

EU-Assistant: Development of a VET curricula for Personal Assistant professional profile based on the European Framework of Qualifications



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MODULE 3 - PERSONAL ASSISTANT



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1. MODULE DESCRIPTION

MODULE TITLE	PERSONAL ASSISTANT
KEYWORDS	assistant, contract, functional diversity, functions, competences, personal assistance
TARGET GROUP	This module will be aimed at those who want to know what the figure of Personal Assistance is.
LEVEL	medium
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES	People who want to become Personal Assistant for people with functional diversity.
AIMS OF MODULE	<p>This module provides participants with practical knowledge, understanding, resources and opportunities to learn how to work as a personal assistant.</p> <p>The student will know what the personal assistance, the characteristics of this work, its functions and how to develop them properly.</p>
OUTCOMES LEARNING	Upon completion of this module, the participant will have learned what the PA is, what their competences are and how the contract and regulation are.

PREREQUISITE (S) SKILLS:	Basic use of ICT.
PREREQUISITE (S) COURSE:	none
GUIDED LEARNING HOURS:	12
COMPENTENCY	The student understands what the Personal Assistant is and what his role is in relation to the user.
ASSESMENT	The evaluation will consist of a multiple choice type test and develop response exercise, which will test the knowledge and understanding of students through learning outcomes test.
CATEGORY	cost (cost optimization) time (efficient time management) s-quality (service quality) m-quality (management quality)
SUPLEMANTARY MATERIAL (S)	none

2. INTRODUCTION

Dear participant,

Welcome to this module! This module is created within the training framework for people who are interested in becoming personal assistants for people with disabilities. In this module you will learn about this professional figure, its functions and competences, the features of a good personal assistant and about ethical and employment aspects.

Module 3 includes contents about what the personal assistant is, its functions and its competences: personal and technical, the tasks to perform, what Personal Support Plan for Independent Living (PSPIL) is and its paper in this job, features of a good personal assistant, ethical aspects and employment.

Warm regards,

EU- Assistant Project Team

3. DEFINITION

Personal Assistant is a professional figure who performs or helps to perform the tasks of daily life to another person for their functional diversity situation cannot perform by itself or has many difficulties.

It is regulated by a professional support contract in which the user is the contracting party. This support is physical and is based on the desire and the right of persons with disabilities to control their own lives and to live with dignity involved in being on equal opportunities with the rest of society.

According to Rodriguez-Picavea, A. and Romañach J. (2006) "Personal Assistant is a person who helps another to develop their life."



A personal assistant (PA) is an employment figure performs a service that enables people with disabilities to lead independent lives while promoting self-determination, personal autonomy and decision-making.

He/she is a professional who relies on those activities that someone else cannot do by itself because of its functional diversity (permanent or temporary), in the manner and at the time it requests it, regardless of the environment that you are.

Thus he obtains an economic benefit, on the basis of by a contract of employment according to his work.

The job is to support and accompany the person with disabilities, following his/her guidelines in all actions that he/she, by personal functional diversity, believes cannot run itself or would require a great effort or exposing to a high risk, also in case having skills personal to perform them.

The person with functional diversity must have control of the management of service contracts, thus by an employment contract states that the PA is the employee of the PFD (person with functional diversity), who defines the conditions of service from a Personal Support Plan for Independent Living (PSPiV).

The personal assistant is the best guarantee that the will of the person with functional diversity is respected.

4. FUNCTIONS AND COMPETENCES OF PERSONAL ASSISTANT

4.1. Functions and competences

Personal Assistant performs the tasks, pursuing certain goals or goals, always marked by the person who hired him. That's why we say that personal assistance is a different way to give the necessary support to individuals, regardless of their functional diversity.

Although the ultimate aim pursued is the achievement of an independent living project by the PFD, this goal implies achieving the following:

- Facilitate self-determination and decision-making of the PFD.
- Provide PFD support staff necessary to carry out its project of independence.
- Increase the level of satisfaction of the PFD with regard to achieving independent living.
- Reduce overload or stress that occurs between the PFD and their families and / or support.
- Facilitate the active participation and taking responsibility of PFD in relation to the service they receive.

In short, the PA must provide a new alternative service person-centered, allowing the PFD to live as far as possible in an autonomous and active. This model proves that the person resides and develops his/her daily lives in their familiar physical and social environment, facilitating a way of life different from the classic concepts based on culture of caring and/or institutionalization.

