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**Quality culture through effective instruments for Teachers and trainers**

**International Research report  
WP5**

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## Content

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Quality culture, assurance and management .....	4
3. Quality approaches in VET in partner countries .....	5
3.1. General approaches for quality assurance.....	5
3.2. The use of EU-Quality tools in the partner countries .....	6
4. Quality approaches in partner institutions .....	7
4.1. General information on quality approaches in partner institutions .....	7
4.2. Teacher and Trainer perspective on quality assurance in partner institutions .....	10
4.3. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of quality assurance in partner institutions .....	12
5. Best practices of partner countries and partner institutions .....	15
6. Recommendations for designing the toolkit products .....	18
References .....	20

# 1. Introduction

The aim of the EU project QUAL4T is to enhance quality management, assurance and particularly quality culture in vocational education and training (VET). Within VET Institutions quality management is often initiated by the management. Teachers, trainers and teams are only partly involved in quality assurance, development and improvement. The quality management system is sometimes not related to the needs of teachers and trainers and leads to the situation where quality management and assurance is seen as a burden or an obstacle to their work and teaching. Therefore, the idea of the project is to develop and test tools that support the development of a culture of quality that reaches and influences the actions of teachers and trainers so that they can improve the quality of learners' experiences in VET.

The aim of the project is to provide a toolkit and a practical guide in partner languages, with ready to use instruments for teachers, trainers, quality staff and mentors, to improve the quality of education. Therefore, we intend to:

- develop a quality improvement culture in line with the recommendations of teachers and trainers in VET
- learn from partners' proven quality culture instruments and adapt them for other consortium organisations
- connect management and teachers through a management brochure
- provide an approach, with supporting products that can be used by VET providers across the EU to improve learners' outcomes.

The aim of the report is to get an insight into the different quality approaches of the partner countries and institutions. The report provides basic information on the development of the toolkit products. These products will be based on the needs and best practices that the teachers describe in the case studies.

In the first part of this report the terms quality, quality assurance and quality management will be defined. In a second part the general situation of quality assurance in VET education in the partner countries will be outlined. Different quality approaches used in the VET organisations in the partner countries and the initiatives to use EU quality tools will be described. In addition to the general description of the situation in the countries and institutions, the results of the case studies conducted in the partner institutions will be explored. The partner institutions are four centres for vocational education, one body responsible for systems and policies, one university and one body providing guidance, counselling and information services relating to lifelong learning. The exploration of the case study results will contain the teachers' perspective on quality assurance in their organisation, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of institutions' quality assurance/culture by teachers' perspectives, best practices used by teachers and recommendations from teachers' perspectives for the development of quality. As a conclusion the report will highlight best practices and give recommendations for the development of the toolkit products following the results of the report.

This international report exposes the situation in VET and the different quality management systems that are used in VET in the partner countries: The Netherlands, Spain, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy and Greece. The case study was conducted within institutions for initial and continuing VET.

The interview guide and questionnaire for the data collection consisted of questions concerning the quality culture of the respective institutions, the quality management and assurance processes within each institution, the trainers' or teachers' individual methods to assure and develop quality and their recommendations for quality management. Additionally, sociodemographic data such as gender, age and taught subjects were collected. The findings of case studies conducted between December 2013 and January 2014 are provided and compared in this report.

This report is a product of the Project "Quality culture through effective instruments for Teachers and trainers". The project is funded in the Lifelong Learning Programme LEONARDO Transfer of Innovation from 01.11.2013-31.10.2015. Lanstede Group in the Netherlands is the project coordinator. The project partners are Politeknika Ikastegia Txorierrri in Spain, Westminster Kingsway College in the United Kingdom, Stichting ECABO in the Netherlands, Julius-Maximilians-University

in Germany, CIOFS-Formazione Professionale in Italy and IDEC SA – Consultants – high technology applications – Training in Greece.

## **2. Quality, quality assurance, quality management and quality culture**

Quality is a Latin term that means constitution and describes the constitution of a product. That is why the term quality is neutral and can mean good or bad quality. Although in general the term quality is used for good quality (see Hartz/Meisel 2007). Quality depends on the assessment and the perspective of the assessing person (see Terhart 2000).

Quality in education differs from quality in other fields, because education is not a product in a classical sense. The developmental process is different, because the learners have an impact on the results (see Hartz/Meisel 2007, p.14). This means that quality in education depends on the learners as well.

Learning is usually connected to the effort of learners, although this does not always cause positive emotions for them. However, learners can be satisfied with their experiences but may not learn anything. That is why the satisfaction of the learner should not be the only indicator of good quality in teaching.

Indicators for quality can be related to different interests and levels (such as interaction in an organisation). The society, history and backgrounds of participants can have an impact on quality and its definition.

Criteria for quality in education defined by Arnold (1994) are for instance: Conception, planning, programme, infrastructure, professionalisation, didactics, degrees, satisfaction and personal development. Quality is based on successful legitimation, satisfaction, learning and transfer.

Quality assurance aims to provide a system to measure quality with established standards for quality. It focuses on the technical, formal and administrative structures of an organisation. It can also include surveys with participants and the management of participants' complaints (see Hartz/Meisel). Quality assurance provides information whether the education is in good order at the moment of measurement. For education this also requires the definition of criteria and indicators of good quality.

While quality assurance measures quality, quality management aims to systematically develop quality by using certain forms of management. As quality in VET depends on many different circumstances, it cannot be provided by establishing a standard management system. Quality management uses a variety of strategies and tools to support reflection and evaluation to enhance the quality of education.

Good quality is particularly related to the teacher and trainer who provides education. He/she needs to be able to recognise and understand the needs of his/her participants, to identify and lead learning processes as well as to regulate the learning environment. Therefore, the teacher has an important role in quality management. Another aspect that influences quality is seen in evaluation. Evaluation in educational contexts is an assessment of curricula, programmes, concepts, educational arrangements or forms of organising learning (see Hartz/Meisel 2007, p. 22). There are several approaches to evaluation in educational contexts.

This project is based on the recommendations and outcomes of the QALLL-Project, which was implemented by a network of 15 national agencies for Lifelong Learning. The project analysed 39 good practice projects and gave an insight into how successful quality assurance works. The project provided recommendations for the realisation of quality assurance in vocational education and training. These recommendations are focused on quality culture, quality cycle, quality management models and indicators, methodologies, work-based learning, guidance, professionalisation and staff development, dissemination and valorisation and innovation in QA. "In the QALLL quality culture was understood as an encompassing organisational culture that supports quality assurance and quality improvement at all levels." (The European thematic network QALLL 2012, p. 5). The creation of such a culture goes beyond bureaucratic and formal structures and affects daily practices.

