

Work Package 4

Organization and process of self-assessment Recommendations



Coordinator of the Work Package:
National Centre for TVET Development (CNDIPT)
ROMANIA

**Bucharest,
August 2012**

Introduction

The main aim of WP 4 is to set up the general framework for the self-evaluation system in the French lycées providing vocational education and training and certified as “*lycées des métiers*”, as well as in all schools working towards such certification.

As part of the WP4, a guide has been designed as a support to the experimental self-evaluation to be carried out between September 2012 and March 2013 in the Créteil, Caen and Strasbourg education authorities. This guide is designed for heads of schools and educational teams to support collective drafting, implementation and monitoring of School Projects in view of a continuous improvement approach. Furthermore, the guide should enable the above-mentioned actors to evaluate their contributions to achievement of the national objectives – and their regional application – as well as their own institutional objectives.

Each school involved in the experiment will produce a final report on the subject no later than 18 March 2013. The report will bear upon the guide’s relevance as a self-evaluation tool and as an aid to quality assurance.

In order to support the whole process of experimentation of the guide in the above mentioned regions, the present document, developed by the transnational partners (*ARQA VET Austria, The Observatory Centre for Educational Development Hungary and the National Centre for TVET Development Romania – coordinator of the WP4*), includes:

- Recommendations for / lessons learnt in developing a quality assurance approach at both system and school level
- short description of Support measures /steps taken in implementing a quality assurance approach, at both system and school level, from the partner countries, that could be subject of transfer of innovation
- A set of formats used in the process

Recommendations for / lessons learnt in developing a quality assurance approach at system and school level

AUSTRIA

Lessons learnt in developing a quality assurance approach at system level

Follow a holistic approach and implement a quality management systems that encompasses all phases of the quality cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Act), don't focus too much on single phases (e.g. check – evaluation).

Set support measures especially for the follow up phase (from check to act): It's a big challenge not only for schools but for every organisation to come from evaluation results to new developments. (see: follow up tools for schools).

Set clear roles and responsibilities for quality assurance and quality development. It is important to make clear who is responsible for what and at which level (see: Competence profiles for quality management functions at different levels)

Concerning (self) evaluation: Offer a smart set on instruments for self-evaluation, instruments should support system (organisational) feedback and individual feedback (e. g. feedback from students to teachers).

Look at your quality approach at system level in the sense of quality assurance and development: The quality (management) approach at system level should be continuously evaluated and improved itself.

Recommendations for developing a quality assurance approach at school level

Develop a quality culture: It is important for schools to develop a quality and feedback culture. Quality management means, that the idea of continuous improvement is part of the daily work of as many persons as possible. This means, that a culture of trust and transparency has to be build up - the role of principals and management staff is crucial concerning this topic. Without mutual trust it is quite unlikely that weak points or improvement areas at a school can come into the focus of quality management.

Involve as many staff as possible: Quality management or the responsibility for quality can not be delegated to a single or few persons. It is important that as many staff as possible is involved in quality processes and projects. Quality management and continuous improvement should be needless to as many persons as possible.

Training of staff: Quality management at school level should be combined with training of management and teachers.

From plan – do – check to act: Schools should be aware of the capability of their organisations to work with quality topics. Planning, implementation and evaluation of quality measures and projects should take care of staff resources and the capability of schools to deal with change management. For example it is crucial to produce not too many (self) evaluation results. If the organisation is not able to work with the results and to plan follow up processes, the prior work is probably needless and the engagement of staff and teachers might decrease if it is not obvious that the production of evaluation results makes sense.

HUNGARY¹

Lessons learnt in developing a quality assurance approach at system level

1. **Firm legislative background** for the success of the introduction of self-assessment into the Hungarian Vet schools was important. Several, significant pieces of legislation declared self- assessment either mandatory for schools -in the case of schools participating in the VET School Development Program between 2003-2009- or connected its existence to other motivating factors, such as the Prize for Excellence for VET Schools and for Public schools. (Relevant legislation: Strategy for the Development of the VET System 2005-2013; 1057/2005 Government Resolution about the implementation of the Strategy; 3/2002 Educational Ministerial Decree on the Prize for Excellence for Public Schools; 1/2007 Social Ministerial Decree on the Prize for Excellence for VET schools.)

