Expandvet: Expand Quality assurance in VET (Benchmarking Tool)

State of Play Report

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Part 1 - Overview of EQAVET

Policy context

Copenhagen process

The Barcelona European Council in 2002 (European Council, 2002) set as a target to make Europe's education and training systems a world quality reference by 2010. Since then important steps have been made towards this objective. The Copenhagen declaration (European Ministers of Vocational Education and Training, European Commission, 2002) set the basis for the development of a Common Quality Assurance Framework for VET in Europe (CQAF). In May 2004, the European Council endorsed the CQAF (Council of the European Union, 2004a). The CQAF builds on the target set by the European Council, and is included in the report on the follow-up of the objectives of Education and Training systems in Europe. Its main purpose is to provide a simple and easy to use framework, which can be applied to VET systems and providers, and can serve as a tool for policy developers and practitioners in their efforts to improve the quality of VET services and training provisions. The use of CQAF is voluntary and the primary users are national/regional authorities, public and private bodies (including training providers) in charge of quality assurance and improvement.

The European Network for Quality Assurance in VET (ENQA-VET) established in October 2005, a voluntary cooperation forum, provided a number of initiative and projects at European and national levels, which were carried out to support, test and refine the CQAF. In 2009, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the Recommendation on establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET (EQARF) (European Parliament and Council, 2009a). It invites Member States, by 2011, to develop an approach to improve their quality assurance systems and to make best use of the framework. EQARF is based on and improves CQAF. In 2010, ENQA – VET was replaced by European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET), a community of practice bringing together Member States, Social Partners and the European Commission to promote European collaboration in developing and improving quality assurance in VET by using the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework.

The Bruges Communiqué (European Ministers for Vocational Education and Training, European Social Partners, the European Commission, 2010) reviewed the strategic approaches and priorities of the Copenhagen process and set the roadmap for VET for 2011-2020. Transparency and quality assurance are important for VET, in order to build up mutual trust and facilitate mobility. The dimension of quality mentioned in Bruges Communiqué are: attractiveness of initial VET, quality assurance of VET provision, quality of teachers, trainers and other VET professionals and relevance of training to the needs of the labour market.

The role of quality in the modernisation of VET

Compared to general education and higher education, VET is less regulated. There is great diversity not only between different Member States, but also between sectors, regions, levels and types of VET. The importance of VET is constantly increasing, especially in the nowadays social and economic context, with increased unemployment rates, uncertainty and major social challenges. Accelerated by the Copenhagen process, VET reforms have been and are being implemented in all Member States, although

at different paces. Major developments at European and national level of the first decade of the new century are:

    (a) The introduction of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the development of National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs).

According to EQF recommendation (European Parliament; Council, 2008), the development of National Qualification Frameworks and their reference to EQF should be done with quality assurance principles, explicitly mentioned in the Recommendation. In September 2010, 31 EU/EEA countries have developed/are developing and introducing NQFs (Zahilas, 2011). Four countries (UK, Ireland, France and Malta) (European Commission, 2011) have already referred their NQF to the EQF. The referencing process, developed by the EQF Advisory Group (European Commission, 2009) has two criteria relevant to quality assurance. Namely, criterion 5 previews that "The national quality assurance system(s) for education and training refer(s) to the national qualifications framework or system and are consistent with the relevant European principles and guidelines (as indicated in annex 3 of the Recommendation)" and criterion 6 previews that "The referencing process shall include the stated agreement of the relevant quality assurance bodies". The referencing reports of Member States document the way, in which they address the referencing criteria.

    (b) Developments of credit systems and ECVET.

ECVET recommendation (European Parliament, Council 2009b) invites Member States to apply the common principles for quality assurance in VET (Council of the European Union, 2004a) when using ECVET. Quality assurance is a core issue for building mutual trust in ECVET partnerships and quality assurance principles and criteria are documented in ECVET documents, i.e. Memorandum of Understanding and Learning Agreements. European Member States have adopted measures to implement ECVET, following the recommendation. ECVET is actually implemented mainly through pilot projects, nevertheless in certain countries the development of credit systems is linked to their national qualification frameworks and/or broader VET reforms (Cedefop, 2010).

    (c) Development of validation systems for non-formal and informal learning.

Among the common European Principles for the identification and validation of non-formal and informal learning (Council of the European Union, 2004b) is the obligation of the stakeholders to establish appropriate quality mechanisms for the identification and validation of non –formal and informal learning. Quality assurance mechanisms should underpin processes, procedures and criteria for validation, in order to build confidence and trust. Member States and European Commission are invited to support the development of quality assurance mechanisms.

According to the European inventory on validation of informal and non formal learning (Hawley et al, 2011), there are few countries with high level of development of validation systems (i.e. France, Finland), while in the majority of Member States, there are validation practices in certain sectors and/or levels and types of VET.

    (d) Extensive use of Europass documents.

Europass as a framework for enhancing transparency of qualifications in the world of education and the labour market has been gaining acceptance. The first evaluation of Europass (Ecotec, 2008) indicates successful implementation of Europass, especially of Europass CV and Language Passport. There is further potential for the Europass Certificate Supplement, Europass Mobility and Europass Diploma Supplement, as their use presents obstacles in certain countries. According to the evaluation Europass can be used as a quality assurance framework for the identification and documentation of learning outcomes and transparency of qualifications. On the other hand, quality assurance is an important factor in the use of Europass documents, especially Europass Mobility, in order to facilitate understandability of qualifications.

Quality assurance is linked with and facilitates adoption of European instruments and tools of the Copenhagen process, i.e. ECVET, EQF, validation of non-formal and informal learning and Europass. All these instruments have as objective the facilitation of mobility, through transparency of qualifications and quality assurance is an important factor for building mutual trust.

European Quality Assurance in VET (EQAVET)

The EQARF Recommendation

On June 2009, the recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQARF Recommendation) was issued. With EQARF the Member States are recommended to:

1. use and further develop the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (the Framework), quality criteria, indicative descriptors and reference indicators as set out and further described in Annexes I and II, to further improve and develop their VET systems, support lifelong learning strategies and the implementation of the EQF and of the European Quality Charter for Mobility, and promote a culture of quality improvement and innovation at all levels. Extra emphasis should be placed on the transition from VET to higher education;

2. each devise, not later than 18 June 2011, 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;

3. participate actively in the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework network (the framework network) as a basis for further development of common principles, reference criteria and indicators, guidelines and tools for quality improvement in VET at national, regional and local levels, as appropriate;

4. establish, where this does not already exist, a Quality Assurance National Reference Point for VET that is linked to the particular structures and requirements of each Member State and that, in accordance with national practice, brings together existing relevant bodies and involves the social partners and all stakeholders concerned at national and regional levels, in order to ensure the follow- up of initiatives. The reference points should:

— keep a wide range of stakeholders informed about the activities of the framework network,

— provide active support for the implementation of the work programme of the framework network,

— take concrete initiatives to promote further development of the framework in the national context,

— support self-evaluation as a complementary and effective means of quality assurance which allows the measurement of success and the identification of areas for improvement in respect of the implementation of the work programme of the framework network,

— ensure that information is disseminated to stakeholders effectively;

5. undertake a review of the implementation process every four years — such review to be incorporated into every second national progress report drawn up within the context of the future strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training — on the basis of reference criteria to be defined under the framework network in cooperation with the Commission and the Member States.

