

Report on Work Package 3.2

“Development of the VALERU VNIL Training Programme”

The purpose of this report is to retrospectively describe the development of the VALERU VNIL training programme, which was elaborated in an iterative manner.

The **main aim** of the VALERU project is to support and develop validation procedures in Higher Education Institutions in the Russian Federation. A VNIL **training (train-the-trainer) programme** and training/learning material was developed to accomplish this task. Also assessment methods and ways of **ensuring a quality standard** in training outcomes were installed. All training materials and assessment has been aligned with learning levels and outcomes of the European Qualification Framework. The development process for the training programme resulted in **three levels of qualification**:

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The introductory level (equals EQF level 3):

- Passing the [online exam](#) (50% pass mark)
- Participant receives VALERU Introductory Certificate (issued online after passing the exam)
- A VNIL specialist at introductory level is able to **explain the importance** of VNIL for Higher Education, to **distinguish between different learning perspectives**, to **write learning outcomes** and to enumerate different VNIL practices.

The intermediate level (equals EQF level 4, 2 ECTS):

- Writing the [reflective report](#) (approx. 2500 words) about introducing and composing a VNIL procedure and passing it.
- Participant receives VALERU Intermediate Certificate after passing the reflective report.
- A VNIL specialist at intermediate level is able to **compose a process for VNIL**, to **advise VNIL candidates** and to **conduct VNIL training sessions**.

The advanced level (equals EQF level 5, 3 ECTS):

- Passing the intermediate level and writing an **add-on to the reflect report** with a focus on assessment strategies (all in all approx. 3000 words)
- **Practical training:** Assisting in assessment of reflective reports
- All points above accomplished: Participant receives the VALERU Advanced Certificate

- A VNIL specialist at advanced level is able to **quantify and assess non-formal and informal learning** and to **conduct VNIL training sessions and its assessment**.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE VALERU TRAINING PROGRAMME

The training programme was developed in an iterative manner and adapted to the needs of the Russian project partners. The training programme was reviewed in 4 steps, which are further described below:

Training Design 1.0

In an **initial stage (VALERU VNIL training design 1.0)** the purpose was to train “VNIL experts”, so they are able to re-train the VNIL training programme in their institutions. They are required to write a reflective report about how to introduce and implement validations procedures in their institutions and also pass a final exam, which is taken at the final conference. The online exam serves to ensure that there is a common understanding of basic terminology throughout the Russian Federation, whereas the reflective report has a focus on higher order thinking skills (analysing, evaluating and creating).

We identified a few obstacles/threats in this initial plan:

- 1) A **paper-based final exam** with necessary attendance at the final conference could cause problems. Our VNIL training participants come from very different parts of Russia and it is hard to bring them all to Moscow for the exam at the final conference. We risk the chance of having a big expert pool.
- 2) The training programme educated VNIL trainers, but not **assessors**. UoC, DUK and DUW marked the reflective reports, but who will do this after the project lifetime and also in Russian language? Additional competences are needed for being a competent assessor. This issue is also an issue of sustainability.

