

# **Level-5 (Associate degree) practice trainer in TVET**

## **- the missing link in teaching staff-**

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***Building Bridges and Opening Doors***

## **Level-5 (Associate degree) practice trainer in TVET**

- the missing link in teaching staff-**



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PIET LEM**

## **Introduction**

Technical Teacher Training Institute

Fontys university of professional education (Eindhoven, Netherlands)

We train educators and we develop programs

Mission:            Develop a level-5 practice trainer program into a really relevant alternative route for professionals in becoming valuable (T)Vet educators

## PART 1

### Explanation

The Why and How of a Practice Trainer (associate degree) Program

## PART 2

### Discussion

What makes a level-5 program **really** 'a missing link'.....

So, we have a mission.....and still a lot of work to do....

..... If the mission succeeds, .....



..... It is a mission in which everyone wins .....

.... If it succeeds, the winners are .....

# Pupils

# Schools for (technical) vocational education and companies

# National teacher potential (quantity and quality)

# Labor market

# Participation in higher education (and lifelong learning)

# .... And of course our own teacher training college....

## **Current situation in (T)Vet teachers and teacher training**

### ***Educators***

- # A (growing) shortage of (T)VET teachers and trainers
- # An 'over-aged' teaching staff (and little staff dynamics)
- # A declining student teacher population in teacher training colleges

### ***Market demands***

- # A growing need of (technical) vocational skilled professionals,  
on all levels: Eqf level 1, 2, 3 and 4!!



## Current situation in (T)Vet teachers and teacher training

# Ministry demands a (T)VET teaching staff with a higher education background

# Lots of pressure on (T)VET schools to upgrade the teaching staff (at least to bachelor level)

# Pressure on the teaching training colleges to raise the program quality (more demanding programs)

And.....

## Current situation in (T)Vet teachers and teacher training

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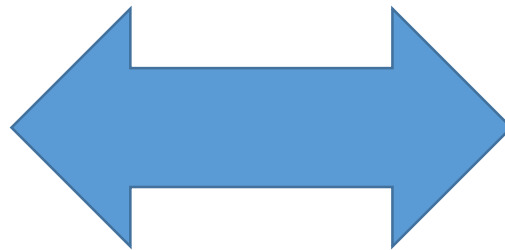
And.....

**# Quality of (T)VET-education requires a differentiated teaching staff for different levels of pupils**

## Problem statement

***So, in the Netherlands, we have a "VET-dilemma" !***

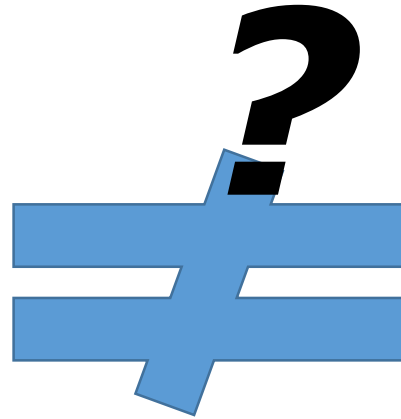
Raising the  
quality of  
VET educators  
and education



Overcoming  
shortage of  
VET  
educators

## Dilemma

Raising the  
quality of  
VET educators  
and education



Overcoming  
shortage of  
VET  
educators

# ***Analysis of the "VET-dilemma" !***



# For many **students** (especially those who work in industry):

A training program of 4-5 years is too demanding.....

By raising quality demands..... for many students even a 'mission impossible'.

# For **employers** it is also too demanding.

Not very eager to send out their employees for many years.

# For **instructors** (professionals from industry educating as instructors)

Many of them do not want to become a teacher; they are happy as instructor!!

## Level-5: Challenge and desired situation

### Challenge

How to seduce professionals from industry to enrol in a higher education training program to become a VET educator,

to overcome the shortage of VET educators, and to raise the quality of VET education

## **A jump towards a solution**

By law the higher education level 5 is introduced in Dutch higher education

In solving our dilemma.....

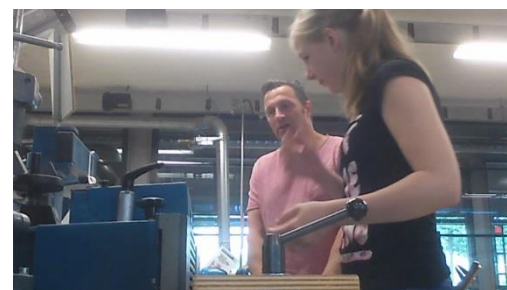
..... a gift from heaven.....

