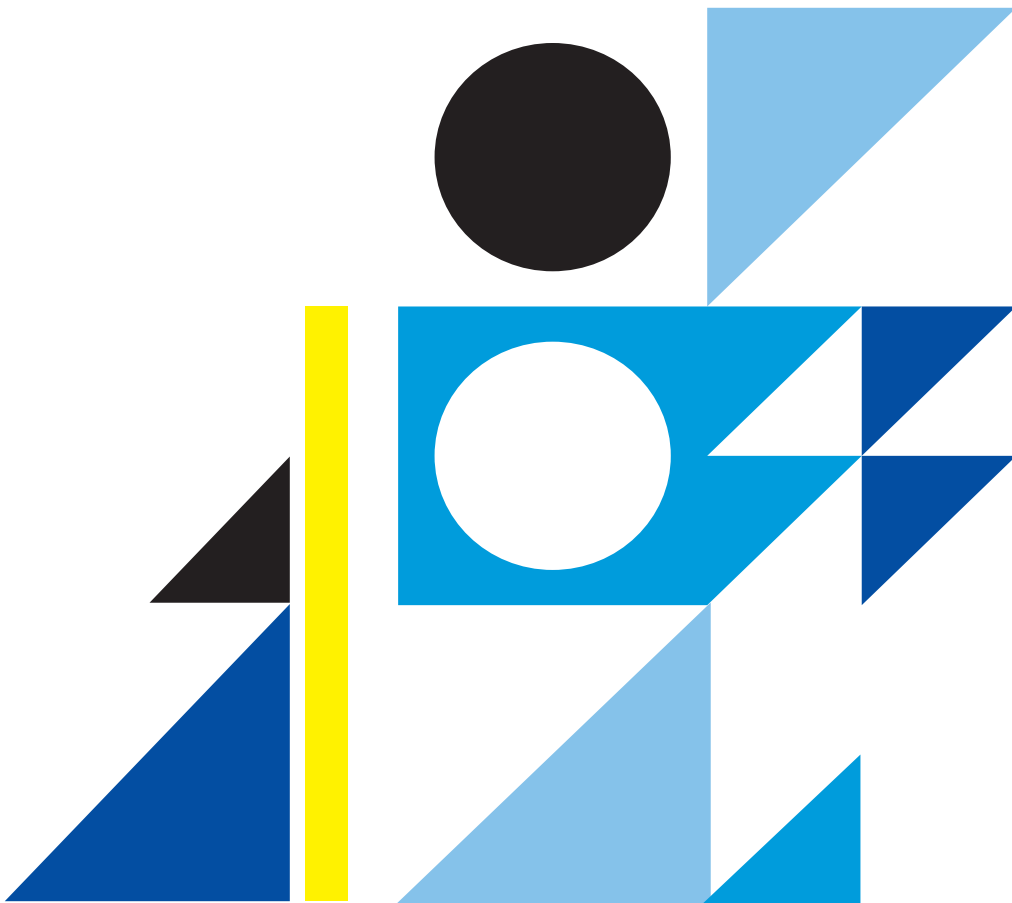




Handbook

for VET providers



Supporting internal
quality management and
quality culture



Handbook

for VET providers

Supporting internal quality management
and quality culture

Cedefop Reference series 99

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2015

Please cite this publication as:
Cedefop (2015). *Handbook for VET providers:
Supporting internal quality management and quality culture.*
Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.
Cedefop Reference series; No 99

A great deal of additional information on the European Union
is available on the Internet.
It can be accessed through the Europa server (<http://europa.eu>).

Luxembourg:
Publications Office of the European Union, 2015

ISBN 978-92-896-1665-2
ISSN 2363-216X
doi:10.2801/82638

Copyright © European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training (Cedefop), 2015
All rights reserved.

Layout by adam@artdirector.gr
Printed in the European Union

The **European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training** (Cedefop) is the European Union's reference centre for vocational education and training. We provide information on and analyses of vocational education and training systems, policies, research and practice. Cedefop was established in 1975 by Council Regulation (EEC) No 337/75.

Europe 123, 570 01 Thessaloniki (Pylea), GREECE
PO Box 22427, 551 02 Thessaloniki, GREECE
Tel. +30 2310490111, Fax +30 2310490020
E-mail: info@cedefop.europa.eu
www.cedefop.europa.eu

Joachim James Calleja, *Director*
Barbara Dorn, *Chair of the Governing Board*

Foreword

This publication, the first that the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) addresses to providers of vocational education and training (VET) rather than to policy-makers, aims to help VET institutions initiate or improve their quality approach. This will enable them continually to improve the education they offer, for their own benefit as well as students and society at large.

The handbook is meant to guide VET providers through a ‘quality journey’ based on the PDCA (plan-do-check-act/review) or quality cycle, the underlying approach to any quality management system (QMS). The handbook’s guidelines, advice and practical examples are taken from 20 VET providers in initial, continuing or sector vocational training, all of whom have successful and mature quality management in place. The annex features 41 tools Cedefop selected among those offered by these VET providers, covering all phases of the quality cycle (planning, implementation, assessment/evaluation and feedback/procedures for change).

Cedefop, EU reference centre on VET, has found that while quality assurance is important for accreditation and certification of studies and diplomas, it is not enough to ensure that institutions continually strive to improve quality, unless accompanied by effective internal quality management. For this reason, this publication focuses on internal quality management and its importance for VET institutions.

Commitment of both teaching staff and management and their interaction, are crucial for any successful quality approach. Effective internal quality management is time- and energy-consuming and this must be taken into account from the start to secure whatever is necessary for a quality culture to flourish.

Striving for quality is a dynamic process, with tensions between efforts and results, and between leadership and participation. Such tensions can be partially overcome through lean quality management that privileges qualitative over quantitative methods and improvement over sanctions, involves staff closely, and, above all, is appropriate for the goals and scale of the institution. Overambitious systems risk leading to too much effort for too little benefit.

If the PDCA cycle is common to all quality management approaches, self-assessment is their second shared component. As the 20 case studies have

demonstrated, self-assessment forms an integral part of internal quality culture, with results leading to specific improvements. Empirical data on the financial effect of quality management are lacking. In Cedefop's analysis, costs relate mostly to personnel, while positive effects are measured in relation to student satisfaction with teaching/learning and services/facilities. Though tangible, the latter cannot be compared directly against cost. Despite this, interviewed VET providers said the return on investment could be surmised from higher visibility and attractiveness for prospective students. Other positive effects include increased internal transparency, further education of staff and better adapted training programmes to students' and other stakeholders' needs. In addition, VET providers with solid internal quality management are more open to external cooperation, networking and participation in European cooperation.

Most VET institutions analysed are supported by public structures that are part of national quality frameworks. This support comprises guides to self-assessment, sets of indicators, data collection and processing tools and training opportunities for teachers and trainers.

Cedefop's analysis revealed that the vision of quality and the concept of internal QMSs differ considerably among the VET providers investigated. Each institution aims to define its own approach based on its local/regional environment and internal organisational structure. But they all respond to common challenges, such as increasingly heterogeneous groups of learners, developing into lifelong learning institutions, redefining curricula based on learning outcomes, strengthening methods for competence-based assessment, promoting self-learning and adopting new forms of teaching.

Teacher and student mobility is increasing and VET provision is becoming more international and subject to national and foreign competition. The present handbook is meant to help VET providers successfully meet these challenges.



Joachim James Calleja
Director

Acknowledgements

This publication ⁽¹⁾ is the result of a team effort reflecting the work of Tina Bertzeletou, Cedefop senior expert who coordinated the project, and of the research consortium led by Wolfgang Schlegel of the Institute for Vocational Training, Labour Market and Social Policy (INBAS) and of Erwin Seyfried, professor at the Berlin School of Economics and Law, responsible for the research.

Special thanks are due to the team of national and sectoral experts who conducted the field research: Agnès Ammeux who drafted one French case study and, assisted by Sofia Reis, reported on the Portuguese case study; Giorgio Alluli who investigated the two Italian case studies and the sectoral case studies in the automotive industry and in design and industry-related services, Marian Hulshof and Eef Schapman who carried out the case study in the Netherlands; Maria Gutknecht-Gmeiner who conducted the case study in Austria; Katalin Molnar-Stadler who analysed the case study in Hungary; Erwin Seyfried and Anja Wachtel who drew up one French, two German and the Estonian and Scottish case studies as well as those on the maritime industry and social services. Birgit Rasehorn and Ulrike Wisser conducted the case study in Belgium, and finally Dana Stroeie who drew up the case studies in Romania, Slovenia and Finland. The external research team's efforts are highly acknowledged and appreciated as they provided the major input for this handbook.

Erwin Seyfried drafted this report, assisted by Maria Gutknecht-Gmeiner, who provided input for Chapter 5 and by Katalin Molnar-Stadler who contributed to Chapters 4 and 7. In addition, Elena Eybe provided technical support by drafting most of the diagrams while Agnès Ammeux took care of the administrative aspects all along the work process.

Thanks are also due to Alessia De Martino for her secretarial work and to Evangelia Bara and Yvonne Noutsia of Cedefop for their support.

However, it is almost impossible to acknowledge all discussion partners mentioned in the introduction above, who have shared their knowledge, experience and ideas with the research team during its site visits and have contributed with their support and advice to this handbook's relevance.

⁽¹⁾ The research was carried out by INBAS GmbH under Cedefop's service contract AO/ECVL/TB/ InternalQualityManagement/010/11.

Table of contents

Executive summary	10
1. European context for quality in VET	12
1.1. Growing demand for well-qualified workforces	12
2. Quality management and quality culture	17
2.1. Dimensions of internal quality management	17
2.2. Basic activities of a QMS within a VET institution	20
2.3. Quality culture	22
3. Heading towards quality: applying the quality cycle	23
3.1. Planning your activities for better quality	23
3.2. Do and monitor what you are doing	29
3.2.1. Governance and administration of quality within a VET institution	29
3.2.2. Monitoring quality of teaching and learning	30
3.3. Assess your quality results and your progress towards better quality	34
3.3.1. Targeted data collection	34
3.3.2. Collection of feedback from internal and external stakeholders	37
3.3.3. Staff appraisals and staff performance measurement	39
3.3.4. Self-assessment and internal auditing	40
3.3.5. Participation of stakeholders in self-assessment	42
3.3.6. Communication of assessment results	43
3.4. Change and improve through analysis and strategy development	44
3.4.1. Learn by analysing factors that contribute to quality	45
3.4.2. Preparing for change	47
3.4.3. Developing an improvement plan	48
3.4.4. Ready for change?	51
3.5. Planning version 2.0: establishing a coherent development strategy	53

3.5.1. Detect your strengths and weaknesses – and your opportunities and threats	54
3.5.2. Benchmarking	57
4. Cross-cutting internal elements affecting quality in VET	59
4.1. An organisational structure for quality management	59
4.2. Balancing leadership and participation	62
4.3. Information and communication	64
4.4. Process management	65
4.5. Managing documentation	67
5. External elements affecting quality	69
5.1. Cooperation with external stakeholders	69
5.2. Quality in cooperation with the world of work	70
5.3. Cooperation and networking with other educational institutions	73
5.4. Transnational cooperation and peer review	75
5.5. Accreditation/external recognition	76
5.6. Added value of sectoral quality frameworks	78
6. Towards creating a quality culture within VET institutions	83
6.1. Find your focus: different approaches of quality	83
6.1.1. Focusing on the world of work	83
6.1.2. Focusing on needs of students	85
6.1.3. Focusing on effectiveness and efficiency of organisational processes	85
6.2. Defining your vision and mission – based on shared values	86
7. Starting your activities to improve quality	91
7.1. The starting point: self-assessment	91
7.2. Conducting self-assessment in your VET institution	92
8. To do and not to do	100
List of abbreviations	101
Bibliography	103

ANNEX 1.

Toolbox supporting implementation of internal quality management based on the PDCA/quality cycle	107
1.1. Example of strategic planning according to indicators	107
1.2. Example of QMS-related responsibilities of an administration	114
1.3. Questionnaire to teachers for self-reflecting on student's assessment	116
1.4. Questionnaire to assess the teaching process-class observation	120
1.5. Guidelines to teachers for collecting learners' feedback on their learning experience	121
1.6. Guidelines for a staff appraisal interview	126
1.7. Questionnaire to students for self-reflection	127
1.8. Teacher's self-reflection on assessment	129
1.9. Teacher assessment form	133
1.10. Questionnaire to students for assessing their teachers (second example) – Teachers through students' eyes	135
1.11. Questionnaire to teachers for reflecting and assessing teaching	137
1.12. Campaign protocol for collecting feedback	140
1.13. Questionnaire for workplace instructors	142
1.14. Questionnaire to students for assessing their academic year (first example)	148
1.15. Evaluation of cooperation with companies	150
1.16. Questionnaire to assess the school climate	152
1.17. Questionnaire to students for assessing their academic year (second example)	154
1.18. Questionnaire to students for feedback on their academic experience, studies and life	156
1.19. Questionnaire to students on their time-spending	163
1.20. Questionnaire to parents on students' progress	164
1.21. The Dutch framework for curricula evaluation/supervision of the Adult and Vocational Education Act (Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs) (WEB)	166
1.22. Questionnaire to students for evaluating and ameliorating learning and teaching	192
1.23. Guide for using the focus group technique in education and training	194

1.24. Example of an improvement action plan and its explanation note (first example)	204
1.25. Example of an improvement action plan (second example)	208
1.26. Student questionnaire	210
1.27. Teaching reflection	212
1.28. Checklist for school action plan (SAP) development	213
1.29. Example of a SWOT analysis	218
1.30. Example of an organisational structure	221
1.31. Description of staff responsibilities with regard to quality	223
1.32. Example of staff responsibility with regard to quality	224
1.33. Example of a process map	225
1.34. Questionnaire to students for assessing training completed	226
1.35. Example of a cooperation agreement between a VET provider and a company	228
1.36. Questionnaire for evaluation of work-based learning	230
1.37. An example of internship guidelines	232
1.38. Example of a sectoral partnership agreement between a VET provider and an employers' association	234
1.39. Example of a partnership agreement between VET providers in a network	237
1.40. Example of a VET college's quality mission	242
1.41. An example of a mission statement	244

List of tables

1. Intensity of involvement of stakeholders in different areas of quality development	27
2. Types of objective and improvement of quality	51
3. Components of a SWOT analysis	55
4. Typology of stakeholder involvement	72
5. An example of values and associated activities	88

List of figures

1. The Deming (PDCA) cycle	13
2. Main areas for quality within a VET institution	19
3. Basic tasks of an internal quality assurance system	21
4. An example of strategic planning	25
5. Main steps in the strategic planning process	28
6. Quality management in the implementation stage	33
7. Overview of stakeholders involved in evaluation	38
8. Basic factors contributing to quality in VET	46
9. Major and minor factors contributing to quality in VET	47
10. Transforming improvement needs into an action plan	49
11. Organising change and improvement of quality	50
12. Ensuring readiness for change within your institution	52
13. Strategic significance of a SWOT analysis	54
14. Shaping a development strategy	56
15. Adapting your strategy	57
16. Example of a structure for internal quality management in a small VET organisation	59
17. Example of a structure for internal quality management in a large VET organisation	60
18. Impacts on internal quality management	81
19. Different concepts of quality and their interaction	84
20. Values: basis of vision, mission and quality objectives	87
21. An example of values for a VET institution	88
22. The MERI cycle	99
23. Structure of Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre	222

List of boxes

1. Components of the EQAVET recommendation for VET	15
2. Quality assurance tools provided by the EQAVET network	16
3. Questions for reflection and options for further action	16
4. Typical quality issues in a VET institution (see annex, Sections 1.1, 1.2, 1.30, 1.40, 1.41)	18
5. Questions for reflection and options for further action	22
6. Proposals of the EQAVET recommendation	24
7. Indicators	26
8. Questions for reflection and options for further action	28
9. Proposals of the EQAVET recommendation	30
10. Tool: staff appraisal	30
11. Tools: monitoring quality of teaching and learning	32
12. Questions for reflection and options for further action	33
13. A piece of advice	34
14. Proposals of the EQAVET recommendation	35
15. EQAVET indicators	36
16. Tool: campaign protocol	37
17. Tools: questionnaires for collection of feedback	39
18. Tool: teachers' performance measurement	40
19. Preconditions for successful self-assessment	41
20. Tool: organising a focus group	43
21. Questions for reflection and options for further action	44
22. Proposals of the EQAVET recommendation	45
23. Ishikawa diagram	46
24. Pareto analysis	47
25. Brainstorming	48
26. Questions for reflection and options for further action	53
27. Questions for reflection and options for further action	58
28. Activities of a quality management team – an example from a large VET provider	61
29. An internal reward and recognition system	63
30. Meetings to address quality issues	65
31. Typology of processes in VET institutions	66
32. Managing the core processes	66
33. Questions for reflection and options for further action	68
34. Proposals of the EQAVET recommendation	70
35. Results of cooperation with other educational institutions	74

36. Toolbox for implementing a peer review	76
37. Models for internal quality management and external recognition	77
38. Examples of sectoral quality frameworks	80
39. Questions for reflection and options for further action	82
40. Example of a mission for a VET institution	87
41. A piece of advice	87
42. Development of a shared vision and mission	90
43. Questions for reflection and options for further action	90
44. Proposals of the EQAVET recommendation	91
45. Self-assessment	92
46. A piece of advice	94
47. Contents of training in self-assessment	95
48. A piece of advice	95
49. A piece of advice	96
50. A piece of advice	97
51. Questions for reflection and options for further action	99

Key of colours used in boxes

■ Orange	questions
■ Light blue	EQAVET recommendation-related
■ Purple	definitions, tools, examples and models
■ Green	preconditions, typologies, results, summaries
■ Brown	advice

Executive summary

This Cedefop handbook is meant for organisations providing VET that wish to develop and improve the quality of their services by establishing an internal QMS and creating a quality culture to face continuously current and future challenges.

Quality, quality management and quality culture in VET

There are countless definitions of quality. For this handbook Cedefop selected one based on J.M. Juran's approach which defines quality as fit for purpose achieved with optimum resources. While purpose is manifold and depends on differing social contexts, ethical values, interests and stakeholders' views, several methods, instruments and a 'toolbox' are available to support optimal use of resources.

Although there are different approaches to quality management, their common core refers to systematic application of the above-mentioned 'toolbox', to coordinate activities, control and improve a VET institution on its journey towards what is agreed as fit for purpose.

The definition of a quality culture within a VET institution builds on the previous statements by adding the human factor. The term embodies the professional capacities necessary to use the toolbox, which are shared by individuals committed to pursuing the specific value system that defines what is fit for purpose for a particular organisation.

Objectives and structure of this handbook

The primary objective of this handbook is to present to VET providers interested in quality issues a range of instruments, methods and tools they can work with to develop by themselves a quality culture within their organisations. The instruments, tools and methods proposed derive from detailed analysis of the praxis of VET providers active in initial vocational

education and training (IVET) and/or continuous vocational education and training (CVET) who have successfully implemented over the years their own quality approach or have adapted existing quality (standardised) systems to their needs. Given this practical objective, the handbook avoids reference to quality theories, makes use of the minimum necessary technical terms and adopts a simple user-friendly structure based on the quality cycle. The handbook covers quality management at the whole organisation, teaching and learning and quality department levels. It is articulated in nine chapters each opening with a short introduction to its objective, evolving by steps, containing pieces of advice and questions for reflection and further action. An annex with selected tools used by the VET institutions visited and who generously accepted to provide them for this handbook, complete this publication.

Empirical sources

As already mentioned, the handbook draws on a range of empirical sources, encompassing 16 case studies of VET institutions operating with national quality frameworks in 13 European Member States: Belgium, Germany (two), Estonia, France (two cases), Italy (two), Hungary, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Finland, and UK/Scotland, supplemented by four case studies of VET organisations applying sectoral quality frameworks in the automotive industry (Czech Republic), design and industry-related services (Italy), the social sector (Germany) and maritime management, navigation and engineering (Lithuania).

In addition to intensive desk research into the relevant national and sectoral quality frameworks, the case studies were conducted using site visits and comprehensive interviews with managers, quality officers, teachers and trainers, students and representatives of external stakeholders such as ministries, businesses and chambers.

European context for quality in VET

By reading this chapter you will become familiar with the efforts and activities undertaken at European Union (EU) level, including cooperation between Member States and social partners, to improve quality of European VET systems and develop a common European reference framework for quality assurance in VET.

1.1. Growing demand for well-qualified workforces

In all European countries, fast-changing technical developments and global competition are leading to growing demand for well-qualified workforces; investments in education are an important means for the EU to keep pace internationally, as well as contributing to increased social cohesion. Financial investments alone are not sufficient to make VET attractive, socially inclusive and competitive – the quality of VET must be considered too.

Since 2002, the ‘Copenhagen process for enhanced European cooperation in VET’ has fostered common learning by involving all relevant stakeholders to improve performance, quality and attractiveness of VET in Europe. In its political dimension, the process aimed to establish common European objectives and support reforms in national VET systems.

A major development was definition of a common European framework to improve quality assurance in VET. Continuous cooperation between Member States and social partners at European level, supported by the EU Commission, resulted in adoption of the ‘recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a European quality assurance reference framework for VET (EQAVET)’ in June 2009 (European Parliament and Council of the EU, 2009a).

The EQAVET framework comprises an action pattern for quality assurance and quality improvement, based on the PDCA cycle of planning, implementation, evaluation and review, supported by common quality criteria and

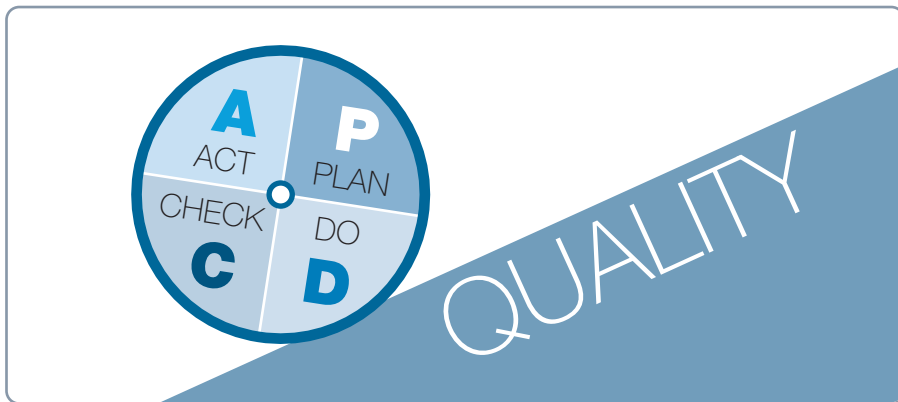
indicative descriptors (Annex I of the recommendation) and a coherent set of quality indicators (Annex II of the recommendation), which can be used both at VET provider and VET system levels.

Following the PDCA cycle, the EQAVET framework suggests application of a circular quality assurance framework that comprises:

- (a) goal-setting and strategic planning;
- (b) rules and regulations for implementation, continuous monitoring and measurement of results according to predefined goals;
- (c) analysis of factors contributing to quality and management of change in view of the achieved results;
- (d) new strategic planning and goal-setting adapted to new developments, thus starting a new cycle for continuous improvement.

The principle of the quality cycle is easy to understand, because it applies instinctively in everyday life. However, it is the systematic, continuous and regular use of the cycle that makes the difference when establishing a quality framework.

Figure 1. **The Deming (PDCA) cycle**



Source: Cedefop.

By following the same structure and the same steps as the PDCA cycle ⁽²⁾ – the foundation and common basis of all models and systems of quality assurance, either implicitly or explicitly – the EQAVET framework aims to develop a systematic approach to quality assurance and continuous

⁽²⁾ Also called the Deming cycle, after Williams Edwards Deming, considered the inventor of the cycle.

improvement in VET systems and VET provision. Applying the PDCA cycle to a specific context constitutes the basic element of any effective internal quality management and quality culture within VET institutions – focus of this Cedefop handbook.

The EQAVET recommendation also promoted establishment of the EQAVET network ⁽³⁾, a platform for deepening cooperation in quality in VET by bringing together the EU, European Economic Area (EEA), European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and candidate countries, social partners and European Commission. Cedefop plays an active role as scientific advisor to the network and participates in its steering committee and working groups. Within its strategic objective of fostering excellence, quality and relevance of VET, the Bruges communiqué of December 2010 invites countries to establish at national level and by the end of 2015, a common quality assurance framework for VET providers, compatible with the EQAVET framework (Council of the EU and European Commission, 2010).

To promote the EQAVET framework at national level, countries are recommended to establish quality assurance national reference points (NRPs). By 2013, 28 countries reported having put in place a NRP ⁽⁴⁾. They form a network and support countries to develop and implement their national approaches to quality assurance, disseminate information on EU VET quality-related developments and raise national awareness of quality assurance in VET ⁽⁵⁾.

The EQAVET recommendation invites Member States to review the EQAVET implementation process every four years and report the results to the European Commission. The first report of the EU Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the experience gained and implications for the future was submitted end of 2013.

⁽³⁾ More information about the EQAVET network is available from www.eqavet.eu [accessed 26.5.2014].

⁽⁴⁾ EQAVET secretariat survey 2013 and EQAVET network website <http://www.eqavet.eu> [accessed 26.5.2014].

⁽⁵⁾ Updated list of NRPs at the above-mentioned EQAVET website.

Box 1. **Components of the EQAVET recommendation for VET**

A pattern for action comprising:

- (a) the EQAVET quality cycle for quality assurance and improvement in VET;
- (b) quality criteria and indicative descriptors;
- (c) a set of coherent quality indicators.

A European network (EU, EEA, EFTA and candidate countries and social partners).

The NRPs in EU Member States.

The EQAVET framework forms part of a series of European tools and principles to make qualifications more transparent and ease mobility of learners and workers. They include the European qualifications framework (EQF) for lifelong learning (European Parliament and Council of the EU, 2008), the European credit system for VET (ECVET) (European Parliament and Council of the EU, 2009a), the common European principles for identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning as expressed in the Council recommendation on validation (Council of the EU, 2012) and Europass (European Parliament and Council of the EU, 2004).

Among the various Cedefop publications related to quality assurance, the following three are of particular interest to VET providers looking for international cooperation:

- (a) Cedefop, 2008;
- (b) Cedefop, 2011a;
- (c) Cedefop, 2011b.

Box 2. Quality assurance tools provided by the EQAVET network (*)

Building blocks

... a series of themes and activities which NRPs can use to support VET providers in developing their internal quality assurance systems in line with the EQAVET recommendation.

Contrasting statements

... helping VET providers to reflect on their quality assurance approaches in comparison to the EQAVET indicative descriptors, and to find out strengths and areas for further development.

Indicators toolkit – Catalogue of indicators

... support implementation of the set of 10 EQAVET indicators by answering possible questions and addressing difficulties that may be encountered when using the indicators.

Guide for national quality reference points to support VET providers' self-monitoring by using the EQAVET indicators

... practical guidance on how to plan, organise and conduct the self-monitoring process at VET-provider level – focusing on results (output and outcomes) as measured by indicators.

Glossary

... to clarify the key concepts and terms used in the EQAVET recommendation.

(*) <http://www.eqavet.eu/index2.html> [accessed 26.5.2014].

Box 3. Questions for reflection and options for further action

- (a) Have you ever been in contact with your NRP?
- (b) Have you ever tried the EQAVET website?
- (c) Are you informed about European VET measures?

CHAPTER 2

Quality management and quality culture

In this chapter you will learn more about the concepts on which this handbook is based – quality management and quality culture. You will see the differences as well as the relationships between these terms and you will get a first idea of what it means to set up a QMS and a quality culture in your organisation.

While in Chapter 1 you learned that a common EQAVET framework for VET was adopted, it is also a fact that most European countries have established quality frameworks that give their VET providers the freedom to decide by themselves which internal approaches, instruments and tools to apply (see annex, Section 1.39). Although this flexibility is fully in line with the EQAVET framework, there are some basic requirements and tasks for operation of any internal QMS that must be followed and which are explained in Section 2.1.

2.1. Dimensions of internal quality management

Even small VET institutions have a complex organisational structure and quality is generally produced in all parts of the institution, although some parts are more important for producing quality than others. Therefore, the first task is to distinguish between the less important and more important quality issues and focus on the particularly relevant areas for action. A typical list of quality areas including quality objectives and core tasks for quality management of a VET institution is in Box 4.

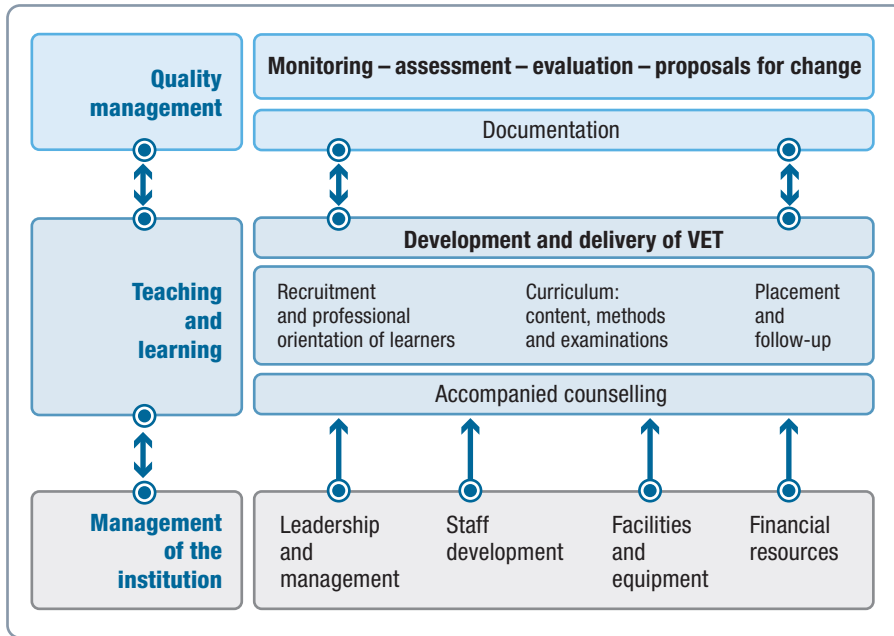
**Box 4. Typical quality issues in a VET institution
(see annex, Sections 1.1, 1.2, 1.30, 1.40, 1.41)**

- (a) Manage the institution:
 - (i) involve all relevant stakeholders;
 - (ii) improve quality of teaching and learning;
 - (iii) adjust processes for prime service delivery.
- (b) Develop the institution:
 - (i) agree on a vision and a mission statement;
 - (ii) agree on quality objectives and targets.
- (c) Lead the personnel of the institution:
 - (i) develop capacities of teachers, trainers and other staff.
- (d) Aim for optimal management of resources.
- (e) Develop cooperation and networking with external stakeholders.
- (f) Create and develop facilities for educational supply.
- (g) Observe, assess and analyse processes, results, outcomes and impacts.
- (h) Strive for continuous improvement of quality.

Box 4 provides a first overview of the quality tasks to be fulfilled by VET institutions.

As teaching and learning are at the heart of quality, internal quality management of any VET institution has to focus its activities primarily on them. Figure 2 highlights the quality issues important for quality in teaching and learning.

Figure 2. Main areas for quality within a VET institution



Source: Cedefop.

Figure 2 refers first and foremost to delivery and continuous development of VET programmes and their main components: content of the curriculum, pedagogical methods applied and procedures to assess student performance.

The main part of the teaching and learning process is preceded by recruitment processes and professional orientation of interested students/learners; downstream activities are conceived to support placement of students in employment or their transfer to further and higher education institutions, and to services for follow-up. In parallel to the teaching and learning process, many VET institutions offer counselling to provide additional support, in particular to migrants and socially-disadvantaged students/learners.

Management processes within the organisation aim to ensure an appropriate environment and optimal preconditions for teaching and learning. Among different management tasks, the most important for quality are promotion and further training of teachers and trainers, adequate facilities and equipment for smooth provision of teaching and training, and last but not least, efficient management of financial resources.

Quality management embraces both the teaching and learning process and organisational management of the VET institution, and a specific function or even a department is responsible for implementation and promotion of all quality-improving activities in these areas. In addition, quality management includes monitoring these activities, in other words assessment and evaluation of quality achievements, on which proposals for further improving quality of the VET institution are based.

A fully operational internal QMS covers several basic tasks or activities, applies a range of tools to assess and analyse, to illustrate and communicate plans and results achieved, and will use certain instruments to promote a quality culture within the VET institution and work in partnership with external stakeholders.

2.2. Basic activities of a QMS within a VET institution

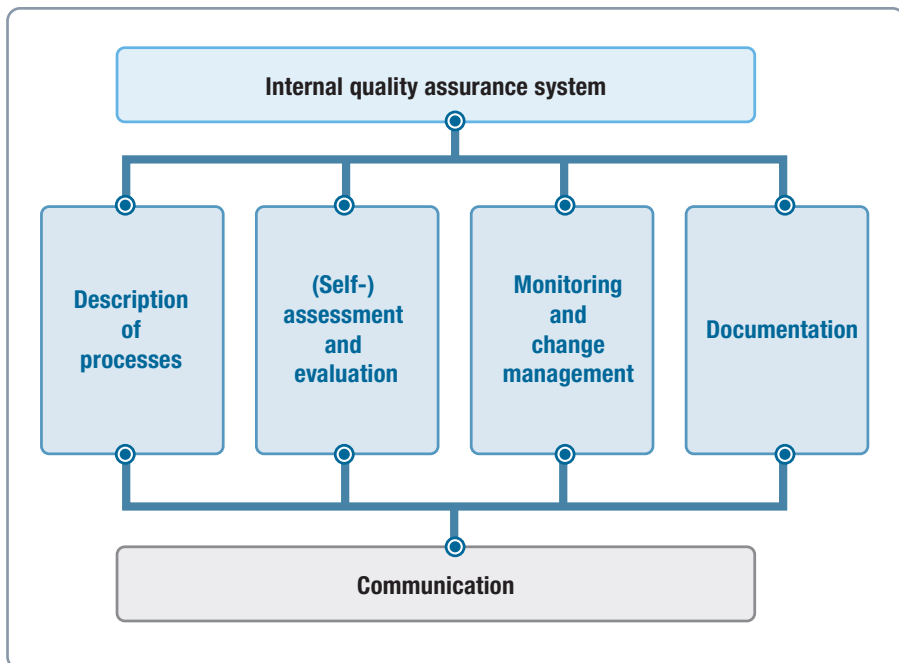
Tasks of an internal quality assurance system can be described as follows:

- (a) description of processes: this is one of the most prominent requirements for all kinds of external recognition of quality in a VET organisation. The internal quality assurance system sets up and describes the operational processes and their quality objectives together with the individual responsibilities for the management and control of each operation, giving a whole picture of the organisation;
- (b) (self-)assessment: the internal quality assurance system develops and/or provides the necessary instruments and tools for collecting information and assessing results from staff, students and external stakeholders. As a horizontal task the quality assurance system is based on consistent principles for collection and evaluation of information in different units and departments of the VET organisation and for different operations;
- (c) monitoring and change management: the quality assurance system puts into effect the institutionally-agreed quality assurance processes through continuous monitoring, regular assessment, evaluation and proposals for adaptation, improvement and change;
- (d) documentation: this is another basic requirement for any type of external recognition of the institution. The internal quality assurance system has to ensure the documentation and storage of all documents guiding operations of the VET institution both internal and those addressed to its external stakeholders;

A fully-fledged documentation system in a VET institution should store under safe conditions at least the following records:

- (i) mission statement and quality policy of the VET institution;
 - (ii) descriptions of the main processes and definitions of related (personal) responsibilities;
 - (iii) tools and instruments used for assessment and evaluation;
 - (iv) records of assessments and evaluations undertaken;
 - (v) records of all suggestions, complaints and subsequent investigations made;
 - (vi) minutes and results of discussions to improve quality of organisational processes and programme and service delivery;
- (e) communication: as a cross-cutting function, a quality assurance system within a VET institution should ensure internal communication with staff, teachers/trainers and students as well as communication with relevant stakeholders from outside, such as general schools, employers and employment agencies.

Figure 3. **Basic tasks of an internal quality assurance system**



Source: Cedefop.

2.3. Quality culture

This handbook for VET providers focuses on developing quality management and a quality culture. They represent two different concepts and approaches to quality, which in practice should complement each other.

Quality management aims to introduce and provide a continuous review of planned quality objectives and coordinated activities to direct and control the VET organisation with regard to quality. Using reliable and valid instruments for data collection, quality management monitors, assesses and evaluates input, output and outcomes of its impact on quality of services within the organisation. Thus, quality management is a 'hard' concept based on facts, figures and measurement within the organisation.

Quality culture is a 'soft' concept, depending on prevailing attitudes and behaviour of individuals in the VET organisation. Quality culture builds on quality management and is understood as the interaction between a well-functioning, professional QMS and committed staff members who, guided by professionalism, demonstrate quality-oriented behaviour. Thus, the main factors of a quality culture are individuals' roles and commitment in producing quality in VET.

Box 5. Questions for reflection and options for further action

- (a) Which of the above-mentioned tasks of internal quality management are sufficiently accomplished in your organisation?
- (b) Where is there room for further action?
- (c) Which benefits from internal quality management can be seen in your organisation?
- (d) How are quality management and quality culture interlinked in your organisation?

Heading towards quality: applying the quality cycle

In Chapter 1 you got a first idea about the PDCA cycle. In this chapter you can learn – step by step – how to apply the quality cycle in your organisation: how to plan your activities, how to monitor what you are doing and how to assess your achievements. Further, you will learn to analyse different factors affecting quality in VET and how to organise change to improve things.

3.1. Planning your activities for better quality

One can hardly imagine building a house without prior planning and the same applies to quality in VET. People make plans before they act and in VET institutions planning is an everyday process. One has to plan distribution of subjects, deployment of teachers and use of teaching materials, as well as assessments of students and graduation ceremonies.

But planning quality means strategic planning, which is more than finding short-term solutions or correcting errors that have occurred. Strategic planning is about improving the whole organisation and in particular its core process of teaching and learning. Last but not least, planning quality means developing a strategy for quality management.

A strategy must provide answers to the following questions:

- (a) what should be achieved;
- (b) how can it be achieved, by whom, by when;
- (c) what resources are needed.

Therefore, a VET institution has to define its strategic objectives, activities and resources. Consequently, strategic planning can be understood as development of a coherent plan to achieve the institution's self-defined objectives with appropriately defined resources and by systematic alignment of activities towards these objectives.

Box 6. Proposals of the EQAVET recommendation

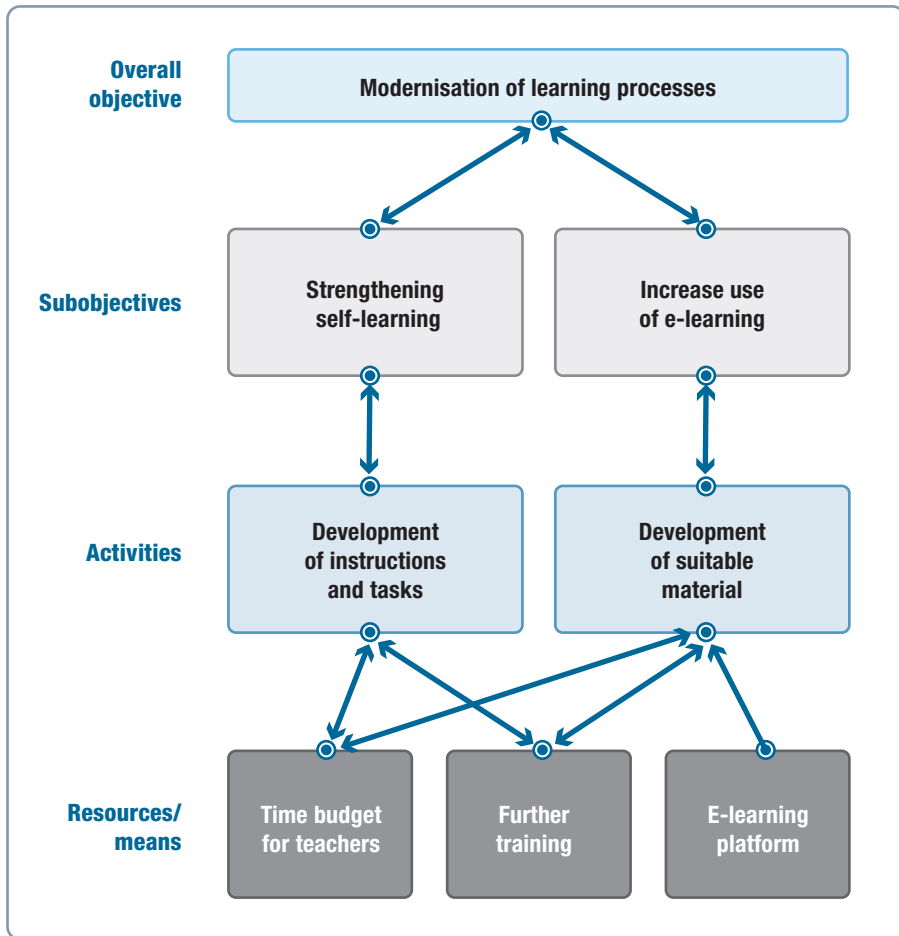
According to the quality criteria in Annex I of the EQAVET recommendation, planning should reflect a 'strategic vision' and 'includes explicit goals/objectives, actions and indicators'. The descriptors suggest:

- (a) explicit goals/objectives and targets are established and monitored;
- (b) responsibilities in quality management and development are allocated;
- (c) VET providers have an explicit and transparent quality assurance system in place.

