

EQARF

Applying EQARF Framework and
Guidelines to the Development and
Testing of Eduplan

10 Elements in EQARF Guidelines:

1. Set clear rules for deciding who offers VET provision	
2. Recognise and build on existing internal arrangements	
3. Set clear roles and responsibilities for different parts of the VET system	
4. Identify what information and data should be collected and used in VET system	
5. Define and implement a communications strategy	
6. Pilot initiatives and value success	
7. Use feedback to improve VET	
8. Provide clarity over funding	
9. Ensure quality assurance covers all aspects of VET provision	
10. Ensure VET is founded on a strong involvement of external and internal partners and relevant stakeholders	

Element 1: Deciding about VET Provision

1. Set clear rules for deciding who offers VET provision

- Member States manage the supply of high quality training by having clear systems to decide which organisations can offer courses and/or qualifications.

Key Questions

- How important are decisions on agreeing which organisations can offer VET?
 - How important are decisions on the content of training or qualifications in assuring quality?
 - What processes are needed to approve which qualifications and programmes can be offered by individual training providers?
 - How can the supply of training be best managed, at a national, sectoral and regional level to ensure the demand for high quality training is met?
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Relevance of Element 1 to Eduplan

1. Decisions about VET training, as referred to in this element of the guidelines, are within the realm of policy at regional and national level
 2. Eduplan is designed for use at the level of training providers, and policy decisions about VET provision are therefore not relevant
 3. However, results from Eduplan can contribute to:
 - Assessment of processes to approve relevance of training qualifications (Eduplan: Requirement Profiles Demands)
 - Assessment of processes to approve relevance of training content (Eduplan: Drawing up of Educational Opportunities – Market demands; and Assessment of Learning Success; Realisation)
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Element 2: Recognising and Building on Existing Internal Arrangements

2. Recognise and build on existing internal arrangements

- The EQARF recommendation can be supported through the use of existing provider-based systems and VET quality assurance arrangements.

Key Questions

- What is the best way to support training providers to develop their own quality assurance systems?
 - How can all providers learn lessons from the best?
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Applying Element 2 to Eduplan

EQARF Question	Currently Addressed in Eduplan:	Recommendations for Additions:
<p>- <i>What is the best way to support training providers to develop their own quality assurance systems?</i></p>	<p><i>Evaluation of Learning Opportunities: Demands</i> "Data and information collected for evaluation purposes are sufficiently defined" <i>Quality management system:</i> "Quality control cycles work on different levels and are provable"</p>	<p>Adding to Quality Assurance and Development (Realisation) Criteria on: <i>"Trainers and course managers are provided active supports to implement quality assurance plans"</i></p>
<p>- <i>How can all providers learn lessons from the best?</i></p>	<p><i>General Customer Satisfaction:</i> "The concept to measure customer satisfaction contains all essential aspects of the company which is visible for the participant" <i>Information and Communication:</i> "Information media include statements on institutional guidelines, terms of business and relevant aspects of the institution"</p>	<p>Adding to Information and Communication (Realisation) Criteria on: <i>"The institute has in place recognised procedures to identify and share good practice "</i> <i>"These procedures are implemented and regularly updated"</i></p>

Element 3: Roles and Responsibilities

3. Set clear roles and responsibilities for different parts of the VET system

- At both provider and system level (either nationally or regionally) it is important to be clear about what each organisation is expected to do.

Key Questions

- How important is legislation in creating a culture of quality assurance?
 - How can you ensure that training providers are likely to see the EQARF expectations as reasonable?
 - How clear are training providers about their roles and responsibilities in organising quality assurance systems?
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Applying Element 3 to Eduplan

EQARF Question	Currently Addressed in Eduplan:	Recommendations for Additions:
<p><i>- How important is legislation in creating a culture of quality assurance?</i></p>	<p>National legislative level not relevant</p>	
<p><i>- How can you ensure that training providers are likely to see the EQARF expectations as reasonable?</i></p>	<p><i>Education and Trainers, Quality Assurance Section:</i> "Quality control cycles work on different levels and are provable" and "Proof of the certification or own quality management"</p>	<p>Adding Introductory question to this Section: <i>"Reference is made to EQARF in formal statement of Quality Assurance Policy"</i></p>
<p><i>- How clear are training providers about their roles and responsibilities in organising QA systems?</i></p>	<p>Not Addressed</p>	<p>Adding two question in Quality Assurance Section: <i>"Responsibilities are assigned in relation to overall QA implementation"</i> and <i>"QA aspects are part of job description for trainers and teaching staff"</i></p>

Element 4: Defining Relevant Data

4. Identify what information and data should be collected and used in VET system

- There is extensive data on vocational training, the challenge is to identify and use a relevant core set of data consistently – with a focus on providers, inspectors, evaluators and government using the same definitions of the indicators and measures.

