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Standard Recommendation
S.R. CEN GUIDE 14:2010

Common policy guidance for addressing standardisation on qualification of professions and personnel

S.R. CEN Guide 14:2010

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CEN GUIDE 14

**Common policy guidance for
addressing standardisation
on qualification of
professions and personnel**

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Foreword

This document (CEN Guide 14:2010) has been prepared by CEN/BT/WG 192 "Qualifications of professions / personnel", the secretariat of which is held by UNI. Subsequently, the Guide was adopted by the CEN Technical Board by Resolution BT 2/2010.

Draft Guides adopted by the responsible Committee or Group are circulated to national bodies for voting.

Publication as a Guide requires approval by simple majority of the national bodies casting a vote.

Introduction

First discussion on CEN possible input on qualification of personnel sprang out in CEN Bureau Technique in relation to specific situations. On that occasion CEN/BT acknowledged that standards that somehow deal with Qualification of professions / personnel had already been issued in various specific sectors and demand for new projects was increasing.

CEN/BT has recognized the need to ensure market relevance of and compatibility between standards on Qualification of professions / personnel and has agreed that this could be facilitated by a common guidance for analysing the conditions for starting standardisation on the issue and providing tools for drafting such standards (ref: Resolution BT C060/2006).

CEN system should deal with qualification of professions and personnel in a consistent and careful way, in order to prevent different strategies on the same issue from spreading in Europe, and possible consequent misunderstanding from damaging CEN system's image.

As the main legislative reference at European level in relation to qualification of professions / personnel, CEN/BT/WG 192 has identified "Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 7 September 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications". Annex A provides details on the EU legislative acquis, and Clause 3 offers an outline of the relationship between standardisation and legislation, and suggestions on possible room for standardisation in the field of qualification of professions / personnel in order not to hinder free circulation.

NOTE Throughout this Guide the wording "Qualification of professions / personnel" is referred to by the abbreviation "QPP".

A way to avoid creation of barriers is to consider qualification as the tool to assure the proper performance of an element in a process. Paying attention to the global efficiency of a process, standards on QPP should specify how it is possible to understand, evaluate and check if an element is able to offer the exact performance that is expected in its being a part of a successful process.

For the purpose of assuring that European Standards on Qualification of professions / personnel remain useful, authoritative and respected, it is of key importance that they reflect demonstrated market needs and that they are mutually compatible to facilitate their possible joint implementation.

The objective of this Guide is to assist those involved in writing (new or revised) standards on Qualification of professions / personnel to ensure that the standards meet the above-mentioned key criterion of market relevance, without either bringing on complexity in the European market or creating any barriers to free movement.

Use of these guidelines should also help ensure compatibility and enhance alignment between standards on Qualification of professions / personnel with a view possibly to facilitate the combined application of the standards.

This Guide is intended to be used by all standard writers having to approach standardisation on Qualification of professions / personnel. This Guide is addressed to the standard writers having to deal with the elaboration of European Standards. Nevertheless, CEN members are recommended to make beneficial use of it also in the preparation of relevant national documents.

This document is meant to offer possible solutions to the question whether and how standardisation can provide contribution to the QPP process.

This document has been prepared focusing on a person's qualification. Nevertheless, there may be some requests to extend the concept of qualification to an organisation. This document does not consider such cases, but it is assumed that its approach can apply to organisations, too.

Examination by CEN/BT/WG 192 of a sample of European and International Standards on QPP has shown that, at the time of issue of this common guidance, different technical sectors have already approached QPP in various ways. Through a classification step, analysis of the existing standards has helped to detect a possible modular structure template and three major types of standards have been detected, which reflect the approaches on QPP that the market has found, i.e.:

- the standards that mainly specify professionalism focusing on *competence*;
- the standards that mainly define the *tasks* to be performed; and
- the standards that mainly provide specifications on *assessment* of competence.

On the grounds of the study CEN/BT/WG 192 has carried out, this Guide provides a preferable modular template for the structure of European Standards on QPP, and related explanations.

The modular template provides basic, clear and sound orientation for standard writers who need to decide the methodological approach and to choose the relevant elements to be included in a QPP standard.

The template should be considered as a checklist of all the elements that could be included in a QPP standard, among which standard writers could develop the ones they are more interested in. The template should also help them in identifying all the other elements that should be present in a QPP standard in order to make the qualification process successful, to consider all possible users of the standard, to ensure market relevance, and therefore not to create any barriers to free movement.

With reference to terminology, following up the task "to collect basic terms and definitions", with which CEN/BT charged CEN/BT/WG 192 by Resolution BT C060/2006, CEN/BT/WG 192 provided evidence that a taxonomy in the QPP field is necessary, and that the subject would need further development. However, at the time of submission of this draft Guide to CEN/BT for approval, no specific documents on terminology in the QPP sector are available yet.

In the light of the purpose of assuring that standardisation on QPP can actually contribute to free movement without creating any barriers, the vocabulary should consider any possible definitions available at EC level, and clarify the difference between qualification and regulated professions.

1 Scope

This Guide is intended to help standard writers to express requirements on qualification of professions / personnel, in a clear and uniformed way and to be able to assess and facilitate potential new initiatives on Qualification of Professions and Personnel in an efficient and coherent way in the European market.

In this Guide the term "qualification" of professions / personnel is used making reference to the standardisation "process" of qualifying a person as the candidate to perform a defined task properly.

Accordingly the Guide does not consider qualification as the job title, or as the formal outcome of an assessment process determining that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards.

It contains recommendations related to the pre-normative phase, standard drafting rules and indications on terminology. The latest point out the need to consider terminology as a basic element and as a valuable practical instrument, when a QPP standard is to be drafted.

This Guide considers two phases of the standardisation process, i.e. the pre-normative phase (see Clause 3) and the standard drafting phase (see Clause 4), covering the following items:

- policy guidance, i.e. guidance to evaluate a proposal for a standard on Qualification of professions / personnel process. In relation to that, Clause 3 aims at providing support to answer the question whether standardisation can contribute to the Qualification of professions / personnel process, on the grounds of an outline on the "state of the art" on QPP, which refers to the relationship between standardisation and legislation, mainly reporting the EU legislative acquis;
- "operational" guidance, i.e. guidance offering a modular template for the structure of European Standards on Qualification of professions / personnel, with recommendations on how to deal with QPP. Clause 4 aims at replying to the question of how standardisation can provide contribution to the QPP process in the cases where, following up proper evaluation of a market's request to prepare a standard covering QPP aspects, it has been judged that the request can be met.

Clauses 3 and 4 point out the actions that are remarkable in relation to the various steps in the pre-standardisation and in the standard drafting process.

NOTE 1 Whenever in this Guide the term "standard" is used, the whole range of CEN deliverables is meant [i.e. European Standards, CEN(CENELEC) Guides, Technical Specifications, Technical Reports, Workshop Agreements] unless a specific type of document is referred to.

NOTE 2 Whenever in this Guide the term technical committee (TC) is used, all CEN technical bodies developing deliverables are included.

2 Basics concepts

For the purpose of the application of this Guide, reference should be made to the following document:

CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations – Part 3, 2009, *Rules for the structure and drafting of CEN/CENELEC Publications (ISO/IEC Directives – Part 2, modified)*.

Besides, as the key to reading this Guide, this clause provides explanation of how some common basic concepts are used in this text.

NOTE Identification of terms and definitions is the subject of standardisation activities, and it is not within the scope of a CEN Guide prepared by a CEN/BT/WG.

This Guide makes references to the following basic concepts, the clarification of the meaning of which is reported in the perspective of facilitating common understanding and easy and effective use of the Guide.

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