### 3. Quality approaches in VET in partner countries

#### 3.1. General approaches for quality assurance

This International Report is an analysis of the National Research reports that are provided by the partners of the QUAL4T project. The general structure of the report is based on the structure of the National Research reports. A substructure for the report has been developed on the basis of the content of the National Research reports. The Report analyses the general approaches for quality assurance and the use of EU-quality tools in the partner institutions. The analysis focuses on the freedom of institutions to choose their own quality management system, external assessments, finance and budget, assessment of processes and products and International or European orientation. Those were the aspects covered by the National Research reports.

All the project partner institutions are in different countries with different regulations, objectives and strategies towards quality in vocational education and training. These regulations have consequences for the quality situation in the partner countries and the opportunities that the partner institutions have to influence quality in their institution.

##### *Freedom to choose own quality management system*

Some of the partner countries provide a lot of freedom to providers in vocational education and training concerning quality management. This is particularly the case in the Netherlands “Dutch VET providers are mostly free in their quality management and can choose which approach and system they adopt, but they have to adopt a quality assurance system” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). To conduct quality assurance is what providers of vocational education and training are obliged to do, but they can choose the quality management system, with its focus and intensity convenient to the objectives of the institution. In Germany the providers of vocational education adopt different quality management systems as well. Most of the providers adopted self-evaluation; for instance the European Foundation for Quality Management, International Organisation for Standardisation-Certification, seals of quality (Gütesiegel) or participation in contests (Bötel/Krekel 2004). The system in Italy provides freedom for providers of vocational education and training as well. The Italian Ministry of Labor defined minimum requirements that providers of vocational education and training have to meet. Although the provider have the freedom to choose their quality management system, most of the providers adopted the ISO-9001 standards. VET providers in Italy have to be accredited by the regional authority, following minimum requirements. In addition the organisations can choose a quality management system (see Di Paolantonio 2014). The freedom to choose a quality management system seems to exist in Spain as well. Although the Organic Law 9/1995 promotes certain quality management systems “by encouraging individual educational managers to undertake steps towards internationally recognised QUALITY certification following models such as the ISO 9001 and EFQM” (Megaw 2014). Although the providers have independence, there is a clear objective towards specific quality management systems. The freedom of Greek vocational education providers adopts to the strategy of the Ministry of Education. “A comprehensive framework for quality in education and lifelong learning in Greece is a principal policy priority for the Ministry of Education” (Anagnostaki 2014)

The level of freedom seems to vary in partner countries, where the Report of the United Kingdom shows that education providers are assessed by Ofsted which impacts on quality and quality management within vocational education and training.

##### *External assessments*

Although the providers of vocational education experience freedom to adopt suitable quality management systems, the providers have to pass external assessments. This external assessment is described in most of the national reports. The type of assessment and the responsible body for the assessment are different in the partner countries. The Netherlands, The United Kingdom, Italy and Greece have external assessments. In the Netherlands the external assessment is made by the Dutch Inspectorate of Education and by the “JOB Monitor” (see Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). The Inspectorate assesses educational processes, examination, student success, quality assurance, compliance with legal requirements, quality of teaching staff and financial stability. In the UK it is the

Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) that conducts assessments. The focus of Ofsted is on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment (see Edwards 2014). The regional governments assess the minimum requirements in Italy.

#### *Finance and Budget*

In the partner countries financial aspects and budgeting are relevant aspects of quality assessment as well as the educational aspects. In most of the countries this is related to the adoption of the ISO 9001 as quality assurance system. The ISO 9001 certification has finances and budgeting as an assessment area. In Germany, Italy and Spain this type of QA system is adopted in institutions. The National Report in the Netherlands describes financial stability as one of the assessment areas in the Inspection Framework.

#### *Assessment of processes and products*

Quality assurance in the partner countries shows that there are two main approaches to quality assurance that can also be combined. Assessment can be of processes or of products/outcomes. The Netherlands describe in the National Report a tendency towards the assessment of processes, although the products in cases of obtained diplomas and drop-outs are assessed as well. In Germany the assessment depends on the adopted QA system. The ISO 9001 assesses the production process, and it is adapted in Germany as well as in Italy and Spain. The Italian National Report describes a focus on outcomes, such as achievement (see Di Paolantonio 2014). Greece describes the quality in processes as well as in outputs as the focus of the national strategy for Lifelong Learning. The UK National Report explains that outcomes of learners are measured and well as the process of teaching, learning and assessment.

#### *International/ European Orientation*

The National Reports show in general an orientation towards QA systems that are recognised internationally or in Europe. Almost all of the institutions describe that they are involved in European initiatives to enhance quality, like for instance "CIOFS-FP VET training pathways have been designed according to EQAVET Quality cycle" (Di Paolantonio 2014). Spain promotes the use of internationally recognize QA like ISO 9001 or EFQM, these instruments are also adopted by institutions in Germany and Italy. In the Netherlands "EU implementations as EQF, ECVET, EQARF, EQAVET and so on are appreciated and implemented, because it gives the opportunity to work pro-actively on enhancing quality in VET" (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). The National Report for the Netherlands describes a tendency that is not described in the other reports. The VET providers are oriented towards EU initiatives to enhance quality in VET. In the other National Reports the appreciation of EU innovations as tools to enhance quality are not described.

The partner countries show that quality of VET is important in each of the partner countries. The main orientation in all the strategies is to implement internationally recognised quality management systems and to strengthen the awareness of quality development. The countries have different focuses on quality development like for instance professionalisation, competence orientation or tools towards total quality management.

### **3.2. The use of EU-Quality tools in the partner institutions**

During recent years the EU has developed several quality management systems and tools. These are for instance EQAVET, ECVET, EQARF and QALLL. Some of the partner countries and partner countries have adopted these quality tools and work with them.

EQARF is the abbreviation of European Quality Assurance Reference Framework. The Member States and the European Union established this EQAVET framework to promote and monitor continuous improvement in national systems of vocational education and training (VET). It is a reference tool for policy-makers based on a four-stage quality cycle that includes goal setting and planning, implementation, evaluation and review.

ECVET is a learner oriented approach and its methods (partnership and learning agreement as well as individual certificates of performance) can be applied by all persons and institutions acting in education. It promotes the transparency and recognition of vocational competences and

qualifications. Target groups are:

- Staff in IVET and Organisations as well as other providers of VET
- Institutions promoting mobility and
- Learners who acquire competences in formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

Although ECVET is not yet implemented in The Netherlands in VET, Landstede does pilot with ECVET points in international settings, for instance within the Nurse care qualification. One staff member of Landstede is involved in the Dutch ECVET work group (see Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). “Moreover, IDEC had a contract with Cedefop for Europass – EQF, ECVET for documentation and validation of learning outcomes” (Anagnostaki 2014).