Furthermore EQARF endorses the European Commission's intention to:

1. support Member States in carrying out the above tasks, in particular by facilitating cooperation and mutual learning, testing and developing guidance material, and providing information on quality developments in VET across Member States;

2. promote and participate together with the Member States in the framework network, contributing to policy development in this area through concrete proposals and initiatives, as appropriate;

3. ensure follow-up to the implementation of this recommendation by presenting a report every four years to the European Parliament and the Council on the experience gained and implications for the future, including, if necessary, a review of this recommendation conducted in cooperation with the Member States and involving the various stakeholders;

4. undertake, on the basis of that report and in cooperation with the Member States, an evaluation of the implementation of this recommendation and, if necessary, its revision.

The framework

The EQAFR recommendation establishes a European quality assurance reference framework ('the framework') which comprises a quality assurance and improvement cycle (planning, implementation, evaluation/ assessment and review/revision) based on a selection of quality criteria, descriptors and indicators applicable to quality management at both VET-system and VET-provider levels. The aim is not to introduce new standards, but to support Member States' efforts, whilst preserving the diversity of their approaches.

The Framework should be regarded rather as a 'toolbox', from which the various users may choose those descriptors and indicators that they consider most relevant to the requirements of their particular quality assurance system.

The proposed descriptors and indicators are provided as guidance only and may be selected and applied by users of the Framework in accordance with all or part of their requirements and existing settings.

They may be applied to initial vocational training (IVT) and/or continuous vocational training (CVT), depending on the relevant individual characteristics of each Member State's VET system and the type of VET providers.

They are to be used on a purely voluntary basis, taking account of their potential added value and in accordance with national legislation and practice. They should be considered neither as benchmarks, nor as a means of reporting on, or drawing comparisons between, the quality and efficiency of different national systems. The responsibility for monitoring the quality of these systems remains entirely with the Member States.

Quality Criteria and Indicative Descriptors

Annex I of the EQARF Recommendation proposes common quality criteria and indicative descriptors to support Member States, as they deem appropriate, when implementing the Framework.

Quality Criteria	Indicative descriptors at VET-system level	Indicative descriptors at VET-provider level
Planning reflects a strategic vision shared by the relevant stakeholders and includes explicit goals/objectives, actions and indicators	Goals/objectives of VET are described for the medium and long terms, and linked to European goals	European, national and regional VET policy goals/objectives are reflected in the local targets set by the VET providers
	The relevant stakeholders participate in setting VET goals and objectives at the different levels	Explicit goals/objectives and targets are set and monitored
	Targets are established and monitored through specific indicators (success criteria)	Ongoing consultation with relevant stakeholders takes place to identify specific local/ individual needs
	Mechanisms and procedures have been established to identify training needs	Responsibilities in quality management and development have been explicitly allocated
	An information policy has been devised to ensure optimum disclosure of quality results/outcomes subject to national/ regional data protection requirements	There is an early involvement of staff in planning, including with regard to quality development
		Providers plan cooperative initiatives with other VET providers
	Standards and guidelines for	The relevant stakeholders participate in the process of

	recognition, validation and certification of competences of individuals have been defined	analysing local needs VET providers have an explicit and transparent quality assurance system in place
Implementation plans are devised in consultation with stakeholders and include explicit principles	Implementation plans are established in cooperation with social partners, VET providers and other relevant stakeholders at the different levels Implementation plans include consideration of 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 towards 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	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
Evaluation of outcomes and processes is regularly carried out and supported by measurement	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	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

	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	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
Review	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	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 | 13 |

A reference set of selected quality indicators for assessing Quality in VET

Annex II proposes a comprehensive set of selected quality indicators which can be used to support the evaluation and quality improvement of VET systems and/or VET providers. The set of indicators will be further developed through European cooperation on a bilateral and/or multilateral basis, building on European data and national registers.

The table of indicators does not include aggregated indicators at national level in cases where these do not exist or are difficult to obtain. The aggregation of such indicators at national level can be carried out at a later stage on the basis of a joint agreement between the Member States, the Commission and the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework network.

Indicator	Type of Indicator	Purpose of the Policy
Overarching Indicators for Quality Assurance		
No 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	Context/Input indicator	Promote a quality improvement culture at VET-provider level Increase the transparency of quality of training Improve mutual trust on training provision
No 2 Investment in training of teachers and trainers: (a) share of teachers and trainers participating in further training (b) amount of funds invested	Input/Process indicator	Promote ownership of teachers and trainers in the process of quality development in VET Improve the responsiveness of VET to changing demands of labour market

		Increase individual learning capacity building
		Improve learners' achievement
Indicators supporting quality objectives for VET policies		
No 3 Participation rate in VET programmes: Number of participants in VET programmes (1), according to the type of programme and the individual criteria (2)	Input/Process/Output indicator	Obtain basic information at VET- system and VET-provider levels on the attractiveness of VET Target support to increase access to VET, including for disadvantaged groups
No 4 Completion rate in VET programmes: Number of persons having successfully completed/abandoned VET programmes, according to the type of programme and the individual criteria	Outcome indicator	Support employability Improve responsiveness of VET to the changing demands in the labour market Support adapted training provision, including for disadvantaged groups
No 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	Outcome indicator (mix of qualitative and quantitative data)	Increase employability Improve responsiveness of VET to changing demands in the labour market Support adapted training provision, including for disadvantaged groups

with acquired skills/competences		
Context information		
No 7 Unemployment rate (4) according to individual criteria	Context indicator	Background information for policy decision-making at VET-system level
No 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	Context indicator	Background information for policy decision-making at VET-system level Support access to VET for disadvantaged groups Support adapted training provision for disadvantaged groups
No 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	Context/Input indicator (qualitative information	Improve responsiveness of VET to changing demands in the labour market Support employability
No 10 Schemes used to promote better access to VET: (a) information on existing schemes at different levels (b) evidence of their	Process indicator (qualitative information)	Promote access to VET, including for disadvantaged groups Support adapted training

effectiveness		provision	

Notes:

(1) For IVT: a period of 6 weeks of training is needed before a learner is counted as a participant. For lifelong learning: percentage of population admitted to formal VET programmes.

