



# Implementing the Standard for In-Company Trainers in ASEAN Countries (ASEAN In-CT Standard)

Country Case Studies

Thailand 

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# Introduction

In-company training is globally recognised as a best practice to provide students and apprentices with technical knowledge and practical skills. It complements education in vocational schools by offering hands-on training, experience with real work processes and access to up-to-date know-how from business and industry.

Work-based learning in companies relies on competent in-company trainers to train students, apprentices and other employees effectively. Between 2014 and 2015, with the support of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BiBB) and the Karlsruher Institut für Technologie (KIT), a regional working group addressed the need to define a benchmark for the essential competencies of trainers engaged in workplace TVET delivery for the ASEAN region. In a collaborative process, the working group developed *The Standard for In-Company Trainers in ASEAN Countries* (ASEAN In-CT Standard).

The group consisted of 60 experts from labour and education ministries, standard authorities, business and industry, universities and other educational and training institutions from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. In November 2015, representatives from participating ASEAN member states established a regional steering committee to oversee the promotion and implementation of the ASEAN In-CT Standard at the regional and national level. Today, the committee is composed of nine ASEAN member states, with one representative from the public and one from the private sector for each country.

The ASEAN In-CT Standard was endorsed by the *12<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Education* (SOM-ED) in December 2017 and ad-referendum by the delegates of the *11<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting Working Group on Progressive Labour Practices to Enhance the Competitiveness of ASEAN* (SLOM-WG) in December 2018.



# 1 | In-Company Training In Thailand

Thailand has a long history of promoting in-company training, compared to other ASEAN member states. Two government departments have always played a central role in regulating in-company training and offering training courses for in-company trainers: the Department of Skills Development (DSD) under the Ministry of Labour and the Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC) under the Ministry of Education. DSD's focus is on providing pre-employment training, reskilling and skills upgrading for people who are already in the workforce. OVEC is responsible for vocational education in Thailand, including dual vocational training, which was introduced in 1995.

## Regulatory function of the Department of Skills Development

DSD is mandated to promote skills development in Thailand. More specifically, DSD is responsible for establishing national skills standards, certifying training centres and training and assessing workers as regulated by the Skill Development Promotion Act B.E. 2545 (A.D. 2002) and the additional amendment (second edition) B.E. 2557 (A.D. 2014).

In order to ensure that trainers are able to equip employees with the skills that companies need, the Skill Development Promotion Act authorises the Skill Development Promotion Committee (SDPC)<sup>1</sup>, under the guidance of DSD, to oversee the establishment of qualification requirements for training instructors in Thailand. According to the Act, a training instructor is defined as a person who delivers training instructions to trainees. To qualify as instructor for pre-employment training<sup>2</sup> the person must:

- hold a national skill standard certificate in the profession they are going to instruct or have graduated with a bachelor's degree or a diploma in a field of the profession;
- in case there is no national skill standard in the profession, a pre-employment instructor must obtain a vocational certificate or graduate from elementary or secondary education with work experience;
- attend a training of trainers (TOT) course of at least 30 hours duration or have a minimum of 30 hours of teaching experience.

The TOT course can be conducted by DSD, by a DSD-certified skills training centre or by another training provider as long as the course is approved by DSD. DSD's 30-hours course 'Skills development and work-based training techniques' includes the following subjects:

<sup>1</sup> According to the Skills Development Promotion Act (Chapter 5, Section 38), the SDPC is a tripartite committee comprised of representatives from several ministries, the Thai Chamber of Commerce and other private sector associations as well as representatives of employees. The Director General of DSD serves as secretary of the SDPC.

<sup>2</sup> Pre-employment training is provided prior to employment in order to enable workers to perform in line with the respective skill standards of their profession.

| Subject  | Hours |
|--|-------|
| Responsibilities and qualifications of trainers    | 3     |
| Training psychology                                | 3     |
| Importance of Instructional media                  | 3     |
| Workplace analysis                                 | 1.5   |
| Safety regulations at work                         | 3     |
| Defining behavioral objectives                     | 1.5   |
| Evaluating training                                | 3     |
| Preparing training using lecturing techniques      | 2     |
| Lecturing techniques                               | 1     |
| Conducting training using lecturing techniques     | 3     |
| Preparing training using demonstration techniques  | 2     |
| Demonstration techniques                           | 1     |
| Conducting training using demonstration techniques | 3     |
| Total  | 30    |