EQAVET Quality Cycle is a quality tool used for the process of developing educational products. It includes four stages: Planning, Implementation, Evaluation, and Review.

The Landstede Director of Quality is an expert for NLQAVET (see Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). Spain is currently aligning with the EQAVET recommendations on implementation of the EQARF which will allow greater transparency between different national VET systems (see Megaw 2014).

“All CIOFS-FP VET training pathways have been designed according to EQAVET Quality cycle: the indicative descriptors and indicators EQAVET set for each of 4 criteria were compared to check their match with those required by the accreditation system” (Di Paolantonio 2014).

IDEC has been the coordinator of projects regarding Quality Management and Evaluation (EQUAL and BEQUAL). The BEQUAL project has been transferred through two different projects BEQUAL+ and EXPANDVET and currently is the largest Community of Practice in Evaluation and Quality Assurance in VET (see Anagnostaki 2014).

There is further use of EU quality tools “For instance in the Netherlands ECABO assisted in building the NLQF, the Dutch translation tool for EQF. ECABO supports the use of EQAVET, ECVET or EQARF.” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014)

The initiatives to use European quality tools in partner institutions are proceeding differently. Their relevance seems to be different in each institution. Although some of the institutions very actively implement the tools, there are no statistics on the use of the tools in the partner countries. This is also the case because the tools are still in an implementation phase.

## **4. Quality approaches in partner institutions**

### **4.1. General information on quality approaches in partner institutions**

#### *Certification*

Most of the partners mentioned in the reports that they obtained an ISO certification. This is the case for ECABO, Politeknika Txorierrri, CIOFS-FP and IDEC. Politeknika Txorierrri obtained the silver and golden Q Award in the EFQM as well. This can mean that the quality management in the partner institution is adjusted to the ISO or, in the case of Politeknika Txorierrri, to the EFQM as well. The ISO is focused on processes in a customer oriented quality management system. In following the ISO, it is important to have systematic processes for quality assurance. Elements of the quality management are: responsibility of the management, the management of resources, the realisation of products, measuring, analysing and improving, and a continuous improvement of the quality management system (see Hartz/Meisel 2011). Quality management through ISO influences the quality management system and the quality culture in the partner institutions. Therefore new quality tools should be adjusted to the existing ISO certification.

#### *Customer orientation*

Customer orientation, and the aim to develop education that addresses participants’ needs, is one way of improving the quality of teaching which contributes to developing a quality culture. The ISO certification has an impact on the customer orientation in institutions. But not only are the institutions with an ISO certification oriented towards customers. Except ECABO and IDEC who described their customer orientation in relation to ISO certification, Westminster Kingsway College

states the relevance of education that meets the needs of the learners: “curriculum managers are expected to work with their teams to agree a Teaching and Learning Policy which meets the needs of their specific learners” (Edwards 2014). In ECABO the customer focus is described in relation to the ISO certification. IDEC conducts customer satisfaction in the assessment of the effectiveness of processes: “The effectiveness of processes is assessed by a variety of means such as performance reviews, discussions, evaluation of performance (using evaluation questionnaires), cost reviews, customer satisfaction assessment” (Anagnostaki 2014). The teachers at CIOF-FP mentioned that “the QMS approach was useful to better understand the expectations and perceptions of our pupils and then to adapt the lessons to their real needs” (Di Paolantonio 2014).

#### *Involvement of staff*

The ISO certificate focuses on the responsibility of the management and often quality management is seen as a responsibility of the management. The involvement of teachers and trainers in quality management is one of the central aims of the QUAL4T Project. Through this the project aims to create a quality culture that involves teachers as well as management. In some of the partner institutions involvement of staff is already present, like for instance at ECABO, Landstede, Politeknika Txorierri, CIOFS-FP or IDEC. ECABO realised that the system of quality assurance was not known by staff and translated the work processes of the organisation to the norm (see Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). The organisation decided to adapt the quality assurance system to the existing processes in the organisation. Within this approach all processes in the organisation were described. Landstede changed their quality culture in recent years as well with the aim of improving the quality of education and student successes. They changed the culture “into getting teachers more involved in the process in which the quality of education is improved” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014).

In Politeknika Txorierri staff was strongly involved “in ALL the processes” (Megaw 2014) in order to prepare for the EFQM Certification. The result was that the staff “felt insufficient motivation or capacity for the evaluation and planning of effective tasks”. The involvement of staff here was overwhelming, as they were not prepared and involved in several processes at a time.

IDEC describes the involvement of staff, as the “actions for the improvement of processes are suggested by all staff members” (see Anagnostaki 2014). Staff can suggest an improvement of processes where they see a possibility to improve quality. The management then evaluates and approves the suggestions.

CIOFS-FP involves staff through a yearly quality day, which has changing topics every year (Di Paolantonio 2014).

This underlines that the involvement of staff is in general an important aspect of improving quality, but this involvement process should follow certain rules in order to motivate staff.

#### *Information and transparency*

In relation to the quality culture, transparency is an important factor. Staff need certain information to be able to provide good quality education and to work together to improve the quality culture. Next to participants’ needs, didactical knowledge and other, it is particularly information about the needs of the institution, the processes, the role of quality management and how to improve the quality of education that are important. The partner institutions describe a transparent communication to managers and staff in their National Research Reports. In Landstede the Director of Quality provides management information for each area in the institution. Additionally information about internal audits, student successes and complaints are provided for the CEO twice a year and information on dropout rates is provided monthly at team and management levels. This shows that Landstede is actively providing relevant information to their staff. At Julius-Maximilians-University quality is promoted through the “Qualitätspakt Lehre”. In this programme a report is published on the internet which describes the actions that have been undertaken to improve quality. At Politeknika Txorierri “information related to processes is being developed in the school intranet in a flexible online tool” (Megaw 2014). Next to the transparency of developments within the institution, this shows the involvement of staff in quality management as well. Westminster Kingsway College has developed several quality management tools. “All quality information is held on the College’s intranet site” (Edwards 2014). Although it is not provided to staff in hard copy, the staff have the

opportunity to access it on the intranet.

