



Automotive Sector Good Practice Guidelines for Job Descriptions

D6.5.1 Recommendations on common European standards for automotive job descriptions



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INTRODUCTION

This paper focuses on approaches to achieving the DRIVES Project WP6.5 objective: *‘Disseminate and work with private recruitment sector IT platforms to ensure a take up of common EU standards for the alignment of JDs’*.

The stated aim of this strand of work package 6 is to develop and then disseminate a model that could be used to set common EU standards for the alignment of JDs in the automotive sector.

However, after discussions it was decided that it would be unrealistic to expect recruitment agencies and employers to conform to detailed guidelines about how job roles and associated skills are actually described, but it would be more realistic and valuable to set out clear ‘good practice’ guidelines for the range of information that should be included when developing JD’s for recruitment purposes and the inclusion of specific information to allow easy comparison of JD’s across the EU automotive sector. This would allow for a more flexible and sustainable approach that promotes the sharing of good practice without being overtly prescriptive.

With this in mind, the agreed approach being adopted to fulfil the above objectives can be summarised as follows:

- Review current recruitment adverts: Review a sample of recruitment adverts in order to identify current practice in relation to information included and in what form. This will be undertaken in the UK, Italy and Portugal. These three countries were selected as partners from these countries are all active members of the group implementing this DRIVES Work Package, but also, given the differing composition and significance of the automotive sector in each country, this should test differing practices across different countries.
- Encourage compatibility with relevant EU wide classification systems relating to occupations, job roles, skills and economic activities
- Capture views of recruitment agencies through direct survey work. This is being piloted in Italy due to the strong links with national agencies of DRIVES Italian partner, Confindustria.
- Encourage conformity with a bespoke ‘DRIVES Automotive Job Framework’



This paper focuses on the first element of the approach by reviewing a current sample of relevant recruitment adverts within the UK.

The paper also:

- Sets this analysis in context by reviewing evidence of current recruitment practices within the EU automotive sector and more generally also examines patterns of on-line recruitment advertising in more detail
- Suggests approaches to encouraging compatibility with relevant EU wide classification systems relating to occupations, job roles, skills and economic activities
- Discusses encouraging conformity with a bespoke 'DRIVES Automotive Job Framework' (See section 6 for more details)



1 CONTEXT

Effective recruitment is identified as an essential aspect in ensuring that an organisation's workforce has the relevant skills and abilities to meet current and future needs. It is also pointed out that recruitment practices go beyond just filling immediate vacancies, as they also impact on the long-term success of the business¹.

However, effective recruitment can pose a major challenge and, in some cases, it can be the biggest challenge for many HR Professionals, CEOs and Business Owners².

Evidence suggests recruitment difficulties are a major challenge within the automotive sector. A recent report by the UK Automotive Council indicated that in 2016 up to 5,000 job vacancies in the UK automotive industry could be vacant due to a skills shortage affecting the sector. Around 19% of the unfilled vacancies cited in the report were identified as 'critical' and having a significant impact on company operations³.

The increasingly competitive nature of recruitment also underlines the importance of adopting good practice approaches to job advertising⁴.

¹ <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/people/recruitment/factsheet#7036>

² <https://www.talentlyft.com/en/blog/article/167/job-advertisement-best-practices>

³ <https://www.automotivecouncil.co.uk/2016/02/5000-jobs-vacant-in-uk-automotive-due-to-skills-shortage/>

⁴ <https://www.talentlyft.com/en/blog/article/167/job-advertisement-best-practices>



2 OBJECTIVES

Given the international nature of the EU automotive sector and associated supply chains, one of the barriers to increased labour mobility and a more effective EU wide recruitment market is the lack of common EU standards for the alignment of job descriptions.

In recognition of this, one of the objectives of the DRIVES project is to ‘disseminate and work with private recruitment sector IT platforms to ensure a take up of common EU standards for the alignment of job descriptions (JDs)’.

As a step towards the above objective this paper focusses on setting out clear ‘good practice’ guidelines for the range of information that should be included when developing JD’s for recruitment purposes.