We started developing and carrying out a higher education training program for further education of

- (a) instructors in (T)VET schools, and
- (b) professionals in industry

to become (T)VET practice trainers.





**Practice  
trainers**



**in  
action**



**Trudy** owned a restaurant  
*"TRUUS & Co"* in Breda



**Rob** was a designer at  
*Philips* electronics company



**Hans** was a welder  
*Shipyard IHC* Rotterdam area



Trudy, Rob and Hans,

Just 3 students of the 2016  
examination class





**INSTRUCTOR**  
in **VET**

**Trudy**

Catering & Hospitality

**secondary**

vocational education  
(pupil level 1, 2, 3 and 4)

**Rob**

Metal, Electro & Installation

**secondary**

vocational education  
(pupil level 1-2)

**Hans**

Metal, Electro & Installation

**In company training**

(in collaboration with school for  
vocational education)



Why are these level-5 higher education practice trainers so valuable for (T)VET education ?

Why are they so valuable for the quality of education ?

Why is the program so appealing ?

In vocational education: **4 different training levels**

At the National Qualification Framework

Level 1: Assistant training

Level 2: Basic vocational training

Level 3: Professional training

Level 4: Middle-management training



Main focus of  
Trudy, Rob and Hans



**50% of  
pupils**

Level 1: Assistant training

Level 2: Basic vocational training

### Characteristics level 1 and 2

- # Many special needs pupils
- # Practically focussed, not theoretically
- # demands great pedagogical competences
- # pupils need safe learning environment

Level 3: Professional training

Level 4: Middle-management training

**50% of  
pupils**

### Characteristics level 3 and 4

- # Teaching theoretical concepts as important as practical education
- # Pupils are more able in independent learning

Level 1: Assistant training

Level 2: Basic vocational training

Level 3: Professional training

Level 4: Middle-management training

Typically

**a VET Practice trainer**

domain group

Typically

**a VET Teacher**

domain group

**Pupil level 1 and 2 and VET Practice trainer.**

## Why a good match?

They have experience with these pupils ....

They understand these pupil's world.....

They themselves are practically focussed.....

As a professional, they carry out expert power.....

They often are 'born' pedagogues.....

Many of them have learning difficulties themselves.....



## **Advantages**

### **For instructors in VET**



1. The program offers a attainable horizon (2 years)
2. The program focusses on 'their world' of teaching and guiding pupils in practice situations.
3. It offers an opportunity for further education from instructor to practice trainer
4. Important for their professional identity, the associate degree gives status!
5. The program offers the opportunity for further education to teacher (bachelor).



**Trudy**, instructor in  
secondary  
vocational education



**July 2016**

Trudy is now a practice trainer and  
continues in the further education of  
teacher



**Rob**, instructor in  
secondary  
vocational education

**Associate  
degree**

Rob is now a practice trainer and wants  
to stay a practice trainer. Maybe later he  
continues in the further education of  
teacher

**Practice  
trainer**



**Hans**, instructor in  
In-company training

**in VET**

Hans is now an in-company practice  
trainer at the ship yard. He considers  
continuing in the further education of  
teacher.

# **ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

Level 5 Practice trainer program. In the first year, we welcome.....

Professionals  
working in industry

Professionals  
working as in-  
company trainers

Basic program for educators in vocational  
education and training

Level 4 graduated  
students from secondary  
vocational education

Professionals working  
as instructors in  
vocational education



Job as practice trainer

**ASSESSMENT / Examination**

Practice trainer program 2<sup>e</sup> year  
(associate degree)

**ASSESSMENT**

Course / career planning interview

Competence assessment: propaedeutic

Basic program for educators in vocational education and training (1 year)

Teacher training 4<sup>e</sup> year  
(bachelor degree)

Teacher training 3<sup>e</sup> year  
(bachelor degree)

Teacher training 2<sup>e</sup> year  
(bachelor degree)

***Some concluding  
remarks!***

## **As developers**

### **We should design appealing programs for VET educators**

- # feasible study horizon,
- # enabling career planning (and lifelong learning),
- # status within the VET-teaching staff to attract technicians from industry

### **We should design flexible and differentiated study routes**

- # to meet their needs, motivation, competences and experiences
- # for a better match of teaching staff and levels of pupils.