Competences:

The competences have been broken down into two blocks: personal and technical. We consider that the Personal Assistant requires technical knowledge that facilitates the development of the activities that their profession entails. Likewise, we must consider that the Personal Assistant requires personal competences (flexibility, promotion of autonomy, organizational capacity ...) that ensure an appropriate interaction with the user.

Personal competences

FLEXIBILITY

KNOWLEDGES	SKILLS	PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ABILITIES
Know and understand the diversity that exists within society	Search for alternatives to unforeseen situations	Sensitivity to user's circumstances
Know the needs of people with functional diversity	Be versatile	Predisposition to accepting changes
Know the functions of a personal assistant	Learning ability	Want to learn and keep improving

RESPECT

KNOWLEDGES	SKILLS	PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ABILITIES
Know the role they have as employees	Being in the background	Have an open mind
To know the different conflict resolution and anger management techniques	Manage conflicts in a calm and resolute manner	Be assertive, calm and patient
Know the rights of the user	Ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the user's life.	Be respectfully
Know what their functions are	Respect the user's decisions and their rhythms	
Learn the user's needs and preferences	Respect religious and spiritual needs of the DP	

AUTONOMY PROMOTION

KNOWLEDGES	SKILLS	PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ABILITIES
To know what the ILF is	Act according to the ILF principles	Encourage the user to make their own decisions
Know where the ILF arises	Restrict yourself to offering support strictly in what the user needs	Do not judge user decisions
Know the basic principles of ILF	Promote their capacities, without focusing on their FD.	Be active, not manager
Knowing techniques	Be aware of possible dangers	Support them in their society integration and family
Know the user's capabilities	Support the FDP according to their own skills in their own capacity	Be sensitive to the reality of people with FD
Know the basic security measures	Treat in accordance with the principle of equality/ Applying the security rules in the environment	Defend the rights of people with FD
Know the ethical rules of the PA profile	Aware of the ethical rules of the PA profile	Be committed to the ILF and the objectives of the personal assistant profession

COMMUNICATIVE ABILITIES

KNOWLEDGES	SKILLS	PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ABILITIES
To know the different	Active listening	Be prudent

communicative styles		
To know the communicative barriers	Ability of verbal expression (to be a good communicator)	Kind and friendly
Know effective communication techniques	Audible listening comprehension of the user	Empathy
Know conflict resolution techniques	Nonverbal Expression	Assertiveness
To know techniques of self-control and emotional regulation	Ability to provide good feedback	Honesty
	Self-control	Sensitivity

ORGANIZATION ABILITIES

KNOWLEDGES	SKILLS	PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ABILITIES
To know techniques of time management	Know how to organize the work	Desire to work
Know techniques for planning and finding alternatives	Find alternatives	Initiative
Know the functions of a PA		Punctuality
		Responsibility
		Proactivity

Technical competences

THEORETICAL BASES

KNOWLEDGES	SKILLS	PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ABILITIES
Know the FD and its implications	Learning capacity	Motivation
Know the functions of the PA	Attentional ability	Eager to learn
Understand the independent living model	Know how to use the computer tool	

DAILY LIFE ACTIVITIES

KNOWLEDGES	SKILLS	PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ABILITIES
To know the different techniques of mobilizations and transfers	Maintain proper hygiene/ take preventive measures against possible risks	To be responsible
To know the techniques for the dress, the hygiene and the feeding	Make transfers	Be careful
Know the incontinence products and their use	Carry out mobilizations	Respect how the user needs to be helped
Know the existence and operation of the transfer lift and other technical supports for daily life	Take appropriate security measures for both the user and the assistant	Carry out functions in the best possible way
Know the necessary safety and health measures	Know how to use the transfer lift and other technical supports for daily life	Be proactive
Know effects and side	Know how to use	

effects of the incontinence products	incontinence products	
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4.2. Tasks to be performed

We talk about a labor agreement between user and PA. Each user is a special case, as are their needs and situation.

Tasks that incorporate personal assistance service can be structured into four types:

- Personal care activities.
- Home help activities.
- Accompanying activities and support activities inside and outside the home.
- Other activities that are part of the project of independence.

Following considerations on the figure of Personal Assistant Bill to Promote Personal Autonomy and Care for Dependent Persons A. Rodríguez-Picavea and J. Romañach (2006) spelled out this type of activities, which in turn, usually divided into the following areas:

- **Personal Tasks:** are all those that are related directly to the person, such as grooming (washing, showering, shaving, plucking, etc.), get dressed, get out of bed, help physiological needs help eating, drinking , undressing and going to bed, preparing and taking medication. Answering the phone, taking notes, turning pages etc. Similarly, it also includes caring for people who are in charge of permanent or ad hoc PFD form: children, nephews, grandchildren ... or support other PFD that are at peak times with the contractor.
- **Household tasks:** those performed inside the home, from cleaning the house itself, to make beds, sorting clothes, used appliances, to make food or cater to animals or plants.
- **Tasks Accompaniment** is to accompany the person with disabilities (regardless of age) at home, at work, on the street (either to manage roles, go to the bank or purchase), on trips and leisure activities, as well as vacation time.
- **Driving Force:** sometimes, the wizard has to drive a car, either to carry or pick up the person with disabilities, to accompany her to pick up third, etc ..