In order to achieve this it is necessary to:

- Understand current recruitment practices within the EU both generally and within the automotive sector
- Understand the similarities and differences between companies and recruitment platforms in terms of the current content of recruitment adverts within the EU automotive sector
- Identify steps that could be taken to adopt common EU standards for the alignment of recruitment adverts within the EU automotive sector
- Identify what is considered to be good practice in terms of recruitment advertising

Each of these issues is addressed in the following sections.



3 UNDERSTANDING CURRENT RECRUITMENT PRACTICES WITHIN THE EU AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR AND MORE GENERALLY

Employers use a wide range of different recruitment techniques, which are evolving all the time.

In the UK, according to the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) about two thirds of UK companies now use 'new media' (such as web advertising and/or social media), with a quarter of UK companies recruiting via professional networking sites like LinkedIn to attract candidates⁵.

These companies also often use a mix of these and more traditional methods.

The key methods used can be summarised as⁶:

- Recruitment internally using the company intranet, message board or other methods
- Print advertising, including use of specific journals and magazines
- TV advertising
- Web advertising including own corporate websites and/or recruitment agency websites
- Social media such as Twitter and LinkedIn
- Talent search using recruitment agencies

Specific methods of recruitment vary by employer, sector, occupational level and across different EU countries.

Insights into the different recruitment methods in relation to the automotive apprenticeship marketplace is provided through the results of a major on-line survey of automotive employers undertaken as part of the DRIVES project⁷

The survey included a number of questions relating recruitment methods, specifically in relation to recruitment of apprentices.

⁵ https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/resourcing-talent-planning_2015_tcm18-11303.pdf

⁶ <https://www.brighthr.com/articles/hiring/recruitment/popular-employee-recruitment-techniques>

⁷ DRIVES Work Package 2 Employer On line Survey 2019



In relation to apprentices, the most frequently cited recruitment methods were use of ‘links with educational institutes or training providers’ (64% of all respondents) and ‘on line job boards and websites’ (63%). This was followed by ‘recruitment events’ and ‘social networks, such as Facebook and LinkedIn’ (47%).

More than a third of enterprises responding indicated more informal ‘word of mouth’ (35%) methods were used and 12% used ‘advertising in newspapers/other press’.

By far the least frequently used method was ‘use of the Drop'pin@EURES or other EU recruitment services’, (2%) probably linked to the relatively localised focus of much apprenticeship recruitment.

What are the main methods currently used by your organisation to recruit apprentices?



Source: DRIVES WP2 Survey

Base: 81 enterprises responding to the question

Note: Enterprises often used more than one method, so % figures do not add to 100%

- *On line recruitment advertising*

On line job portals have grown in importance in recent years and have now become a key recruitment channel. Historically they used to focus on highly skilled workers, but increasingly platforms now advertise jobs across all occupations and skill levels⁸.

⁸ Cedefop develops real-time skills intelligence by analysing online job vacancies; Cedefop, Briefing note | April 2019 | issn 1831-2411



Recent analysis undertaken by Cedefop indicates that there are thousands of sites advertising jobs on the web, with an array of search options. There are also sites focusing on specific regions or certain occupational fields⁹ including those relating to automotive jobs.

The use of on-line job vacancy (OJV) portals not only varies between sectors but across different EU countries due to different level of digital use and differing employment structures¹⁰.

This is supported by recent evidence of a large-scale analysis of on-line job adverts (across all sectors) conducted by Cedefop¹¹. The study which systematically mapped the OJV portal landscape in all EU Member States found that:

- The format of OJVs differs greatly both across job portals and between different employers represented on a particular portal (e.g., Czech Republic and Spain).
- While most OJV portals specify categories such as job title, length of contract, type of contract, part/time/full time, location, there are differences in how they are grouped and denoted.
- There is also great variety in terms of how the information in these fields is generated, such as if employers are requested to tick boxes or provide free text (e.g., Italy).
- Whether and how employers use fields asking for a description of tasks (duties, responsibilities, required qualifications), information on the company (profile), offers in terms of benefits/perks and working conditions also varies greatly (e.g., Cyprus and Malta).

The study distinguishes between public employment services (PES) –managing public portals offering free services for employers and jobseekers –and private OJV portals which tend to provide access to jobseekers free-of-charge while charging employers for their services.