#### *Staff development*

Professionalisation is mentioned in the National Reports as one of the important parts of the quality management of institutions. Qualified staff can be supported to improve the quality of education by coaching, supervision, training and other tools, and this can also contribute to improve the quality culture. The National Reports define professionalisation as the provision of training and coaching. ECABO for instance mentions continuous professionalisation of staff as a way to improve quality. In depth it is meant to provide “in-/external workshops, courses, study, presentations, conferences, master classes a.s.o.” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). Landstede “has its own academy for professionalisation (LeerWerkAteliers) through which teachers/trainers can increase professional knowledge through: workshops, peer learning classes, colleges, presentations” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). Julius-Maximilians-University provides training for teaching staff as well through the “ProfiLehre”, a programme that provides workshops for teaching staff at the University (see Kaleja 2014). At CIOFS-FP “each Regional Association develops and implements specific trainers’ training programs” (Di Paolantonio 2014). At Westminster Kingsway College there are annual appraisals where staff are set individual objectives and agree development plans which are monitored twice a year. Additionally 1-1 support and supervision meetings between managers and staff support and monitor progress (see Edwards 2014). Also IDEC provides training to staff, particularly on quality management concepts and ISO 9001 requirements (see Anagnostaki 2014). This underlines that training is provided to staff, sometimes on specific topics.

#### *Plan Do Check Act Cycle*

The partner institutions state that they use the plan, do, check, act (PDCA) cycle for their processes in the institution. This method supports teachers to systematically implement actions and helps them to ensure quality. ECABO mentions: “Of course the systems are based on the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). “Landstede uses the Plan Do Check Act-cycle to perform quality improvement” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). Txorierrri and CIOFS-FP mention that they use PDCA as well.

#### *Practice and competence-development*

Next to the quality management measures some of the partner institutions are aiming to provide competence-based learning for their participants. This was mentioned by Landstede. Their training aims to provide competences to learners by implementing working placements, working on external assignments and other (see Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). Julius-Maximilians-University developed in the “Qualitätspakt Lehre” the GSiK programme to provide courses particularly on intercultural competences for students. This didactical approach is aimed at improving the quality of learning at the institution.

#### *Framework*

Westminster Kingsway College described in the National Report a Quality Framework that has been developed for the college. This framework is designed to improve and ensure quality management within the institution. It includes a quality cycle that is followed in the organisation. Probably the other institutions are following a quality framework as well, but it was not described in the National Research Reports. In the development of a quality culture in the institution a clear quality framework can contribute to improve the quality in the institution. In the case study that was conducted, Edwards (2014) described that most of the participants did not know the framework well. In the other institutions they might be unknown as well. One important hint can therefore be, to promote the institution’s quality framework or to design a quality framework.

#### *Student’s Evaluation*

In the description of their quality management the partner institutions described evaluation and review processes within their institutions for developing quality. Evaluation contributes to regular reviews of the quality of teaching. The reviews can help to discover weaknesses in teaching and to

improve them. At Julius-Maximilians-University the “ProfiLehre” conducts regular evaluations with questionnaires for each workshop they provide (see Kaleja 2014). The participants in the evaluations are participants in the workshops who mainly work as teaching staff at the university. CIOFS-FP conducts student evaluations of teachers as well (Di Paolantonio 2014). Westminster Kingsway College conducts evaluations as well. They conduct surveys “of all of its learners twice a year to determine satisfaction ratings across a variety of topics” (Edwards 2014). IDEC conducts reviews and evaluations of performance as well to assess the effectiveness of processes.

### *Targets*

Some of the partner institutions set targets for their development or the development of their staff to reach and monitor improvements in the quality of teaching. Through regular targets the institution gets a direction and can systematically plan quality improvement. Westminster Kingsway College conducts annual appraisals with each member of staff where they set individual targets and development plans. Targets are also set at team and college levels (see Edwards 2014). At Landstede individual staff as well as teams set targets. In CIOFS-FP they set targets as well, but these targets are set for the whole institution. “Each regional board of the association CIOFS-FP sets annual targets in key areas identified by senior management. These targets are regularly monitored and, annually, the senior management team analyses performance. The results are presented to the Board of Directors in order for a system-wide change to be identified and implemented.” (Di Paolantonio 2014).

The partner institutions have different roles in the VET system as well as different target groups. Each of the institutions has its own strategy towards quality assurance and quality management. Most of the institutions obtained an ISO certificate or the EFQM. ECABO supports providers in VET and shares tools and methods towards quality assurance and quality management. Julius-Maximilians-University enhances quality by providing continuing education for teaching staff and promoting e-learning. Landstede has a focus on competences as well as CIOFS-FP. Landstede and Txorierrri involve teachers in quality. Westminster Kingsway College manages quality especially by the quality unit and the management and is strongly driven by Ofsted. In CIOFS-FP it is also the management that is involved in quality management. IDEC focuses on the effectiveness of processes and conducts internal audits.

## **4.2. Teacher and Trainer perspective on quality assurance in partner institutions**

In the case studies teachers and trainers were asked what they think about the quality culture in their institution. The teachers highlighted some aspects that they know about the quality culture and were free to talk about their opinion. Mainly the comments were positive, teachers and trainers mentioned what they appreciate about the quality culture and described some of the measures undertaken in the institution to improve and ensure quality.

### *Training*

In some of the partner institutions the teachers and trainers highlighted training and coaching opportunities as part of the quality culture. Training and coaching opportunities are described as professionalisation in some of the National Research Reports. This was appreciated by the teachers and trainers. “In Landstede the teachers and trainers are aware that Landstede invests in professionalisation” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). At Politeknika Txorierrri the teachers mentioned training as well as quality tool. “The majority of teachers at Txorierrri considered that the centre most contributes to quality in teaching by supporting and providing teachers with the opportunity to receive training in new methodologies and the use of new technologies” (Megaw 2014). The training opportunities that the teachers mention are on special topics. But again the most transparent quality management aspect for the teachers is the provision of training. At Westminster Kingsway College the teachers mentioned mentoring and coaching as the aspects of the quality culture (see Edwards 2014). The trainers in the case study at IDEC “recognised various tools and methods, mostly based on the improvement of competences of trainers” a.s.o. (Anagnostaki 2014).

### *Communication*

Communication in institutions is mentioned as an important aspect of good quality by teachers and trainers. Communication between staff members and with the management contributes to the provision of transparent information about the processes in the institution. In the case study in Landstede the teachers mentioned the “effective communication between the central quality staff and teachers and teams” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). The communication is appreciated by the teachers, and this also shows in the other National Reports. At Julius-Maximilians-University the trainers describe that in preparation of each workshop, trainers communicate with the institution “the topic of the workshop, the description, the room, the time and so on” (Kaleja 2014). The trainers describe it as a necessity in their preparation, to clarify these conditions. Describing the quality culture, the teachers at IDEC mentioned internal communication methods as an aspect of the quality culture in the institution.

At CIOFS-FP one objective is the improvement of internal communications, by implementing new communications tools and media.