- **Communication tasks:** refers to both interpretation in sign language for the hearing functional diversity, and the interpretation of the different alternative communication systems that sometimes some people use people with limitations in communication (for example, cerebral palsy)
- **Coordination tasks:** those relating to planning and daily decision-making support.
- **Exceptional Tasks:** are those that are caused by an unforeseen situation. It will always act adhering to a previously established protocol for such cases by the assisted person himself.
- **Special tasks:** those related to sex-related activities (meaning those which involve the support or assistance in the preparation). In some countries such as Germany or Denmark, there is the figure of the sexual assistant.

Although the PA can be regulated and specialized geriatric or similar type training or experience in the care or assistance, it is essential to begin attending a new user does so with the intention of listening and learning that way you want this or this be addressed / a. While both meet basic safety guidelines will be the / the user / or who will determine the shape and timing of tasks.

All the knowledge that has the personal assistant are useful for work, but do not forget that each person is unique and that the conditions in which their work will take place will not always be similar to those learned in theory.

4.3. Personal Support Plan for Independent Living (PSPIL)

In short, the main function of PA is to support the user in achieving the Personal Plan for Independent Living that the user will have made (explicitly or implicitly) before hiring assistance and consisting of an approximate planning your day with specification those tasks that could be needed to support and the specification of the kind of this support.

5. CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD PERSONAL ASSISTANT

PA profile is not unique, but it is determined by the PFDs according to their functional and personal characteristics, their needs, their customs and their environment. Nevertheless, there are some basic requirements and certain features and / or skills that all personal assistants should have in order to facilitate good understanding and to ensure the full decision of the PFD. The basic requirements to be met by a person candidate to work as PA are:

1. Assumption of the Independent Living Philosophy.
2. Assumption of responsibility and commitment.
3. Being over 18 years.

Among the features and / or skills that should have the Personal Assistant to facilitate the smooth operation of the service and therefore, must be put in value and be aware of them before starting work activity, it should emphasize the following:

- Initiative.
- Empathy.
- Assertiveness.
- Self.
- Honesty.
- Sensitivity to social realities.
- Confidentiality. *The PA is in many private moments of the person and must maintain confidentiality about it.
- Flexibility.
- Have a stable biopsicosocial situation, to avoid the mistake of intervening as a participant in the life of the beneficiary.
- Respectful with the person and privacy.
- Not discriminate based on gender, sexual orientation, age...
- Be prudent.
- Active, but NOT manager.
- Take into consideration the indications and wishes of the person with disabilities.
- Ability to self-organize the work tasks. Take responsibility for the tasks , without forgetting the importance of conducting them timely and correctly.
- Capacity of continuous learning.

- Balance and serenity to deal with conflict situations. * For example, I find an accessible toilet full of boxes, it is important to have a critical and proactive attitude towards finding solutions, but not convenient to get angry or have overreactions.
- To be ordial and friendly.
- Versatility to perform different tasks. It is essential that a professional can cover all functions related to user needs / a.
- Good communicator, with the ability to convey information clearly and in an orderly, structured and accurate.
- Ability to stay in the background.
- Respectful with the pace of the other: preserving the independence of people and their autonomy. * Do not get ahead if we are trying to do something alone.
- Support for the other to take their own decisions.
- Promote the capabilities and potential of people without focus on their diversity.

Responsibilities of PA

- Providing personal assistance service according to the teachings of the beneficiary of the service and document agreements.
- Help and accompany the beneficiary and generally not replace the actions of the family or the relational environment.
- Respect the rights of those involved, maintaining professional ethics indications derived from each situation, confidentiality, privacy and integrity of the properties of the beneficiary.
- Comply with labor obligations under the Schengen Convention and other labor regulations.

There are differences between the figure of the PA and other professional figures in the field of care to PFD, as described below:

- The PA should adapt to any environment and interacting properly, knowing at all times what their place. In all other professions in the same field, such efforts and skills are not necessary.
- The PA is a professional based on a person-centered service, in which the PFD is the expert on own needs and how they should be supported. Instead, other professional figures are based on specific

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previous training, built on previous model of attention to diversity, such as the aforementioned medical-rehabilitation model, where the helper is candidate to be the expert of the process against the decisions of the supported person.

