researched models in other countries, like France, Austria and the German Lander. The seminar considers the historical impact of policy borrowing and debates as a basis for assessing contemporary pressures to transform the Swiss educational system towards a isomorphic world model of education.

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### SESSION 3 11.15-12

## Swedish efforts to enhance VET-research: two post-graduate programmes

Chair: *Viveca Lindberg*, associate professor  
Gunilla Berg-Christoffersson, Eva Klope, Pia Lindström & Ruhi Tyson, PhD-students

**Introduction:** Swedish VET-research has for a long time either focused on the historical development of VET related to social, economical or educational aspects or on transition from school to work as issue of the effectiveness of the system in terms of statistical measurements. Issues related to processes within VET have received little attention among researchers and concern different decades (1970s, 1990s and 2000-) and different programmes, but also different perspectives and objects. As a consequence, the field is left open for public debate on VET is based on assumptions and opinions that have contributed to what may be labelled myths. In this landscape, two post-graduate programmes with specific focus on Vocational Pedagogy have received funding, one from the Swedish Research Council, and the other by the Swedish Government. The first one is based on a collaboration between four Swedish universities, for the second two further universities (six in total) were involved. All together, 22 PhD-students have started the programme, five of them aiming at a full PhD and the others at a Swedish licentiate which is a degree between a master and a PhD.

Frames for the two programmes and the organisation will be presented as well as an overview of the theses in process with four examples, on of which will be more elaborated. As we are in the process of applying for further funding, our aim with the

presentation is to get input from participating colleagues on what considerations we should take into account when involving more post-graduate students.

**Outlines** for three projects are presented briefly by Gunilla Berg Christoffersson, Eva Klope and Pia Lindström. An example of a full paper follows:

### Exploring vocational education and training in traditional crafts: using practice-based examples to gain perspective on general VET theory and policy

Ruhi Tyson

Vocational education depends to a large degree on the institutional environment where it takes place. This paper will explore a couple of vocational practices that provide new perspectives on national and international policies in VET, in particular the relation of skill-learning to broader areas of knowledge development.

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#### PAPER SESSION 4E

13.15-14.45

Chair/discussant: Franz Kaiser

### Co-makership! Linking VET and professional practice: lessons from Dutch experience.

Hester Smulders & Aimée Hoeve,  
Centre for expertise in vocational education and training (ecbo)  
PO box 19194D  
3501DD Utrecht  
Netherlands  
[hester.smulders@ecbo.nl](mailto:hester.smulders@ecbo.nl) (+31 6 53749282)  
[aimée.hoeve@ecbo.nl](mailto:aimée.hoeve@ecbo.nl) (+31 6 10970967)

The transition learners are required to make from education to the workplace is a complex, and often problematic, process (Tynjälä, Välimaa, & Sarja, 2003). To overcome this problem schools and work organisations seek for new ways of collaboration. The focus in this study is on the emerging forms of collaboration between schools and work organisations that can be defined as co-makership. The central question of the study is: What are possible substantive and organisational varieties of co-makership between VET-institutes and business partners? Out of 100 projects involved in a national innovation programme, we selected 10 projects that were successful in establishing long term collaboration to innovate educational practices. A conceptual framework is developed to describe the collaboration practices in Dutch VET. Core concepts in this framework are stakeholder interest, cognitive distance between partners, resources, governance and the added value of the collaboration (Nooteboom, 2006, Delden, 2009). Based on initial analysis of the data we developed 5 modalities of co-makership. In this presentation we will present the 5 modalities and reflect on their persistence.

### Reform implementation and institutional change in vocational education and training in Norway

Torgeir Nyen & Anna Hagen Tønder  
Fafo, Norway

This paper analyzes how initial vocational education and training in Norway is affected by a recent domestic reform of upper secondary education. The main model in Norwegian VET is a dual model, combining two years of school based education with two years of apprenticeship training. In 2006, as part of a school reform, the in-depth study project (ISP) was introduced as a new school based subject in all vocational programs. The main purpose was to give VET students an opportunity to try out relevant trades and occupations at an early stage of their training. This is difficult to achieve without the cooperation of companies that are willing to provide practice periods for students. As a new pedagogical and institutional construct, the ISP cuts across established institutional divisions between school and work and provides a space for the redefinition of roles and responsibilities in VET. We argue that over time, these local processes could lead to more substantial changes within vocational education and training in Norway.

### **Tacit Skills and Prior Learning in work-related contexts: issues of recognition and evaluation.**

Natasha Kersh  
London University

The paper will seek to revisit the concept of tacit skills specifically in the context of workplace learning. The part played by tacit skills and knowledge in work performance is well recognised but not well understood. In order to provide a conceptual insight into the notion of tacit knowledge the paper will focus on a number of scholars who have made a substantial contribution to the research on tacit skills and informal competences, such as Polanyi (1962, 1966a, 1966b) Eraut (2000) and Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995). The paper (1) will further consider the link between the development of tacit skills and learning contexts, (2) will discuss the need for acknowledging and recognising prior learning as a vital part of the process of assessing tacit skills and competences within a range of contexts, and (3) will argue that there is a need for the development of a methodological approach for eliciting and capturing tacit skills and informal competences in specific contexts.

