



EQAVET

European Quality Assurance
in Vocational Education and Training

Supporting the implementation of the
European Quality Assurance Reference Framework
for Vocational Education and Training

POLICY BRIEF

This note summarises the key issues emerging from the EQAVET working groups, which have been established to advance the implementation of the EQAVET work programme 2010-2013. The note has been prepared by the EQAVET Secretariat experts managing the work and content of the working groups. The EQAVET working groups provide the means by which the EQAVET Network will address and work on areas of strategic importance for the successful implementation of the Recommendation on the establishment of a European quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET. The key task of the working groups is to develop practical guidance and materials which will assist Member States in developing their national approaches to the implementation of the Recommendation and reporting on progress. This note reflects the opinions of the working groups' participants and does not constitute an official European Commission or EQAVET position.

EQAVET Working Group

On developing guidelines to support the implementation of the EQAVET Reference Framework

Countries taking part: BE, CZ, DE, EE, ES, IT, CY, LV, LT, HU, NL, AT, PT, RO, SI, FN, UK, HR; and Social Partners

SUMMARY

This policy note is based on discussion during and after the fourth meeting of the EQAVET working group on *Developing guidelines to support the implementation of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET (EQAVET Reference Framework)*. It brings together contributions from 18 European countries and Social Partners as they reflect on the development of national approaches to the implementation of the EQAVET Reference Framework (all the material is available on the website at www.eqavet.eu).

OBJECTIVE OF THE WORKING GROUP

The Working Group is focusing its attention on finalising the EQAVET web resource which will help Member States and their Quality Assurance National Reference Points. Central to the development of this resource has been the completion of a series of cases studies from 13 Member States and an analysis of the European case studies set out in the [Quality Assurance for Lifelong Learning Compendium](#). Each of the case studies, identified by Working Group members, considers how a VET provider has introduced aspects of quality assurance which are in line with the Recommendation on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET.

EMERGING POLICY ISSUES

Across Europe, VET providers are using many quality assurance systems. Some of these are in line with national and international approaches, while others have been developed to meet local circumstances. Increasingly the Working Group is considering the value and advantages of using the EQAVET system. Not only is this approach the only one accepted by Member States, it provides the flexibility to meet individual needs within a holistic framework that focuses on planning, implementation, evaluation and review.

A second policy issue being considered by the Working Group is the extent to which the web resource will, and should, be used by individual VET providers. While the focus of the work has been to support the Quality Assurance National Reference Points, an on-line resource will be open to all and will be accessed by many VET providers.

ANALYSIS of OUTCOMES New knowledge and/or European added value

The Working Group has developed a wide range of resources which can be used by the Quality Assurance National Reference Points at a system level and with individual VET providers. At the moment these resources are embedded in the website, and individual National Reference Points are each using different approaches to support VET providers. As part of its work to support Quality Assurance National Reference Points, EQAVET is looking at how these resources can be developed into a set of training materials which can be used to support VET providers in implementing aspects of the Recommendation.

This development reflects the increasing use that individual VET providers are making of the EQAVET web site. The launch of the next phase of the web resource in March 2012 is likely to accelerate this trend and EQAVET is looking at how best this can be supported.

**POLICY
RECOMMENDATIONS
or KEY MESSAGES
for POLICY-MAKERS,
At national and
European level**

The Working Group has analysed 26 case studies from across Europe. They cover all the indicators and indicative descriptors within the Recommendation. Although it is early days in the implementation of the Recommendation, it is already clear that many of the features and characteristics of the EQAVET quality assurance approach are being used by VET providers. In this context, it is important to recognise that the web resource which is designed for Quality Assurance National Reference Points will be used by individual VET providers who are keen to use this system and ensure the quality of their provision.

As this quality assurance system gains in popularity and becomes more widely known, it is worth considering how best to recognise the holistic nature of the approach. So far the case studies selected by members of the Working Group have focused on specific aspects of quality assurance, but in all these examples there is much more that could be said about the comprehensive and integrated approaches that are being used.

METHODOLOGY

The Working Group continues to draw on expertise from across Europe. The early analysis has benefited from the experiences of many national experts, members of the Quality Assurance National Reference Points and staff from European organisations of VET providers (EUproVET), of social partners and expert groups such as CEDEFOP and ETF. Throughout the meetings of the working group, and in preparation for the Annual Forum in March 2012, EQAVET members have used the on-line forum to discuss emerging findings and to comment on draft proposals.

CHALLENGES

Now that the case studies of good practice have been identified, the Working Group is looking at the lessons that have been learnt in introducing these quality assurance approaches. This will help EQAVET to offer further advice to the Quality Assurance National Reference Points as well as develop training materials which reflect the experiences of others.

Although the quality assurance approaches used by VET providers vary to a large extent, it is clear that the value of the indicators and indicative descriptors is recognised. In addition, there is a wide scale acceptance of the four stages of the quality assurance cycle (planning, implementation, evaluation and review). The main challenge for both EQAVET and the Quality Assurance National Reference Points is to promote this system and improve the consistency of approaches towards quality assurance across Europe.