An amendment initiated in 2003 to the 1993/ LXXIX Act on Public Education declared mandatory for all school to create and Institutional Quality Management Program (IQMP). For the realization, the implementation and continuous review of the IQMP the schools must operate a Quality Assurance team; which sets up a quality assurance plan; assess the satisfaction of partners on a regular basis and adjusts and modifies its goals in accordance with the results of the partners' surveys. In the Institutional Quality Management Program schools must set the practices, frequency and the methods of self assessment they plan to carry out.

2. In addition to the legislative background the launching of specific **developments projects**

¹ The Hungarian contribution was prepared by Katalin Molnar-Stadler, external consultant to the QALEP project (M&S Consulting Ltd.: katalin.stadler@t-online.hu) and Krisztina Mihalyi, project coordinator (Corvinus University of Budapest, Observatory Centre for Educational Development: krisztina.meszáros@uni-corvinus.hu). In case more detailed information is required about any of the described tools please contact us.

from governmental initiation were also important inputs in the success of the introduction of SA into schools. Specifically the VET School Development Program and the Comenius Program can be mentioned here, which aimed at the improvement of VET schools and public education schools respectively. The launch of these programs was preceded by extensive status analysis including the survey about where institutions are in terms of quality assurance practices. The status analysis was followed by a strategy forming process financed by the government.

3. Since all development programs were financed by public money there was a mandatory monitoring system designated to the realization processes. The monitoring was both financial and professional from which this latter was extremely important in the success of the spreading of the self assessment practices. The **professional monitoring system** operated as a support for the institutions to reach the goals set in the relevant development program.
4. There was a need from the institutions to receive feedback on their work. In this the **Prizes for Excellence** played very important part and operated as great motivation for the institutions.
5. There was also need for ensuring **opportunities for peer-learning activities**. Institutional Club Networks (organized on regional or other territorial levels) operated very well. The external expert consultancy meeting organized for several schools at the same time also provided opportunity for sharing and learning from each other.
6. **Information systems** supporting the quality assurance processes also played important role. The **Benchmarking Database** developed within the framework of the VET School Development Program and the Quality Assurance Database developed later within Social Renewal Operational Program both served well for purposes like:
 - generating statistics;
 - comparing results
 - providing opportunities for searching for best practices.
7. **Governmental communication** was very important. Carrying out quality management and self-assessment is a lot of work. The schools had to understand the value of this work and the idea that this work leads to the good of the entire institution, the students, the staff and also to the good of the local/regional community.
8. Setting up the **institutional framework from government initiation and financing** with the role to support the QM processes was also a significant measure. An entire department

in the National Institute for VET was devoted to enhance the processes.

9. On system level **pilot results were synthesized** and **lessons learnt were integrated** in the next phases of implementation. For example the experiences gained in the VET School Development Program were used in planning phase of the projects realized in the Social Renewal Operational Program.
10. **Special financing structure** was set up to ensure the finances devoted for QM purposed were really spent for QM purposes by the schools. In Hungary many schools are in poor financial conditions. Unless the special measures they might have spent the money received on other essential tools rather than employing the external QM experts. Therefore these experts were paid centrally, but the values of their work landed in the schools.

Recommendations for developing a quality assurance approach at school level

1. The commitment of headmasters / management is inevitable.
2. Commonly defined and accepted strategic objectives are needed at institutional level.
3. The organization-wide operation of QM is very important. Involvement, motivation and RECOGNITION of staff supports QM processes.
4. The training of the QM team and the rest of the staff is essential.
5. Application of the plan-do-check-act (PDCA) cycle in the operation of the institution and in quality management serves as basis for successful QM.
6. A status analysis at institution level should precede planning.
7. The institutional strategic plan should contain specific, numeric, and measurable indicators.
8. Establishment of a partner-focused operation is inevitable.
9. Communication within the institution from the headmaster to the staff is as important as governmental communication to the school managers at system level.
10. The basic principle of quality management is that QM is a tool not a goal. QM is a tool towards pedagogical excellence. It does not operate parallel to the pedagogical tasks. This principle must be internalized by the school management and the entire staff.