### **We should consider programs with official certificates** (backed up by ministry)

- # to meet the need for a more solid professional identity and market value of VET educators

## **We should try to establish a clear national (or international) competence framework**

To contribute to a clear program for training VET-educators

To contribute to a more relevant program which includes needs of industry

## **We should try to incorporate collaboration of VET-schools with industry**

# to connect (often) closed worlds

# to achieve a response to economic developments and needs.



## **Some concluding remarks**

So far, we have noticed that both groups (employees and employers) are willing and ready to participate in a level 5 practice trainer program.

But the most difficult struggle is 'within the walls of our higher education castle'

The grown ups bachelor and master programs have a new born little brother.....

***Thank you for  
your  
attention!***

# DISCUSSION

## DISCUSSION

It is our belief that a level-5 employee (in our case a practice trainer) is NOT in the first place “on the road” to level 6; he or she is not a ‘half way’ bachelor!

A level 5 employee, in the first place, makes a difference in and for an organisation and of course for the clients.

## MIND SHIFT

Teacher



Practice  
trainer



Instructor



Teaching  
assistant

COMMON  
THINKING

## MIND SHIFT

Teacher



Practice  
trainer



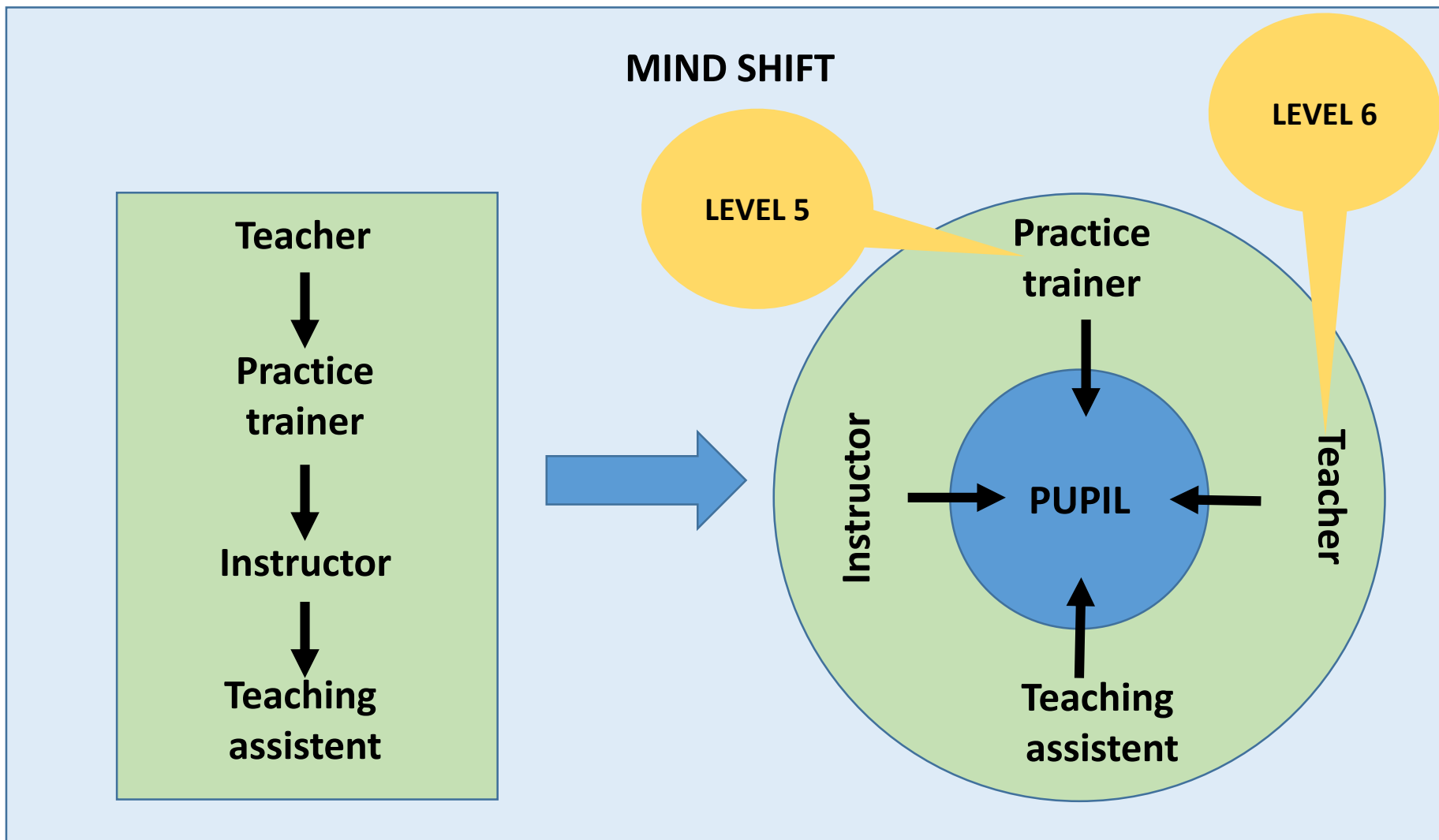
Instructor

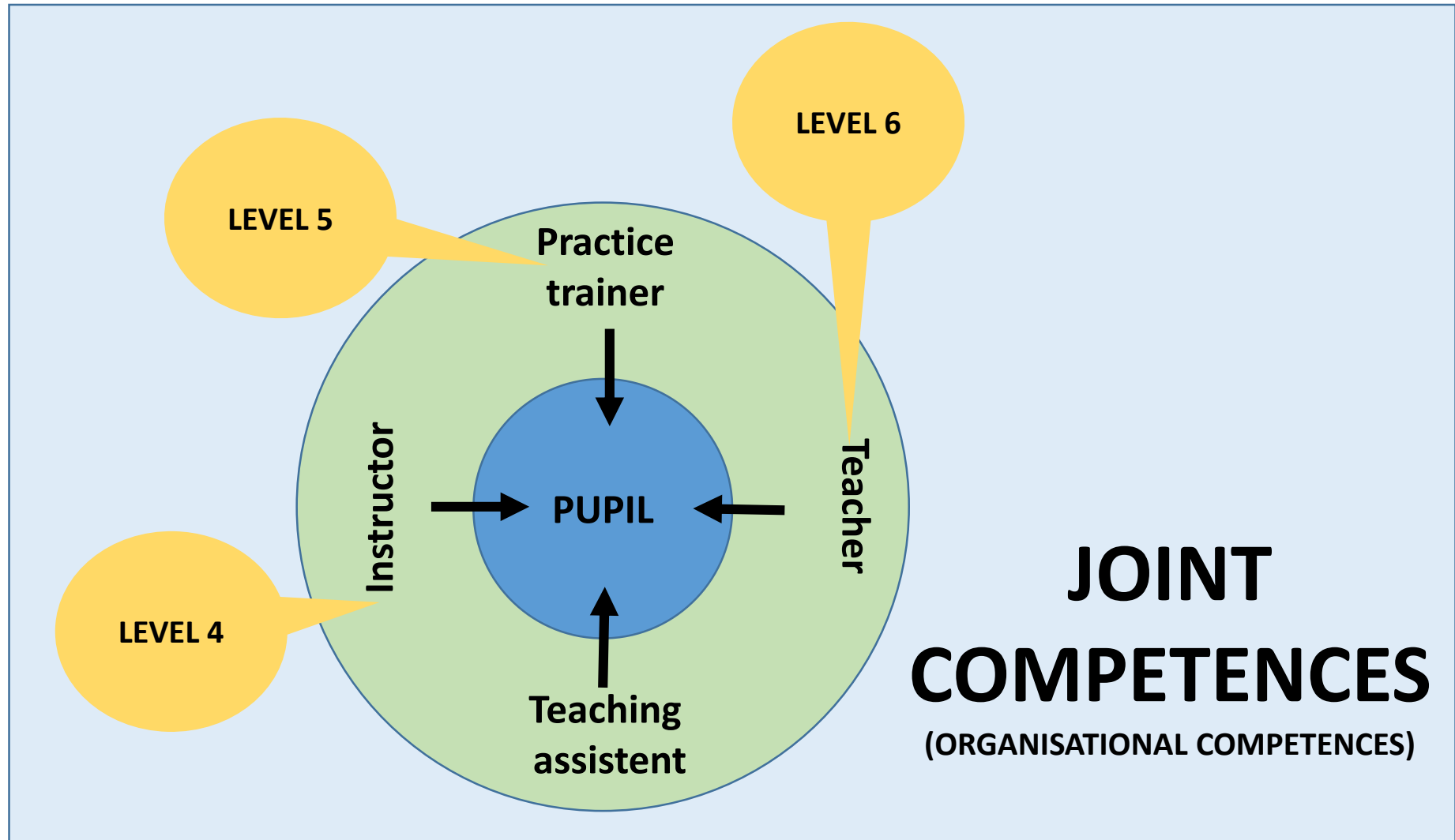


Teaching  
assistant

LEVEL 6

LEVEL 5







Example from our case

More and more it is stated that many (level-6) teachers in (T)Vet are

**OVER-EDUCATED and UNDER-SKILLED**

for teaching 'lower-level' (T)VET pupils

## Example from our case

... A little bit oversimplified...