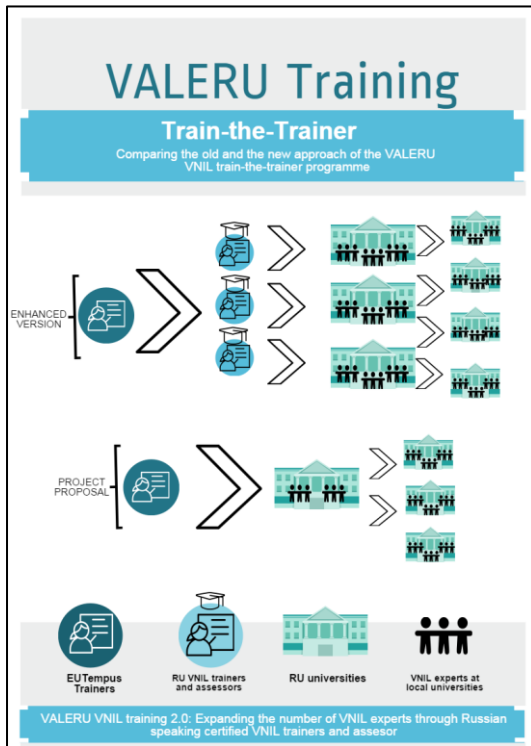


Figure 1: VNIL Assessment Experts approach in VALERU VNIL training design 2.0

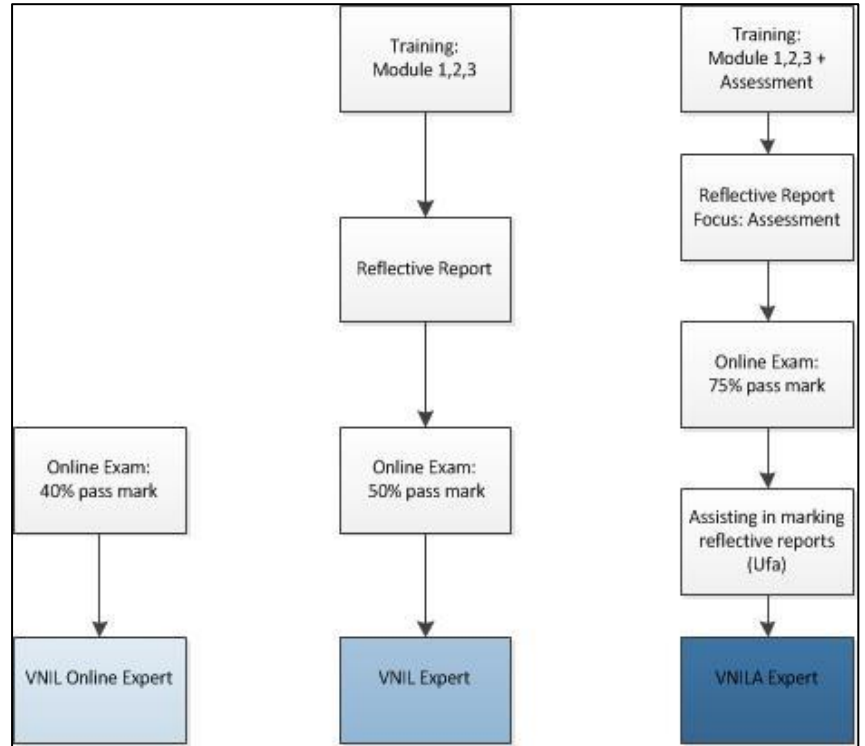


Figure 2 VALERU VNIL Training Design 2.0. with three experts groups – and rather separated training sessions

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Training Design 2.0

We tried to answer to these obstacles with following solutions in Training Design 2.0:

- 1) We established an **online exam** for the VNIL experts. They can take it everywhere and at any time. We can also open it for other interested stakeholders, who didn't participate in the training session. The thought to call them "online experts".
- 2) We developed a training design for **VNIL Assessment Experts**, who can assess reflective reports of training participants.

In the end we came up with **three expert groups**: Online experts, regular VNIL experts and VNIL Assessment Experts. But how are these expert groups related to each other? And which requirements need people to fulfil to reach a different status? How should the certificates be named like and how can we ensure their transparency? We were faced with several questions. The system with three different expert groups was somehow complex and hard to understand.

Training Design 3.0

That's why we were looking for a more coherent and progressive solution within the training design – the VALERU VNIL Training Design 3.0. DUK and UoC developed a level-system, indicating three levels of expertise, each one correlating with a different EQF level, against which reflective reports need to be assessed.

And at this point the **double function of the training** becomes obvious: When reaching the last, advanced level of the VNIL training (EQF 5), students are able to assess reflective reports against criteria given by a certain qualification framework. Therefore they learn not only to assess VNIL training participant's reports, but also in general how to quantify and assess learning in a validation process. They are trained to be VNIL assessors in a validation procedure. Specialists in VNIL at intermediate level can not only re-train, but they are also able to compose a VNIL procedure and also can act as a facilitator and advisor for candidate who wish to start a VNIL procedure.

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Instead of Online Experts, VNIL Experts and VNIL Assessment Experts, we developed following three levels:

- 1) **Introductory Level (EQF Level 3):** Self-study (<http://valeru.net/course-material/> and <http://valeru.net/online-training-mode/>) and online exam (<http://valeru.net/valeru-online-exam/>), pass mark 50% – Certificate: *"VALERU Introductory Certificate"*
- 2) **Intermediate Level (EQF Level 4):** Training session (face-to-face or webinar) on Module 1, 2, and 3. Writing and passing a reflective report about introducing and composing a VNIL procedure (around 2500 Words) – Certificate: *"VALERU Intermediate Certificate"* (2ECTS)
- 3) **Advanced Level (EQF Level 5):** Training session (face-To-face or webinar) on assessment, writing and add-on to reflective report about assessment strategies (around 500 Words) - Certificate: *"VALERU Advanced Certificate"* (3ECTS)