Key Questions

- How important is it for different parts of the VET system to use the same definition of data?
- How can training providers use data to support self-evaluation and quality improvement?
 - How do you ensure that only valid, reliable and accurate data is collected?
- How do you minimise the data collection burden on training providers and employers?

Applying Element 4 to Eduplan

EQARF Question	Currently Addressed in Eduplan:	Recommendations for Additions:
<i>- How important is it for different parts of the VET system to use the same definition of data?</i>	<i>In Drawing Up Educational Opportunities: Market Orientation:</i> "Does the institution take broader economic and social requirements into account?"	Add to this Section: <i>"Does the institution co-operate with others (have common definitions and understanding) in assessing operational environment?"</i>
<i>- How can training providers use data to support self-evaluation and quality improvement?</i>	<i>In Drawing Up Educational Opportunities: Evaluation:</i> "Data and information collected for evaluation purposes are sufficiently defined (e.g. participant feedback, evaluation, school attendance, financial aspects)"	<i>None</i>
<i>- How do you ensure that only valid, reliable and accurate data is collected?</i>	Not Addressed	Add to First Section (Evaluation): <i>"Independent external evaluation and validation of internal results is undertaken periodically"</i>
<i>- How do you minimise the data collection burden on training providers and employers?</i>	Not Addressed	Add to Course Evaluation, Realisation: <i>"Training staff are consulted about/have a say over extent and nature of data collection for QA purposes"</i>

Element 5: Communications Strategy

5. Define and implement a communications strategy

- Whilst mainly relevant at the system level, there are clear needs for up-to-date, consistent and accurate information on the quality assurance process to be shared and understood.

Key Questions

- To what extent should the outcomes of quality assurance be available publicly?
 - How important is it to include the training providers and other stakeholders in developing the communication plans?
 - What role will the Quality Assurance National Reference Points (QANRPs) have in developing communications strategies?
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Applying Element 5 to Eduplan

EQARF Question	Currently Addressed in Eduplan:	Recommendations for Additions:
<p><i>- To what extent should the outcomes of quality assurance be available publicly?</i></p>	<p>In evaluation section: <i>"The participants are informed about the results"</i></p>	<p>Add to this Section: <i>"Standards of Quality (as well as achievements) as communicated to wider public as part of normal publicity material"</i></p>
<p><i>- How important is it to include the training providers and other stakeholders in developing the communication plans?</i></p>	<p>Not addressed</p>	<p>Add to this Section: <i>"Training staff are consulted in development of plans to publicly communicate quality standards of courses and of the institute"</i></p>
<p><i>- What role will the Quality Assurance National Reference Points (QANRPs) have in developing communications strategies?</i></p>	<p>Not relevant (at regional/national level)</p>	<p>NA</p>

Element 6: Initiatives and Success

6. Pilot initiatives and value success

- Quality assurance can be achieved through recognising effective practice. Staged approaches which include pilot programmes, awards and funding can all play a part in recognising successful quality assurance systems.

Key Questions

- What is the best way to share effective practice?
 - How effective is a staged approach to implementing quality assurance?
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Applying Element 6 to Eduplan

EQARF Question	Currently Addressed in Eduplan:	Recommendations for Additions:
<p><i>- What is the best way to share effective practice?</i></p>	<p><i>In Fostering a Culture of Feedback:</i> "Visits are planned, carried through and discussed upon" <i>And</i> "Proof of the realisation of visits and of the feedback"</p>	<p>Add in Quality Assurance Section: <i>"Effective and successful elements of the educational approach are captured, demonstrated and communicated externally"</i> <i>And</i> <i>"Efforts are made to establish links with other institutes with the aim of identifying and learning from good practice"</i></p>
<p><i>- How effective is a staged approach to implementing quality assurance?</i></p>	<p><i>In Quality Assurance Section:</i> "An own quality management system exists: Demands and quality standards are defined. Relevant laws and specifications are known, current and taken into consideration"</p>	<p><i>Add to this Section:</i> <i>"There are clear stages defined in relation to full implementation of QA strategy"</i></p>

Element 7: Feedback

7. Use feedback to improve VET

- VET has to both meet employers' and learners' needs. Key to any quality assurance system is the way feedback is used to improve the national or regional system, and training providers systematically collect and use the experiences and feedback from learners and employers to modify and improve their provision.

