

DEVELOPMENT OF THE OCCUPATIONAL STANDARD FOR THE GRAPHIC TECHNOLOGIES, MEDIA AND ADVERTISING SECTOR

Sajek D.
Kauno kolegija

Abstract

A crucial factor for the development of the national economy and for the growth of competitiveness is the qualification of employees that meets the needs of the labour market. Competitive specialists of various areas and at different qualification levels of are the guarantee of the business world, generating local and global breakthroughs at the level of individual companies and nationwide. To achieve this goal, the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework (LTQF) has been developed on the basis of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). LTQF is a set of qualifications that meets the needs of the country's operational system and its employees. The purpose of the National Qualifications Framework is to harmonize the needs and objectives of business and education system in order to ensure optimal results, while improving training of the workforce and increasing the efficiency of education services.

The qualifications framework is based on occupational standards at national level, developed for the appropriate economic sectors of the country. A sectoral occupational standard is a formal agreement between the world of work and the education system, which is vital for employers, educational institutions, learners and employed persons in terms of development and implementation their professional career expectations. Occupational standards enable to define the qualifications of economic sectors using uniform principles and to establish links between levels of qualifications. Furthermore, the occupational standards are an important milestone in the process of acquisition, evaluation and recognition of qualifications [1].

Professional standards are drawn up through social dialogue with experts from the economic sector and the education system, respectively. When preparing a list of qualifications and their descriptions, it is important to assess the actual current situation in the economic sector, the expectations and interests of all social partners, the strategic needs of the society and the long-term perspectives.

This article provides a brief analysis of the sector of graphic technologies, media and advertising, the process of qualification research and the list of qualifications for the sectoral occupational standard.

Key words: national qualifications framework, occupational standards, qualification, competence, labour market, economic sector.

Definition and structure of the graphic technologies, media and advertising. The graphic technologies, media and advertising sectors cover a wide range of activities related to design and publication of printed and modern electronic media (media) and advertising products – design, production, service provision, management and development. The following activities are included in the classification of economic activities NACE_2 in the graphic technologies, media and advertising sectors: Section C (Manufacturing): Division C18 – Printing and reproduction of recorded media; Section J (Information and Communication): Division J58 – Publishing activities, Division J59 – Motion picture, video and television programme production, sound recording and music publishing activities, Division J60 – Programming and broadcasting, Division J63 – Information Service Activities; Section M (Advertising and Market Research): Division M73, Group M73.1 Activities: Advertising Agencies (Group 73.11) and Media Representation (Group 73.12) [2].

Using the methodology for the development of an occupational standard [3] and analysis of the main activities of the sector, the types of services provided and the types of output produced, the economic sector has been divided into three sub-sectors:

1. Graphics and publishing;
2. Media;
3. Advertising.

The activities of all these subsectors are closely interrelated.

Taking into account the logics of processes, the graphics and publishing subsector consists of two parts. Typical graphics activities common for this part of a subsector include printing processes, covering printing processes in printing companies, printing of books, brochures, newspapers, magazines, packaging, promotional, informational, special, and other products using different printing technologies as well as post-printing and finishing. Creative processes that encompass a part of the publishing process include printed and published media production, graphic design, layout, editing and other activities. Some publishing activities, such as book publishing, are related to printing activities except digital book publishing. The other

part such as the publishing of newspapers and magazines, is closely related to the activities of both the printing and the media sub-sectors, which are characterized by the variability of publishing information and the expediency of presentation and the ability to print and publish content in digital information sources.

Activities specific to the media subsector are classified according to type of media: print media, television, radio, and the internet. The media subsector is characterized by journalism activities such as collection, processing and provision of written, video, audio and other information. This subsector also includes the production and design of video and television programmes, sound recording, television and radio programming and broadcasting, and other activities.

Activities related to the creation, production and publication of advertising in publications, radio, television, the internet and other media, digital and printed media are common to advertising sector. Promotional items are exhibited in various indoor and outdoor stationary and mobile objects, in the interior and exterior of buildings, etc.

Qualification research in the sectoral enterprises. Typical activities in the graphics, media and advertising sectors are carried out in printing and publishing houses, advertising and media companies such as television, radio, news agencies. The qualifications, positions and occupational activities of the graphic technologies, media and advertising sectors were investigated in Lithuanian companies selected on the basis of the occupational standard methodology [3]. The qualification research covered large, medium and small-sized enterprises in the sector chosen. A number of the employees, the specifics of activity, the nature of the products produced, as well as the technical and technological excellence and the organization of advanced production were taken into account while selecting the companies.

