



Funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



COMPREHENSIVE POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR CONTINUING VET: REFORM OF CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEMS

RE-CVET QUALITY CODE HANDBOOK





RE-CVET QUALITY CODE HANDBOOK



Funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Project title: Comprehensive policy frameworks for continuing VET: Reform of Continuing Vocational Education and Training Systems (Re-CVET)

Agreement Number:

2015 – 2994 / 001 - 001

Project number:

567039- EPP-1-2015-1-CY-EPPKA3-CVET

Implementation period: 01 November 2015 – 30 November 2017

Project consortium:

Ministry of Education and Culture (Coordinator)

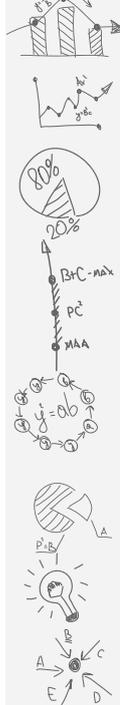
Enoros Consulting Ltd

Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre (KPMPC)

Project Website:

<http://www.re-cvet.org>

ISBN 978-9963-0-5411-4



The project has been funded with the support of the European Commission. The content of this publication does not reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Responsibility for the information and views expressed in the publication lies entirely with the authors.



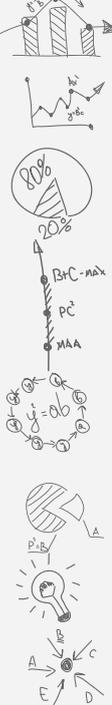


ABBREVIATIONS	FULL TITLE
CBA	Cost –Benefit Analysis
CEDEFOP	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CQAF	Common Quality Assurance Framework
CVET	Continuing Vocational Education and Training
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
EQAVET	European Quality Assurance Reference Framework
ESF	European Social Fund
ETF	European Training Foundation
HRDA	Human Resource Development Authority
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IVET	Initial Vocational Education and Training
KPMPC (QVETDC)	Qualifications and vocational education and training development centre
MES	Ministry of Education and Science
MLSI	Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance
MOEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
PDCA	Plan-Do-Check-Act (Cycle)
PI	Pedagogical Institute
SVQ	System of Vocational Qualifications
VET	Vocational Education and Training



Table of Contents

Introduction	8
1. Implementing EQAVET in practice	10
1.1. What is EQAVET?.....	10
1.2. Application of EQAVET in practice.....	14
2. CVET quality code for national authorities	15
2.1. Introduction	15
2.2. What should be at the core of CVET national quality assurance framework?	16
2.3. What processes should be included in the national CVET external quality evaluation model?.....	21
2.4. What are existing national approaches to CVET quality?	28
3. CVET quality code for CVET providers	34
3.1. Introduction	34
3.2. Key principles for CVET quality assurance at institutional level	34
3.3. Documentation of quality management system.....	39
4. CVET quality checklists.....	41
4.1. Checklist for national authorities.....	41
4.2. Checklist for CVET providers.....	41
5. Further reading and resources	43
Graph 1 - Quality circle according to EQAVET	10
Graph 2 - The map of processes of CVET quality external evaluation	22
Graph 3 - Main areas for quality within VET institutions.....	34
Table 1 - EQAVET Quality criteria and indicative descriptors for national authorities and VET providers.....	11
Table 2 - National authorities actions in applying quality cycle for CVET	16
Table 3 - Set of quality indicators proposed by the Technical working group on adult learning	19
Table 4 - The owners of the processes.....	23
Table 5 - CVET providers actions in applying quality cycle for CVET	35
Box 1 - EQAVET indicators.....	13
Box 2 - Coverage of Quality Management Recommendations for VET	33





INTRODUCTION

This publication has been prepared as a product of the Erasmus+ project “Comprehensive policy frameworks for continuing VET: Reform of Continuing Vocational Education and Training Systems (Re-CVET)”. The project has been initiated by national educational authorities in Cyprus and Lithuania in order to improve continuing vocational education and training (CVET) systems: to enhance the uptake of the programmes offered within the CVET system and to strengthen the link between CVET and the labour market by making it more attractive to the beneficiaries of both sides (enterprises, businesses and potential employees, CVET institutions).

The main purpose of the RE-CVET Quality Code Handbook’s is to offer advice and propose tools for CVET providers in relation to their quality assurance procedures. It also recommends the key quality assurance principles for national authorities and policy makers in the field when supporting and evaluating the quality of the CVET providers based on the European Quality Assurance Framework for VET (EQAVET).

The publication is based on analysis of existing practices in Lithuania and Cyprus, other European countries, products of European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), information and products by the EQAVET network.

What do we mean by quality and quality assurance?

There are countless definitions of quality. For the purpose of this handbook a working definition by ISO 9000 is used i.e. **“a degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfils requirements”**. This definition signals that for achieving quality, there have to be standards, principles or benchmarks set or commonly agreed. This can be done by institution staff, community, or, in some cases, set by national authorities, especially when they design and fund training services.

The aim of this handbook is to guide national authorities and CVET providers on their route to quality assurance. Quality assurance refers to “activities involving planning, implementation, evaluation, reporting, and quality improvement, implemented to ensure that education and training (content of programmes, curricula, assessment and validation of learning outcomes, etc.) meet the quality requirements expected by stakeholders”¹.

Quality assurance systems are based on quality criteria and indicators and are composed of external and internal evaluation mechanisms where:

- quality criteria are defined as distinctive marks (or characteristics) for assessing the quality of a CVET system or the quality of CVET activities of an organisation;
- indicators are quantitative or qualitative variables that provide a simple and reliable basis for assessing achievement, change or performance;
- an external evaluation is an evaluation carried out by evaluators external to the entity evaluated, and;
- an internal evaluation is self-evaluation of organisations during which one or more persons assess the performance of an entity for whose activities they are fully or partially responsible.

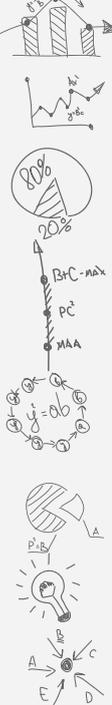
¹ Sources of definitions of terms in this document: EQAVET glossary: <http://www.eqavet.eu/qa/gns/glossary.aspx> and Cedefop (2011). Glossary. Quality in education and training



The purpose of the Handbook

European countries increasingly call for actions to improve the quality in vocational education and training (VET) and set national criteria and indicators for training processes and outcomes as well as for VET institutions performance. It is quite common in initial VET (IVET), but in CVET it is more difficult to agree on common indicators and standards. CVET, compared to training of young persons, is characterized by a more diverse background of learners, higher proportion and importance of non-formal and informal learning environments, more diverse providers of training, including enterprises, NGOs, community centres, and by more flexible ways of organizing training (Simon Broek and Bert-Jan Buiskool, 2013). In addition, CVET is more focused on immediate needs of businesses or sectors, is shorter-term and not always leads to a full qualification, is funded by a mixture of public authorities, individuals or business and is less regulated in terms of curriculum, certification, delivery of training (ICF GFK, 2013). As a result, national authorities introduce different, usually less binding, requirements for CVET and therefore CVET providers have the main responsibility for the quality of their training programmes and to satisfy the needs of their learners. This handbook and the third section in particular will provide insights and recommendations for building or improving their quality assurance system, but it is up to CVET providers to interpret them and to choose the most suitable approach to quality and the areas on which to concentrate when taking quality assurance actions.

The handbook's second section will be useful for national authorities in charge of evaluating of CVET providers or searching for ways to support their quality.



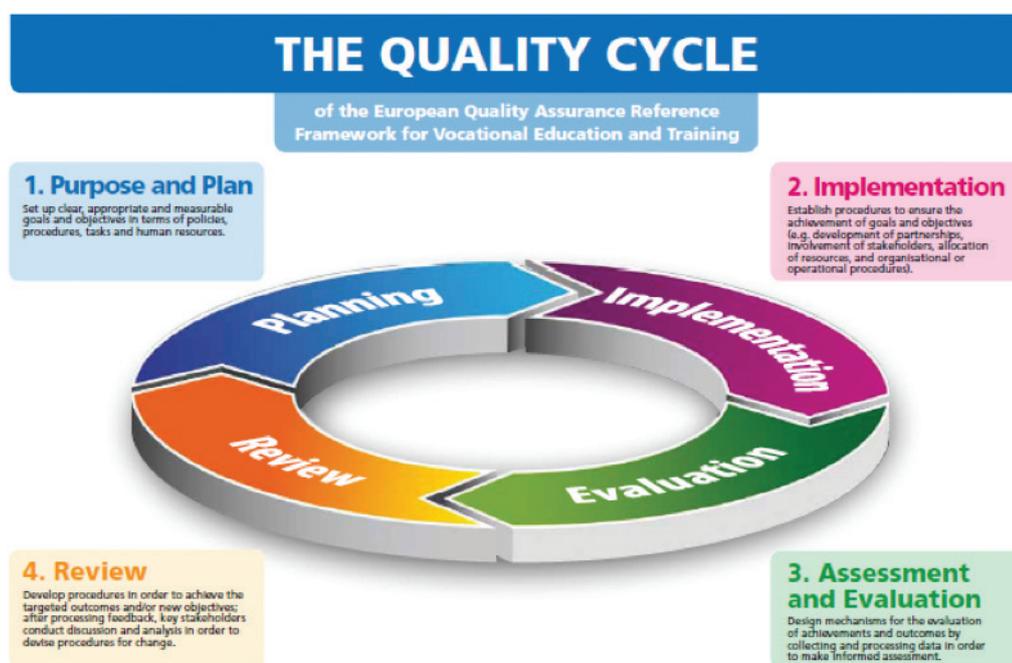


1. IMPLEMENTING EQAVET IN PRACTICE

1.1. What is EQAVET?

The European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQAVET) aims to promote better VET by providing national authorities with common tools for the quality assurance. EQAVET was developed by Member States in cooperation with the European Commission and has been adopted through the European Parliament and Council Recommendation in 2009.

The core of the EQAVET is quality assurance and improvement cycle (planning, implementation, evaluation/assessment and review/revision, graph 1).



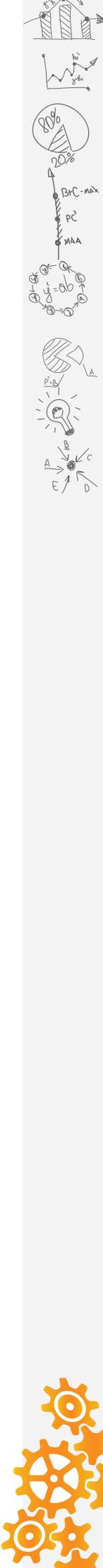
Graph 1 - Quality circle according to EQAVET

EQAVET also proposes a set of quality criteria together with descriptors and indicators applicable to quality management for national (system) and VET-provider levels (Table 1). EQAVET is applicable to IVET and CVET, depending on the VET system's characteristics and the type of VET providers. EQAVET is not a standard for systems and providers, it should be regarded as a guidance and "toolbox" from where everyone may choose and apply the most suitable elements taking account of their potential added value and in accordance with national legislation and practice. The responsibility for monitoring the quality of these systems remains entirely with the Member States (European Parliament and Council of the EU, 2009).



Table 1 - EQAVET Quality criteria and indicative descriptors for national authorities and VET providers.