At Westminster Kingsway College the teachers did not mention the self-assessment process which is central to the communicated quality framework. Therefore it seems as if the teachers in the institution don't know the quality framework, which might result from the effectiveness of its communication.

### *Investment in quality*

Particularly at Landstede the teachers see an improvement of the quality culture. “A lot of the respondents (school) state that quality assurance and culture has been improved, compared to the situation of some years ago” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). The National Report describes that Landstede invested in quality approaches in the last years aiming to involve teachers and staff in the quality culture of the institution. The statements of teachers in the case study show that teachers see an improvement through the investment. This might be a result of the greater involvement of staff that raised awareness for quality management.

### *Student's Evaluation*

Evaluation with questionnaires was described in the National Reports by partner institutions. These evaluations were not always mentioned by the teachers in the case study. The trainers at Julius-Maximilians-University mentioned and described the evaluation process in detail. “The department provides evaluation sheets to all the participants of each workshop. Trainers receive an evaluation sheet as well. The results of the evaluation are discussed and communicated between the provider and the trainer. These evaluation sheets are used in workshops but not in the coaching. If problems arise and the evaluation sheet of participants show problems with the quality, the provider talks to participants and the trainer to get an insight into the situation” (Kaleja 2014). Particularly for the trainers at Julius-Maximilians-University this was one of the main aspects of the quality culture. This might be a result of the fact that trainers are working freelance and that the evaluation is one of the main ways in which the trainer has contact with the institution. Landstede conducts student evaluations as well, and this was mentioned in the case study by teachers (see Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014).

### *Participant orientation*

“The trainers describe quality in VET from a participant oriented perspective. High quality teaching means to them: Learning things that support participants in their own work, Connecting learning to fun, Satisfaction of Participants, Develop and conduct education tailored to the needs of participants, Transparent communication and information on processes for participants, trainer and provider. All of the trainers mentioned an aspect of quality as the orientation towards the needs of learners” (Kaleja 2014). The participant orientation is described by the trainers in the case study. The teachers at IDEC also refer to a participant orientation that they see in their institution. They mention a close relationship with their learners, collecting feedback and listening to the needs of the participants (see Anagnostak 2014). All these aspects show that participant needs are an important aspect of quality management for teachers.

### *Bureaucracy*

One aspect of quality management in education institutions that was mentioned as having a negative effect is the bureaucracy that it can generate. One teacher at Politeknika Txorierri “feels that teachers often *“have to direct their attention to complying with documentation rather than to the classroom”* (Megaw 2014). The teacher complains that through bureaucracy in quality management the needs of the participants are disregarded. The case study results at IDEC show similar results: “On the other hand, there are some comments on the negative aspects of the quality focus. Some of the comments mentioned are “the bureaucracy of the quality management system”, “the time required for the documentation”, “the need for continuous monitoring and keeping records” etc.” (Anagnostaki 2014). An effective quality management system should therefore integrate low bureaucracy.

### *Objectives*

Particularly at CIOFS-FP the teachers and trainers described the objectives set in the institution as a supportive element of quality management. “Over the years, QMS processes/procedures proved to be effective instruments to improve teaching and learning methods, the core business of our institution, as they help the staff/operators think about continuous improvements, those necessary to meet foreseen teaching goals, and think about team working” (Di Paolantonio 2014).

## **4.3. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of quality assurance in partner institutions**

Teachers and trainers described in the interviews how they think the quality culture and management as well as their working situation supports, and how it interferes with, the quality of their work. The results show that teachers and trainers experience the quality management in some parts as a supportive element, but there are some hindering aspects as well. The supportive aspects are mainly the working atmosphere, the PDCA cycle, flexibility and training. Hindering aspects are lack of time, lack of supervision, bureaucracy, top-down approach and observations as well as finance. Transparency, evaluation and IT are aspects that were rated as supportive in some institutions and hindering in others.

### **Strengths**

Teachers and trainers were asked in the case study what supports them to provide high quality education. As the quality culture and the adopted systems vary in the institutions, the answers of the teachers and trainers highlighted different aspects as supportive. These are in general the atmosphere, evaluation, PDCA, flexibility, transparency, training and IT.

### *Atmosphere/Environment*

In the questionnaires and interviews the teachers and trainers mentioned the working environment or the atmosphere as a supportive element. This can be factors like availability of teaching rooms and material or the atmosphere within teams and between staff. At Landstede the teachers for example mentioned that they appreciate the situation of open classroom doors (see Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). This supports openness in teams and between staff and a supportive working environment. “At Politeknika Txorierri teachers considered that the working environment in the college helps them offer high quality teaching by: Offering the opportunity to gain new competences in methodological advances which encourages new ways of teaching” (Megaw 2014). Here the teachers describe some aspects of quality management as a supportive environment, especially training to gain new competences. “The factors quoted that support teachers in delivering high quality teaching in Westminster Kingsway College were varied but included positive comments about the physical environment” (Edwards 2014). This probably refers to material and teaching rooms at the college. At IDEC the teachers and trainers feel supported by the top management that ensure an “inspiring working atmosphere and collaborative spirit” (Anagnostaki 2014).

### *Evaluation*

Trainers described evaluations as a supportive aspect of quality management in the institutions as the evaluation provides useful feedback on the needs of learners and on successful aspects of their teaching as well as the weaknesses of their teaching. The case study in Landstede shows: “When evaluations are mentioned, not only general student evaluation is mentioned but also structural (coach) lesson evaluation by students” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). There are different methods of evaluation that are used in the institutions. The trainers at Julius-Maximilians-University mention that the “feedback of participants provides valuable information on how to develop the quality of own workshops” (Kaleja 2014). The provision of feedback is highlighted by the teachers at Westminster Kingsway College as well. The teachers at IDEC mention the provision of tools for review and evaluation purposes as supportive elements of the quality culture. As the feedback of participants usually provides information on their needs, teachers and trainers appreciate feedback. By reflecting on the feedback, they have the possibility of adapting their teaching to the needs of their learners.

### *PDCA*

The PDCA cycle is adapted in most of the institutions. This was already an outcome of chapter 4.1. In the case study most of the teachers did not mention the PDCA cycle. This might be because the staff do not know about the use of PDCA in the institution, or because they are using it without knowing that they do so, or because it is not recognised by the teachers as something that supports them in providing high quality education. The teachers at Landstede recognized the PDCA cycle and mentioned it as a supportive aspect of quality management (see Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014).