Two large enterprises in the economic sector were chosen for the qualification research, where specialists of narrower specialization prevail, yet with higher qualifications, alongside with 8 medium and 20 small companies. In total, 30 companies in the sector have been investigated in terms of qualifications, positions and professional activities.

During the qualification research in the companies, the analysis of internal company's documents such as a list of positions and their descriptions was carried out. In addition, information on activities specific to the economic sector was provided in national and international documents: the Lithuanian Classification of Occupations (LCO) [4], the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) [5], the European Classification of Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) [6] as well as

documents on studies and vocational training alongside with the list of positions and descriptions provided by companies.

To determine the content of positions' description, the following methods of document analysis, workplace and company level expert survey were used. Having analysed the lists of occupations and their descriptions provided by LCO, the lists of occupations and the descriptions which can be found in the sector and, consequently, an initial list of occupations was drawn up. On the basis of the data obtained from the economic sector and company-level experts, the list was revised to determine which occupations are found in companies under the same title as the occupations that the world of work consider as 'narrow' ones covering one occupational activity (position), or vice versa, which of the occupations are relatively 'wide' ones according to the Lithuanian Classification of Occupations, that cover several professional activities. The initial list of occupations was refined with representatives from the companies to determine the relevance of the occupational activity and the actual data on occupations and positions held.

Having analysed the descriptions of the occupations found in the enterprises, the goals of the professional activity were formulated and the fields of professional activity were defined. The objectives of the occupational activity and the fields of activity were defined having summarized the objectives and duties of the position held as described in the related positions' descriptions or by splitting the elements of the different occupations. In the world of work, it is not occupations, but positions that are chosen as the starting point for the occupational standard.

Additional data on the positions, their functions, subordination, specific requirements, qualification upgrading opportunities were collected during the company expert survey. The workplace-level expert survey enabled to identify areas of activity and tasks for specific job positions, the competences and limits required for these positions, as well as to carry out analysis of workplace, and determine specific requirements for working conditions. After the analysis of the workplace of the particular occupational activity, the technical and technological characteristics of the workplace (techniques, technologies, equipment) were defined. Furthermore, it was identified provision of managerial, technical or legal documentation, development of the infrastructure, occupational safety measures applied and the key competences and their level, and requirements for employee health. The research data were summarized by completing tables of qualification research.

Research on the sectoral specialist training. Specialists in graphic technologies, media and advertising sectors require a wide range of knowledge and skills, creativity in solving complex tasks in a constantly chang-

ing environment, and the application of modern production and information technologies. The processes of publishing, advertising and media product creation and publication require complex knowledge from different fields, i.e. artistic, technical and humanitarian training. Modern media industry need skilled professionals capable of working with digital technologies, possessing excellent knowledge of Lithuanian and foreign languages, information literacy, creativity, knowledge of materials science alongside with general and special skills.

Specialists in graphic technologies, media and advertising are trained in Lithuanian vocational schools, colleges and universities. Currently, there are more than 20 IV level training programmes directly related to the qualifications of the sector in vocational education and training schools. The most popular of them are: *Electronic Publishing Layout Designer*, *Multimedia Service Provider*, *Advertising Organizer* and others. [7].

Level VI specialists in this sector of the economy are trained in colleges that offer about 15 professional Bachelor programmes, such as *Graphic Technologies*, *Advertising Technologies*, *Photography*, *Multimedia Technology*, *Multimedia Design*, *Graphic Communication Design*, *Advertising Management*, and others. Currently, Lithuanian universities provide about 15 undergraduate study programmes to train VI level specialists – *Publishing and Advertising*, *Journalism*, *Lithuanian Philology and Publishing*, *Film Directing*, *Photography and Media Art*, *Packaging and Press Engineering*, etc.

Level VII specialists are trained in Master Degree Programmes such as *Graphic Communication Engineering*, *Journalism and Media Industries*, *Advertising Management*, *Publishing*, *Media and Communication*, etc.

