

## Q-KULT: QUALITY CULTURE IN VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop for members of EQAVET National Reference Points

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OeAD-Haus, Ebendorferstraße 7, A-1010 Vienna

**Working groups: Recommendations at system level (WP 8)**

**Q1: How relevant are these findings for your own quality management system in your country?**

A.Oviedo: With the instrument you make visible what you don't see -that is the benefit of the instrument.

K.Skaar: The questions (in OCAI) are not focused on quality -quality is one aspect among six others. There are so many instruments we (in NOR) are already using - so this instrument will only compete with all other instruments - I will not introduce it at home - because we have other instruments that work - but taking cultural aspects into account is important.

D.Mali: No results so far for in-company-training - that is missing. In schools you have the structures and the time - in companies not so much. You cannot rely on instruments in companies.

L.Koski: Last year all VET providers in Finland made self evaluation and one topic was quality culture - results will be available in English in one month. We want to find out how we can promote quality culture in QM. In general, the findings are important in order to be able to provide suitable QM-tools/-systems to different type of VET providers and VET schools.

D.Stroie: - Important question at system level is: How to be able to support and help VET providers and schools in their pursuit to improve? One needs to find right methods for certain types of schools, variety of methods instead of just one method. OCAI is a way to make diagnosis but what comes after that? Could be truly useful for schools which have problems.

K.Molnar-Stadler: We are restoring a centralised system in Hungary now, an inspection system with a compulsory framework. At provider level a group of innovative schools would be interested (translation of the instrument!). TQM System: assess and develop organisational culture - already in 2000 the topic appeared to deal with sort of organisational culture.

Ph.Whitney: There are requirements for schools they have to fulfil. For the UK System it would be hard to deal with.

All: Make Quality Culture visible (EQAVET-Quality cycle), use the term in recommendations, offer Diagnosis instruments

**Q2: Should school cultural aspects be taken into account at QM-system-level? And if so, how?**

D.Mali: This is just an instrument. I would use it - but not on system level - only at school level

A.Oviedo: The instruments can be used on a voluntary basis

D.Mali: But it is good to be aware of quality culture when we talk about quality management. Right now we are only talking about instruments and indicators -

D.Mali: QM-Instruments in schools - can we change the instruments depending on quality culture? Is that thinkable? To offer special instruments for special cultures? Recommendation for certain tools....

M.Jonach: We gave first hints in our guidelines for OCAI

H.Ittner: If QM system is fixed by regulation of government - no use of OCAI recommended - there must be a certain flexibility of the framework -

M.Jonach: OCAI is about adaption of QM not adaption of culture - that is the difference to the t-procedure for example - but all systems offer some flexibility - there is no fixed plan how to implement QM at school.

H.Mahler:: Voluntary Tool at system level - would be helpful. The outcome is good for the organisation itself.

K.Molnar-Stadler: Centralisation - big resistance. Argumentation is needed to highlight the benefit of such an approach.

D.Stroie: We need to have tools to help the schools, to support the schools in changing them. In Romania we have had good results when we have work close with the schools, OCAI could be useful in this kind of work approach. What is still needed is to go beyond the diagnosis phase: tools to support and for the improvement processes, solutions to how to use, how to further work with the results of the diagnosis? For the question how to make the QM visible in the schools, OCAI could be useful. OCAI could be "a mirror for the schools to be able to see where they are at the moment".

L.Koski: There are some schools where you can feel, sense, what the quality culture is/means. You cannot explain it but you can sense it, you see it all around in the school, in the way how things are done, how people are. It would be interesting to see what kind of results these kinds of schools would get by using the OCAI? And further, how is this kind of culture established in the first place? OCAI seems to be more of an improvement instrument, it could support processes of improvement e.g. by enhancing discussion between different groups and parties, thus opening up a possibilities to find solutions to questions/problems through broad-ranging discussions.

**Q3: Do you see a benefit to offer school quality culture diagnosis instruments (like OCAI) to VET providers in your country? If yes, why? If no, why not?**

K.Skaar: It doesn't support change if you prescribe the use of a certain tool to schools. Some schools may use the instruments but they put the results in the drawer. If you don't find any reason/usefulness you won't use the tool. This instrument can work for some schools - (OCAI) - It is just one instrument among others.

K.Skaar: It is only useful if you work with the results.

A.Oviedo: I don't agree. The self reflection sets in! That is a benefit. We are missing the second phase (the change) -

M.Kranebitter: The diagnosis is an intervention in the school and if you don't do anything the situation can worsen - the teachers have expectations - you have to discuss, you have to find out about the different point of views- you have to find the trigger

D.Mali: The system needs to support schools that need to change.

M.Kranebitter: In this phase the schools need support - in the phase of becoming aware of their culture - they need external experts - moderators - in the diagnostic phase.

A.Oviedo: For any diagnostic instrument: It fosters discussion and self reflection at school level but however the diagnostic phase is not enough and the system should support in areas where the schools think they need to change.

I.Koongard: it gives awareness to the school - you start a discussion with the teachers - where you want to achieve sth. Like less dropouts ... If we are a school with good relations - maybe we have low dropouts - if we are very competitive we have more dropouts? Why is there more resistance against certain topics - why do we never discuss some topics? Because no one sets up a meeting on this...