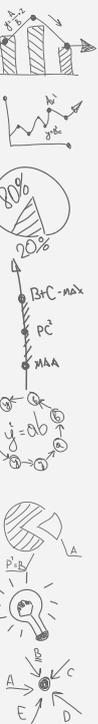
Quality Criteria	Indicative descriptors at VET-system level	Indicative descriptors at VET-provider level
<p>Planning reflects a strategic vision shared by the relevant stakeholders and includes explicit goals/objectives, actions and indicators</p>	<p>Goals/objectives of VET are described for the medium and long terms, and are linked to European goals The relevant stakeholders participate in setting VET goals and objectives at the different levels Targets are established and monitored through specific indicators (success criteria) Mechanisms and procedures have been established to identify training needs An information policy has been devised to ensure optimum disclosure of quality results/outcomes, subject to national/regional data protection requirements Standards and guidelines for recognition, validation and certification of competences of individuals have been defined</p>	<p>European, national and regional VET policy goals/objectives are reflected in the local targets set by the VET providers Explicit goals/objectives and targets are set and monitored Ongoing consultation with relevant stakeholders takes place to identify specific local/individual needs Responsibilities in quality management and development have been explicitly allocated There is an early involvement of staff in the planning, including with regard to quality development Providers plan cooperative initiatives with other VET providers The relevant stakeholders participate in the process of analysing local needs VET providers have an explicit and transparent quality assurance system in place</p>
<p>Implementation plans are devised in consultation with stakeholders and include explicit principles</p>	<p>Implementation plans are established in cooperation with social partners, VET providers and other relevant stakeholders at the different levels Implementation plans include taking into consideration the resources required, the capacity of the users and the tools and guidelines needed for support Guidelines and standards have been devised for implementation at different levels Implementation plans include specific support for the training of teachers and trainers VET providers' responsibilities in the implementation process are explicitly described and made transparent A national and/or regional quality assurance framework has been devised and includes guidelines and quality standards at VET-provider level to promote continuous improvement and self-regulation</p>	<p>Resources are appropriately internally aligned/ assigned with a view to achieving the targets set in the implementation plans Relevant and inclusive partnerships are explicitly supported to implement the actions planned The strategic plan for staff competence development specifies the need for training for teachers and trainers Staff undertake regular training and develop cooperation with relevant external stakeholders to support capacity building and quality improvement, and to enhance performance</p>





Quality Criteria	Indicative descriptors at VET-system level	Indicative descriptors at VET-provider level
<p>Evaluation of outcomes and processes is regularly carried out and supported by measurement</p>	<p>A methodology for evaluation has been devised, covering internal and external evaluation Stakeholder involvement in the monitoring and evaluation process is agreed and clearly described The national/regional standards and processes for improving and assuring quality are relevant and proportionate to the needs of the sector Systems are subject to self-evaluation, internal and external review, as appropriate Early warning systems are implemented Performance indicators are applied Relevant, regular and coherent data collection takes place, in order to measure success and identify areas for improvement Appropriate data collection methodologies have been devised, e.g. questionnaires and indicators/metrics</p>	<p>Self-assessment/self-evaluation is periodically carried out under national and regional regulations/frameworks or at the initiative of VET providers Evaluation and review covers processes and results/outcomes of education including the assessment of learner satisfaction as well as staff performance and satisfaction Evaluation and review includes adequate and effective mechanisms to involve internal and external stakeholders Early warning systems are implemented</p>
<p>Review</p>	<p>Procedures, mechanisms and instruments for undertaking reviews are defined at all levels Processes are regularly reviewed and action plans for change devised. Systems are adjusted accordingly Information on the outcomes of evaluation is made publicly available</p>	<p>Learners' feedback is gathered on their individual learning experience and on the learning and teaching environment. Together with teachers' feedback this is used to inform further actions Information on the outcomes of the review is widely and publicly available Procedures on feedback and review are part of a strategic learning process in the organisation Results/outcomes of the evaluation process are discussed with relevant stakeholders and appropriate action plans are put in place</p>

EQAVET also proposes a list of 10 quality indicators that can be applied both at system and provider level.



Box 1 - EQAVET indicators

Indicator 1. Relevance of quality assurance systems for VET providers:

- (a) share of VET providers applying internal quality assurance systems defined by law/at own initiative
- (b) share of accredited VET providers

Indicator 2. Investment in training of teachers and trainers:

- (a) share of teachers and trainers participating in further training
- (b) amount of funds invested

Indicator 3. Participation rate in VET programmes:

- (a) Number of participants in VET programmes
- (b) Number of participants according to the type of programme and the individual criteria

Indicator 4. Completion rate in VET programmes:

- (a) Number of persons having successfully completed/abandoned VET programmes, according to the type of programme and the individual criteria

Indicator 5. Placement rate in VET programmes:

- (a) destination of VET learners at a designated point in time after completion of training, according to the type of programme and the individual criteria
- (b) share of employed learners at a designated point in time after completion of training, according to the type of programme and the individual criteria

Indicator 6. Utilisation of acquired skills at the workplace:

- (a) information on occupation obtained by individuals after completion of training, according to type of training and individual criteria
- (b) satisfaction rate of individuals and employers with acquired skills/competences

Indicator 7. Unemployment rate according to individual criteria

Indicator 8. Prevalence of vulnerable groups:

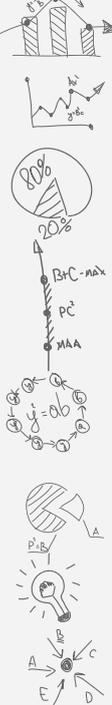
- (a) percentage of participants in VET classified as disadvantaged groups (in a defined region or catchment area) according to age and gender
- (b) success rate of disadvantaged groups according to age and gender

Indicator 9. Mechanisms to identify training needs in the labour market:

- (a) information on mechanisms set up to identify changing demands at different levels
- (b) evidence of their effectiveness

Indicator 10. Schemes used to promote better access to VET:

- (a) information on existing schemes at different levels
- (b) evidence of their effectiveness





1.2. Application of EQAVET in practice

The idea of the EQAVET circular approach to quality is based on Deming cycle “Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle” and it suggests that:

- **Planning** should be based on a strategic vision and should include goals/objectives, actions and indicators set;
- **Action implementation** aims at ensuring that vision, goals and objectives are in place and includes the resources required, the involvement of stakeholders and support for staff involved in implementing the action plan;
- **Evaluation** (internal and external when appropriate) of performance and outcomes achieved as well as of students, staff and external stakeholders satisfaction should be regularly carried out in order to measure success and identify areas for improvement;
- Results gained from the evaluation should be **reviewed** in order to devise plans for change thus starting a **new quality cycle**. Corrective and preventive actions should be planned and implemented. Results of the evaluation process should be discussed with internal and external stakeholders and it is recommended that information on review outcomes would be publicly available.

The core principle of EQAVET is a regular and systemic application of the quality cycle. Commitment to apply it does make a change for quality of performance and services. It is important to keep in mind that application of internal quality management systems (such as ISO, EFQM and others) does not conflict with EQAVET; EQAVET does not prescribe any binding requirements. The Quality cycle is the basic element of any effective internal quality management system and quality culture within VET institutions (Cedefop, 2015).

National authorities and CVET providers may use another two main elements of EQAVET, i.e. quality criteria and indicators, for inspiration by:

- quality criteria together with descriptors (Table 1) clarify the preconditions and characteristics of operating / functioning the quality cycle;
- ten EQAVET indicators (Box 1) form a framework of basic indicators for measuring quality of training processes and outcomes. CVET providers and national authorities may formulate or adapt their indicators based on this list.

EQAVET underlines the involvement of stakeholders into the quality assurance actions at all stages of **the** quality cycle. Stakeholders are understood as “People, groups or entities that have a role and interest in the objectives and implementation of a VET policy or VET programme. They include the community whose situation the policy or programme seeks to change; staff who implement activities; policy and programme managers who oversee implementation; decision-makers who decide the course of action related to the policy or programme; and supporters, critics and other persons who influence the policy or programme environment”.



2. CVET QUALITY CODE FOR NATIONAL AUTHORITIES

2.1. Introduction

National authorities in charge of CVET can intervene in CVET providers' performance and support their quality by defining and implementing national CVET quality frameworks, quality systems and quality instruments.

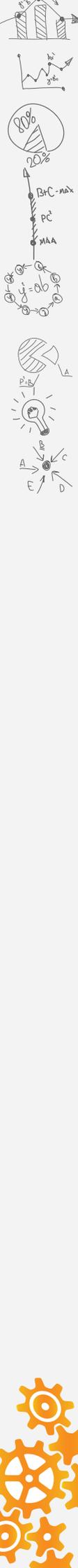
Simon Broek and Bert-Jan Buiskool (2013) differentiate among quality framework, quality systems and quality instruments where:

- **quality framework** is as an overarching reference for recommended quality concepts, models, criteria and indicators that can be included in the quality systems (this framework could be embedded in legislation, but also in policy documents or agreements between stakeholders);
- **quality systems** are concrete systems that are implemented on national, regional or sectoral level, such as accreditation systems or quality labels for which individual providers need to apply for or get awarded. They cover quality criteria, indicators and procedures. CVET providers may have their own quality assurance systems in place on organisational level to assure quality;
- **quality instruments** are implemented at system and providers' level and include self-evaluation and external evaluation.

In the context of EQAVET a quality framework represents a national approach to quality assurance; EU member states were urged by 2011 to devise an "approach aimed at improving quality assurance systems at national level, where appropriate, and making best use of the framework, involving the social partners, regional and local authorities, and all other relevant stakeholders in accordance with national legislation and practice". By defining a national-level quality framework (or regional, where appropriate), authorities shape a vision and policy for quality-assured CVET and identify quality systems and quality instruments needed to support the implementation of this vision as well as necessary structures and resources. As Conti (2010) states, 'Managing for quality should [...] be first defined at the system level, and then down, in a consistent way, to the lower levels (subsystems, techniques and tools) (ETF, 2014).

National authorities, in opposite to situation in IVET, regulate CVET to a lesser extent in terms of requirements for CVET provision and requirements for curricula. This is due to a different nature of CVET: a more diverse background of learners, higher proportion and importance of non-formal and informal learning environments, more diverse providers of training, shorter-term training that does not always lead to a full qualification, diversified funding sources, etc. Therefore, national authorities in many countries choose to impose quality-related requirements on publicly funded CVET. Similarly, requirements for training quality may be set by other organisations which order and fund training services. As a result, there is rarely a unified system of quality assurance in CVET and it is possible that a CVET provider has to comply with several requirements at the same time, depending on the source of funding and sub-system arrangements (IGF, 2013).

When it comes to formal CVET, there have to be quality systems in place for training leading to officially recognised qualifications. National authorities are "the owners" of these qualifications and it is in their interest that these qualifications would be in accordance with a national qualifications framework, integrated into the overall system of qualifications and would correspond to labour market needs. The existence of quality assurance systems for training processes and qualifications also signals to learners that they can trust training and its results (knowledge, skills and competences gained).





2.2. What should be at the core of CVET national quality assurance framework?

The fundamental elements

The national quality assurance framework should cover the following elements (ETF, 2014):

- clearly stated goals and objectives for further development and improvement of CVET, which will be continuously reviewed and adapted, according to the results of the cyclical work (PDCA cycle);
- definition of a set of indicators to measure the stated objectives and their impacts, namely, input, output, outcomes, context and process indicators;
- agreement among the key stakeholders on the methodological and procedural principles that will guide its implementation.

National authorities together with key stakeholders should consider a concept of CVET quality, measuring of CVET quality and improving CVET quality.

Use of the quality cycle

When designing their national level measures to improve CVET quality, national authorities should consider an operation of the quality assurance cycle (planning, implementation, evaluation and review, see section 1 and Table 2 below). At a planning stage a strategic vision for CVET and CVET quality assurance measures, including goals/objectives, actions and indicators should be elaborated, followed by a proper action plan to monitor their implementation, and corrective and preventive actions. National authorities should also support and promote the operation of the quality cycle at CVET provider level.