(2) Besides basic information on gender and age, other social criteria might be applied, e.g. early school leavers, highest educational achievement, migrants, persons with disabilities, length of unemployment.

(3) For IVT: including information on the destination of learners who have dropped out.

(4) Definition according to ILO and OECD: individuals aged 15-74 without work, actively seeking employment and ready to start work.

Quality management in VET provider organisations

Creation of a quality culture

The EQARF recommendation strengthens the role of Member States and European Commission for the adoption and further development of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework, following a top-down approach. Following the recommendation, Member States are invited to device an approach aiming at improving quality assurance systems, establish a Quality Assurance National Reference Point for VET, participate in EQAVET network and undertake a review of the implementation process every four years.

Quality assurance mechanisms, approaches and tools at system level (i.e. national, regional, and sector level) are important for creating a quality culture in VET. Quality management in VET should be seen as an overall system, in which policy makers, stakeholders, social partners and VET providers have an important role. There is an interrelation between on the one hand quality assurance approaches at national, regional and sector levels and on the other hand internal quality management approaches at VET provider level. Needless to say, the role of VET provider organisations in adopting and further developing their own quality management approaches is very important. Quality of VET at system level presupposes the prevalence of a culture of quality at VET provider level. The VET provider organisations are called to design and deliver VET programmes, each one of them responsible and accountable for its own pedagogical outputs, the return on investment and most of all the employability of their trainees. The aggregate pedagogical outputs of VET providers constitute the VET provision at system level.

Internal quality culture is first of all sensitisation towards change, introduction of innovations and continuous improvement on one hand and willingness to engage into a learning and a learning to learn process. This, although seems evident for organisations providing learning, is not always so, for a numbers of reasons (strong tradition, rigid institutional framework, management style etc.). Quality culture demands to have open antennas and perceptiveness of stimulus coming from the context. Changes in training technology and therefore in resources needed, changes in qualifications and therefore in learning outcomes required, expansion and need to assure quality in a decentralised system, changes in the competition and therefore seeking for ways to cope with this situation or just the

simple need to survive in a very tough economic context are some examples of factors that push VET providers to adopt their own quality approach and culture.

Quality management is a basic pillar of any organisation affecting the performance of the organisation and the quality of the outputs (products and services). In particular in VET, quality of pedagogical outputs has an impact at individual level and at society level. At individual level, quality of pedagogical outputs affects the trainees in multiple ways, including self – esteem and confidence, employability, flexibility to adapt to changing demands of the labour market, geographical and sector mobility, transferability and accumulation of learning outcomes. At society level, quality of pedagogical outputs affects inter alia the employment, the growth and development of regions and sectors, the social and vocational rehabilitation of disadvantaged groups, the culture towards learning and innovation and the long-term economic sustainability.

The need to promote vocational education and training and make it more attractive is another driver for creating a quality culture. VET providers need to improve their status in the overall training system and provide high quality pedagogical outputs and better employability prospects as alternative to other educational pathways.

At European level, quality assurance is strongly linked to transparency of qualifications and mobility of learners and workers. At a macro-level quality assurance is linked to and supports the implementation of European instruments and tools (section 3.2). At VET provider level, quality assurance plays a vital role in building mutual trust and transparency.

Quality assurance must not be seen as an institutional requirement or as unnecessary administrative bargain, rather than as an integral prerequisite in all processes and procedures of a VET provider. Quality management should underpin the performance of any VET provider organisation. It is important that quality management approaches are adapted to the policy, vision, mission and particular characteristics of a VET provider organisation and not solely conform to institutional requirements. The particular characteristics of a VET provider that have to be taken into consideration are: the type of training (initial/continuing, formal/non-formal, school-based/work-based), the level of VET, the type of beneficiaries (young people, unemployed, disadvantaged groups, etc), the type of funding (private/public) and the type of organisation (size, governance, profit/non-profit). An effective quality management system should respond to characteristics and needs of each organisation as well as to national, regional and sectoral policies and practices for quality assurance.

The creation of quality culture at VET provider level relies on commitment and engagement of management, administrative and pedagogic staff to quality management. The top management should take all necessary measures to provide the required resources, in terms of staff, facilities and equipment. All members of staff should have a role and be engaged in quality assurance. A designated management representative should ensure quality management that is quality planning, quality assurance and continuous quality improvement.

Finally, the effectiveness and efficiency of VET is important. Whatever the source of funding, public or private, there is an interest from stakeholders to assure the return on investment.

Challenges

The quality culture has to underpin the whole VET institution driving its management, its staff, its operations and its services towards continuous improvement. The design and implementation of quality management systems by VET providers presents a number of challenges. For the presentation, we categorise the challenges in the four steps of the quality cycle (European Parliament, Council 2009a).

Planning

The planning of a quality management system in a VET provider reflects a strategic vision shared by the relevant stakeholders and includes explicit goals/ objectives, actions and indicators.

A quality management system should take into account the internal characteristics of the organisation as well as the operating environment. The operating environment is a complex system that includes:

- local environment: training needs, local companies, population, competition;

- national/regional environment: VET policies, VET tradition, VET authorities, VET networks, involvement of stakeholders and social partners, institutional requirements;

- European level: EU policies, instruments and tools.

The challenges for a VET provider are to obtain and validate information of the operating environment, to follow evolutions in rapid changing conditions and to satisfy possibly contradictory needs.

A key element of the quality management system is the definition of goals and objectives – taking into account the internal characteristics of the VET provider and the operating environment. Goals and objectives should be realistic and measurable. The fulfilment of goals and objectives is operationalised into concrete processes and expected outputs.

The process of defining goals and objectives may include different stakeholders, such as funding authorities, regulating organisations, social partners, companies, trainees, at different levels of the operating environment. Building consensus and engaging the different actors involved in planning may present a challenge.

Planning should be customer-focused, or in other words to be oriented towards filling the needs of customers. This presents another challenge as the VET provider has to define clearly its customers and their needs (e.g. are customers the funding bodies or the company ordering the training or the trainees themselves and what are the customer needs exactly?).