Key Questions

- How can training providers best respond to feedback?
 - How can you ensure that students see the importance of providing accurate feedback?
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Applying Element 7 to Eduplan

EQARF Question	Currently Addressed in Eduplan:	Recommendations for Additions:
<p><i>- How can training providers best respond to feedback?</i></p>	<p><i>In Culture of Feedback Section:</i> "The management of the educational institution promotes a positive and constructive culture of feedback. The concept of feedback contains form of feedback (recipient – customer; customer - customer; supervisor-teacher; provider - customer)"</p>	<p>Add to this Section: <i>"Feedback from customers and participants is regularly and formally reviewed: with results of the review used to update course content and approaches"</i></p>
<p><i>- How can you ensure that students see the importance of providing accurate feedback?</i></p>	<p><i>In Drawing up Opportunities:</i> "The participants are asked to feedback on courses, what learning targets they have reached (self evaluation)"</p>	<p>Add to this Section: <i>"Student/participants are provided with reports on feedback reviews and changes implemented as a result of reviews"</i></p>

Element 8: Clarity Over Funding

8. Provide clarity over funding

- Public and private sector funds are not limitless. The link between high quality provision and funding provides both an incentive as well as an accountability measure for quality assurance arrangements.

Key Questions

- How can quality assurance be used to establish a link between the quality of provision and the availability of funding?
 - How do you ensure training providers and other stakeholders are clear about the links between funding and quality?
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Applying Element 8 to Eduplan

EQARF Question	Currently Addressed in Eduplan:	Recommendations for Additions:
<p><i>- How can quality assurance be used to establish a link between the quality of provision and the availability of funding?</i></p>	<p>Not addressed</p>	<p><i>In Course Evaluation Section: "Systemic means are employed to assess educational outcomes against financial input and costs (for example Cost-Benefit Analysis, Social Return on Investment etc)"</i></p>
<p><i>- How do you ensure training providers and other stakeholders are clear about the links between funding and quality?</i></p>	<p>Not addressed</p>	<p><i>In same Section: "Results from cost-benefit assessments are considered by management in decision-making about future course planning and resource policies"</i></p>

Element 9: Quality Assurance

9. Ensure quality assurance covers all aspects of VET provision

- Quality assurance covers both the content of training and the administrative and staff arrangements which support teaching and learning. The EQARF should be seen as all encompassing.

Key Questions

- What aspects of the training providers' arrangements should be covered by quality assurance arrangements?
 - How do you ensure that all the separate quality assurance processes are compatible and aligned?
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Applying Element 9 to Eduplan

EQARF Question	Currently Addressed in Eduplan:	Recommendations for Additions:
<p>- <i>What aspects of the training providers' arrangements should be covered by quality assurance arrangements?</i></p>	<p><i>In Evaluation Section:</i> "Other factors impacting on performance are identified and monitored (e.g. board, accommodation etc.)"</p>	<p>Add to Quality Assurance Section: <i>"Quality Assurance standards and procedures are applied to non-teaching aspects of educational provision (for example administrative and support staff, resources used etc.)"</i></p>
<p>- <i>How do you ensure that all the separate quality assurance processes are compatible and aligned?</i></p>	<p>Not Addressed</p>	<p>Add at end of Quality Assurance Section: <i>"Analysis of results from Quality Assurance exercises allow for conclusions to be made about internal functional relationships (for example links between support functions, administrative functions, course planning functions and teaching functions)"</i></p>

Element 10: Involvement

10. Ensure VET is founded on a strong involvement of external and internal partners and relevant stakeholders

- VET is based on effective partnerships. These exist between government, social partners and national stakeholders; employers and training providers; and learners and society. They create the foundation stone of the VET system which gives it strength, relevance and acceptability.

Key Questions

- How do you ensure social partners' involvement is genuine and valued?
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Applying Element 10 to Eduplan

EQARF Question	Currently Addressed in Eduplan:	Recommendations for Additions:
<p><i>- How do you ensure social partners' involvement is genuine and valued?</i></p>	<p><i>In Drawing up Educational Opportunities:</i> "Does the institution take broader economic and social requirements into account? "</p>	<p><i>In this Section:</i> "Social Partners (Government, Employers, Trades Unions) are consulted periodically and formally about the required orientation of educational provision and course content" And "Social Partners are consulted periodically and formally about course recruitment and student profiles" And "Reports are provided to, and discussed with, Social Partners on course results and institutional achievements"</p>