- With the PA no organized intermediaries are provided. However, when other labor figures involved, organizing tasks can be decided by a third party: a technical, social worker, an organization that provides the service, etc.
- Since the PA covers all areas of life PFD, functions are versatile and can play actions currently are attributed to other professionals: in addition to those associated with everyday life. By contrast, the functions of other professional figures are bounded. For example, a family caregiver cannot put a collector to a man with urinary incontinence, when this action is part of personal hygiene.
- The PA plans to work every day of the year and in all areas and activities PFD, while other figures are committed to specified working days and / or only in specific areas and preset, such as domestic, educational, labor or rehabilitation.
- The person with disabilities can hire freely who considers best for the position of personal assistant. Meanwhile other figures are assigned to the PFD by a third party.
- Who decides what action, spaces and times of personal assistant is the beneficiary and not an outside professional. When the work is done by other professional figures, decision making external professional.
- The PA is at the service of the person and not vice versa. But when professional figures attend the PFD, he/she must adapt to the conditions of their service.
- The PA is flexible and adapts to the PFD, even changing needs support changes in the activities of the PFD. The service provided by other professional figures is rigid/structured and does not include changes to adapt to the temporary activities.
- The PA provides freedom, independence and ability to improvise to PFD. With other figures there's no room for improvisation.
- The PA allows the changing role of the PFD. This implies to promote and to encourage the PFDs in assuming a full responsibility for his/her life and to do not accept decisions made by other people or

services in place of them. Instead, other professional figures perpetuate the role of PFD as dependent.

6. ETHICAL ASPECTS

Ethics is the whole standards, values and principles that determine how the things should be done (T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı: 2013). These ethical rules try to illuminate the dilemmas arising from the differences between the expectations of the person with FD, their family and the personal assistant. Two-sided ethical rules should be taken into account.

In this case, it is important that the parties' empathy skills have been developed. Moreover, mutual respect, mutual assistance, mutual trust, and acceptance the opposite as it is, solving everything by talking are also important. Regarding the functional diversity of the disabled person, they can be provided with these services under the control of their family if required. They should be provided with services worthy of human dignity. Their capabilities should be supported and protected.

Here are the ethical principles of the personal assistant profile:

- Do-not harm principle: Care should be taken not to damage the people with FD while performing the care
- Benefit principle: Care should be given to the people with FD regarding their benefits.
- Justice principle: They should be treated in accordance with the principle of equality
- Accuracy principle: The truth should be taken into account as it is and any comments should not be added.
- Credibility principle: The mutual trust between the people with FD and PA should be employed.
- Autonomy principle: The people with FD should be provided to make the best decision for themselves at their own capacities.
- Prudence principle: The PA should have compassionate, carefully and empathetic attitudes towards the people with FD.
- Privacy principle: The privacy of the person with FD about all medical and personal information should be protected.

7. EMPLOYMENT

The relationship between personal assistant and the person with disabilities or needing a support should always be regulated through a legal contract. It is recommended that this relationship should cover the following aspects:

- Must be cordial, but we must remember that it is not a friendship. The PA is not a relative, or a friend or a servant, not a doctor or psychologist.

The maximum that rules the professional relationship is the contractual agreement between the two parties.

The first weeks of relationship are very important as it is when you start to establish the dynamics on which the relationship will be sustained. Both should communicate intensively in this period both to specify functions and to perform ways to manage conflicts or inconveniences that may arise.

- Personal assistant should be self-managed: the client or, must have direct control over the service and the choice in all respects, even in the smallest details.
- must be respected and promoted the role that corresponds to the PFD, as well as for any relationship between employer and employee, in any work environment.

And of course, to end the relationship when failure in their job duties or PFD occurs decide that the relationship between her and her personal assistant has deteriorated such that, given the nature sometimes very intimate assistance received you can neither wish to receive personal assistance to that person and hire a different demand.

- The PA is a physical support, not psychological, affective or emotional. Both the PA and the beneficiary of the Personal Assistance must have clear the role of each.
- The boundaries of the relationship and roles should be clear. A very close relationship between personal assistant and beneficiary may involve a mix between work and personal roles, causing a greater number of problems (w.r.t. default schedules, duties, agreements, etc.).

- There is no recipe to manage the relationship. The balance of the relationship between personal assistant and the beneficiary is part of a continuous learning process.

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