### *Flexibility*

Trainers at Julius-Maximilians-University mentioned flexibility as one of the supportive aspects. This was an aspect that was only mentioned by the trainers in this institution. The reason is probably that the trainers are working as freelancers for the institution. These circumstances make both, the provider as well as the trainer more flexible to adapt to changes. The trainers described this flexibility in changing topics or the time of a workshop if needed for the participants. This flexibility provides the opportunity to adapt workshops to the participants’ needs. As the other institutions did not interview freelancers, the circumstances are different.

### *Transparency of Needs*

Transparency of the institutions, its quality culture, processes and objectives are a relevant aspect of quality management from the perspective of staff. The teachers at Politeknika Txorierri mention the transparency of the needs of the institution as a supportive aspect of quality management. At the same time the trainers at Julius-Maximilians-University mention low transparency as a hindering aspect. “Quality Management Processes at Txorierri help the teaching staff offer high quality education by informing them of the current needs in the college” (Megaw 2014).

### *Training*

Training opportunities provided by the institution is considered to be a supporting aspect of quality management. Teachers mentioned training opportunities in their questionnaires as a support to providing high quality teaching. This can be training, coaching, workshops and other organised education that supports the development of teachers. At Politeknika Txorierri the teachers underlined that “the opportunity to gain new competences in methodological advances” (Megaw 2014) supports them to provide high quality teaching. The teachers and trainers at Westminster Kingsway College and IDEC highlighted as well the training opportunities as supporting. At Westminster Kingsway College the teachers mentioned the good access to internal and external training. At IDEC it was coaching and counselling instead of workshops that are mentioned as supporting aspect of the quality culture. In general the teachers show appreciation towards continuing education and training.

### *IT*

Teachers in the case study of IDEC appreciate the IT environment. In IDEC the IT environment was

mostly appreciated by the teaching staff as a support to providing high quality teaching (see Anagnostaki 2014). The IT environment was mentioned in the case study by some teachers as a hindering aspect, as the IT is often not updated. In some institutions the teachers have contradictory opinions of the IT. This is the reason why IT is a strength as well as a weakness.

## **Weaknesses**

For the development of quality tools that address the needs of staff, it is important to know what it is about the quality management in their own institutions that hinders them in providing high quality education. Next to what supports the provision of high quality education, the hindering aspects are important to avoid. By knowing them it might be possible to develop tools that help to reduce the hindering aspects. Therefore one question in the case study was what hinders teachers in providing high quality education. The answers of teachers show, that most of the aspects cannot be changed. These are for example time, IT, finance a.s.o.

### *Time*

The aspect that hinders teacher most often in providing high quality teaching is time. This was mentioned by teachers and trainers at Landstede, Politeknika Txorierrri, Westminster Kingsway College, CIOFS-FP and IDEC. At Landstede “time is the condition that is mentioned most” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). At Politeknika Txorierrri the teachers explain that they have an “excessive number of teaching hours per week which allows no time for reflection or for updating methodology” (Megaw 2014). This is particularly a problem when the methodology used is not meeting the needs of the participants and hindering pupils to learn. At Westminster Kingsway College time was also one of the aspects mentioned most often by the teachers. At CIOFS-FP the teachers explain that “everybody has little time to process a lot of data” (Di Paolantonio 2014), this seems to be the case for teachers at IDEC as well. The lack of time shows that teachers face a situation with much pressure on time. For them it is relevant to use methodologies and strategies that support them providing high quality education efficiently and time saving.

### *Intransparency*

While transparency was highlighted in some of the institutions as a supportive aspect, in other institutions the intransparency was mentioned as a hindering aspect in providing high quality teaching. The transparency is therefore seen by teachers as contributing to high quality teaching. A clear communication of needs and aims within the institution can contribute to involving staff in improving the quality of education in the institution. The teachers in Landstede mentioned that “Information should be ready in time and brought to the right people” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). A lack of effective communication is seen as a hindering aspect for providing high quality teaching. Intransparency was also mentioned by teachers in Juilius-Maximilians-University. The needs of the institution are not clear, as it is not communicated which topics for workshops the institution needs (see Kaleja 2014). At Westminster Kingsway College the lack of transparency was criticised as well. “The quality assurance culture may not be understood, used or communicated well” (Edwards 2014). This shows that transparency and communication is seen by teachers as an important contribution to high quality in education.

### *IT/material*

One of the hindering aspects that were mentioned was IT or material and the finances for it. At Westminster Kingsway College the IT environment was assessed differently by the teachers. Some of the teachers appreciate the IT environment, others criticise the “unreliable or out of date IT equipment and systems” (Edwards 2014).

In other partner institutions the IT equipment was mentioned as well as a hindering aspect in quality. The teachers at Landstede mention an “up-to-date *IT-environment*” (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014) as well. The teachers at IDEC criticise the “lack of finances for investment of new teaching equipment, lack of supporting training materials/ tools/ equipment” (Anagnostaki 2014). This shows that the teachers at the partner institutions have a critical opinion on the IT equipment and the lack of finances for an up-to-date IT environment. This can be a problem for high quality teaching when

it is relevant to use online learning platform such as moodle.

#### *Lack of supervision*

Particularly at the Julius-Maximilians-University the trainers mentioned that they would appreciate having opportunities for supervision with colleagues. “Few aspects they mentioned as interfering were: The lack of supervision between colleagues (DEa)” (Kaleja 2014). This might be a result of their work as a freelancer that does not provide opportunities to work together with colleagues and to share experiences.

#### *Bureaucracy*

Particularly the teachers at Politeknika Txorierrri criticised the “Excessive bureaucracy” (Megaw 2014). Teachers at Politeknika have the idea of quality management as documentation and bureaucracy. This can be a result of the previous history of Politeknika Txorierrri where teachers were involved in the processes for EFQM and were involved in three or four processes at a time. This experience can be seen as advice for the development of quality management tools to create them in a way that they require minimum or simplified documentation.

#### *Evaluation*

Most of the teachers in the partner institutions welcome the feedback of participants as a development tool. However, evaluations from participants are also criticised by the teachers at Politeknika Txorierrri. The teachers remarked that “student evaluations are rated too highly and resulting actions not always in their favour (ES10), student evaluations are not reliable, student evaluations are carried out too late to implement effective changes (ESb), evaluation from so many agents may mean that teachers lose touch with their own criteria as well as what to do (ES2)” (Megaw 2014). It is the time of the evaluation, the handling of the results and the reliability of the evaluation, not the evaluation in general that is criticised by the teachers

#### *Top-down approach and observations*

In Westminster Kingsway College there is a whole college approach to quality that is influenced by Ofsted. This is clear to the teachers in the case study as well. They criticise the top-down approach and mention that the quality processes are “too removed from teachers and teaching” (Edwards 2014). Comparing this to Landstede, where teachers appreciate that they are involved in the quality management, it seems to be important for teachers to be involved in quality management. In addition to that the lesson observation that is conducted may make teachers feel insecure and scared. “Teachers may feel that lesson observation is ‘daunting’ and so may not do their best when observed (UK1) or ‘scared’ about getting things wrong which does not support sharing (UK3)” (Edwards 2014).