Design of training provided as well as of resources needed is another function of the planning step. Selection of the appropriate pedagogical approach, technology, qualification of staff involved, taking into account of environmental management and social responsibility aspects and most of all quality of the VET product are some of the factors that may embrace the quality culture at this step. At the same time the selection of these factors as well as of the respective indicators to be used in order to evaluate outputs and their impact constitute challenges for the VET institutions.

Another important aspect of a quality management system is cost effectiveness. There are two dimensions of cost. Firstly, there is the overall planning of resources of a VET institution and the securing

of the appropriate funding. Resource planning should take into account available resources in relation to needs and expected results. Secondly, there is the cost of the quality management system (quality cost). Quality cost should be proportional to the overall budget of the organisation. The implication of this statement is that the complexity (and as a consequence the cost) of a quality management system, increases with the size, the complexity and the operation of a VET provider, although, there is no linear correlation between the two variables. Quality management systems that are unnecessarily complex and bureaucratic are less accepted and may have a reverse effect on the commitment of the actors responsible for their implementation and the quality culture in the VET provider.

Implementation

The implementation of a quality management system requires commitment of management and staff and engagement of the relevant persons in daily operations. Quality assurance underpins all business processes and procedures as well as the pedagogical processes and outputs of the VET provider. The role of people, i.e. management, administrative staff and trainers is the most important factor of success. The challenge for the VET provider is to assure the engagement of personnel.

The quality policy and quality objectives of the VET provider should be communicated internally and externally, i.e. to staff and to stakeholders. Communication of policy and objectives is an important first step to involve actively people in the quality cycle and although it is logical, in practice it is not obvious.

The stakeholders involved in the quality management of a VET provider are diversified. Depending on the type of the institution, stakeholders can be VET authorities and organisations at national, regional and local level, professional and sector organisations, networks, social partners, companies – collaborators or customers, trainees and their representative organisations and the VET provider staff. The operation of a VET provider and therefore its quality management system depend to a certain degree on the source of funding and to institutional requirements. The VET provider has to identify and ensure involvement of stakeholders, balance the needs and expectations of all involved parties and at the same time follow the rules. The satisfaction of stakeholders can be a challenge, as they may have different expectations. Regularly, there are contradictions between different stakeholders: e.g. rules and control imposed by the operating environment and the need for autonomy of a VET provider, expectations and aspirations of individual trainees and the needs of economy and society.

Quality assurance is very often an institutional requirement. Institutional requirements may range from strict rules that must be followed to recommendations. The VET provider has certain degrees of freedom to design and implement a quality management approach, depending on the institutional requirements. A quality management system should be adapted to the particular characteristics of the VET provider. A robust quality management system can serve the scope of a large and complex organisation, but in a small organisation may cause unnecessarily high administrative cost and reduce flexibility. Over-regulation may inhibit innovativeness and use of creativity for finding solutions. A quality management approach is not 'one fits all'. A VET provider has to select between different approaches taking into consideration, internal and external environment as well as the cost. The challenge is to implement quality assurance approaches, balanced between the need for robustness, standards and documentation and the need for cost effectiveness, simplicity and flexibility.

Evaluation

In the quality management cycle evaluation of processes and outcomes has the meaning of measuring processes and outcomes against the set objectives, criteria and expected results. Evaluation approaches range from self-evaluation to external evaluation and control. Peer review and benchmarking supervised by networks is also gaining ground in VET.

Self – evaluation of VET providers is a practice in some Member States, in some it is an institutional requirement, while in others it is voluntary based. There is a tendency for combining self – evaluation with external review. Identifying the right balance between the two methods is a challenge (Cedefop, 2009).

Evaluation should involve interested stakeholders including students and trainees. There are two dimensions that should be taken into account. Firstly, there is the assessment of learning outcomes that is a measurement of the quality of the pedagogical methods and means. Secondly, there is the measurement of outputs of the learning process, in a more wide sense, e.g increase in employability, social inclusion, self-satisfaction. The second dimension is equally important, because it provides feedback to the overall operation of a VET provider, from planning to continuous improvement, but also is of high importance to the funding organisations. Evaluation in VET providers usually has the form of either formative evaluation (which takes place during the period of training and permits corrective actions) or summative evaluation (some time after the end of the training to assess the impact of training).The challenge for evaluation is to measure the pedagogical work of a VET provider, keeping a broad perspective in the overall performance of the organisation.

External assessment takes various forms. It can be a regulatory requirement or voluntary- based. It can be performed by VET authorities, independent assessment bodies, certifying or accrediting bodies, public or private. External assessment also depends on the use of standards, such as ISO 9001, ISO 10015, EFQM, national quality labels and standards and other quality standards not directly related to the pedagogical work, such as environmental, social accountability standards. The selection of external assessment and certification bodies is a challenge.

Review

The result of the evaluation is the basis for correcting, preventing and improving actions. Correcting processes address mistakes and faults, (non conformities) identified during evaluation. Preventing actions address possible non-conformities. Corrective and preventing processes aim to improve the processes that generate mistakes, so as to lessen similar non-conformities in the future. The quality management system should have a continuous improvement character and include review processes for identification of aspects for improvement. The planning of processes for review should be adhered to the planning of the quality management. In practise VET institutions focus more on quality assurance and less to improvement because the later needs strong commitment to change, to innovation and development of a learning culture. The implementation of a quality management system, with a strong focus on quality improvement embedded from the planning phase is a challenge.

Communication of review outcomes to stakeholders and staff facilitates their commitment and involvement and promotes transparency. The development of processes for communication of review

outcomes is a challenge. The operating environment is complex and the involvement of different types of stakeholders increase the degree of complexity. The VET provider should identify the relevant key information that should be communicated and use appropriate methods and tools for communication

Organisational and technical issues

The most relevant organisational and technical aspects of the implementation of a quality management approach in a VET provider are:

- Internal environment

The characteristics of the organisation: the type of training (initial/continuing, formal/non-formal, school-based/work-based), the level of VET qualifications offered and as an implication the qualification level of the trainees, the type of beneficiaries (young people, unemployed, disadvantaged groups, etc), the type of funding (private/public) and the type of organisation (size, governance, profit/non-profit).

- Operating environment

The national, regional, local policies and practices. The local environment in which the VET provider operates: urban or rural area, population, migration, existence of groups at risk, culture and tradition, main sectors of economy, companies.

Taking into account environmental management and social responsibility in the four steps of quality management seem to be presently some of the most "forgotten" or marginal elements for most VET providers (BEQUAL, 2011).

Competition is for sure a very potent motivation. Adopting a quality culture as a proactive driver rather than as a re-active one is a major challenge.

- Institutional and regulatory requirements

Existence of obligatory or voluntary frameworks, rules, standards at national, regional, local or sectoral level. Existence of common practices, culture and traditions that may informally constitute requirements.