Table 1: Training course outline of DSD's 'Skills development and work-based training techniques'

## Tax incentives for companies

In order to encourage more companies to provide skills development opportunities for their workers, Thailand's Revenue Department stipulated tax incentives for companies in the Royal Decree Issued Under The Revenue Code Governing Exemption of Taxes and Duties (No. 437) B.E. 2548 (A.D. 2005). It introduced tax incentives to support companies which train in-company trainers. Companies that comply with the Skills Development Promotion Act are eligible to deduct 100% of expenses incurred for sending their employees to a government-approved training institution or DSD-approved training course for training instructors, from their annual corporate taxes. Companies must provide evidence of the costs incurred.

## In-company training as part of dual vocational training

In vocational education, specifically dual vocational training, in-company trainers are responsible for training apprentices during their workplace training phases. Vocational education at all levels is overseen by OVEC as regulated in the Vocational Education Act B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008) and the Act on the Ministry of Education B.E. 2546 (A.D. 2001). Due to the important role of companies in a dual training system, a separate law, the Dual Vocational Education Standard Act B.E. 2557 (A.D. 2014), regulates Thailand's dual vocational training system.

The Act requires companies that wish to train students/apprentices as part of the dual vocational training system to comply with certain criteria, e.g. to have a qualified in-company trainer.

OVEC specifies that in order to qualify as an in-company trainer, a company employee has to fulfil at least one of the following conditions:

- pass an in-company trainer assessment,
- complete a training course for in-company trainers of at least 30 hours<sup>3</sup> or
- have at least six months of training experience as an in-company trainer.

These requirements are different from those laid down by DSD. However, in practice, companies which participate in the dual vocational training system have an interest in complying with the Skill Development Promotion Act in order to be able to deduct the training expenses for in-company trainers from their annual corporate taxes. OVEC therefore designed a training course that is adapted to suit in-company trainers who train students/apprentices in the dual vocational training system and which is also aligned with DSD's 30-hour training course for training instructors. The course was subsequently approved by DSD as conforming to the qualification requirements in line with the Skills Development Promotion Act.

As a practical consequence, companies always send employees with the potential to qualify as in-company trainers to attend a training course. The options of passing an assessment or gaining credit for practical training experience in order to qualify as an in-company trainer are not utilised in practice.

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<sup>3</sup> OVEC does not require a formal assessment to complete the course (attendance only), because of negative feedback received from training participants in the past. Instead, it integrated a micro-teaching session into the training course, which it uses to provide feedback on participants' competencies as in-company trainers.

# 2

## Adaptation to the ASEAN In-CT Standard

Thailand was one of the first countries in ASEAN to adapt its in-company trainer training scheme to the ASEAN In-CT Standard and to develop an in-company trainer qualification benchmarked with the regional standard.

### Alignment of training to the ASEAN In-CT Standard

When the ASEAN In-CT Standard was finalised in 2015, DSD and OVEC (which were both involved in the development of the standard) saw the benefit of aligning their existing training courses for in-company trainers to the regional standard.

The ASEAN In-CT Standard structures the competencies in-company trainers should acquire into four groups (modules) and recommends that the competencies are best obtained in an 80-hour training course. DSD and OVEC reviewed the ASEAN In-CT Standard and agreed to align their existing course content to the ASEAN In-CT Standard. Changes were made to the subjects and their weight in terms of hours in the overall structure of the training courses.

The legal qualification requirement was, however, not changed, because of feedback from the private sector that 30-hours was already the maximum time companies were willing to release their employees for an in-company trainer course. DSD and OVEC therefore offer now two courses: a 30-hour and an 80-hour version. Both OVEC training courses were approved by DSD, allowing companies that send employees to these training courses to deduct the expenses from their annual corporate taxes.

| Subject  | Hours |
|--|-------|
| Background to the Act on the Department of Skill Development | 2     |
| Conducting training in the dual education system             | 2     |
| Monitoring training in the dual education system             | 2     |
| Designing a training plan                                    | 8     |
| Conducting training  | 9     |
| Evaluating training  | 5     |
| Assessment   | 2     |
| Total  | 30    |

Table 2: Outline of OVEC's 30-hour 'Train the trainer in the workplace' course

Since the adaptation of OVEC’s training courses to the ASEAN In-CT Standard, OVEC has trained over 2,000 in-company trainers. Most training courses are still 30 hours long, since companies opt for the minimum duration required by law.

| No. of training courses | Duration                      | No. of trainers |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| 2 courses               | 80 hours (10 days per course) | 24              |
| 57 courses              | 30 hours (4 days per course)  | 2,121           |
| Total                   |                               | 2,145           |

Table 3: Number of training courses conducted by OVEC from 2017 to 2019

## Development of a professional qualification for in-company trainers

The development of the ASEAN In-CT Standard initiated another process in Thailand: the development of a professional qualification for in-company trainers by the Thailand Professional Qualification Institute (TPQI).