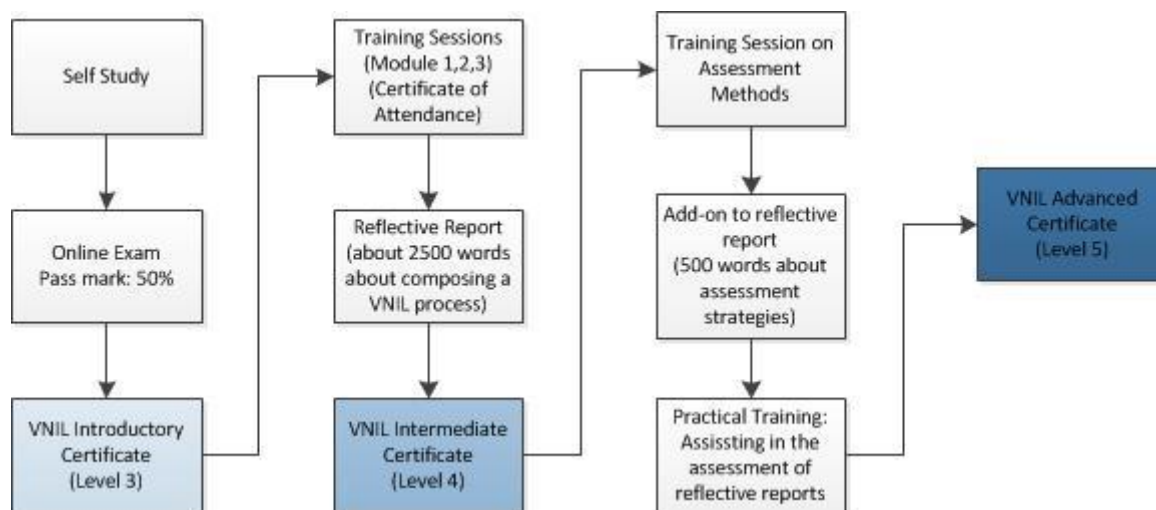


Figure 3 Coherent and progressive training design: VALERU VNIL training design 3.0

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Read more about the characteristics of a Specialist in the Accreditation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning and learning outcomes at different levels in report 3.1.

The VALERU Training Programme (4.0)

During the pre-conference meeting in Barcelona in July 2016 also the training programme design 3.0 was discussed and certain issues were identified, which needed improvement:

- The **learning outcome** should be important, now how and where the person learned it.
- To address adult learner needs, our programme needs to be **more flexible**
- We should not force people to go through the whole process until the VNIL Advanced Level in order to obtain the certificates. If people can **show during the assessment that they fulfil the criteria**, they should be allowed to receive the certificate.

Therefore, the [final training design 4.0](#) was developed during the project meeting in Barcelona:

People can choose which level is suitable for your needs and you would like to achieve. You can also choose the way you want to learn: Through self-study, through...

- **self-study:** studying the [material on the platform](#) and especially [module readers for module 1, 2 and 3](#) and practicing questions with the [online training mode](#),
- participating in face-to-face **training sessions** or through
- webinars.

The introductory level (equals EQF level 3):

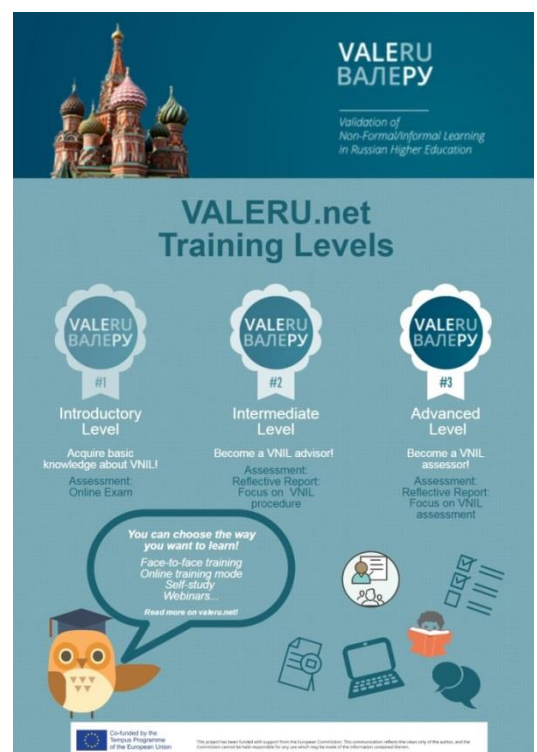
- Passing the **online exam** (50% pass mark)
- Participant receives VALERU Introductory Certificate (issued online after passing the exam)
- A VNIL specialist at introductory level is able to **explain the importance** of VNIL for Higher Education, to **distinguish between different learning perspectives**, to **write learning outcomes** and to enumerate different VNIL practices.

The intermediate level (equals EQF level 4, 2 ECTS):

- Writing the **reflective report** (approx. 2500 words) about introducing and composing a VNIL procedure and passing it.
- Participant receives VALERU Intermediate Certificate after passing the reflective report.
- A VNIL specialist at intermediate level is able to **compose a process for VNIL**, to **advise VNIL candidates** and to **conduct VNIL training sessions**.

The advanced level (equals EQF level 5, 3 ECTS):

- Passing the intermediate level and writing an **add-on to the reflect report** with a focus on assessment strategies (approx. 500 words)
- **Practical training:** Assisting in assessment of reflective reports
- All points above accomplished: Participant receives the VALERU Advanced Certificate
- A VNIL specialist at advanced level is able to **quantify and assess non-formal and informal learning** and to **conduct VNIL training sessions and its assessment**.



Isabell Grundschober (DUK) on behalf of the VALERU project team, October 2016