Table 2 - National authorities' actions in applying the quality cycle for CVET

Quality cycle stage	Actions for national authorities
Planning	<p>Describe goals/objectives of CVET for the medium and the long term, and link them to European goals. Involve relevant stakeholders into the process</p> <p>Consider the concept of CVET quality and define measures for CVET quality assurance accordingly. Choose the approach that is relevant to the context and manageable</p> <p>Consider the institutional framework for CVET quality assurance</p> <p>Establish targets through specific indicators (success criteria)</p> <p>Establish mechanisms and procedures to identify societal training needs which CVET system could address and fulfil</p> <p>Establish an information policy for disseminating results/outcomes</p> <p>Define standards and guidelines for recognition, validation and certification of competences of individuals</p>
Implementation	<p>Establish implementation plans. Involve relevant stakeholders into the process</p> <p>Consider the resources required and support for teachers, work to ensure access of staff to continuing professional development activities and expansion of their availability; when relevant consider establishing a teacher certification system based on their participation in continuing professional development</p> <p>Consider the resources required and support for staff engaged into CVET quality assurance measures</p> <p>Clarify responsibilities of CVET providers and all other parties involved in the implementation process</p> <p>Create CVET quality assurance guidelines and standards at CVET-provider level which encourage improvement</p> <p>Provide methodical support and consultations for CVET providers in need of advice on quality assurance issues</p> <p>Provide support to the experts, members of bodies and all other parties dealing with CVET external evaluation and quality assurance</p>



Quality cycle stage	Actions for national authorities
Evaluation	<p>Create a methodology for regular and systemic evaluation, covering internal and external evaluation. Build it on existing practices and make it relevant for the context</p> <p>Consider and involve stakeholders into the monitoring and evaluation process</p> <p>Consider and establish early warning systems that would help to detect and would warn of emerging threats as early as possible</p> <p>Establish and apply performance indicators</p> <p>Create appropriate data collection methodologies and tools</p> <p>Collect relevant, regular and coherent data that is used to measure success and identify areas for improvement</p>
Review	<p>Define procedures, mechanisms and instruments for undertaking reviews at all levels</p> <p>Review processes regularly and establish action plans for necessary changes</p> <p>Adjust CVET delivery</p> <p>Adjust CVET quality assurance measures</p> <p>Publicise information about CVET quality assurance</p>

Adapted from European Parliament and Council recommendation on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) (2009)

Clarity over who provides CVET

National authorities should decide on minimum requirements for institutions claiming to provide CVET through accreditation, licensing or certification systems. It has to be clear who can offer courses or qualifications. In the latter case requirements should be defined by legal acts.

Institutional framework

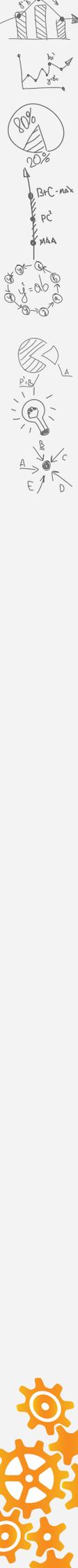
National authorities should design a national quality assurance framework that is manageable and corresponds to the institutional framework of CVET governance and the type of CVET providers. National authorities must be committed to run and improve such a system. When needed, additional advisory bodies, non-formal platforms and networks may be established to support the existing institutional structures.

Internal vs. external evaluation

National authorities should carefully consider the internal and external quality evaluation procedures applicable to CVET providers. The internal evaluation procedures should not be too time and data consuming and should serve their primary purpose – improvement of CVET providers' performance. There are different approaches to external evaluation ranging from peer-review to inspection. Peer-review combines internal evaluation and external evaluation carried out by "persons of equal standing" with the persons whose performance is reviewed (i.e. peers). Peer-review can be implemented nationally and internationally. On the international level peer review has been already implemented successfully in IVET and CVET in EU projects. European peer-review methodology and supporting tools are available from 2007². Originally it was designed for initial VET and later transferred into adult learning. One of the most recent initiatives for adult education sector is international Erasmus+ programme project "PRALINE - Peer Review in Adult Learning to Improve formal and Non-formal Education" where peer-review methodology and manual together with supporting tool-box consisting of quality areas and indicators were revised and adapted for the adult learning sectors³. National authorities should choose the evaluation approach

² <http://www.peer-review-network.eu>

³ <http://www.praline-project.eu/>





taking into account their own resources, sustainability and actual benefit of doing so. The benefit of internal or external evaluation must be clear to CVET providers from the start. If both instruments are used, they should be in synergy, criteria and indicators for internal and external evaluation should correspond to each other and external evaluation should be based on the results of self-assessment. CVET providers should be encouraged and motivated to announce the evaluation results. Processes to synergise internal and external evaluation are proposed in Section 2.3.

Agreed quality indicators

National authorities together with their key stakeholders, including CVET providers, may decide on concrete quality criteria and indicators for measuring the success of the system. CVET providers may be granted some freedom to decide on indicators and criteria for their self-analysis reports. Indicators can be applied at both, system level and at CVET provider level. Examples of indicators embedded into the national quality assurance frameworks (ICF 2013b):

- In Germany, the AZAV QA framework requires providers to meet minimum benchmarks based on the indicator of employment insertion;
- In Finland, the quality management recommendation to VET providers defines indicators for each stage of the quality cycle, taking into account the different characteristics of VET excellence defined in the framework. The use of these indicators by VET providers is voluntary (see Finnish example below);
- In the Netherlands, the quality assurance framework of the inspection (which also applies to CVET) is based on an indicator system;
- In the UK-England, the different aspects of quality assurance put in place by the Skills Funding Agency and Ofsted (the inspection body) use indicators to measure VET providers' performance in a range of areas.

Based on the analysis of usage of indicators in EU member states and their comparison to EQAVET list of indicators (ICF 2013b), the most commonly used indicators concern data on numbers of accredited providers, participation rates, completion rates and unemployment data.

EQAVET indicators (section 1) can be taken into account when elaborating or reviewing a list of national level or provider level indicators.⁴ In addition, a list of indicators elaborated by thematic working group on quality in adult learning (2013) might serve this purpose (Table 3).



⁴ For more information about EQAVET indicators please consult EQAVET Indicators Toolkit: http://www.eqavet.eu/Libraries/Working_Groups/EQAVET_Indicators_Toolkit_final.sflb.ashx

Table 3 - Set of quality indicators proposed by the Technical working group on adult learning**Indicator 1. Quality assurance systems:**

- number of nationally recognised accredited providers;
- number of providers using quality assurance systems.

Indicator 2. Accessibility of adult learning programmes:

- rate of accredited providers to population;
- participation rates per region;
- ratio of vulnerable groups participating in adult learning.

Indicator 3. Quality of staff:

- number of licensed practitioners from recognised programmes;
- number of licensed practitioners participating in continuing professional development programmes.

Indicator 4. Availability of information and guidance:

- flexible access to information and guidance, including the number of access points in the region;
- ratio of access points per head of population;
- number of events and activities on national level to promote adult learning annually;
- proportion of adults with access to an on-going guidance service;
- retention rates on adult learning programmes.

Indicator 5. Leadership and management of adult learning programmes:

- completion rate;
- achievement rate;
- progression rate;
- high level of learner satisfaction rates;
- cost effectiveness of the programme (or cost per learner) / return on investment;
- the extent to which budgets and financial targets are met.

Indicator 6. Outcomes:

- percentage of participants in sustained employment 6 months after completing the programme;
- percentage of stakeholders indicating that skills achieved by learners meet skills' demand;
- percentage of participants reporting wider benefits from adult learning, including social, citizenship and health effects;
- percentage of participants with improved employment situation;
- percentage of participants gaining a qualification on completion;
- participants progressing to further training on completion.

Indicator 7. Contribution to economic growth and social inclusion:

- unemployment rate;
- volunteering rate;
- growth rate of SME sector;
- economically inactive rate;
- percentage of local, regional and national bodies in which the social partners are involved;
- percentage of institutions / bodies providing adult learning at local, regional and national levels in which the social partners are involved.

Indicator 8. Mechanisms to identify training needs in the labour market:

- the percentage of major sectors represented by employer representative bodies with a clearly defined role;
- efforts to ensure relevance of adult learning provision to labour market needs.

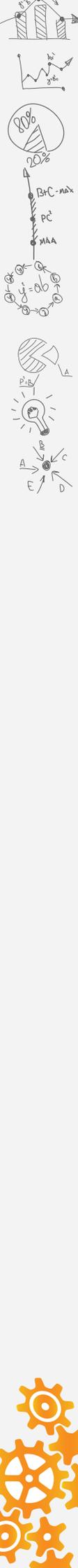
Indicator 9. Validation of non-formal and informal learning:

- number of adults obtaining validation of non-formal and informal learning;
- number of guidance access points / practitioners per head of population.

Indicator 10. Qualifications system:

- number of diplomas / certificates issued against NQF standards.

Source: Thematic working group on quality in adult learning (2013)





When creating / revising the list of CVET quality indicators, one has to pay systemic evaluation particular attention to the relevance of an indicator to measure CVET and societal / economical outcomes, the potential of an indicator to evidence a progress in CVET and accuracy, validity and feasibility of indicator.

National authorities can either benchmark CVET providers according to defined indicators or can encourage them to monitor their performance and use indicators voluntarily. If a national CVET quality assurance framework is being built, it is advisable to establish voluntary indicators since systemic data collection can be too time-consuming and CVET providers may resist this initiative. National authorities should take into account which administrative data are already collected and what would be the costs of starting a new data collection. National authorities should also consider the resources needed for national level administration and analysis of data collected.

Building on existing internal CVET providers' quality arrangements

When building or improving a national CVET quality assurance framework, systems and tools, national authorities should consider and rely on existing CVET quality assurance practices and practices applicable to IVET that proved to be successful (e.g. quality indicators, guidelines, approaches to internal – external assessment).

CVET providers may already have internal quality management systems or policy for IVET provision, therefore they should be allowed to build their CVET quality assurance measures based on their practice. One of the options is defining a list of certifications that are recognised as sufficient and do not require additional quality assurance measures for CVET (see Austrian example below).

Mechanisms and procedures to identify training needs

Various national, regional and provider-level mechanisms, such as, short-term or long-term labour market/occupations analysis and forecasting systems, graduates' tracking systems, labour market analysis and econometric investigations are used to improve the responsiveness of education to the current and emerging labour market and societal needs and to decrease skills mismatch. Effective application of information generated by these mechanisms into the process of the design and offer of qualifications would serve the purpose of transforming training from supply-driven to a demand-driven. Analysis and application of information in planning, implementation and review of training services remains a challenging task together with securing the quality of information. In practice there already exist many potential mechanisms and data sources for identification of training needs (e.g. registers of training programmes, learners and graduates, tax inspection and employment services data, citizens' migration registers). In order to make training needs analysis and forecasting more effective and efficient it is important to combine and align these mechanisms and data sources, reduce duplication and make this exercise systemic and regular. For example, Lithuania is currently developing a human resources monitoring system which will use data from eight different registers' and most of the data will be automatically updated. In addition, national authorities should define the procedures for responding to the training needs' information and build on the capacity of responsible authorities and CVET providers to analyse and use this information. And finally, it is of utmost importance to make a CVET system part of overall training needs identification chain.

Monitoring [of] CVET provision and using monitoring results for policy decisions

There has to be a nationally devised system for collecting data about CVET provision based on set performance indicators. Information collected must be analysed and used so as to identify strengths and weaknesses of CVET provision, define areas for improvement and plan corrective and preventive actions. Results of the evaluation process should be discussed with stakeholders and publicly announced.

Stakeholder involvement

One of the fundamental elements of any quality assurance system is the involvement of stakeholders. Key



stakeholders must be involved in setting CVET goals, qualifications design, learners' evaluation. They must be addressed at all stages of quality cycle and regularly informed about the implementation of national quality assurance framework and the related quality assurance measures. One of the options is the setting up of an advisory stakeholders' body on the issues of CVET quality. Such a body might analyse CVET quality evaluation data, monitor the implementation of the national quality assurance approach, provide policy recommendations, etc.

Quality assurance systems must consider qualifications design and award

This is especially important in the context of implementing the national qualifications framework. Qualifications awarded in CVET system are just as important as qualifications awarded in IVET or higher education and there have to be mechanisms in place to assure the quality of their design (standards, curricula), implementation (certification systems, quality checks) and award (quality of examination).

Information policy

CVET providers must be motivated to share the results of internal and external quality assessment. National authorities should also disseminate outcomes from quality evaluation and review, announce CVET strengths and weaknesses and measures to be taken. Discussions on CVET quality with CVET providers and stakeholders through conferences, platforms and networks should be also encouraged.

Motivation of CVET providers

National authorities should consider what motivates CVET providers to engage into quality assurance and improvement measures. For example, national authorities could decide to support financially the quality assurance measures of CVET providers or to award funding only if providers demonstrate their commitment to quality and have internal quality assurance systems in place. In addition, a number of non-financial support measures can be elaborated, for example, national guidelines for CVET providers, training material, training courses, best practice competitions, support to providers networks, etc.