TPQI was established as a public organisation under the Prime Minister’s supervision in 2011 in order to promote the development of a professional qualification system in Thailand. According to the *Royal Decree on the Establishment of the Thailand Professional Institute (Public Organisation) B.E. 2554 (A.D. 2011)*, TPQI’s objective is to enhance the competencies of Thailand’s workforce by establishing a professional qualification system, work with industries to set occupational standards<sup>4</sup> that are recognised both domestically and internationally, collaborate with industry experts to assess competency, as well as cooperate with public and private organizations to promote competency-based training and the implementation of occupational standards. TPQI also accredits other organisations to serve as assessment centres for its occupational standards.

In order to link TPQI’s occupational standards to the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and in consequence also to the ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework (AQRF), TPQI developed the Professional Qualification Framework (PQF). It is divided into eight competence levels and is used as a tool to assess and certify the level of knowledge, skills, application and responsibilities of workers in accordance with occupational standards.

In September 2015, TPQI started to develop a professional qualification and occupational standard for in-company trainers, which it benchmarked with the ASEAN In-CT Standard. The occupational standard for in-company trainers was endorsed in May 2016. TPQI decided to develop a level 3, 4, and 5 qualification<sup>5</sup>. Level 3 and 4 contain units of competencies that can be found in all four modules of the ASEAN In-CT Standard:

<sup>4</sup> This is in contrast to skills standards, which DSD remains responsible for in Thailand.

<sup>5</sup> At the time of writing, TPQI is considering adding a level 6 qualification that would consist of the competencies of the ASEAN In-CT Standard that are not yet covered by the level 3, 4 and 5 qualifications.

| ASEAN In-CT Standard  |         | TPQI's occupational standard for in-company trainers |
|---|---------|--|
| Module 1: Analysing work tasks and defining learning requirements | Level 3 | Trainee analysis                                     |
| Module 2: Planning and preparing training                         |         | Planning and preparing training                      |
| Module 3: Conducting training                                     |         | Conducting on-the-job training                       |
| Module 4: Evaluation and further development of training          |         | Evaluation and further development of training       |
| Module 1: Analysing work tasks and defining learning requirements | Level 4 | Identifying training needs                           |
| Module 2: Planning and preparing training                         |         | Developing training courses                          |
|   |         | Developing training materials                        |
|   |         | Selecting appropriate training materials             |
|   |         | Selecting most appropriate training methods          |
|   |         | Planning and preparing a lesson plan                 |
| Module 3: Conducting training                                     |         | Conducting in-class training                         |
| Module 4: Evaluation and further development of training          |         | Evaluation and further development of training       |

Table 4: Comparison of TPQI's occupational standard for in-company trainers with the ASEAN In-CT Standard

Units of competencies in level 5 qualification include analysis of a workplace, counselling, improvement of training process, and coaching other in-company trainers.

The benchmarking of the occupational standard for in-company trainers with the ASEAN In-CT Standard marked the explicit endorsement of the ASEAN In-CT Standard at the national level in Thailand. The occupational standard also further enhanced the visibility of in-company trainers and standardised, for the first time, the set of competencies required by an in-company trainer.

## Private sector involvement in the assessment of in-company trainers

TPQI puts great emphasis on the cooperation between the public and private sectors in order to enhance the quality of professional qualifications and occupational standards. In practice, industry experts are an essential part of the working groups that develop occupational standards and of the standard review subcommittees which ensure that standards remain relevant and respond to industry's need for skills.

Industry or professional associations can also be involved in the promotion, assessment and certification of standards. TPQI certifies organisations to conduct assessments for its occupational standards based on ISO 17024 principles, which are the principles of personnel certification, including

- expertise in the field in which they are applying to assess candidates,
- a three-year assessment plan outlining their target group and assessment process,
- availability of qualified assessors and a support team at the assessment centre to conduct and facilitate the assessments,
- an appropriate setting and equipment to conduct the assessments.

