RPL
Recognition of Prior Learning Experience of France

VAE
French background
RPL: Legal framework
Main dates and decrees

- **1934**: RP Experience, for people having a 5-year work experience in the engineering field
  - access to an engineer diploma

- **1985**: VAPP, Recognition of Personal and Professional Experience for those who don’t meet the regular access requirements
  - Access to a program (exemptions can be awarded for part of a program)
  - does not get a qualification / diploma or a part of diploma

- **1992**: VAE, Recognition for people having a 5-year professional experience
  Qualification awarded by 2 Ministries (Education and Agriculture) + Ministry of Youth and Sports (1999)
  - possibility to obtain a complete diploma or part of a diploma

- **2002**: VAE (01-17-2002) Only 3 years of professional experience are required
  - Recognition is extended to all type of qualification provided they are registered in the RNCP (National qualification directory)
  - A right for everybody
  - New paths for getting a qualification

- **2002**: VES (decree 2002-529, 04- 1- 2002) Recognition of diploma

- **2016**: VAE only 1 year of professional experience is required
2002 : Starting point for a new RPL era in France
Three systems of recognition

- **VAP** just gives access to a certain level of studies

- **VAE** for people having a 3-year professional, professional-like or any form of experience (whatever their age, profession, gender, situation...)

  Gives possibility to validate part of a diploma or obtain it fully

- **VES** (Validation of HE studies) for students, awarded with a qualification/diploma that is not a (French) university diploma

  Gives possibility to validate part of a diploma or obtain it fully
The L 2002-73 law (01 / 17 / 2002) (Social Modernisation Act)

- A right for every working citizen, to obtain a recognition of his/her prior experience, in order to get a diploma, a vocational degree or whatever.
  → an individual right in the Life Long Learning frame

- Used to deliver full or partial qualification
  → possibility to get a whole diploma

- The recognition of non formal, informal and formal prior learning, acquired in various situations (professional or professional-like experience, volunteering, leisure activities ...)
  By the way of RPL, different paths lead to diplomas or vocational degrees
  → a new way of graduating

- Creation of the National Register for Professional Qualifications / RNCP (French National Qualification Framework) : only qualifications or diplomas registered on the RNCP can be delivered by way of the VAE : [http://www.rncp.cncp.gouv.fr/](http://www.rncp.cncp.gouv.fr/)
VAE : from 2002 on

- The same qualification / diploma can be awarded through VAE as it is through initial/regular or continuing education
- All levels of qualification can be obtained through the VAE (not only HE levels) provided the diploma is registered on the RNCP
- VAE is inscribed in Education and Labour codes
- VAE is recognised as an activity for professional training
- VAE is part of the policy for further training for employees
- Collective VAE is currently encouraged and developed in some companies
The VAE policy

• **At a political level**
  – Enhancing a training policy
  – Enhancing employment, integration and social advancement
  – Increasing security of professionnal itinerary during the entire working life

• **At an individual level : a second chance**
  – Having competences acquired through experience recognized by a diploma
  – Increasing professional prospects
  – Promoting personnel growth

• **At a company level**
  – Increasing possibilities to evolve and adapt
  – Managing human resources (facilitating internal staff mobility)
  – Contributing to the company internal cohesion by staff development
VAE: who is concerned?

- People who left school or University without any qualification or diploma
- Out of job people (with or without qualification)
- People looking for a new job (for different reasons)
- People who want their experience to be recognized by their company
- Migrants?
Structures involved
Roles and Responsibilities

• The Government
  – Ministry of labour, employment and social dialogue
  – The CNCP (management and up dating of the RNCP)

• The Regions
  – Local organization
  – Information and counselling

• The Social partners
  – Financial aspect

• The Institutions
  – Putting the process on track from beginning to end: the award of the diploma, the follow-up in case of diplomas not entirely awarded
VAE Process
Step 1: Information / counselling

Step 2: Eligibility
   Counselling: Choice of a diploma

Step 3: Portfolio / VAE dossier

Step 4: Jury
   - Full graduation
   - Partial graduation
   - Failure

Monitoring (non compulsory)
   Face to face / online

Full graduation after complying with the recommendations of the jury
The different steps of the VAE process

• **Information / counselling**
  – Regarding the professionnal experience of the candidate, identification of the diploma whose learning outcomes are coherent with the experience of the candidate

• **Advice / choice of a diploma**
  – Administrative advice /pedagogical advice
  – Search for funding

• **Monitoring**
  – Not compulsory
  – Methodological help by teachers or administrative staff
  – Preparation of a « dossier »: file, set of documents the candidate has to show his skills and competences

• **Dossier**
  – The applicant has to give evidence the LO acquired out of any academic institution matches with the LO acquired in formal education

• **Jury**
  – Formal presentation to a panel of experts (teachers, people from companies)
    • Decision
      • Full diploma
      • Part of the diploma (recommendations if some skills, LO and competences are
      • Failure

Duration : about one year
Three kinds of qualification are concerned

- National education (not only HE): 70% qualifications or diplomas
- Different qualifications given by:
  - Other ministries: 24%
  - Other institutions (chambers of commerce and industry): 5%
- Vocational qualifications given by the sector of economy, so called CQP (certificate for vocational qualification): 1%
Some figures
VAE in HE for 2014

- Total number of diplomas awarded in HE: 420,000 (including engineering and business schools diplomas)
- Total number of diplomas awarded by VAE: 4,300 (full diploma or part of it)
  → Percentage: 1%

- The most successful diplomas:
  - Bachelor degree (vocational bachelor degree): 37%
  - Master degree: 37%

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1st jury</th>
<th>Post 1st jury</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full validation</td>
<td>Part validation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>44,7%</td>
<td>27,3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>30,5%</td>
<td>44%</td>
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Ministry for Higher Education and Research
Statistical data 2014

• Age of applicants:
  – Less than 30: 5.5%
  – 30-39: 35.5%
  – 40-49: 40.1%
  – 50 or more: 18.9%

• Employment situation:
  – Out of job: 30%
  – In employment: 70%
VAE Positive points and Issues
Positive points

• A well defined frame:
  – A legal frame
  – A procedure harmonized at the state level

• Tools
  – Description of LO
  – A well ordered procedure

Possibility to obtain full diplomas
Main problems

• **For applicants**
  – Administrative procedure: too complex
  – Difficulties to get funding
  – Length of the process
  – Not easy
    • to bring evidence of one’s competences
    • to have a reflection on one’s activity

• **For jury members (teachers and professionals)**
  – The description of diploma in LO is not always complete
  – Especially at a master level (at a Bachelor level, the job was accomplished at the Ministry level)
  – Both teachers and professionals
    • For teachers: reluctant to give a diploma on the basis of working experience
    • For professionals: insufficient training

• **For companies**
  – Apprehensive having to pay higher salaries with the rise in qualification of employees
  – When the employees are in training they are not at work
Bibliography, laws, sources, web sites

• Main laws
  – L 2002-73 law (01 / 17 / 2002), Social Modernisation Act

• About VAE
  http://www.vae.gouv.fr/
  DARES, résultats n°028, juin 2016 (2014 data)

• About RNCP
  http://www.rncp.cncp.gouv.fr/