Since VET institutions are complex organisations, they will rarely have just one objective. This is why in strategic planning a hierarchy of objectives is established (see annex, Sections 1.1, 1.2, 1.29). At the top there is a general and commonly-shared principle, a vision of the future role of the organisation, which is mostly kept deliberately vague, and in Chapter 6 you will learn more about the vision's importance and how to build and shape it. At the current stage, dealing with strategic planning, it is more important to look more closely at operational issues, because there are several additional steps to be planned to ensure achievement of the strategic objectives.

Strategic planning in teaching and learning could look like the following example (see Figure 4): the overall objective is to modernise the learning process and subobjectives are to strengthen self-learning and use of e-learning/open-educational resources. Teachers and trainers must develop and provide tasks and instructions for self-learning and suitable material for e-learning through corresponding activities.

Figure 4. An example of strategic planning



Source: Cedefop.

Concerning e-learning/open educational resources, a learning platform and additional equipment are the resources needed. In addition, teachers and trainers must be entitled to allocate a certain percentage of their working time for preparing themselves and further training might be offered to them so they are able to perform their new tasks professionally. Necessary time for this could be made available by giving up other tasks they perform, such as providing cover for other teachers or carrying out clerical and administrative activities.

To determine at a later stage whether the strategic objectives have been achieved, they must be realistic and sufficiently specific. Setting targets helps to stay realistic. For example, setting targets would mean defining a realistic number of VET courses per department and determining for each course a realistic percentage of self-learning and, where appropriate, of using e-learning/open educational resources.

In subsequent stages of strategic planning, departments should designate individual teachers to take on the tasks, thus defining clear personal responsibilities. Further, milestones and deadlines have to be fixed: what progress should be achieved after a month, three months, or half a school year? But it is important to differentiate, as milestones and deadlines might be different for different departments or VET programmes.

The quality management department should be responsible for the following steps in strategic planning. First, it must define appropriate indicators for monitoring the process and the results. In the example above the number of teachers who have completed further training can be monitored as a process indicator and the number of tasks for self-learning developed could be used as a result indicator. In addition, the quality department must determine how monitoring processes and assessment of results is organised and what measurement tools could be used, to evaluate whether the tasks and instructions for self-learning developed are suitable and appreciated by students/learners.

Box 7. Indicators

Indicators are to provide information on whether and to what degree agreed quality objectives have been achieved. Indicators should be tangible and measurable and accompanied by concrete targets, reflecting the envisaged level of attainment.

Involving stakeholders in planning and developing quality in your institution is of vital importance, although intensity of their participation should be different in various areas with respect to their individual concerns and responsibilities (see Table 1 and annex, Section 1.37). It is obvious that teachers and trainers are the most important actors for quality in teaching and learning, but senior management and students/learners should also have a voice and a significant role since they are directly affected by the planned

objectives. External stakeholders should contribute to planning teaching and learning with their experience in an advisory role, while quality management should have a supporting function by defining appropriate indicators and tools for monitoring and assessing the envisaged quality objectives. Quality management’s role is a supportive one also in the developing quality of organisational processes phase, while it is decisive in constructing an effective QMS within the institution. The senior management team should contribute through its proactive attitude to all areas, but is responsible for quality in overall management of the organisation.

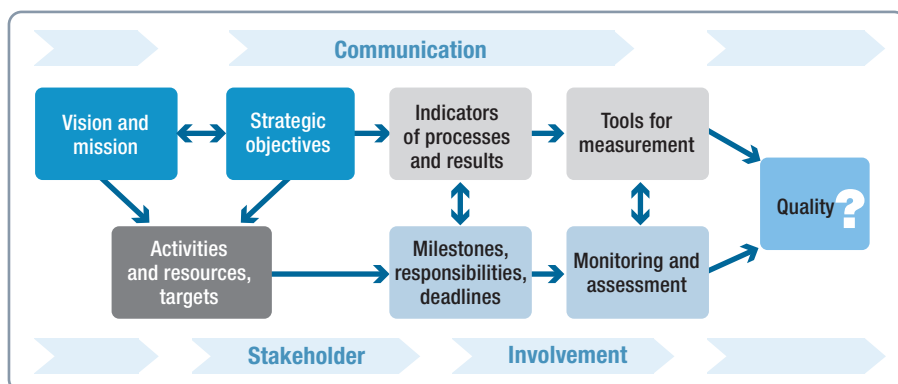
Table 1. Intensity of involvement of stakeholders in different areas of quality development

Stakeholders	Management of the institution	Teaching and learning	Quality management
Senior management	■	●	●
External stakeholders	◆	◆	◆
Teachers and trainers	●	■	◆
Students	◆	●	◆
Quality manager	◆	◆	■

NB: ■ most important actor; ● principal actor; ◆ supportive and/or advisory role.
 Source: Cedefop.

An overview of the different steps in the strategic planning process and how these steps subsequently build on one another is given in Figure 5. It must be underlined that the whole planning stage needs to be accompanied by continuous communication and coordination between the various stakeholders, which should be organised by the quality department under responsibility of senior management. In later chapters you will learn more about how to organise stakeholders’ involvement in operational terms.

Figure 5. Main steps in the strategic planning process



Source: Cedefop.

Strategic quality planning is usually undertaken in a long-term, multiannual perspective, but is reviewed and adapted once a year in light of progress made, mostly in combination with preparation of the annual course programme. Achievement of quality milestones, however, can be monitored more frequently, quite often in parallel with implementation of activities leading to it. In Section 3.2 you will learn more about real-time monitoring of your activities.

Box 8. Questions for reflection and options for further action

- (a) What would you consider the main strategic quality objectives in your institution, in:
 - (i) organisational development;
 - (ii) teaching and learning;
 - (iii) quality management.
- (b) Are your main objectives broken down into a hierarchy of appropriate subobjectives?
- (c) What steps do you take to put your objectives into practice?
- (d) How do you try to stay realistic when setting your quality objectives?
- (e) Have you allocated adequate resources to achievement of your quality objectives?
- (f) Do you involve your stakeholders appropriately?
- (g) Is your quality management department aware of its tasks in the strategic planning process?

3.2. Do and monitor what you are doing

In this section you can learn what you should consider when implementing your quality objectives. You will become acquainted with some instruments for monitoring quality of teaching and learning in VET institutions and learn how to use the results to achieve immediate improvement.

3.2.1. Governance and administration of quality within a VET institution

An effective internal relationship between senior management, heads of departments, the quality manager and other members of staff is crucial to ensure purposeful and timely implementation of the planned activities for achieving the quality objectives.

On the one hand, there must be a certain degree of freedom and flexibility in implementing quality activities in different departments and in particular at the lower end of the organisational hierarchy. Quality objectives will be achieved all the more readily when staff members at all hierarchical levels take ownership of the process, create their own targets and act on their own initiative to achieve them (see annex, Sections 1.31, 1.32). On the other hand, it is up to senior management to ensure coherent development of quality within the organisation and therefore to establish clear rules and transparency in decision-making, in case of deviation from the adopted quality objectives and the related activities. In Chapter 4 of this handbook you can learn more about keeping a balance between leadership and active staff participation and how to establish an effective flow of information and a communication system within a VET organisation.

Motivation and capabilities of staff, in particular teachers and trainers, is the decisive factor for success of quality improvement activities. Therefore VET organisations need a strategy for professional development of their staff in line with the institution's quality objectives. Appropriate criteria for recruitment of new teachers and trainers should be introduced and a plan for further staff training should be defined which reflects development needs of the institution and also takes interests and potential of individuals into account. To develop capabilities of its staff, a VET institution should put in place appropriate programmes for further training and adopt measures acknowledging staff efforts.

Box 9. Proposals of the EQAVET recommendation

The quality criteria in Annex I of the EQAVET recommendation propose that in the 'do' stage of the PDCA cycle 'implementation plans are devised in consultation with stakeholders' and the quality descriptors suggest:

- (a) resources are appropriately assigned to achieve the targets set in implementation plans;
- (b) for staff competence development, teachers' and trainers' needs are specified and staff undertake regular training, in cooperation with external stakeholders.

Staff appraisals are an essential tool to align development needs of the organisation and individuals. Many quality-oriented VET institutions use this tool continuously and systematically to allow mutual feedback between staff and senior management. Conducted annually, staff appraisals may proceed along the following lines:

- (a) feedback from staff members interviewed to their managers;
- (b) feedback from managers to staff members;
- (c) discussion of ideas to improve quality within the institution;
- (d) discussion of needs and demands for further training of staff members;
- (e) recording mutually agreed objectives, activities and deadlines.

Box 10. Tool: staff appraisal

A form with hints on undertaking and recording staff appraisals can be found in the annex, Section 1.6.

3.2.2. Monitoring quality of teaching and learning

It is appropriate to monitor all activities you undertake to achieve better quality, improve organisational processes, teaching and learning and quality management. However, this section focuses solely on teaching and learning to illustrate the importance of their monitoring.

Unlike assessment and evaluation, focus of the third step of the PDCA cycle, monitoring is part of the second step and is understood as direct and systematic observation of a process with designated instruments, to draw conclusions for immediate improvement. Thus, the main function of monitoring

is to provide evidence of the course of a process for immediate intervention if the process deviates from the original intention.

Reducing numbers of dropouts and raising graduation rates in VET are Europe-wide agreed policy objectives, and monitoring can help achieve them through real-time collection of relevant information. Unexcused absence of students from classes can be considered an early-warning sign of impending drop-out, and it should therefore be monitored closely in every department. Where numbers of absences exceed a certain level, an institution might adopt a counselling strategy for these particular students or learners.

Another example is the number of cancelled lessons: additional resources might be provided for these classes and courses to serve students' and learners' needs better.

Quality of classroom lessons and workshop training lies primarily in teachers' and trainers' hands. If they have appropriate monitoring tools at their disposal, they can monitor quality of their lessons themselves and improve them accordingly.

In fact, quality-oriented VET providers have developed tools to help teachers to reflect systematically on quality of their classes, including on their students' different learning styles, their favourite methodologies, promotion of self-learning or quality of the learning material used.

This self-directed monitoring can be complemented by including students' perspectives collected through questionnaires, to obtain immediate student feedback on classes. This feedback is addressed directly and confidentially to the teacher and is intended for individual use only. The students' questionnaire addresses similar issues to those in the self-reflection form for the teacher, thus allowing the teacher to draw conclusions from comparing their own perception with students' assessments.

Additionally, some VET providers distribute questionnaires to students for self-assessment and self-reflection on their learning behaviour, which constitutes another monitoring tool for teaching and learning, although here the students themselves must draw the appropriate conclusions to enable change.

Another approach to monitoring teaching and learning in classes is to build tandems of teachers who attend one another's classes to collectively monitor teaching and learning processes and provide professional feedback to one another (see annex, Section 1.27). Experience has shown that teachers initially hesitate to engage in these activities, but agreement on quality criteria and assessment items helps develop common trust and prepares the ground for cooperation.

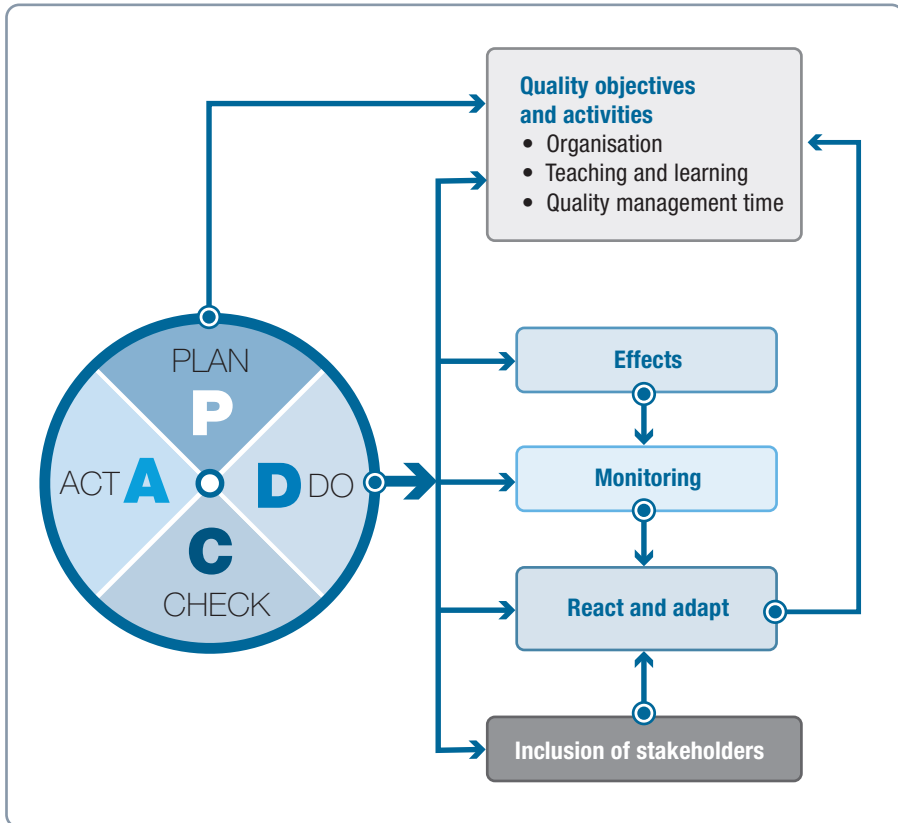
Monitoring can also take the form of voluntary learner engagement meetings between students and teachers, which discuss and reflect on quality of teaching and learning. Although the main intention of meetings is to listen to learners, it is important to make targeted use of this tool by structuring discussions around certain themes and by orienting the groups towards results and conclusions which will improve quality.

Box 11. Tools: monitoring quality of teaching and learning

- (a) Self-reflection and self-assessment by teachers
(see annex, Sections 1.3, 1.8, 1.9, 1.11).
- (b) Questionnaire for confidential feedback from students to teachers
(see annex, Section 1.22).
- (c) Students' self-reflection (see annex, Section 1.7).
- (d) Students' feedback on school and academic year
(see annex, Sections 1.10, 1.14, 1.16, 1.17, 1.18, 1.19).
- (d) List of themes for learner engagement meetings
(see annex, Section 1.5).

The examples given above demonstrate clearly the value of real-time monitoring. Collection of monitoring data offers a chance for immediate response whenever results of activities crucial for achieving quality are recorded as poor or below expectations. Sometimes actions to correct or improve activities may result directly from monitoring data. Where this is not the case, searching for an appropriate solution must become a common concern. Necessary actions must be discussed by including relevant stakeholders, before senior management takes a final decision on the most suitable option for change.

Figure 6. Quality management in the implementation stage



Source: Cedefop.

Box 12. Questions for reflection and options for further action

- (a) What is your approach to further developing skills of teachers, trainers and other staff?
- (b) What is your strategy for further training of staff?
- (c) How do you define development needs? Do you use staff appraisals?
- (d) Which activities aiming at better quality are monitored in real-time in your organisation?
- (e) Which tools does your organisation use to monitor quality of teaching and learning?

3.3. Assess your quality results and your progress towards better quality

In this section you will learn how to assess and evaluate your quality achievements, how to collect feedback from internal and external stakeholders, how to implement self-assessment and in-depth evaluation of your results within your institution, and finally, how to communicate the available information.

3.3.1. Targeted data collection

Quality management means that developing quality is pursued systematically and is based on facts and figures. Thus, collection of data for assessing achievement of quality objectives is an inevitable practice in all VET institutions that have adopted an internal QMS.

Experience shows, however, that quality-oriented VET institutions often collect too many data and these data are neither analysed nor used, simply because it is impossible to cope with the magnitude of the task. But uncontrolled data collection not only creates unnecessary work; in the long run, it also discourages respondents from giving feedback. Stakeholders flooded with feedback questionnaires, possibly with incoherent questions, will not provide valid answers.

Hence the importance to strictly concentrate data collection on predefined quality objectives of your own VET institution and its core process of teaching and learning, and from the outset to keep collection of feedback from stakeholders within tolerable bounds.

Box 13. A piece of advice

Scope of data to be collected should be strictly limited and clearly focused to assess achievement of your quality objectives as defined in the planning stage.

Further, the quality manager should ensure that a suitable system for data collection and processing is available and that it requires minimal effort. Nowadays, many inquiries can be performed online and by linking them with an appropriate data processing programme it should be possible to process

and analyse the information automatically. It is highly recommended therefore, not to use homemade tools for data collection and data processing, but to take advantage of professional support from outside the VET institution, and in fact in several Member States such systems are provided by relevant public authorities.

In some countries, data processing and analysis of results are undertaken externally by the education authorities, which provide VET institutions with their individual results, together with reference data, by placing their results in a context of average ratio of all institutions, thus allowing for benchmarking and common learning among VET providers.

Box 14. **Proposals of the EQAVET recommendation**

The quality criteria in Annex I of the EQAVET recommendation stipulate that 'evaluation of outcomes and processes is regularly carried out and supported by measurement'. The descriptors suggest that:

- (a) self-assessment/self-evaluation is periodically carried out;
- (b) evaluation and review cover processes and results/outcomes of education, including assessment of learner satisfaction as well as staff performance and satisfaction;
- (c) evaluation and review include adequate and effective mechanisms to involve internal and external stakeholders.

Some basic data, especially for running VET programmes, should be extracted immediately from the organisation's business management system without involving stakeholders. This includes information on participation rates in individual VET programmes as well as students' graduation rates. The business management system should allow capture of these data broken down by individual characteristics of students such as gender and age, or according to affinities to vulnerable groups.

With these data, generated from your business management system, you may already evaluate some of the indicators included in the EQAVET framework, presented in Box 15.

Box 15. EQAVET indicators

Annex II of the EQAVET recommendation proposes a comprehensive set of quality indicators, which can be used to support evaluation and quality improvement of VET providers.

European quality indicators propose:

- (a) application of an internal QMS;
- (b) investment in further training of teachers and trainers;
- (c) establishment of participation rates in VET programmes, according to type of programme and individual/social characteristics (gender, age, vulnerable groups);
- (d) establishment of completion rates in VET programmes, according to type of programme and individual/social characteristics;
- (e) establishment of placement rates after graduation from VET programmes, according to type of programme and individual/social characteristics:
 - (i) destination of graduates after completion of VET programmes;
 - (ii) share of employed graduates;
- (f) use of acquired skills at the workplace:
 - (i) occupation obtained by graduates according to type of training and individual/social characteristics;
 - (ii) satisfaction rate of graduates and employers with acquired skills/competences;
- (g) use of unemployment rate according to individual/social characteristics (context indicator);
- (h) prevalence of vulnerable groups (context indicator);
- (i) mechanisms to identify (changing) training needs in the labour market;
- (j) schemes used to promote better access to VET.

It is important to note that some European quality indicators are arranged in a chain of indicators, which are interrelated and build on one another and thus can provide information of additional value. For instance, having collected information on participation rates (indicator 5) and completion rates (indicator 6) it is possible to calculate drop-out rates by comparing the two. The more detailed and disaggregated the information gathered is (for example according to gender, age, ethnic background, educational background) the more reliable the evidence they provide. If information on participation, completion and

destination is analysed by VET programme and individual/social characteristics of students, it will be possible to identify the effects on students with different social characteristics and thus to evaluate suitability and adequacy of the various VET programmes they have gone through.

However, information available from the business management system is insufficient to evaluate all these basic indicators, not to mention individual quality objectives of your own organisation. Additional methods for data collection must be used to get deeper insights into quality of a VET institution.

3.3.2. Collection of feedback from internal and external stakeholders

Usually, feedback is collected from students, but rarely from students' parents (see annex, Section 1.20), from teachers and trainers (but rarely from other staff of a VET institution), and from former graduates and their employers, companies cooperating in work-based training, business organisations (such as chambers of commerce and industry) and other stakeholders in the local community (see annex, Section 1.36). An overview of the internal and external stakeholders that should be included in evaluation of processes and outcomes of a VET institution is given in Figure 7.

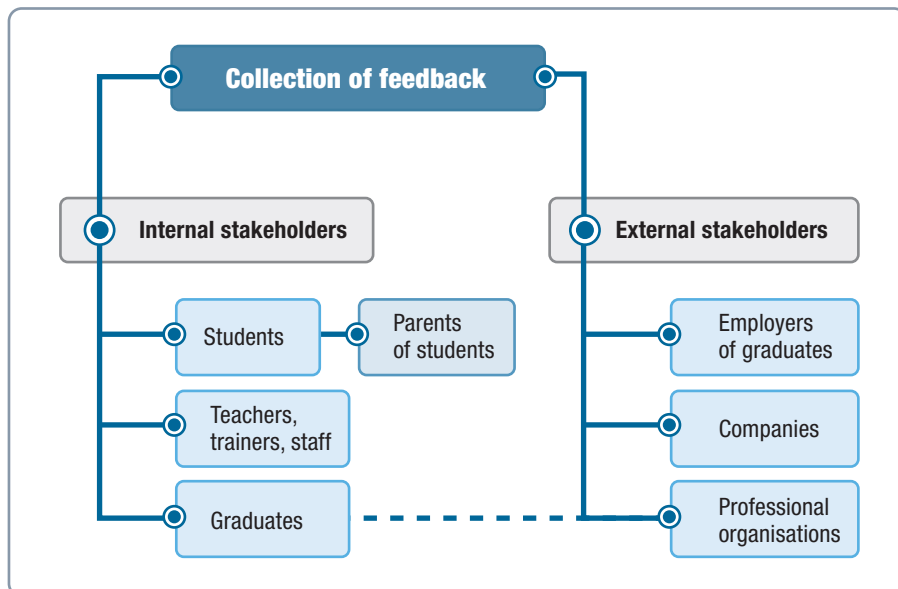
Students and learners are the most important stakeholders for providing feedback; usually their feedback is generated annually and it should be possible to collect it online. Questionnaires might include items addressing personal data (respecting anonymity) and the institution and its various services (such as library and catering facilities), but focus should be on questions concerning the learning process. This section should contain questions on students' awareness of the learning outcomes to be achieved in classes, an appropriate combination of theory and practice, use of new media, opportunities for self-organised learning and clarity of assessment criteria.

Box 16. Tool: campaign protocol

A guide on how to collect and record valid and reliable feedback from students can be found in the annex, Section 1.12.

A questionnaire for students' parents might address parents' views on whether classes attended led to increased knowledge and competence or whether their child made positive/negative comments about the school, its classes, teachers and trainers.

Figure 7. Overview of stakeholders involved in evaluation



Source: Cedefop.

Questionnaires for collecting feedback from teachers, trainers and other staff members may address issues such as the institution's quality culture, performance of senior management, possibilities for participation, satisfaction with communication and information policy, the working climate and the way conflicts are dealt with.

Investigating former graduates' destinations to get information on their employment status is essential for every VET institution's quality. Issues to be addressed in such enquiries refer to occupations obtained as well as satisfaction with the completed education and use of acquired skills and competences at the workplace.

Mirroring these enquiries, employers of graduates might be interviewed about graduates' job performances and their career prospects considering their acquired skills and competences.

Feedback questionnaires addressed to companies offering work experience and work-based training may ask about satisfaction with exchange of information and cooperation between the VET institution and the company, quality of classes, lessons and learning material, a general assessment of the institution's image and incidents observed over the past 12 months.

Finally, other stakeholders, such as chambers of commerce and industry, business organisations, employee organisations or NGOs representing socially-disadvantaged groups, might be asked to give their feedback, in particular on their perception of quality and overall image of the VET institution.

Box 17. Tools: questionnaires for collection of feedback

- (a) Students' questionnaire (see annex, Section 1.26).
- (b) Questionnaire for students' parents (see annex, Section 1.20).
- (c) Questionnaire for teachers, trainers and other staff members (see annex, Section 1.34).
- (d) Questionnaire for former graduates (see annex, Section 1.13).
- (e) Questionnaire for employers of former graduates (see annex, Section 1.15).
- (f) Questionnaire for business companies offering work-based training (see annex, Section 1.38).

3.3.3. Staff appraisals and staff performance measurement

In Section 3.3.2 on monitoring teaching and learning, you learned how important staff appraisals are as a tool for collecting common feedback between staff members and senior management and for recording ideas for improvement of quality.

Quality-oriented VET institutions may also regularly assess employees' performance against the tasks set out in their job descriptions. Assessment criteria include general professional attitudes (professionalism, methodological culture, assessment/evaluation, fostering talented students), specific educational activities (general tasks, extracurricular activities) and other quality-related aspects (commitment to the institution and its quality mission, cooperativeness, managing partnerships, communication, work discipline, administration). For specific positions additional criteria may be added to assess how employees perform management tasks (management of a department and partnerships, leadership capabilities, managerial knowledge, creativity, communication).

Another tool for assessing staff performance is class visits by heads of department or head of the VET institution, aiming to assist teachers and trainers in their professional development by identifying strengths and areas for improvement of their individual capacities. To obtain the most objective

and undistorted assessment, classroom observation is normally complemented with self-assessment by the teacher and assessment of the teacher's performance by the students. By no means should these assessments have a controlling function since they must be of a purely supportive nature. To create a quality culture within an institution, it is highly recommended to evaluate results and discuss activities for improvement in a confidential conversation between the teacher and supervisor involved.

Box 18. Tool: teachers' performance measurement

A guide to assess teachers' performance by classroom observation can be found in the annex, Section 1.4.

3.3.4. Self-assessment and internal auditing

Self-assessment is a powerful tool for quality, if and when it is an inherent part of the quality approach within a VET institution and is carried out systematically and comprehensively. In most cases it is coordinated and implemented by the core quality team of a VET institution, assembling quality officers and experts under responsibility of a quality manager, but it goes without saying that other staff members – preferably teachers and trainers – are invited to participate in this process as well. Senior management should participate too and should motivate teachers, trainers and other stakeholders to engage in small teams for self-assessment of quality, where the organisation's strengths and weaknesses should be addressed in an open and honest debate.

The debate should of course consider the facts and feedback data collected from different sources, but it should also rely on 'intangible knowledge' of teachers, trainers and other staff. Ikujiro Nonaka and colleagues have demonstrated that new organisational knowledge is always generated from two sources: 'explicit knowledge' consisting of data, standards and indicators, and intangible 'implicit knowledge' based on experience, opinions and individual perceptions of reality (Nonaka et al., 1994). This kind of knowledge is difficult to detect using standardised feedback instruments and a big advantage of self-assessment is that complex, so far undetected problems, hidden conflicts and blockages can be tackled and solved in open debate. Both sources of knowledge should be combined and their cross-fertilisation will generate new knowledge and innovation in an organisation.

Box 19. Preconditions for successful self-assessment

- (a) Commitment, support and participation of the head of the institution.
- (b) A core quality team to coordinate and integrate self-assessment activities.
- (c) Involvement of staff in the self-assessment exercise.
- (d) Openness towards data, facts and potential changes.
- (e) Open and honest debate addressing 'intangible knowledge'.
- (f) Immediate decisions on improvements based on self-assessment results.
- (g) Agreement among staff on implementation of improvement actions.

Self-assessment has proven to be a useful and effective instrument for creating robust dynamics leading towards quality, but its full potential is only realised when it becomes an integral part of management standards and organisational structure of a VET institution. When they are widely agreed among staff members, its results can be transformed into immediate decisions to improve quality. This can result in considerable improvements, for example developing pedagogical culture, harmonising theory and practice, introducing new media in everyday teaching activities, or elaborating common criteria for assessing students' performances. Thus, when its results are used to define immediate solutions for improving quality, self-assessment can play an important role in establishing an internal quality culture in VET institutions.

Internal quality audits are another tool for self-assessment in VET institutions. These audits are undertaken by part-time quality officers recruited from the teaching and training staff, who can build on their own experience but should be trained continuously as well, to audit different departments of an organisation with a professional view. Being familiar with an institution and staff, quality officers can provide immediate feedback to staff members responsible in the audited areas, based on their audits. They can thus push for quality. Besides, they produce audit reports, which are considered in annual planning and updating quality objectives and in preparing for external accreditation. The reports are presented to the senior management team, where decisions on further change and improvements can be made, if necessary.

3.3.5. Participation of stakeholders in self-assessment

It is highly desirable that besides staff members of the VET institution itself other internal and external stakeholders are involved in self-assessment activities. However, in realistic terms, in most cases the scope to involve them actively is rather limited.

The easiest way to enlarge the stakeholders' circle is to involve the students. In addition to collection of feedback via questionnaires, teachers and trainers should be encouraged to collect qualitative feedback in a dialogue session with their students towards the end of the class. When students feel their opinions and ideas are welcomed, it can reasonably be expected that some at least will also participate in further activities to improve quality.

All these additional activities are designed to obtain qualitative feedback and statements from internal and external stakeholders on current status of the VET institution and on their expectations for its further development. Stakeholders might be invited to participate in selective meetings or thematic workshops to discuss current problems, or to elaborate on future trends and demands. Depending on the topic, this could be a one-off meeting or a series of round tables, to which a wide range of external stakeholders can be invited. Whatever the format, it is important that the inviting VET institution has a clear idea of what the topic on the agenda is to give stakeholders a clear orientation and make them understand what is expected of them.

A tool that VET institutions are using increasingly – and successfully – to assess quality with stakeholders is focus groups. Originally rooted in social research, this tool has gained wide acceptance as a way to tackle in depth sensitive issues in training and education. A focus group is a tool through which a group of people is brought together and asked to express their opinions – on quality of a product or service, concepts or ideas, or new trends and developments. Focus groups are interactive settings where participants are free to talk and exchange views with other group members. They should be characterised by a thoughtful and permissive atmosphere. Excessive formality and rigidity should be avoided as this might stifle dynamics of interaction between participants, but too much informality and relaxation could also cause problems as the discussion might not be taken seriously.

In practice, focus groups not only deepen interpretation of data previously collected with quantitative tools such as feedback questionnaires, but they will also help to stimulate new ideas and creative concepts for developing quality in your VET institution.

Box 20. Tool: organising a focus group

A guide on how to conduct a focus group to involve stakeholders actively in quality debates within a VET institution can be found in the annex, Section 1.23.

3.3.6. Communication of assessment results

One should be aware that transparency of processes and results of quality assessments is not automatically ensured, neither for internal nor external stakeholders and customers. Therefore, all assessment activities need to be supplemented by an active publication and communication strategy.

This strategy must define who can access which information through which medium, since owing to their confidential nature not all assessment data can be given to all stakeholders or made available via the Internet to the general public. Generally a weighing of interests has to be made, between protection rights (of teachers and trainers in particular) and the requirement for the greatest possible transparency.

The following guidelines might help establish rules for communication of assessment results in your organisation:

- (a) personal assessments of teachers are for their individual eyes only;
- (b) results from classroom observation should be kept confidential and discussed only between the teacher and the responsible supervisor;
- (c) assessment of classes and programmes might be circulated via the intranet of the VET institution, if anonymity of personal data is guaranteed and discussed widely in quality meetings with internal and external stakeholders;
- (d) aggregated results from surveys should be made accessible via the public website, thus supporting positive marketing of the VET institution.

Box 21. Questions for reflection and options for further action

- (a) Check and adapt the amount of data collected in your organisation.
- (b) Do you already consider the European set of quality indicators?
- (c) Do you collect feedback from important stakeholders of your organisation?
- (d) How do you define individual skills and capacity improvement needs of your staff members?
- (e) Do you consider the self-assessment activities in your organisation as sufficiently successful?
- (f) Have you ever tried a focus group for in-depth evaluation of your quality assessments?
- (g) Have you established clear rules for communicating your assessment results?

3.4. Change and improve through analysis and strategy development

In this section you enter into the crucial phase of the PDCA cycle: you will learn how to transform your assessment and evaluation results into change and improvement activities for your organisation. You will become familiar with methods for professional analysis of factors contributing to quality and you will learn how to organise change and move towards improvement.

Several examples in Section 3.3 have demonstrated how close assessment and evaluation are to development of new ideas on change. When discussing assessment results the solution is quite frequently immediately at hand, particularly when it comes to correcting errors and overcoming poor quality.

Applying professional methods to analyse your assessment results should help you to go beyond ad hoc solutions and to design a coherent strategy for improving quality of the whole organisation and its core process – teaching and learning – and to set out a detailed improvement plan that corresponds to the criteria for planning as shown for this stage of the PDCA cycle in Section 3.1.

Box 22. **Proposals of the EQAVET recommendation**

For the last stage of the PDCA cycle the indicative descriptors in Annex I of the EQAVET recommendation suggest that:

- (a) learners' feedback with teachers' feedback is used to inform further actions;
- (b) procedures on feedback and review are part of a strategic learning process in the organisation;
- (c) appropriate action plans are put in place.

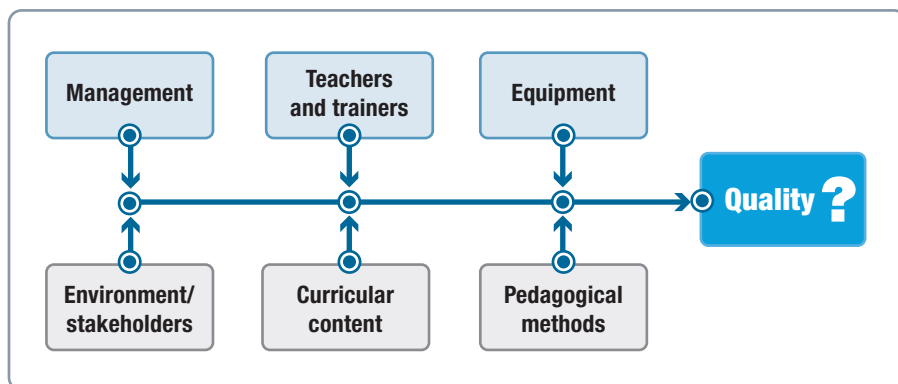
3.4.1. Learn by analysing factors that contribute to quality

Based on results of the monitoring and assessment carried out under responsibility of the quality department, an analysis of your performance (in relation to your quality objectives and previously set targets) has to be made. You will discover your positive results as well as your failures – and the organisation should learn from both to improve its quality.

Usually it is easier to look into achievements than to analyse failures, because failures must be admitted and accepted before they can be corrected. For analysis of both achievements and failures, it is extremely useful to be aware of the factors that could have caused the positive and the negative effects. To improve quality, one has to know and change the factors that caused these effects.

An initial overview of basic causal factors in VET is given in Figure 8, which is constructed according to the cause-and-effect model developed by and named after the Japanese quality theorist Kaouro Ishikawa. The diagram shows causes leading to or significantly affecting an intended result; it can be applied in many areas to analyse if and how certain factors have contributed to quality and is therefore widely used.

Figure 8. **Basic factors contributing to quality in VET**



Source: Cedefop.

As shown in Figure 8, a certain quality effect might have been produced by management of the VET institution, teachers and trainers, or by available equipment, but external stakeholders, the curriculum content or the pedagogical methods used could have been crucial factors as well.

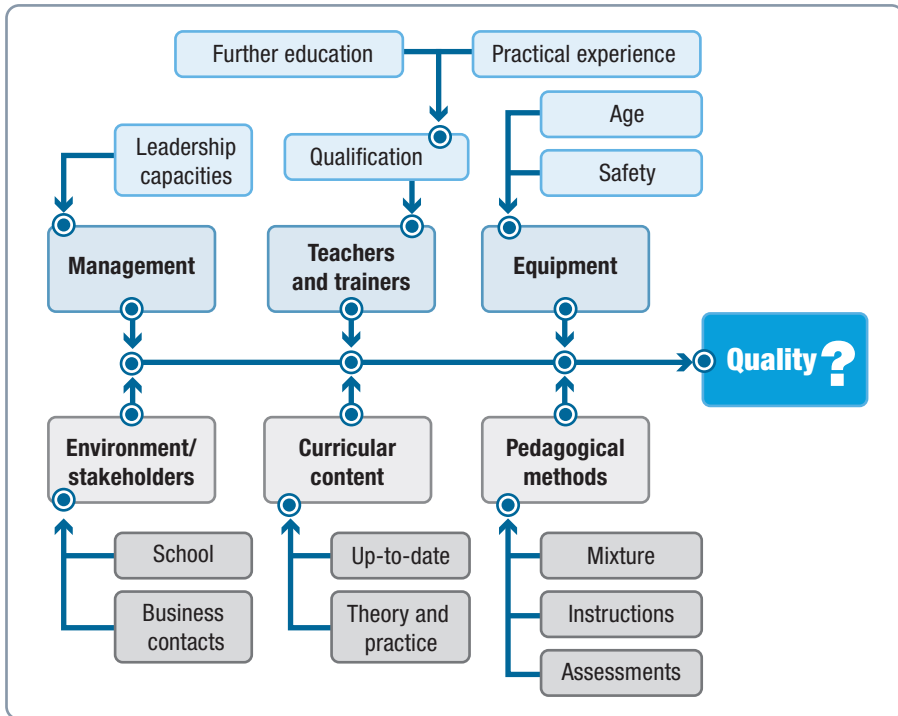
Box 23. **Ishikawa diagram**

The Ishikawa diagram is a tool for analysis and generating ideas for problem-solving and improvement. It is an illustration of cause and effect, where the intended effect is placed at the right end of an arrow, while main causes are noted on either side of the effect 'bone' with subcauses linked to the main factors.

In practice, interplay of the responsible factors is particularly important, of course, but for analytical purposes, the causal contribution of each factor should be analysed separately as well. In Figure 9 the basic causal factors of quality in VET are further differentiated. The deeper the analysis of potential causal factors is, the clearer the emerging options for taking action towards improving quality are.

Figure 9 shows that, for example management could strengthen its leadership capacities, teachers and trainers could acquire more practical experience, and external VET authorities could be asked to replace obsolete technical equipment.

Figure 9. Major and minor factors contributing to quality in VET



Source: Cedefop.

3.4.2. Preparing for change

Once your causal analysis has progressed so far, the most important issues for change and improvement should be at hand. But since it is impossible to improve quality simultaneously all over your institution, you have to make choices, select and determine a focus for action. In this respect the Pareto analysis technique, explained in Box 24, may be a helpful tool.

Box 24. Pareto analysis

Pareto analysis, also known as the 80-20 rule, is a tool for prioritising improvement actions and finding solutions for problems. The rule states that 80% of problems originate from 20% of the causes. By identifying the crucial 20% you are able to improve your performance disproportionately.

As soon as preferred areas for change and improvement are identified, options must be discussed and agreed. As expectations and intentions of the VET organisation, teachers and trainers, other employees, students and other stakeholders do not necessarily coincide, compromises often have to be found. Available means for achieving the intended objectives should be checked: are they sufficient to accomplish the desired results? Which partners are available to help achieve the intended objectives? Which stakeholders can provide support?

Various tools are available to tackle such issues. To gather ideas for implementing change you could organise, for example, a mind-mapping session. A keyword or image is put in the centre of a chart, from where main branches and subbranches radiate in different directions, creating a map in which elements to be considered are clearly and hierarchically structured.