Accreditation of assessment centres is valid for three years with the option of renewal. Once an organisation has been certified as an assessment centre, its assessors are required to attend an assessor training course organised by TPQI.

For the in-company trainer standard, TPQI accredited the Federation of Thai Industries (FTI), King Mongkut University of Technology North Bangkok (KMUTNB) and the Thai-German Institute (TGI) as assessment centres. Their assessments have to conform to the criteria outlined in the relevant occupational standard. For the in-company trainer qualification, the assessment centres use interview and portfolio assessment.

From July 2017 to April 2020, the centres assessed 167 candidates (115 candidates in level 3 and 52 candidates in level 4). 136 candidates were certified as in-company trainers (104 in level 3 and 32 in level 4).

| Number of trainers registered for certification |         | Number of trainers who passed certification |         |
|---|---------|---|---------|
| Level 3   | Level 4 | Level 3                                     | Level 4 |
| 115   | 52      | 104   | 32      |
| Total: 167                                      |         | Total: 136                                  |         |

Table 5: Assessments and certification of in-company trainers between July 2017 and April 2020

Assessments for the in-company trainer qualification are open to anyone who is interested in achieving certification. TPQI does not require candidates to have attended a training course before sitting for an assessment. Companies that wish to participate in the dual vocational training system, however, still need to send their employees to an OVEC training course.

(See table 6)

## Level descriptors of the Thailand Professional Qualification Framework

| Level | Knowledge   | Skills  | Abilities   | Responsibilities   |
|-------|---|---|---|--|
| 8     | New knowledge at the forefront of a field or outstanding new knowledge in one's field of work                                   | Most advanced skills to perform challenging tasks and to develop new and original principles or concepts in one's field of work | Ability to develop new concepts or visions in one's field or create internationally recognised work                           | Responsibility for top leadership in successful organisation and/or having recognised expertise in the field Leading new, original and well-received concepts and body of knowledge  |
| 7     | Specialised knowledge in a specific field or knowledge to systematically develop a new body of knowledge in one's field of work | Skills to perform work that requires the development of a new body of knowledge or innovation                                   | Ability to improve system, body of knowledge or innovation that benefits one's organisation                                   | Responsibility for policy management and solving problems that are unexpected given the changing context of the organisation<br>Responsibility for offering opinions that are well-received in one's field of work                             |
| 6     | Specialised theoretical or technical knowledge in a specific field or several fields of work                                    | Skills to perform work that is subject to change and requires strategies or new techniques                                      | Ability to think strategically using several fields of knowledge to solve complicated problems that are subject to change     | Responsibility for strategic management to increase productivity and solving complicated problems that are subject to constant changes<br>Responsibility for one's professional field and for giving consultations in one's field of expertise |
| 5     | Theoretical or technical knowledge in a specialised field of work   | Skills to perform complicated work that requires information analysis, planning, management and evaluation                      | Ability to perform complicated work that is subject to change and requires evaluation and management to increase productivity | Responsibility for supervision and evaluation of plan/project and problem solving<br>Responsibility for team leadership and coaching   |
| 4     | Theoretical or technical knowledge within a field of work   | Skills to solve problems and improve work standards and safety  | Ability to perform complicated work that is subject to change and requires evaluation and management to increase productivity | Responsibility for continuous supervision of work process and quality improvement<br>Responsibility for occupational health and safety of oneself and others   |
| 3     | Knowledge of principles and information analysis within one's occupation  | Skills to make judgements and choose processes and tools according to occupational standard or criteria                         | Ability to follow standard operating procedures and make initial decisions under supervision                                  | Responsibility for quality of assigned work and supporting colleagues and other teams  |
| 2     | Factual knowledge of work process   | Skills to follow work instruction   | Ability to follow work instruction under supervision  | Responsibility for assigned tasks and collaboration in work with others  |
| 1     | Basic knowledge of occupation and work  | Basic skills to carry out routine work and simple instructions  | Ability to work according to instructions within a clearly defined scope of work under close supervision                      | Basic responsibility at work and performance of duties in accordance with instructions from supervisor   |

Table 6: Level descriptors of the Thailand Professional Qualification Framework