In general the teachers in all the institutions described the quality assurance as supportive. One reason for the good opinion on quality assurance is the feedback from learners (Txorierrri, Julius-Maximilians-University, Westminster Kingsway College, CIOFS-FP, IDEC). The main aspects that are hindering teachers to provide good quality teaching is the lack of time. This was mentioned at Txorierrri, Landstede, CIOFS-FP, IDEC. At Westminster Kingsway College the top-down approach was a critical point about the quality assurance, this was for instance mentioned as a supportive element at IDEC.

## **5. Best practices of partner institutions**

In the National Research Reports the partner institutions described best practices that they are already using in their institution to improve the quality culture. These best practices focus on particular aspects of quality culture such as transparency, awareness, objectives, teaching, evaluation, reflection and training.

#### *Year of Learning*

At Westminster Kingsway College a Year of Learning has been initiated at the institution. The aim of this initiative is to enhance and develop teaching and learning at the institution. Therefore

supervision and coaching has been provided for teachers and longer term Teaching and Learning Coaches have been appointed to work with individuals and teams to meet local needs. In addition two staff conferences are held each year and a series of planning and development days are conducted within the Year of Learning as well as a programme of management training. (see Edwards 2014).

#### *Transparency through the quality 'fan' and a team toolbox*

Landstede provides a best practice to develop transparency and to inform staff about the quality management in the institution. It is the quality 'fan' that informs staff about the educational areas that inspection focuses on. Each staff member receives a hard copy of it and can be prepared for assessments. In addition Landstede uses a team toolbox. This toolbox is used to gather information on student success, team plans, professionalisation, team-evaluation, and self-evaluation. It enhances the transparency in a team and helps to coordinate work and inform the colleagues.

#### *'Is quality my responsibility?' - raising ownership*

The reports show that the ownership for quality management in the partner institutions is relatively high. Landstede uses for awareness raising a specific method. It is an exercise that is conducted in a team. The exercise can be conducted "with a group of teachers/staff about: Who is responsible for the quality in our (team, school, sector). The aim of the exercise is to conclude together as a group that everyone has his/her responsibility" (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014). In the exercise teachers and teams get into a reflection of the responsibility for quality and can discuss about it. The idea is to recognise that quality is a topic for everyone.

#### *Developing SMART Targets*

Some of the partner institutions describe in their National Research Report that they set annual targets for staff or at different management levels. The involvement of each member of staff in the development of targets can be a good contribution to reach higher motivation and commitment to the targets of the institution. Landstede conducts a team activity to defining aims. The participants "start with a simple sentence, pass through and each person has to improve the aim a bit, following the SMART rules" (Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014).

#### *Dream Session about 2025*

As the quality tools that the project aims to develop are focusing on the needs of teachers and trainers, best practices in teaching and teaching methods were provided in the national reports. Landstede described a dream session about 2025 where students and teachers could think about education in 2025. The output of the session was also used to develop annual targets. The teachers at Julius-Maximilians-University provided some advice on the design of a workshop and the relevance of a transparent schedule for the participants. This is explained by the trainer at the beginning of the workshop or activities so that participants are clear on expectations.

#### *Project based learning, case studies, simulations, independent and flipped learning*

At Txorierrri teachers use project based learning, case studies, simulations, new technologies and software as best practices (see Megaw 2014). This contributes to increasing the level of learners' independence. This is also what teachers at Westminster Kingsway College are doing, by using methods like independent or flipped learning. For vocational learning the teachers invite speakers from industry or use industry based competitions. One teacher supplies wrong answers to questions and discusses with students why those answers are wrong (see Edwards 2014). At CIOFS-FP the teachers use learning Units that "allows students to acquire a skill, by realising a task/product" (Di Paolantonio 2014). The result can then be evaluated.

#### *Questionnaires and Online Evaluation Methods*

Teaching and education at the partner institutions is usually evaluated. Within the evaluation the partner institutions use different tools for evaluation and teachers apply their own methods to get feedback from their learners as well.

At Julius-Maximilians-University the provider evaluates each workshop by distributing

questionnaires to participants and the trainer. In addition to the questionnaire, the trainers describe the evaluation methods as best practice. “These are for instance: Oral and personal feedback from participants (DEb, DEc). Scales that the trainer uses. He/she asks questions on the experiences of the participants and the participants stand on the scale, where they see themselves (DEb), flashlight as a feedback method, where each participant says in one sentence what he/she thinks about the workshop (DEc), Other feedback methods like for instance the own hand (DEa)” (Kaleja 2014). Teachers use these methods to gain differentiated feedback from participants and to be able to ask for an explanation, if they do not understand the feedback.

Westminster Kingsway College conducts evaluation by using online questionnaires. “The managers of the ESOL and Employability provision issue learners with an online survey using Survey Monkey at the end of each term. As each class is taught by a different teacher it enables feedback to be collated about learners’ experiences in lessons during a term and about each teacher” (Edwards 2014). The teachers can get feedback from their learners by using an anonymous online poll. As well as college or departmental surveys, teachers use their own methods to get feedback. “The teachers reported on using feedback from their learners to improve quality. Sometimes this is a paper-based survey, sometimes it is online, and sometimes it is an email to the teacher” (Edwards 2014). By this, teachers can collect feedback more often than twice a year and can get feedback from their learners that they can use to improve their teaching during the course.

#### *Self-evaluation*

At Txorierri there is a self-evaluation with staff conducted each year. This can contribute to monitor the individual’s competence development. “All teaching staff at Txorierri carry out a self-evaluation of their general competences (leadership, communication and technical competence) each year. They are also evaluated by the pedagogical director and their head of department using the same criteria” (Megaw 2014). If the evaluation shows unsatisfactory results, the teacher gets support through training. Here the evaluation is used as a method to develop and train teachers systematically. At IDEC the management board conducts self-evaluation as well. “The management board of IDEC performs self-evaluation once per year to measure the degree of quality in the core processes. For this purpose, a template is used and includes the following data. The indicators are based on the ten quality assurance indicators of EQAVET” (Anagnostaki 2014). The self-evaluation at IDEC is conducted for the complete institution. In addition to the self-evaluation IDEC uses “questionnaires filled by the students after the completion of the course, interviews with the trainees to receive feedback regarding their satisfaction” (Anagnostaki 2014)

#### *Continuing staff development*

In the case study teachers in all the institutions mentioned training as an important aspect of quality culture. Through training teachers can gain knowledge about new methods or IT. This can help them to provide high quality teaching. The teachers in the partner institutions mentioned the training within the institution as a positive contribution to providing high quality education. Most of the partner institutions described that they are providing training on new methodologies or on technologies to their staff. In the best practices specific training for staff was very rarely mentioned. CIOFS-FP mentioned that “the National Headquarters arranged trainers’ training aimed at developing an integrated approach against the burn-out of trainers” (Di Paolantonio 2014). Additionally there is training on co-operative learning and teaching with case studies (see Di Paolantonio 2014).