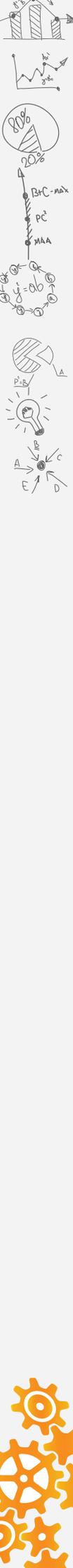
2.3. What processes should be included in the national CVET external quality evaluation model?

In this section, a theoretical model of national-level CVET assessment is proposed based on a Lithuanian model of external VET assessment (UAB „JOSTRA“ and UAB „ORO INCORPORATE“, 2016). The model was developed in 2015 during the ESF funded project “External VET Quality Assessment” (Profesinio mokymo kokybės išorinis vertinimas, Nr. VP1-2.2-ŠMM-04-V-03-002). It has been proposed to the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) for external evaluation of the VET system in general and hasn't yet been fully implemented.

A critical success factor of the national CVET evaluation model is the existence of a stable institutional framework with clear and agreed responsibilities. The official bodies, which should be involved in the CVET evaluation processes (see Graph 2) are listed below:

- The Ministry of Education;
- An institution in charge of organising, managing and performing external quality evaluation and consulting CVET providers designated by the Ministry of Education. In Lithuania, such institution is the Qualifications and VET Development Centre (KPMPC). In this section such institution will be referred to as a 'Quality Assurance Authority';
- CVET institutions.

The process of external evaluation, evaluation aims and objectives, evaluation areas, criteria and quality indicators have to be documented in the guidelines / methodology of external quality evaluation and made publicly available together with a template of self-evaluation report and evaluation schedule. The website of Quality Assurance Authority should serve as the main channel for posting all quality evaluation related information: guidelines, evaluation schedule, reports, evaluation conclusions, etc.





Graph 2 provides a tentative map of processes of the national quality evaluation model. Each process should have an assigned owner of the process who would be fully responsible for the result of a particular process.

Graph 2 - The map of processes of CVET quality external evaluation

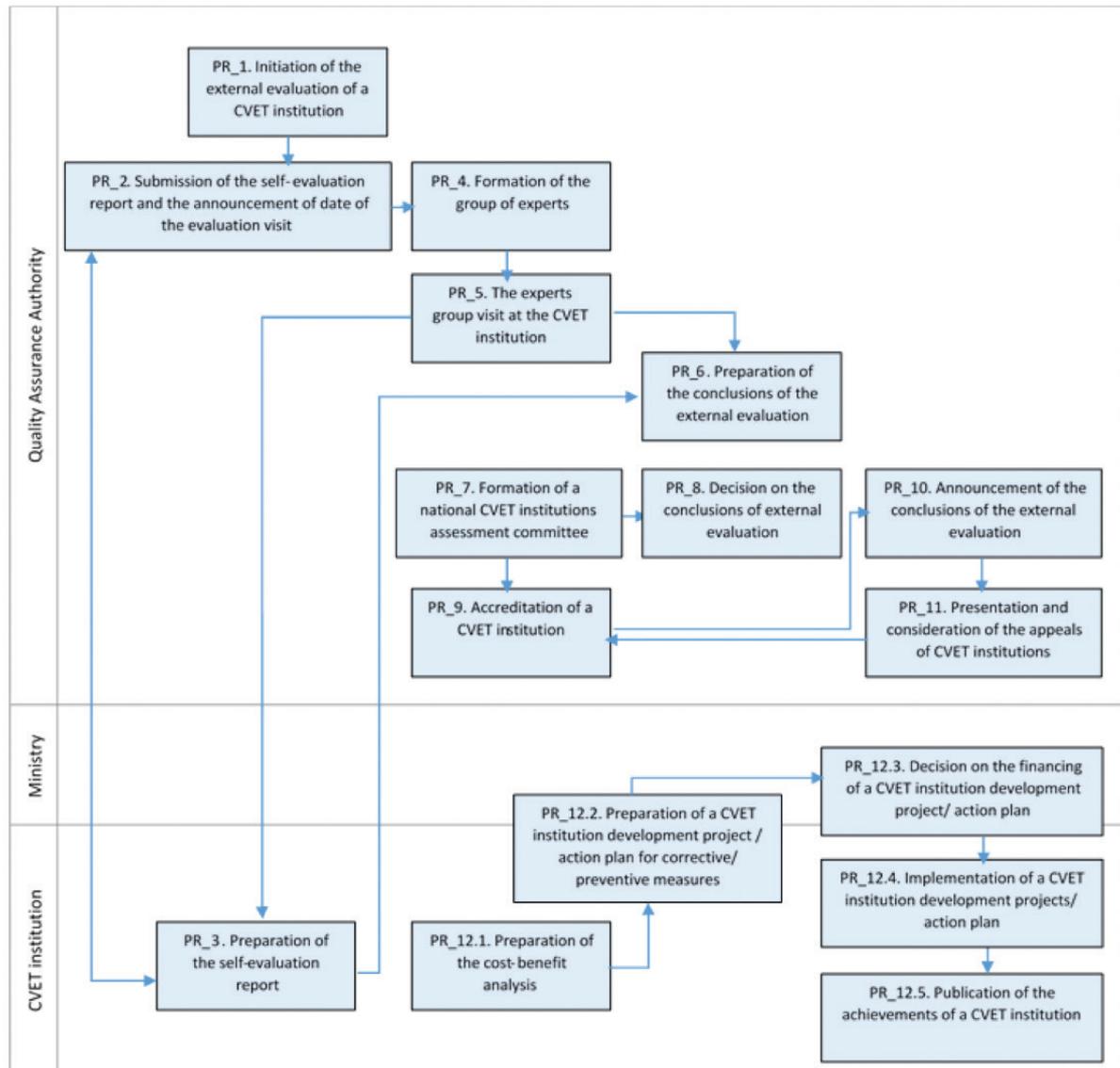
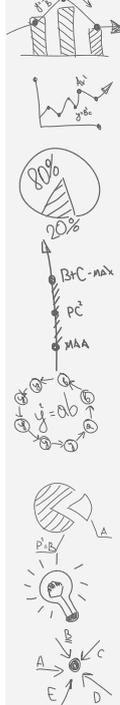


Table 4 - The owners of the processes

The title of the process	The owner of the process
PR_1. Initiation of the external evaluation of a CVET institution	Quality Assurance Authority
PR_2. Submission of the self-evaluation report and the announcement of the date of the evaluation visit	Quality Assurance Authority
PR_3. Preparation of the self-evaluation report	CVET institution
PR_4. Setting up the group of experts	Quality Assurance Authority
PR_5. The experts group's visit at the CVET institution	Quality Assurance Authority
PR_6. Preparation of the conclusions of the external evaluation	Quality Assurance Authority
PR_7. Setting up a national CVET Institutions Assessment Committee	Quality Assurance Authority
PR_8. Decision on the conclusions of external evaluation	Quality Assurance Authority
PR_9. Accreditation of a CVET institution	Quality Assurance Authority
PR_10. Announcement of the conclusions of the external evaluation of a CVET institution	Quality Assurance Authority
PR_11. Presentation and consideration of the appeals of CVET institutions	Quality Assurance Authority
PR_12.1. Preparation of the cost-benefit analysis	CVET institution
PR_12.2. Preparation of a CVET institution development project / action plan for corrective/ preventive measures	CVET institution / The Ministry
PR_12.3. Decision on the financing of a CVET institution development project/ action plan for corrective/ preventive measures	The Ministry
PR_12.4. Implementation of a CVET institution development projects/ action plan for corrective/ preventive measures	CVET institution
PR_12.5. Publication of the achievements of a CVET institution	CVET institution





The core characteristics of processes are summarised below.

Periodicity

The external evaluation of CVET institutions should be initiated and carried out at least every 5 years according to the CVET Institutions Assessment Methodology / Guidelines which determine the preparation procedures of the self-evaluation of CVET, the procedures of the external evaluation of CVET institutions performance organised by the Quality Assurance Authority, assessment principles, assessment areas and criteria. Non-scheduled external evaluation of CVET institution's performance can be initiated by its community or board members, who provide reasons and arguments justifying the initiation of non-scheduled external evaluation.

Areas of assessment

During external evaluation of VET providers in Lithuania in 2014-15 the following assessment areas were defined: training/ learning environment, lifelong learning, access to training, modernity of training, correspondence of qualifications to the needs of the economy, effectiveness of information and career planning. It is recommended that the external evaluation would also check the operation of the quality cycle in CVET provision.

Self-evaluation report

The Quality Assurance Authority should ensure that CVET institutions are informed beforehand of the deadlines for the submission of self-evaluation reports, the evaluation requirements, areas, criteria and indicators and are familiarised with a template for self-evaluation report. It is recommended that CVET institution would be given 5 months for the preparation and submission of the self-evaluation report.

CVET institutions are responsible for the implementation of self-evaluation; they define internal self-evaluation procedures and appoint a person responsible for the execution of self-evaluation. Self-evaluation reports should be prepared in compliance with Quality Assurance Authority recommendations for self-evaluation and in-line with the evaluation aim, objectives and areas of evaluation.

A self-evaluation report has to display an institutional capacity to analyse and critically evaluate its performance as well as to measure the prospect of improving it.

The experts group's visit at the CVET institution

An employee of the Quality Assurance Authority together with the CVET institution should prepare and settle on paper the evaluation rules and terms and experts' visit agenda. The agreed date of the experts' group visit and agenda should be posted on the CVET institution's website.

Training should be offered to external assessment experts to help them prepare for the evaluation (including the explanation of evaluation objectives and tasks, presentation on the legal acts regarding evaluation, etc.). The Quality Assurance Authority should provide the experts with the self-evaluation reports of the CVET institutions and other additional information not later than 1 month before the visit.

The duration of the visit to a CVET institution is 1–3 days depending on the CVET institution's size and the scope of its activities. During the visit meetings are held with the administration, self-evaluation development group, teachers, students, graduates and social partners. During the visit experts have to carry out inspection of CVET provider's infrastructure and get acquainted with documents necessary for the evaluation.

The experts group's work is managed by the head of the experts group. He chairs experts group's meetings, defines the functions of the members of experts group and is responsible for the work results of whole group. Experts group's work is co-ordinated by an employee appointed by the Quality Assurance Authority.



When carrying out the external evaluation of a CVET institution, experts are guided by the following ethical principles:

- *the principle of objectivity.* The experts honestly pursue the objectives of the evaluation and objectively carry out the evaluation of a CVET institution. An expert expresses his opinion, forms conclusions and makes decisions according to the facts, accurate information and his competence;
- *the principle of impartiality.* During the evaluation, an expert functions independently, does not represent any institution and is impartial;
- *the principle of respect* for evaluation participants. During the evaluation an expert acts professionally, politely, does not abuse expert position, does not exercise financial, psychological or any other type of pressure. An expert considers that participants of the evaluation are able to answer for their performance, therefore, while indicating CVET institution's strengths and weaknesses, he / she avoids giving advice that, in his opinion, would lead to the best solutions to problems;
- *the principle of confidentiality.* All information related to the evaluation (questions discussed during meetings and opinions expressed by other evaluation participants, self-evaluation report and additional document submitted for evaluation) is used only for the purpose of evaluation and cannot be disclosed for any other reasons;
- *the principle of co-operation.* While working in a group, an expert pursues common objectives together with other group members and completes the tasks assigned by the group on time. While communicating with CVET institution's representatives an expert makes an effort to help the CVET provider improve its quality culture and seeks mutual understanding.

At the end of the visit, the experts' group discusses in group the results of the visit and presents to the CVET provider community the preliminary observations.

Preparation of the conclusions of the external assessment

The draft of the CVET institution's external assessment conclusions should be prepared and sent to the Quality Assurance Authority not later than 1 month after the visit to the CVET institution.

In the conclusions the experts' group provides the following:

- the analysis of the evaluation of a CVET institution's performance based on the evaluated areas;
- overall evaluation, suggestions and recommendations regarding the improvement of the CVET institution's performance;
- overall conclusions regarding the CVET institution's performance evaluation;
- recommendations and insights for the authorities that shape and implement CVET policy.

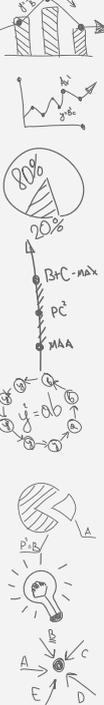
The evaluation conclusions and suggestions by the experts groups must be based on the data of self-evaluation report and other complimentary documents, information gathered during the visit and other official sources.