Teachers, as compared to practice trainers

There is

- # too much conceptual, instead of practical thinking and teaching
- # too much orientation on content, instead of orientation on pupils
- # too much an engineer role, instead of a role as pedagogue
- # often limited connection with the outside world of work for pupils

A (level-5) practice trainer in (T)Vet in this sense can make a difference!

What makes YOUR level-5 situation

really 'a missing link'.....

....in joining additional or different competences?

***Appendix***

***Program***

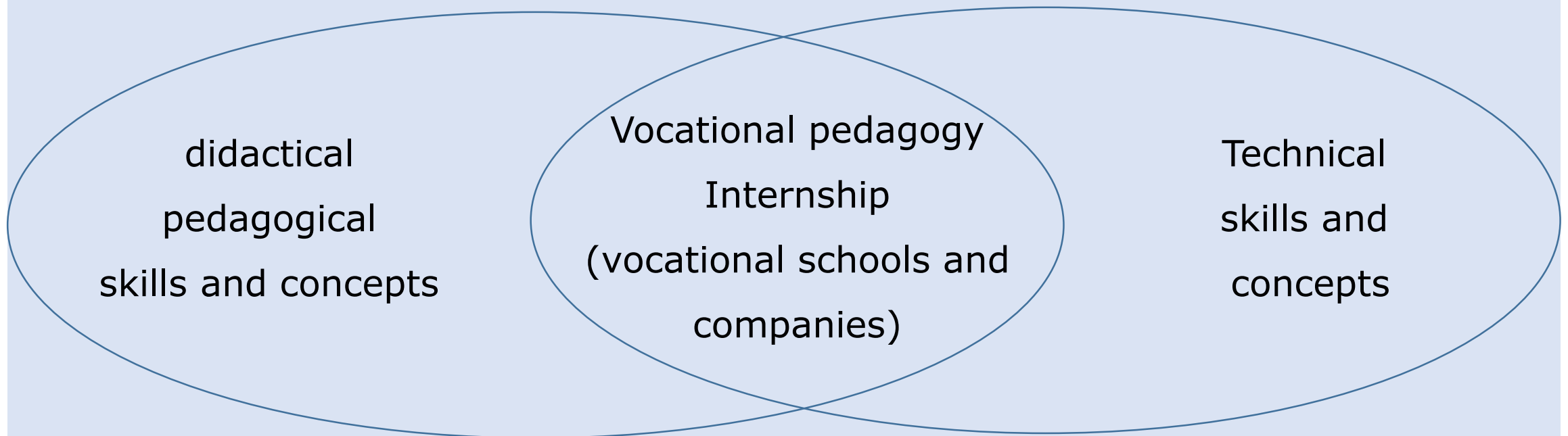
# Practice trainer Basic program (1 year)

Duration: 1 year

Credit Points: 120 (Partly earned by proven competence)

On the job (Internship): 1 day per week (at least)

Off the job (Institute): 2 evenings a week





## **ASSESSMENT**

- # Work place learning
- # Knowledge base
- # Competence analysis
- # Portfolio products
- # Master proof

# Practice trainer Examination program (2e year)

## COMPETENCE ANALYSIS

Analysis refers to portfolio products

### COMPETENCES

- INTERPERSONAL
- PEDAGOGY
- VOCATIONAL DIDACTICS
- ORGANIZING
- STAFF COOPERATION
- REFLECTION

## PORTFOLIO

- # Report on work place learning (with video analysis)
- # Practical research on special need pupils
- # Lesson program on pupil centred learning
- # Advise on improvement vocational didactics
- # Special individual products
  
- # Integrated project (Master prove)

## ASSESSMENT

- # Work place learning
- # Knowledge base
- # Competence analysis
- # Portfolio products
- # Master prove