The research points to significant differences between the two forms of OJVs¹². In particular:

⁹ Cedefop develops real-time skills intelligence by analysing online job vacancies; Cedefop, Briefing note | April 2019 | issn 1831-2411

¹⁰ Cedefop (2019). Online job vacancies and skills analysis: a Cedefop pan-European approach. Luxembourg: Publications Office. <http://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2801/097022>

¹¹ Cedefop (2019). The online job vacancy market in the EU: driving forces and emerging trends. www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/5572

¹² Cedefop (2019). The online job vacancy market in the EU: driving forces and emerging trends. www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/5572



- OJVs on PES portals tend to be highly structured, formalised and focused on requirements, but the level of detail provided differs across countries
- OJVs on private OJV portals differ greatly, both in terms of their format and content, due to the lack of harmonisation in categories and the companies' wide-spread use of corporate design to illustrate employer branding. On private OJV portals, widespread differences in terminology for job titles was identified, with the same type of job often having multiple titles assigned by different employers.



4 UNDERSTANDING THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN THE CONTENT OF RECRUITMENT ADVERTS WITHIN THE EU AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR

In order to understand the similarities and differences in the current content of recruitment adverts within the EU automotive sector a sample of relevant recruitment adverts has been undertaken within the UK.

This has included adverts from companies own websites, recruitment platforms and newspaper adverts.

Based on this review of automotive adverts¹³ undertaken as part of the DRIVES project, the key elements included in these recruitment adverts can be summarised as follows:

- Position (Job role)
- Pay or pay or pay range
- Status of position (Permanent, temporary)
- Hours
- Holiday entitlement
- Geographical location
- Key responsibilities/job role description
- Experience required/desired
- Qualifications required
- Other attributes desired/required

However, there is little standardisation in terms of how some of these elements are actually described, such as job title, key responsibilities/job role description and experience required.

These findings will be enhanced further through analysis of relevant job adverts in both Italy and Portugal.

¹³ This was based on a review of 28 automotive sector job adverts from UK OEM websites together with more than 100 adverts relating to automotive sector job roles from Labour Insight

5 IDENTIFYING STEPS THAT COULD BE TAKEN TO ADOPT COMMON EU STANDARDS FOR THE ALIGNMENT OF RECRUITMENT ADVERTS WITHIN THE EU AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR

The lack of standardisation in terms of how elements of recruitment adverts such as job title, key responsibilities/job role description and experience are actually described raises important issues about how closer alignment across the EU automotive sector with respect to recruitment adverts could in practice be achieved. Two suggestions to support greater alignment are outlined below:

- *Encourage compatibility with relevant EU wide classification systems*

One important step that can be taken to help support the adoption of common EU standards for the alignment of JDs in the automotive sector is to recommend that job adverts make reference to relevant EU wide classification systems relating to occupations, job roles, skills and economic activities. The purpose of this is to enable JDs to be linked to wider EU wide data sets on occupations and sectors in order to significantly enhance the ability to analyse current and changing patterns of recruitment. It will also enhance the ability to compare JD's across the EU automotive sector. In practice this means ensuring that common EU standards for JDs include conformity with both ESCO and NACE codes:

- ESCO is the multilingual classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations. The classification identifies and categorises skills, competences, qualifications and occupations relevant for the EU labour market and education and training. (See Appendix 1 for more details)
- NACE (Nomenclature of Economic Activities) is the European statistical classification of economic activities. (See Appendix 2 for more details)

Employers/recruitment agencies should be encouraged to use the relevant codes. In practice this means that each JD should include both a NACE and ESCO code where possible.

- *Encourage conformity with a bespoke 'DRIVES Automotive Job Framework'*



In order to help monitoring, analysis and comparison of JD's across the EU, categorisation of each JD according to the classifications set out in a bespoke DRIVES Automotive Job Framework (as yet to be agreed) would further enhance the ability to compare JD's across the EU automotive sector.

A good example of such a framework is the UK Automotive Industry Job Framework which was created to help bring consistency across the industry and a common understanding of different job roles and their skills requirements. The framework categorises job roles into five job families and for each job family, a number of sub-families. (See Appendix 3 for more details).