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#### **SESSION 4F                      13.15-14.45**

Chair/discussant: Philipp Gonon

#### **Dialogues as a technology of hope for the future**

*Ulf Olsson*, University of Stockholm, Sweden  
(John B. Krejsler, university of Aarhus, Denmark)  
(Kenneth Petersson, university of Linköping, Sweden)

The concept of dialogue as an ideal has a long history in Western societies. It can be traced back, at least, to Plato's Dialogues and the Socratic conversations. During recent decades the concept as a figure of thought and as a practice of governance has become a natural element in virtually all areas of society. Dialogue as a practice is regarded as an ideal not only in terms of individuals' learning, but also in terms of groups, organizations and communities and national as well as transnational political spaces. The purpose of

this paper is to problematize dialogue as a governmental practice in contemporary transnational educational contexts. The focus in the paper is the so called systematic dialogues that are considered to have a key role in the implementation of the Bologna process in higher education. In our analyses, we draw on Foucault's concept of governmentality, as this kind of analysis has the advantage that it does not require prior definition of for examples dialogues, citizenship or political spaces like Europe. In the implementation of the Bologna process various governmental means pushing for harmonization operates; confession, visibility, comparison, mutual criticism, peer review and the idea of exchange of 'good practices. Thus, it operates as a dialogical dispositive, making visible, rebuff and thus put pressure on individual member states considered lagging behind and not reaching common objectives agreed on.

### **Acknowledgment and accreditation of professional competences acquired informal non-formal settings – A case study**

*Cristina Miranda Santana*, University of Las Palmas, Spain  
*Lázaro Moreno Herrera*, Stockholm University, Sweden

Accreditation of qualifications has become in the latest decade a central issue both from European work market point of view, as well as the interest of national contexts. Reasons are diverse; for example, the increasing needs to gain mobility of the work forces and in consequence the need to impact the national educational systems, in particular de systems of vocational education and training. Implementation of the European Qualification Framework (EQF) has considerable specificities in accordance national context mainly related to the organization of the educational systems and the articulation with the working life sector. This paper analysis the specific case of a national context, Spain, and in particular the implementation at the level of an autonomous region. More specific acknowledgment and accreditation of competences acquired informal and non-formal settings was done in four main professional sectors. This paper however presents outcomes from the process in two sectors, namely (a) tourism and hotel services and (b) electric and electronic maintenance. The process was carried out during approximately two years as cooperation between Institute Qualifications of the Canary Island, the Education Board of the islands (both governmental bodies) and researchers from the University of Las Palmas. The outcomes show that a good articulation between the National Qualification Framework (NQF), governmental regulations of national coverage and carefully designed procedures of acknowledgment and accreditation of competences can potentially produce successful outcomes. Likewise, outcomes shows what we can consider a win-win situation in which the organizations involved sharpened and gained in efficiency of the cooperation, the methodology used gets validated, professional involved in the validation process get trained and the workers, ultimately, gets their qualifications acknowledged.

## The challenging vocational challenge on research, teaching and training

Associate Professor Petros Gougoulakis,  
Department of education, Stockholm University

### Purpose:

The aim of this paper is to identify fundamental ideas behind the vocational challenge uttered in policy documents produced by international actors, i.e. EU, OECD, UNESCO, and in a sample of country-specific VET descriptions. Bearing concepts and their pedagogical/didactical implications are highlighted and tentatively reasoned with emphasis on demands of new knowledge (research), conceivable impact on teachers' professional skills (vocational teacher education) and the design of curricula for vocational education and training in various levels (instruction).

### Theoretical framework:

The recent education policy discourse is immersed with ideas related to the new informational economy's global and network oriented nature, aided by sophisticated information technologies. The forces of globalisation and the multifaceted idea of lifelong learning appear to alter the content and mission of VET directed towards increased productivity and competitiveness in the global market, as well as, promoting employability and social inclusion rather than develop the individual personality. Consequently, the VET Community faces a range of urgent requirements and issues, in order to develop educational programs, adapted to contemporary world characterized by insecurity, uncertainty, unpredictability and exclusion for many from the labour market:

- How relevant is today's vocational education and training?
- Is there a gap between school-acquired knowledge and competencies needed in the workplace?
- What kinds of learning should VET programs encourage and how a dynamic learning environment would look like, to cultivate not only instrumental skills for employability, but equally life skills for being a human and living with others?

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**SESSION 5: PANEL DISCUSSION**

**15.00 -**

### VET: Emerging issues and challenges for research

Liv Mjelde, Kathryn Ecclestone, Lázaro Moreno Herrera (chair).

