



STATE MATURA PROJECT

Terms of Reference

Junior Non-Key Expert for Final Examinations in Vocational Education and Training

1. Project Background

The project Improving the Quality of Education by Introducing Examinations at the End of Secondary Education (State Matura Project) aims to support the development of a modern and efficient education system in the Republic of Serbia which should contribute to building a knowledge-based society.

The purpose of the project is to prepare the education system to implement the final examinations at the end of secondary education in the Republic of Serbia, as a contribution to improvement of the quality of education and higher participation in higher education.

The expected results are:

1. The education system of the Republic of Serbia is prepared for the implementation of final examinations in secondary education. It will be achieved through the following groups of activities:

- 1.1 Identification of the organisational model
- 1.2 Fine-tuning of the institutional and legislative framework
- 1.3 Capacity building of different stakeholders
- 1.4 Support for establishment of working groups
- 1.5 Development and delivery of final examination items
- 1.6 Piloting of final examinations
- 1.7 Strengthening of IEQE and IIE professional competencies
- 1.8 Creation of preconditions to manage the implementation.

2. Higher education institutions are prepared for a new way of enrolment of students. It will be achieved through the following activities:

- 2.1.1 Analysis of current practices of defining content in enrolment tests by faculties
- 2.1.2 Regular consultations with higher education institutions (HEIs) to support consensus-building concerning final examinations
- 2.1.3 Support to HEIs in defining the enrolment criteria and amending their instruments, tools and procedures
- 2.1.4 Development, delivery and assessment of training programmes for teaching and administrative staff in HEIs.

3. Increased understanding of the public about the relevance of introducing final examinations in secondary education and its benefits for society. It will be achieved through the following activities:

- 3.1.1 Development and implementation of a communication strategy
- 3.1.2 Development and implementation of a media campaign
- 3.1.3 Organisation of roundtables and public discussions with target stakeholders
- 3.1.4 A Helpdesk for communication with target stakeholders during the project
- 3.1.5 Development of an online project portal.

The assignment will address the specifics of vocational education and training (VET), focusing on standardised final examinations in this subsector of secondary education. In a number of aspects, VET is seen as more complex than general secondary education:

- VET is undergoing substantial reform, in particular through introducing qualification standards and revising curriculum of VET profiles accordingly
- Qualification standards and corresponding VET profiles are in the process of being referenced to Serbian National Qualifications Framework (NOKS)
- Despite the trend to reduce the number of VET profiles, their number remains over 100, each requiring a valid, reliable and objective theoretical (in 4-year profiles) and practical (in 3- and 4-year profiles) final examination
- VET has to be relevant and therefore respond to technological development, i.e. undergo changes in content and methodology more rapidly, compared to general education
- Engagement of employers in defining VET curriculum and in conducting final examinations is becoming crucial, e.g. the effort to transform traditional VET to dual system
- VET faces the problem of attractiveness for young generation, being often only the 'second choice' of pupils and their parents who prefer general education.

2. Reference document

Terms of Reference of the Project: EuropeAid/138188/DH/SER/RS, Improving the Quality of Education by Introducing Examinations at the End of Secondary Education.

3. Terms of Reference Relevance

The assignment will contribute to the achievement of the planned results by providing expert input in the following activities of the Sub-component 1.6. Piloting of final examinations, analysis and enhancement of the system for final examinations, partly also the Sub-component 1.7. Strengthening of human resources and professional competencies of IEQE and IIE:

Activity 1.6.1. Prepare instruments (tests) based on the developed items for the purpose of piloting

Activity 1.6.2. Organize and deliver the first pilot phase in selected secondary schools

Activity 1.6.3. Process and analyse the results of the first pilot

Activity 1.6.5. Organise and deliver the second pilot phase

Activity 1.6.6. Process and analyse the results of the second pilot

Activity 1.6.7. Present the results of the pilot phases to relevant target groups

Activity 1.6.8. Provide support for the revision of the final version of the Concept of Final Examinations

Activity 1.7.2. Provide support to IEQE and IIE to organize and/or establish an effective examination centre

Activity 1.7.3. Develop and deliver a continuous professional development programme targeting IEQE and IIE

4. Assignment objective

The assignment objective is to participate in the preparation and implementation of piloting VET final examinations, contribute to processing and analysing the results of the pilots, participate in support and CPD targeting IIE (VET Centre).

5. Main Tasks/Activities

The Junior Expert for Final Examinations in Vocational Education and Training will carry out the following tasks in cooperation with Junior VET WG Coordinator and Junior Monitor and Evaluator for Final Examinations:

- Review the concepts of VET tests and examination tasks produced by working groups as regards their congruence with qualification standards or VET profile characteristics and curriculum, validity and level of difficulty, provide feedback to WG coordinator, and supervise the quality of the examination tools
- Assist in ensuring across all VET profiles that the preparation of final examinations in VET is aligned with the ongoing VET reform, focusing in particular on the following:
 - Alignment to qualification standards and their NOKS level
 - Relevance of VET final examinations to the requirements of industry and services

- Engagement of companies and employer representatives in preparing and conducting final examinations
- Oversee the organisation and delivery of piloting final examination in VET schools
- Contribute to processing and analysing the results of the pilots in VET and their presentation
- Contribute to the revision of the final version of the Concept of Final Examinations

6. Related Outputs

The Junior Expert for Final Examinations in Vocational Education and Training shall produce the following deliverables:

- Written reviews of concepts of VET final examination tasks and tests with regard to their congruence, validity and level of difficulty, in the time frame corresponding to the final examinations piloting schedule
- A report on organisation and delivery of VET final examination pilots, in May 2020 and May 2021
- Contribution to analytical reports on the results of VET final examinations piloting
- Contribution to the revised final version of the Concept of Final Examinations

7. Timing and duration of mission/s

The assignment shall be implemented in Belgrade, in the period February 2020 – September 2021, up to 120 working days. Some travel outside of Belgrade might be needed. The number of days is subject to extension as needed.

8. Reporting

The experts will report and submit all written deliverables to the Key Expert 2 (1.6), Key Expert 3 (1.7) and the Team Leader. The expert work and its outputs will be recorded by the expert in the draft monthly timesheet.

9. Expert profile

A Junior Non-Key Expert with the following qualifications, skills and experience is required for this task:

Qualifications and skills:

- University degree
- Excellent communication, reporting and teamwork skills
- Fluency and good writing and editing skills in English
- Knowledge of Serbian will be considered an asset
- Computer literacy

General professional experience:

- A minimum 5 years of general professional experience in the education sector

Specific Professional Experience:

- A minimum of 3 years of experience in the area of VET
- Experience in VET reform in Serbia
- Experience in monitoring final examinations in VET
- Experience in preparing professional development programmes in education

Experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities defined by the Terms of Reference.

10. Evaluation of work

The expert's performance will be assessed by the Key Experts 2 and 3 and the Team Leader, and by the Beneficiary's representative.