Another tool promoting innovative ideas is short brainstorming meetings, which should not exceed 10 to 30 minutes and should focus on topics communicated some time before the meeting.

Box 25. **Brainstorming**

Brainstorming is a key tool to assure and develop quality in VET organisations. It is organised as a free-flowing process assembling experienced stakeholders to generate ideas for further development of the VET organisation and solutions to overcome failures.

3.4.3. Developing an improvement plan

An improvement plan builds on results of analysis of achievements and deficits and incorporates the challenges, opportunities and resources available for change (see annex, Sections 1.24, 1.25, 1.28). Once you have discussed the issues with the main stakeholders and agreed the most important areas for change, the improvement plan compiles all this information and elaborates two different proposals for change:

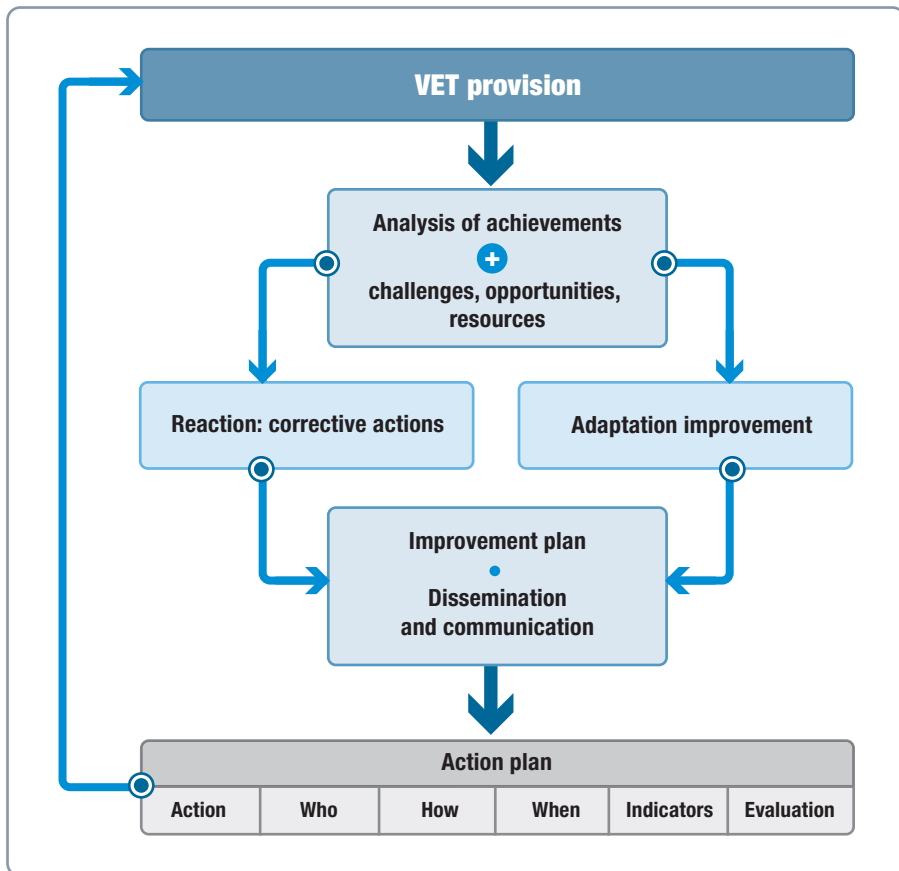
- (a) corrective actions, to overcome detected failures and deficits, as an immediate response to major complaints of students and other stakeholders;
- (b) adaptive actions to make structural improvements and adaptations of the VET institution and VET programmes, considering underperformance or new demands.

After approval by senior management of the VET organisation, the improvement plan should be disseminated widely and communicated to the broadest possible range of stakeholders, to demonstrate the organisation’s passion for quality.

An improvement plan should be reviewed twice a year and updated at least once a year as part of the annual quality cycle.

Internally, organisation of change needs an additional step: the improvement plan must be put into practice. Figure 10 gives an overview of how commonly identified and agreed needs for change are transformed into a detailed action plan.

Figure 10. Transforming improvement needs into an action plan



Source: Cedefop.

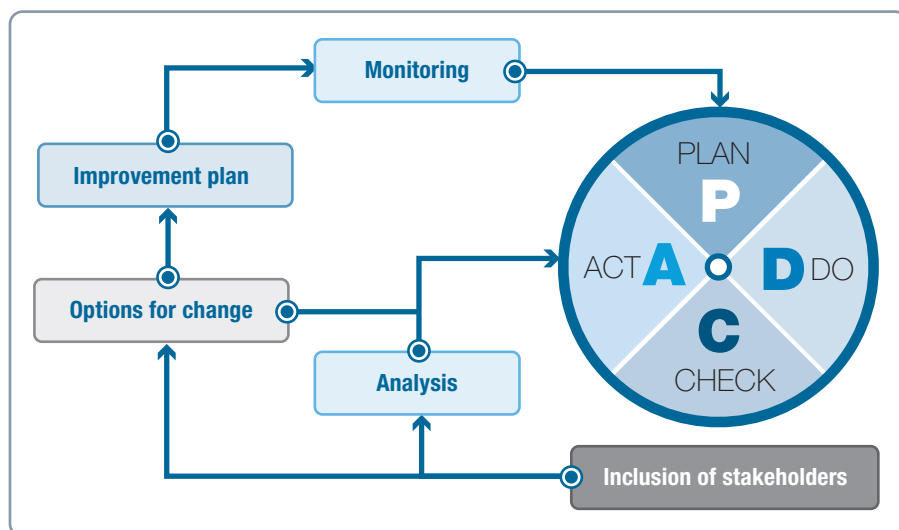
An action plan is meant to ensure that change really happens and that the envisaged improvement process is monitored and evaluated to check if the intended effects have been achieved. In detail an action plan should record:

- (a) kind of actions to be undertaken;
- (b) individuals responsible for implementation;
- (c) resources and tools needed to undertake the planned actions;
- (d) deadline by which the actions are completed;
- (e) indicators to measure if the intended effects are really achieved;
- (f) assessment and evaluation of envisaged progress.

Monitoring activities to put the action plan into practice, as well as measuring its effects, is the responsibility of the quality manager.

To sum up, Figure 11 provides an overview of the different steps to be undertaken to establish an improvement plan. Based on a sound analysis of various factors contributing to quality in VET, followed by a thorough discussion of different options for change with internal and external stakeholders, the improvement plan is adopted by senior management of the institution. It sets out corrective actions and structural adaptations and defines activities, resources, responsibilities, indicators for measuring achievements and deadlines. The quality manager will monitor implementation of the improvement plan.

Figure 11. **Organising change and improvement of quality**



Source: Cedefop.

3.4.4. Ready for change?

Now that the preconditions for management and the technical tools for change and improvement are in place, one might assume that the envisaged change is implemented as planned. Far from it, it still remains to ask if the people in your organisation are ready for change and motivated enough to put the improvement and action plans into practice.

There are still some issues that must be considered to achieve the envisaged change. The challenges and obstacles that may occur in pursuit of different quality objectives are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2. **Types of objective and improvement of quality**

Quality objectives	Challenges	Obstacles
Permanent objectives	Creation of sustainable, durable development	Deadlocked routines leading to decline of attractiveness
New objectives	Promoting innovation against established procedures	Resistance to change and path dependencies

Source: Cedefop.

Permanent or long-lasting quality objectives become tiresome and lose attractiveness in people’s minds. It is difficult to stay motivated over the years to achieve further improvements, which might themselves be blocked by deadlocked routines.

Implementing new innovative objectives is even harder: innovations go hand in hand with abolition of cherished traditions and ingrained customs. This frightens people and they will express their emotions in resistance to change and subtle conflicts. When implementing innovation, the organisation itself must adopt new patterns of action, departing from well-known roads and overcoming path dependencies.

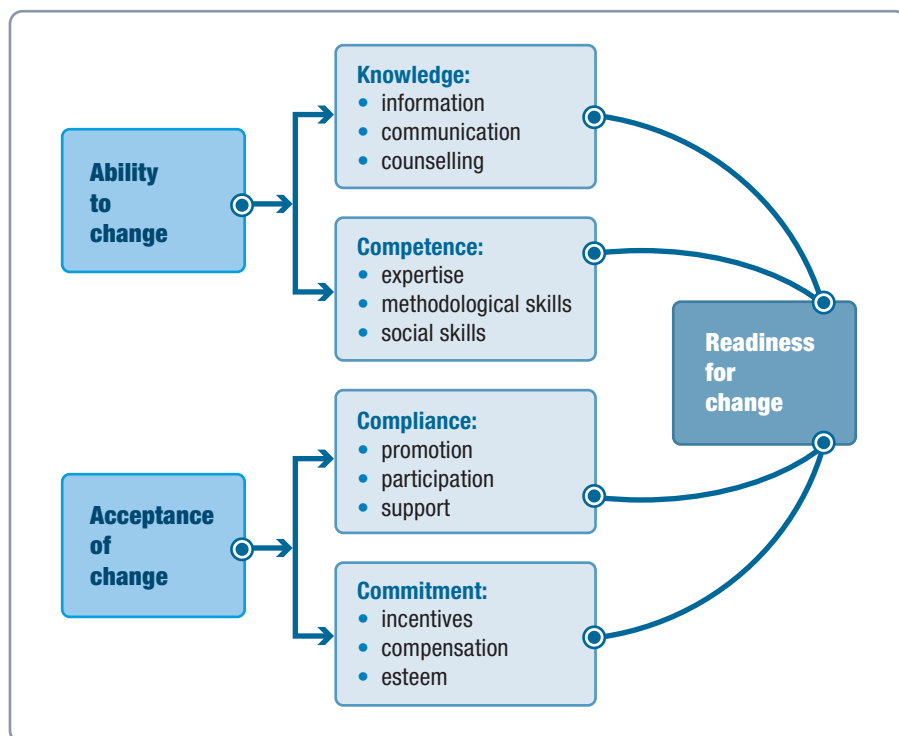
What can be done to ensure readiness for change within your organisation? Two main approaches are at hand: one approach is to improve ability of people in your organisation and the second is to increase their acceptance of change. For an overview, see Figure 12.

Communication with people, providing information on what is intended and what is expected, should help to increase their knowledge and ability to face new demands. Special attention should be paid to those who are acutely affected by the envisaged change and for some individual counselling might be appropriate.

Usually, change and improvement put new and different demands on people and therefore one should ensure that they have the necessary competences, skills and expertise at their command to cope with their new assignments and changing tasks.

Providing opportunities for participation in all stages of quality development is probably the best way to create acceptance of change and compliance towards upcoming new demands. It is a precondition for compliance with quality standards that people feel encouraged and supported not only in their extraordinary efforts for better quality but in their daily activities too.

Figure 12. **Ensuring readiness for change within your institution**



Source: Cedefop.

Finally, encouraging people's self-esteem and valuing them is another important key to creating readiness for change, as well as promoting commitment and motivation through incentives and compensation for extraordinary efforts towards better quality. Readiness for change is a necessary precondition for any organisation to move towards a culture of quality.

Box 26. Questions for reflection and options for further action

- (a) What are the three major or minor factors you consider to have the strongest impact on quality in your VET organisation?
- (b) Which factor is the priority according to you? Is your rating shared within your organisation?
- (c) Which tools do you apply within your organisation to get fresh ideas on improvements and find solutions to overcome failures?
- (d) Does your improvement approach contain more corrective or more adaptive actions?
- (e) Is your quality management ready to monitor implementation of your improvement plan?
- (f) What is the main challenge in your organisation for creating readiness for change among people?

3.5. Planning version 2.0: establishing a coherent development strategy

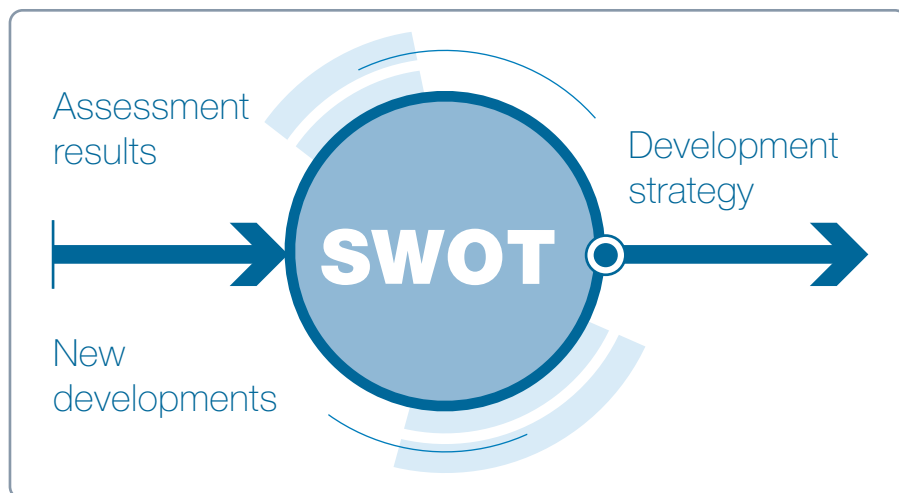
Having completed the whole PDCA cycle in the previous sections, you are now reentering the first stage of the cycle. While in the previous round planning was considered a detailed operational task, you will learn in Section 3.5.1 how to move to 'planning version 2.0', an advanced version of planning, and to establish a coherent development strategy for your VET institution encompassing continuous improvement of quality.

3.5.1. Detect your strengths and weaknesses – and your opportunities and threats

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis provides an overall framework for identifying strengths and weaknesses of a VET institution and opportunities and threats for its strategic development. It is a methodological tool for developing a coherent strategy for the whole institution based on valid assessment and reliable evaluation of both internal and external factors influencing your organisation. The tool can provide a condensed overview of an organisation's situation based on the more detailed analyses undertaken in the previous stages of the PDCA cycle.

While your former analyses have focused on your internal achievements, a SWOT analysis aims at combining internal assessment findings with results of an investigation on the external preconditions for further development of your VET institution. Inward-looking analysis of strengths and weaknesses aims to illuminate where failures must be corrected and which strengths could be further developed.

Figure 13. **Strategic significance of a SWOT analysis**



Source: Cedefop.

Analysis of external factors should identify opportunities and threats the organisation might face in the future. Thus, a SWOT analysis is an appropriate tool to transform results of internal assessments and analysis of future trends into a coherent development strategy for your institution, including a strategy for continuous improvement of quality.

Table 3. Components of a SWOT analysis

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal factors	Characteristics, capabilities and resources within your VET organisation which can be used to achieve your quality objectives	Internal shortcomings, limitations and disadvantages threatening achievement of your quality objectives
	Opportunities	Threats
External factors	Opportunities arising in your institution that might support achievement of your quality objectives	Environmental factors that in future could have an adverse effect on your quality improvement strategy

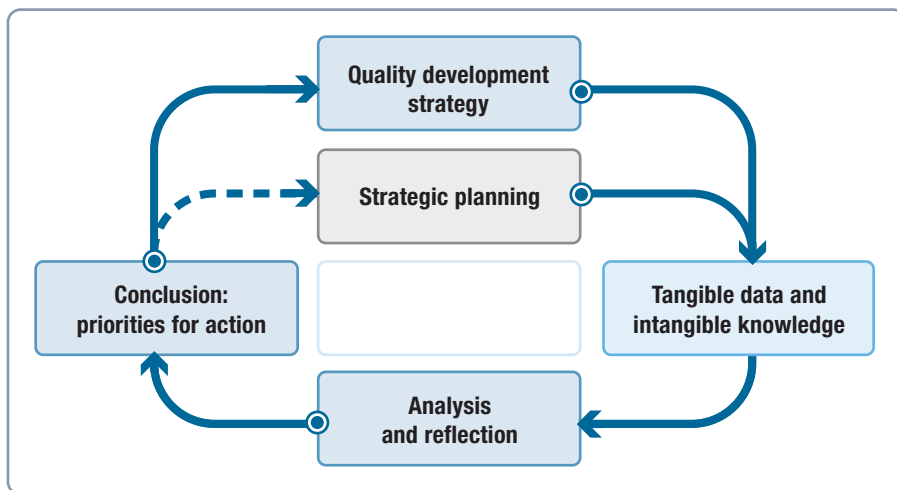
Source: Cedefop.

A SWOT analysis is a sober and open-ended investigation into the current and future situation of an institution, which includes analysis of empirical facts and data on persistent trends for VET in Europe and in your particular region. Relevant studies and research reports should be evaluated, but contacts with experts, research institutions and development agencies should be favoured as well. Once the major opportunities and threats are identified, their potential impact on the institution has to be evaluated. The crucial step is to link internal and external factors: a SWOT analysis aims to identify which development strategy will best enable an institution to take full advantage of the opportunities – with regard to its particular strengths and weaknesses.

Unique strengths are particularly well-suited key factors for further development, so focus your strategy on the strengths that distinguish your institution from others (see also Section 3.5.2 on benchmarking).

Like other quality-oriented activities, SWOT analysis and subsequent strategy building should be carried out in partnership with internal and external stakeholders. Applying this approach should allow you to integrate experiences from different economic and social segments of society in establishing your development strategy. Including a broad variety of experts and stakeholders from different backgrounds means organising this process as a multiphase circle, similar to the PDCA cycle, with individual stages considering tangible data as well as intangible knowledge of participants, shared analysis and reflection, drawing appropriate conclusions for further action and thus continuously shaping your development strategy (see Figure 14).

Figure 14. **Shaping a development strategy**



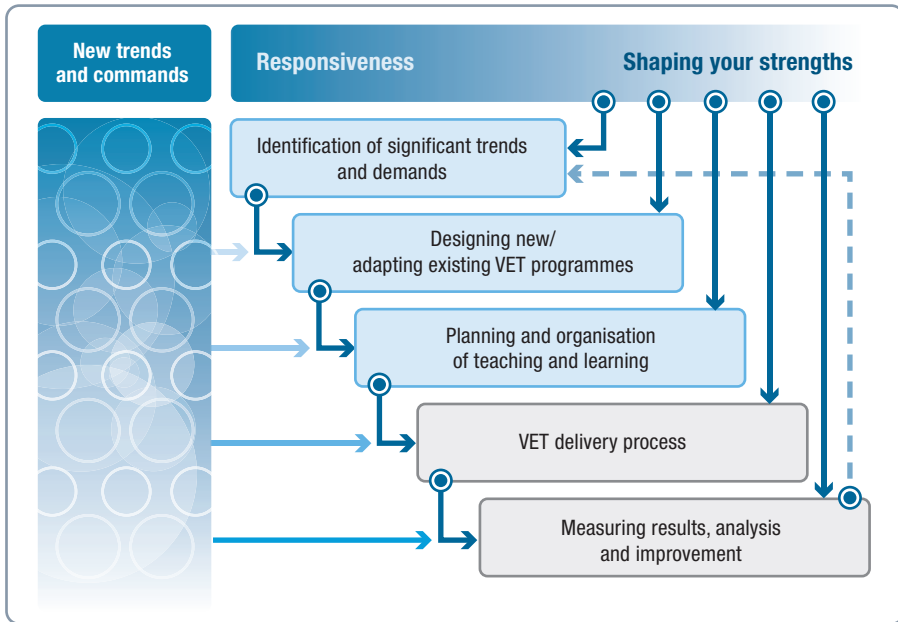
Source: Cedefop.

Ideally, each passage round the cycle should help to build a clearer picture of the empirical situation and future trends and thus optimise the development strategy. If planning is organised as a common learning process, it is not only quality of the strategy that will benefit. Through common exchange of experience and joint production of new insights cooperative relationships of the actors will also intensify and a climate of common trust will emerge.

Owing to growing requirements for innovation in VET, quality development is not making linear progress but is rather a multidimensional task. VET institutions have to adapt continuously to increasingly rapid changes in the business world and to constantly altering demand for new skills and competences in labour markets. Thus, strategic quality development means reiterating the cycle again and again, being ready to learn, adapt and innovate.

Identifying new external trends and demand in labour markets and ensuring appropriate response from your organisation is a continuous challenge. But not every new direction will suit your organisation and match your particular strengths. You should first thoroughly analyse external developments' significance for your organisation's strategy and then undertake a series of adaptation and change activities to bring your strategic insights down to earth – into your particular profile and into delivery of the VET programmes you offer (see Figure 15).

Figure 15. **Adapting your strategy**



Source: Cedefop

- (a) New VET programmes might need to be designed and existing ones might need to be adapted and changed as regards both content and methods of delivery.
- (b) Planning teaching and learning processes will follow – new staff, equipment and learning material might be needed.
- (c) Delivery of adapted and new programmes must be organised.
- (d) Monitoring and measuring results, analysis and further improvement must be ensured.

3.5.2. Benchmarking

In the business world, benchmarking has been used for quite some time and is taking on increasing importance. Benchmarking is a process in which products, services and practices are measured and compared against the strongest competitor, considered to be the best-performing leading organisation in the relevant area. In business, continual search for strengths and weaknesses and exploitation of untapped potential are seen as key success factors for achieving quality and sustainable competitiveness.

Benchmarking helps to look consistently and purposefully for new ideas, effective methods, procedures and processes outside your own institution, to push for internal improvement and innovation. Thus, benchmarking focuses on development of your own organisation.

Box 27. Questions for reflection and options for further action

- (a) Has your institution established a long-term development strategy encompassing continuous improvement of quality?
- (b) How would you analyse future trends and resulting opportunities for your organisation?
- (c) What would you consider the unique strengths of your organisation?
- (d) Do you know a suitable competitor against which you could benchmark your VET institution?

Cross-cutting internal elements affecting quality in VET

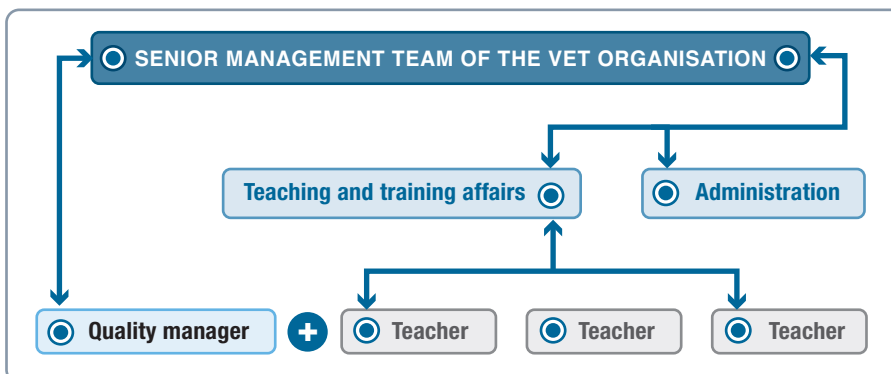
In this chapter you will learn how cross-cutting elements originating from inside an organisation and the environment affect quality in provision of VET and you will learn how you can influence these factors to assure and improve quality in your organisation.

4.1. An organisational structure for quality management

The first and foremost challenge is to anchor quality management in the organisational structure of a VET institution. There is no ‘one size fits all’ solution, since organisation of quality management must match the size and overall structure of a VET provider. Traditions, personal qualifications and interests have also to be considered.

Therefore the overviews in Figures 16 and 17 can only serve as examples describing some points of general importance.

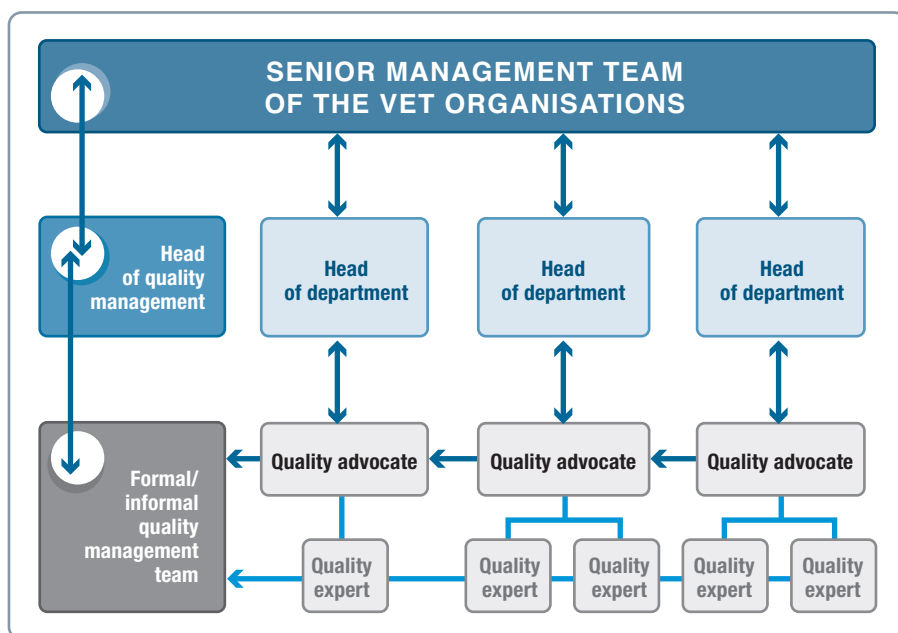
Figure 16. **Example of a structure for internal quality management in a small VET organisation**



Source: Cedefop.

For a small VET organisation it is advisable to attribute quality management tasks (as described in Chapter 2) to a teacher or trainer as a part-time activity carried out in combination with normal teaching or training activities. The person appointed should be responsible for operational implementation and monitoring of quality management activities and report directly to the senior management team.

Figure 17. **Example of a structure for internal quality management in a large VET organisation**



Source: Cedefop.

In any case, a quality manager’s formal position – or a quality department in large organisations – must be established under direct responsibility of senior management of the institution and must work in close cooperation with this level. In most VET institutions, heads of departments are part of the senior management team, at least regarding decision-making on quality issues, since they are responsible for putting most quality-related activities into daily practice. It is highly desirable for heads of department to be supported by official quality advocates; normally this is an additional task for a teacher, trainer or other employee in the department who has other major tasks.

Quality advocates are the most important partners for the quality manager, for implementation of quality activities at department level. Together they build the formal quality management team. Informally this team can be supplemented by quality enthusiasts personally engaged in quality issues and others who are experts in quality-related issues and are therefore entrusted with tasks closely linked to quality management such as internal data collection and data processing.

Box 28. Activities of a quality management team – an example from a large VET provider

In this example, the quality management team of the VET institution consists of seven people with special functions and expertise, the formal members being the quality manager and two quality advocates and the informal members being the administrator responsible for scheduling teaching hours, the union representative, an external educational counsellor, and the institution's information technology (IT) expert. The team is coordinated by the quality manager and meets at least twice a year – if needed up to four times – to discuss and operationalise the national, regional and school-specific quality goals and evaluate the latest achievements in quality. These evaluations are based on objective data collected, but for their analysis and interpretation the qualitative feedback the team members gain from their (informal) networks within the school is taken into consideration as well.

Building on work of the quality management team, the quality manager prepares decisions for senior management and drafts the official quality reports (for external accountability and accreditation).

The example also provides information on formal recognition of work of the quality management team. In total, the school has a 'time budget' of one teaching hour per pupil per year for tasks related to quality management. For the quality manager this leads to a corresponding reduction in his weekly teaching load; depending on distribution of tasks some of these hours can be given to other (formal) members of the quality team. Additionally, formal and informal quality management team members may become eligible for career development – including pay rises – in recognition of their engagement.

To conclude, internal quality management needs to be organised formally, but it can function with a limited number of formal positions and specific human resources, on condition that the experience and personal engagement of employees is used. An overall quality management function will be necessary, but many tasks connected with quality issues, such as administration, data collection and analysis, might be undertaken by teachers, trainers and other employees with intermediate management responsibilities.

4.2. Balancing leadership and participation

Distinct leadership is an indispensable precondition for successful operation of an internal QMS but, as already underlined, even the best system will not work without commitment of members of the organisation. The decisive point therefore is to find the right balance between leadership and participation. Successful quality management needs counter-flow processes – a combination of top-down and bottom-up initiatives.

The most appropriate and promising approach seems to be management by objectives (MBO) – setting strategic objectives by senior management after consultation with the main stakeholders, and joint agreement on concrete objectives in conformity with the overall strategy for each organisational unit and staff members. Daily activities are self-guided, but performance measurements will check whether staff members and units have achieved the agreed objectives. The MBO concept strengthens decentralised responsibilities, an important precondition for staff to be able to identify with the institution and commit themselves to quality.

Commitment of the senior management team (especially the chief executive or head teacher) to quality, and their active participation (as role models) in quality-related activities, is a key factor for balancing leadership and participation, as the following examples show:

- (a) one member of the senior management team is put in charge of quality management and the quality manager reports directly to this person;
- (b) senior management appoints the quality manager and quality officers and invites staff members to participate in the quality team;
- (c) senior management provides both human and financial resources for quality management activities;
- (d) the senior management team supports efforts to improve quality and acts as role models of effective agents of change.

Active involvement of employees, in addition to their leaders, ensures that

quality management activities, changes – corrective and improvement actions – will be carried out at each level of the organisational hierarchy, boosting the staff’s commitment to the institution and its continuous development towards better quality. It is senior management’s task to create appropriate conditions for active participation of employees, which include:

- (a) promoting shared values, defining clear responsibilities and raising awareness of quality objectives and targets;
- (b) involving employees in setting objectives and targets for better quality;
- (c) continuous and credible information and communication activities (see Section 4.3);
- (d) creating an atmosphere of open and honest dialogue and trust (see Box 30).

Employees do not always automatically grant their active participation and may need motivation and stimulation. Empowerment is an effective tool, which means delegating certain responsibilities and authority to employees, enabling them to enjoy autonomy, determine themselves how to do their jobs, and make their own decisions in specific work-related situations. Empowerment counterbalances leadership and helps employees to take ownership of their tasks. The main operations for empowering employees may be the following:

- (a) a decentralised governance structure;
- (b) definition of clear process-related responsibilities (see Section 4.4);
- (c) a clearly-defined voice for employees in decision-making processes;
- (d) an internal reward and recognition system for deserving employees (see Box 29).

Box 29. An internal reward and recognition system

An internal reward and recognition system to acknowledge achievement of quality objectives can motivate employees to strengthen their engagement in quality-oriented activities. Recognition comes best when it follows immediately after creditable action the employee has performed. Good performers should be recognised as such in person in front of staff and senior management. Information on recognition should be disseminated widely using different communication media.

4.3. Information and communication

Knowledge is considered the most valuable resource an organisation has, and one that can enable its further development and give it competitive advantage. To provide, share and produce knowledge effectively, it is vital for any VET provider organisation to arrange smooth flow of information and provide ample opportunities for communication. However, information should be targeted at the right people and any information overflow avoided as counterproductive.

Good information and communication management is also crucial for operation of a QMS, as it helps to establish transparency of processes and responsibilities, spread information on occasions for active participation in quality and communicate results of quality assessments. Continuous communication with staff, teachers, trainers and students is an important precondition for creating commitment to quality. To give an example, feeding back results of quality measurements to those who participated in assessments and evaluations is an indispensable task of managing quality. Providing information on main results of a students' satisfaction survey – together with improvement actions launched in its wake – will improve perceived quality of a VET institution, and, as a by-product, increase motivation to participate in future surveys.

A VET organisation can use a broad range of media for meaningful management of information and communication, and it is an important task for quality management to choose the right medium depending on the case, purpose and confidentiality of communication:

- (a) meetings are indispensable communication opportunities for discussing quality issues (activities, results, improvements) in an open atmosphere by actively including relevant stakeholders;
- (b) an intranet is a perfect documentation system for rules, procedures, records and assessment data, where an individualised access system can allow flexible accessibility to confidential information;
- (c) a website is the appropriate medium for positive marketing of a VET institution, communicating its quality objectives and achievements, and for rapidly disseminating all up-to-date information;
- (d) newsletters might be used to inform people of latest developments and achievements introduce new personnel and promote new projects and plans;
- (e) social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Xing are increasingly replacing (printed) newsletters as they fulfil the same role, but are more frequently updated and appreciated by VET students;

- (f) notice boards are useful media through which to share core information with specific audiences (students, teachers);
- (g) television screens, installed at central meeting points inside a VET institution, are helpful to communicate the latest news stories.

Box 30. Meetings to address quality issues

Discussion of quality issues at meetings of staff, students and external stakeholders is extremely important, but meetings should be organised as efficiently as possible, with their duration reduced to a bare minimum and participation limited to those directly concerned in view of their interests and expertise.

To create a quality culture in a VET organisation, management’s commitment to quality and its continuous improvement should be part of the basic message in each communication with internal and external stakeholders.

4.4. Process management

Smooth management of processes is crucial for quality-oriented VET institutions. Processes are defined as sets of interrelated or interacting activities repeated in time to deliver a service for students and other stakeholders of a VET provider by transforming input into output. Essentially, process management means that all activities performed regularly in an institution are implemented in a previously discussed, planned and controlled way, results are measured and evaluated and processes can be improved.

Design of a process management system starts with identification and definition of a VET provider’s core processes, critical to attainment of the organisation’s objectives and satisfaction of its customers (for example, see Figure 3 in Chapter 3). Next, interconnections and interactions between these processes should be mapped, to determine process boundaries and create a transparent and organised system of processes, resulting finally in elaboration of a process map for the whole VET institution (see annex, Section 1.33). The next step includes definition of individual process ownerships and determination of roles and responsibilities in maintaining and improving the relevant processes. Finally, establishment of a process management system

includes designation of evaluation procedures for each process, comprising definition of performance criteria and indicators as well as appropriate instruments for measurement.

Box 31. Typology of processes in VET institutions

Core processes comprise a VET provider organisation's main activities, from recruitment and enrolment of students to organisation of teaching and learning, and from assessment of performance and support for graduates to management of partnerships with external training sites.

Support processes are carried out to support the core processes and include, for example, recruitment of appropriate teachers and trainers, their further training, IT facilities and media support for teaching and learning.

Management processes are those that govern a VET provider organisation, and in relation to quality management they include strategic planning, resource allocation, setting objectives and targets, and distribution of roles and responsibilities.

It is important for quality of a VET organisation to review periodically its process map and introduce changes in both existing and new processes.

Box 32. Managing the core processes

Managing the core processes is crucial for creating a quality culture in VET providers. For this reason, institutions should focus on definition, management and improvement of their core processes – while support and management processes should play a role of strengthening the core processes.

Elaborated process descriptions ensure a standardised approach to activities performed in a VET institution as they allow control over who is doing what, why, when, where and how.

An elaborated process description should contain the following elements:

- (a) name, purpose and objective of the process;
- (b) name and position of the process owner;
- (c) scope of the process: activities and operations covered;

- (d) steps of the process: starting point, set of sequential steps, results;
- (e) tasks to be performed at each step;
- (f) persons responsible for execution of tasks in each step;
- (g) indicators and instruments for measuring the process performance.

Far more than textual descriptions, graphical visualisations (such as flowcharts) help people to understand the processes, thus supporting operational performance of the organisation. Staff should be trained in how to define processes and write descriptions and understand and use existing process descriptions.

4.5. Managing documentation

Establishing internal quality management includes appropriate documentation, storage and protection of all documents that guide operations in a VET institution. In addition, an effective documentation system ensures that only authorised persons have access to valid documents and data sheets, and that only current versions are used. Obsolete documents must be removed to prevent incorrect usage, and therefore procedures for issuing, amending and withdrawing documents must be defined as part of the process management. Similarly, rules for data collection and data storage must be elaborated and observed. Previous data play an important role in evaluation of quality developments and for this reason it is essential to develop a sound data handling and storage system that is reliable, valid and eases data retrieval. All data and documents must be accessible to authorised persons, but protected from unauthorised access as well as damage, for example, fireproof storage should be considered.

In summary, the documentation system should ensure:

- (a) all relevant documents on processes, procedures, rules and responsibilities are accessible in current versions by authorised persons only;
- (b) valid and reliable data from previous quality assessments are retrievable to allow longitudinal comparisons of results;
- (c) current tools and instruments for data collection (such as questionnaires) on quality issues are accessible.

VET institutions work with many personal data, protection of which is legally obligatory. Therefore internal rules for personal data protection must be established and access to these data must be clearly defined and strictly limited. In all cases, the data protection system must fully meet requirements of relevant national legislation.

Box 33. Questions for reflection and options for further action

- (a) What would an appropriate structure for quality management look like in your institution?
- (b) Whom would you appoint as responsible quality manager, a supporting quality advocate and whom would you invite to become an informal member of the quality management team?
- (c) Have you considered establishing an internal recognition and reward system?
- (d) What are the most important media for communication in your organisation?
- (e) Which media are neglected/overemphasised so far?
- (f) Have you considered establishing a process management system?
- (g) Does your internal documentation system meet the requirements set out above?

External elements affecting quality

In this chapter you will learn how different external stakeholders can contribute to quality of your VET institution and how you can develop cooperation, networking and common evaluation to support your efforts for better quality.

5.1. Cooperation with external stakeholders

For many VET providers, cooperation with external stakeholders and in particular the world of work is part of their daily activities, with varying benefits for quality stemming from different stakeholders:

- (a) employers are partners in provision of practical training and an important source of information on workplace-related training needs and adequate responsiveness of training provision;
- (b) social partners, chambers and sectoral or professional associations may provide information on the latest trends in the labour market, changing skills needs and concomitant needs for adaptation of curricula;
- (c) employment services can support integration of graduates into the labour market and report on employability trends;
- (d) cooperation with other providers of education and training opens pathways to further education for students and graduates of VET organisations and promotes in the long run permeability between educational subsystems;
- (e) graduates may provide valuable feedback on usefulness of competences students acquire and help make contacts in the world of work and the local community. Durable contacts can be made through alumni associations or regular invitations to social events organised by VET institutions;
- (f) contacts with local or regional decision-makers and civil society aim to anchor the institution in its environment, promote its visibility and reputation and improve attractiveness of VET;
- (g) cooperation with accreditation bodies must be sought for external recognition of VET institutions.

Box 34. Proposals of the EQAVET recommendation

The EQAVET recommendation emphasises involving external stakeholders and ‘improving the interrelationship between education, training and employment’:

- (a) maintaining and increasing responsiveness of VET to labour market needs is the main purpose of fostering external cooperation;
- (b) improving the transition from VET to continuing education and training, in particular to higher education;
- (c) easing and improving access to VET.

5.2. Quality in cooperation with the world of work

While cooperation with employers is a valuable asset for quality of VET provision in general, it becomes a ‘must’ for institutions that include practical training in companies. As in several VET programmes at least some part of training is work-based, quality of this part becomes an inherent and decisive issue for internal quality management.

As the following step-by-step approach for establishing quality in work-based training will show, quality and quality improvement can be built in when cooperation between a VET institution and the world of work is developed.

Establishing quality in work-based learning ^(e)

Step 1, making contacts, aims to generate willingness to cooperate and recruit enterprises to provide appropriate work-based learning opportunities. This is usually a long-term endeavour that calls for continuity, networking and establishment of dependable partnerships. VET institutions’ most important starting activities are:

- (a) invitations to employers and company representatives to events, presentations of students’ work to the public, visits to companies, joint projects with companies;
- (b) engagement with chambers and employers’ associations, preparing the ground for mutually-beneficial collaboration;
- (c) invitations to external stakeholders to participate in feedback surveys and interviews.

^(e) See annex, Sections 1.21, 1.35, 1.36.

Step 2, planning work-based learning activities, is mainly under responsibility of the VET institution and must consider legal requirements as well as pedagogical aims:

- (a) contractual arrangements setting out rights and obligations of trainees and employers should be clear before the work-based training period starts;
- (b) adequacy of training opportunities in enterprises must be ascertained: content of work-based training needs to fit in with the curriculum of the VET programme, and the work-based learning environment should allow acquisition of hard and soft skills;
- (c) individual learning plans should be drawn up detailing the competences to be acquired by trainees during the work-based training period.

Step 3 includes tutoring students and monitoring work-based learning through collaboration between the VET institution and in-company trainers, in:

- (a) documenting the work-based training process by means of training protocols of in-company tutors and training diaries of trainees;
- (b) self-evaluation by trainees and in-company tutors which helps to steer the learning process and detect areas for improvement;
- (c) on-site visits of the VET institution's teachers and trainers to help with supervision of trainees' performance and provide opportunities for first-hand feedback;
- (d) ongoing exchange between the VET institution's teachers and trainers and in-company tutors to ensure a favourable work-based learning process.


