

FRANCE [3] - 2012 PILOT COMPETENCES PORTFOLIO

A. BASIC INFORMATION

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| Country: | France |
| Title of initiative: | [FR] <i>Livret de Compétences Expérimental (LCE)</i> [EN] Pilot Competences Portfolio |
| Coordinator/ Organization: | Mme N. Arrestier, head teacher of the <i>Collège de Montastruc</i> (lower-secondary school) |
| Key competences addressed: | All competences acquired inside and outside of school |
| Type of initiative and channels used for implementation (e.g. curriculum reform introduced through legislation etc.) | National Pilot of the Competences Portfolio |
| Partners: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · School Inspectorate · University of Toulouse |
| Scope: (student/teacher/school lev- el; local/regional/national) | Students |
| Learning context: (formal or non-formal) | Mainly non-formal |
| School education level/s: (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary) | Lower secondary |
| Target groups: | Two <i>Quatrième</i> classes [age 13-14] (48 students) |
| Time frame: (start and end date) | 2010 - 2013 |
| Relevant links: | No information provided |

B. SUMMARY

This Pilot initiative has been running since September 2010 and concerns two classes in *Quatrième* [age 13-14], i.e. 48 students.

Each student is monitored over two school years by a teacher/tutor who guides the individual student in the creation of a personal Competences Record.

The project aims to:

- Teach individual students to understand themselves better by identifying their aspirations and potential and recognising competences developed in and out of school.
- Enable each student who has developed competences in various extra-curricular activities to make best use of his/her time at *Collège* by compiling a Pilot Competences Portfolio (*Livret de Compétences Expérimental - LCE*) which takes the form of both a paper document and a digital record (*Webclasseur*).

C. IN DEPTH INFORMATION

Rationale/contextual background/motivation for introducing the initiative/reform:

Each student develops skills outside school (during activities with organisations or companies or at home) or at school but outside the usual school subjects (extra-curricular projects involving sport, culture, environment, voluntary social work, etc.). Students can make good use of these skills to acquire knowledge, boost their self-esteem and help towards their career choice.

Objectives:

This Pilot Competences Portfolio should enable students to:

- have the skills that they acquire in extra-curricular activities taken into account in the official “Core Curriculum of Knowledge and Skills Reference” record;
- create a skills folder (which can be computerised) to highlight their experiences and informal learning;
- develop confidence in their abilities and raise their self-esteem.

Dimensions targeted by the initiative/reform (e.g. student curriculum, assessment, initial/in-service teacher education, school autonomy etc.):

- Development of students’ autonomy and self-confidence
- Introduction of a Competences Record that takes into account all dimensions of education
- Formal and non-formal education

Overall approach (e.g. holistic – existence of an overarching strategy, or targeted approach focusing on a specific dimension etc.):

Holistic

Detailed explanation of the key competence/s concerned:

All key competences are covered by the Competences Record.

Specific subjects concerned or cross-curricular approach:

Cross-curricular approach

How the initiative/reform is being implemented (e.g. process followed, political commitment, consultation with stakeholders and their respective roles, incentives for stakeholders, dedicated funding, teaching material, definition of goals and standards, assessment and evaluation mechanisms, impact on teacher training/professional development and school practices/leadership, scaling-up approach, based on research/evidence? etc.):

- Introduction of the Pilot Competences Portfolio
- Teachers familiarise themselves with the tool
- Explanation to parents and students
- Coordination of teams to clarify the skills that are taken into account, at school and outside of school
- Work with students on the skills being developed

Present stage/phase of implementation:

Introduction of the Record for two *Quatrième* classes [age 13-14] (48 students)

Pedagogical issues (issues related to how key competences are being taught to students and how are teachers being prepared to teach them):

- Identifying the competences to be taken into account within the context of the Pilot Competences Portfolio
- Explaining the aims and objects of the Competences Record to families and students.

What works well (to identify enablers):

1. Students

- Student-teacher relationship is transformed (a different view of the teacher, better quality of relationship).
- Greater confidence in their potential (self-esteem) through recognition of new competences.
- The Competences Portfolio proves useful in careers guidance meetings.
- Development of a sense of initiative, taking responsibility within projects.
- Official recognition of their skills.

2. Teachers

- View of the student is transformed (change of posture).
- Better appreciation of individual students and their potential
- More understanding of student's difficulties (aid to personalised support)
- The project gives an opportunity for professional reflection on competences and how to identify and evaluate them.
- Richness of multidisciplinary exchanges.

3. The School

- Establishes a reflexive dynamic that questions the professional status of teachers and the administrative team: an opportunity for everyone to expand their own competences.
- Work and time spent together on pedagogical development between the administrative team and innovative teachers – enriching and positively challenging teachers' individual existing practice.
- Effect of innovation through Piloting this project: real collegiality and confidence created, providing a basis for risk-taking and a freedom that is organised and structured within the autonomous framework of the school's '*Etablissement Public Local d'Enseignement*' EPLE (state owned local educational establishment) status. Strengthening of partnerships.

Challenges and how these are being addressed (to identify obstacles and solutions):

- Lack of time in groups of 15 to do justice to the work of the piloting team. This lack of time available in the EPLE is a hindrance to pedagogical innovation.
- Student group dynamics were weakened this year by the dispersion of the two *Quatrième* classes into five classes in *Troisième* [final year of *Collège*, age 14-15].
- Frustration on the part of teachers when they realise that the beneficial effects on students are not observable in the short term.
- Inherent resistance to innovation that calls practices into question.

Monitoring & evaluation so far/planned, and which methods are being used (e.g. internal/ external quality assurance, inspection, national assessments, international tests, self-evaluation, formative or summative evaluations):

This project is being monitored:

- At a national level within the monitoring of the Pilot Competences Portfolio project
- At local educational authority level by the inspectorate

Impact (e.g. any planned impact assessment?):

- No overall evaluation is planned before the end of Pilot phase but the school team notes the importance of collective responsibility for learning and of evaluation of the students' progress with reference to the individual student.
- Awareness of the limitations of grading, which is too often a factor of inequity and lack of social cohesion.
- Awareness of the right to make mistakes and to experiment when moving forward in a process of innovation.
- Conviction that the student needs recognition in order to progress.

Communication of the initiative/dissemination of outputs and activities:

At the local education authority level:

- Innovation conferences.
- Lectures on the request of CIO (Information and Orientation Centre) directors and CSAIO (Head of information and orientation service of the local education authority).
- Lecture at management seminars.
- Presentation to inspectorates.

At the national level:

- National workshop for exchange on the Pilot Competences Portfolio (Paris).

Next steps/follow-up:

1 Extension of the LCE (Pilot Competences Portfolio) to the whole school

- Make available a simplified tool for formalising competences from Sixième to Troisième [full Collège education] in order to recognise students' achievements and thus motivate them in their learning.
- Use of the Digital Work Environment and Webclasseur (digital record of the skills booklet) in the school will be a facilitating factor.

2 A class without grades

- A class without grades in *Quatrième* [age 13-14], with a full teaching team, to be compared with a whole year group.
- Associated with this Pilot project:
- A subject taught for a year without grades.
- Tutoring of the class (a teacher of the class monitors 2 or 3 students).
- Follow-up to be provided by a teacher-researcher, Mr Tricot.

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