

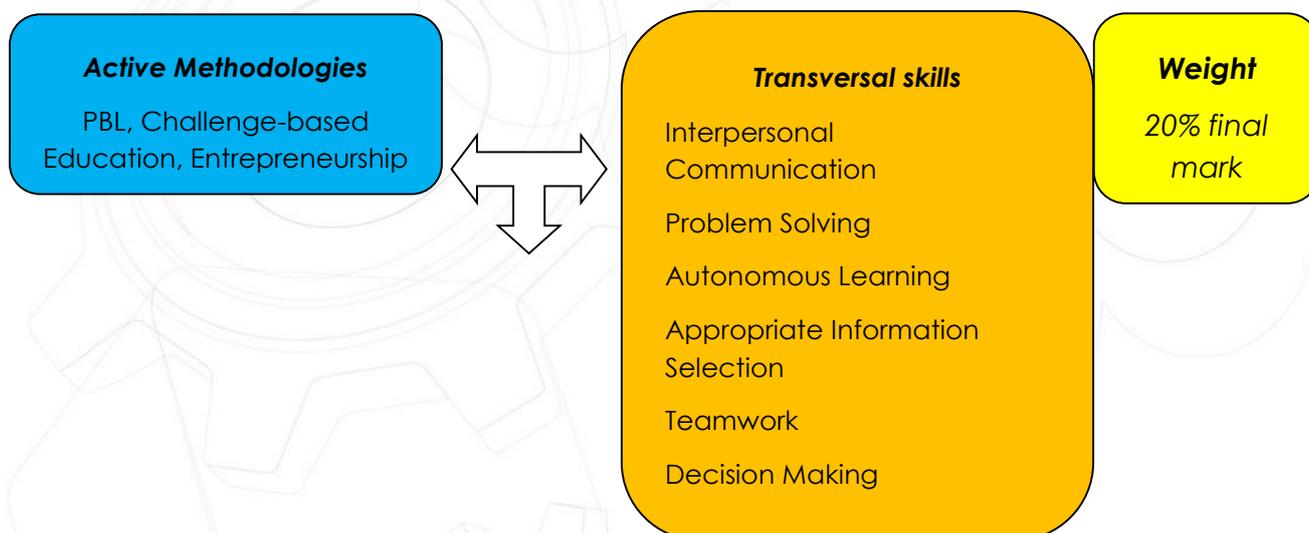
## Skills Evolution Tool (SET), a versatile internet-based platform for the assessment of transversal skills in VET.

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February 2016

As a VET School one of our main goals has always been to offer a high quality education that meets the needs of our students in order to facilitate a smooth and successful transition into the world of work. The demand for skilled professionals is in constant evolution and the academic profiles companies search for have changed. So have the scenarios and challenges companies are facing. Globalization and the development of new models and technologies require new professionals with extra competencies besides the specific technical skills relative to their field. Companies need professionals who can communicate appropriately, co-operate with others, solve problems in the workplace and who can exercise critical judgment. In addition to this, proactive professionals with good leadership skills are becoming more and more necessary.

In such a challenging scenario, what can a VET School do to improve students' future employability? If we want our students to acquire new competencies, we need to change the rules of the game, that is to say the teaching and learning methodologies. This process has been keeping us busy for the last ten years. During this period we have sought advice from some of the best local universities (Deusto, Mondragon, UPV) and we began to adapt and transform our teaching methodologies putting the emphasis on students' active participation via PBL, Project-based Learning, Simulations, Service Learning, Entrepreneurship Projects... All of them have now become integral parts of our organizational DNA, so to speak. They have been very useful to modify the traditional student-teacher relationship and to expand our skills development model whose focus is no longer solely based on the acquisition of specific technical skills. By being actively engaged in their own learning process our students are granted the opportunity to develop personal and entrepreneurial competencies that will help them enter the job market successfully.



### ***New competencies require a new assessment method***

New teaching methodologies require new forms of assessment from the teachers. Team projects in which each member has to rely on his/her team members to solve a problem, face the challenge or make a social or business project successful represent some of the most prevalent learning scenarios at Colegio San José de Calasanz and they do certainly pose significant assessment challenges.

One of our first decisions was to increase the grade weight of cross-curricular and entrepreneurial competences (20% of the final grade). To put it other way, demonstrating technical knowledge in traditional exams was no longer enough to get a good mark.

With this objective in mind we devised a simple but powerful online platform to assess cross-curricular competencies. It was based in a 360 evaluation method in which performance is rated by the student, team mates and teacher using a simple survey at the end of each term. By comparing his/her own impressions with feedback provided by teacher and team mates the student becomes aware of own strengths/weaknesses. The improvement process starts here. Goal-setting comes next and, with the help of the teacher, the student commits to make them happen.