Step 4, encompassing review and evaluation of work-based learning activities, provides information for further improvement:

- (a) feedback from trainees and in-company trainers on quality and results of the work-based training can be gathered through surveys and interviews;
- (b) evaluation of the work-based learning period should include an objective assessment of the learning outcomes achieved;
- (c) additionally, evaluation should build on observations and feedback collected during site visits of the VET institution's teachers and trainers.

Step 5 refers to improvement and change of work-based learning activities and is based on evaluation results, agreement on a common quality approach and application of shared quality indicators:

- (a) evaluation results should be discussed by responsible teachers and trainers in the VET institution; and also

Table 4. **Typology of stakeholder involvement**

	Type of activities	Tools applied	Quality goals
WEAK  Degree of involvement STRONG	Socialising with external stakeholders to increase participation in common activities	Public relations and information activities to stakeholders	Strategy to improve cooperation with stakeholders
	Participation of stakeholders in feedback surveys or interviews	Questionnaires, interview guidelines	Response of stakeholders to quality issues
	Participation of stakeholders in workshops: (a) selective meetings; (b) thematic workshops; (c) continuous cooperation	Invitation, agenda setting, inputs from VET provider, collecting feedback, focus groups	Contribution of stakeholders to quality improvement
	Cooperation in training provision		
	Shared implementation of training in cooperation with external stakeholders	Formalised cooperation agreement	Strengthening work-based training
	Shared monitoring and tutoring of work-based training	Training protocols and diaries, site visits, feedback	Assuring quality of work-based learning
	Application of shared quality indicators in common provision of VET	Agreement on indicators, common quality approach	Improvement of common VET provision

Source: Cedefop.

- (b) with in-company trainers to draw lessons for the future;
- (c) organising reflective workshops or focus groups encompassing all stakeholders may entail improvements of quality, for example better preparation of students, reinforced coordination of work-based and school-based training, adaptation of curricula for VET programmes; leading to
- (d) the final result of applying shared quality indicators and agreeing on a common quality approach.

Table 4, which presents a typology of stakeholder involvement, provides an overview of activities that can be undertaken to increase continuously involvement of external stakeholders. The rows at the top of the table apply to all stakeholders, employers, local authorities and graduates, while those at the bottom refer in particular to cooperation with employers for jointly providing work-based learning. Taking an example of implementing work-based learning, Table 4 contains not only the activities, but also the quality goals to guide cooperation activities, as well as several tools supporting attainment of these quality goals.

5.3. Cooperation and networking with other educational institutions

Cooperation and networking with other education and training institutions has become a quality objective for many VET providers. The purpose is manifold – common information, making the institution and its vocational programmes known, exchange of experience, networking and comparison with other institutions – all these activities with various effects on quality.

Most VET institutions pay special attention to cooperation with secondary/upper secondary schools whose graduates are considered potential students. Apart from traditional activities such as open days, some VET providers apply active recruitment strategies by organising information days at local secondary/upper secondary schools, where VET programmes on offer are presented to parents and prospective students. Institutional cooperation schemes with schools aim to prepare pupils for vocational programmes and support their smooth transition to VET.

Cooperation with other VET institutions can provide additional learning opportunities through participating in provider networks. Such networking with other VET providers may range from an informal exchange of experiences supporting common learning to cooperation in development and joint delivery of training programmes and targeted activities for benchmarking results.

Because of competition in the training market, exchange and cooperation between VET institutions will often be limited, despite the above-mentioned common activities. As interviewed VET providers have stressed, the harder VET institutions compete in the open market, the more limited their willingness is to exchange good practices in quality management. No institution wants to lose its competitive advantage.

Where cooperation takes place, the benefits for quality lie in identification and transfer of good practices to one's own institution and in receiving external feedback. Several VET providers cooperate with one another to pilot schemes, renovate and modernise training programmes or promote use of e-learning, thus gaining added value for their programmes and improving quality standards of their services. A few VET providers participate in innovation projects with research institutes to develop new quality marks and safety norms.

Some institutions, especially those with a lifelong learning approach, have a clear focus on cooperation with higher education establishments. Analysis of VET institutions, especially those related to specific sectors, revealed interesting examples of cooperation between them and universities to develop jointly new programmes closer to professional career needs of their VET graduates than traditional higher education programmes. This improves quality standards of their services and represents an important added value for them.

Box 35. Results of cooperation with other educational institutions

- (a) Ensuring a competitive edge, high visibility and improved attractiveness of a VET institution for prospective students, parents and companies.
- (b) Development of new training programmes and modernisation of existing programmes through networking with other educational institutions.
- (c) Acquiring new insights from joint delivery of training programmes and obtaining targeted benchmarking of results.
- (d) Adding value to an institution's own programmes and improving its own quality standards.
- (e) Opening up new professional career pathways for graduates.

5.4. Transnational cooperation and peer review

Transnational cooperation through participation in conferences, study visits, joint projects or mobility of teachers and students provides opportunities for learning and thus for improving quality. The activities conducted may reinforce one another and create synergy: a study visit might turn into sustained cooperation and joint projects, participation at a conference may lead to common visits and exchange of students, teachers and trainers. Transnational cooperation provides staff and students with additional opportunities to develop language skills and intercultural competences.

While transnational cooperation's impact on quality is rather diffuse and difficult to measure, peer reviews focus directly on quality. A peer review is a voluntary, improvement-oriented and external evaluation of a VET provider by its peers, colleagues from other VET providers on an equal standing with those whose performance is reviewed. Usually, peers work in teams of four that must comprise all competences and expertise necessary, namely experience in education and training (active teachers/trainers must be part of the team), expertise in the quality areas under scrutiny and some competences in quality management and evaluation. Peers are also called 'critical friends'. The peer review becomes 'transnational' if at least one member of the peer team comes from a foreign country.

Peer review does not propose a 'new' system, but builds on quality management already in place, by applying a step-by-step procedure: it starts with a self-evaluation by the VET provider, it includes a site visit by peers, and results of the review are laid down in an evaluation report.

In distinction to control-oriented external evaluation schemes, peer reviews are voluntary procedures with a purely formative function, building on professionalism of VET practitioners and supporting networking between VET institutions. Traditionally used for external quality assurance in higher education, peer review has been transferred to VET lately. Among various approaches, it is worth mentioning the Leonardo da Vinci projects carried out between 2004 and 2009 (ÖIBF, 2009a; 2009b; 2009c), to support VET providers in improving quality of their services with a clear reference to the EQAVET framework.

Peer reviews are targeted at institutions seeking alternative forms of external evaluation or wanting to complement traditional accreditation/certification with a 'friendly, yet critical' approach tailored to their needs and paying special attention to teaching and learning. Both sides – the reviewed institution and the peers – will benefit from a peer review. If conducted in a

quality-assured way, following the European peer review manual, peer review procedures gain added credibility and recognition from external stakeholders.

Box 36. **Toolbox for implementing a peer review**

The European peer review manual for IVET describes a standard European procedure for use of peer reviews in IVET and CVET. The manual offers directly implementable guidelines for VET providers who want to introduce peer review into their quality assessment and development procedures. It is currently available in 15 European languages.

The manual is complemented by a practical toolbox that includes a set of quality areas with quality criteria and indicators as well as various forms and checklists designed to guide and support peers and VET providers during the peer review.

A peer training programme helps to prepare peers for their task. It was developed based on a detailed competence profile for peers.

All tools are available from www.peer-review-education.net [accessed 26.5.2014].

5.5. Accreditation/external recognition

Most European countries have a system for external recognition of VET providers and/or VET programmes, which is carried out by ministries, semi-public agencies or recognised private organisations mandated to this effect ^(?). In addition to these national accreditation schemes, most Member States recognise accreditations/certifications following the most common models such as the international organisation for standardisation (ISO) or the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) as equivalent to their national ones (for an overview of the models see Box 37).

In many countries, accreditation is a requirement for VET institutions, especially those aiming at receiving public funding. Apart from this potential benefit, external accreditation improves institutions' reputations and contributes to increasing their attractiveness.

(?) For a detailed overview see Cedefop, 2011a.

Accreditation can also serve as an external verification of internal quality efforts of a VET institution, since it always involves experts from outside. Ideally, both internal and external verification efforts should complement and cross-fertilise each other. To avoid duplication of efforts and squandering—usually – scarce resources, accreditation and internal quality management should be tightly linked and connected:

- (a) ensuring compatibility of internal quality management with external requirements of national or sectoral accreditation systems should be a task from the start;
- (b) resources and support provided by external agencies for implementing accreditation should be used strategically to improve internal QMS.

Box 37. **Models for internal quality management and external recognition**

While EN ISO 9000 explains the principles and definitions behind QMSs, EN ISO 9001 outlines the minimum requirements for a quality system within an organisation that wants to provide products and services meeting customer expectations and regulatory requirements. ISO 9000ff considers organisational processes and compares plans to actual achievements. In case of deviations, improvements and change will be implemented. According to the PDCA cycle, the organisation is subject to a continuous process of improvement.

The EFQM model is a quality assurance system providing guidance for establishment and development of an internal QMS. Self-assessments serve to determine strengths and areas for improvement within the organisation, thus supporting continuous development. To achieve sustainable results, all employees should be involved in the self-assessment and improvement process. In addition, permanent monitoring of all processes should help to identify an organisation's strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement and to align its quality strategy.

The common assessment framework (CAF) is a result of cooperation among EU ministers responsible for public administration and aims to assist public-sector organisations to use quality management techniques to improve their performance. The CAF is inspired by the total quality model in general and by the excellence model of the EFQM in particular. The model is based on the





premise that quality for citizens/customers and society is achieved through leadership, strategic planning, partnerships and process management.

Investors in people is an internal quality system and a model for external recognition of organisations. Similar to the EFQM model, it aims at continuous internal improvement, displayed externally by award of its eponymous quality label. In contrast to EFQM, staff management and development are at the centre of all quality-oriented activities and they are not just one factor among others. Focus on leadership and staff development will result in quality improvement.

The learner-oriented quality model, which originates in continuous training of adults, focuses on the learner. It is a model for internal quality management and external recognition, following which development of quality starts with definition of a vision and mission and identification of good practice. In its self-assessment report, which is the basis for its external recognition, a VET organisation has to outline how learning and the learning process are promoted.

Accreditation and external recognition serve mainly to ensure conformity of VET provision with minimum standards, and this limited understanding of quality should be taken into account when linking accreditation efforts to internal quality management. VET providers that have successfully renewed their accreditation over time or have been regularly ‘inspected’ by national/regional authorities will confirm that external requirements reflect the necessary preconditions for quality – but they are not sufficient to trigger and support continuous improvement. In most cases goals of quality-committed VET institutions go beyond external requirements of accreditation schemes. In this perspective, achieving external accreditation is a point of departure to keep track of an institution’s own vision and goals for better quality.

5.6. Added value of sectoral quality frameworks

In addition to national accreditation schemes and widely-acknowledged models for external recognition, more sectoral approaches to internal quality management and external accreditation/recognition have been developed in recent years. Conducted by professional associations of providers,

requirements and procedures imposed by these frameworks usually address particular issues of quality and thus go beyond official systems, providing added value to VET organisations applying them.

It is necessary to distinguish between sectoral quality frameworks geared solely to internal quality and those accompanied by external recognition of the VET institution, in which case a positive result leads to a sectoral quality label.

The first group of sectoral quality frameworks includes quality standards applied by VET providers as a result of their close collaboration with businesses. For example, companies in the automotive and IT industries have to meet high-quality and/or safety standards.

VET organisations that voluntarily adopt these complementary quality standards always keep the technology, equipment and materials used in their training and education programmes up to date. Application of these quality standards is a constant source of innovation for training/education and corresponding job profiles. Students will often have an opportunity to acquire complementary certificates, while VET providers may improve their reputations.

To enjoy these benefits, VET organisations should make some additional efforts: compliance with high-quality standards should be continuously assessed by internal and external auditors and audits should be performed more frequently than national accreditation schemes, sometimes as much as twice a year.

Adoption of high-quality industrial standards has even more positive effects on quality of VET provision:

- (a) companies involved participate more actively in development of future VET strategies, design of new training profiles and adaptation of training programmes to new technologies;
- (b) VET teachers and trainers in companies usually maintain quite close relationships and companies are strongly interested in further training of VET teachers to adapt their knowledge to new technical developments;
- (c) occasionally, companies send their staff as lecturers to VET institutions and often provide them with multimedia equipment and technology for modern laboratories;
- (d) companies are eager to provide VET students with places for work-based learning, thus increasing their employability.

Introduction in VET institutions of high-quality industry standards impacts particularly on their core processes of teaching and learning and results in corresponding quality improvements. Introduction of sectoral frameworks associated with external recognition of a VET institution and a quality label

have a greater impact on the entire organisation and affect both the quality concept and basic values of service provision, including in the teaching and learning process.

Box 38. Examples of sectoral quality frameworks

The European quality framework in social services (Equass) dates back to an initiative of the European platform for rehabilitation. Equass provides a range of services for approval and certification of quality of social service providers, in accordance with European requirements for quality in provision of social services. The Equass quality framework and corresponding certification of providers is complementary to national quality frameworks and is overseen by an independent international awarding committee that includes representatives from key European stakeholders in social service provision.

Eco-citizenship is a European quality award for educational institutions engaged in finding solutions for environmental and sustainable development resulting in tangible environmental benefits. Being an eco-citizen organisation means offering specific training programmes to support sustainable development, such as training in eco-construction, renewable energy or waste management and integrating eco-citizenship principles all over an organisation and its training programmes. Institutions meriting the award have to ensure that their students get a chance to participate in decision-making, and develop skills for, and a sense of value of, active citizenship. They build community links with local authorities, business organisations and students' families.

The total e-quality award is an annual award for organisations practising exemplary equal opportunities in their organisational policies. The award certifies sustainable commitment to equal opportunities in staff education and employment. Successful certification can be achieved by means of questionnaires on self-assessment, in which an institution has to demonstrate its continuous efforts and achievements in relation to equal opportunities in staff recruitment, development, career planning and provision of work-life balance measures for its employees, as well as in implementation of quality assurance instruments for organisational and quality culture development.

Sectoral quality frameworks, which promote fundamental values such as respect for dignity of the individual and consequent individualisation of services provided, testify to their importance and holistic approach. The Equass quality framework for social services serves as an eloquent example since it:

- (a) promotes rights of customers/students, with reference to the United Nations Convention on Human Rights, and by providing guidelines to support autonomy and self-determination of students;
- (b) refers to ethical values and behaviour by providing guidelines against sexual and financial abuse and guidelines for health and security of students;
- (c) strongly supports partnerships with and participation of students by providing instruments for their empowerment.

These are important additional values and quality objectives that could be endorsed by any VET organisation, which is not the case in national or sectoral quality frameworks. However, it should be kept in mind that adoption of additional sectoral quality frameworks implies that the range of tasks related to internal quality management will inevitably be extended (see Figure 18).

Figure 18. **Impacts on internal quality management**



Source: Cedefop.

Under certain conditions, quality management established in a VET institution not only needs to correspond to requirements of national accreditation schemes, but also to take into account high-quality industrial standards and integrate overarching values and concepts of sectoral quality frameworks. This constitutes an important challenge all the easier to implement insofar as it is not seen as compulsory, but rather as a resource to improve continuously quality of the organisation and its quality culture.

Box 39. Questions for reflection and options for further action

- (a) Who are the most important external stakeholders of your VET institution?
- (b) How are they involved in your activities to improve quality?
- (c) How could you increase their involvement? Which activities could you perform and which tools could you apply to improve quality?
- (d) What are your particular priorities for networking and cooperating with different external stakeholders of your institution?
- (e) Which benefits would you expect to gain from participating in transnational cooperation and peer reviews?
- (f) What should you consider when linking your internal quality management to requirements of external accreditation?
- (g) What benefits would you gain from striving to adopt a sectoral quality framework?

Towards creating a quality culture within VET institutions

In this chapter you will learn how to create a quality culture within your VET institution, how to find a quality focus and how to define a vision and mission based on shared values.

6.1. Find your focus: different approaches of quality

The concept of quality and thus the quality management applied in VET institutions will always differ according to the type of education they offer, their organisational tradition and the regional or local environment. Next, three different approaches to quality and quality management in VET will be presented, although in reality VET providers apply a mixture of them (see Figure 19). Every VET institution has to find its own individual balance between these approaches, considering its environmental conditions as well as its internal organisational structure.

6.1.1. Focusing on the world of work

For all education and VET providers, but especially for those principally engaged in CVET, quality is primarily geared to fulfilling requirements of businesses and secure employment prospects of their learners. Consequently, relationships with the business world come at the centre of their quality approach, and their good reputation among businesses and the local community are of central importance to them. For these VET institutions, quality means excellence of facilities, laboratories, workshops and equipment, inclusion of work experience in training programmes, and, as already mentioned, positive employment prospects for their learners.

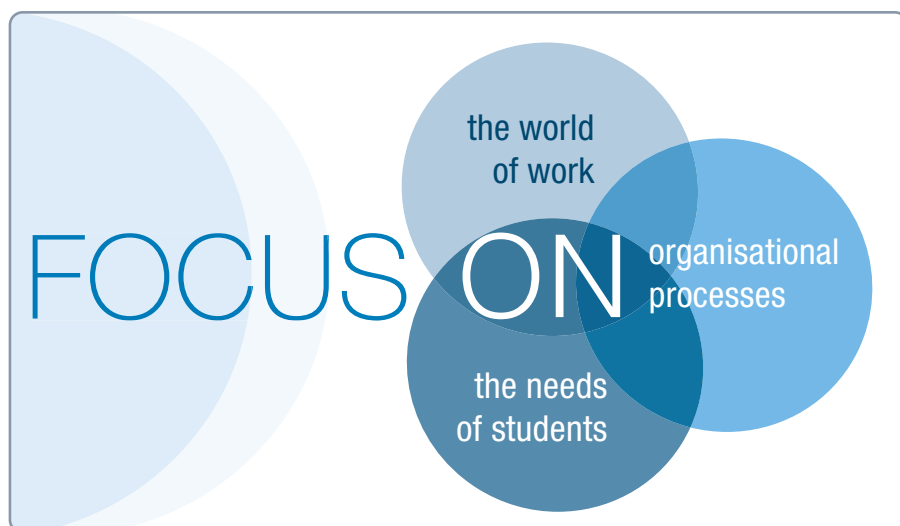
Relationships with the world of work do not just mean responding mechanically to needs of companies, but also being able to anticipate new

professional trends in the labour market, adapt content of training programmes and introduce innovation into curricula. Therefore, these VET institutions play an active role in the world of work by continuously updating technologies they use and by adapting professional profiles they deliver to the labour market's emerging needs.

The main activities related to quality should be to promote frequent and intense contacts with employers and representatives of business organisations, adapt training programmes offered to changing needs of the world of work, and demands of learners, who – it should be underlined – often pay on their own for their education, especially when retraining or acquiring new skills. There is a category of VET providers whose quality-related activities are driven by their ambition to design innovative and attractive training programmes and achieve satisfactory results for their students/learners and their employers.

For this group of VET institutions, adoption of a formalised internal QMS meets instrumental needs mainly with positive effects for the institution. A formalised system, preferably according to ISO standards, helps strengthen the quality image of an organisation among businesses and self-financed clients/learners. In addition, such an adopted system will ease monitoring all processes relevant to achievement of quality objectives.

Figure 19. **Different concepts of quality and their interaction**



Source: Cedefop.

6.1.2. Focusing on needs of students

For another category of VET institutions, the central notion of quality lays in teaching and learning, in provision of individualised training including targeted support, in ability to meet individual needs of students, and in achieving educational success even under difficult sometimes personal conditions. Here, ensuring educational success includes supporting social integration, preparation for more active participation in society and access to the world of work.

Thus, for these VET institutions quality of teaching and learning, including relationships with the world of work to provide work-based learning, lay at the heart of their quality concept. Quality-related activities promote motivation and active participation of teachers and trainers and the tools and methods applied to manage quality that will strengthen their engagement.

These VET providers often view adoption of a formalised QMS very critically and consider it a demand coming from their external environment. They sometimes consider it a bureaucratic burden and even a waste of time. Quite frequently these VET institutions choose to shape their individual approaches to quality management to reflect their particular intentions and objectives. Accordingly, they build their own tailor-made quality systems, deviating from standard models and corresponding to their concept of quality. Further developments of their QMS result directly from continuous experimentation with new methodologies and tools to improve communication with students and external stakeholders.

6.1.3. Focusing on effectiveness and efficiency of organisational processes

For a third group of VET providers, effectiveness and efficiency of management processes in the organisation plays a central role in their concept of quality. This approach is particularly relevant to VET providers operating in the open market. They need to maintain an efficient organisation of all their services to compete in the market.

For these VET organisations it is mainly the senior management team that assesses implementation of the formalised QMS in place. Here, close coherence between the QMS and concept of quality can be observed: the QMS adopted allows monitoring and improvement of all processes and structural elements in the organisation considered essential for achieving quality. It is important to note that improving effectiveness and efficiency of institutional processes is quite often in full accordance with needs of teachers, trainers and students, as they usually benefit from transparent structures and

processes that run smoothly. Teachers and trainers are particularly appreciative when quality management simplifies their daily work.

Reflections on further developments of the QMS are undertaken mainly by the senior management team, which increasingly results in introduction of new electronic information tools to improve effectiveness and efficiency of organisational processes.

6.2. Defining your vision and mission – based on shared values

A clearly identified focus for the quality concept may help to draft a vision and mission for a VET institution, promoting sustainable development and creation of a quality culture. Visions and missions provide an emotional and intellectual superstructure for quality culture: they sharpen the corporate identity of a VET institution and strengthen staff members' identification with and commitment to quality.

A vision is a positive expression of forward-looking expectations on what the institution should be in the future. Applying a long-term view, it describes a state for the institution, which does not yet exist, but which it should be feasible to reach in the future. To ensure its feasibility, your vision needs to be interlinked and cross-checked with the development strategy for your VET organisation (see Section 3.5).

Example of a vision for a quality-committed VET institution

could read as follows: ...

to be the benchmark for VET in our region.

A mission is the means to achieve successfully your vision. In its mission a VET organisation states its self-image, its fundamental principles and its main objectives. The mission is to provide orientation for the organisation as a whole and to guide daily activities of individual staff members. The mission is part of normative management and provides a framework for strategies, quality objectives and operational actions.

To the public, a mission should make the organisation's fundamental purpose clear and help to communicate to stakeholders its strategic quality alignments.

Box 40. Example of a mission for a VET institution

To empower and educate our students through workplace-focused VET and provision of key competences, skills and knowledge for gainful employment and personal fulfilment.

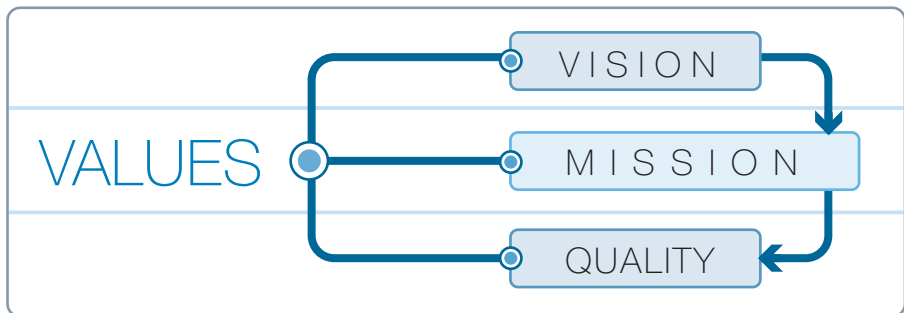
There are many different perceptions of what culture means. As the term is broadly understood, every social phenomenon is characterised as ‘cultural’ and thus culture is used as a rhetorical term without a deeper significance. A more specific meaning of the term underlines that every culture is ‘produced’ by a certain group of people. Following this understanding, every culture has specific conceptions of practical organisation of its daily activities, which are based on common patterns of knowledge and belief, morals and law, customs, behaviour, and rules for making decisions. In these essential aspects, culture can be understood as an expression of specific values and ethics.

These basic values are the driving forces behind every quality culture within a VET institution, as they constitute the basis for understanding its vision, mission and quality objectives (see Figure 20).

Box 41. A piece of advice

Active creation of a quality culture means reflecting on the ethical values that should guide your VET organisation when pursuing its vision, mission and quality objectives.

Figure 20. Values: basis of vision, mission and quality objectives



Source: Cedefop.

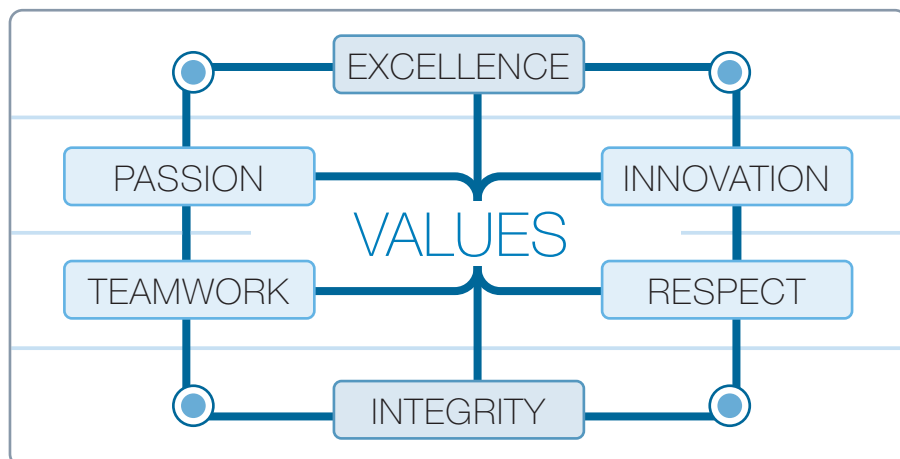
Values should be durable and therefore must be determined with particular care. The values you select should mirror your concept and focus of quality: they must refer to your tradition and environment, be appropriate for the organisation’s future development and, last but not least, be suitable to be anchored in students’ minds.

The more clearly you articulate the values guiding your organisation, the less time and resources you will spend on communicating strategic direction, generating staff commitment and terminating unwanted behaviour.

Figure 21 presents an example of values which might be typical for a quality-committed VET institution.

The ring of exemplary values is organised in three axes with correlating values at their ends, which means that the axes depict interrelated values which complement one another. The main axis is the vertical one, stressing at the top the overall quest for quality and excellence in the organisation, but outstanding professional performance is based on personal integrity and ethical standards. The common grounding of values is of particular importance, to avoid any one-sidedness that would result from moving forward with tunnel vision towards an overall dominating value which gains an independent existence.

Figure 21. An example of values for a VET institution



Source: Cedefop.

Each value represents a condensed description of activities and in Table 5 exemplary values are described in conjunction with their associated activities.

Table 5. An example of values and associated activities

Values	Activities
Excellence	Improving continuously to achieve excellence in all areas
Integrity	Acting professionally, ethically, honestly and transparently
Innovation	Taking on new challenges by creative and forward-looking thinking
Teamwork	Acknowledging cooperation, mutual support and shared expertise
Passion	Performing with positive emotions and devotion to quality
Respect	Recognising dignity and diversity in all relationships

Source: Cedefop.

Clearly articulated values and a complementary vision and mission will acquire particular significance when drawn up in partnership with relevant stakeholders of your organisation. But ideas on guiding values will never be uniform; individual people prefer different values and have different perceptions of the values important for their VET organisation. Individual stakeholders may even support contradictory values.

Developing a shared vision and mission is not an easy task and it should involve staff from an early stage. Careful balancing of leadership and involvement of stakeholders is required, as is clear decision-making in case of conflicts. But finally, the effort made to establish an internal quality culture should pay off, as shown in Box 42.

Box 42. Development of a shared vision and mission

Development of a shared vision and mission:

- (a) requires leadership in decision-making;
- (b) requires staff involvement at an early stage;
- (c) creates legitimacy for action;
- (d) enables coordination of activities towards achievement of quality objectives;
- (e) enables subsequent assessment, evaluation and analysis of achievements;
- (f) informs external and internal stakeholders on the organisation's ambition;
- (g) motivates staff members;
- (h) increases staff identification with the organisation and commitment to creating a quality culture.

Box 43. Questions for reflection and options for further action

- (a) What concept of quality does your VET institution focus on?
- (b) What is your vision?
- (c) What mission derives from your vision?
- (d) What would you consider to be the basic values of your institution?

Starting your activities to improve quality

In this chapter you will learn how to start activities for better quality within your VET organisation by introducing a self-assessment exercise broadly accepted by your staff.

7.1. The starting point: self-assessment

The following proposal to start activities for better quality within your VET organisation aims at reviewing and adapting the PDCA cycle to your own staff. While the PDCA cycle starts with planning activities, which logically is obvious, the proposal here is to start with an assessment phase, since tackling specific problems and finding solutions for them is more likely to attract people's attention and stimulate their engagement.

Box 44. **Proposals of the EQAVET recommendation**

The EQAVET recommendation suggests NRPs in Member States 'support self-evaluation as a complementary and effective means of quality assurance'.

Another equally important proposal is to promote communication and create awareness among teachers, trainers and other stakeholders of existence of critical aspects within the organisation, thus generating and stimulating the need for change and improvement.

Box 45. **Self-assessment**

Self-assessment is to ensure that your VET organisation identifies its strengths and areas for improvement, derives from this an improvement plan and develops and implements specific activities, thereby increasing its quality.

There is no single approach to self-assessment, which could be applied successfully to every institution. The most formal systems for external accreditation provide guidelines for self-assessment and in several European Member States not only is it a legal obligation for VET institutions to undertake self-assessment regularly, but national authorities also provide guidelines and criteria on how to do it.

The final aim of self-assessment is to develop a long-term QMS and a sustainable culture of quality in your VET institution. Repeating self-assessment again and again allows you to measure continuously progress you have made, compare current with previous performance and provide for consistent quality development.

7.2. **Conducting self-assessment in your VET institution**

Self-assessment allows you to pursue various objectives, but its effects should not be exaggerated. The two foremost objectives should be to promote awareness of problems, deficits, etc., and internal communication and views exchange on what should be done. Initiation of change and improvement can be expected only as a result of this process.

Before starting self-assessment three preconditions must be met, otherwise the process will not make any sense:

- (a) the senior management team must support and direct the project with inner conviction and personal engagement;
- (b) resources for carrying out the process must be justified and available;
- (c) resources to implement improvements must be earmarked.

A four-phase process is recommended for implementation of a first self-assessment passage, which should later be repeated in appropriate cycles. The phases rely on the PDCA cycle and on what you learned in Chapter 3 of

this handbook. The four-phase self-assessment process is implemented through the following series of steps ⁽⁸⁾:

Phase I: planning self-assessment

In the kick-off phase you will plan how to organise and communicate the envisaged self-assessment in your organisation.

Step 1: how to organise self-assessment

- (a) Define the scope and the approach: it is important to decide whether the whole organisation or only some departments will be included. To start with, it is recommended that you focus on a few carefully selected areas where there is a good chance of seeing a rapid improvement.
- (b) Appoint a process leader/quality manager.

The process leader is responsible for operation of self-assessment activities, communication about it, compliance with the schedule, and finally reporting and documenting results.

Appointing an appropriate person to lead the self-assessment process is one of the key decisions to be made by the senior management team. The person appointed should be familiar with the VET organisation and its ways of communication, must have a sound knowledge of quality management and be acknowledged as appropriate to carry out these tasks by staff and external stakeholders.

If the person appointed is not sufficiently experienced in quality management, they should either be trained or an external expert should be brought in to provide support and comoderate the self-assessment process.

Define a schedule for implementing the process: four to six months is likely to be an adequate timeframe for the first run of a self-assessment process; bigger organisations might need a longer period.

Step 2: establish a communication strategy

- (a) Implement a communication plan: continuous communication is a crucial factor for successful self-assessment: the communication plan should define the contents and channels for communication and consider needs of individual stakeholders.

⁽⁸⁾ The recommended steps for self-assessment are partly based on the guidelines for implementation of the CAF for public organisations. For further information see <http://www.eipa.eu/en/pages/show/&tid=69#&title=topic> [accessed 26.5.2014].

- (b) Motivate staff to engage in the self-assessment process: the means and style of communication should aim to create a positive environment, confidence and motivation for people to participate actively in the self-assessment process.
- (c) Decide on inclusion of stakeholders: who should be included, how, at what stage of the process and in what role, who should be provided with information in what level of detail and at what stage.

Box 46. A piece of advice

Invite peers/representatives from other VET institutions experienced in self-assessment and quality management to a round table with the staff of your institution: motivate people to ask critical questions and learn from others' experience. Be aware of possible limits in exchanging experience with other VET institutions that might arise owing to a competitive situation.

Phase II: **implementing self-assessment**

Step 3: compose a self-assessment team

- (a) Representative composition: self-assessment should be carried out by a cross-hierarchical team representative of the organisation. Members should know the departments to be assessed and participate voluntarily in the team. Employees often feel appreciated when being specifically addressed.
- (b) Size of the self-assessment team: to ensure an effective and relatively informal working style, teams of around eight to 10 participants are preferable. If the whole organisation is to be assessed, several teams should be formed addressing different topics.

Step 4: organise training

- (a) Train the self-assessment team: in a one- or two-day meeting the self-assessment team should learn about fundamentals of quality management and operation of the PDCA cycle, understand and agree the self-assessment process. In any case the quality manager should provide a guide containing all relevant information to the self-assessment team, including the main criteria and indicators needed to assess the VET organisation.

- (b) Develop competence in quality throughout the organisation: in addition to training the team, information sessions should be held for all employees to broadly anchor understanding of the self-assessment process and its importance for developing quality within the organisation.

Box 47. Contents of training in self-assessment

- (a) Basic knowledge of quality management and assessment procedures.
- (b) Basic skills in quantitative and qualitative data collection and aggregation of data.
- (c) Skills in giving and receiving feedback.
- (d) Self-reflection techniques.

Step 5: undertake self-assessment

- (a) Assessments should be made by applying reliable tools that reflect agreed criteria and indicators. Statements and conclusions should be based on empirical data and evidence; where appropriate, feedback from various stakeholders should be collected.
- (b) The self-assessment team should achieve a certain consensus on strengths and the most crucial areas for improvement within the organisation.
- (c) The self-assessment team is asked to suggest some first ideas for an action plan.

Box 48. A piece of advice

It is important to develop a common perception of the organisation's situation: where are we, what do we want to change? There are no right or wrong views. Exchange and understanding of the different perceptions of quality are crucial for successful self-assessment.

Step 6: draw up a report with your results

- (a) A self-assessment report should be clearly structured, address the strengths and areas for improvement supported by relevant evidence and provide ideas for improvement actions.

- (b) It is crucial that senior management officially accepts the report and, ideally, approves it by reconfirming its commitment to implement improvement actions.

Phase III: **change and improve**

Contributing to improvement of quality is one of the main objectives of self-assessment efforts and it is also the means to promote further strategic development of the VET institution.

Step 7: establish an improvement plan

- (a) Supplement self-assessment by analysing major and minor factors contributing to quality.
- (b) Distinguish between corrective actions, which can mostly be implemented immediately, and structural adaptations and innovations.
- (c) Prioritise areas of improvement and allocate the necessary resources for implementation.

Box 49. A piece of advice

In the beginning, only those critical issues should be tackled which are under the control of the VET institution itself and which can be changed without relying on external interventions.

Step 8: communicate the improvement plan

- (a) To ensure the broadest possible acceptance it is advisable to inform all employees in a timely and open manner on the self-assessment process, the results that have emerged and subsequent improvement activities.
- (b) The ways and means of communication can be based on the plan and principles elaborated in Step 2.

Step 9: organise change and improvement

- (a) Assign responsibilities, activities, deadlines and indicators for monitoring the process and results of improvement actions.
- (b) Involve members of the self-assessment team in improvement activities – this is a way to reward their efforts and will boost their further commitment.
- (c) Ensure readiness for change by providing additional knowledge and competence, deal patiently with resistance, provide support and esteem.

Box 50. A piece of advice

It is advisable to concentrate quality improvement on just a few critical issues, to avoid overloading the organisation and allow people to enjoy the merits of quality-related activities. Make sure that in some areas short-term success becomes visible.

Step 10: establish a coherent development strategy

- (a) Undertake a SWOT analysis of your organisation and combine your internal assessment results with results of an investigation into external preconditions for further development of your VET institution.
- (b) Shape your development strategy by identifying your unique strengths and key factors for further development; benchmark your institution against its strongest competitor to exploit your untapped potential.
- (c) Plan the next self-assessment: quality development needs continuity and sustainability – self-assessment should be carried out repeatedly after one year at the earliest, but not later than three years.

Phase IV: ensuring continuous quality development

The final phase builds on self-assessment but goes beyond it since its main objectives are to create informed professionalism for quality within your organisation and develop towards a quality culture.

Step 11: stabilise your drive for better quality

- (a) Anchor a quality department/quality manager within your organisation to professionalise your efforts further for quality and strengthen its significance.
- (b) Prepare for external recognition/accreditation which serves as an external verification of your internal efforts for quality and will improve the reputation and attractiveness of your organisation.

Step 12: create a quality culture within your VET institution

- (a) Define your focus of quality by reflecting on different concepts and putting together your own approach.
- (b) Reflect on your basic ethical values that should steer your VET organisation when pursuing its vision, mission and strategic quality objectives.

- (c) Define a broadly accepted vision and mission for your institution to sharpen its corporate identity, strengthen your staff's identification with it and boost their commitment to quality.
- (d) Apply continuously the soft skills articulated in the MERI cycle to ensure a quality culture within your organisation (see Figure 22).

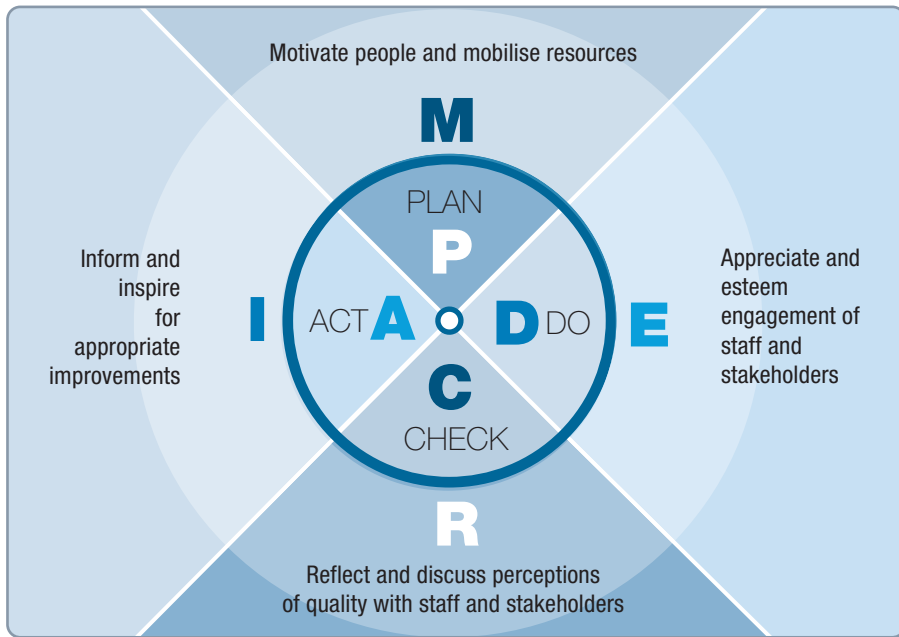
It is important to make sure that teachers, trainers and other staff of your institution know about and understand the logic of the PDCA cycle. This way of thinking and acting should be integrated into the everyday life of the VET institution and used systematically in all its areas of operation, thus paving the way for a quality culture.

Apart from embedding this attitude and behaviour in your institution, development of a quality culture is strongly influenced by human factors, which are supported and encouraged by making use of appropriate soft skills, as explained in the MERI cycle (see Figure 22). The soft skills inherent in the MERI cycle are the complement and counterpart to the hard skills addressed in the PDCA cycle. While technical activities of the PDCA cycle are a prerequisite for establishing an internal QMS, the MERI cycle articulates ingredients of creating an internal quality culture. A quality culture requires more than that foreseen by the PDCA cycle activities; it is mainly produced by human relationships characterised by common respect and encouragement.