ROMANIA

Lessons learnt in developing a quality assurance approach at system level

1. Quality assurance:
 - is an umbrella-process and should be holistically approached
 - is a long term construction: all schools are most vulnerable when the public

demands quick change, rather than exercising the patience to implement sustainable change

2. Accountability “for” and “to” is as important as development
3. School networking and peer learning are strong support instruments
4. The inspectors’ support in the process is important. Inspectors have the skills, knowledge and understanding to help TVET providers assure and improve quality across all forms of learning and qualifications

Recommendations for developing a quality assurance approach at school level

1. objectives led and results oriented quality assurance approach
2. commitment of leaders to QA
3. active participation of relevant stakeholders
4. ownership of staff
5. cultivating a feedback culture:
 - *to students*, from teachers, on their learning progress and behaviour, in order to support their professional and personal development
 - *to teachers*, from students’, parents and peers, to encourage their reflection on their own performance and enactment of improvement
 - *to managers*, from both teaching and non teaching staff, students, parents
 - *to the institution’s performance as a whole*, from all relevant stakeholders, to facilitate the review and improvement process at institutional level
6. creating a human resources development culture:
 - support development of individual skills and competences
 - encourage team work
 - appraise staff on a regular base from the person perspective (self assessment of his/her own performance combined with management evaluation), concluding in an improvement plan with clear goals and given framework
7. encouraging innovation
8. aiming to learn and improve on an on-going basis, at individual and institutional level

Support measures /steps taken in implementing a quality assurance approach, at both system and school level, from the partner countries, that could be subject of transfer of innovation

AUSTRIA

Support measures provided at system level

Quality management functions are implemented at different levels: There are headmasters and School quality process managers who work on the implementation of quality management at school level – always with the focus to involve other staff. At regional level, school inspection and regional quality process managers are responsible for the support of schools within QIBB (Austrian VET Quality Initiative). At ministry level there are heads of departments and Federal quality process managers who deal with the quality topic.

An Online Platform for self evaluation (www.qibb.at) has been implemented by the Austrian Ministry of Education, the arts and Culture in order to support schools to do self evaluation in their organisations. Different tools and instruments are offered to support system (organisational) and individual (personal feedback e. g. for teachers) evaluation. Qualitative Methods are in use as well, for example there are guidelines for schools to support the implementation of individual feedback).

The focus of VET-CERT (Leonardo da Vinci Project, see: www.vet-cert.at) was to develop competence profiles and framework curriculums for persons holding quality management functions within QIBB. Competence profiles are finished at all (see formats) and framework curriculums can be provided in the next month. A pilot with the focus on implementing VET-CERT results by offering trainings will be done in 2013/14.

A “Follow up Tool” for schools to support their internal processes from check (self evaluation results) to act (new measures and implementations) was provided by ARQA-VET (developed by Prof. Karl Wilbers from Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nürnberg). See: Follow up Tool.

Steps taken in implementing a quality assurance approach school level

See above

HUNGARY

Support measures provided at system level

1. **QA Information databases** for performance and methodological benchmarking. (see above)

2. **Prize for Excellence** for Public Education Schools and for VET Schools. (see above)
3. **3-level introduction process.** Realizing that schools are not at the same level of readiness for introduction of QM tools a 3-level introduction process was designed in Hungary. The schools entering into the QM processes could adjust the introduction phase to their readiness for changes/innovation. This was important because asking too much for the first time only creates resistance, but the gradual introduction helps to avoid conflicts. (See details in the attached: “Quality Improvement initiatives implemented in the Hungarian vocational education and training (VET) sector (2000 – 2011)”)
4. **General QM systems** (like ISO) were transformed into education and training specific systems.
5. **EU requirements** from CQAF and EQARF were integrated into the Hungarian development therefore tools developed in these European frameworks could server as support for the Hungarian implementation.
6. A 2-year long **accredited master level training** was developed and is offered for people already having a teaching qualification at the University of Szeged and also at “Kodolányi János” College providing “Quality Developer Teacher” qualification. The training program is available to be transferred.
7. Mentors were trained within the QM project realized under the Social Renewal Operational Program. The **mentor training program** is available to be transferred.
8. **Accredited continuous professional development teacher training programs** in conducting self assessment at schools were developed and are available to be transferred.

Steps taken in implementing a quality assurance approach school level

Pre-requisites:

1. There is a need for a **core team** who undertakes this task and is willing to devote extra time, energy and work to it.
2. Self-assessment has to be followed by **improvement actions and tangible results** have to be achieved and presented to the staff and partners. Using self-assessment as a collective exercise for review and to ensure the implementation of appropriate change(s). Launch so many improvement actions which are realistic and feasible.
3. The most important partners (especially staff) have to be involved into the mutual agreement on and selection of improvement actions.
4. The **connection between** the institutional goals, the processes/activities/methods (i.e. Enablers) implemented to achieve the institutional goals, and the Results achieved (i.e.

extent of fulfilment of the institutional goals set) should be explained and made visible/clear to the staff.

