

NEWSLETTER

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Lesson Study for VET

Teachers' collaboration for Improving the Quality of Vocational Education and Training



DEVELOPING A LESSON STUDY MODEL FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING

The LS4VET project aims to adapt the Lesson Study (LS) methodology for Vocational Education and Training (VET). In VET, LS has been only sporadically applied and never systematically adapted. The objective is to achieve deep and sustainable impact – the improvement of the quality of education through enhanced teacher collaboration and professional development – in VET schools that will apply the LS4VET method.

Needs-Analysis and Data Collection

The first product of the project (Intellectual Outcome 1) is a theoretical model of Lesson Study for the special context of VET. The LS4VET model was developed through professional collaboration between the partners, based on comprehensive needs-analysis and data collection:

- *survey of the prior and current application of the method of LS in VET in the partner countries;*
- *comparative analysis of the special VET-specific national (VET system), organisational (VET school) and individual (teacher) level factors;*
- *survey of the needs of the teachers in the partner VET schools.*

Lesson Study adapted for VET

Findings and suggestions from the needs-analysis and research about factors relevant to the adaptation of LS to the VET context were translated into objectives which influence each other constantly during implementing, carrying out and evaluating Lesson Study for VET:

1. Developing adaptive teachers through inquiry – involves the skill of teachers to deal with unexpected and novel situations. The inquiry component should feature in all stages of the teacher education continuum. We see this as the foundation and starting point for engaging teachers in Lesson Study.
2. Cross boundary collaboration and learning - involves all stakeholders (students, teachers, lesson study facilitators, knowledgeable others, industry-based practitioners). We believe that teachers learn a lot from their workplace in the industry and by observing each other's practices. An implication of this is that LS4VET teams should always include one or more VET teacher(s) in work- and practice-based subjects.



3. Sustainability - the ultimate aim of the LS4VET model should be that Lesson Study becomes a sustainable process within the institution and possibly beyond. Lesson Study in VET should include aspects of how this sustainability may be attained among participants and actors.

The LS4VET Model thus defines the „big ideas” (Goei et al., 2021) of Lesson Study for VET as follows:

1. Teachers collaboratively perform research on challenges and opportunities in their teaching practice. The essence of the first big idea in VET is to improve student learning through teachers’ investigation of new teaching methods and their collaboration (also with industry) in the design, implementation, evaluation, and reflection of research lessons over an extended period.

2. LS involves combining practical knowledge and external knowledge in innovative ways. In a VET context, the second big idea thus includes establishing cross-boundary collaboration with knowledgeable others and/or facilitators from education and/or the industry to create better learning opportunities for students. LS in VET should expand teachers’ horizons through co-creating VET education in collaboration with students, colleagues, industry-partners and other teams, sectors, educational institutes and countries.

3. LS is about learning from students’ learning. LS in VET should lead to teacher's better understanding of their students’ **learning** and what kind of VET-pedagogy is effective for students’ learning.

4. LS is a collaborative effort of teachers with each other and with knowledgeable others. In a VET context, LS involves teachers in job-embedded collaboration and research about theories and methods of authentic teaching and learning, wherever possible in collaboration with the labour market. LS in VET should aim at a better learning culture and collaborative professionalism and enable deep collaboration between teachers and stakeholders from industry about **challenges** and chances they experience in their teaching practice.

5. LS requires iterative cycles of research lessons. LS in VET should encourage teacher learning that is disseminated across practices, within and across VET-institutions

The project website

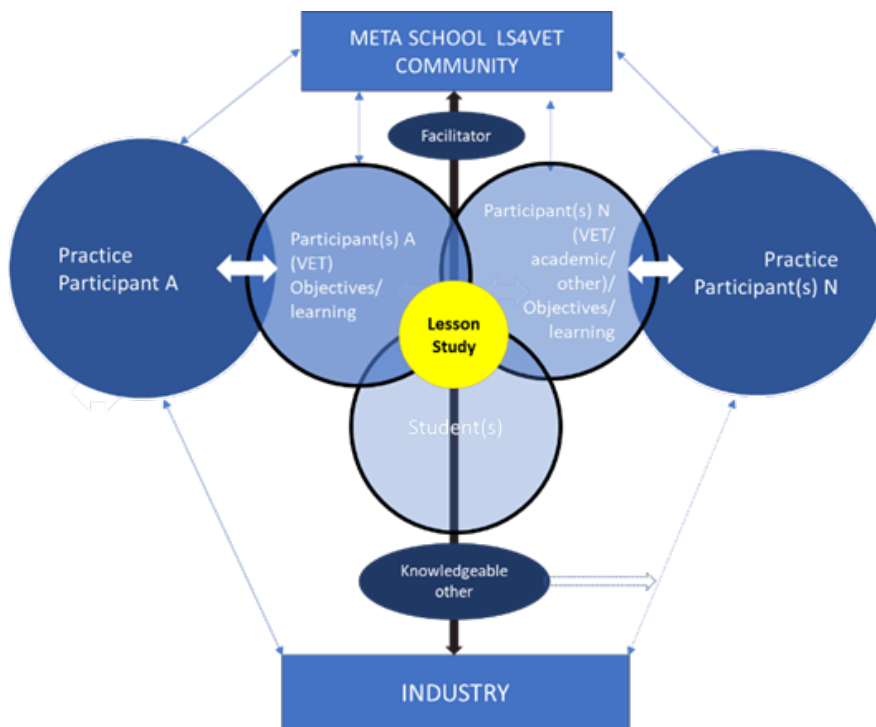
Parallel with working on the model, the LS4VET partnership developed a dynamic multilingual portal with a restricted area (content and file management platform, internal evaluation tools) for the partners and with a front-end site for sharing information about the progress of the project, the events and results in four European languages.