Work being undertaken as part of WP3 and 4 could form the basis for a bespoke DRIVES Automotive Job Framework.

Development and adoption of a bespoke DRIVES Automotive Framework would provide the essential link between WP6.5 and WP 2, 3 and 4, but also make it easier to monitor changing patterns of recruitment across the industry.

Again, the idea is that employers/recruitment agencies could be encouraged to use the relevant 'job family' and job sub-family' codes. In practice this means that each JD should include reference to the relevant 'job family' and job sub-family' of the DRIVES Automotive Job Framework (If this adopted).

6 IDENTIFYING WHAT IS CONSIDERED TO BE GOOD PRACTICE IN TERMS OF RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING

A review of literature has been undertaken in order to identify what is considered ‘good practice’ in relation to the content of recruitment adverts.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) has set out what they consider a job advert should contain as follows:

Advertisements should contain clear, accurate information and the organisation and the role.

They should also indicate:

- the organisation’s activities and values
- job requirements and other criteria
- job location
- reward and benefits package
- flexible working opportunities, where available
- type of employment offered. For example, is it a fixed-term role?
- details of how to apply and the deadline.

<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/people/recruitment/factsheet#7036>

Further research¹⁴ specifies what a good advert should and should not contain as follows:

A good advert will include:

- Descriptive job title
- Short ‘punchy’ introduction to your organisation
- The job role - the opportunity!
- The job requirements – profile of the ideal candidate
- Salary and benefits
- Clear, simple call to action

A bad advert will include:

- Too much technical detail about the role
- Too much technical jargon

¹⁴ The Ultimate Guide to Online Recruitment Advertising - Essential best practice and top tips for recruiters – www.jobs.ac.uk



- Too many 'unnecessary' words
- Uninspiring descriptions of the role
- Too much emphasis on the job
- Not enough emphasis on the ideal candidate

There are particular issues to consider when writing on line recruitment adverts which have been summarised as follows¹⁵:

- Who are you targeting? – You need to tailor what you say to your target audience
- Optimise the use of keywords – You need to ensure that your advert is 'searchable' online? It is essential make sure relevant keywords that jobseekers would search on such as specific skills or job titles appear in your job advert.
- Avoid internal or ambiguous job titles – Ensure that the job title used is meaningful outside your own organisation
- Think about your opening paragraph, which need to be short and punchy
- Location – This is identified as an important element of how people search for a job, so should be included.
- Include salary information where possible
- Be clear, be concise!
- Ensure that what is stated conforms to legal requirements

¹⁵ The Ultimate Guide to Online Recruitment Advertising - Essential best practice and top tips for recruiters – www.jobs.ac.uk

7 CONCLUSIONS

This paper has:

- Reviewed a range of evidence relating to current recruitment practices and the recruitment market within the automotive sector and more generally
- Undertaken focussed research using a selection of automotive job adverts in the UK
- Set out practical suggestions to help closer alignment of automotive sector job adverts

These findings can be further enhanced by the results of current work being undertaken in Italy and Portugal to obtain feedback from recruitment agencies serving the automotive sector in these respective countries and analysis of automotive job adverts.

8 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: ESCO

ESCO is the multilingual classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations. ESCO is part of the Europe 2020 strategy. The ESCO classification identifies and categorises skills, competences, qualifications and occupations relevant for the EU labour market and education and training.

<https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/home>

The occupations pillar is one of the three pillars of ESCO. It organises the occupation concepts in ESCO. It uses hierarchical relationships between them, metadata as well as mappings to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) in order to structure the occupations.

<https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/occupation>

Each occupation concept contains one preferred term and any number of non-preferred terms and hidden terms in each of the ESCO languages.

Each occupation also comes with an occupational profile. The profiles contain an explanation of the occupation in the form of description, scope note and definition. Furthermore, they list the knowledge, skills and competences that experts considered relevant terminology for this occupation on a European scale.

In ESCO, each occupation is mapped to exactly one ISCO-08 code. ISCO-08 is a four level hierarchical classification that allows all occupations in the world to be categorised into 436 unit groups, 130 minor groups, 43 sub-major groups and 10 major groups.