While forming conclusions, experts have to try to reach a common opinion. If it is not possible to reach one, the decision is adopted according to the majority of votes; other opinions together with arguments should be documented as an appendix to the conclusions of the external evaluation of CVET institution.

The CVET institution's external assessment conclusions should be sent to the CVET institution with a right to submit comments on the factual mistakes that appear in the project of conclusions. The expert group should revise the project of external evaluation conclusions and resubmit them to the Quality Assurance Authority.

National CVET institutions assessment committee

It is recommended that an external committee for the evaluation of CVET institutions should be formed as a collegial body that advises the Quality Assurance Authority on questions regarding the CVET institutions' external evaluation. The evaluation committee performs the following functions:





- considers, whether the conclusions of the external evaluation of the CVET institution's performance submitted by external experts are impartial, comprehensive and well founded;
- submits proposals to the CVET institutions for the improvement of their performance and development as well as improvement proposals to the Quality Assurance Authority and experts regarding the external evaluation of CVET institutions;
- submits improvement proposals regarding legal acts that regulate the matters of the external evaluation of CVET institutions' performance.

The evaluation committee is formed of 9 members. The members are appointed by the head of the Quality Assurance Authority for a period of 3 years. The same person cannot be appointed as a member of the evaluation committee for more than 2 consecutive times.

The appointed members of the evaluation committee can be scientists, specialists in a relevant field distinguished for their competence and creativity, prominent public figures, administrative staff of CVET institutions, teachers who have experience in expert evaluation, students and representatives of the social partners. The evaluation committee must comprise at least one person who has experience in managing or administrating a CVET institution, a person representing learners and a person representing CVET social partners. The chairman of the evaluation committee and his deputy are appointed by the head of the Quality Assurance Authority.

Having analysed the conclusions of the external evaluation of CVET institution's performance prepared by experts, the evaluation committee submits to the Quality Assurance Authority one of the following reasoned proposals:

- agree with the conclusions of the external evaluation of CVET institution's performance prepared by experts;
- disagree with the conclusions of the external valuation of CVET institution's performance prepared by experts.

Having received the proposal from the external evaluation committee the Quality Assurance Authority informs the CVET institution and the Ministry of Education of the decision.

The accreditation of a CVET institution

It is recommended that external evaluation conclusions about a CVET institution should be taken into account for institutional accreditation purposes. For example, it can be decided to accredit a CVET institution for 5 years (if evaluation conclusions are positive), for 3 years (if evaluation conclusions are negative) or to not accredit the CVET institution, if it is negatively reassessed.

CVET institutions must be given an opportunity to appeal against the decision regarding accreditation. It is recommended that complaints be reviewed by a special appeals committee.

Subsequent actions

It is up to the Ministry of Education and the Quality Assurance Authority in cooperation with other ministries involved in CVET and social partners to agree on further actions and sustainability of external assessment results.

For example, within the period of 6 months from the receipt of the conclusions regarding the external evaluation of performance quality, CVET institution should be obliged (or [recommended] urged) to provide a list of measures for the elimination of weaknesses defined during the self-evaluation and external evaluation and for the improvement of its performance. It may apply to the Ministry of Education or other institutions, ESF support management institutions for funding the implementation of corrective measures or development projects if such funding is available.

CVET institutions should be encouraged to publicly announce the external (and internal) quality assessment results and foreseen measures.



Cost-benefit analysis

Cost-benefit analysis (hereinafter CBA) is carried out only if its need was identified in the preceding stage of the evaluation. CBA is required to determine the optimal set of measures to eliminate issues identified during the evaluation of quality or to implement the CVET institution's development plan.

The essence of CBA is to ensure that the target set is fulfilled by using an effective (not too vast and not too small) amount of resources. At the same time, it is important to decide on proper goals that would best meet the needs of the society and would not waste the resources.

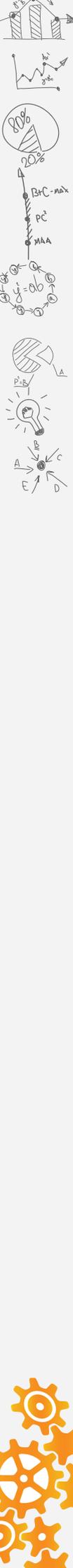
CBA is an evaluation method of investment efficiency that compares the investment required for the implementation of a project to the investment-generated social and economic value expressed in monetary terms. This is one of the main approaches that help to adopt investment and financing solutions: after the analysis of possible alternatives, the most efficient one in terms of the social and economic benefits is chosen. The method helps to identify the investment solution that requires the least amount of resources and generates the best value (the ratio of the consumption of resources and the generation of social and economic value is taken into consideration). The method can be applied to all cases in which the most efficient and beneficial alternative has to be selected. CBA is an instrument designed to examine all alternatives and estimate the most beneficial one. In other words, the method helps to make and determine the most rational and beneficial investment solutions. The CBA method can be implemented in every case that requires choosing the most efficient alternative among all other alternatives.

However, *the application of CBA in the field of education requires specific solutions and analysis not applicable in other sectors.* Unlike many other sectors, the main component in the education sector is human (intangible) rather than physical (tangible) capital. The social welfare generated in this sector may rate various elements that are affected by CVET: from the decreased number of crimes influenced by participation in education and training to decreased early school leaving and increased employability of graduates and the higher added value they generate. The majority of the said social benefits can be measured in monetary terms, yet necessary data are needed. The result of a high-quality CBA is a set of arguments, explaining why one investment solution (alternative) concerning the improvement of CVET system or its part (training providers) is more beneficial and efficient than other alternatives. This result should be kept in mind by CVET policy makers and the principals of CVET institutions while making decisions. It is important to note that during the decision-making the weaknesses of CBA, warning systems, assumptions and other apparent limitations of the analysis must be taken into account.

Cost-benefit analysis is conducted in the following cases:

- while planning and implementing CVET institution's development projects co-funded by EU funds;
- while deciding on and/or optimizing the CVET institutions operating policies when the intended changes require external funding;
- while evaluating CVET network restructuring (merge, division, major reform) issues;
- while examining joint projects by CVET institutions with the purpose of optimizing the use of state funds and increasing efficiency;
- while assessing the impact on regional/ state economy caused by the changes/ projects by several CVET institutions.

With regard to the conclusions of conducted CBA, the development projects can be prepared in the following areas: The CVET institution's infrastructural development; the development of current CVET programmes and the preparation and implementation of new CVET programmes; the improvement of vocational teachers' qualifications and skills; the development of CVET management.





2.4. WHAT ARE THE EXISTING NATIONAL APPROACHES TO CVET QUALITY?

In 2013 the evaluation of EQAVET implementation in European countries was performed during which national quality approaches were assessed (ICF, 2013 b). The evaluation showed that in many countries (Bulgaria, Denmark, Greece, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom) the quality assurance framework or measures were the same for IVET as well as for parts of CVET and only in 9 countries (Austria, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands and Sweden) a clear quality assurance framework for CVET (in some cases corresponding to framework for IVET) could be identified.⁵

The most common feature of quality assurance in CVET is a certain form of provider accreditation, licensing or labellisation (20 countries from 33 evaluated). The requirement to carry out self-assessment seems to be less frequently covered by the CVET quality assurance framework than in the IVET (16 countries from 33) and inspection of CVET (or its parts) is very rare (6 countries from 33).

In some countries external certification, such as ISO, EFQM is required for accreditation by public authorities. National authorities define a range of external certifications from which CVET providers choose the most appropriate (see Austrian example).

Below you will find illustrations of different national level measures for assuring CVET quality.

2.4.1. Lithuanian national approach to CVET quality

In Lithuania, the key principles for quality of VET (both IVET and CVET) have been defined in a Concept of VET Quality (Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training, 2008).

The Concept laid down how the quality in VET is to be assured, the institutions involved and their responsibilities as well as future/following activities.

The concept has defined the following VET quality assurance instruments:

- Internal quality evaluation. The legislation stipulates that self-assessments of school's activities and a method of carrying-out of the self-evaluation are chosen by the School Council. Providers are free to choose the quality management model.
- National regulation. The following regulations influence VET quality: legal acts defining VET strategy; national qualifications framework; standards; requirements for VET programmes; curricula; licensing rules; examination procedures; requirements for teacher qualification.
- Support to providers. VET institutions are given support by developing methodological recommendations for quality assurance, organising training for VET institution's staff and management; by collecting and disseminating information on good practices.
- External quality evaluation. The purpose of external evaluation is to provide assistance to VET institutions, to help them improve VET quality and to develop quality assurance culture. It was planned that on the national level, external VET quality evaluation will be carried out periodically. The first trials were implemented in 2010-2015. External evaluation model is further developed.
- Encouraging development of quality with a focus on promoting high quality training and innovations intended for training improvement.
- VET monitoring. At present, education system monitoring indicators at national level exist, however, they

⁵ At the time of evaluation Dutch part of Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia reported that they were developing the framework for quality assurance.



are only partly applicable to VET. National level monitoring is implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science when collecting data and annual information from VET providers. At a provider level VET institutions having implemented internal quality assurance management systems have defined lists of indicators and criteria.

- Licensing and supervision. A licence to carry out a registered programme is issued to a VET provider, if it proves that: 1) vocational teachers or candidates for vocational teachers meet the requirements prescribed in VET programmes and laws; 2) theory and practical training places, material and methodical resources are sufficient for implementing the programme, and 3) training premises are equipped with sufficient and relevant material resources. The Ministry of Education and Science performs the State supervision of legal, financial and the pedagogical activities of VET providers, determining compliance of providers with legislative provisions, whether all the necessary conditions have been provided for the implementation of training programmes offered, and, if conditions are not met, the Ministry may withdraw the training licence issued.

- National coordination. The Law on Education entrusts the coordination of this activity at the national level to the Ministry of Education and Science. It is supported by Qualifications and VET Development Centre.

2.4.2. Cypriot national approach to CVET quality

There is no national approach to quality assurance in Cyprus. Overall, there is no national framework for quality assurance in the Cypriot education system. However, there are policies and procedures in place at each educational level. Since the education system is quite centralised, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) is mainly responsible for quality assurance. The legislative provisions for education are contained in several different pieces of legislation (Laws Nos 5/71, 56/83, 123/85 and 154 (I)/99).

The development of a Vocational Qualifications System and the latest quality assurance system for CVET providers are considered to be the main building blocks towards the adoption and implementation of an overall national approach to quality assurance.

An important educational reform is currently taking place in Cyprus with quality assurance being one of the goals of education reform. Specific proposals have been delivered regarding full transformation of the assessment culture and practice throughout the education system and its stakeholders (learners, teachers, curricula etc.). However, no formal action has been taken so far.

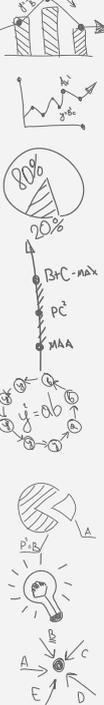
The CVET sector is quite developed in Cyprus mainly through the existence of a levy grant system run by the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA). All enterprises are obliged by law to contribute, through a levy on their payroll, to the HRDA Fund and are able to benefit by subsidised participation in a variety of training schemes covering their training and human resource development needs.

Quality assurance arrangements at system level in CVET:

Formal CVET programmes are provided at the Evening Technical Schools, which operate under the supervision of the Directorate of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture. Regarding non-formal CVET, there is a plethora of providers: Technical and Vocational Education of the MoEC and public training institutions, as well as private, such as colleges, training institutions and enterprises. Other forms of non-formal CVET are supported by other ministries, mainly the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance (MLSI), focusing on their field of expertise. CVET programmes are offered from the Pedagogical Institute (PI, under the MoEC), the Open University, evening schools, as well as adult education centres. Vocational training is offered from specialised, tertiary level institutions, such as the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus, under the MLSI.

However, the dominant actor in the field of CVET is the HRDA, as it approves and subsidises training programmes implemented by public and private institutions for over 35 years.

The development of HRDA training schemes as well as the System for the Assessment and





Certification of training providers comes as a result of direct stakeholder involvement within the tripartite HRDA Board which also decides about the allocation of financial and other resources for the training and development of human resources within the overall socio-economic policy of the government.