At Politeknika Txorierri, teachers are provided with training and supervision when the results of the conducted self-evaluation are unsatisfactory. “If a colleague is having particular problems evidenced either in negative feedback from students or in poor student results, an experienced member of staff is teamed up with that colleague to study the problem and to offer practical support in changing the trend” (Megaw 2014).

## 6. Recommendations for designing the toolkit products

The case studies and the National Reports show certain aspects that are considered as contributing to high quality education in the partner institutions and partner countries. These aspects should be taken into consideration in the development of the toolkit products.

### *Creating good working atmosphere in teams*

The working atmosphere was valued very highly in the National Reports. In the case studies teachers and trainers mentioned the importance of a good working atmosphere. Therefore the toolkit products should pay attention to the development of tools to enhance and improve the working atmosphere in teams and institutions. The teachers at Landstede mentioned for instance the positive working atmosphere through open classroom doors (see Kroese/Bastiaannet 2014).

### *Ownership*

Within the National Reports awareness of the relevance of quality management was a topic highlighted by the partner institutions. The teachers in the case study seem to be interested in quality management and show awareness of the importance of quality, although there might be teachers and trainers who are not aware. Landstede provided in the best practices an exercise that can contribute to raising awareness by showing each teacher that they have a responsibility for quality. The method is called: "Is quality my responsibility?" and can be conducted in a team.

### *How to develop SMART targets*

The partner institutions set targets for the complete institution or the individual teachers set targets for themselves. These targets are reviewed regularly through different methods. In the case study the teachers mentioned that these targets can support them to achieve them. Targets can support teachers to create a structure and systematically work together towards their objectives. This result underlines the relevance of objectives for quality management. Objectives can contribute to letting teachers know what the strategy of the institution is and to work together. The National Research Report for the Netherlands provides a method to set and develop SMART targets in a team. Additionally the toolkit products could provide methods which involve staff in the development and achievement of targets.

### *High Transparency and effective communication*

The teachers in the case studies mentioned the appreciation of transparent communication in their institution, or claimed intransparency in the institution. Transparency supports teachers to develop quality in their teaching as they can meet the requirements of the institution better by knowing what the requirements are. In addition they can contribute to reaching objectives set by the institution when they know about them. Transparency within teams supports teamwork, as each teacher can contribute with his/her knowledge to develop teaching quality. A method for transparency was mentioned in the National Report of the Netherlands. It is called the team toolbox. Each teacher in the team can document their students' results and other information. Another method is the quality 'fan'. It is a folder that provides information on assessment areas. Teachers can use the instrument to prepare themselves for internal and external assessments.

### *Provision of Training opportunities*

The case studies in the partner institutions underline the relevance of training opportunities in the form of supervision, coaching, workshops and other. The teachers and trainers appreciate the support of the institution for training. Trainers at Julius-Maximilians-University participate regularly in vocational education and training (see Kaleja 2014). The toolkit products can contribute to training opportunities by showing existing opportunities, additionally the toolkit can contain self-assessment tools and methods to identify useful training opportunities, for instance validpack or the ProfilPass. This can contribute to develop teachers, systematically based on their individual needs.

### *Evaluation Methods*

Evaluation and reviews are typical instruments that are used by the partner institutions. In general

these are questionnaires like for instance at Westminster Kingsway College (see Edwards 2014). Teachers also use their own methods of evaluation as well. Some examples were given in the National Research Report for Germany (see Kaleja 2014). These were for example a flash light feedback, where each participant says one sentence about the workshop or the hand method where participants use their hands to assess different aspects of the workshop. These could be used for the toolkit products to support teachers to undertake own evaluation with their participants.

#### *Teaching Methods*

Teachers described in the case studies their use of different teaching methods. The variety of methods can contribute to reaching participants who learn differently and they can contribute to involve participants in learning. In the National Research Reports different methods were mentioned that are used by the teachers in the institutions, these are for instance project based learning, case studies (see Megaw 2014), flipped learning, smartie drop (see Edwards 2014), the activation of participants at the beginning of a workshop and others. The toolkit products should include different teaching methods as tools for teachers to create more variety in their methods.

#### *Plan Do Check Act Cycle*

Most of the partner institutions know about the PDCA Cycle and apply the method in their institutions. The teachers know more or less about how the PDCA Cycle works. Although the method seems to be clear, it might be useful to include information about the PDCA Cycle in the toolkit products as it is probably not known by all the teachers in all institutions. As it is appreciated by teachers and the management, this instrument might be a good tool for quality management.

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## Links

International Organization for Standardization: [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)

Landstede Group: <http://www.landstede.nl/Landstedegroep/Landstede-Groep/Welcome-at-Landstede/Our-activities.html>

Youth employment: Commission proposes standards to improve quality of traineeships: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2011&furtherNews=yes>

Job Site in the Netherlands: [www.job-site.nl](http://www.job-site.nl)

European Commission: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/ecvet\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/ecvet_en.htm)

TodoFP official educational website for VET in Spain: <http://todofp.es/todofp/profesores/Europa/fp-europa/calidad.html>

Excellent adult vocational teaching and learning: <http://repository.excellencegateway.org.uk/fedora/objects/eg:5937/datastreams/DOC/content>

Profilpass: <http://www.profilpass-online.de/>

Validpack: <http://www.capival.eu/validpack>

Euskalit. URL: [www.euskalit.net](http://www.euskalit.net)

HOBBIDE: [http://www.hezkuntza.ejgv.euskadi.net/r43-2356/es/contenidos/informacion/agencia\\_calidad/es\\_calidad/hobbide1.html](http://www.hezkuntza.ejgv.euskadi.net/r43-2356/es/contenidos/informacion/agencia_calidad/es_calidad/hobbide1.html)

Sistema Estatal de indicadores de la educación. URL: <http://www.mecd.gob.es/inee/estudios/sistema-indicadores.html>

LOGSE Reform (1990) URL: <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/1990/10/04/pdfs/A28927-28942.pdf>