<https://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco08/index.htm>

ISCO-08 can therefore be used as a hierarchical structure for the occupations pillar. ISCO-08 provides the top four levels for the occupations pillar. ESCO occupations are located at level 5 and lower.

ISCO-08 therefore provides the essential link to enable data on occupations classified according to the ESCO format to be linked with wider worldwide data using the IACO-08 classification.

The ESCO skills pillar

<https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/skill>

Not all ESCO skills can be accessed through the existing hierarchy. It currently includes 13485 Skills / competences.

The ESCO skills pillar distinguishes between i) skill/competence concepts and ii) knowledge concepts by indicating the skill type. There is however no distinction between skills and competences. Each of these concepts comes with one preferred term and any number of non-preferred terms and hidden terms in each of the ESCO languages. It also includes an explanation of the concept in the form of description, scope note and definition. The skills pillar of ESCO does not contain a full hierarchical structure but is structured in four different manners:



- Through their relationship with occupations, i.e. by using occupational profiles as entry point;
- In the part of the transversal knowledge, skills and competences through a skills hierarchy;
- Through relationships indicating how knowledge, skills and competences are relevant to other knowledge, skills and competences (in particular in cases of skill contextualisation);
- Through functional collections that allow to select subsets of the skills pillar.

Qualifications pillar

<https://ec.europa.eu/esco/portal/qualification>

ESCO currently includes 8677 Qualifications

Qualifications are the formal outcome of an assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards. Qualifications displayed in ESCO come from databases of national qualifications that are owned and managed by the European Member States. Member States provide this information to ESCO on a voluntary basis. It therefore depends on each Member State to ensure information on its qualifications in ESCO is available, complete, correct and up-to-date. The Commission also envisages integrating private, international and sectorial qualifications from other sources into ESCO in the near future. It is piloting this approach and discussing it with the Member States.



Appendix 2: NACE codes

<https://siccode.com/page/what-is-a-nace-code>

NACE (Nomenclature of Economic Activities) is the European statistical classification of economic activities. NACE groups organizations according to their business activities. Statistics produced on the basis of NACE are comparable at European level and, in general, at world level in line with the United Nations' International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC).



Appendix 3: Automotive Industry Job Framework (UK)

<https://www.automotiveip.co.uk/careers-job-descriptions/>

The Automotive Industry Job Framework was created to help bring consistency across the industry and a common understanding of different job roles and their skills requirements.

Five job families were identified, these being Engineering, Purchasing, Materials Planning and Logistics, Quality and Manufacturing functions. Each job family is tiered, with detailed job descriptions available for career levels from 'Apprentice/trainee' to 'Head of'. 119 generic job descriptions templates can be downloaded in total, outlining the recommended skills, attributes and qualifications needed for individual job roles.

The framework and job descriptions have been developed and approved by the industry's employers with input from professional organisations, such as the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and Chartered Institution of Procurement and Supply.

The job description templates can be used by manufacturers and suppliers who are recruiting – generating significant time and resource savings. They also show new entrants and existing employees the breadth of opportunities that are available and the scope for career progression or lateral moves in the industry.

Industry Job Framework (Job families)

- Engineering (ENG)
- Materials Planning & Logistics (MPL)
- Purchasing (PU)
- Quality (Q)
- Manufacturing (MFG)

Each 'job family' is divided into a number of sub-families

For the Engineering 'job family' these are as follows:

<https://www.automotiveip.co.uk/careers-job-descriptions/engineering/>

- Research
(RES) Blue sky thinking and research into new technology (10 years before development phase). Developing systems and methodologies that will improve the vehicle either for the customer and meet future legislation.
- Design & Development
(DES) Designing systems, processes and methodologies, as well as component and vehicle design to enhance the overall performance for the customer and environment. Transforming concepts into prototypes for testing.
- Programmes (PRG)
Co-ordinating and controlling projects from concept to post production launch of new and modified components and vehicles, ensuring delivery to timing deadlines, cost and quality. Production
- Engineering (PRE)
Defines and works out how the product will be assembled on the production line. Reviews efficiencies and eliminates waste within the manufacturing process