In detail, the MERI cycle foresees the following activities for strengthening interpersonal relationships within the organisation:

- (a) motivate people and mobilise resources for improvement;
- (b) appreciate and esteem engagement of staff and stakeholders;
- (c) reflect and discuss assessments, evaluations and opinions of staff and stakeholders;
- (d) inform and inspire appropriate improvement.

Figure 22. The MERI cycle



Source: Cedefop.

Box 51. Questions for reflection and options for further action

- (a) Do you agree to start quality development in your organisation with a self-assessment process?
- (b) Are the three preconditions fulfilled before starting self-assessment?
- (c) Do you clearly focus self-assessment on certain areas within your organisation? If this is the case: which ones will you focus on?
- (d) Do you need external support to conduct the self-assessment process or do you have all competences at hand?
- (e) Will you establish one or several self-assessment teams?
- (f) How will you transform your self-assessment results into an improvement plan?
- (g) How can you build further on your self-assessment results to create a quality culture within your organisation?

To do and not to do

In this final chapter you will learn about the 10 basic recommendations on what you should do and what you should avoid when establishing internal quality management and creating a quality culture within your VET institution.

Promotion of quality management and...

- (a) The senior management team's commitment to quality is a make-or-break factor. If it is absent – stop: there is no way to move forward.
- (b) Identify expertise and stimulate motivation among staff, students and other stakeholders, build a self-assessment team and provide it with organisational resources.
- (c) You can only do a few things well – restrict self-assessment and improvements to one or two weak points which matter to students, staff and, if possible, also to external stakeholders.
- (d) Make sure that assessment results and subsequent change and improvements are widely shared within the organisation and by external stakeholders.
- (e) Ensure continuity and extended follow-up activities involving the whole organisation.
- (f) Take advantage of your quality achievements for internal and external marketing – build your VET institution's reputation.

... creation of a quality culture

- (a) Professionalise your internal quality management and your staff in applying the PDCA cycle in everyday operations.
- (b) Promote empowerment of staff and students, reward their commitment to quality and make use of their innovative potential.
- (c) Apply the MERI cycle, keep people's enthusiasm high and support learning as a key factor of quality.
- (d) Define your concept of quality, your development strategy, vision and mission of your VET organisation.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● **Good luck on your journey to quality!** ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

List of abbreviations

CAF	common assessment framework
Cedefop	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
cgo	competence-based learning
crebo	central register of vocational courses
CVET	continuous vocational education and training
DAFCO	Délégation académique à la formation continue [academic delegation to continuing education]
ECVET	European credit system for VET
EEA	European Economic Area
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EQAVET	European quality assurance reference framework in VET
EQF	European qualifications framework
Equass	European quality framework in social services
EU	European Union
GRETA	groupements d'établissements [national network of public and adult education centres]
INBAS	Institute for Vocational Training, Labour Market and Social Policy
ISO	international organisation for standardisation
IT	information technology
IVET	initial vocational education and training
LEAP	local education action plan
LMA	Lithuanian Maritime Academy

MBO	management by objectives
NCDVET	Centrul Național de Dezvoltare a Învățământului Profesional și Tehnic [Centre for the Development of Vocational Education and Training]
NRP	national reference point
ÖIBF	Österreichisches Institut für Berufsbildungsforschung [Austrian Institute for Research on Vocational Training]
PDCA	plan-do-check-act
REAP	regional education action plan
QMS	quality management system
SAP	school action plan
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
VAE	validation des acquis de l'expérience [validation of knowledge acquired through experience]
VET	vocational education and training
WEB	Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs [Adult and Vocational Education Act]

Bibliography

[URLs accessed 26.5.2014]

- Albanesi, C. (2004). *Il focus group*. Rome: Carocci.
- Bertin G. M. (1995). Il governo della multidimensionalità del processo di valutazione [Governance of multidimensionality of the evaluation process]. In: Bertin, G. M. *Valutazione e sapere sociologico: metodi e tecniche di gestione dei processi [Evaluation and sociological approach: methods and techniques of process management]*. Milan: Franco Angeli, pp. 235-277.
- Bovina, L. (1998). *Il focus group. Storia, applicabilità, tecnica [Focus group. History, applicability, technique]*. *Valutazione*, Vol. 1, pp.1-9.
- Cedefop (2008). *Terminology of European education and training policy: a selection of 100 key terms*. Luxembourg: Publications Office.
www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/4064_en.pdf
- Cedefop (2011a). *Assuring quality in vocational education and training: the role of accrediting VET providers*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop reference series; No 90.
www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3061_en.pdf
- Cedefop (2011b). *Glossary: quality in education and training*. Luxembourg: Publications Office. www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/4106_en.pdf
- Corrao, S. (2000). *Il focus group*. Milan: Franco Angeli.
- Council of the European Union (2004). *Draft conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on common European principles for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning*. Brussels, 18 May 2004.
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/04/st09/st09600.en04.pdf>
- Council of the European Union (2012). Council recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning. *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 398, 22.12.2012, pp. 1-5.
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ%3AC%3A2012%3A398%3A0001%3A0005%3AEN%3APDF>
- Council of the European Union; European Commission (2010). *The Bruges communiqué*. <http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2010/75928.pdf>

- European Parliament; Council of the European Union (2004). Decision No 2241/2004/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 December 2004 on a single Community framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences (Europass). *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 390, 31.12.2004, p. 6. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32004D2241&from=EN>
- European Parliament; Council of the European Union (2008). Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European qualifications framework for lifelong learning. *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 111, 6.5.2008, pp. 1-7. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:111:0001:0007:EN:PDF>
- European Parliament; Council of the European Union (2009a). Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European quality assurance reference framework for vocational education and training. *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 155, 8.7.2009, pp. 1-9. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:155:0001:0010:EN:PDF>
- European Parliament; Council of the European Union (2009b). Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of June 2009 on the establishment of a European credit system for vocational education and training (ECVET). *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 155, 8.7.2009, pp. 11-18. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:155:0011:0018:EN:PDF>
- Ishikawa, K. (1985). *What is total quality control? The Japanese way*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Krueger, R. A. (1994). *Focus groups: a practical guide for applied research*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Nonaka, I., Toyama, R., Byosiére, P. (1994). A theory of organisational knowledge creation: understanding the dynamic process of creating knowledge. In: Dierkes, M. et al. (eds) (2001). *Handbook of organisational learning and knowledge*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 491-517.

- ÖIBF (2009a). *Peer review in European VET: peer review in initial VET*.
[www.peer-review-education.net/index.php?class=Calimero_Webpage
&id=12285](http://www.peer-review-education.net/index.php?class=Calimero_Webpage&id=12285)
- ÖIBF (2009b). *Peer review in European VET: peer review extended*.
[www.peer-review-education.net/index.php?class=Calimero_Webpage
&id=12287](http://www.peer-review-education.net/index.php?class=Calimero_Webpage&id=12287)
- ÖIBF (2009c). *Peer review in European VET: peer review extended II*.
http://www.peer-review-education.net/index.php?class=Calimero_Webpage&id=12289
- Rubin, H.; Rubin, I. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing: the art of hearing data*.
Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Zammuner, V. (2003). *Il focus group*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

ANNEX 1

Toolbox supporting implementation of internal quality management based on the PDCA/quality cycle

1.1. Example of strategic planning according to indicators ⁽⁹⁾

Criteria	Approach	Deployment
	RIGHTS AND DUTIES	RIGHTS AND DUTIES
15	Respect for and protection of human dignity is anchored in our corporate philosophy (thesis No 5). Based on this, we have a Charter of Rights.	Information on the Charter of Rights: bulletin boards, discussions, internet, intranet, residents' meetings, elected bodies of the service users, presentation at meetings with relatives, handing out to new employees, further training of the elected bodies, Ombudsman, Charter of Rights is brought up at the familiarisation of new employees and in staff meetings, addressing the topic in the daily life and in everyday work, frequent development discussions on the Charter of Rights.
16	From the first contact onwards, we consider it important to inform people about their rights and duties. We do this in a way they can understand and that is accessible for them. First contact does not only mean personal contact, but also gathering information about Josefsheim via internet, brochures and other media. It also includes contact via phone or in written form as a letter or e-mail. We include our service users in the develop-	Relaunch of the website in March 2011, further development of the printed media (presentation of the new corporate design in June 2012), first contact: free initial consultation, free info line, anonymous advice via the internet (participating in Caritas model project for online counselling), emphasising discussions with the elected bodies, naming the rights and duties in the contracts with the service users, addressing the rights and duties

⁽⁹⁾ Josefsheim gGmbH, Olsberg, Germany, www.josefsheim-bigge.de [accessed 7.7.2014].

Results		
	RIGHTS AND DUTIES	ANNEX No
Indicator 1	Result of periodic evaluation of the Charter of Rights and consequent changes	Charter of Rights
Indicator 2	Level of familiarity of employees with the Charter of Rights (percentage of agreement with the statement: 'I know the Charter of Rights of the Josefsheim')	
Indicator 1	Percentage of agreement of service users with the statement: 'I know my rights and duties'	
Indicator 2	Number and type of publications of the Charter of Rights (bulletin board, internet, intranet, discussions, minutes, events, trainings)	

Criteria	Approach	Deployment
	RIGHTS AND DUTIES	RIGHTS AND DUTIES
16	ment. They are represented by their elected councils.	in the individual planning meetings, implementation of the residential and participatory law (Wohn- und Teilhabege- setz), group 'new here'.
17	We want to develop our company together with people. This is anchored in our corporate philosophy (theses No 9, 10 and 11). We have a complaints management system. Feedback can be given directly, but also via the service users' elected councils. They are collected, processed and evaluated systematically. Every complainant gets feedback to his/her complaint.	Process 3.6.7 complaint management, the elected bodies are the contact points for our service users, regular meetings of these committees with the management about the suggestions and complaints, elected bodies have confidants at the Josefsheim, Ombudsman, additionally the contribution is possible via the suggestion systems, service user surveys on satisfaction, group discussions of the service users, round-table discussions in vocational training centre on current issues.
	SELF DETERMINATION	SELF DETERMINATION
18	In our corporate philosophy (thesis No 6) we determine: 'we facilitate and encourage the involvement and participation of people with disability in society. We support each individual with a disability in developing its prospects. By providing education we enable him to realise his/her vision of life self-determined. By doing so we facilitate and encourage participation and empowerment of people with disability'.	Individual planning meetings, learning opportunities with modules, efforts to peer counselling, involvement of the service users in projects ('we empower uS bH', 'competently mobile', 'getting older together in Olsberg'), personal future planning as a method, functional specification of vocational training in the sheltered workshop is based on the idea of lifelong learning, group 'together we are strong', addressing the topics in the political and religious instruction at the vocational college.
19	In our corporate philosophy (thesis No 5) we determine: 'we assist people with disability in becoming politically and socially active. We establish and maintain contacts to decision-makers in politics, economy and society'. In this context, it is important to know that we	Contacts and activities: county disability advisor, disability advocacy, Ombudsman, consultation hour of the mayor, politicians, president of the Chamber of Commerce as cooperation partner, association of medium-sized businesses, member of north Rhine-Westphalian

Results		
	RIGHTS AND DUTIES	ANNEX No
Indicator 1	Number and type of complaints received, differentiated according to different stakeholders (from annual report?)	
Indicator 2	Number and type of feedback given to the complaints (from annual report?)	
	SELF DETERMINATION	ANNEX No
Indicator 1	Percentage of agreement of service users with the statement: 'I could get involved with my individual planning'	
Indicator 2	Percentage of agreement of service users with the statement: 'I can put my vision of life into effect'	
Indicator 1	Quality of life survey: percentage of agreement of service users with the statement: 'I was enabled to engage myself in the community'	
Indicator 2	Number of offers of the Josefsheim	

Criteria	Approach	Deployment
	SELF DETERMINATION	SELF DETERMINATION
19	<p>understand social engagement as participation in society. We provide our service users with additional contacts apart from our staff and assist in the selection of internal and external trust.</p>	<p>Committee of Sheltered Workshops, involvement of service users in planning the Aqua and the train station in Olsberg, barrier-poor woodland trail, advocacy, organisational support of protest days, placement of external advisory bodies, prevention specialists, spiritual advisor, provision of individual communication assistance.</p>
	INVOLVEMENT OF PERSON SERVED	INVOLVEMENT OF PERSON SERVED
28	<p>In our corporate philosophy we determine: 'we support every single person with disability in developing its prospects'. Furthermore: 'together with the person with disability we constantly adjust our services to his/her individual needs and life planning' (thesis No 6 and 7). Thus we involve the service users individually as well as collective. Our communication system guarantees a constant dialogue. That way we include people with disability actively in the development of our services.</p>	<p>Contribution via: suggestion system, residents' meetings, department conferences, division conferences, company's conference, meetings of the elected bodies, involvement of people with disability in our projects ('we empower uS bH', 'competently mobile'), workshops on service development at JOVITA, peer counselling, service user surveys, deployment on individual level: assessment as a basis for individual planning and review, individual planning meetings, training on inclusion.</p>
29	<p>Based on our corporate philosophy (thesis No 7 and 11) people with disability actively participate in the planning and review of our services. This happens on an individual as well as a collective level. To do this systematically, we regularly evaluate the participation and use the results of the evaluations for the continuous improvement of our services. We employ benchmarking to compare our capability with other service providers.</p>	<p>At individual level: individual planning meetings, evaluation done by rehabilitation moderators, at collective level: evaluation done by the company's conference, head of divisions and executive director, service user surveys, internal benchmarking related to the residential housing and participation law (Wohn- und Teilhabegesetz), business development through service user (for example extension of House Heinrich Sommer).</p>

Results		
	SELF DETERMINATION	ANNEX No
	INVOLVEMENT OF PERSON SERVED	ANNEX No
Indicator 1	Percentage of agreement of service users with the statement: 'I am fully involved in my individual planning'	
Indicator 2	Satisfaction of service users with their involvement in the individual planning, percentage of agreement with the statement: 'I am taken seriously'	
Indicator 1	Evaluation of participation in the development of services (quantitative)	
Indicator 2	Annual evaluation of the participation of service users at collective level (elected bodies)	

Criteria	Approach	Deployment
	EMPOWERMENT OF PERSON SERVED	EMPOWERMENT OF PERSON SERVED
30	<p>At Josefsheim, a culture of empowerment is a core attitude (thesis No 6). We provide both service users and employees with a variety of tools to increase and strengthen their empowerment. We consider the individual service user and his/her environment. We regularly review our tools for empowerment of employees and service users and develop them continuously. We support service users in their participation in society and work towards a society that allows and encourages participation.</p>	<p>At individual level: individual planning meetings, at collective level: Vrijbaan, request, future workshop as a method, projects concerning personal budget, project 'we empower uS bH', personal future planning as a method, phases of practical vocational training in companies, new housing concepts, involvement in accessibility in the community (for instance Aqua Olsberg, barrier-poor woodland trail in Olsberg).</p>
31	<p>In our corporate philosophy we determine: 'we take influence on decisions and shape the change actively' (thesis No 5). The aim is to create an environment that promotes the empowerment of people with disability. Thus we train our staff on empowerment. We also use our contacts at local, regional, national and European level. Our aim is to be a trendsetter (thesis No 11). All our activities undergo scientific monitoring.</p>	<p>Implementation of request as a result of the project Equabench, contacts in politics, economy and society with regular exchange, public naming of hindrances, barriers and risks, disability advocacy in Olsberg and the county (Hochsauerlandkreis), further training, projects, scientific monitoring done by universities, analysis of the environment as a focus of the assessment, Josefsheim as a service provider for other employers to break down barriers at the workplace.</p>

Results		
	EMPOWERMENT OF PERSON SERVED	ANNEX No
Indicator 1	Percentage of agreement of service users with the statement: 'at the Josefsheim, a culture of empowerment is part of the daily life'	
Indicator 2	Evaluation of instruments and their usefulness, regular process monitoring	
Indicator 1	Request: organisational profile and individual profiles	
Indicator 2	Actions of the Josefsheim concerning empowerment	

1.2. Example of QMS-related responsibilities of an administration ⁽¹⁰⁾

Responsibilities of the LMA director with regard to the QMS are to:

- (a) approve policies and quality manager of the LMA;
- (b) take decisions on summaries of evaluative analysis of the quality system;
- (c) preside over meetings of the LMA administration on assessment of the quality system;
- (d) distribute funds for activity development;
- (e) form the LMA administrative services, establish principles of their activities and appoint their heads.

Responsibilities of the LMA vice-director for academic affairs with regard to the QMS are to:

- (a) study organisation and control;
- (b) apply research planning and supervise its operation in departments;
- (c) monitor library activity and its development;
- (d) plan and organise professional development and attestation of the academic staff;
- (e) initiate international cooperation and other projects in the academic field and organisation of their implementation;
- (f) plan, organise and control development of methodological provision of studies;
- (g) ensure requirements of the QMS comply with requirements of standard ISO 9001:2008.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Lithuanian Maritime Academy (LMA) (*Lietuvos aukštoji jūreivystės mokykla*), Klaipėda, Lithuania.

Responsibilities of the LMA vice-director for practical training with regard to the QMS are to:

- (a) organise student practices;
- (b) monitor organisation and development of the Seamen's Training Centre operation and training workshops;
- (c) develop, organise and monitor short-term (specialised) courses for seamen and other interested people;
- (d) plan, organise and monitor development and maintenance of facilities for practical training;
- (e) ensure QMS requirements for practices and specialised courses comply with requirements of standard ISO 9001:2008.

Rights and responsibilities of heads of departments and units are set in respective procedures of process management. Principal responsibilities of heads of departments are to:

- (a) encourage quality policies in everyday activities;
- (b) check how staff observe the procedures, regulations and instructions.

1.3. Questionnaire to teachers for self-reflecting on student's assessment ⁽¹¹⁾

Teachers reflect on how they evaluate students

For the teacher	
Subject	

The assessment Tick only one choice

Manage time

(a) I consider the time spent on the assessment of tests as:

(i) a necessary inconvenience;	
(ii) a task little or not at all repaid;	
(iii) a part of my duties;	
(iv) an important step of the learning/teaching process;	
(v) other.	

(b) Before a test:

(i) I only tell my students the date and the topic on time;	
(ii) I never tell them the date;	
(iii) it is my students' responsibility to study on time;	
(iv) I prepare exercises and simulations on time;	
(v) other.	

(c) As regards periodical tests:

(i) I use materials prepared by myself for other classes/previous years;	
(ii) I use the materials provided by the textbooks;	

⁽¹¹⁾ Project LLP-LDV-TOI-09-IT-0448 'ValeRIA' 'Assessing the relationship between teaching and learning', Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore Altiero Spinelli, Milan, Italy, www.iisaltierospinelli.it [accessed 7.7.2014].

(iii) I often prepare the tests with my colleagues;	
(iv) I prepare the tests by myself;	
(v) other.	
(d) As regards the types of tests, they are:	
(i) mainly only one type of test (only oral, only written, only graphical);	
(ii) different tests according to the modality, type, structure, length;	
(iii) I prefer written tests for their objectivity;	
(iv) I prefer oral tests as I can see the results immediately;	
(v) other.	
Correction of written tests	
(e) The analysis of results leads me to:	
(i) an immediate feeling of satisfaction/ dissatisfaction;	
(ii) I don't think about it a lot, I start my work again;	
(iii) I use the results for general assessment and I get on with my work;	
(iv) a reflection with my available colleagues (class council, subjects...);	
(v) other.	
(f) When the result is completely negative:	
(i) I take it out on my students;	
(ii) I take it out on myself;	
(iii) I take it out on my colleagues;	
(iv) I reflect about the reasons for failure on my own;	
(v) I reflect about the reasons for failure with the class;	
(vi) other.	
(g) After a test with unsatisfying results I spend time:	
(i) revising the topic;	
(ii) using different types of tests on the same topic;	

(iii) continuing the syllabus without giving importance to the result;	
(iv) discussing with the students the reasons for their failure;	
(v) revising the topic using a different method;	
(vi) other.	
(h) When the test is very positive:	
(i) I have some doubts on the effectiveness of the test;	
(ii) I inform all my students about my satisfaction;	
(iii) I am personally satisfied;	
(iv) I check with other tests and highlight the individual progress;	
(v) other.	
(i) After a test with satisfying results I spend time:	
(i) rewarding my students for the achieved result;	
(ii) enhancing knowledge and skills to plan the next topics;	
(iii) I don't waste time and get on with the syllabus;	
(iv) feeling satisfied;	
(v) other.	
Mark	
(j) As regards the assessment of a single test:	
(i) I am influenced by the results of previous tests;	
(ii) I only correct the single test, then I will work out an arithmetic mean;	
(iii) I don't use the whole range of marks from 1 to 10;	
(iv) I always use the whole range of marks from 1 to 10;	
(v) other.	

Appeal

(k) If the assessment is questioned by a student or his/her parents:

(i) I state my specific competence and I end the conversation;	
(ii) I change my assessment to avoid any argument;	
(iii) I listen to the observations and reflect; if necessary, I change it;	
(iv) I justify clearly my evaluation, if I am convinced;	
(v) I try to get understanding from my colleagues;	
(vi) I go to my principal, I feel offended;	
(vii) other.	

1.4. Questionnaire to assess the teaching process-class observation ⁽¹²⁾

Classroom observation

Class			
Subject			
Date			
The teacher begins the lesson by revising previous topics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The teacher uses materials and various teaching aids, such as slides, audiovisuals, boards and text books.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The teacher does not waste his/her time and begins the lesson immediately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The teacher explains clearly and fully.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The teacher is able to involve all his/her students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The teacher encourages his/her students' participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The students are interested in the lesson and take part in it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The students listen to their schoolmates' contributions carefully.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
All the students take part in the group work, if scheduled, and cooperate with each other.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If the teacher questions a student, the others listen carefully and participate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

⁽¹²⁾ Project LLP-LDV-TOI-09-IT-0448 'ValeRIA' 'Assessing the relationship between teaching and learning', Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore Altiero Spinelli, Milan, Italy, www.iisaltierospinelli.it [accessed 7.7.2014].

1.5. Guidelines to teachers for collecting learners' feedback on their learning experience ⁽¹³⁾

Listening to learners

Discussion themes for learner engagement meetings

The learning process

Learner motivation and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What makes a good lesson? ● What makes a good teacher? ● What makes a good learner?
Use of resources by learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What equipment and facilities help you to learn in class?
Reflection on learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How often do you get a chance to talk about your learning/progress with your teacher? How regularly?
Independence in learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How much of an opportunity do you get to get on with things yourself or with other learners? ● Do you want more or less of that? ● How much of an opportunity do you get to work in smaller groups or on your own with the teacher?
Progress and outcomes of learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do you feel you could have learned more/made more progress? In what ways? ● What do you think are the main benefits of learning?

The teaching process

Application of professional and subject knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How interesting and relevant does your teacher make the topics?
Application of good practice in teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is there anything really good in some classes that never happens in any others?

⁽¹³⁾ Anniesland College, Glasgow, Scotland/UK.

Focus on learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do you always get a chance to say what you want to say in the classroom? ● If there is a class discussion you make a contribution? If not, why not? ● Is there a good atmosphere in the class?
Contextualised learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is your other job experience/life experience helpful? ● Do you get a chance to talk about and use it? ● What have you learned from other learners? How have you learned it?
Use of resources (including information communication technology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you think of the hand-outs, computers and other resources used in the teaching sessions?
Promotion of achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How is your progress celebrated or recognised in class? ● How does the teacher motivate you to want to achieve more?

Context and planning of learning and teaching

Staff-learner relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do you always get a chance to say what you want to say in the class? ● If there is a class discussion you make a contribution? If not, why not? ● Is there a good atmosphere in the class?
Planning of learning activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How do you know what you will be doing in class from one session/ lesson to the next? ● Are you informed when your assessments will take place? ● Are you given assessment results quickly?

Physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How does the classroom and all that goes on in it affect your learning?
Standards set by staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What makes a good lesson? ● What makes a good teacher? ● What makes a good learner? ● How does your teacher let you know what is expected of you?

Learner progress and achievement

Progress from prior attainment, achievement, learning and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is your other job experience/life experience helpful? ● Do you get a chance to talk about it? ● Use it?
Skills – personal and learning, core, vocational, employability, citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What skills do you feel you are gaining? ● Any skills you think relate to work? ● How will these skills help you find the kind of job you want? ● What about the skills for your everyday life?

Learner attainment

Attainment of formal qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are the qualifications you can gain from this class? ● How do you know you have succeeded?
Attainment in industry-related awards and tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are you involved in any other qualifications or certificates related to this subject area or the kind of work you are interested in?
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has your teacher(s) helped make sure you stay on the course? ● Have there been any times/reasons when you thought about leaving?

Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How are attendance and punctuality concerns picked up in the class?
Post-course success including progression to higher education, relevant area and level of employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have you had any information about how successful this class/programme is? ● Information on what you might progress to once you have finished?
Success in award schemes, competitions, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tell me about any extras that you get involved in – any competitions, shows, trips or awards that you have been involved in.

Listening to learners

Sample questions for meetings with learners.

Learning and teaching process:

- are most lessons interesting;
- is the right equipment easily available; do you get help to use it;
- do you get the right resources, such as hand-outs, books, computers, software, Internet access;
- do you often get a chance to talk to your teachers about your learning and progress;
- do you get the opportunity to get on with work yourself, such as searching for information or practising skills;
- do teachers help you if you find the work difficult or if you want to find out more;
- do you and fellow learners get a chance to talk about your job and life experience when this is relevant to your course;
- does the atmosphere in lessons help you to learn;
- is there plenty of opportunity to discuss relevant topics with other learners and the teachers;
- do teachers let you know what work you will be doing throughout your programme;

- (k) are the classrooms suitable for the work you are doing;
- (l) do the teachers make sure that everyone can get down to their work without wasting time;
- (m) are you made aware of what you need to do to pass your assessments and get your qualifications.

Learner progress and outcome:

If you have any previous experience in your college subjects, do you get a chance to use it to progress further or more quickly?

Are you getting a chance to improve your skills in:

- (a) written and spoken communication;
 - (b) ability to work with numbers;
 - (c) ability to work with other people;
 - (d) ability to solve problems (not just numerical);
 - (e) ability to use computers.
-

Do you feel that you have had a chance to:

- (a) develop other personal skills which might improve chances in life;
 - (b) develop the skills or qualifications you wanted;
 - (c) prepare yourself gradually for work or further study after completing your course.
-

Do you know when your assessments will be taking place and in what ways do you receive feedback about your performance in subjects?

Have you ever thought of leaving because the programme or lessons were not well run?

Have you ever thought of leaving because you felt you were not getting enough help?

1.6. Guidelines for a staff appraisal interview ⁽¹⁴⁾

EFQM performance review

Last name, first name	
Position	
Date of meeting	
Date of the previous meeting	
Person conducting the meeting	
Other participants	
(a) Employee's feedback to school directors.	
(b) School director's feedback to employee.	
(c) Suggestions to improve work at school.	
(d) Need for advanced training.	
(e) Agreed goals and activities:	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
To be completed by:	By:
Signature from the school's directors	Employee's signature

⁽¹⁴⁾ Dr Walter Bruch School BBZ (vocational centre), Saarland, Germany.

1.7. Questionnaire to students for self-reflection ⁽¹⁵⁾

Student's self-reflection

For the student

Think carefully and answer sincerely, your opinion is important to us especially to improve the work and also your results.

Male/Female:		Birth year:	
Class:		Date:	/ /

In the month of I received my school report; it seems important to me to reflect and suggest my comments.

Progress at school

1. Am I satisfied with my progress at school? Grade from one (not at all) to four (a lot)	
2. The subjects or activities in which I had difficulties are (put them according to the difficulty):	
2.1.	2.2.
2.3.	2.4.
3. What are the reasons for the negative results? (state, for the two subjects or activities you found most difficult, the possible causes, marking only one answer).	
In 2.1	
3.1.1. I don't understand a lot of the explanations	
3.1.2. I get easily distracted	
3.1.3. I don't feel equal to the tasks	
3.1.4. I try to follow the lecture but then I lose interest	
3.1.5. I study but I do not commit myself enough	
3.1.6. Other	

⁽¹⁵⁾ Project LLP-LDV-TOI-09-IT-0448 'ValeRIA' 'Assessing the relationship between teaching and learning', Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore Altiero Spinelli, Milan, Italy, www.iisaltierospinelli.it [accessed 7.7.2014].

4. The subjects and activities I liked most are:

4.1.		4.2.	
4.3.		4.4.	

5. How much time do you on average spend on studying (including homework) every day?

30 minutes/one hour at the maximum	
Less than two hours	
More than two hours	
I never feel like studying...	

6. Am I aware of the fact that I had problems outside school that adversely influenced my concentration and progress?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

7. How can I close the gaps in my progress? (mark with a cross)

7.1. I will commit myself much more in class	
7.2. I would like help such as assisted studying	
7.3. Through remedial lessons	
7.4. I have to find the will and peace again	
7.5. I will ask for explanations	
7.6. I have to find peace	

Relationships in class

8. The relationship with classmates is:

very good		good		average		not good	
-----------	--	------	--	---------	--	----------	--

9. And with teachers/trainers:

very good		good		average		not good	
-----------	--	------	--	---------	--	----------	--

1.8. Teacher’s self-reflection on assessment ⁽¹⁶⁾

For the teacher	
Subject	
The assessment	Tick only one choice
Manage time	
1. I consider the time spent on the assessment of tests as:	
1.1. a necessary inconvenience;	
1.2. a task little or not at all repaid;	
1.3. a part of my duties;	
1.4. an important step of the learning/teaching process;	
1.5. other.	
2. Before a test:	
2.1. I never tell them the date;	
2.2. It is my student’s responsibility to study on time;	
2.3. I prepare exercises and simulations on time;	
2.4. other.	
3. As regards periodical tests:	
3.1. I use materials prepared by myself for other classes/previous years;	
3.2. I use the materials provided by the textbooks;	
3.3. I often prepare the tests with my colleagues;	
3.4. I prepare the tests by myself;	
3.5. other.	

⁽¹⁶⁾ Project LLP-LDV-TOI-09-IT-0448 ‘ValeRIA’ ‘Assessing the relationship between teaching and learning’, Istituto d’Istruzione Superiore Altiero Spinelli, Milan, Italy, www.iisaltierospinelli.it [accessed 7.7.2014].

4. As regards the types of tests, they are:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 4.1. mainly only one type of test
(only oral, only written, only graphical); | |
| 4.2. different tests according to the modality,
type, structure, length; | |
| 4.3. I prefer written tests for their objectivity; | |
| 4.4. I prefer oral tests as I can see the results
immediately; | |
| 4.5. other. | |

Correction of written tests

5. The analysis of results leads me to:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5.1. An immediate feeling of satisfaction/
dissatisfaction; | |
| 5.2. I don't think about it a lot, I start my work again; | |
| 5.3. I use the results for general assessment and
I get on with my work; | |
| 5.4. a reflection with my available colleagues
(class council, subjects...); | |
| 5.5. other. | |

6. When the result is completely negative:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 6.1. I take it out on my students; | |
| 6.2. I take it out on myself; | |
| 6.3. I take it out on my colleagues; | |
| 6.4. I reflect about the reasons for failure
on my own; | |
| 6.5. I reflect about the reasons for failure
with the class; | |
| 6.6. other. | |

7. After a test with unsatisfying results I spend time:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 7.1. revising the topic; | |
|--------------------------|--|
-

7.2. using different types of tests on the same topic;	
7.3. continuing the syllabus without giving importance to the result;	
7.4. discussing with the students the reasons for their failure;	
7.5. revising the topic using a different method;	
7.6. other.	
8. When the test is very positive:	
8.1. I have some doubts on the effectiveness of the test;	
8.2. I inform all my students about my satisfaction;	
8.3. I am personally satisfied;	
8.4. I check with other tests, and highlight the individual progress;	
8.5. other.	
9. After a test with satisfying results I spend time:	
9.1. rewarding my students for the achieved result;	
9.2. enhancing knowledge and skills to plan the next topics;	
9.3. I don't waste time and get on with the syllabus;	
9.4. feeling satisfied;	
9.5. other.	
Mark	
10. As regards the assessment of a single test:	
10.1. I am influenced by the results of previous tests;	
10.2. I only correct the single test, then I will work out an arithmetic mean;	
10.3. I use the test for global assessment of the student/class and of the syllabus as well;	

10.4. I don't use the whole range of marks from 1 to 10;	
10.5. I always use the whole range of marks from 1 to 10;	
10.6. other.	
Appeal	
11. If the assessment is questioned by a student or his/her parents:	
11.1. I state my specific competence and I end the conversation;	
11.2. I change my assessment to avoid any argument;	
11.3. I listen to the observations and reflect; if necessary, I change it;	
11.4. I justify clearly my evaluation, if I am convinced;	
11.5. I try to get understanding from my colleagues;	
11.6. I go to my principal, I feel offended;	
11.7. other.	

1.9. Teacher assessment form ⁽¹⁷⁾

Assessment form for the teacher								
Data sheet to assess the teaching and behaviour of teachers								
Class								
Date								
Criterion	Grade						Assessment	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Ø
Interesting lesson								
Writing/graphics on the board								
Work instructions (practical/theoretical)								
Ability to explain								
Use of different media (e.g. blackboard, overhead projector, slides)								
Good, alternating methods of teaching								
Expertise								
Is grading understandable?								
Assertiveness								
Fairness towards pupils								
Ability to accept criticism								
Punctuality								
Teacher's readiness								
External appearance								
Sense of humour								
Own sense of wellbeing during the lesson								

⁽¹⁷⁾ Dr Walter Bruch School BBZ (vocational centre), Saarland, Germany.

Comments:	Final grade
Criticism	
Praise	
Improvement	

This survey should be conducted by every teacher in every class towards the end of the school year.

The survey is done anonymously without the teacher monitoring the pupils.

Note: the sum per line divided by the number of pupils results in the average assessment of the individual criterion. The sum of the average assessments divided by 16 results in the summarised final assessment.

1.10. Questionnaire to students for assessing their teachers (second example) – Teachers through students’ eyes ⁽¹⁸⁾

Teachers/trainers in students’ eyes

For the student

Read carefully, answer sincerely and appreciate that you are being asked for your views on your teachers. Insert from one (if you do not agree at all) to four (if you really agree):

- | | |
|---|--|
| (a) he/she makes me want to study the subject he/she teaches, although I know it is very difficult; | |
| (b) at the beginning of the year he/she comes to an agreement with us which is respected by him/her; | |
| (c) he/she rarely loses patience and, if it happens, he/she gives us his/her reasons about his/her complaint and he/she establishes a relationship with us again; | |
| (d) he/she tries to involve everybody and he/she considers us like a working community; | |
| (e) he/she explains clearly and we know what to do; | |
| (f) he/she smiles and works well with the class; | |
| (g) he/she is helpful about discussing his/her decisions, if he/she thinks it is necessary; | |
| (h) he/she helps us and makes us think, face the problems and be responsible for our actions; | |
| (i) he/she worries about teaching us a study and preparation method; | |
| (j) he/she tries not to do boring lessons; | |

⁽¹⁸⁾ Project LLP-LDV-TOI-09-IT-0448 'ValeRIA' 'Assessing the relationship between teaching and learning', Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore Altiero Spinelli, Milan, Italy, www.iisaltierospinelli.it [accessed 7.7.2014].

- | | |
|--|--|
| (k) before setting a test, he/she prepares steps for the tests; | |
| (l) he/she listens to us; | |
| (m) he/she does not make fun of those who make mistakes and he/she always respects students; | |
| (n) the teacher explains always the elements he/she uses for evaluation; | |
| (o) he/she tells us his/her objectives and reminds us the importance of what he/she teaches; | |
| (p) when he/she makes a mistake or has a doubt, he/she acknowledges it; | |
| (q) at the end of the units, we appreciate we have learned something new; | |
| (r) the activities' timetable is respected; | |
| (s) he/she explains our mistakes clearly and tells us how we can close any gaps; | |
| (t) he/she gives back our tests corrected within a reasonable time (maximum 15 days); | |

1.11. Questionnaire to teachers for reflecting and assessing teaching ⁽¹⁹⁾

Teaching reflection and assessment		Tick only one answer
For the teacher		
Subject		
(a) How much do I know about my students' personal experiences:		
(i) little or nothing;		
(ii) well enough but it does not change my assessment;		
(iii) well enough and I consider it in the assessment;		
(iv) other.		
(b) I am aware of the different learning styles and times:		
(i) yes, but I do not care about them;		
(ii) no, the students must only study;		
(iii) yes, I often take them into account;		
(iv) no, but I would understand them;		
(v) other.		
(c) The activities I use to get my students to acquire my subject contents:		
(i) they must study at home, completing exercise by themselves;		
(ii) give out exercises in class/in the laboratory;		
(iii) I suggest outlines and mind maps to train their memory;		
(iv) I give them work to do at home and I check it regularly;		

⁽¹⁹⁾ Project LLP-LDV-TOI-09-IT-0448 'ValeRIA' 'Assessing the relationship between teaching and learning', Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore Altiero Spinelli, Milan, Italy, www.iisaltierospinelli.it [accessed 7.7.2014].

(v) I give them work to do at home and I sometimes check it;	
(vi) other.	
(d) How I check the acquisition of the essential contents of my subject:	
(i) I prepare tests similar to the ones my students have done in the classroom;	
(ii) I give surprise tests as it is better;	
(iii) I test my students orally as soon as possible;	
(iv) I test my students at the end of the term, arranging the dates;	
(v) other.	
(e) What importance I give to the basic elements of my work as a teacher (answer grading from one (not at all) to five (very much)):	
(i) mastering my subject contents;	
(ii) knowledge of my students;	
(iii) programming/planning with my colleagues;	
(iv) traditional teaching instruments;	
(v) new technologies such as the interactive whiteboard;	
(vi) e-learning, blog, etc.;	
(vii) subjects updating;	
(viii) pedagogical updating;	
(ix) other.	
(f) My favourite methodologies are (maximum two answers):	
(i) learning by problems;	
(ii) face-to-face lectures;	
(iii) conceptual maps;	
(iv) group work;	

(v) induction;	
(vi) text explanation;	
(vii) practical demonstrations;	
(viii) other.	

(g) Verification of my completed work can be defined as follows (maximum two answers):

(i) I am interested in my colleagues' opinion(s);	
(ii) I am interested in the parents' opinion(s);	
(iii) I am interested in the working atmosphere in the classroom;	
(iv) I ask my students' opinion(s);	
(v) I am not worried, I can work well;	
(vi) I am interested in my principal's opinion;	
(vii) other.	

(h) Relationships with other people. I am interested in the collaboration with:

	not at all	little	enough	very much
h.1. subject colleagues;				
h.2. colleagues of the team or of the class council;				
h.3. all school teachers;				
h.4. the principal;				
h.5. administrative staff;				
h.6. the head administrator;				
h.7. parents;				
h.8. students;				
h.9. the territory/education authority.				

1.12. Campaign protocol for collecting feedback ⁽²⁰⁾

Campaign – consistent activities, implemented in a certain period to find out and assure quality of education.

Phases of campaign:

- (a) preparing the campaign plan (objectives, indicators, areas, associated classes, teachers, subjects, students, time of survey) considering availability of computer science classroom, timetable of class time meant for campaign, survey before or after lesson. An informatics teacher must be in the quality group and be present in the survey. Survey schedule has to be announced on time on bulletin board for students, in staff room, on web pages, and it has to be put into teacher's mailboxes and sent by e-mail;
- (b) introducing campaign plan to teaching staff;
- (c) placement of computer programme for survey (passwords required, questionnaires);
- (d) sending invitations for collective survey to small number of teachers. Invitations have to be put into teachers' mailboxes and sent by e-mail, especially to class teachers of associated classes;
- (e) check working of the e-questionnaire and inform the administrative system manager about implementation of the survey (day before survey);
- (f) preparation of computer science classroom; on day of the survey (before arrival of students) teacher has to prepare the classroom, switch on computers and enter passwords for campaign participants;
- (g) surveying students; every student fills in the questionnaire on his/her computer in the classroom. If there are more students than computers, survey takes place in two groups. While surveying two teachers must be present – supervisors (member of the quality group and informatics teacher) or just an informatics teacher as a member of the quality group. Teacher supervisor takes care that the survey runs without any disturbances (clears up any confusion, ensures correct filling in of questionnaires);

⁽²⁰⁾ Velenje School Centre (*Šolski Center Velenje*).