Concluding comments

### *Participants*

	<b>Name</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>e-mail</b>
1	Maud Baumgarten	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:maud.baumgarten@edu.su.se">maud.baumgarten@edu.su.se</a>
2	Gunilla Berg-Christoffersson	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:gunilla.berg-christoffersson@ksgyf.se">gunilla.berg-christoffersson@ksgyf.se</a>
3	Ingrid Berglund	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:ingrid.berglund@edu.su.se">ingrid.berglund@edu.su.se</a>
4	Åsa Broberg	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:asa.broberg@edu.su.se">asa.broberg@edu.su.se</a>
5	Richard Daly	Freelance anthropologist	Norway & Canada	<a href="mailto:dalybred@online.no">dalybred@online.no</a>
6	Kathryn Ecclestone	University of Sheffield	U.K.	<a href="mailto:k.ecclestone@sheffield.ac.uk">k.ecclestone@sheffield.ac.uk</a>
7	Eva Eliasson	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:eva.eliasson@edu.su.se">eva.eliasson@edu.su.se</a>
8	Michael Gessler	University of Bremen	Germany	<a href="mailto:mgessler@uni-bremen.de">mgessler@uni-bremen.de</a>
9	Philipp Gonon	University of Zürich	Switzerland	<a href="mailto:gonon@ife.uzh.ch">gonon@ife.uzh.ch</a>
10	Petros Gougoulakis	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:petros.gougoulakis@edu.su.se">petros.gougoulakis@edu.su.se</a>
11	Christian Helms Jørgensen	Roskilde University	Denmark	<a href="mailto:cjhj@ruc.dk">cjhj@ruc.dk</a>
12	Aimee Hoeve	Centre for expertise in VET, Utrecht	Netherlands	<a href="mailto:Aimee.Hoeve@ecbo.nl">Aimee.Hoeve@ecbo.nl</a>
13	Franz Kaiser	Federal Institute for VET (BIBB), Bonn	Germany	<a href="mailto:Kaiser@bibb.de">Kaiser@bibb.de</a>
14	Natasha Kersh	University of London	England	<a href="mailto:N.Kersh@ioe.ac.uk">N.Kersh@ioe.ac.uk</a>
15	Eva Klope	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:eva.klope@ksgyf.se">eva.klope@ksgyf.se</a>
16	Viveca Lindberg	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:Viveca.lindberg@edu.su.se">Viveca.lindberg@edu.su.se</a>
17	Pia Lindström	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:pia.lindstrom@haparanda.se">pia.lindstrom@haparanda.se</a>
18	Liv Mjelde, Norway	Oslo and Akershus College for Applied Sciences (HIOA) & Kyambogo University	Norway & Uganda	<a href="mailto:mjeldeliv@gmail.com">mjeldeliv@gmail.com</a>
19	NN			
20	Cristina Miranda Santana	University of Las Palmas	Spain	<a href="mailto:cmiranda@dedu.ulpgc.es">cmiranda@dedu.ulpgc.es</a>
21	Lázaro Moreno Herrera	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:lazaro.moreno@edu.su.se">lazaro.moreno@edu.su.se</a>
22	Ulf Olsson	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:ulf.olsson@edu.su.se">ulf.olsson@edu.su.se</a>
23	Hiroshi Numaguchi	Daitobunka University	Japan	<a href="mailto:hiro@ic.daito.ac.jp">hiro@ic.daito.ac.jp</a>
24	Torgeir Nyen	Fafo	Norway	<a href="mailto:Torgeir.Nyen@fafo.no">Torgeir.Nyen@fafo.no</a>
25	Kaja Reegård	University of Bergen	Norway	<a href="mailto:Kaja.Reegard@fafo.no">Kaja.Reegard@fafo.no</a>
26	Katarina Sipos	Stockholm	Sweden	<a href="mailto:katarina.sipos.zackrisson@edu.su.se">katarina.sipos.zackrisson@edu.su.se</a>

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		University		
27	Hester Smulders	Centre for expertise in VET, Utrecht	Netherlands	<a href="mailto:Hester.Smulders@ecbo.nl">Hester.Smulders@ecbo.nl</a>
28	Helena Tsagalidis	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:Helena.tsagalidis@edu.su.se">Helena.tsagalidis@edu.su.se</a>
29	Ruhi Tyson	Stockholm University	Sweden	<a href="mailto:ruhi.tyson@kristofferskolan.se">ruhi.tyson@kristofferskolan.se</a>
30	Anna Hagen Tønder	Fafo	Norway	<a href="mailto:anna.hagen.tonder@fafo.no">anna.hagen.tonder@fafo.no</a>
31	Etsuo Yokoyama	Nagoya University	Japan	<a href="mailto:n47131a@nucc.cc.nagoya-u.ac.jp">n47131a@nucc.cc.nagoya-u.ac.jp</a>
32	Mr. John Ecclestone	Accompanying guest	U.K.	
33	Mrs. Anita Kaiser	Accompanying guest	Germany	

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