## METHODOLOGICAL COMPONENTS

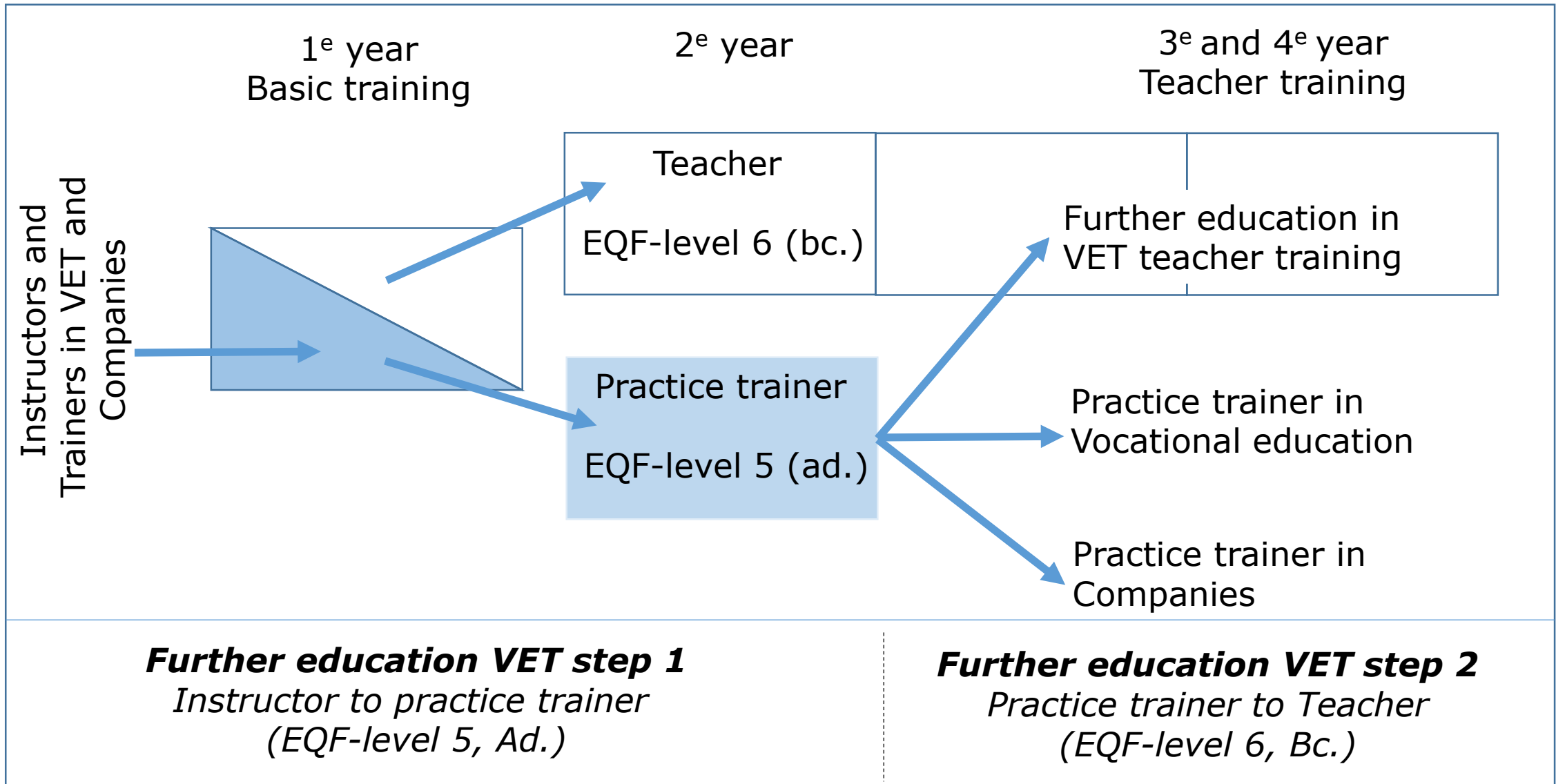
- # In-school research
- # **Building a knowledge library**
- # Workshops on project topics
- # Individual and group learning tasks
- # Work place learning
- # Practice research

## Guidance system

- # Mentor circle
- # Coaching
- # Vocational content monitoring
- # Vocational didactics monitoring
- # InterVision







Program constraints by law: these are met by the implementation of different knowledge bases and competence requirements frameworks:

## Program

- (1) the national knowledge base on education competences and competences required within professions of education;
- (2) the general knowledge base for the profession of teachers;
- (3) the didactical knowledge base dedicated to the technical profession;
- (4) the technical knowledge base dedicated to the technical profession;
- (5) the competence framework for workplace-learning achievements within educational environments.

The above knowledge bases and frameworks are implemented in curricula, modules and assignments for students to develop their competences successfully: technically, pedagogically, and didactically.

The practice trainer program offers different specialization routes: automotive, construction, metal, electro and installation, and catering and hospitality.