- Management

Governance of the VET provider, level of autonomy, involvement of social partners and/or other stakeholders in decision making. Commitment of managing board to quality and engagement of executive managers to design and implementation of quality management approaches.

- Quality policy and objectives

Quality policy in conformance with internal characteristics and the operating environment. Quality criteria for processes and outputs with focus to pedagogical results. Clear and measurable objectives and indicators. Involvement of staff and stakeholders in drawing quality policy and objectives. Verification of quality objectives.

- Resources

Facilities, technology, equipment, material and human resources. Special needs of and provisions for groups at risk. Source of funding.

- Staff

Involvement of staff to quality management, allocation of responsibilities, communication channels, communication of quality policy, objectives and expected results.

- Training

Training of personnel, training of teachers / trainers, importance of qualified trainers in quality assurance.

- Stakeholders

Identification of stakeholders, consultation and active involvement, engagement of stakeholders at different steps of the quality management cycle.

- Networks and partnerships

Cooperation with other VET providers and with other types of organisations, e.g VET authorities and organisations, social partners, enterprise networks, companies, representatives of the target groups, associations of social groups.

- Processes

Planning, implementation, evaluation and review of business and pedagogical processes, definition of inputs, methods and outputs, quality objectives and criteria, ownership and responsibilities.

- Results

Pedagogical results, learning outcomes, outcomes on individuals, outcomes on society, outcomes on environment, organisational outcomes, learning process.

- Documentation

Documentation of processes and procedures. Records, processes for issuing, verifying and keeping records, processes for analysing data.

- Continuous improvement

Corrective and preventing actions. Processes for gathering feedback, analysing data, revising objectives and processes. Active involvement of the staff in the continuous improvement process is a challenge that enhances learning, creativity, trust and open communication within the VET institution.

Tools and mechanisms for promoting quality culture

Most common quality assurance approaches in VET providers include self-assessment, peer review, benchmarking, external reviews and audits, accreditation of VET providers, quality management systems based on standards, including standards from the business sector.

In most countries self-evaluation is a key quality management approach (Cedefop, 2009). Self-evaluation can be compulsory or voluntary. A number of countries have implemented national self-assessment frameworks to guide and support VET providers in self-assessment. Typically, self assessment is conducted in a yearly basis. The outcome is a self-assessment report that is usually made public.

External evaluation is a broad term; it can include evaluation of a VET institution performance by independent experts / auditors, by designated experts from VET authorities or by peers. The form of external evaluation depends on the quality approach of the VET provider. The adoption of a quality standard, such as ISO 9001, requires external audits by independent certifying organisations at regular intervals. The accreditation of a VET provider may imply audits by reviewers / auditors of the accrediting organisation or by external experts. The adoption of quality frameworks, quality labels and standards, specifically designed for VET may imply external audits. External evaluation may be combined with and complement self-evaluation.

Peer review is a promising instrument of quality management in VET. While peer review is prevalent in higher education, its use in VET is marginal (Austrian Institute for Research on Vocational Training, 2007). Peer review consists of external evaluation of VET providers by peers that is an external group of experts coming from other VET providers or stakeholders. Peers are external but work in a similar environment and have specific professional expertise and knowledge of the evaluated subject. They are independent and "persons of equal standing" with the persons whose performance is being reviewed. Peer review is a cost effective method, it is carried out by persons who have in depth knowledge of the learning process, it fosters networking and exchange between VET providers.

Following a preliminary review of the existing bibliography quality approaches for VET institutions focus mainly on quality assurance.

Promotion of quality culture in a VET institution means to insert additionally to quality assurance the concept of continuous improvement. The systematic exploration of quality standards of the business sector can be of benefit to VET institutions. Quality culture may be enhanced through mechanisms and tools as described in the following:

- Rationale. Why to introduce a quality culture in my institution?

The management of the VET institution has to be persuaded that internal quality of culture is a requirement for the institution, that quality is not just an institutional requirement deriving from the EU, the state, the region or the customer but that it is a sine non qua for business operation and provides useful information for management decisions, eliminating sources of conflict with customers and suppliers continuously improving the institution's performance and image. Furthermore, it is a revitalising culture, rendering the staff of the VET institution active in learning, proposing and implementing innovations and improvement and that perhaps the very survival of the institution depends on the adoption of the appropriate quality management approach. To this end, the proposal of the contractor for the training handbook includes explanation in simple words about quality policies and the 4 phases quality cycle (planning, implementation, evaluation/assessment and review revision). Furthermore it will illustrate arguments and examples coming from the comparative analysis of the case studies depicting the meaning of these arguments.

- Relevance to the specific VET institution. The quality culture is useful, but isn't it possible for other types of VET institutions?

The management of the VET institution has to be persuaded that the adoption of an internal quality culture is possible for their specific case. To this end, it is useful to demonstrate how different VET institutions of different types, addressing different target groups of different ages in different national/regional sectorial contexts have coped with this issue. Some examples coming from the case studies and comparative tables can contribute to this end.

- Practical aid to set quality objectives. How can I put management objectives concerning quality?

In some cases management objectives concerning quality are implicit. VET providers would be helped by some examples of management objectives concerning quality. It has also to be clear that management objectives for quality should be quantifiable and promoted publicly within the VET institution. This will have a positive effect in the active involvement of the staff as far as quality assurance and improvement is concerned. It will also prove to be beneficial to the VET institution if the management objectives for quality are publicised for stakeholders and interested third parties to be informed in this respect.

- Prerequisites for the development of quality culture. What is the most crucial factor in the development of a quality culture in my institution?

There are in fact two very crucial factors. The first one is the commitment of management in the development of the quality culture, as shown above, and the second one is the active and wholehearted involvement of the staff of the institution. This is up to the management to find ways to gain. On the other hand the communication of quality management objectives, open communication channels, asking for contribution in finding solutions to problems etc, have proven to be useful in many cases. A list with attitudes that are positive and others that are inhibiting may be of help.

- Quality processes. What sort of processes may be useful in my case for quality management as far as planning and/or implementation and/or evaluation and/or reviewing/revising are concerned?

It has to be clarified that there is no magic recipe for quality management. Each institution has to find the approach that best suits its needs. One may also go further and say that the quality approach itself is subject to continuous revision, innovation, change and improvement. A tool, namely a list with examples of processes and approaches of various VET institutions per process may be useful though, providing input and being a basis for development of ideas for the own approach to quality.