The data provided show that the training of specialists in all subsectors and qualification levels of the graphic technologies, media and advertising sectors according to the description of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework [8] is widely developed in Lithuania. The training of specialists of VI level and VII level is concentrated mainly in Vilnius and Kaunas higher education institutions. Although a majority of vocational training programmes are implemented in Vilnius and Kaunas, yet a significant number of programmes are realised in Klaipėda, Ukmergė, Alytus and other towns.

Having analysed the compliance of qualifications awarded by vocational education and training and study programmes with the needs of the business world, it has been noted that a majority of the programmes respond to business needs and expectations. In addition, it should be noted that the needs of the business world are constantly changing, thus the flexibility of vocational training and study programmes is inevitable.

In the course of the preparation of the occupational standard and the qualification descriptions, the data on study programmes and training as well as the research on qualifications in the enterprises were used as a source for the sectoral qualification study to define the areas of activity and competences identifying the level of their qualification and limits.

Development of the qualifications and their attribution to the graphic technologies, media and advertising sector. The analysis of the occupational activity is the basis of the national occupational standard, therefore a sectoral qualification list is designed based on the data. Qualifications may correspond to one or more professional activities. While analyzing and summarizing the main areas of activity, qualification units are formed that include specific and realistic combinations of competencies (operational functions). Identification and description of the competences is a very important task of the analysis of occupational activity. Having identified the cognitive, functional and general competencies necessary for the specific activity and the limits of these competencies, the level of competencies is determined. Qualifications are assigned to LTQF / EQF levels on the basis of the description of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework and a description of the qualification levels, assessing the independence, complexity and change of the activity [8, 9].

The graphic technologies and publishing subsector is broad, covering manufacturing (printing and related processes) and publishing (pre-publishing and publishing processes) activities. Large, medium and small-sized companies belong to this subsector, thus the qualifications of the existing occupations in the enterprises and their coherence in the context of the companies' activities were taken into account in the development of qualifications.

Synthesis of professional activities (such as the activities of a multimedia technologist, media manager) prevail in the media subsector. The occupational activities of this subsector are characterized by a wide range of skills i.e. media professionals often need creativity, artistic, technical and social skills. There is also a synthesis of a variety of professional activities that are common to a single qualification in the advertising subsector e.g. advertising manufacturer or photographer. Small businesses dominate in this subsector resulting in broader employee engagement in occupational activities with more competencies.

Key qualifications in the graphic technologies, media and advertising sectors (Table 1) are attributed to three subsectors, yet the attribution of some qualification to one subsector is relative. Qualifications such as photographer, media manager or graphic designer are found in all subsectors.

Table 1. *List of qualifications of the graphic technologies, media and advertising sector*

Qualification	Level of qualification according to LTQF / EQF
Graphic technologies and publishing subsector	
Layout editor	IV
Graphics technician	IV
Digital press operator	IV
Printing plate technician	IV
Printing technician	IV
Layout designer	V
Printing equipment mechanic	V
Printing production supervisor	V
Graphic designer	VI
Language editor	VI
Printing production manager	VI
Printing production business manager	VI
Graphic technologist	VII
Graphic process manager	VII
Media subsector	
Photographer	IV
Multimedia technician	IV
Video and audio operator	IV
Photographer	V
Video and audio system technician	V
Multimedia technologist	VI
Producer	VI
Film director	VI
Media editor	VI
Media manager	VI
Journalist	VI
Media editor	VII

Advertising subsector	
Manufacturer of visual advertising	IV
Advertising technologist	VI
Advertising business manager	VI
Advertising process manager	VII

Conclusions. Modern graphic technologies, publishing, media and advertising market – state-of-the-art and dynamic creative media industry – requires qualified professionals capable of working with digital technologies, demonstrating excellent knowledge of Lithuanian and foreign languages, information literacy, creativity, knowledge of materials science, and other general and special skills. The sector is characterized by rapid deployment of up-to-date technologies, application of innovations, use of new materials, techniques, specialized software and change. All these factors determine a need for higher VI-VII level qualifications in order to ensure the success of the economic sector.

Sectoral occupational standard, as an agreement between the business world and the education system, will benefit businesses in order to inform education system on specific requirements for professionals and executives of training and study programmes who will have a specific milestone in developing, implementing and updating programmes. Undoubtedly, an occupational standard is important for individuals planning to study or develop their careers in the media industry. In order for this agreement to be relevant and comply with actual needs of the social partners, the occupational standard must be updated at least every five years.

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