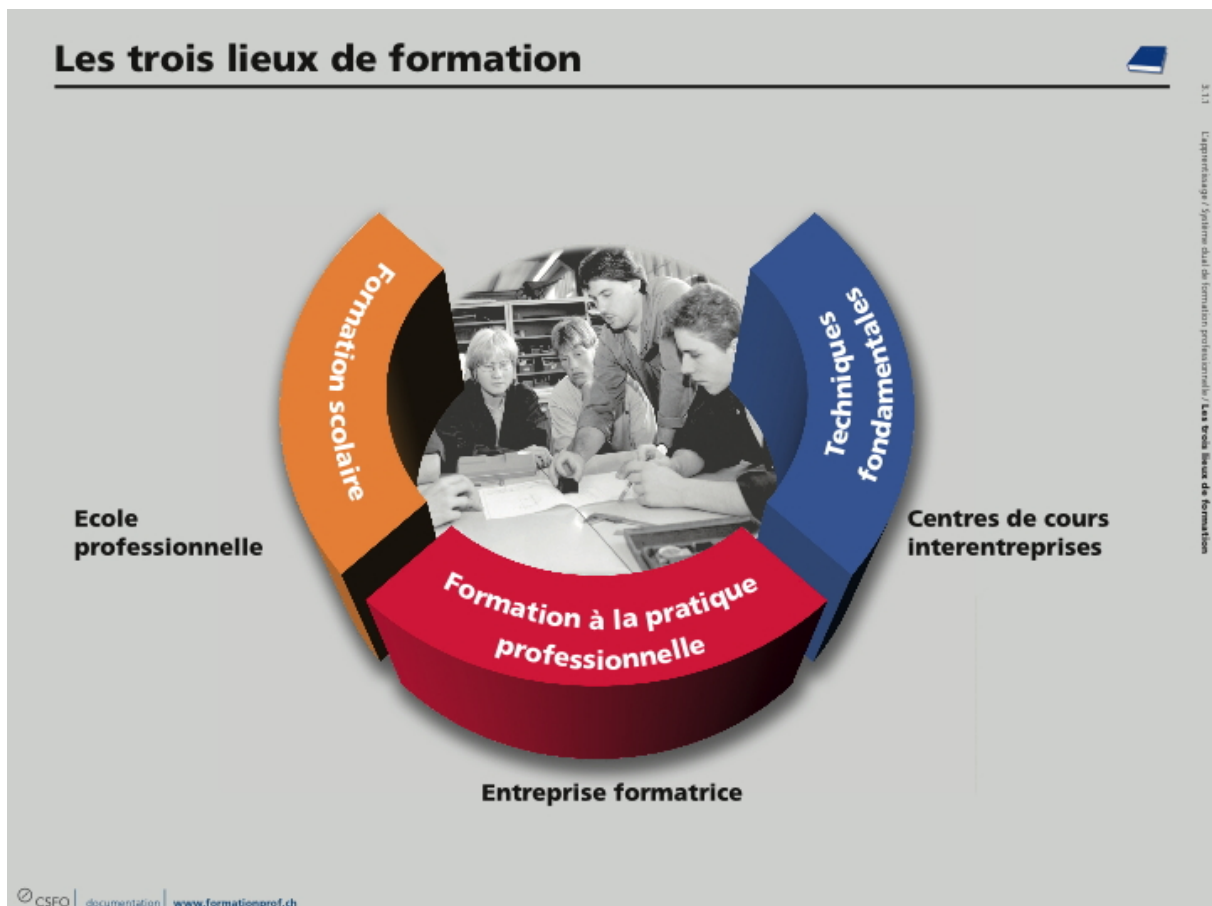


Was vocational education and training (VET)? Three learning locations



Ecole professionnelle:	VET school	Techniques fondamentales:	Basic knowledge and skills
Formation scolaire:	Classroom instruction	Centres de cours interentreprises:	Centre of branch courses
Formation à la pratique professionnelle:	Training in the host company		
Entreprise formatrice:	Host Company		

Vocational education and training (VET) is the most frequently chosen pathway at upper-secondary level in Switzerland. VET programmes offer a blend of theory and practice for a specific occupation. VET qualification is recognised across Switzerland. There are two different types of qualification:

- Federal VET Certificate, awarded upon completion of a two-year VET programme
- Federal VET Diploma, awarded upon completion of a three- or four-year VET programme

Training content for dual-track VET programmes is generally distributed across three main learning locations, which are described below:

1. Host company (e.g. a trading company, a department store, a hospital, a construction company, a restaurant, a car dealership, etc.)

A host company is the company that has created an apprenticeship position and set aside the material, financial and human resources required to provide young people with work-based training. From the very start of your apprenticeship, you will be part of day-to-day operations. Initially, you are given simple tasks to do. Over time these tasks become more challenging. As your apprenticeship training progresses, you will learn the practical aspects of your occupation (e.g. hand movements, how to handle tools and machines, how to interact with customers, etc.). Your work will be supervised and guided by an apprenticeship trainer and other people working with you (e.g. co-workers, other learners who started their apprenticeship training before you).

You will spend 3-4 days per week at the host company (e.g. working from Monday to Wednesday and then on Friday). Since you will be producing work for the host company, you will receive an apprentice's salary from the very beginning. Your salary will increase with each year of training. Depending on the occupation and training year, your income will be between CHF 400.- and CHF 1,600.- per month. You are also entitled to five weeks of annual leave.

2. Branch courses

Companies that offer similar products and services also use similar techniques and processes. Each occupation comes with a set of fundamental practical skills that are not only covered by either the host company or the vocational school. You will therefore attend branch courses on individual days or in a block of several days during the training year. Branch courses are generally taught at regional training centres and are free of charge for learners enrolled in the VET programme.

3. VET school

You will attend classes at vocational school for one or two days, or 8 to 15 hours, per week. Vocational-school courses are designed to enhance your understanding of theoretical concepts in your line of work and to allow you to broaden your knowledge of general subjects such as politics, law, civics, culture, technology, economics and finance, human relationships and societies, insurance, etc. Lessons are normally taught at a VET school in your region. Attendance is free of charge for VET learners, although you may be asked to buy learning materials and contribute to the cost of field trips or other activities.

In addition, vocational subjects may be taught in special locations such as a workshop, laboratory, or computer room. Here, you will acquire practical knowledge that will enable you to work in your chosen occupation. At vocational school, you will be expected to study at home and complete assignments on a regular basis. In addition, you will be asked to prepare for graded tests; each grade that you receive will impact your final grade upon graduation.

If you struggle to keep up with the pace at vocational school and to obtain satisfactory grades on tests, you can attend remedial courses.