Ph.Whitney: We agreed this is not the end - it's no good just to have the diagnosis - we need the next step - there must be a benefit somewhere

M.Jonach: Maybe if there is a school in a crisis and they tried a lot - you can offer them - but it must be voluntary

All: Whenever you want a discussion about your quality culture...

K.Molnar-Stadler: Summary of the group discussion (OCAI) - as description of the school

H.Mahler: Tool: Also useful for students? Who should be involved?

M.Jonach: We go out with instruments - we talk about instruments all the time - Quality - is not only about instruments

H.Mahler: it should be offered to schools in Austria as well

I.Kongraad: Presented tools are very relevant to the QM work in our school. We have also presented and discussed the collected data in our own VET-network, OCAI enhances fruitful discussions not only inside our own school but also within the network. OCAI makes sense when combined with something else, it is a start but needs further steps.

Benefits:

- Anything which makes people think about quality is helpful.
- People get another picture of QM
- The instrument could foster motivation
- Enhance the efficiency of Quality Management

Risks:

- Not so many threats...
- Result might be misinterpreted...
- Guidance...
- To do nothing with results...

**Q4: Would it be useful to work with (anonymous) data from school quality culture surveys at systems level?**

K.Skaar: Yes I would say. Any kind that will make people think about quality is useful.

D.Mali: I would say no - it doesn't make any sense

S.Kurz: It doesn't make sense for a whole country- but for individual school yes.

A.Oviedo: No benchmarking. But data is useful for the individual schools - it should be collected and analysed for individual/organisational use.

D.Stroie: Ida from Denmark told about school networks with common benchmarks - schools can support each other - for these networks they could use the tool and share experiences. At single VET provider and on networks of providers - but must be equal - not hierarchical

D.Stroie: I would not necessarily say it is a no - but somehow it is - if we could manage to have this data survey - in some countries - it is very difficult to aggregate this data - other contexts... it will be almost impossible to make recommendations - very specific situations.

Ph.Whitney: We wouldn't put it on system level. It will be difficult to implement it at system level, it could not be a compulsory part of the QM system. It should be offered to schools on a voluntary basis - it's a useful tool - it affects the way you approach the quality cycle

L.Koski: At system level at the moment no, first the quality culture need to be developed then it would make perhaps sense to do survey.

I.Kongraad: Survey would be no problem for Danish schools, they are open and transparent, all information what they do is open for the public, why not then also this kind of survey if it would serve a purposeful meaning?

All: Average of Culture does not make sense.... more for individual organisational development..

**Q5: Should the work on instruments be continued? And if so how?**

A.Oviedo: Yes.

K.Skaar: Yes - there are 7 dimensions and only one is specific on quality management - so yes - develop only this one further - number 7 - that is unique. As an instrument - work on that. Throw away 1-6 and work on 7 - make it better

All: Agreed

H.Mahler: on t-/U-Procedure: the t-Part depends a lot on the quality of the external moderation - the U-Part is not so hard anymore! If you have the external moderator for the t, you can do the U more easily by yourself

D.Stroie: definitely yes. Minimum approach: how instruments are used and share experience - also with other - not-German-speaking countries. Transfer-Strategy should be developed.

M.Jonach: the discussion is more important than the result of the diagnosis

K.Molnar-Stadler: Yes, but this should be made clear in the guideline for OCAI

K. Skaar: This is a good tool to bring up a discussion. This should be made clear in the guideline.

L. Koski: You can not only go with the online tool in a school - you need expertise and moderation to support it.

A.Oviedo: What is clear for me: I see it almost as a peer review exercise on a voluntary basis. And it is important you have trained people to support schools to use this.

L.Koski: It is more for internal exercise, not external

K.Molnar-Stadler: innovative tool - other tools in QMS we don't yet have such tools -this is the one you cannot only give to schools -Competence in the organisation to deal with this - this diagnosis can help understand certain reactions or activities within the school -

M.Jonach: The only thing you have in a formal way is the graph - how to communicate this to external stakeholders - I would be very careful - what does that mean? It could help you to look on your mission statement etc.

K.Molnar-Stadler: OK it is a start but what of it? It is even difficult to interpret for those who are inside the school

D.Stroie: Or add to the diagraph a text that explains the process - a description

J.Markowitsch: It would be helpful to give a little bit more practical guidelines maybe a page on a more practical level addressing Dos and Don't's - f.e. group building -current situation/target situation - how and what first? Do we recommend one or other way to do it? Another way would be - if schools use them - give us a very short report on how you used it - for this purpose - that was the way we organised it - small stories about how it worked... And then the Follow-up project - any will have to deal with change - starting point: links between school culture and quality management system - there we need evidence! Now it is only assumptions. At the moment I can't think of how to prove these linkages that we assume there are

H.Mahler: For schools you should find a headline, why schools should use OCAI. Get a headline - what is the purpose of it! The main aspect of OCAI is the discussion - and that will be lost in space - is not documented. We have 250 teachers so 100 different outcomes of OCAI - the numbers that come out are not the most important part. You need Dos and Donts - they should be defined - And I would not reduce the instrument to dimension 7 - cause culture comprises more - you don't get the picture if you don't do the others - it's the one you want but you need the others too.

Group 1: Certainly, OCAI is a tool for diagnosis, what is also needed is a tool for change. How to get from diagnosis to change? Further development of the instrument in different countries could also be interesting and needed. How to secure that the achieved results won't disappear?

Additional information:

FI: Selbstevaluation der Provider, Teil davon bezog sich auf Qualitätskultur.