Overview of EQAVET – Refernces

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- European Parliament and Council. (2008) *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008, on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF).* Available from Internet: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:111:0001:0007:EN:PDF [cited 30.8.2011].

- European Parliament and Council. (2009a). *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2009 on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training.* OJ C/155/1, 8.7.2009. Available from Internet: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:155:0001:0010:EN:PDF [cited 30.8.2011].

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Part 2 – Austria National Report

Description of general structure of national education level

In Austria the education system is managed by a variety of Co-Players. The competence for legislation in education and its implementation is divided between the Federation (Bund) and the States (Länder). At the states level, the competent legislative bodies are the States Parliaments (diets), however the responsibility for implementation rests with on the administrative bodies (Ämter der Landesregierung) of the 9 Austrian States. Schools enjoy some autonomy in budgetary management and, up to a point, are free to adapt the curriculum to local needs.[1]

Furthermore the Austrian education system is very similar to the Swiss and German systems. A specific feature of the Austrian system is the four-year primary/elementary education followed by secondary education that is split up into two four-year periods. The division is made according to the ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education) classification of the UNESCO. The Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture coordinates important tasks such as education and training of teachers and maintenance of schools, the Federal Ministry of Science and Research assumes the governance of the higher education system.

The elementary level (ISCED 0) in Austria refers to the following childcare institutions: crèches, kindergartens, after-school care facilities and children's groups. Playgroups and nannies also offer their services. And also pre-school education of children of school age who are not yet ready for school belongs to the elementary level.

Compulsory education in Austria starts at the age of 6 and lasts for nine years. **The primary level** (ISCED 1) lasts four years. Schools of this level are primary/elementary schools as well as special needs schools and integrative/inclusive education in regular schools.

After completion of the 4-year primary level **secondary level I** (ISCED 2) starts 5th to 8th form. Pupils can choose between the following types of schools (different admission requirements): primary school upper cylce (Volksschul-Oberstufe), lower secondary school (Hauptschule), new secondary school (Neue Mittelschule), academic secondary school lower level (AHS Unterstufe) as well as special needs schools and inclusive education.

Secondary level I is followed by **secondary level II** (9th school year) (ISCED 3 & 4), with the following options: "polytechnical" schools (= schools preparing pupils for an apprenticeship or job), vocational schools and apprenticeships (dual system), vocational secondary schools, vocational colleges (excluding the 4th and 5th forms), upper level of grammar schools (higher secondary schools of general education) as well as the vocational preparatory year and integrative vocational education.

The non-tertiary postsecondary level refers to the 4th and 5th forms of vocational colleges, the educational institutions for nurses, education and training for health professions, preparatory and continuing education courses and the vocational matriculation examination.

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[1] (source: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Austria:Higher_Education^, 11.04.2013)

After having completed a general or vocational education one can pursue an education in the **non-university tertiary sector** (ISCED 5B): schools for mastercraftsmen, foremen and construction trades, kollegs, midwife colleges, medical-technical colleges, or an education in cardio-technical service.

After having completed a general or vocational education people can **study at a university**, university of applied sciences or a university college of teacher education. Having completed a university degree you can continue your studies to obtain the highest possible degree (ISCED 6), which is the doctoral or PhD degree.[2]

The following graph provides an overview of the national education system in Austria.

Structure of the national education system 2012/13

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Austria:Overview)
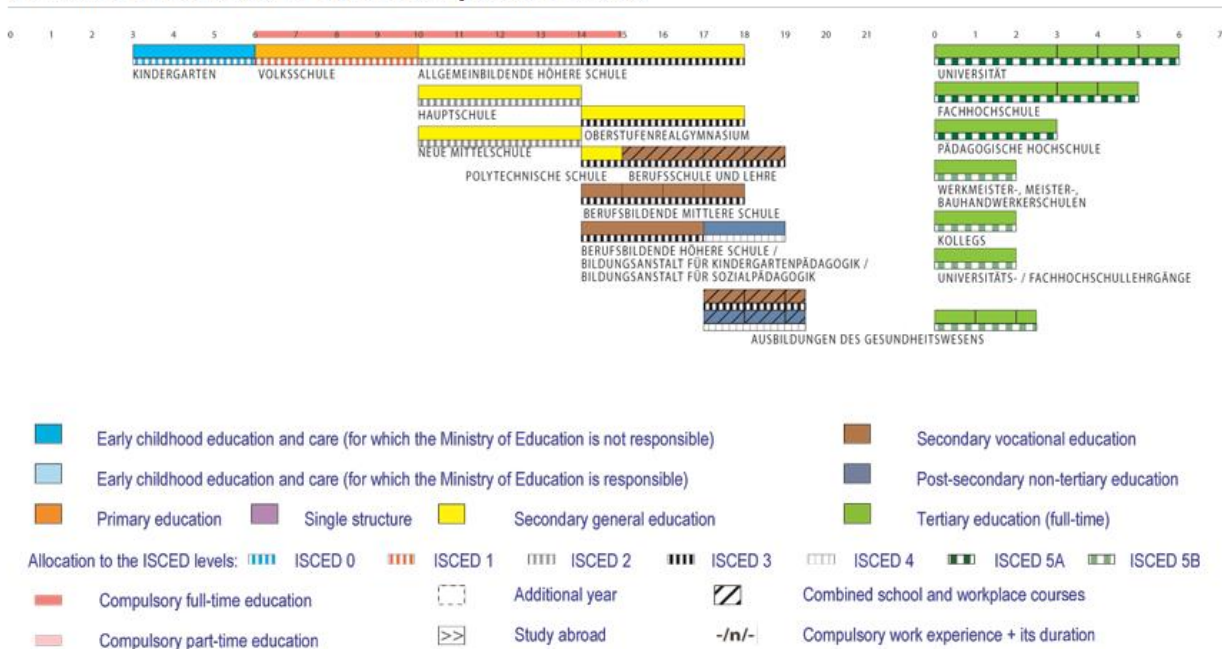
The following chapters describe the current situation regarding formal and informal vocational education and training for post 16-years learners in Austria.