Tapping into our five year experience with this assessment platform and method, TKNIKA (the Innovation Centre for Vocational Training in the Basque Country) requested our collaboration to develop and start testing **Skills Evolution Tool (SET)**, a very powerful and versatile software platform for the assessment of cross-curricular competencies of VET students.

### ***Implementation of SET in the whole Centre***

New features in SET have brought significant qualitative and quantitative improvements for the assessment of transversal skills in our school. In this way, thousands of students' and teachers' assessments are processed in an effective way. Besides, teachers and students can keep track of each student's individual progress. TKNIKA platform adds reliability, security, functionality, and flexibility to define assessment parameters and information outputs such as marks, graphs, establishing and controlling student commitments, records of evidence, progress reports. In conclusion, it is a serious and effective information process to establish the 20% of the final grade.

### ***Skills Evolution Tool – Step by step***

Transversal skills are assessed at the end of each school term (3 per year). A typical assessment cycle includes:

1. Online assessment
2. Skills evolution report
3. Individualized coaching sessions
4. Progress

### 1. Online assessment

Teacher adds students, creates group(s) defines skill(s) to be assessed. Students have access to standardized rubrics.



### 4. Progress

At any given time, SET built-in data processing capabilities facilitates visualization of progress.



### 2. Skills Evolution Report

Based in survey responses, SET aggregates student, peers and teacher assessment scores and generates Individual/group progress reports. Teachers can add further comments.



### 3. Individualized Coaching Sessions

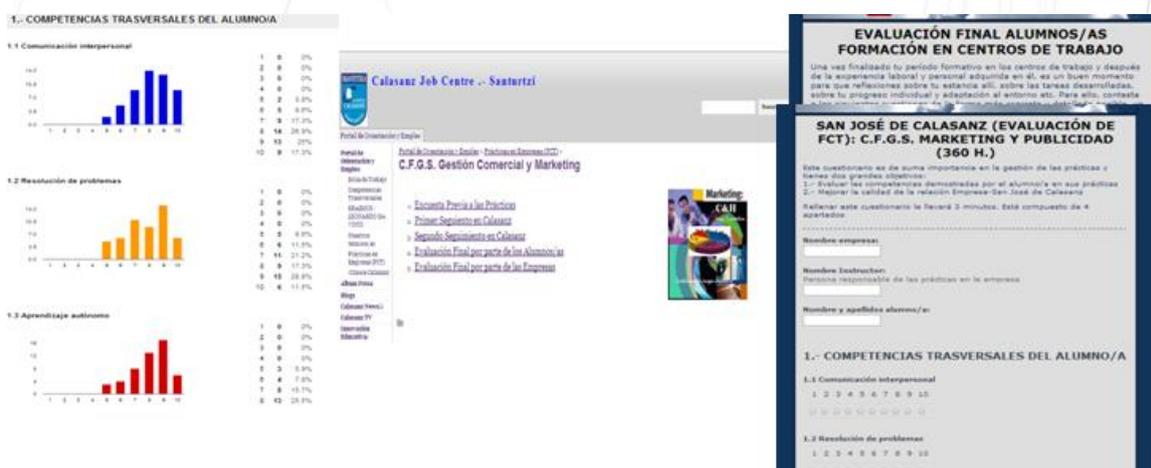
SET report is analyzed. Teacher supports student in identifying weaknesses and setting goals to improve skills most needed. Students have access to additional online resources in the school platform.



## Transfer to the workplace

If one of our strategic aims is to increase our students' employability and the quality of their future career development, we cannot afford to ignore the employers' perspective. For this reason, we keep close and constant links with host companies taking part in our apprenticeships scheme.

In line with our philosophy of education, apprenticeship supervisors in the companies are also involved in the assessment of that same set of cross-curricular, personal and entrepreneurial competencies. In this respect, the development and assessment of transversal competencies comes full circle by the time our students have completed their apprenticeship period.



Trainees' transversal competences are also assessed by in-company trainers

It is very clear that companies, through their involvement in this assessment process, are making it possible for us to bridge the existing gap between the kind of training companies require and the education we offer in our school. Thanks to this, we are achieving better rates of professional integration and our students are more and more satisfied with their professional guidance.

This particular aspect caught the attention of CEDEFOP (Centre for the development of Vocational Training in Europe). Austrian researcher Mariya DZHENGZOVA (3S Research – Viena) was commissioned to write a case study based in our experience: **“Planning, organisation, monitoring and assessment of ‘in company training’ at Colegio San José de Calasanz”**.

In this Case Study one of the most valued aspects was the fact that host companies monitor and assess the cross-curricular competencies of student apprentices adhering to the same principles and in close cooperation with the school.