- (h) after the survey students can compare their answers with other students;
- (i) surveying teachers; while surveying a small group of teachers two members of the quality group have to be present or just one informatics teacher who is also a member of the quality group;
- (j) after the survey teachers are able to see students' survey results, because teachers fulfil it in after students;
- (k) completing minutes of the survey; teachers/supervisors complete the minutes with information required (date, time of survey, class, number of students, survey course);
- (l) after the campaign members of the quality group check results, find out weaknesses and strengths and plan improvement;
- (m) presentation of survey results to whole teaching staff (made by members of the quality group);
- (n) preparation of the final report on implementation of the survey (made by quality group).

1.13. Questionnaire for workplace instructors ⁽²¹⁾

On-the-job learning workplaces

Employer feedback

On-the-job learning questionnaire for workplace instructors

1. Employer sector (select):					
2. Number of staff employed by the work unit:					
3. Number of on-the-job learners at my worksite annually (select):					
4. I have worked as a workplace instructor for (select):					
5. I have received coaching or training for my duties as a workplace instructor (select):					
6. Educational institution being assessed (select):					
7. Students' field of vocational educational and training (select):					
8. Qualification pursued by the students (select):					
Preparation	I fully disagree	I disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I fully agree
9. I discussed the practices of working life with the student.					
10. I had sufficient advance knowledge of instructing on-the-job learners.					
11. The goals, contents and duties related to on-the-job learning were agreed between the teacher and the student.					
12. I received sufficient advance information about students coming for on-the-job learning.					

⁽²¹⁾ North Karelia Municipal Education and Training Consortium, Finland.

13. I provided induction for the student into the workplace and his/her duties.					
14. I provided the students with sufficient induction into occupational safety.					
On-the-job learning period	I fully disagree	I disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I fully agree
15. The workplace was informed in advance of the arrival of the on-the-job learner.					
16. Students were able to do tasks specified in the on-the-job learning plan in the workplace.					
17. The work community displayed a positive attitude towards the student.					
18. I guided the student adequately.					
19. I provided the student with sufficient feedback.					
20. I received sufficient support from the supervising teacher.					
21. The on-the-job learning period improved the student's vocational skills development.					
Assessment	I fully disagree	I disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I fully agree
22. The assessment practice for study-work carried out at the workplace is clear.					
23. I found the assessment and feedback discussions useful.					

24. The student provided me with feedback on my performance as an on-the-job learning instructor.					
25. The teacher provided me with feedback on my performance as an on-the-job learning instructor.					
26. The on-the-job learning period benefitted our organisation.					
27. I have received sufficient induction into the duties of a workplace instructor.					
28. Overall, I was satisfied with the on-the-job learning period.					

Practical demonstrations

Please answer the following questions only if the on-the-job learning period covered practical demonstrations:

	I fully disagree	I disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I fully agree
29. I had sufficient professional knowledge of the practical demonstrations' goals, contents and assessment.					
30. I guided the student in drawing up the practical demonstration plan.					
31. The practical demonstration complied with the plan.					
32. The assessment basis for the practical demonstration was clear and comprehensible.					
33. The assessment of the practical demonstration was performed in line with the assessment basis.					

34. The students had prepared for the self-assessment section of the practical demonstration.					
35. The assessment discussion section of the practical demonstration was fair and supported the student's professional growth.					
36. I had sufficient expertise to assess the practical demonstration.					
37. In the practical demonstration, the student was able to utilise the skills learned during his/her on-the-job learning period.					
38. In my opinion, our workplace demonstrated a positive attitude towards the practical demonstration.					
39. The student's self-assessment was taken into account in the assessment of the practical demonstration.					

Questions to all respondents

40. From the viewpoint of the organisation, the on-the-job learning period was arranged at a suitable time (select):	
41. The duration of the on-the-job learning period vis-à-vis its goals (select):	
42. What kind of vocational content should be included, or intensified in this education?	
43. Other feedback and ideas for the development of on-the-job learning and practical demonstrations:	

Additional questions for managers and supervisors	I fully disagree	I dis- agree	Neither agree nor disagree	I agree	I fully agree
44. The quality of vocational education/adult training is good in our region.					
45. Vocational education/adult training shows renewal and development potential.					
46. The schools providing vocational education/adult training have competent staff.					
47. The vocational education/adult training meets the competence needs of the labour market in this region.					
48. The vocational education/adult training supports and improves the employment of individuals.					
49. The vocational education/adult training takes account of the changing competence needs of commercial and industrial life.					
50. The vocational education/adult training is tailored to the needs of the individual.					
51. The vocational education/adult training develops competence for international work and activity.					
52. Adequate and relevant information on vocational education/adult training is readily available.					

53. The name of the vocational college/institute for adult education is clear and understandable.					
54. Vocational education is a good alternative to upper secondary school.					
55. Competence-based vocational qualifications are suitable for adults.					
56. The best professionals for our organisation usually come from our own region.					
57. Our region can provide all the necessary fields of vocational education/adult training.					
58. Vocational education/adult training is flexible.					
59. Vocational education/adult training also provides opportunities for further and continuing education.					
60. Vocational colleges/institutes for adult education are reliable partners for collaboration.					
61. How would you describe the vocational skills of persons who have either graduated from, or studied at, our institution?					
62. Any other feedback to the north Karelia municipal education and training consortium:					

1.14. Questionnaire to students for assessing their academic year (first example) ⁽²²⁾

We would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete this survey. The information you offer will be used to evaluate and improve the quality of your learning and teaching experience.

Department:				
Course title:				
Type of study:	<input type="checkbox"/> Full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time <input type="checkbox"/> Evening <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible learning <input type="checkbox"/> School pupil			
	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree
I have been motivated and involved in my learning.				
The quality of guidance and support I received was very good.				
I was able to access and use technology and other resources to help me learn.				
Assessment methods and feedback helped me understand my progress.				
Teaching staff took account of my individual learning needs.				
My college experience has helped increase my self-confidence.				
My college course has enabled me to think creatively and show an enterprising attitude.				

⁽²²⁾ End of course survey: 2010/11, Anniesland College, Glasgow, Scotland/UK.

My course has helped me to develop skills for work and employment.				
I have been made aware of the opportunities for further study and/or employment.				
I am satisfied with my experience at Anniesland College and would recommend the college to others.				

Please provide any additional comments on your learning and teaching experience:

1.15. Evaluation of cooperation with companies ⁽²³⁾

Company survey form

How do you assess the following statements:

- (a) collaboration and communication between the school and the company functions smoothly;

excellent 1 2 3 4 5 6 inadequate

- (b) the company receives information about the apprentice/intern when needed;

excellent 1 2 3 4 5 6 inadequate

- (c) the school's organisation of instruction days is well managed;

excellent 1 2 3 4 5 6 inadequate

- (d) the school schedule is coordinated with the company's needs;

excellent 1 2 3 4 5 6 inadequate

- (e) theoretical and practical instruction is adapted to new content.

excellent 1 2 3 4 5 6 inadequate

Please mark only one box

- (f) Are you interested in presenting your company to our pupils, e.g. to recruit apprentices.

Yes No No answer

- (g) To maintain the dialogue between the school and the company, do you prefer;

round table events questionnaires other forms of communication (which?)

⁽²³⁾ Dr. Walter Bruch School BBZ (vocational centre), Saarland, Germany.

(h) In your view, how important is a vocational centre's certification in selecting a vocational school.

- Very important Of little importance since other criteria are more important Not important

(i) Our school has school partnerships with foreign schools, for example in France. Is your company willing to release your apprentices for exchange programmes (for up to approximately three weeks)?

- Yes No No answer

(j) In the event of a student exchange, would you be willing to employ and support apprentices from the foreign partner schools at your company?

- Yes No No answer
-

1.16. Questionnaire to assess the school climate ⁽²⁴⁾

Area	Student	Teacher
Wellbeing	(a) I feel good in my class.	(a) I feel good in my class.
	(b) There is tension between particular groups in class.	(b) There is tension between particular groups in class.
	(c) I try to make a creative atmosphere during lessons.	(c) I try to make a creative atmosphere during lessons.
	(d) I try to succeed.	(d) I try to get my students to succeed.
	(e) My schoolmates are my friends and we often meet after school.	(e) Students are friends with one another.
Relations between students	(a) Students help one another with problems.	(a) Students help one another with problems.
	(b) We respect one another.	(b) Students respect one another.
	(c) We eliminate problematic classmates.	(c) Students eliminate problematic classmates.
	(d) Classmates also abide my suggestions.	(d) Students abide suggestions of their classmates.
	(e) We are tolerant to diversity and we do not discriminate.	(e) Students are tolerant to diversity and they don't discriminate.

⁽²⁴⁾ Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Education and Sport: a consortium of school centres (*Republika Slovenija, Ministrstvo za solstvo in Sport: konzorcij šolskih centrov*).

Area	Student	Teacher
Relation student-teacher	(a) Teacher helps every student with school problems.	(a) I help every student with school problems.
	(b) If I don't understand something I don't hesitate to ask teacher.	(b) If a student doesn't understand something he/she doesn't hesitate to ask me.
	(c) Teacher accepts my problems with understanding.	(c) I accept their problems with understanding.
	(d) We get along well with teacher.	(d) I get along well with students.
	(e) Teacher knows how to maintain order and discipline.	(e) I can maintain order and discipline in class.
	(f) Students and teacher argue.	(f) I and students argue.
	(g) Teacher's behaviour is a good example to me.	(g) I am a good example to students with my behaviour.
	(h) Teacher assesses students fairly.	(h) I assess students fairly.
	(i) Teacher often congratulates me.	(i) I often congratulate students.
	(j) Teacher respects me.	(j) I respect students.
	(k) I respect the teacher.	(k) Students respect me.
Taking care of sense of belonging to class	(a) Success of the class means a lot to me.	(a) Success of the class means a lot to students.
	(b) I try for unity in class.	(b) Students try for unity in class.
	(c) There is a lot of positivity in class.	(c) There is a lot of positivity in class.
	(d) I am proud of my school.	(d) I am proud of my school.

1.17. Questionnaire to students for assessing their academic year (second example) ⁽²⁵⁾

Student end of the year

For the student

Think carefully and answer sincerely, your opinion is important to us especially to improve work and also your results.

Male/female		Birth year	
Class		Date	/ /

Progress at school

Am I satisfied with my progress at school:

(Grade from one (not at all) to four (very much))

(a) in case of negative results: what are the reasons for the most negative ones? Choose the possible reasons for two subjects or activities where you had many difficulties, marking only one answer.

(b) In:

(i) I didn't understand the explanations very much;

(ii) my attention was easily diverted;

(iii) I didn't feel equal to the tasks;

(iv) there was too much noise in the classroom;

(v) I wasn't interested in what we were doing;

(vi) I tried to follow the lessons, but then I lost interest;

(vii) I studied and applied myself to study very little;

(viii) other.

⁽²⁵⁾ Project LLP-LDV-TOI-09-IT-0448 'ValeRIA' 'Assessing the relationship between teaching and learning', Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore Altiero Spinelli, Milan, Italy, www.iisaltierospinelli.it [accessed 7.7.2014].

(c) In:

- (i) I didn't understand the explanations very much;
 - (ii) my attention was easily diverted;
 - (iii) I didn't feel equal to the tasks;
 - (iv) there was too much noise in the classroom;
 - (v) I wasn't interested in what we were doing;
 - (vi) I tried to follow the lessons, but then I lost interest;
 - (vii) I studied and applied myself to study very little;
 - (viii) other.
-

1.18. Questionnaire to students for feedback on their academic experience, studies and life ⁽²⁶⁾

Dear student of Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre, this is our feedback questionnaire. Please select a suitable response for each statement and mark it with a cross.

(a) General questions

Gender Male Female

Curriculum

Why did you decide to study in Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre?

Reasons of school choice	Certainly not	Rather not	Certainly	This too
Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre teaches the profession that interests me				
High reputation of Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre				
Good quality of the education				
Recommendation of friends or acquaintances				
Closeness to home				
Was not admitted to the preferred university				
Easy acquisition of the diploma				
Future career considerations				
Financial circumstances did not permit studies far from home				
Recommendation of parents				
It was largely a chance choice				

⁽²⁶⁾ Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre (*Võrumaa Kutsehariduskeskus*), Väimela, Estonia, www.vkhk.ee/en [accessed 8.7.2014].

Why did you choose this profession?

Reasons of profession choice	Certainly not	Rather not	Certainly	This too
Family traditions				
Interest in this profession				
Possibility to study in the native tongue				
Low competition for student places				
Good reputation of the profession				
Positive accreditation of the profession				
Recommendation of friends or acquaintances				
Recommendation of parents				
Was not admitted to the studies in preferred profession				
Easy acquisition of the diploma				
Future career considerations				
It was largely a chance choice				

Have you considered discontinuation of your studies?

- Yes
 No

If yes, what would be the reasons for discontinuing the studies?

Reasons for discontinuing the studies	Certainly not	Rather not	Certainly	This too
I wanted to go to work				
I wanted to start a family				
I wanted to go to another school				
The higher education provided does not meet my expectations				
I am disappointed in the professions				
I have changed my place of residence				

Have you used academic leave?

- Yes
 No
 No but I plan to

If yes, what would be the reasons for taking the academic leave?

Reasons for taking academic leave	Certainly not	Rather not	Certainly	This too
Difficulty to keep up with the study programme				
Family reasons				
Studies abroad				
Military service				
Pregnancy/maternity leave				
Financial situation				
Work to earn income				
Work to find a good practice location or employment				
Health reasons				
Need for variety				

(b) Student life

What are your plans for the future after graduation?

Plans after graduation	Certainly not	Rather not	Certainly	This too
Military service				
Start employment				
Continue studies at an Estonian university				
Continue studies abroad				

Your place of residence during the study period?

Dormitory	
Rented apartment room	
My own apartment	
My own house	
With my parents	
With relatives/acquaintances	
Elsewhere	

Reasons for the choice of the place of residence

Reasons	Certainly not	Rather not	Certainly	This too
Low rent				
No expenses for rent				
Smaller fees for utility services				
No expenses for utility services				
Close to the school				
Good access to public transport lines				
Close to a store				
Location (beautiful, secure)				
General orderliness of the place of residence				
Privacy				
Comforts				
Low rent				
Lager living area				
Internet connection				
Opportunity to communicate with fellow students				
Easy access to study aids				
Opportunity to live with my family				
Neighbours				
Lower expenses on food				
Lack of alternatives				

Availability of comforts at your place of residence

Laundry facilities	
Private room	
Kitchen	
TV set	
Internet	
Computer	
Washing opportunity	
Warm water	

Please assess your expenses on the place of residence during the study period

Reasons of school choice	Certainly not	Rather not	Certainly	This too
I pay much more than I would like to				
I pay slightly more than I would like to				
I am satisfied				
I would be able to pay slightly more				
I would be willing to pay much more				

Please assess your selection of nutrition

- Not satisfied at all Rather not satisfied
 Rather satisfied Completely satisfied

Alcohol consumption

I frequently drink hard liquor	
I frequently drink beer and/or wine	
I sometimes drink hard liquor	
I sometimes drink beer/wine	
I drink a few glasses in company	
I do not drink alcohol	

In my leisure time

I participate in the work of various organisations	
I am member of several organisations: fraternity/sorority;	
choir;	
sports team;	
student organisation.	
I belong to some other organisation	

**Use of the Internet in connection with the studies;
I use the Internet at least:**

once a day;	
a few times per week;	
a few times per month;	
less frequently than once a month;	
not at all.	

(c) Infrastructure

Are you satisfied with the study premises at the school?

	Not satisfied at all	Rather not satisfied	Rather satisfied	Completely satisfied	No opinion
Capacity of lecture rooms					
Equipment in lecture rooms					
Lighting of lecture rooms					
Capacity of practice rooms					
Equipment in practice rooms					
Lighting of practice rooms					

Are you satisfied with the computer classes at the school?

	Not satisfied at all	Rather not satisfied	Rather satisfied	Completely satisfied	No opinion
Capacity of computer classes					
Equipment of computer classes					
Lighting of computer classes					
Opening hours of the computer classes					
Convenience of computer classes					

Are you satisfied with the school library?

Convenience of the library					
Literature selection in the library					
Lighting of the library					
Opening hours of the library					
Copying/printing opportunities in the library					
Service in the library					

I visit the library:

daily once a week once a month

Please give your general assessment of the school infrastructure

	Not satisfied at all	Rather not satisfied	Rather satisfied	Completely satisfied	No opinion
Cleanliness					
Toilets					
Hygiene					
Ventilation					
Heating					
General order					
Parking					
Smoking					
Access for the disabled					
Cloakrooms					
Catering					

Your proposals and recommendations

1.19. Questionnaire to students on their time-spending ⁽²⁷⁾

Student time

For the student

Male/female		Birth year	
Class		Date	/ /

Think of a typical day in the classroom and answer sincerely; it is important to us to understand what happens in class and how you would like to work.

(a) What do you usually do in class?

Actions	Never	Sometimes	Often
(i) I follow the explanations and I take notes.			
(ii) During the explanation, I make observations on the topics.			
(iii) I work in a group.			
(iv) I use the textbook.			
(v) I do activities.			
(vi) I get distracted and think about my own business.			
(viii) I chat with my classmates.			

(b) How important do you think the following activities are?

Actions	Not important	A little important	Important	Very important
(i) Follow the explanations and take notes.				
(ii) Use the computer.				
(iii) During explanations, make observations on the topics.				

⁽²⁷⁾ Project LLP-LDV-TOI-09-IT-0448 'ValeRIA' 'Assessing the relationship between teaching and learning', Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore Altiero Spinelli, Milan, Italy, www.iisaltierospinelli.it [accessed 7.7.2014].

Actions	Not important	A little important	Important	Very important
(iv) Work in a group.				
(v) Use the textbook.				
(vi) Do activities.				
(vii) Get distracted and think about my own business.				
(viii) Discuss with classmates.				
(c) In classroom, if there is too much noise... (only one choice)				
(i) I join the ones who disturb.				
(ii) I isolate myself as much as possible.				
(iii) I try to intervene to stop the confusion.				
(iv) I wait for the teacher to intervene.				

1.20. Questionnaire to parents on students' progress ⁽²⁸⁾

For parents or tutors responsible for the students

Think carefully and answer sincerely, your opinion is important to us, above all, to help improve our work as well as our/your students' results.

Male/female		Birth year	
Class		Date	/ /

In the month of you received your son's/ daughter's school report; it is important to us to have your observations.

⁽²¹⁾ Project LLP-LDV-TOI-09-IT-0448 'ValeRIA' 'Assessing the relationship between teaching and learning', Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore Altiero Spinelli, Milan, Italy, www.iisaltierospinelli.it [accessed 7.7.2014].

Progress at school

- (a) Are you satisfied with your son's/daughter's progress at school?
Answer and choose from one (no, not at all) to four (yes, a lot)
-
- (b) Difficulties, your son/daughter has had in the several subjects, can be overcome through school helps such as aided studying and remedial lessons (extra lessons); do you know about them?
 Yes No
-
- (c) Difficulties, your son/daughter has had in the several subjects, can be overcome through school helps such as aided studying and remedial lessons (extra lessons); do you know about them?
-
- (d) If your answer is yes, do you think your son/daughter will attend them?
 Yes No
-
- (e) Does your son/daughter talk about his/her school?
 A lot, spontaneously and about his/her difficulties too
 Only if we ask about it and we think he/she tells us everything
 A little and with difficulty
 He/she doesn't want to discuss it at all
-
- (f) What would you like to have from your son's/daughter's school?
(only one choice)
 To have more frequent communication
 More individual conversations with the teachers
 To be informed by SMS or e-mails
 Nothing in particular, everything is fine
-
- (g) Your son's/daughter's relationship with his/her schoolmates, according to what you know, is:
 good satisfying not very satisfying not good at all
-
- (h) Your son's/daughter's relationship with his/her teachers, according to what you know, is:
 good satisfying not very satisfying not good at all
-

1.21. The Dutch framework for curricula evaluation/supervision of the Adult and Vocational Education Act (Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs) (WEB) ⁽²⁹⁾

Frame of reference

Use of portraits

This section presents portraits for all the indicators. The portraits outline the standards for each indicator. The situation observed is considered to satisfy the indicator if, across the board, the situation meets the description of the portrait. In each case, the assessment pertains to the aggregate factors.

Frame of reference for adult education and distance learning

The modified portraits relating to Domain 1 for adult education programmes and curricula and non-subsidised distance learning and the portraits relating to adult education Domain 2 still need to be fleshed out in more detail.

DOMAIN 1: **instructional process**

Curriculum

Aspect 1.1: **cohesion**

The programme's curriculum is geared to attainment targets, document/qualifications dossier and other national guidelines; it is coherent and appropriately structured.

Indicator	Portrait
------------------	-----------------

1.1.1.	
--------	--

Content	
----------------	--

	The overall curriculum of the programme is well-structured in terms of content, with regard to teaching and examinations within the institution as well as practical training. The curricula for the vocational subjects, languages, arithmetic and career/citizenship tie in with the qualifications dossier (or attainment targets document) and other guidelines that apply across the board. To that end, the cohesion between the tasks
--	--

⁽²⁹⁾ Dutch Inspectorate of Education: Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (*Inspectie van het Onderwijs: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap*).

and working processes in the qualifications dossier has been adapted to the institution's course programme and professional practice. The practical experience gained by the students is expanded and coordinated in the theoretical curriculum. The curriculum demonstrates a proper balance between elements of knowledge, skills and attitude.

1.1.2. **Scheduling** The various components of the curriculum are scheduled in an appropriate and timely manner with respect to teaching and examinations within the institution; this scheduling also applies to practical training.

Aspect 1.2: tailoring

The curriculum takes into account differences between students as regards prior education, capabilities, progress and intended further education.

Indicator	Portrait
1.2.1. Differentiation	Wherever necessary, the curriculum deviates from the standard choice of subjects offered in order to create opportunities for individuals and/or groups which allow optimum gearing to feeder schools and subsequent education or the labour market, remediation, enhancement, deepening and wherever possible deceleration or acceleration. Acceleration preferably leads to an actual shortening of the duration of studies.

Learning in the educational establishment

Aspect 1.3: teaching strategy

The programme offers sufficient structuring of learning activities, instruction, supervision of learning activities, practical exercises and feedback regarding progress made.

Indicator	Portrait
1.3.1. Interaction	The learning activities in a teaching situation are sufficiently structured. The goal, purpose and cohesion of these learning activities are clear to the students. There is effective interaction between teachers and students and among students, aimed at the transfer and development of knowledge, attitudes and skills.

1.3.2. **Support and supervision of the learning activities** The support and supervision of learning activities is aimed at the teaching-learning process and development of students. It addresses current learning issues and individual requests for help or support, arising, for example from intake interviews, special needs provision or guidance activities. The students are encouraged to actually learn.

This is demonstrated by students practising with subject matter, processing assignments and being given sufficient opportunity to ask questions. Questions are addressed in an appropriate and timely manner.

1.3.3. **Feedback regarding the learning activities and the learning outcomes** Individual learning progress is carefully monitored at times befitting the teaching method, learning phase and (target) group. In addition to examinations, development-oriented tests are administered to establish systematically study progress. Feedback is always provided regarding interim results. Deviant learning outcomes prompt diagnostic and corrective measures. Feedback focuses on the student's individual performance. Wherever necessary, feedback is followed up with revision, additional explanation, additional exercises or improvement assignments, etc.

Aspect 1.4: learning time

The programme utilises its formal annual load in an adequate manner, with effective timetables and a balanced workload.

Indicator	Portrait
1.4.1. Utilisation	Teaching time is not wasted. The teaching-learning process is organised such that in teaching situations each student is learning. This means that lessons are underpinned by a feasible, balanced timetable, with as few free periods and as little relocation time as possible. In addition, the timetable is geared to the characteristics and level of the target group. In the event of authorised absences and cancellation of lessons, steps are taken to make up any arrears incurred.
1.4.2. Workload	The workload is well-balanced and experienced by the students as feasible when putting in a normal effort across the entire programme or components of the programme, with regard to lessons, practical training and the corresponding examinations.

Aspect 1.5: learning environment

The learning environment is sufficiently safe, encourages respect and offers a positive working climate for teachers. The programme has sufficient facilities.

Indicator	Portrait
1.5.1. School climate	<p>Students and staff feel safe and taken seriously within the school buildings and beyond. Conventions and rules for personal interaction are actively communicated. Everyone acts in accordance with the conventions and corrective action is taken if the rules are disregarded or broken. Intimidation and bullying among students are actively combated, as is discrimination on the basis of differences in cultural/ethnic origin or sexual orientation.</p> <p>Students are aware of a complaints procedure which is easily accessible. Complaints are registered and handled with care. The institution maintains a positive working climate in which teachers feel encouraged to work in a professional manner.</p>
1.5.2. Facilities	<p>In terms of quality and quantity, facilities such as classrooms, exam rooms, equipment, practice situations, etc. are in keeping with the nature and scope of the programme and its teaching formats; they promote a proper implementation of the programme.</p>

Guidance and supervision

Aspect 1.6: intake and placement

The information provided on the programme prior to enrolment is specific and realistic. The intake procedure is thorough and results in an appropriate placement.

Indicator	Portrait
1.6.1. Information	<p>The information provided on the programme prior to enrolment is in keeping with the qualifications dossier (or attainment targets document) and the professional profile. It comprises current and realistic details regarding the admission requirements, curriculum components including practical training, examinations, exit differentiations, transfer options, labour market prospects, costs and voluntary contributions, if any.</p>

1.6.2. **Intake and placement** Insofar as relevant to the programme, the student's starting situation has been portrayed in a systematic, reliable, complete and transferable manner. This means that the institution has at least looked into the special needs care provided to the student in the feeder school and required by the student in MBO. Students are placed in a programme in accordance with the agreed procedures. The institution has carefully ascertained whether the chosen programme ties in with the wishes and capabilities of the students. If this is not the case, the student is referred to alternatives, either within or outside the institution.

Aspect 1.7: educational career guidance

Educational career guidance provides accurate and timely information regarding the delivery of the programmes, is systematic and proactive, and takes into account differences between students with respect to guidance needs.

Indicator	Portrait
1.7.1. Information provision	The information provides the student with full and adequate information as required, in a timely and accessible manner. This includes, for example timetables, exam schedules, course curricula and examination requirements including changes, if any, the organisation of the practical training, assessment of learning outcomes, the students' charter, complaints procedure, possibilities for participation in decision-making, guidance provisions, etc. At relevant times, the programme actively discusses the information with the students.
1.7.2. Educational career guidance	Educational career guidance focuses on monitoring developments in students' studies and providing support in the choices they make during and following their studies. This ensures an optimum education career, from intake to graduation, and contributes in a proactive manner to the prevention of early school-leaving. Educational career guidance ties in with the information on the student provided during the intake procedure, the placement procedure, the student's development, the educational achievement and the intended final goal.

The nature and intensity of the education career guidance is geared to the student’s development and study progress. Agreements made within the framework of education career guidance are laid down in a transferable manner and their observance is secured.

Aspect 1.8: special needs provision

Sufficient primary and secondary care is available for students with specific special needs. Structural cooperation is in place with tertiary care agencies outside the institution.

Indicator	Portrait
1.8.1. Primary and secondary care	The primary and secondary care focuses on both socioemotional aspects and cognitive development. The care provided ties in with the special needs identified during the intake procedure and any special needs identified during the course of the studies, such as being behind in language and arithmetic, fear of failure and dyslexia. The effect of the care provided is assessed on a regular basis and if need be, is adjusted.
1.8.2. Tertiary care	The institution engages in structural cooperation with tertiary care institutions for the implementation of interventions at the student level beyond the scope of primary and secondary care. The institution collects relevant, transferable information regarding the progress and effects of the care provided, for the purpose of both internal and external cooperation. It informs the student in question and other relevant stakeholders accordingly, upon request and of its own accord. Furthermore, the care is provided in accordance with responsibilities and a division of roles agreed upon beforehand.

Learning in the professional practice

Aspect 1.9: practical training

The programme ensures that the students and the companies offering training places are adequately prepared for practical training; it ensures that students are placed in an appropriate position with appropriate job content; it makes sufficient arrangements with the company offering the training place regarding

their supervision; it monitors the observance of the arrangements and expects students to reflect on their learning experiences.

Indicator	Portrait
1.9.1. Preparation of students and companies	Prior to their practical training, the students know the timeframe and the scope of their training, the assignments they are required to carry out, how they are supervised by the institution and the company and how they are assessed. The companies offering practical training places are clear on the object of the practical training, in terms of organisation, assignments, supervision and assessment.
1.9.2. Placement	The programme is responsible for finding a practical training place. Students carry out their practical training in a recognised position corresponding to the programme, their learning wishes and their learning potential. In this company, they engage in activities and carry out assignments that are appropriate to the nature and the level of the programme and the student's individual development and wishes.
1.9.3. Supervision by the company	The company supervises the student in the manner agreed upon with the programme. The supervision is geared to the level of independence of the student and aimed at a gradual transition to a level of independent working appropriate to the level of the programme. The supervision encompasses regular feedback regarding the work and the student's achievement. The programme is aware of the feedback provided by the company regarding the student's individual performance.
1.9.4. Supervision by the programme	The programme provides sufficient distance supervision and monitoring regarding the progress of students' learning outcomes. Any problems are identified and resolved in a timely fashion. Programme supervisors keep in touch with the company regarding the content of the practical training and the student's progress. The institution is available in case the company has questions or if problems arise. The programme organises opportunities for reflection on the student's experiences in order to expand learning experiences,

coordinate them with the theoretical component of the programme and gain more insight into the development of its own professional achievement. The learning activities in the professional practice may be adjusted based on the feedback provided.

DOMAIN 2: **examination and certification**

Aspect 2.1: **examination instruments**

Examination standard 1: the examination instruments are geared to the exit requirements and meet the testing requirements.

Indicator	Portrait
2.1.1. Distinction between development-oriented tests and examinations	The institution has made a clear distinction between the programme – and the development-oriented tests it comprises – and examinations. This transition is clearly marked. The examinations board has explicitly formulated the examination and other requirements that constitute the basis for awarding the diploma. The students know which assessments are taken into consideration for earning the diploma.
2.1.2. Coverage of the qualifications dossier	The examinations that lead to a qualification are structured in a comprehensive and appropriately complex manner in order to test whether the students have mastered their professional duties at the required level, as outlined in the qualifications dossier. This means that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) for programmes aimed at occupational qualifications structure, the qualification requirements have been incorporated into the examinations, which cover more than three quarters of the working processes for each core task – including the essence of the occupation. The content and test format are geared to the requirements such that knowledge, skills and attitude are assessed in a well-balanced and appropriate manner; (b) for programmes aimed at the attainment targets, the qualification requirements have been incorporated into the examinations, which cover more than three-fourths of the attainment targets for each subqualification – including the

essence of the occupation. The content and test format are geared to the requirements such that knowledge, skills and attitude are assessed in a well-balanced and appropriate manner;

- (c) statutory occupational requirements – if applicable – are tested in their entirety with examinations that are appropriate in terms of content and test format;
- (d) the examination instruments cover the generic qualification requirements for languages and arithmetic in such a manner that the ‘common European framework for languages’ level or, as the case may be, the reference level are accounted.

2.1.3.
Cut-off score

The institution has followed a proper procedure to determine the cut-off score, for examination components as well as for the examination as a whole.

In the examination instruments, the cut-off score has been set at the level at which the students satisfies the requirements. The cut-off score has been formulated in such a manner that the overall score (i.e. including the assessment of the student’s knowledge, skills and attitude) will not turn out lower than what is required for the occupation and for the generic language and arithmetic requirements.

The institution awards marks in a balanced, proper manner that does justice to the significance of attainment targets or core tasks and working processes.

The examination assignments/tests are mutually weighted in a manner that does not devalue the cut-off score mentioned above.

2.1.4.
Assessment method

The examination instruments carry assessment instructions that guarantee optimum objectivity in the assessment. This means that:

- (a) the assessment instructions include guidelines leading to an independent assessment;
- (b) the performance indicators (or similar assessment criteria) have been incorporated into the assessment instructions in a traceable manner and a correct answer model or assessment chart is available;

- (c) the instructions allow the ratter to determine which (sub)score must be awarded to a student's performance;
- (d) the instructions allow the ratter to determine which final score must be awarded;
- (e) the ratter can underpin the scores awarded in a traceable manner in accordance with the assessment instructions. The assessment guidelines show that the assessment is carried out at the level of the attainment targets per training to the subqualifications or core tasks and working processes. The assessment is based on the performance indicators (or similar assessment criteria) outlined in the qualifications dossier. If a student fails to pass an examination (component), the reason for such a failure is accounted for at the level of the performance indicator (or similar assessment criterion).

2.1.5. **Transparency** All stakeholders have a clear picture of how the examination has been set up, how it is administered and how it is marked. Students and ratters have been informed as to the assessment criteria and the manner in which the examination will be administered and marked. The examination instruments include conditions for administration and instructions for ratters and students regarding the design of the examination.

Aspect 2.2: administration and rating

Examination standard 2: the processes in place for the administration and rating of examinations are reliable.

Indicator	Portrait
2.2.1. Authentic administration	The examination comprises at least the activities to be carried out by the student as a junior worker in his future occupation, geared to the qualifications dossier (or attainment targets document). The working conditions and social context to be observed in the rating of the examination correspond to those in the future occupation as far as possible; components of the examination are administered in actual professional practice. The occupational field is involved in the examinations and judges the administration and rating as realistic.

2.2.2. **Certification decisions** The administration and rating are reliable and proceed as intended. Similar cases are rated similarly. The rating is as objective as possible. Provisions in place to guarantee maximum objectivity are utilised adequately.

Examination assignments, administration conditions and ratings have been set up and are applied for all students in a manner that neither detracts from the reliability of the outcomes of the examination assignment or the examination curriculum as a whole, nor from their level.

Students are rated in an expert manner, focused on a correct assessment of their required knowledge, attitude and skills in terms of subject matter.

Aspect 2.3: **certification**

Examination standard 3: the certification is reliable and guaranteed.

Indicator	Portrait
2.3.1. Interaction	The examinations board decides to grant exemptions for components of the examination and to award diplomas and (if applicable) certificates on the basis of the student's examination results, compared to the examination requirements outlined in the qualifications dossier (or attainment targets document) and the examinations decree. The examinations board makes sound decisions based on the assessment of the examination components and gives an accounting based on its recording of the decision-making.
2.3.2. Responsibility of the examinations board	The examinations board verifies, with due thoroughness and frequency, the quality of the examination instruments, the administration, the rating, the decision-making regarding certification and the expertise of those involved in the examinations. The examinations board uses, for example output analyses, student satisfaction evaluations and data from (random) double ratings to determine whether the examinations are marked in an adequate manner. The examinations board records any adjustment of rating results and the improvement measures that will result or have resulted from these adjustments. The examinations board

analyses the possible causes of any irregularities observed in the rating procedures.

DOMAIN 3: **output**

Aspect 3.1: **success rates**

Indicators The assessment should make use of the indicators provided by the system.

DOMAIN 4: **quality assurance**

Aspect 4.1: **steering**

Sufficient specific and measurable goals have been formulated for the programme in a structural manner, based on the institution’s mission and strategic policy and supported by the programme. There is sufficient continuity in teaching and management staff.

Indicator	Portrait
4.1.1. Plans	The institution has drawn up overall multi-year plans and annual plans at various organisational levels, based on its mission and strategic policy. These plans are supported by the organisation. They may include plans for the improvement of any quality deficiencies that are identified. A plan provides a sufficient framework for the underlying organisational level. At any rate, it comprises goals relating to the education quality (instructional process, examinations and output), compliance with statutory regulations and the quality of teachers, as well as activities to achieve this quality. The goals set down in annual plans are sufficiently ‘smart’ (specific, measurable, accepted, feasible and concrete in terms of time). Plans pertain to all steering layers of the organisation and are interrelated.
4.1.2. Information	The steering information on the education quality is available and accessible at the level at which it is to be used.
4.1.3. Continuity	Adequate care is taken that vacancies on the board, an in management and teaching staff are filled in a timely manner.

Aspect 4.2: **assessment**

The programme regularly assesses, in a reliable manner, the progress and achievement of the goals set and involving independent experts and stakeholders.

Indicator	Portrait
4.2.1. Monitoring	The education quality is monitored on a regular basis. The monitor or monitoring instruments comprise clear quality requirements and cover the key elements of the education provided (instructional process, examinations and output). Monitoring takes place in a manner that produces reliable, valid and sufficient representative outcomes.
4.2.2. Evaluation	The outcomes of the monitoring are demonstrably used to assess the quality of the education provided (on a regular basis, in accordance with statutory requirements), to analyse risks and to identify any deficiencies. The programme explicitly evaluates the education quality by reference to predetermined standards. These cover, at a minimum, the instructional process, the quality of examination (by reference to the examination standards and corresponding marking system) and the output; they are sufficiently concrete. Independent experts and stakeholders are involved in the evaluation of the education quality (in accordance with statutory requirements).

Aspect 4.3: **improvement and anchoring**

If need be, the programme takes measures for improvement geared to the outcomes of the assessments in light of the goals set, in particular regarding staff expertise. The quality assurance and attendant tasks, authorities and responsibilities are clearly defined, sufficiently communicated and embedded in the organisation.

Indicator	Portrait
4.3.1. Measures for improvement	The outcomes of the assessment of the education quality (instructional process, examinations and output) are used to draw up a coherent plan for improvement if deficiencies are found. Measures for improvement are tailored to the deficiencies identified in terms of content, they address the causes of the

quality deficiencies and pertain to the appropriate level in the organisation.

4.3.2.
**Staff
 development**

Plans are in place for staff development at the various levels of the organisation, as well as measures and instruments to warrant that staff maintains their competence (in accordance with statutory requirements).

Staff development takes place in a demonstrable manner and, at a minimum, ties in with any shortcomings in the education quality. The institution expressly involves the expertise of those who construct, establish and rate the examinations.

4.3.3.
Anchoring

A system has been laid down providing a structure for planning, monitoring, evaluation, improvement and accountability. Quality assurance is clearly embedded in the organisation. The system identifies the external stakeholders, the organisational level at which dialogue takes place, the topics to be discussed and the timeframe to be observed.

The examinations board is responsible for assuring the quality of examinations.

Aspect 4.4: dialogue and accountability

A sufficiently functioning dialogue regarding the quality is maintained with internal stakeholders and persons responsible as well as with external stakeholders. This dialogue comprises accountability regarding the quality provided and its improvement.

Indicator Portrait

4.4.1.
Internally

A working internal dialogue is maintained with students and staff in accordance with the law, in progress meetings and possibly in other bodies such as student panels. This dialogue addresses at least the education quality and its assessment.

A periodic accounting is given to the executive board, upper management and stakeholders. Accountability at least covers the outcomes of the assessment of the education quality, as well as the approach to and the effects of measures for improvement.

4.4.2. **Externally** A working dialogue is maintained at an appropriate level in the organisation, at any rate, with the business community. This dialogue addresses at least the development of the education provided and examinations, and the assessment of their quality and the programme portfolio.

The annual report is in keeping with the applicable legislation and regulations. An accounting is given to external stakeholders, at any rate regarding the ways in which their input has been put into effect, possibly supplementary to the accountability in the annual report.

DOMAIN 5: **compliance with statutory requirements**

Aspect 5.1: **compliance with statutory requirements. The programme satisfies all the statutory requirements.**

Indicator	Portrait
5.1.1. Compliance with statutory requirements	The programme satisfies all the statutory requirements. The inspectorate periodically determines which statutory requirements will receive additional attention.

DOMAIN 6: **quality of teaching**

Aspect 6.1: **teaching strategy**

The programme provides sufficient structure in the learning activities, instruction, supervision of the learning activities, practical exercises and feedback regarding the progress made.