Formal vocational education and training in Austria

The Austrian educational system offers a large variety of opportunities following compulsory education (9 grades) and three of four possible education paths on secondary level II offering opportunities for vocational training (see figure 1). Besides the possibility to attend a secondary academic school (*Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schule*, *AHS*), which provides general education regarding humanities,

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[2] (Source: http://www.oead.at/welcome_to_austria/education_research/the_austrian_education_system/EN/, 11.04.2013)

science and languages and leads to university entrance, learners can choose one of the following types of vocational schools:

- five-year full-time vocational education and training (VET) colleges (*Berufsbildende Höhere Schulen, BHS*), which both provide vocational training (various branches of technology, business and commerce) and allow their graduates, in general, to access university;
- three to four-year full-time vocational education and training schools (*Berufsbildende Mittlere Schulen, BMS*), which also offer specialised vocational training in a technical or economic field but do not provide access to university;
- two to four-year part-time vocational schools (*Berufsschulen*) combined with apprenticeship training in enterprises ('dual vocational training system').
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- The previously mentioned vocational schools for apprentices start at grade 10. The so called '*pre-vocational year*' (*Polytechnische Schule*), the 9th grade of compulsory schooling, is often used to bridge the time to apprenticeship training. Pre-vocational schools are mainly attended by those who do not (immediately) transfer to other upper secondary programmes in general education or VET after grade 8.

This wide variety of VET options after compulsory schooling results in a very high proportion of individuals who have completed an ISCED level 3 or 4 as their highest educational attainment in Austria. (Compared to other EU countries this is the highest in 2002 amongst EU-15, 4th amongst EU-25 countries in 2005). When deciding about their future educational path, the majority of students follow the VET stream (i.e. approximately 75%).

As stated above, apprenticeship training in Austria, unlike in most other EU-member states, is organised in a dual system. This means that young people who have concluded an apprenticeship training agreement with a company that is authorised to train apprentices are obliged to attend part time vocational schools while receiving their practical training directly within the company. The length of the apprenticeship training varies according to the trade, but is usually three years. Currently, there are over 250 recognised apprenticeship trades in the following specialist fields[3]:

- Construction
- Fashion, textiles, leather
- Chemistry
- Electrical engineering and electronics
- Gardening and agriculture
- Restaurant and food industry
- Timber, glass, stone and plastics industries
- Printing, graphic and paper industries
- Office, administration, tourism, transport and traffic industries

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[3] http://www.bildungssystem.at

- Metal treatment and processing
- Music instruments trades
- Optics and photographic trades
- Health, body and beauty care

This list, however, is subject to constant modification in the intention to face structural changes in the Austrian economy and society. Such, particularly in the fields of telecommunications and electronic data processing, but also in the service sector, new apprenticeship trades have lately been coined as a result of this dynamic development.

After having completed the apprenticeship period, apprentices take the 'final apprenticeship exam' (*Lehrabschlussprüfung*) in order to prove that they have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge for entering into the respective regular labour. Subsequently, the graduates have, among other options, the possibility to take a master exam for the selected craft or trade or to enter further education through the so-called *Berufsreifeprüfung* exam or a university entrance examination. The latter represents a requirement for studying at universities, *Fachhochschulen*, post-secondary VET-courses and post-secondary or tertiary colleges.[4]

Non-formal vocational training and education

Vocational training may be provided in many different ways. Besides formal vocational education, there is a broad range of non-formal vocational programmes in adult education and training for both continuing vocational training and initial vocational training available in Austria. Initial or C/VET courses are offered at public and private institutions of further education, schools, universities and even at the workplace. While formal vocational education almost exclusively affects young learners, non-formal vocational education is aimed at all age groups. When discussing young learners' retention rates in vocational education in Austria it thus has to be considered that the target group cannot be easily ascribed to one educational sector only.

Vocational training measures vary particularly in their contents, format and intensity. The spectrum ranges from continuing vocational training courses in one trade to vocational training in other forms to, e.g. specialise in one aspect, such as on-the-job-training, job-rotation, exchanges, study visits, learning circles, quality circles, self-directed learning or the attendance at conferences, workshops, trade fairs, lectures etc.[5] An example for continuing vocational training courses are the 'dual qualification' programmes that provide skilled workers with the

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[4] http://www.bildungssystem.at
[5] Statistik Austria 2008: 9

possibility to acquire qualifications for university access alongside further vocational education and career-related skills upgrading[6].

Characteristics of National Quality Frameworks for Level 3,4,5 according to EQF division

In the latest Austrian EQF Referencing Report (October 2012) it was stated that the established links between NQF and EQF levels appeared transparent and comprehensible and national descriptors were perceived as a neat contextualization of the EQF descriptors. Following a strong bottom-up and evidence-based approach involving all relevant stakeholders the work conducted since 2006 was acknowledged as valuable in ensuring public trust in the Austrian National Qualifications Framework.

The implementation of the Austrian NQF can be described as on-going. The presentation of the Austrian Referencing Report can be understood as marking the end of the development of Austrian level descriptors and their linking to the EQF. Essential work preparing implementation through drafting a suitable model for allocation, setting the general conditions, clarifying responsibilities, defining the scope of the framework, informing the wider public and involving stakeholders will facilitate further implementation and allocation considerably.

Generally speaking the Austrian National Qualification framework corresponds to the European Qualification Framework and contains 8 qualification levels. In Austria, level 1-5 are based on the EQF descriptors including qualifications from all education contexts. Higher levels (i.e. 6-8) are based on different descriptors some of which belong to the Bologna model (and thus Bachelor, Master and PhD) and follow five categories (knowledge and understanding, application of knowledge and understanding, ability to make judgements, ability to communicate and learning skills).

The Austrian NQF was divided in three corridors:

1. formal education
2. non-formal education (adult education)
3. informal sector (on the job learning, work experience etc.)

The overall strategy on the NQF in Austria foresees that, in a first step, all qualifications acquired in the formal sector will be referenced. But a qualifications framework should also portray non-formally acquired qualifications and learning outcomes acquired through informal learning to fulfil the requirements of a lifelong learning strategy. Therefore development activities within the three corridors are conducted at the same time to use synergies and pursue the objective of promoting permeability between the fields of learning.

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[6] http://www.b.shuttle.de/wifo/duoqual/s-at.htm

The Manual for Including Formal Qualifications into the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) – points out the most important criterias for Including qualifications into the NQF:

- The best-fit principle: 'Best fit' means that a qualification is referenced to the level whose descriptions fit the qualification best ('principle of predominance'). It is therefore always necessary to read the entire table of descriptors and consider which level fits best to a qualification overall. This way of reading the descriptors helps determine the 'focus' of the respective qualification and thus makes it possible to decide where it can be classified. In this process it is necessary to allow for a certain 'respectable generosity' when applying the descriptors as well as leave room for interpretation.

- Equivalence rather than equality: Qualifications which are referenced to a level are considered as equivalent regarding the level of learning outcomes – independent of their specific field of work or study – even if they differ in many aspects – such as in the duration of their acquisition, the place of learning, the education sector in which they are acquired, etc. – and are therefore not equal.