HRDA uses its subsidy policy as an evaluation mechanism. In order to receive a subsidy, the training activities must be approved by HRDA. In that framework, firms prepare and submit training programmes to the HRDA on a continuous basis. There are quality criteria to be met, such as training aims, target group description, duration and content, in order to be approved.

HRDA inspectors also perform on-site control visits on the day of the training on a randomly selected sample of training programmes. Moreover, training providers submit to the HRDA on a six-month basis proposals for multi-company training programmes covering a variety of training needs of enterprises, which are also evaluated and approved for subsidy on the basis of a set of quality criteria. The basic criterion is for the proposed training programme to address the focus areas that HRDA has selected. These focus areas are identified based on economic and labour market forecasts.

HRDA links its subsidy policy to quality assurance of the relevant training programmes. An important development concerns the implementation of the Quality Assurance System (ΑξιοπιστοΣυν) ⁶, for assessing and certifying training providers. The system provides that, from 2015 onwards, all elements of the training provision must be quality assured by HRDA; that is, trainers, providers/institutions and the infrastructures of providers. The main aim of the system is to set minimum quality standards and improve the quality of training for any relevant activity undertaken or funded by HRDA.

Under the System, assessment leading to certification involves Vocational Training Centres, Vocational Training Structures and Trainers in Vocational Training. Applications are submitted online and are assessed as follows:

- *Vocational training institutions are assessed against three main criteria:*

- ability to organise and deliver training activities,
- human resources, and;
- administrative infrastructure;

- *Vocational training infrastructures are assessed against the following criteria:*

- general specifications,
- training classrooms,
- administration facilities,
- coffee break area,
- hygiene facilities and;
- equipment;

- Trainers of vocational training are assessed mainly on the basis of their academic and professional qualifications, their professional experience and their training experience. Trainers can participate in the HRDA's train the trainers activities and demonstrate their competencies in a sample training session.

HRDA is also responsible for the certification of vocational qualifications. The certification is carried out through assessment, where knowledge, competences and skills are tested, so as to reference the learner's learning outcomes to a specific qualification, within the framework of the System of Vocational Qualifications (SVQ)⁷, under the auspices of HRDA. The System has been operating since 2013 and provides assessment and certification of qualifications in the tourism industry, manufacturing, commerce, construction, wholesale and retail trade, repair of vehicles, provision of professional training, communication systems / networks / electronics and computers.

⁶ http://www.hrdauth.org.cy/easyconsole.cfm/page/project/p_id/23/pc_id/17154

⁷ http://www.hrdauth.org.cy/easyconsole.cfm/page/project/p_id/82/pc_id/17154



In the above areas, standards for 72 professional qualifications have been developed and are expected to be developed in a number of additional 80 areas during the 2014-2020 ESF Programming Period.

Quality assurance arrangements at provider level in CVET

Trainers in the training institutions and enterprises play a significant role in the planning and development of training activities. In cooperation with the managers of the training institutions and the management of their enterprises respectively, they investigate training needs, plan the training activities and then proceed with the identification of target groups, the development of the curricula, the selection of suitable training tools and the implementation of the programmes. In the case of the programmes that will be submitted to the HRDA for approval and subsidisation, these have to conform to the biannual thematic areas (for all training schemes) and satisfy the requirements of the HRDA. Additionally, as from the beginning of 2015, trainers have to be assessed and certified by the HRDA.

The Quality Assurance System of HRDA includes (self) assessment methodologies used by vocational training providers within the framework of the certification criteria. One of the elements that HRDA assessors consider, before proposing certification of a training provider, is the internal quality management system of the provider, that is, the approach and methodologies used to assess training needs, plan and implement training activities, as well as the types of evaluation of learning (e.g. debriefing, formative), evaluation pillars (trainers, curricula, learners, infrastructure etc.), evaluation tools (questionnaires, diagnostic essays etc.), ways to publicise/disseminate results of evaluation, recipients of evaluation results (public authorities, HRDA, employers, learners).

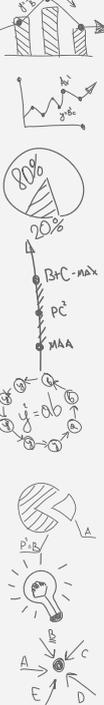
As far as certification is concerned, training providers running HRDA-subsidised training are obliged to issue to participants a training certificate. Some training providers run programmes based on HRDA standards of vocational qualifications in order to support persons to fill training gaps and obtain certification of their competencies within the framework of the SVQ.

2.4.3. Austrian national approach to CVET quality

Ö-CERT (AT-CERT) is an umbrella quality label introduced at national level in Austria. Ö-CERT serves as framework to recognise the quality of adult education providers. The aim of Ö-CERT is a mutual recognition of quality concepts and existing quality management systems by the 'Länder' (Federal States of Austria) and the Federal Republic of Austria. Ö-CERT was developed by the Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture in cooperation with leading Austrian experts, representatives of the nine Austrian provinces and providers of Adult education. Ö-CERT has been implemented since December 2011.

Ö-CERT was developed in reaction to the existence of nine different (external) quality management systems in the federal provinces as a basis for subsidies for course participation. Development of Ö-CERT allowed reaching an agreement between the nine federal provinces regarding mutual recognition of quality assurance measures in adult education. Another focus of Ö-CERT was linking Quality Management Systems and individual funding for adult education participants. The provinces offer individual funding for participants in adult education programmes as long as the relevant education provider is certified through the Quality Management System. Until 2011 it was possible that education providers had to apply for several Quality Management Systems in different provinces. Ö-CERT as the umbrella framework now allows the recognition of different Quality Management Systems and therefore reduces the effort for each educational provider.

Certification by Ö-CERT is voluntary, although the interdependence between Ö-CERT and public funding for participants constitutes a strong pull-factor.





Ö-CERT requires five types of basic prerequisites (criteria) within organisations⁸:

- general basic requirements;
- basic requirements concerning the organisation of the provider;
- basic requirements concerning the offers of the provider;
- basic requirements concerning principles of ethics and democracy;
- basic requirements concerning quality assurance.

Moreover the providers have to confirm their quality efforts by applying one of the valid Quality Management Systems or Quality Assurance Procedures according to the Ö-CERT list. The Ö-CERT list contains ten Quality Management Systems and Quality Assurance Procedures which are all based on an external audit.

The list of QMS approved by Ö-CERT:

- ÖNORM EN ISO 9001:2015 und ÖNORM EN ISO 9001:2008;
- ISO 29990:2012 and ISO 29990:2010;
- EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management): „committed to“, „recognised for excellence“;
- LQW (Learner-Oriented Quality Certification for Further Education Organisations by Art-Set Trademark);
- QVB (used in Austrian job centres and ESF funded);
- EduQwa (the Swiss quality label);
- UZB (environment-label/Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management);
- OÖ-EBQ (Quality Label of Upper Austria; adult learning VET and NON-VET);
- CERT-NÖ (Quality Label of Lower Austria and conducted by the Danube-University- Krems, adult learning VET and NON-VET);
- S-QS (Quality Label of Salzburg, adult learning VET and NON-VET);
- Wien-cert (Quality Label of Vienna, adult learning VET and NON-VET);
- QVB (Quality development in the network of educational institutions).

2.4.4. Finnish national approach to IVET and CVET quality

In Finland, the national quality management system in vocational education and training comprises national steering of VET, quality management systems of VET providers, and external evaluation of VET (Finnish National Board of Education, 2008).

The national steering of VET aims to set the objectives for VET provision and its quality and to ensure achievement of these objectives. The development Plan for Education and Research, adopted by the Government, legal documents and core curricula are regarded as key steering tools of quality management.

VET legislation confers extensive decision-making powers in VET provision and quality management to VET providers. Providers are obliged to evaluate their VET provision and its effectiveness and to participate in external evaluation of their operations. They are required to have a quality management system in place. The system is provider-specific and consists of the policies and procedures to be observed within the organisation. It may be documented in a quality manual. Quality Management Recommendations for VET have been prepared to guide VET providers in developing and improving the quality of their operations. The recommendations have been prepared by the Finnish National Board of Education in co-operation with VET providers, representatives of the world of work and business and students. The Ministry of Education and Science has adopted the document. Recommendations to VET providers are based on the quality cycle and are grouped into nine characteristics of an excellent organisation according to the quality cycle stage (see Box 2).

⁸ <https://oe-cert.at/media/oe-cert-basic-requirements.pdf?m=1418629262>

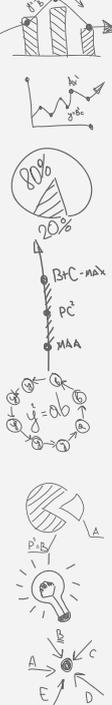


VET providers implementing formal CVET programmes are obliged to participate in external evaluation of the operations. Evaluations are directed towards development-oriented evaluation and support for decision-making.

Box 2- Coverage of Quality Management Recommendations for VET

The Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF)	Characteristics of excellence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Planning- Implementation- Evaluation and assessment- Review (feedback and procedures for change)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Holistic approach – consideration of functions as a whole- Customer focus- Leadership- Results orientation- Continuous learning, innovation and improvement- People as resources- Effective processes- Relevance to the world of work and partnerships- Social responsibility

Source: Finnish National Board of Education, 2008



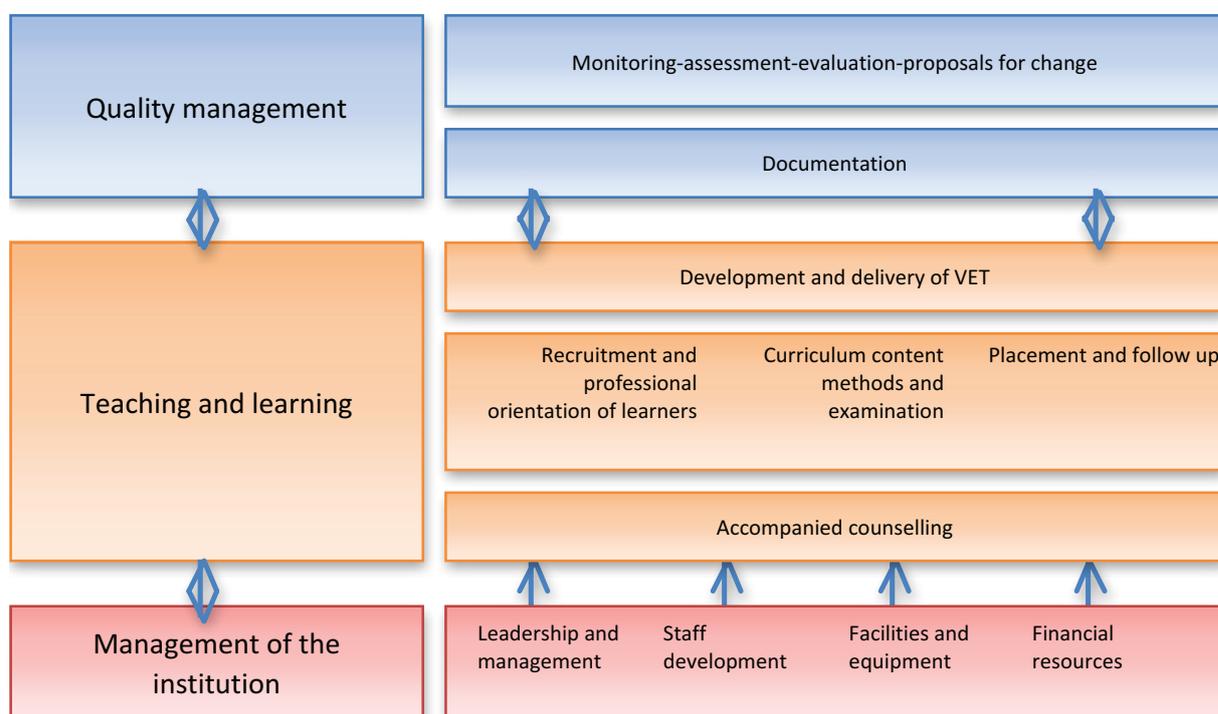


3. CVET QUALITY CODE FOR CVET PROVIDERS

3.1. Introduction

CVET institutions are directly responsible for the quality of their services. As teaching and learning are at the heart of quality, internal quality management of any VET institution has to focus its activities primarily on them (Cedefop, 2015). Ensuring an appropriate environment and optimal preconditions for teaching and learning is also the main aim of management. Graph 3 below illustrates the main areas for quality within a VET institution as proposed by Cedefop.