Indicator	Portrait
6.1.1. Interaction	<p>The educational activities are sufficiently structured. The object, purpose and cohesion of the educational activities are clear to the students.</p> <p>Knowledge, attitudes and skills are transferred in an effective manner. This means that the curriculum content is clearly communicated to the students. The teachers are capable of effective communication. This pertains to interactions between teacher and student(s) as well as</p>

interactions among students. The interactions foster students' involvement in the instructional process. In addition, the interactions provide teachers with insight into learning impediments.

6.1.2. **Support and supervision of learning activities**

The support and supervision of the learning activities is geared to the needs of students. On the one hand, these needs involve current learning issues, on the other, individual requests for help or support, arising, for example from intake interviews, special needs provision or guidance activities. The students are encouraged to actually learn. This is demonstrated by students practicing with subject matter, processing assignments and being given sufficient opportunity to ask questions. Questions are addressed in an appropriate and timely manner.

6.1.3. **Feedback regarding the learning activities and learning outcomes**

Learning activities are carefully monitored at times befitting the teaching method, learning phase and (target) group. In addition to summative tests, formative tests are administered to systematically establish study progress. Deviant learning outcomes prompt diagnostic and corrective measures through feedback. The feedback focuses on the student's individual performance. Wherever necessary, the feedback is followed up with revision, additional explanation, additional exercises or enhancement assignments, etc.

Aspect 6.2: staff commitment (professional scope for and by teachers)

The institution allows the teachers room for a personal interpretation of the view of the institution and the teachers actually use this room in a professional manner, based on reflection and feedback.

Indicator	Portrait
6.2.1. Scope for teachers	The institution or, as the case may be, the department offers teachers professional room to properly fulfil their tasks. This is demonstrated by teachers receiving sufficient support from the educational organisation of the institution, as professionals and in terms of facilities such as time, materials and training, in order to properly fulfil their tasks. In addition, they use the available room to realise their own professional

expertise. This room also includes the autonomy to make substantive decisions regarding the individual practice of an occupation within the frameworks of the institution.

6.2.2.
**Interpretation
by teachers**

Teachers actually use the professional scope with which they are provided. Their work (in particular, learning situations) demonstrates that teachers give their personal interpretation to the school's (education) vision. This is demonstrated by a recognisable and adequate substantiation of the educational agreements made at the institution/department level.

6.2.3.
**Monitoring
and
improvement
by teachers**

The work of teachers demonstrates that they engage in their work in a professional manner. This is reflected in the fact that teachers have insight into the progress and quality of their own work, as individuals and as a team. It also means that in their work, teachers (mutually) reflect on the available competences (as a team) and learning environments appropriate to the content and level of the programme and student characteristics. This reflection may also be conducted by or with students. Teachers are interested in the results of reflection. They encourage one another on the basis of these results and demonstrate a professional willingness to improve their actions by engaging in the required professional development.

Aspect 6.3: staff development (teachers working in the school)

The institution has a view on the professional development of its staff and encourages this on the basis of the training needs of the institution and its teachers. The competences and qualifications of teachers are guaranteed.

Indicator

Portrait

6.3.1.
**Staff
development
concept**

The staff development plan of the institution or, as the case may be, the department shows that the professional development of teachers matches the student population. Staff development is organised and set up in a manner that justifies the expectation that students will be or are benefiting from it.

- 6.3.2. **Insight into quality of teachers**
 In principle, the institution evaluates and assesses the quality of the work of teachers on an annual basis and in a systematic fashion; the assessment covers teaching, developing and administering tests and tutoring. The management assesses the quality of teaching at least on the basis of its own lesson observations or lessons observed by others. Teachers are encouraged to focus on quality, in keeping with the view of the institution and the programme. The institution expressly involves the expertise of those who construct, establish and rate the examinations in this.
-
- 6.3.3. **Insight into training requirements**
 Its evaluations provide the institution with insight into the training needs of teachers, which ensue from personal needs and the requirements of the programme and the institution.
-
- 6.3.4. **Capable and qualified teachers**
 In the assessment of teachers, the institution enforces the competences requirements for teachers as laid down in the order in Council of 2003, under the Professions in Education Act. The teachers have a command of occupational and subject-specific competences, in addition to educational skills, that sufficiently prepare them for a position in vocational education with practical training and for working with qualifications dossiers.
-
- 6.3.5. **Improvement and assurance of the quality of the teachers**
 The institution sets down measures for improvement on the basis of deficiencies identified in teachers' competences. At some moment in time, it determines whether these deficiencies have actually been resolved and sees to it that the deficiencies resolved do not recur.

DOMAIN 7: **financial continuity**

Aspect 7.1: **financial position**

Indicator	Portrait
7.1.1. Solvency	The boards are able to meet their long-term financial obligations. Solvency (equity and provisions divided by total liabilities) is considered healthy if its value ranges between 0.2 and 0.6.

7.1.2. Liquidity	The boards are able to meet their short-term (<one year) obligations. Liquidity (short-term receivables and liquid assets divided by short-term debts) is considered healthy if its value is 0.5 or more.
7.1.3. Profitability	The boards balance out assets and liabilities. Profitability (result from ordinary operations divided by total assets from ordinary operations) is considered healthy if it has maintained a value of zero for a number of consecutive years.
7.1.4. Quality of annual accounts	The annual accounts meet the applicable guidelines and the policy objectives have been set down according to the key activities of the institution.

Aspect 7.2: financial management

Indicator	Portrait
7.2.1. Multi-year budget and annual budget	<p>The institution has a multi-year budget or estimate for the years ahead which is in keeping with the policy objectives formulated. It is based on a realistic estimate of output and expenditure and composed such that the financial position in terms of liquidity, financial buffer and solvency will remain healthy or be restored to a healthy state. Furthermore, financial reserves will not be increased unnecessarily.</p> <p>The institution has annual budgets for the current and coming year. The budgets meet the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) they have been drawn up in accordance with the internal articles of association and regulations; (b) they comprise all the relevant types of expenditure and cost centres and are sufficiently detailed to provide proper insight into the expected output and expenditure; the selection of cost centres is based on a distinction of at least the main individual activities such as sites, school types and private activities; (c) they are in keeping with the statement of assets and liabilities model in the institution's annual accounts; the estimated government grants are based on a sound forecast of the parameters relevant to funding (such as student numbers, diplomas, success rates) and the funding to be granted on that basis;

- (d) the types of expenditure whose nature may cause them to fluctuate are underpinned with plans, such as for maintenance, accommodation, teaching materials. Staff costs are in keeping with a multi-year staff establishment plan;
- (e) they comprise an outline of the main risks with regard to operational management and the measures these call for; the main differences from the previous budget and the most recent annual accounts have been properly explained (annual budget);
- (f) the main expected trends in expenditure and output have been properly explained (multi-year budget).

7.2.2.
Quality of
financial
management

The institution monitors the implementation of the annual budget and the multi-year budget by means of sound financial management including proper liquidity and asset management; the institution is capable of making timely adjustments if the need arises. The annual accounts are drawn up, set down and submitted in a timely fashion; they meet the applicable guidelines.

Towards a broader interpretation of the returns

In the future the inspectorate wants a broader interpretation of the term 'returns' for the adult and vocational education sector. The inspectorate means both social returns, internal and external recognition as well as learning returns of adult and vocational education.

The law ⁽³⁰⁾ has resulted in the following broad social assignments for funded adult and vocational education institutions on:

- (a) accessibility for disadvantaged groups;
- (b) getting a diploma and/or starting qualification;
- (c) which leads to getting sufficient internal return;
- (d) delivery of satisfactory learning returns;
- (e) diploma value and satisfactory external return;
- (f) fulfilment of requirements on regional and national employment markets.

For non-funded institutions only the assignments concerning certification and related required levels of qualification apply.

In its assessment, the inspectorate wants to do justice to the performance delivered in light of the broader assignment.

Accessibility for disadvantaged groups

The inspectorate assesses the degree to which institutions offer admission to – still to be defined – disadvantaged groups in the market relevant to the institution. In cases of marked deviation of intake respective to these groups in the relevant market, we request the institution to justify itself. If institutions have a lot of students from disadvantaged groups, course assessments will be placed in this context in the explanation section of the reports.

Teaching returns

In contrast to other sectors, until now it has not been possible to determine teaching returns of graduates in the adult and vocational education sector, in part due to decentralised examination. The inspectorate considers the following to be future possibilities for secondary vocational education:

⁽³⁰⁾ This is in line with what is determined in the WEB with respect to:

- (a) tasks of funded institutions (Article 1.3.5), including taking responsibility for accessibility to education, particularly for disadvantaged groups;
- (b) the qualification structure goal as expressed in Article 7.2.4, namely the match between the curriculum for professional training and society's requirements, also in light of the employment market outlook for graduates; also in relation to the employment market outlook duty of care in Article 6.1.3;
- (c) combating early school-leaving in Chapter 8 of the WEB.

- (a) once central examination has been introduced for Dutch and numeracy/mathematics the inspectorate will include the performance data for these subjects in a returns indicator;
- (b) the inspectorate is going to inspect the degree to which it is possible to determine (or have determined) and/or verify the aptitude of graduates, for example with random evaluation examination assignments ⁽³¹⁾. This is comparable to the working procedure of visitation panels within the accreditation system of the Dutch and Flemish Accreditation Organisation. A complication is that in secondary vocational education, in contrast to higher professional education, examination is done less with written papers, but more with skills testing. Obviously experts are involved in this.

Employment market requirements

The inspectorate wants to develop indicators for the degree to which institutions provide a sufficiently qualitative supply for the regional and sometimes the national employment market. Use can be made of employment market information, including the Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market and the Association of National Centres of Expertise on VET and the Labour Market. For now this has no consequences for assessment of returns. Here too, where there is a marked deviation in the balance of supply and demand, the institution must justify itself.

The inspectorate does consider these data in inspection of compliance with the employment market outlook duty of care in Article 6.1.3 of the WEB.

The inspectorate recognises the tension between the different expected returns. Therefore it wants to compare components of this (and specifically the return component) to other expectations the institution has to satisfy. This does not lead to a different assessment, as this would undermine the rights of all students to education at an equal level. The performance delivered will be described in light of this context in the reports.

⁽³¹⁾ See the advice 'a certificate of value' (*een diploma van waarde*), education board, 2010.

Inspection objects and institution rights

Inspection object

The inspection object is what we inspect for quality. That is usually the entire training programme that a group of students follows, from the first to the last academic year.

Basic programme of the qualification record (course code)	exit programme
	exit programme
	exit programme

The inspection object differs per inspection theme:

- (a) for the teaching process we review the student's entire training programme. This is the basic programme from the course code, plus a selected exit, learning path and location;
- (b) for examination we review the exams of the selected exit, learning path, examination type and location;
- (c) for the returns we review the entire cluster from the course code with all corresponding exit codes.

Relation to the central register of vocational courses (crebo) codes

At the final attainment stage the course and *crebo* code are the same.

At the stage of competence-based learning (*cgo*) the training programme always comprises several *crebo* codes, in every case a course code and exit code.

Moreover, in the transition phase several codes can be involved (including the so-called 'mid-codes') as can old final attainment codes.

With examination the object of research is the same as the *crebo* codes for the selected exit.

With the teaching process we include not only the *crebo* course code and the exit code, but also *crebo* predecessors. Our starting point for inspection is the clustering as applied by the institution.

For returns we use the same *crebo* codes, and also all exit codes, even if inspection of the teaching process and examination is restricted to one exit. All these *crebo* codes are taken together to determine the returns. The subsequent result applies to each individual exit and therefore also for the inspection selection of exit and location.

Reporting

We report on the inspected course, meaning the selected course programme: the basic programme and the selected exit at the inspected location, examination type and learning path. In reporting we always use the cluster of *crebo* codes the way the institution uses them as a complete system of courses.

Domains

By introducing domains, the possibility of setting up shared domain programmes for several qualification records is created. The diagram is then as follows:

Domain programme	Basic programme of course code A	exit programme A1
		exit programme A2
		exit programme A3
	Basic programme of course code B	exit programme B1
		exit programme B2
		exit programme B3

The inspection object for the teaching process is the programme of the selected course code with exit and the corresponding domain programme (where available). The object of inspection of returns must be determined more closely. For inspection of examination the domains have no consequences: this remains focused on exits.

Formal rights

The law awards rights to qualifications. At the final attainment stage that is the entire course and one *crebo*. The formal inspection object here is the course/*crebo*.

In *cgo* this is exits. If, after a course of intervention as an ultimate solution – rights are taken away, this also counts for an exit. This means that the formal inspection object for *cgo* is always exit. This means that judgements on quality of an inspected course (with a cluster of *crebo* codes) only has consequences regarding the rights for the one selected exit *crebo*. Only for that exit can rights be taken away from the institution, after a period of recovery. This applies both to the right to provide education and the right to examine.

Flow diagram

Quality inspection for one to five courses:

- (a) part system inspection;
- (b) inspection quality assurance;
- (c) verification risk analysis.

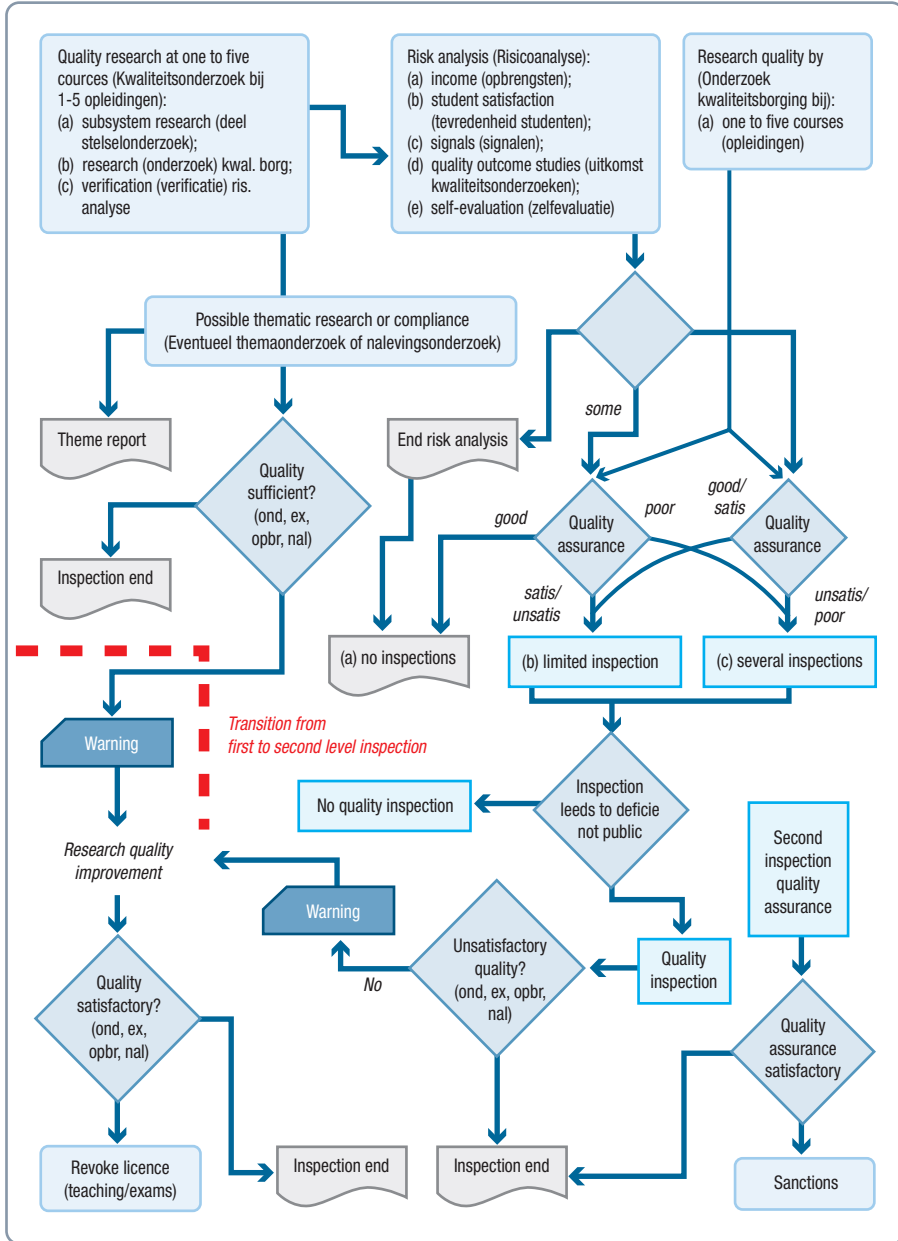
If required theme or compliance inspection. Risk analysis:

- (a) returns;
- (b) satisfaction students;
- (c) signals;
- (d) quality inspection outcome;
- (e) self-evaluation;
- (f) annual reporting.

Inspection quality assurance in:

- (a) one to five courses;
- (b) institution.

Triennial institution analysis



Source: Inspectorate of Education: Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
 (Inspectie van het Onderwijs: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap).

1.22. Questionnaire to students for evaluating and ameliorating learning and teaching ⁽³²⁾

Evaluation of learning and teaching

Course: _____

Instructor: _____

Please indicate your level of agreement by marking the respective number with a cross:

5	4	3	2	1	0
strongly agree	agree	more or less	disagree	strongly disagree	not applicable to this course

(a) Evaluation of the course

1. The course significantly improved my level of knowledge and skills.	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. The course was very interesting to me.	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. The course was very difficult.	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. Study materials for the course were available.	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. The level of study materials recommended by the instructor was very good.	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. All resources required for the learning process were available.	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. Theoretical (lectures) and practical (seminars, workshops) parts formed an integral whole.	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. The course contributed to achievement of the aims of the curriculum and learning the selected profession.	5	4	3	2	1	0

(b) Evaluation of the instructor

9. Presentation of the course was clear and logical.	5	4	3	2	1	0
--	---	---	---	---	---	---

⁽³²⁾ Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre (*Võrumaa Kutsehariduskeskus*), Väimela, Estonia, www.vkhk.ee/en [accessed 8.7.2014].

10. Classes were engaging.	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. The pace of the classes was acceptable to me.	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. The instructor followed the course programme.	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. The prerequisites and conditions for admission to the exam were known at the beginning of the course.	5	4	3	2	1	0
14. The instructor gave clear and explicit answers to the questions of students/trainees.	5	4	3	2	1	0
15. The instructor encouraged and counselled students/trainees in their independent work.	5	4	3	2	1	0
16. The instructor had good contact with the class.	5	4	3	2	1	0
17. The instructor was kind and tactful towards the students/trainees.	5	4	3	2	1	0
18. Opportunities to contact the instructor were very good.	5	4	3	2	1	0
19. The instructor was punctual, observed the times and deadlines.	5	4	3	2	1	0
20. All planned lectures/workshops took place.	5	4	3	2	1	0

(c) Information on the respondent

21. Study year.	5	4	3	2	1	0
22. First and last name of the student/trainee (not mandatory).	5	4	3	2	1	0
23. Prior knowledge was sufficient for passing this course.	5	4	3	2	1	0
24. Consulted with the instructor.	5	4	3	2	1	0
25. Participated in all classes.	5	4	3	2	1	0

(d) Your proposals for improving the level of teaching

Your evaluation has been very valuable. Thank you.

1.23. Guide for using the focus group technique in education and training ⁽³³⁾

The focus group

What is the focus group and what is it used for

The focus group is 'a qualitative technique of data collection, used in social research, which is based on information emerging from a group discussion on an issue or topic that the researcher wishes to investigate in depth' (Zammuner, 2003).

It is used in various fields and for many purposes that are not important in this context and for this reason are omitted.

In recent times use of this method has found wide acceptance in schools and social and educational settings, involving different members of the school and education, particularly students, teachers, parents, to investigate in depth some sensitive issues present in schools and education such as: bullying, family violence, use of drug and alcohol, sexual behaviour, school problems on the relationship with teachers, schoolmates, family and other particular situations, that are omitted because they do not concern the project's context.

The focus group is used mainly to:

- (a) obtain general information about a topic of interest, poorly dealt with in the literature;
- (b) generate hypotheses of research that can be checked during a quantitative phase of the research;
- (c) stimulate new ideas and creative concepts;
- (d) generate opinions and impressions relating to particular interesting topics;
- (e) know how to express a phenomenon of interest. This can be useful in creation of questionnaires for a quantitative phase of research;
- (f) deepen interpretation of data previously collected with quantitative instruments such as questionnaires, etc.

⁽³³⁾ Project LLP-LDV-TOI-09-IT-0448 'ValeRIA' 'Assessing the relationship between teaching and learning', Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore Altiero Spinelli, Milan, Italy, www.iisaltierospinelli.it [accessed 7.7.2014].

Methodology

The methodology consists of stimulation, with appropriate questions, of genuine opinions of participants on a particular topic, opinions that come into interaction with one another and give rise to discussions that often lead to generation of new ideas and opinions.

The focus group's peculiarity lies in its ability to generate reflections among those present and elicit previously unspoken opinions that sometimes the participating people did not think they had.

Important elements for effectiveness of focus groups are:

- (a) composition of the group;
- (b) setting (e.g. the environment in which the focus group takes place);
- (c) atmosphere;
- (d) communicative/relational skills of the leader;
- (e) cooperation of the assistant(s);
- (f) management of time;
- (g) type and sequence of questions.

The group can consist of a variable number of participants depending on the objectives to be achieved (number considered optimal: eight), selected according to predetermined criteria.

The setting must be appropriate to encourage group interaction, so the choice should be a classroom with good acoustics for recording with adequate lighting and large enough to have the chairs in a circle, so all participants and the facilitator can see one another; the observer should occupy a marginal position.

The time to devote to focus will be between 90 and 120 minutes, depending on the situation.

The questions and their order should be modulated according to the objectives and reactions of those present 'to give voice to participants' and understand their world and their experiences 'through their own words' (Rubin and Rubin, 1995).

Important for a successful focus group, as previously said, is formulation and sequence of the questions, in addition to the estimated time for answers and discussion.

How to use the focus group with different targets

Focus groups, in the school, can be used with different targets, for example teachers, students, parents; they can be homogeneous, constituted only of teachers, students or parents, or they can be heterogeneous, for example a focus group with teachers and students together; with teachers and parents together; with teachers, students and parents together.

Homogenous groups have an advantage of having a greater openness to discussion and an easier communicative stream, but they have a risk of conformism in the answers.

Heterogeneous groups have an advantage of providing richer and more various data, but they have a risk that comparison and discussion could slide into open conflict of little use to data gathering.

Focus groups on the same topic are used very much; they have both heterogeneous and homogeneous targets with data coming from different points of view in a peaceful, conversational climate/atmosphere.

Important for smooth running of the focus group

To create a good focus group the planning phase is important.

The key points to consider are the following:

- (a) objectives of the survey and methodological consistency:
 - (i) what are the reasons for launching this survey;
 - (ii) what is the information you want to obtain;
 - (iii) who will use the information;
 - (iv) how will the information be used;
 - (v) who can provide the information we need;
- (b) reference population:
 - (i) who is best placed to take the survey (they should be defined according to the object of study);
 - (ii) how many participants;
- (c) leader:
 - (i) determine how many and who;
 - (ii) decide presence/role of the assistant(s) (observer/co-host);
- (d) setting:
 - (i) determine the best place for group interactions;
- (e) questions:
 - (i) discussion grid;
 - (ii) type of questions that help to produce data and at the same time promote group conversation.

Particular attention must be paid to the atmosphere in which the focus group operates, because quantity and quality of the generated data depends on it.

In particular, a nervous and judgemental atmosphere will block genuine opinions and communicative stream of the conversation. A welcoming and non-judgemental atmosphere will encourage thoughts and encourage communication and discussion.

The leader's task is to create and preserve a positive atmosphere during the discussion, skilfully using communicative/relational competences, and observing and listening to participants to clarify, intervene and steer the conversation where necessary.

It is also important the leader monitors his/her own communicative behaviour in relation to the group dynamics.

Data analysis

Data analysis consists of examining, classifying, tabulating, recombining and interpreting information from the focus group, to be able to answer questions put by research and transfer the results into a report.

The analysis is a complex process because the information derives from many sources: notes of the leader, notes of observers on communications of participants, transcript of the recordings, and oral information from the leader.

Regardless of the method of analysis used, it is advisable to take some principles into account.

The analysis must:

- (a) be systematic, it must handle data in an organised and sequential way;
- (b) be focused, it must not take all the data into account, but focus on data on substantial questions;
- (c) allow a process of comparison between participants of the same focus group;
- (d) compare results of many focus groups on the same topic;
- (e) explain the investigated problem.

Report

For drafting the final report the following points should be considered:

- (a) describe carefully and logically the work carried out, paying particular attention to the reason for the survey, its object, criteria and methods;
- (b) communicate the results;
- (c) provide suggestions for further action.

In-depth examinations

Conducting a focus group – Some definitions

A focus group is:

- (a) a carefully planned discussion where participants can explain their own opinions more easily than in an individual interview, in a permissive and non-threatening environment (Krueger, 1994);

- (b) a research technique in soft evaluation approaches, qualitative, when it is considered convenient to turn to assessments, judgements, opinions expressed by experts or users/customers, to gather different points of view on a topic, to approve outcome, or product broadly speaking (Bertin, 1996);
- (c) a particular kind of group interview, based on explorative potential of interactive communication, verbal and non-verbal, that allows the researcher to receive feedback from his/her reference population (Bovina, 1998);
- (d) a qualitative technique for data collection, used in social research, based on information emerging from a group discussion on an issue or topic that the researcher wishes to investigate in-depth (Zammuner, 2003).

In short, a focus group is a planned discussion among a group of carefully selected people facilitated by a leader, that, with targeted questions, creates communicative interaction among participants and a favourable environment for genuine opinions and explanations to emerge on a specific topic investigated in depth ⁽³⁴⁾.

Peculiarity of the focus group lies in its ability to generate reflections and elicit previously unspoken opinions that sometimes participants were unaware they had.

Application areas

- (a) Academic research.
- (b) Community research.
- (c) Organisational research.
- (d) Educational research.
- (e) Health research.
- (f) Marketing research.
- (g) School research.

Focus group on school research

Participants: students, teachers, parents

Aims: investigate sensitive topics: bullying, family violence, use of drugs and alcohol, sexual behaviour, school problems on the relationship with teachers, schoolmates and family.

⁽³⁴⁾ The elements that characterise the focus group are In bold.

Planning the focus group

- (a) Reasons for the survey:
 - (i) what are the reasons for launching this survey.
- (b) Objectives of the survey:
 - (i) what is the information you want to obtain.
- (c) Reference population:
 - (i) who is best placed to take the survey;
 - (ii) how many participants.
- (d) Group:
 - (i) homogeneous;
 - (ii) heterogeneous;
 - (iii) how many groups.
- (e) Leader/moderator/facilitator:
 - (i) how many;
 - (ii) who;
- (f) Observer:
 - (i) how many;
 - (ii) who;
 - (iii) what function.
- (g) Setting:
 - (i) where is the best place;
 - (ii) where to position the participants.
- (h) Questions:
 - (i) what approach for conducting the focus group;
 - (ii) what approach for the discussion grid;
 - (iii) what approach for the observation grid.

Approaches for conducting the focus group

Guide by topic (made up of a list of topics to suggest to participants; it is little used).

Structured grid (made up of a series of questions – incentive-built according to determined criteria; it is often used because it creates a sensation of confidence in the leader and allows comparison of results of many focus groups).

Feature of questions

- (a) Short.
- (b) Clear.
- (c) Adapted to the language level of the participants.

Type of questions

- (a) Open.
- (b) That do not give the answer.
- (c) Retrospective.
- (d) Non-intrusive.
- (e) Yes/no questions (when there is a risk of bias) ⁽³⁵⁾.

Categories of questions

- (a) Opening question.
- (b) Introductory question.
- (c) Transition question.
- (d) Key question.
- (e) Final question.

Phases of the focus group

- (a) Opening phase (opening question, introductory question, transition question).
- (b) Essential phase (key questions).
- (c) Closing phase (questions, summary, forms of reflection, etc.)

Atmosphere of the focus

- (a) A nervous and judgemental atmosphere blocks the stream of communication and expression of genuine opinions.
- (b) A welcoming and non-judgemental atmosphere encourages emergence of thoughts and promotes communicative interaction.

Categories of messages that block communication

- (a) Evaluate/judge/criticise.
- (b) Give orders.
- (c) Interpret.
- (d) Reassure.
- (e) Investigate.
- (f) Solve.

Professional figures of the focus group

- (a) The leader/moderator/facilitator.
- (b) The assistant (observer, secretary, co-host).

⁽³⁵⁾ The word bias (from Greek bias, violence) means distortions in the answers due to influence of those present or to reasons of social desirability.

Role of the leader/moderator/facilitator

Activate and manage communicative interaction and group discussions to get useful information for the survey.

Role of the observer in ValeRIA

Help the leader manage the focus group as:

- (a) observer of verbal communication;
- (b) observer of non-verbal communication.

Features of the leader

- (a) He/she has communicative/relational skills.
- (b) He/she develops skills of group scanning that consist of looking at the group as a whole and at the same time paying attention to each member individually.
- (c) He/she can observe, for example non-verbal signals of disagreement; it is good that he/she intervenes to help participants explain their opinions, using interpretational questions as: did I understand correctly if I say that...
- (d) He/she can listen using, for example the active listening technique that consists of restitution to a person of what they said, rephrased in his/her own words, without removing or adding.

The paraphrase is introduced by sentences such as:

- (i) it seems to me to understand that ...;
- (ii) in other words ...;
- (iii) you mean that ...;
- (iv) therefore ...
- (e) He/she is able to monitor his/her own communicative behaviour, using non-verbal behaviour that encourages conversation.
 For example:
 - (i) avoid any gestures in agreement or disagreement through head movements or facial expressions;
 - (ii) signal someone to continue;
 - (iii) control anything that could be perceived as judgemental.
- (f) He/she is able to encourage group interaction by avoiding, for example, an authoritarian attitude, and making the group feel more important than him/her.

He/she is able to moderate interventions using assertive communication techniques. For example, if participants monopolise the conversation and do not let others talk, the leader, when they have finished

talking, makes them understand that although their intervention is important, others' interventions are also important.

To stop the communicative stream he/she can use a sentence such as: thank you for your intervention. Is there anyone who has a different point of view?

Leader's behaviour that encourage the communicative stream

- (a) Do not give personal opinions.
- (b) Do not fill a silent pause promptly: they are useful to mark passing from one topic to another.
- (c) Direct a discussion that wanders off the topic.
- (d) Moderate interventions adequately.
- (e) Do not focus attention on more interesting or interested participants.

Conducting techniques: questions to deepen the topic

The leader can clarify and/or deepen the topic, by asking participants:

- (a) specification questions; for example what did you do next? What happened next;
- (b) follow-up questions; for example, if ...(facts, problems, situations) so what... (opinions, causes, solutions);
- (c) probing questions; for example, have you got anything else in mind;
- (d) other questions; for example could you explain better? Give an example, I did not understand correctly ... could you tell me anything in addition.

Conducting techniques: funnelling technique

The funnelling technique is asking questions according to order of importance, putting key topics in central position, when levels of reflection and interaction are greater.

This technique uses the following strategies:

- (a) ask questions from general to specific;
- (b) reflect on positive and negative aspects of the topic (asking first the negative and then the positive questions);
- (c) allow pauses (to give possibilities to reflect and rouse further comments).

Some strategies for the discussion

- (a) 'Focus' on the topic in case of digressions (interrupt persons who wander from the topic, diplomatically).
- (b) For example, we are more interested in your opinion about... rather than...
Deepen group comments (for example, with questions, above all when all participants agree).

Conclusions

To conduct a successful focus group use your personal communicative/relational skills consciously, acquire or improve some specific competences, to encourage moments of individual reflection and create an atmosphere of positive interaction among participants so they provide useful opinions for the survey.

1.24. Example of an improvement action plan and its explanation note (first example) ⁽³⁶⁾

Explanation why this improvement action was selected

The subject ‘teaching to learn’ was selected for an improvement action because our students do not know how to learn. Our primary aim is to develop and use methods which help to involve our students in the learning process and improve their activity thus also strengthening their motivation. Students should be taught how to learn! In this process the (new) methods to teach students to learn will play an important role. We would like to expand and enrich collection of the methods and tools used to support the students’ learning, namely acquisition of knowledge by students on their own (helping acquisition of learning techniques, supporting independent performance of learning tasks, etc.) so that the methods related to modular training and project method will be emphasised.

This subject was also chosen because this topic is closely related to our school’s strategic objectives and the teaching staff identified it as a number one priority. Efficiency of the process will be assessed and evaluated by using questionnaire-based surveys for parents, students and teachers. Our objectives will be attained if there is a 5% increase in the satisfaction rate of our partners compared to the previous year.

⁽³⁶⁾ Nándor Handler vocational school, Sopron, Hungary.

Improvement action plan of the Nándor Handler vocational school, Hungary

Objective of the improvement action

Teaching students how to learn by using methods encouraging students' active participation in the learning process.

Category of the objective

Short-term objective.

Target

The satisfaction rate of parents and students with the support provided for learning should increase by 5% and the number of teachers using each of these methods by 5%.

How to measure the attainment of the target set?

By conducting questionnaire-based surveys.

Project leader

Quality manager.

Start of the project

15 April 2011.

End of the project

30 April 2012.

Improvement action plan

Methodology of learning – to teach the students how to learn

Task	Person responsible	Participants, contributors	Resources
1. Establishment of the improvement team	Quality manager	Teaching staff members	
2. Assessment of the current state	Quality manager	Improvement team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • Computer
3. Collection of existing methods	Improvement team leader	Improvement team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • Computer
4. Document analysis, surveying methodological requirements of curricula. Summarising results (kinds of teaching-learning methods and procedures in use)	Improvement team leader	Improvement team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • Computer
5. Definition of potential trainers and participants of training. Definition of the place and time of training	Improvement team leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headmaster • Teaching team leaders 	
6. Delivering training in the subject 'teaching students how to learn' (milestone)	Trainers	Teaching staff in six groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training room • Computer • Beamer
7. Integration of new methods into syllabi of the related subjects (with special regard to grade 9)	Deputy headmaster responsible for education and organisational matters	Teaching staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer
8. Application of the new methods in education and training	Deputy headmaster responsible for education and organisational matters	Teachers completed the training	
9. Partners' needs and satisfaction survey in the subject 'development/improvement of the methodological culture'	Quality manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality improvement team • Headmaster 	

Duration	Deadline	Method(s) used	Expected result
One hour	15 April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting • Discussion 	Improvement team established
Four hours	20 April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of documents • Discussion 	Mapping the current situation
Four hours	1 May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of the methods and tools used by the teaching teams 	Cumulative list of the methods applied
Four hours	10 May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming • Collection of the needs for new methods of the teaching teams • Summing up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of the needs for new methods • Finalised list
One hour	12 May 2011		List of trainers and participants of training
Three hours	19 May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training 	Expanding the set of methods and tools used in support for teaching students to learn
	16 September 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedagogical planning 	The new methodology should appear in planning pedagogical activities (e.g. when designing the lessons)
	From September 2011 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodology of teaching students how to learn 	Application and professional control of the new methods
Four hours	30 April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners' surveys and evaluation of results 	The satisfaction rate of parents and students with support provided for learning should increase by 5% and the number of teachers using each of these methods by 5%

1.25. Example of an improvement action plan (second example) ⁽³⁷⁾

Area of improvement/weakness found

Activity	Objective
Prior knowledge testing	Lesson adjustment to abilities and prior knowledge of students
Use of movies and computer simulations	Increase motivation, abilities of students, design resource base for demonstration of procedure and make it accessible to every teacher
Stimulate students to use professional literature and autonomously search for solutions	Students use professional literature and autonomously search for solutions
Career guidance for students	Professional more competent students, connection with companies with modern equipment
Professional seminars – good practice in school centres and connection with companies	More competent teachers

Source: Head of quality commission.

⁽³⁷⁾ Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Education and Sport: a consortium of school centres (*Republika Slovenija, Ministrstvo za solstvo in Sport: konzorcij šolskih centrov*).

Expected result	Person in charge	Time	Monitoring implementation of action
Better academic success, better understanding of subject and shortening of preface explanation	Every teacher	At marking period	Headmaster
More successful students, better job guidance for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director • Headmaster 	Next school year	Headmaster
Higher level of knowledge, diversification of lessons, achievement of professional literature – magazines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers • Headmaster 	Next school year	Headmaster
More active students at work, higher self-esteem of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers 	Continuously	Headmaster
Professional seminars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headmaster • Heads of teachers' working group (in the same area) 	Once a year	Headmaster

1.26. Student questionnaire ⁽³⁸⁾

(Assessment by grade: one to six; one = agree completely, six = do not agree at all)

PART I: the school environment						
Question	How do you assess the following statements?					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. The school building and schoolyard are clean						
2. The classroom offers a pleasant working environment						
3. The workshops and functional rooms (e.g. chemistry, physics, IT, lab, kitchen) are well equipped						
4. The classrooms have good equipment (e.g. overhead projector)						
5. The equipment (e.g. computers, machines) is always ready to use						
PART II: organisation and information						
Question	How do you assess the following statements?					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. I receive information about schedules, block schedules and substitutions in a timely manner						
2. Problems with the building (e.g. heating, windows, toilets, lighting, etc.) are promptly resolved						
3. Other than teachers, there are other contacts for us at the school (liaison teachers, social workers, pupil representatives, counsellors, or similar)						
4. The school's website is up to date and informative						
5. The signs are understandable and the room identification is clear						

⁽³⁸⁾ Dr Walter Bruch School BBZ (vocational centre), Saarland, Germany.

PART III: lessons at school

Question	How do you assess the following statements?	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Lessons begin and end on time						
2.	The assigned textbooks are appropriately used						
3.	We can often work on the content of lessons ourselves (worksheets, content from books and the Internet, etc.)						
4.	Homework is regularly assigned and discussed						
5.	The instructional materials used are up to date and have an appealing design						

PART IV: performance assessment for the school

Question	How do you assess the following statements?	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Tests are announced in a timely manner						
2.	The grading of tests is always understandable						
3.	Tests are corrected and returned in a timely manner						
4.	Final grades (on report cards) are not just determined from test grades (presentations, participation, homework, etc. are also taken into consideration)						
5.	A sufficient number of tests are given						

Would you recommend this type of school?

- Yes No

Comments and suggestions for improvement:

1.27. Teaching reflection ⁽³⁹⁾

Reflection on teaching

1. Formal data

Teacher		Colleague	
---------	--	-----------	--

Date		Time		Class	
------	--	------	--	-------	--

Subject/subject area/academic area

Topic of the lesson

2. How is the lesson structured?

(e.g. introduction, execution, reinforcement)

3. How is pupil autonomy encouraged?

(e.g. are they easy to understand, legible, up to date)

4. Which materials does the teacher use during the lesson?

5. Which suggestions are given for future lessons?

The teacher must file this form in their personal records.

⁽³⁹⁾ Dr Walter Bruch School BBZ (vocational centre), Saarland, Germany.

1.28. Checklist for school action plan (SAP) development ⁽⁴⁰⁾

No	Component completed:	yes	no
1	Is the plan complete (have all the sections from the attached content been filled in)?		
2	The plan has a professional appearance: (a) it is a single document with a cover/title page mentioning the name of the school and the fact that this is a SAP for 2007-13; (b) it includes a contents page; (c) it has no spelling or printing mistakes; (d) the layout is clear and allows an easy reading of the document.		
3	The plan is written in a clear and accessible style for people who do not work in education and/or includes a glossary explaining any specialised terms or terms from the educational field.		
4	Do the first two parts reflect the fact that the plan adopts a long-term perspective until 2010, as well as the fact that it includes an operational plan for one year: (a) the needs analysis refers to the situation until 2010 and it includes conclusions drawn on anticipation data as well as on historical data; (b) it refers to the regional education action plan (REAP) ⁽⁴¹⁾ and to the local education action plan (LEAP) ⁽⁴²⁾ with regard to the long-term requirements and priorities; (c) the objectives and targets are provided for the time period until 2013 or at least beyond 2011.		