5. **Integrating QA into daily work** to avoid duplication of existing processes and adding to workloads.

Steps to be taken:

Step 1: **Commitment of the headmaster** / top management.

Step 2: **Setting/defining commonly accepted strategic objectives.**

Step 3: **Organisation-wide operation** of the QMS, involvement, motivation and recognition of the staff.

Step 4: **Professionalism of the Quality Improvement Team** and the teaching staff in applying QM/QI methods.

Step 5: **Systematic operation** according to the PDCA cycle (with closing the cycle – organisational learning, implementation of improvement actions based on the evaluation results).

Main principle:

Keep in mind that quality improvement and quality management is not necessarily producing spectacular changes or tangible results immediately. Better to follow a step by step approach which may bring about apparently small change and acknowledged results in issues important to us and our partners.

Process in the school:

1. **Communication** with the **headmaster** / school management.
2. **Communication** with the **staff**.
3. **Common understanding** of goals and values.
4. Setting up and acceptance of the Self Assessment **Project Plan**.
5. Filling in the **evaluation book**.
6. Setting up an **improvement plan**.
7. **Implementation** of the improvement plan.
8. **Follow-up, reflection** on the results and **modification of goals and tasks** on the basis of the results.

ROMANIA

Support measures provided at system level

1. **QA Training for TVET actors:** prior experimentation, the main TVET actors were trained to understand the role of the different quality assurance components and use the manuals/guidebooks:
 - NATIONAL LEVEL : Ministry of education and its agencies, other relevant bodies
 - COUNTY LEVEL: all general inspectors responsible for quality assurance
 - PROVIDER LEVEL: headmasters and quality assurance coordinators from all TVET schools
2. **Mentoring and networking:** all TVET units are associated in inter institutional assistance networks, so they can cooperate in monitoring, evidence collecting and peer learning activities:
 - New schools entering the experimentation of the quality assurance were mentored by those schools with previous experience quality assurance
 - all schools implementing quality assurance mechanisms are associated in inter institutional assistance networks
 - on line Communication platforms were set up to facilitate dialogue between schools on the quality assurance issues
3. **Dissemination and promotion of good practice:**
 - development of *Guides of good practices in quality assurance of vocational education and training programmes*
 - promotion of good practice examples at regional, national and european level (on the website of relevant organisations, in different dissemination activities)

Steps taken in implementing a quality assurance approach school level

1. Approving in the school Board the objective of setting up a QA approach
2. Informing the staff about this objective
3. Setting up the Quality Documentation Centre
4. Setting up the Quality Assurance (QA) Commission
5. External training of the QA Commission members in the field of quality management
6. Information seminar (on the job training) for all staff in the field of quality management
7. Development of the Quality manual (procedures, regulations, responsibilities, job descriptions etc.)
8. Involving the heads of teachers department in the QA approach
9. Involving the students' coordination body in the QA approach
10. Development of the set of performance criteria
11. Development of the assessment instruments

12. Development of the QA Action Plan at departament and school level
13. Internal monitoring all the quality assurance elements; identification of weak points and establishing of remedial action plans
14. Gathering the evidence corresponding to the performance criteria established
15. Conducting the self assessment
16. Defining the strong points and the aspects that need improvement
17. Developing the Improvement plan
18. Restarting the QA CYCLE

Formats used in the quality assurance process

AUSTRIA

1. Online Platform for self evaluation

Here is a link for the demo version of the online self evaluation platform of QIBB:

<http://qibbdemo.bmukk.gv.at/admin>

user: demoschulehtl

password: demo

2. VET-CERT Competence Profiles for persons holding quality management functions within QIBB. Competence Profiles for the following functions are available:

- School Quality Process Manager
- Principal
- Regional Quality Process Manager
- School Inspectorate
- Federal Quality Process Manager

See: http://www.vet-cert.at/products/competence_profiles/EN/#c6158

3. Follow-up-Tool for VET-Schools

See: <http://www.peer-review-in-qibb.at/> and attachment

ROMANIA

1. Preparation Checklist for Self-Assessment Process

2. Summary of Self-assessment Requirements

3. Self-assessment report format

4. Improvement plan format

Annex

Quality improvement initiatives implemented in the Hungarian vocational education and training (VET) sector (2000 – 2011)

HUNGARY'S QUALITY JOURNEY TO EQAVET

(written by Katalin Molnar-Stadler)