<https://ls4vet.itstudy.hu/>



The LS4VET Model

[The LS4VET Model](#) provides a theoretical framework and guidelines for the adaptation of Lesson Study. Also, it guides the development of the next LS4VET products, including the curriculum and learning content for the LS4VET blended course for VET teachers.



What is Lesson Study?

Lesson Study is a bottom-up approach to teachers' continuous professional development based on professional collaboration and practitioner inquiry. It is a complex activity initiated and carried out by the teachers, in which they investigate a challenge or problem in their daily teaching practice following certain steps. The essence of Lesson Study (LS) is for teachers to discover new, more reflective, and effective approaches in their work for the improvement of students' learning.

Transnational Project Meetings

The aim of the 1st partner meeting held in September 2020 was to create a solid basis for the three years long collaboration aimed at adapting the Lesson Study approach to the special features of VET.

The planned venue of the meeting was Budapest, however, the LS4VET partnership had to switch to online video conference because of the COVID-19 situation.

The 2nd transnational meeting of LS4VET project partners was also held online on 27th May, via MS Teams, organized by the IO1 Leader, University of Applied Sciences Utrecht.

Following the opening words by Prof. Dr. János Győri on behalf of the coordinator organization ELTE, partners responsible for each IO1 activities presented their summaries on the surveys and interviews done among VET schools and teachers. Then the partners took a step forward in the development of the LS model designed to be used in VET. During the second part of the meeting, the leader of IO2, ITStudy presented the upcoming tasks related to the design, implementation and piloting of the LS4VET training course that is the next outcome targeted in the project.

Finally, the partners discussed dissemination activities carried out so far as well as financial and quality management issues.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Teacher collaboration plays a vital role in various elements of teachers' work and was found to have a positive impact on teaching quality and student performance. Lesson Study is a particularly promising model of teachers' professional development based on professional teacher collaboration and focusing on the improvement of student learning through improving teachers' methodological skills. The method, however, only sporadically and not systematically been applied in VET before. In this project, Lesson Study will be systematically applied in VET contexts, which is expected to bring about innovative development in both domains.

Is4vet.itstudy.hu

PROJECT DATA

Title: Teachers' Collaboration through Lesson Study for Improving the Quality of Vocational Education and Training

Acronym: LS4VET

Project ID: 2020-1-HU01-KA202-078848

Program: Erasmus+ KA2

Project type: Strategic partnership

Target group: teachers and trainers working in VET schools

Secondary target group: teacher educators and student teachers

Beneficiaries: VET students

Participant countries: Austria, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands

Project start: 1 September 2020

Project end: 31 August 2023

AIMS

The LS4VET project aims to adapt the Lesson Study methodology for the sector of VET in order to achieve deep and sustainable impact – that is, improvement of the quality of education – in VET schools that will apply the method. Lesson Study has been found to be particularly effective because:

- it is a bottom-up approach of development, where professional development is done not "to" but "by and with" the teachers,
- it is job-embedded and focuses on teachers' real educational contexts in order to improve student learning through teachers' learning of new teaching methods and changing their teaching practice,
- it involves deep teacher collaboration when teachers actively learn through designing, teaching, evaluating and researching lessons together over an extended period of time.

The adaptation of the Lesson Study methodology to VET will be carried out in a close collaboration of expert partners (teacher educators) and VET schools' teachers and students. This process will be supported by formal training (an e-learning course) and mentoring for VET teachers and trainers to learn, adapt and pilot the method of Lesson Study in their own schools.

PROJECT PARTNERS

ELTE Eötvös Loránd University Institute of Intercultural Psychology and Education (Hungary) – project coordinator

iTStudy Hungary Educational and Research Centre Ltd. (Hungary)

Neumann János Computer Science Technical School (Hungary)

Pädagogische Hochschule Niederösterreich (Austria)

HTL Wiener Neustadt (Austria) - *associated partner*

Università ta' Malta (Malta)

Institute of Tourism Studies (Malta)

University of Applied Sciences Utrecht (The Netherlands)

Stichting Landstede (The Netherlands)