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Airinei Telecommunications Technical College, Bucharest, Romania, <http://airinei.omad.ro> [accessed 9.7.2014].

⁽⁴¹⁾ REAP – provides an overview on the regional context – demographic, labour market and economic trends and Pentru forecasts.

⁽⁴²⁾ LEAP – analysis of the county context, with focus on specific issues of the TVET system at county level.

5	<p>The plan contains a substantial needs analysis from an external perspective including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) labour market demand and final users' needs, including students' needs; (b) relevant information on the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) development and especially the skills needs for the fields/sectors for which the school provides vocational training; (c) clear conclusions on the implications for the future of TVET. <p>Note that the needs analysis should not repeat the information found in the needs analysis within REAP and LEAP, but it must include relevant conclusions on the future plans of the school.</p>		
6	<p>The plan comprises a self-assessment of the internal environment and of the strengths and weaknesses of the actual educational provision for each of the headings specified in the guide for SAP development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) teaching and learning; (b) teaching materials and resources; (c) students' outcomes; (d) guidance and counselling services for students; (e) qualifications and curriculum; (f) physical and human resources; (g) partnership and collaboration. <p>Note that at this stage only resource centres are fully implementing the quality assurance standards and self-assessment procedures, but all other schools were required to pilot some form of self-assessment.</p> <p>Have clear conclusions, and not only a set of statements, been formulated?</p>		
7	<p>There is a summary (preferably maximum two pages) of SWOT that regards mainly the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) presents the main conclusions; (b) helps identify elements that need to be developed and priorities; (c) creates links between the proof collected during the internal analysis and those collected during the external analysis. 		

8	<p>The plan identifies a set of priorities which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) are based on the needs analysis; (b) are correlated with the priorities within REAP and LEAP; (c) are adapted to the school profile and its mission; (d) are correlated with the TVET reform programme as identified by the training sessions within the current PHARE project; (e) focus on the key interventions (it is better to have less than more such interventions that cannot be performed). <p>Note that the plans should not include any priority goal to which the school cannot contribute, for example the establishment of a regional or local observatory.</p>		
9	<p>Does the plan include a clear set of objectives and targets that are correlated to the priorities? These:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) contribute to coherent local planning that ensures existence of a coordinated training offer in a certain geographical area; (b) improve and modernise teaching and learning by adopting new student-centred methods and satisfy students with special needs; (c) fulfil the need to provide continuous adult training. 		
10	<p>SMART objectives and targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) refer to a specific development aspect, but with a view to 2010 (these objectives should not cover only one year); (b) include a measurable target (ideally a target that can be measured simply); (c) is the measurement method clear; (d) are the objectives achievable during the specified period of time and with estimated available resources, being at the same time sufficiently ambitious and demanding for the school to encourage actions for improvement; (e) are the objectives relevant for the future school mission and profile (considering other schools in the area); (f) do the targets to be achieved specify the period 2013. 		

11	<p>Is each objective accompanied by a corresponding set</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) established for the next school year; (b) included in the school activity and responsibility area, taking into account its mission and profile (namely you should specify the activities the school can perform). 		
12	<p>Are the actions directly connected to achievement of the specified objectives?</p>		
13	<p>Are these actions based on the principle of collaboration and partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) between members of the school staff; (b) with other schools from the geographical area; (c) with other schools that provide qualifications in the same field or in similar fields; (d) with psychopedagogical services; (e) with employment agencies; (f) with employers and employers' associations. 		
14	<p>Do the actions support the decision to increase and improve school networks and work in partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) is the partnership plan included in the SAP. 		
15	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) are the actions realistic and achievable, but at the same time ambitious; (b) are they clearly and unambiguously formulated; (c) have partners been identified; (d) has the leader/person in charge been nominated for each action as well as duration of the action; (e) have the implications been analysed from the resources perspective. 		
16	<p>Is there evidence that SAP development has been completed through a collaboration and consultation process (this aspect should be included in the fourth part of the plan). Is there proof that the following have been consulted when developing the plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) employers, employees, SME owners and employers' associations; (b) employment agencies; (c) parents; (d) students; (e) school staff; 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (f) teachers and directors from other schools; (g) school managing board (not only for approval, but also as a source of guidance and counselling); (h) inspectors/TVET inspectors. 		
17	<p>Does the plan contain proper mechanisms for monitoring and analysis by people responsible for action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) managers; (b) school director; (c) school board. 		
18	<p>Have the vocational development needs of staff members been identified?</p>		
19	<p>The enrolment plan is logically correlated with SAP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) it supports the priorities, objectives and targets; (b) does it take into account offers of other schools in the city and other factors such as future numbers of young people in the area and future demand for such qualifications. 		

1.29. Example of a SWOT analysis ⁽⁴³⁾

Verdigris Valley Electric Cooperative SWOT analysis

Internal strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Longstanding experience (traditions) in teaching certain professions.• Fanaticism about teaching.• Practice facilities (wood, metal).• Internal development activities.• Participation in external projects.• Participation of teachers in training and practice courses.• Good location.• Evaluation of subjects, feedback.• Good competitive ability of graduates on the labour market.• Success of students in professional competitions.• Created motivation for learning.• Organisational division.
Internal weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of textbooks.• Insufficient cooperation between different specialities.• Weak know-how in new specialities.• Insufficient motivation among students.• Few leisure time opportunities for students, lack of rooms for independent work.• Cooperation with employers.• Insufficient opportunities for practice organisation (too few, instructors, motivation).• Mediocre reputation.• Few opportunities for exchanging experience with colleagues.• Lack of vision (where do we want to go?).• Recruitment of staff.• Weak traditions.• Lacking room for teachers.• Condition of the main building.• Catering.• Slow work of the administrative department.• Movement of information.• Lack of unified collective.

<p>External threats</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low reputation of vocational education. • Movement of youth into large cities. • Varying level of graduates. • Uncertainties in legislation. • Lack of education policy. • Decreasing population numbers. • Discipline at school, in the company. • Insufficiently developed infrastructure (communication, information, transport). • Dispersed placement of study buildings. • Weak regional policy. • Outflow of qualified employees. • Insufficient financial support from the State.
<p>External opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest of entrepreneurs. • Development of entrepreneurship, financial situation. • Practice motivation (compensation for the school). • Education policy (vocational education reform). • Demand on the labour market. • Improved reputation of Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre. • State subscription. • Higher value of professionals in society. • Support from local government and the State. • Amendments of legislation (provision of vocational education at several levels). • In-service training opportunities for teachers outside the school. • Traditions connected to agriculture. • Development of vocational education. • Various programmes and projects. • Development of infrastructure. • Increased cooperation between professional associations.

⁽⁴³⁾ Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre (*Võrumaa Kutsehariduskeskus*), Väimela, Estonia, www.vkhk.ee/en [accessed 8.7.2014].

Identification of target groups

- (a) Students pursuing qualifications (vocational secondary education, included after basic school, applied higher education).
- (b) Students with special needs.
- (c) Adults:
 - (i) staff of companies and organisations, including own school staff;
 - (ii) practice supervisors in companies, etc.
- (d) Youth without basic education:
 - (i) preliminary training for pupils in basic school;
 - (ii) vocational training for students who have passed the minimum school-leaving age (17+).
- (e) Students in a speciality (for people with varying educational backgrounds).
- (f) Unemployed persons (retraining and rehabilitation).
- (g) Foreign students.
- (h) Students from adult gymnasium.
- (i) Dropouts from vocational schools and potential dropouts.

Mission

Training a competitive labour force at EU level.

Good schooling for entire life.

Vision 2012

Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre in south-eastern Estonia is a multifunctional school based on a network of vocational education institutions, offering competence-based training, which is flexible in responding to changes in the labour market, considers individual development and abilities of students and supports development of the region through its support services.

1.30. Example of an organisational structure ⁽⁴⁴⁾

Organisational structure of a VET school

To achieve the school's objectives, the school has a study department, an administrative department and an organisational division.

Structural units formed by the head of the school may be part of the study department: chairs, library, adult education division, consultation division. The study department is managed by a deputy head for learning.

The study department:

- (a) guarantees quality of education based on established standards;
- (b) observes and fulfils requirements applied to implementation of higher education curricula;
- (c) fulfils the school's development plan;
- (d) directs, organises, analyses and evaluates the educational work;
- (e) manages development of curricula;
- (f) coordinates applied research;
- (g) coordinates fee-charging professional training;
- (h) plans for teaching staff needs, analyses and evaluates their work;
- (i) plans for teaching aids' needs optimising their use;
- (j) manages the study information system;
- (k) ensures cooperation with pupils' and students' self-government;
- (l) maintains and promotes public and foreign relations;
- (m) organises fulfilment of the school's activity plan and keeps records;
- (n) develops the library;
- (o) launches and coordinates projects;
- (p) coordinates in-service training for staff;
- (q) organises pupil and student exchange and foreign exchange of teachers;
- (r) looks for sponsorship opportunities.

The administrative department is managed by the head of the administrative department.

The administrative department:

- (a) financially supports provision of education;
- (b) ensures functioning of school infrastructure as required;
- (c) provides the necessary technical materials for the study process;

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre (*Võrumaa Kutsehariduskeskus*), Väimela, Estonia, www.vkhk.ee/en [accessed 8.7.2014].

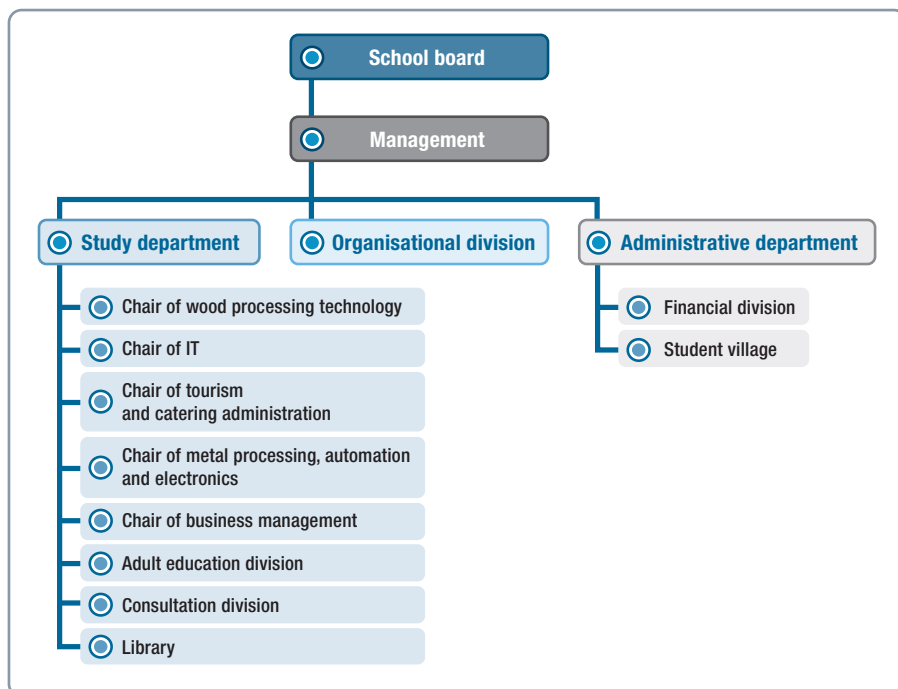
- (d) maintains State assets and keeps their value;
- (e) organises public procurement;
- (f) ensures self-sufficiency of the dormitory;
- (g) plans for staff needs in the administrative department, analyses and evaluates their work.

The organisational division is managed by the quality director.

The organisational division:

- (a) collects and analyses information necessary for school management;
- (b) strategically plans activities of the school and develops school regulations and strategies;
- (c) organises document administration and circulation;
- (d) develops and administers information systems;
- (e) develops and implements a quality control and evaluation system for the school's activities;
- (f) plans for staff needs, analyses and evaluates their work;
- (g) organises accounting.

Figure 23. **Structure of Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre**



1.31. Description of staff responsibilities with regard to quality ⁽⁴⁵⁾

To ensure interaction between departments, divisions and the administration in the institution's everyday activities.

Structure of the QMS

The quality manager

The quality manager at the Lithuanian Maritime Academy (LMA) is head of the personnel and quality system. The quality manager:

- (a) is responsible for the functioning and improvement of the quality system;
- (b) designs, approves and issues documents of the quality system;
- (c) holds annual meetings of LMA administration to assess the functioning of the quality system;
- (d) plans and organises internal audits of quality and revision and preventive actions;
- (e) encourages the staff to observe the quality system and submit proposals for its improvement;
- (f) manages activities of internal auditors and quality representatives in departments and divisions.

Quality representatives

Quality representatives in departments and divisions are heads of departments, the Seamen's Training Centre and divisions.

Quality representatives:

- (a) check how subordinates meet quality requirements;
- (b) ensure observation of quality system requirements in departments and divisions;
- (c) register non-compliance;
- (d) seek removal of shortcomings or non-compliance at work.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Lithuanian Maritime Academy (*Lietuvos aukštoji jūreivystės mokykla*), Klaipėda, Lithuania.

The staff

The staff (academic, administrative, department and division staff) record shortcomings or non-compliance with requirements of LMA's internal regulations and procedures and report them to their intermediate authorities.

All LMA staff are responsible for:

- (a) accumulation, documentation and storage of records of the quality system;
- (b) precise and transparent identification of records kept in e-media.

Internal auditors

At the LMA, internal auditors are the assistant director and head of the personnel and quality system. Internal auditors:

- (a) plan and execute the quality internal audit;
- (b) identify non-compliances and to prepare statements;
- (c) report results of quality internal audits;
- (d) check removal of non-compliances and report to the administration.

1.32. Example of staff responsibility with regard to quality ⁽⁴⁶⁾

The IT lab plans, designs, and uses IT and promotes opportunities for its use in the study process.

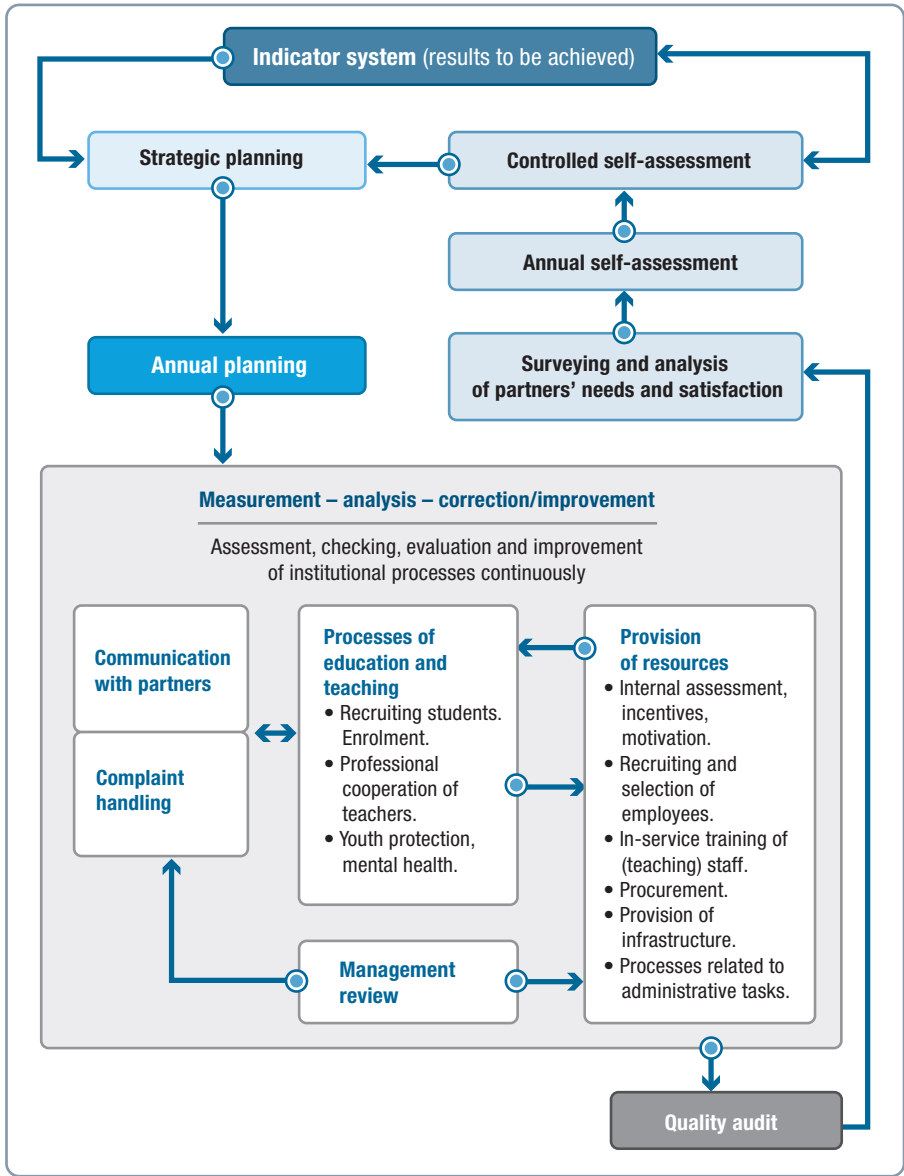
The library ensures provision of LMA study fields with information; creates conditions for using internal and external information resources; provides services that meet LMA students' and academic and administrative staff needs and supports implementation of the LMA strategic action plan.

The department of studies is in charge of planning, organising, coordinating and restructuring studies, assurance and improvement of quality of the study process and formation and presentation of data on studies and students for applicants to the LMA.

The department of international relations and project activities develops international relations, initiates and coordinates LMA project activities, and disseminates information on the activities.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Lithuanian Maritime Academy (*Lietuvos aukštoji jūreivystės mokykla*), Klaipėda, Lithuania.

1.33. Example of a process map ⁽⁴⁷⁾



⁽⁴⁷⁾ Nándor Handler vocational school, Sopron, Hungary.

1.34. Questionnaire to students for assessing training completed ⁽⁴⁸⁾

Assessment of the training by the trainee

You have just finished a training course. We hope it will be of great benefit for you. By filling in this questionnaire you will help us to assess the quality of our service. Your remarks and comments will contribute to improving future sessions. These sheets are systematically read and analysed. Analysis leads to remedial actions, as necessary. Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete this form.

Date of the end of training

Title of the training

Name, first name (optional)

Overall appreciation of the service

--

-

+

++

What did you like

What did you not like

What did you miss

Welcome, information

--

-

+

++

Comments

At your initial welcome the staff were available

The information provided was clear and relevant

The time delay between your first contact with GRETA and the proposal for your training was reasonable

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Academic delegation to the continuing education (*Délégation académique à la formation continue*) (DAFCO)/national network of public and adult education centres (*groupements d'établissements*) (GRETA) (Region Basse-Normandie), Caen, France, www.ac-caen.fr [accessed 8.7.2014].

Training project	--	-	+	++	Comments
Your personal constraints were taken into consideration when designing your training plan					
The objectives and contents corresponded to your expectations					
You received all information and explanations necessary to start your training					
Implementation of training	--	-	+	++	Comments
The premises were appropriate					
The material at your disposal was satisfactory					
The educational materials provided were clear and useful					
The guidance was dynamic and efficient					
The trainers' teaching methods satisfied you					
The balance between theory and practice was satisfactory					
The trainers were competent in their professional sectors					
The trainers were available and receptive					
The training fostered development of your autonomy					
You could easily follow up your progress					
Your training objectives were reached					
Recognition of your acquired competences increased your training's value					

1.35. Example of a cooperation agreement between a VET provider and a company ⁽⁴⁹⁾

Cooperation agreement No (organisation of professional traineeship)

This agreement has been concluded on, in Väimela between the Võru County Vocational Education Centre, represented by Tanel Linnus (hereinafter the 'school'), represented by (hereinafter the 'company'), and(hereinafter the 'student'), who have agreed to the following terms and conditions:

- (a) within the scope of this agreement, the parties shall develop mutual cooperation in the organisation of professional traineeship for the students;
- (b) Võru County Vocational Education Centre undertakes:
 - (i) to send the student ... to professional traineeship from ... to ...;
 - (ii) duration of the traineeship: ... hours;
 - (iii) to appoint ... as the school's supervisor of the traineeship;
 - (iv) to provide the student with traineeship guidelines;
- (c) the company undertakes to:
 - (i) enable the student to carry out the traineeship according to the programme;
 - (ii) appoint a supervisor of traineeship from the company in order to ensure efficient completion of traineeship;
 - (iii) provide safety instructions pursuant to valid legislation;
 - (iv) assess the traineeship of the student;
- (d) the student undertakes to:
 - (i) appear at the location of traineeship at the start of traineeship;
 - (ii) follow the internal work and safety procedures established in the company;
 - (iii) follow correctly the instructions given by the supervisor from the company;

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Võrumaa Vocational Education Centre (*Võrumaa Kutsehariduskeskus*), Väimela, Estonia, www.vkhk.ee/en [accessed 8.7.2014].

- (iv) participate in the daily work of the company pursuant to the traineeship programme;
- (e) the school shall have the right to:
 - (i) recall the student if it will be impossible to carry out the traineeship pursuant to the traineeship programme;
- (f) the company shall have the right to:
 - (i) remove the student from traineeship due to unauthorised absence from work, infringement of internal work or safety procedures and to notify the school;
- (g) the student shall have the right to:
 - (i) apply for a new location of traineeship if the company is unable to ensure compliance with the traineeship programme;
- (h) this agreement has been concluded and signed in three identical English copies of which each party shall receive one copy;
- (i) any questions and disputes arising from this contract shall be solved through negotiations;
- (j) requisite information and signatures of the parties:

Võru County Vocational Education Centre	Company:
Reg. No: 70005542	Registration No:
Väimela, Võru County	Address:
65501 Võru County	Phone:
Phone: 782 8649	Fax:
Signature	Signature

Võru County Vocational Education Centre	
Name of the student:	Specialty:
Study year:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Signature	

1.36. Questionnaire for evaluation of work-based learning ⁽⁵⁰⁾

Course end date:	
Course title:	
Last name, first name (optional):	

Trainee's evaluation of course

We hope the course you just completed will prove useful to you. By filling in this questionnaire you can help us assess the quality of the training we provide and to improve future sessions. These sheets are systematically analysed and used to take any necessary corrective steps.

Thank you for taking a few moments to fill in this form.

Key:	++	Very satisfactory
	+	Satisfactory
	-	Unsatisfactory
	--	Very unsatisfactory

Overall appreciation of the service	--	-	+	++
--	----	---	---	----

What you liked

What you did not like

What you would have liked

⁽⁵⁰⁾ DAFCO/GRETA (Region Basse-Normandie), Caen, France, www.ac-caen.fr [accessed 8.7.2014].

First contact/information	--	-	+	++	Comments
(a) At first contact you found staff approachable					
(b) You received clear and relevant information					
(c) The time between your first contact and your training proposal was reasonable					
Course design	--	-	+	++	Comments
(a) Your particular constraints were taken into account in the development of your training plan					
(b) The aims and content of the course met your expectations					
(c) You received all necessary information and clarifications to get your training off to a good start					
Course delivery	--	-	+	++	Comments
(a) The premises were suitable					
(b) Materials provided were satisfactory					
(c) Training documents supplied were clear and useful					
(d) Course delivery was dynamic and effective					
(e) You found the trainers' teaching methods suitable					
(f) The balance between theory and practice was satisfactory					
(g) Trainers displayed a good command of their professional field					
(h) Trainers were approachable and listened to the students					
(i) The course enabled you to become more independent					
(j) It was easy for you to monitor your progress					
(k) The aims of your course were achieved					
(l) Recognition of your previous skills added value to your training					

1.37. An example of internship guidelines

Objective of internship

The main objective is to reinforce and deepen knowledge acquired in the main and special subjects through practical work and prepare the student for work in a professional environment, as well as continuing education after practical training and studies.

Internship location

Decided by the internship supervisor at the school:

- (a) achievement of the internship objective;
- (b) general description of the company;
- (c) review and analysis of the company's operations;
- (d) review of customer service;
- (e) requirements for professional assignments.

Professional assignments during the internship should correspond to the specific nature of the speciality studied in the curriculum framework.

The student's specific duties depend on the specific profile of the internship company.

Any deviations and exceptions should be agreed in writing with the senior instructor of the chair of specialisation.

Professional assignments should be appropriate for a student without prior professional experience.

Office work and routine work (data input, sale of computers, etc.) does not constitute an internship.

Rules of conduct for the trainee

The trainee is required to:

- (a) report at the location of internship at the start of internship;
- (b) follow any legal instructions of the internship supervisor and those authorised to manage the work of others with diligence and accuracy, and be responsible for results of his/her actions equally with regular employees of the internship company;
- (c) keep business and trade secrets of the internship company and maintain its good reputation.

The trainee may not:

- (a) use any property or information from the internship location for purposes conflicting with the internship company business or internship objectives;
- (b) take independent management decisions, except in cases where immediate interference is required to prevent material damage.

Study portfolio required for passing an internship

The internship report should include:

- (a) individual internship objectives;
- (b) required documents for internship – CV, application, agreement, list of skills, official letter of introduction to the employer, etc.;
- (c) contacts with the company during internship planning, means of communication used;
- (d) explanations, descriptions and analysis;
- (e) assessment of the knowledge acquired during internship;
- (f) assessment of own performance;
- (g) opinion on achievement of individual objectives;
- (h) assessment of coping with problematic situations (conflicts, criticism, new people);
- (i) assessment of ability to cooperate with the supervisor, colleagues, customers;
- (j) assessment of employment opportunities, based on the internship experience;
- (k) a general part, which does not depend on the specific position;
- (l) if some of the required information is confidential in a particular company, the student should accept it and include a respective note in the report;
- (m) recommended structure of the report:
 - (i) title page;
 - (ii) table of contents;
 - (iii) introduction (justification for selection of internship company and position, definition of internship objectives, overview of the report's structure);
 - (iv) general description of the company (brief overview of the history, areas of company business, etc.);
 - (v) overview of work assignments completed during internship;
 - (vi) conclusion;
 - (vii) references;
 - (viii) annexes.

Evaluation sheet

The owner or executive manager of the company provides an opinion and evaluation of the trainee's professional development. Where favourable, this could be a letter of recommendation (this would help the trainee find better internship companies in the future and possibly a better position after graduation).

Defence of internship

The study portfolio required for passing the internship should be submitted within one week after the end of internship.

1.38. Example of a sectoral partnership agreement between a VET provider and an employers' association

Partnership agreement

between

and

The signatories agree as follows:

Axis of collaboration

Evolution of jobs, training and diplomas

..... and mutually to inform each other of necessary adaptation of training to qualification needs brought about by economic, organisational and technological developments in employment in the sector in

..... will inform and consult on development of sector activities and training relevant to this sector.

Exchange of information can feed into reflections on elaborating academic patterns for training of the also using field-related studies carried out by the profession.

These efforts will equally enrich consultations with the, which is responsible for the regional plan for development of vocational training

The VET provider ... and the employers' association will discuss training in the sector, its needs, and with the regional council :

- (a) development of sector training, especially in departments of vocational education schools, apprentice training centres or different structures set up to develop learning, if necessary;
- (b) conclusion of agreements between these establishments and the of the branch, if there are qualified and quantified needs;
- (c) setting up a network of training structures for employment areas of concern.

Common actions of an educational nature

The association agrees to favour acceptance of pupils and apprentices in companies from the sector of concern.

Representatives of the profession will assess training periods of young people at the company and be present in the examination board.

Common actions to improve pedagogy will be undertaken as follows:

- (a) elaborating documents and pedagogical methods to improve pedagogical continuity of training at vocational education schools and in companies; use of a database for internships in companies;
- (b) integrating a reciprocal link between websites of the VET provider and the profession;
- (c) smoothing the relationship between school and company.

Material and documentation

The employers' association and the VET provider reinforce their cooperation in developing professional and/or educational documents (CD-ROM, brochure, DVD, etc.) supporting training and education.

Validation of knowledge acquired through experience (validation des acquis de l'expérience (VAE))

The employers' association and the VET provider wish to ease access to VAE certification for employees of sector companies.

To this end, the two parties agree to:

- (a) carry out collective action managed jointly by the employers' association and the educational system in place for VAE to develop validation to benefit sector employees wishing to obtain a diploma pertaining to a second degree;
- (b) rely on liaison offices for counselling set up by the regional council concerning individual information (professional titles, professional diplomas and certificates, finances, etc.);

Monitoring the academic partnership agreement and assessment of activities

The steering committee will meet at least once a year to monitor ongoing actions and review effective collaboration between the partners.

On this occasion, assessment of the previous year and an academic partnership plan for the coming year will be formalised. The documents will be broadly circulated by the parties to this agreement.

Confidentiality and security

The information gathered at sector companies are of a confidential nature. Interns and teachers are bound by professional secrecy not to divulge any confidential information which could be brought to their knowledge during their presence in a company of the sector.

The board of education where the VET provider operates is obliged to inform its personnel, pupils and students of this confidentiality clause. This applies equally to all information gathered within national education.

Settlement of a dispute

The co-signatories agree to meet if a serious dispute arises and to examine carefully all the terms, before resorting to a termination procedure foreseen within the framework of this agreement.

1.39. Example of a partnership agreement between VET providers in a network ⁽⁵¹⁾

Partnership agreement

Article 1. Partners

This partnership is agreed between:

- (a) NCDVET, headquartered in, represented for the purpose of signature of this agreement by, director and;
- (b) technical college one..., located at ..., hereinafter referred to as 'resource centre', represented for the purpose of signature of this agreement by, director;
- (c) technical college two, located at, hereinafter referred to as 'member school' represented for the purpose of signature of this agreement by, director;
- (d) technical college three, located at, hereinafter referred to as 'member school', represented for the purpose of signature of this agreement by, director;
- (e) technical college four, located at, hereinafter referred to as 'member school', represented for the purpose of signature of this agreement by, director;
- (f) technical college five, located at, hereinafter referred to as 'member school', represented for the purpose of signature of this agreement by, director;
- (g) technical college six, located at, hereinafter referred to as 'member school', represented for the purpose of signature of this agreement by, director.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Centre for the Development of Vocational Education and Training (NCDVET), (*Centrul Național de Dezvoltare a Învățământului Profesional și Tehnic*), Bucharest, Romania.

Article 2. Purpose of the partnership agreement

The purpose of this partnership agreement is to improve quality of IVET in...
by:

- (a) piloting the methodology for implementation of EQAVET;
- (b) developing a common database on labour market needs concerning the qualifications offered by the resource centre and member schools, to increase the correlation between the VET offer and labour market demand;
- (c) cooperating and disseminating good practice within the network set up by the resource centre and member schools, hereinafter referred to as 'the network';
- (d) providing common support within the network, to improve quality of VET;
- (e) creating and managing an efficient communication system within the network;
- (f) regularly collecting information on the staff's continuous professional development needs and organising or supporting organisation of continuous staff training;
- (g) promoting innovative activities within the network.

Article 3. Network activities will:

- (a) integrate goals/objectives of European, national and regional VET into schools' targets;
- (b) establish and monitor common targets for schools;
- (c) organise further consultation with relevant stakeholders to identify local/individual specific training needs according to local/regional labour market needs;
- (d) plan and develop cooperation with other providers of education and training;
- (e) ensure participation of relevant stakeholders in analysing local training needs;
- (f) design and implement management and quality assurance systems;
- (g) distribute responsibilities for development of the management and quality assurance system;
- (h) involve human resources in planning and development of the management and quality assurance system;
- (i) support strategic planning of human resources skills development;
- (j) stimulate participation of human resources in training activities for their continuous professional development;
- (k) carry out regular self-assessments at school and network level;

- (l) assess the process and results, including student satisfaction evaluation, student performance and satisfaction of human resources (teachers/auxiliary teaching and non-teaching staff);
- (m) develop adequate and effective mechanisms to involve internal and external stakeholders in the self-assessment process/student and institutional assessment;
- (n) develop a system to record students' and teachers' feedback on the learning environment and experiences, and use it to set up future actions/activities;
- (o) revise the teaching and learning process within schools, based on feedback results.

Article 4. Activities of schools in the network shall be according to an annual working plan, which will include at least:

- (a) minimum three meetings/year of the network's coordination committee, comprising six members: a member nominated by the resource centre as network coordinator and five people nominated as 'reference points' by each school member;
- (b) a total of six peer learning activities ('peer learning') – one organised by the resource centre and one organised by each member school;
- (c) a peer review activity ('peer review') to assess fulfilment of EQAVET requirements by the resource centre.

Article 5. Roles and responsibilities

- (a) NCDVET provides methodological support and expertise in piloting the methodology for implementation of EQAVET in the resource centre and member schools.
- (b) NCDVET has the right to monitor the network's activities, making at least one monitoring visit for each year of the agreement, including spot checks.
- (c) The resource centre provides, through the information system, support for:
 - (i) internal and external communication of the network;
 - (ii) informing relevant stakeholders of timing and type of planned activities;
 - (iii) promotion of activities and of examples of good practice;
 - (iv) a common database on labour market needs and the education and training offer of the resource centre and member schools.
- (d) Each school (resource centre or member) is responsible for organising their own partnership activities as agreed in the working plan; the school

shall: provide resources and logistics, invite participants and inform them in good time of all aspects including accommodation facilities (if applicable), carry out the activity and promote the event through specific information and publicity means.

- (e) Advancing and deferring certain activities can only be achieved by common agreement.

Article 6. Duration of this partnership agreement

The term of this agreement shall be for 24 months, commencing on the date of the last signature and may be renewed until ..., by common agreement based on a written addendum to the partnership agreement, duly signed by each partner.

Article 7. Force majeure

- (a) Force majeure is established by a competent authority.
- (b) Force majeure relieves contracting parties of the obligations assumed under this partnership agreement.
- (c) Application of the partnership agreement will be suspended during force majeure, but without prejudice to the rights of the parties that were due to its appearance.
- (d) The party prevented from carrying out its obligations hereunder shall give notice to the other parties immediately and completely and shall take any measures at its disposal to limit the consequences.
- (e) If force majeure occurs and its effect continues for a period of six months, each party may give to the other parties a notice of termination, without either party being entitled to claim damages from the other parties.

Article 8. Final terms

- (a) Any amendments to this partnership agreement, including those caused by changes in national and European legislation, shall be made with the common consent of all the partners. Such amendments should be in writing and signed by all the partners.
- (b) This partnership agreement is the intention of the partners and eliminates any other verbal agreement, before or after its conclusion.
- (c) This partnership agreement was drawn up in seven copies, one original for each partner.

NCDVET,
Name and surname of
the legal representative

School-resource centre

Name and surname of
the legal representative

School-network member

Name and surname of
the legal representative

School-network member

Name and surname of
the legal representative

School-network member

Name and surname of
the legal representative

School-network member

Name and surname of
the legal representative

School-network member

Name and surname of
the legal representative

1.40. Example of a VET college's quality mission ⁽⁵²⁾

LMA quality policies

LMA's vision

The LMA, a contemporary high school, is an educational institution open to society and an integral part of the national and European system of higher education which meets the needs of Lithuania as a maritime State, observes requirements of EU directives, and provides the community with educational and different social services.

LMA's mission

It educates and trains specialists in technological and social sciences and provides them with higher college education; ensures a contemporary study process that meets requirements for maritime professions set by the European space of higher education and national and international legal acts and actively cooperates with stakeholders; trains students' general abilities and civic value-based attitudes necessary for their work after graduation and for lifelong learning.

Aims and objectives of LMA

- (a) Implement studies providing a person with higher non-university education and higher education qualifications that meet needs of the Lithuanian State, society, economy and maritime transport, and comply with contemporary research and technologies and requirements of national and international legal acts for maritime professions.
- (b) Develop applied science activities and research necessary for Lithuanian maritime transport and Klaipeda region and advise municipal institutions, economic subjects and individuals.
- (c) Disseminate the idea of Lithuania as a maritime State, seek to implement it, promote value-based attitudes and encourage young people to choose maritime specialities.
- (d) Provide conditions for development of acquired knowledge and abilities and assist economic subjects in organising professional development and retraining processes.

⁽⁵²⁾ Lithuanian Maritime Academy (*Lietuvos aukštoji jūreivystės mokykla*), Klaipeda, Lithuania.

- (e) Establish a level playing field for individuals seeking higher non-university education regardless of their gender, age, ethnicity, religion, political views, or social status.
- (f) Develop modern contemporary training facilities in compliance with requirements of national and international legal acts for maritime professions and new technologies beneficial for shipping, the port and Klaipeda region.
- (g) Implement applied research and counselling activities, as well as activities for improving quality of studies.
- (h) Implement adult training and professional development activities.
- (i) Assure smooth running of the QMS at LMA and its development.
- (j) Participate in international, national, and regional programmes of economic, social, educational and cultural development.

Aims in the quality field

- (a) Educate and train specialists open to education and culture, able to work under conditions of fast technological change and prepared to integrate into the international community.
- (b) Develop young people's personal qualities necessary for work at sea (punctuality, discipline, responsibility, initiative, etc.).
- (c) Create a transparent structure of the organisation and identify responsibilities and functions of each staff member.
- (d) Form the staff and accumulate necessary technical equipment for implementation of their functions.
- (e) Draft documents necessary for organising LMA management, study, teaching and infrastructure processes.
- (f) Know and apply the laws and other normative documents.
- (g) Regularly improve LMA's QMS.

1.41. An example of a mission statement ⁽⁵³⁾

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Pupils are the core focus of our work. (b) Within the scope of our pedagogical work we are committed to performance and a culture of effort. (c) Performance assessments are transparent and are clearly defined thanks to internal and external agreements. (d) Pedagogical responsibility means reflecting upon the quality of our work and subjecting ourselves to evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Adolf Kolping School considers itself an innovative provider of education. It reflects the current state of the art in education as far as is needed. (b) It is open to people of the region and develops contemporary educational offers. (c) Cultural offers and options are being expanded. (d) The school habitat is being adapted according to the expanded educational mandate.
<p>The core process of teaching is improved continuously.</p>	<p>The Adolf Kolping School has a comprehensive offer for 'lifelong learning'.</p>

(⁵³) Adolf-Kolping School, Lohne, Niedersachsen, Germany.

The Adolf Kolping School is the regional competence centre for technical and vocational training.

<p>Personal development focuses on the school objectives as a competence centre.</p>	<p>Decision-making processes and opportunities to get involved are transparent.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Employees are assigned to classes based on their qualifications. (b) Practical advanced training is geared towards teaching and individual skills and focus areas of the teachers. (c) Teamwork is a basic component of staff development. (d) Collaboration between colleagues is cultivated in the interests of staff development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The school fosters a high degree of shared responsibility and a culture of responsibility through involvement in committees and the staff representative body. All staff identify strongly with the school objectives in all areas they are involved in. (b) Pupils, parents/guardians and teachers all play an active role. (c) The school’s directors and administrators set an example for work of departments and teams through their leadership style.

This mission statement’s significance for pupils, parents and companies is seen in the following:

- (a) we regularly survey pupils, parents and companies and results of these surveys are incorporated into further work at the school;
- (b) we have a suggestion and complaint management system (a form can be downloaded from our website);
- (c) we have trainer and parent conference days in November. All teachers are instructed to maintain regular contact with parents and companies;
- (d) they can be reached at the following e-mail address: nachname@berufsschule-lohne.de;
- (e) we have an active council of pupils and parents;
- (f)

Handbook

for VET providers

Supporting internal
quality management and
quality culture

Quality assurance is important for accreditation and certification of studies and diplomas. But for continuous improvement, institutions must also set up effective internal quality management. This handbook focuses on the importance of internal quality management specifically for institutions involved in vocational education and training (VET).

The handbook is meant to guide VET providers through a quality journey, based on the PDCA (plan-do-check-act/review) cycle, which underlies any quality management system (QMS). The handbook's guidelines, advice and practical examples are taken from 20 providers of initial, continuing or sector-based vocational training, all of which have successful and mature quality management in place.



CEDEFOP

European Centre for the Development
of Vocational Training

Europe 123, 570 01 Thessaloniki (Pylea), GREECE
PO Box 22427, 551 02 Thessaloniki, GREECE
Tel. +30 2310490111, Fax +30 2310490020, E-mail: info@cedefop.europa.eu

visit our portal www.cedefop.europa.eu



Publications Office



ISBN 978-92-896-1665-2



9 789289 616652