Graph 3- Main areas for quality within VET institutions



Source: Cedefop (2015)

It is up to CVET institution to create, implement and monitor an internal quality management system. It can be based on external certification, such as ISO, EFQM or can be developed and agreed by the institution itself. The system has to be regularly reviewed and improved in accordance with the evaluation of the performance of the institution and external requirements (e.g. changes in legal acts).

3.2. Key principles for CVET quality assurance at institutional level

Use of the quality cycle

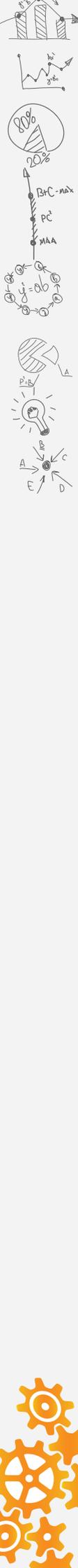
When designing their institutional measures to improve CVET quality, CVET providers should consider an operation of quality assurance cycle (planning, implementation, evaluation and review, see section 1 and Table 5 below). At a planning stage a strategic vision for CVET and CVET quality assurance measures, including goals/objectives, actions and indicators, should be elaborated, followed by proper implementation action plans, monitoring of their implementation and corrective and preventive actions.



Table 5 - CVET providers actions in applying the quality cycle for CVET

Quality cycle stage	Actions for CVET providers
<p>Planning</p>	<p>Set goals, objectives and targets and link them to European, national and regional CVET policy goals and objectives. Involve relevant stakeholders into the process</p> <p>Take into account local needs expressed by stakeholders</p> <p>Consult other CVET providers</p> <p>Create an explicit and transparent quality assurance and management system. Choose the approach that is relevant to the institution and local/ national context and is manageable</p> <p>Involve staff in planning quality development from the start</p> <p>Allocate responsibilities in quality management and development</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Establish implementation plans. Involve relevant stakeholders into the process</p> <p>Consider and assign adequate material, human and financial resources to implement the action plan and achieve the targets set</p> <p>Build partnerships</p> <p>Take care of staff competence development, including training on quality assurance issues</p> <p>Ensure access of staff to regular training</p>
<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>Create a methodology and tools for regular and systemic self-evaluation</p> <p>Carry out self-assessment/self-evaluation periodically under national and regional regulations/frameworks or at your own initiative</p> <p>Evaluate and review learners' achievements and their satisfaction</p> <p>Evaluate staff performance and satisfaction</p> <p>Evaluate stakeholders' satisfaction with training and other services</p> <p>Consider and establish early warning systems that would help to detect and would warn of emerging threats as early as possible</p> <p>Participate and actively support external evaluation procedures</p>
<p>Review</p>	<p>Review processes regularly, discuss results of the evaluation process with stakeholders, plan and put in place appropriate corrective and preventive actions</p> <p>Use information collected from learners, staff and stakeholders to inform further actions</p> <p>Adjust CVET delivery</p> <p>Adjust quality assurance system and measures</p> <p>Publicise information on the outcomes of the review</p> <p>Treat procedures on feedback and review for the strategic learning of the organisation</p>

Adapted from European Parliament and Council recommendation on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) (2009)





Management commitment

The role of an institution's management is one of the most significant while creating and implementing the quality management system and, at a later stage, when the system operates and is regularly improved. Therefore, the management has to:

- Instruct the institution's staff about the importance of working in compliance with the documents that regulate the training services of the institution ;
- define quality policy and objectives;
- prepare and present management reports to institution's staff;
- ensure resources necessary to provide quality services.

Focus on learners

The management of an institution has to ensure that the needs of learners are clearly defined and understood by the institution's staff. This requires identification of different learners' groups, their current and future needs and ways of their fulfilment. The management of the Institution has to regularly point out to staff with emphasis that the core goal of the institution is to increase learners' satisfaction with the institution and its services.

Stakeholder involvement

The involvement of stakeholders is one of the fundamental elements of any quality assurance system. CVET providers need to have a diverse network of stakeholders ranging from local community, employment services to local or regional employers. Stakeholders needs have to be taken into account when planning services and shaping training content; they also need to be addressed when evaluating the quality of training services. Their consultation is indispensable when introducing innovations into training or offering new courses/ qualifications. It is also advisable to involve representatives of external stakeholders into the management of CVET institution and to consult with them when setting and reviewing quality policy, goals and targets.

Planning

The management of the institution has to ensure that the quality objectives comply with institutional operational objectives and the institution's potential. Quality objectives have to be measured and be in compliance with institution's overall quality policy. They must also reflect national CVET quality goals. The management of the institution has to seek the involvement of the institution's community and social partners in the planning process. Cost-benefit analysis (see section 2.3) is recommended while planning quality measures and reviewing them.

Delegation of responsibility

The management of the institution has to appoint responsible persons as well as to ensure that the staff comprehend and carry out the appointed tasks and responsibilities in accordance with their operating functions. The management of the institution has to ensure that the institution operates based on effective information dissemination and feedback mechanisms. The communication and cooperation of institution's community members has to be fostered.

Resource management

A CVET institution has to define the material, human and financial resources necessary for the following objectives:

- operation, maintenance and gradual improvement of the internal quality management system;
- implementation of high quality services;
- fulfilling learners ('clients') expectations and meeting their needs, ensuring learners satisfaction with services provided by the CVET institution and the institution itself.

In terms of staff competences, skills and capacities, CVET institution has to:



- establish the necessary level of competence and qualification of the staff, whose everyday activities are directly or indirectly related to how the quality of institution's services meet requirements;
- if necessary, train target staff or implement other competence development actions;
- analyse and evaluate the impact of the aforementioned actions;
- ensure that every staff member comprehends the requirements of his position and the necessary level of performance quality as well as the impact/significance of his work to quality objectives;
- encourage a supportive microclimate in order to ensure quality services and an efficient quality management system. In addition, the institution has to maintain a staff incentive system.

In terms of infrastructure, a CVET institution must establish the required infrastructure level necessary to ensure quality services and an efficient quality management system as well as to make the infrastructure accessible to staff and maintain it. Infrastructure is perceived as:

- buildings, workshops, equipment, training tools, etc.;
- coffee and break areas;
- equipment necessary for the implementation of the processes of the quality management system (computers, software, etc.);
- technical aids (communication and organisational equipment, etc.).

Planning training services

A CVET institution must create and implement a system for the planning of training services. For planning what and of what content training services will be provided, it is recommended to analyse and take into account labour market information and forecasts. While planning how the training service will be provided, the institution has to define the following:

- quality objectives and requirements for provided training services;
- operating processes, documentation and necessary financial, human and material resources;
- forms of learning (apprenticeship, day / evening classes, distance learning);
- necessary supervision, evaluation and testing measures of provided training services as well as criteria for assessing correspondence of training services to the requirements and expectations of learners.

Planning other services

A CVET institution may identify that other services in addition to training services are demanded by its learners and stakeholders. The examples of such services may be guidance and counselling on learning, career counselling, assistance to companies in search for employees.

Identification of the requirements for services

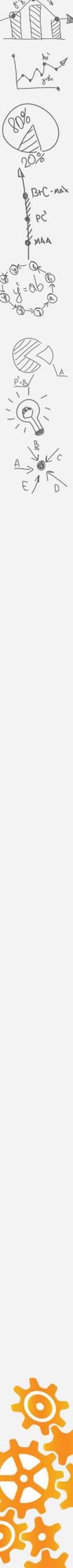
A CVET institution has to identify the following:

- learners' requirements/expectations in relation to training and support services (e.g. support in the search for employment);
- other requirements for service provision that are raised by legal acts and other documents, requirements for service quality, provision methods, requirements indicated by the institution and staff, etc.;
- the actual needs of the labour market and the requirements for employees identified by the companies;
- the trends of sector expansion and possible development scenarios of the companies.

Informing learners

A CVET institution has to create and implement an effective student notification and feedback mechanism, which would include:

- information of available training services;
- inquiries, supplementary agreements or changes in existing arrangements with learners;





- feedback from students (proposals, complaints, etc.).

Formation of training content and scheduling

A CVET institution has to plan and monitor training content (curricula) and service provision schedule. A CVET institution has to define:

- the stages of curricula formation, implementation, evaluation and review;
- the stages of designing learning schedules;
- the responsibilities and obligations of staff involved.

In shaping the content of learning it is necessary to refer to official VET-related standards, training programmes and labour market information about emerging training needs.

Documentation of services

In order to effectively manage the service provision process, a CVET institution has to prepare and implement the following:

- the description of provided training and other services, which includes service characteristics (composition, size, specifics, etc.);
- description of assessment of learning outcomes;
- internal rules and action descriptions (procedures of conducting lessons, work safety rules, instructions for using practical training and other equipment, etc.);
- description of monitoring and measuring the system, tools and instruments used;
- description of work with learners or other customers.

Effective internal and external communication

The management of an institution has to ensure the operation of effective mechanisms for internal/ external communication and feedback. Communication and cooperation of community must be promoted. A CVET institution may define criteria and indicators concerning quality and efficiency of internal and external communication.

Stakeholders satisfaction measurement

One of the most significant elements of the monitoring of quality management system is the compilation of analysis of the feedback regarding the quality of the institution's services and services' compliance with expectations from stakeholders' groups (first and foremost, employers and learners). Therefore, CVET institution has to create and operate an information collection and analysis mechanism. One of the recommended ways to collect information is a survey of employers and learners. Any other necessary parties and partners of the training processes or services' customers such as practical placement/ traineeships organisers, employment services, local municipalities, etc. should be addressed also.

Monitoring and self-evaluation

Monitoring and self-evaluation is a fundamental part of the internal quality management system. A CVET institution needs to create and install measures for the monitoring of daily processes (training services delivery, learners' satisfaction, errors, discrepancies, achievement of indicators, etc.). Self-evaluation should be conducted on a regular basis and should involve evaluation of performance and training services in selected areas as well as evaluation of implementation of CVET quality policy and operation of quality management system. The output of self-evaluation is twofold: it results in a self-evaluation report which summarizes areas with effective practices and those areas that require improvement and in an action plan for corrective / preventive measures. Following self-evaluation, the quality policy and quality objectives have to be reviewed and updated accordingly. The evaluation should be performed regularly, at least once in a year. It is recommended to publicise the outcomes of self-evaluation.



According to Cedefop (2015) a successful self-evaluation is related to the active engagement of staff members and their positive attitude towards self-evaluation. In particular, commitment, support and participation of the head of the institution, designation of a core quality team, openness towards data, facts and potential changes, open and honest debate, immediate decisions on improvements and an action plan for improvements are identified as necessary preconditions.

Data collection, analysis and using it for improvement

To assess the effectiveness of the quality management system and the compliance of training provision to the needs and expectations of stakeholders a CVET institution needs to collect and analyse data and then turn it into action. By exploring data, it is possible to identify existing problems and make informed decisions about what to change and how to change it. Once the necessary changes are made, data will help to evaluate the effect of the change (EQAVET) .

When planning data collection, one has to ask the following questions:

- Why data are needed?
- What will be done with the data after collecting them ?
- Where will the data be collected?
- What type of data will be collected (qualitative and quantitative)?
- How data will be collected (surveys, interviews, focus groups), by whom, how frequently?
- What are the requirements for the quality of data?
- Where will they be stored?
- How will they be analysed, by whom?
- How the results will be presented to the community, stakeholders and other parties involved?

EQAVET distinguishes three levels of analysis:

Level 1: gathering of quantitative and qualitative data, which describe “what is” or “what is happening”;

Level 2: turning data into information, i.e. allowing providers to make key statements or comparisons;

Level 3: using information as evidence:

- to make judgements, e.g. “how well” or “to what extent”;
- to take decisions, e.g. “if this is so, then we need to ...”;
- to determine priorities.

