

Quality assurance of WBL in Italy

In the past few years, the topic of WBL has played a central role in the training and labour market policies in Italy. As a matter of fact political decision makers have adopted WBL as key element in the transition from education and training to the labor market. Therefore WBL has been regulated by specific acts aimed at setting a proper "dual system".

Here the measures and tools adopted in Italy, including work-based learning:

Education and vocational training

These are three or four year training courses, including, in addition to classroom training, laboratory activities and traineeship;

Learning –working system

It is a didactical methodology aimed at reinforce the high school paths with experiences on the job, in order to acquire professional skills. Learning working system can also be implemented through a“simulated enterprise”, i.e. the establishment of a virtual enterprise which carries out a networking business (e-commerce) and refers to a real company (tutor company) as a reference model;

Apprenticeship

It is a work contract with a training component. It is organized in three different types:

1. Apprenticeship in Vet system, high school and higher technical education/training, for young people aged 15 to 25;
2. Professional apprenticeships for young people aged 18 to 29, aimed at learn a job;
3. Highly apprenticeship for young people aged 18 to 29, in order to acquire graduation and post-graduation degrees.

Non curricular traineeship

It is an active labour market policy. It is a work practice including an educational component and it is not considered as a working relationship. Such traineeship is aimed at acquiring professional skills applicable on the labor market. The detailed rules relating to each of the measures above mentioned provide specific instructions to ensure the quality of WBL's experience.

In general, the quality of WBL's experiences is guaranteed through:

- learning contents based on a written agreement;
- the mentoring/supervision of trainees;
- the monitoring of traineeship;
- evaluation of experience and certification of training outcomes.

To better explain the structure of the quality system as part of WBL's experiences, here as an example one of the most important and widespread measures of WBL.

Quality in non curricular traineeships

In May 2017 the new Guidelines on non curricular traineeships have been published, according to the Council Recommendation of 10 March 2014 on a Quality Framework for Traineeships. The 2017 Guidelines replace those of 2013 by introducing new provisions to improve the quality of traineeships and to prevent and effectively counteract violation and inappropriate use of such traineeship. The new Guidelines respond to Quality Framework for Traineeship European Guidelines, as well as introduce additional quality criteria besides those recommended by the European Union Council.

Below the main provisions for ensuring traineeship qualification standards:

1. To start a non curricular traineeship consists in planning a training project which must be signed by the trainee, by the institution hosting, as well as by the promoter, or a third part with the task of checking and monitoring quality and results of the traineeship. In the training project, the training objectives and tasks of the trainee must be fully and exhaustively indicated. A clear definition of learning objectives and contents is the key element in ensuring the traineeship quality.
2. The trainee must be supported during his/her training path by a tutor of the hosting institution, in charge to ensure the achievement of the training objectives.
3. The trainee is also supervised by a tutor of the promoter, whose task is monitoring the traineeship to guarantee qualitative standards and solving problems or critical issues. Traineeship monitoring is carried out through tailor made tools such as the "individual dossier", in which are collected all important documents certifying and demonstrating the actual development of the activities listed in the training project.

4. The activities of the trainee are evaluated by the tutor of the hosting institution, in collaboration with the tutor of the promoter. On the basis of the evaluation, at the end of the traineeship path the trainee is given a “final certificate”, signed by the promoter and the host subject. Such certification is a fundamental document for the transparency, recognition and use of the acquired skills.

The 2017 Guidelines -and its attachment as the models of the training project, the individual dossier and final certification -are therefore a kind of "quality system of traineeship" aiming to maximize the quality of these experiences.

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