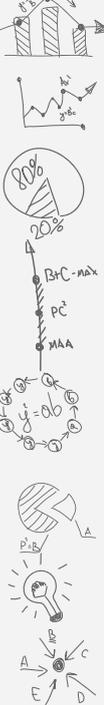
Collection of data should turn into interventions. Possible interventions are:

- general interventions, which focus on all aspects of CVET provision in a systemic way, e.g. management and organisation, CVET services, learners’ assessment, meeting stakeholders needs;
- targeted interventions, which focus on specific aspects of CVET provision that need to be improved, e.g. meeting stakeholder needs;
- individual interventions, which focus on individual aspects of CVET provision, e.g. alternative CVET programmes for unemployed persons.

3.3. Documentation of the quality management system

The quality management system has to be transparent and understandable to the community, learners and stakeholders of CVET institutions. Cedefop (2015) proposes that the internal quality management system would cover description of processes, (self-) assessment, monitoring and change management, documentation and communication. The quality management documentation system should store at least the following records:

- mission statement and quality policy of the CVET institution;
- descriptions of the main processes and definitions related (personal) responsibilities;
- tools and instruments used for assessment and evaluation;



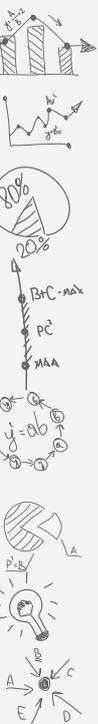


- records of the assessment and evaluation undertaken;
- records of all suggestions, complaints and subsequent investigations made;
- minutes and results of discussions to improve quality of organisational processes and programme and service delivery.

It is essential that at least institutional quality policy, main processes and responsibilities would be defined in one document (quality manual, handbook, guide or similar) which would guide design, implementation and monitoring of the quality management system and would help to communicate the quality policy and processes to staff, learners and external stakeholders.

Based on the analysis of existing quality manuals of Lithuanian CVET institutions, the common structural parts of the document are as follows:

1. Presentation of the institution;
2. Introduction into the application of the quality management system;
3. Definitions and abbreviations;
4. The quality management system: processes and documentation requirements;
5. Quality policy and goals;
6. Management and staff responsibilities in implementing the quality management system, internal communication;
7. Resources management: planning and provision of resources, human resources, including their training, infrastructure and work environment;
8. Management of main activities and processes (i.e. training services and other services to learner stakeholders): planning main activities, customer-related processes, design and development, purchasing (public-procurement) procedures, implementation of main activities;
9. Measurement, analysis and improvement: general provisions, stakeholders and customers satisfaction, internal audit, monitoring and measurements of processes and services, nonconformity control, improvement (continual, corrective and preventive actions);
10. Annexes: quality management processes scheme, statement of quality policy, implementation and monitoring plan.



4. CVET QUALITY CHECKLISTS

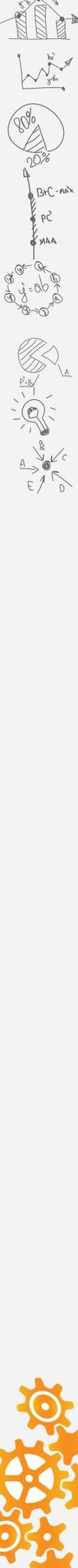
This section presents concise CVET quality checklists for the various target groups in order to utilize the RE-CVET Quality Code Handbook effectively.

4.1. Checklist for national authorities

1. Take into account the institutional framework of CVET governance and the type of CVET providers when designing and/ or improving a national CVET quality assurance framework. Build it on existing CVET quality assurance practices. Avoid over regulation.
2. Involve stakeholders and social partners into setting the goals for CVET quality and planning, implementation and review of CVET quality assurance measures.
3. Be committed to run and improve CVET quality assurance framework.
4. Safeguard the operation of quality assurance cycle (planning, implementation, evaluation and review) in CVET delivery and regular improvement of CVET quality assurance measures.
5. Create a methodology for regular and systemic evaluation, covering internal and external evaluation (when appropriate). External evaluation (if any) must serve the purpose of improving CVET providers and must be in synergy with CVET providers' internal evaluation instruments, create provider-level CVET quality assurance guidelines and offer methodical support and consultations.
6. Together with stakeholders agree on a list of national quality indicators. Consider the scope of application of indicators for CVET providers' benchmarking /evaluation or voluntary application purposes and already collected administrative data.
7. Collect relevant, regular and coherent data to measure CVET success and identify areas for improvement.
8. Integrate CVET into the existing mechanisms for identifying and fulfilling training needs.
9. Focus on the quality of CVET qualifications' design and award.
10. Support training of staff engaged in CVET quality assurance measures of national authorities and CVET providers.
11. Introduce motivation systems/ incentives for CVET providers to engage into quality assurance and improvement measures.
12. Regularly disseminate outcomes from CVET quality evaluation and review, announce CVET strengths and weaknesses, measures to be taken.

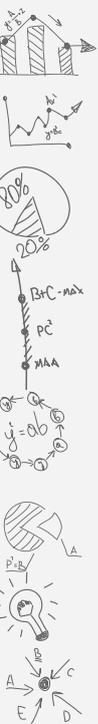
4.2. Checklist for CVET providers

1. Be committed to run and improve the CVET quality assurance system.
2. Instruct staff about the importance of working in compliance with institutional CVET quality assurance policy, define quality policy and objectives, regularly prepare and present staff with management reports, ensure resources necessary to provide quality services.
3. Safeguard the operation of quality assurance cycle (planning, implementation, evaluation and review) in CVET delivery and regular improvement of CVET quality assurance measures.
4. Clearly delegate responsibility for CVET quality, support training of staff engaged in CVET quality assurance measures.
5. Involve stakeholders and social partners into setting the goals for CVET quality, planning, implementation and review of CVET quality assurance measures and training services delivery in general.
6. Make your quality management system transparent and understandable to the community and document it. Choose the approach that is relevant and manageable.
7. Create and install measures for the monitoring of daily processes, conduct self-evaluation on a regular basis, create and operate an information collection and analysis mechanism.





8. Actively engage staff into self-evaluation, work to achieve immediate decisions on improvements and action plan for corrective/ preventive measures.
9. Ensure that the institution operates based on an effective information dissemination and feedback mechanisms.
10. Evaluate staff performance and satisfaction.
11. Publicise information about self-evaluation and review, announce strengths and weaknesses and measures to be taken. Take the opportunity to use this information in order to make your institution more visible and attractive to learners.



5. FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

(accessed 23.03.2017)

Cedefop (2011). Glossary. Quality in education and training / Qualität in der allgemeinen und beruflichen Bildung / La qualité dans l'enseignement. http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/4106_en.pdf

Cedefop (2015). Handbook for VET providers. Supporting internal quality management and quality culture. http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/3068_en.pdf

EQAVET (2011). The EQAVET Indicators Toolkit. http://www.eqavet.eu/Libraries/Working_Groups/EQAVET_Indicators_Toolkit_final.sflb.ashx

ETF (2014). Quality assurance in vocational education and training a collection of articles. [http://www.etf.europa.eu/webatt.nsf/0/270970490A6E9327C1257CA800407038/\\$file/Quality%20assurance%20in%20VET.pdf](http://www.etf.europa.eu/webatt.nsf/0/270970490A6E9327C1257CA800407038/$file/Quality%20assurance%20in%20VET.pdf)

European Parliament and Council of the European Union (2009). European Parliament and Council recommendation of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET). <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:155:0001:0010:EN:PDF>

Finnish National Board of Education, 2008. Quality Management Recommendations for VET. http://www.oph.fi/download/131938_Laadunhallintasuositus_en.pdf

Human Resources Development Agency (Cyprus) - Quality Assurance System Forms (ΑξιολογιστοΣυμ) for assessing and certifying training providers. http://www.hrdauth.org.cy/easyconsole.cfm/page/project/p_id/23/pc_id/17154

ICF GHK (2013a). Evaluation of implementation of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET). http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/more_info/evaluations/docs/education/eqavet13_en.pdf

ICF GHK (2013b). Study on quality assurance in continuous VET and on future development of EQAVET. http://www.eqavet.eu/Libraries/2014_Publications/Study_on_QA_in_CVET.sflb.ashx

Methodological Centre for Vocational Education and Training, 2008. Concept of VET Quality Assurance System in Lithuania.

Qualifications and VET Development Centre (2015). Strategic assessment areas for external evaluation of CVET providers. <http://www.kpmc.lt/kpmc/en/external-assessment-of-vet-quality-esf/>

Simon Broek, Bert-Jan Buiskool (2013). Developing the adult learning sector. Quality in the Adult Learning Sector. http://arhiv.acs.si/porocila/Quality_in_the_Adult_Learning_Sector-final_report.pdf

Thematic working group on quality in adult learning (2013). Final report. https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/thematic_wg_quality_report.pdf

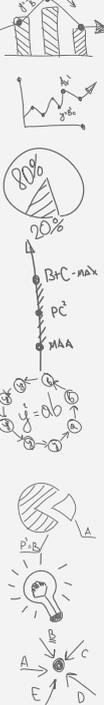
UAB „JOSTRA“ and UAB „ORO INCORPORATE“ (2016). Profesinio mokymo kokybės išorinio vertinimo modelis [Model of external evaluation of VET quality]. http://www.kpmc.lt/kpmc/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/PMK_isor_vert_modelis.pdf

Websites:

European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET): <http://www.eqavet.eu>

European Peer Review Network: <http://www.peer-review-network.eu>

European Peer Review Tool-box for Adult Learning (PRALINE): <http://www.praline-project.eu/>





National contact points for quality assurance in VET:

Country	Institution	Website
Austria	Österreichische Referenzstelle für Qualität in der Berufsbildung - ARQA-VET	www.arqa-vet.at
Belgium	Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Training	www.akov.be
Bulgaria	Ministry of Education, Youth and Science	www.minedu.government
Croatia	Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (AVETAЕ)	www.asoo.hr
Cyprus	Ministry of Education and Culture	www.moec.gov.cy
Czech Republic	National Institution of Technical and Vocational Education	www.nuv.cz
Denmark	Ministry of Children and Education Agency for Quality and Supervision	www.uvm.dk
Estonia	Estonian Higher Education Quality Agency	www.ekka.archimedes.ee/en
Finland	Finnish National Board of Education	www.oph.fi
Germany	German National Reference Point for Quality Assurance in VET	www.deqa-vet.de
Greece	Hellenic Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, Culture and Sports	www.yppo.gr
Hungary	National Office of Vocational Education and Training and Adult Learning (NOVETAL)	www.nive.hu
Ireland	Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)	www.QQI.ie
Italy	National Institute for the Analysis of Public Policies	www.inapp.org
Latvia	State Education Quality Service	www.ikvd
Lithuania	Qualification and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre	www.kpmptc.lt
Luxembourg	Ministry of Education, Children and Youth	www.men.public.lu
Malta	National Commission for Further and Higher Education	http://ncfhe.gov.mt
Netherlands	CINOP International Agency	www.eqavet.nl
Poland	National Centre for Supporting Vocational and Continuing Education	www.new.koweziu.edu.pl/



Country	Institution	Website
Portugal	Direção-geral do Emprego e Relações de Trabalho – DGERT	www.dgert.msess.pt
Romania	National Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training Development	www.tvet.ro
Slovenia	Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training	www.cpi.si
Slovakia	State Vocational Education Institute	www.siov.sk/siov
Spain	Ministry of Education	www.mec
Sweden	Swedish National Agency for Education	www.skolverket.se
UK/ England	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	www.gov.uk
UK/ Scotland	Scottish Qualifications Authority	http://www.sqa.org.uk
UK/ Wales	CollegesWales/ColegauCymru	www.colegacymru.ac.uk/
UK/ Northern Ireland	Department for Employment and Learning	www.delni.gov.uk/
Norway	Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training	www.udir.no
Switzerland	Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET)	www.seri.admin.ch



Coordinator:



Tel. + 357 22800655, + 357 22809530,
Fax. + 357 22428273
Email: dmtee@moec.gov.cy

Partners:



Tel. +357 22 375473,
Fax. +357 22375598
Email: info@enoros.com.cy



Tel: +370 5249 7126/7130
Fax: +370 5249 7126
Email: info@kpmpc.lt

Website: <http://www.re-cvet.org>
Email: recvetproject@gmail.com
Facebook: Re-CVET

ISBN 978-9963-0-5411-4