- No 'steps' in the acquisition of qualifications: Although the NQF has a hierarchical structure, this does not mean that the acquisition of qualifications must be step-by-step. A qualification which is assigned to a higher level does not necessarily require the acquisition of a qualification at a lower level. The relevant provisions are not regulated by the NQF. Even though a qualification is the prerequisite for acquiring another qualification, it does not follow that the 'add-on qualification' must by all means be assigned to a higher level than the 'prerequisite qualification'. It is conceivable that both qualifications are assigned to the same level.

The descriptions ('descriptors') of the individual EQF levels are formulated in a rather general manner. The results of the NQF consultation process and NQF pilot projects, however, point towards a consensus concerning their practicability in principle as well as their further use to establish the NQF. But it was demanded to carry out a 'translation' of EQF descriptors for the national context in order to make the allocation of Austrian qualifications easier. Subsequently separate descriptors were developed for the Austrian NQF (originally termed 'explanations' in the manual), which formulate learning outcomes with special consideration of the national context. These formulations were the result of analyses conducted while work was carried out on the manual and build on EQF descriptors and the Austrian qualification descriptions (such as curricula, training regulations, legal documents, etc.). To ensure EQF descriptors can be understood and applied more easily, these formulations aim to specify the abstract descriptions in greater detail. This also aims to make differences between levels more clearly visible. Therefore the following criteria have been considered in the referencing of qualifications to the Austrian NQF:

- EQF descriptors

- NQF descriptors

- Reference qualifications

Descriptions of the Austrian NQF levels 3

LEVEL 3	KNOWLEDGE	Knowledge of facts, principles, processes and general concepts in a field of work or study	He/she has • a well-founded general education • fundamental knowledge in his/her field of work or study (e.g. about facts and circumstances, principles, materials, processes, methods, connections, regulations and norms, etc.) to independently deal with simple tasks and challenges provided the framework conditions remain unchanged • the ability of business-related thinking and critical consumer behaviour • knowledge needed to directly carry out simple professional activities	Secondary home economics school qualification (two-year course)
	SKILLS	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to accomplish tasks and solve problems by selecting and applying basic methods, tools, materials and information	In his/her field of work or study he/she is able to • select basic instruments, methods and procedures and use them appropriately • independently cope with simple activities while the framework conditions remain unchanged • demonstrate different approaches to solutions for everyday problems and use these to independently solve the problems after prior consultation • develop independent and logical thought • actively take part in simple discussions on familiar themes, present his/her own viewpoint and give reasons to substantiate this • independently research relevant information to fulfil his/her tasks from given sources, critically assess this and use it after prior consultation • present common contents in appropriate form (i.e. according to the situation and the target audience) and also technically correct while using the correct language	
	COMPETENCE	Take responsibility for completion of tasks in work or study Adapt own behaviour to circumstances in solving problems	In his/her field of work or study he/she is able to • act autonomously and with own responsibility in simple situations • act autonomously and with own responsibility to cope with simple challenges under framework conditions which remain unchanged • adapt his/her behaviour independently to the circumstances in common situations	

LEVEL 4	**KNOWLEDGE**	Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study	He/she has • an in-depth general education • theoretical knowledge in his/her field of work or study (*e.g.* about facts and circumstances, principles, materials, processes, methods, connections, regulations and norms, etc.) to independently deal with common tasks and challenges, including with changing framework conditions • fundamental company-related business and legal knowledge • a university entrance qualification or knowledge needed to directly exercise a profession	VET school qualification (*e.g.* the certificate of the VET school for machine construction, the business school certificate, the certificate of the school of hotel and catering industries, etc.) ; Apprenticeship diploma (*e.g.* the certificate in the apprenticeships office clerk or joiner, etc.)
	SKILLS	A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study	In his/her field of work or study he/she is able to • select common instruments, methods and procedures and use them appropriately • independently cope with standard tasks, including under changing conditions • analyse everyday problems taking into account theoretical knowledge, demonstrate different approaches to solutions and solve these problems independently • develop certain creative and networked thinking • actively take part in discussions in standard situations with familiar themes, present his/her own viewpoint and give reasons to substantiate this • independently research relevant information to fulfil his/her tasks from largely given sources, critically assess this and use it • present information in appropriate form (i.e. according to the situation and the target audience) and also technically correct while using the correct language and using common communication techniques/technologies	
	COMPETENCE	Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change Supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities	In his/her field of work or study he/she is able to • handle routine situations independently and behave appropriately according to the circumstances • work in a team and instruct/supervise others in common tasks	

LEVEL 5	**KNOWLEDGE**	Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge	He/she has • extensive theoretical knowledge in his/her field of work or study (*e.g.* about facts and circumstances, principles, materials, processes, methods, connections, regulations and norms, etc.) to independently deal with tasks and challenges, including in unpredictable situations • awareness of what effects using this knowledge has on the field of work or study • in-depth company-related business and legal knowledge for taking on managerial tasks and/or heading a company • knowledge needed to directly exercise a high-level profession	VET college *Reifeprüfung* certificate and VET diploma (*e.g.* college of construction engineering, business college, college of tourism, etc. and the certificate of the secondary training college for nursery school teachers)
	SKILLS	A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems	In his/her field of work or study he/she is able to • independently cope with tasks including in unpredictable contexts • assess the implications of such tasks and draw conclusions here for how to proceed subsequently • analyse challenging and multi-layered problems using logical, abstract and networked thinking and solve these autonomously while complying with the respective applicable norms, regulations and rules • use his/her own creative contributions to solve problems • understand connections between ecological, economic and social mechanisms, establish interconnections and use the knowledge gained here in common and also unpredictable situations • form an opinion on new facts and circumstances, explain his/her own viewpoint and present this using the standard specialist terminology in a way which is suitable for the target audience and the particular situation • independently research information from different sources and disciplines, gather the essential content, critically assess, select and present this in a manner suitable for the target audience	
	COMPETENCE	Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change Review and develop performance of self and others	In his/her field of work or study he/she is able to • independently coordinate and manage projects • act independently and flexibly in different situations, including unpredictable ones • reflect on his/her own behaviour and draw conclusions on how to act in the future • critically and responsibly deal with the actions of other people, give feedback and contribute to the development of their potential	

For the time being only the first corridor has been reviewed. A number of papers have been elaborated and published in the process of linking school types, certifications and trainings to the corresponding NQF level. Some of these documents are:

Important reference documents for the reference of schools, certifications and diplomas to NQF/EQF

Title (in German)	Content	Date/Published by/link
Aufbau eines Nationalen Qualifikationsrahmens in Österreich	Positioning paper regarding the NQF, conclusions, decisions after finishing the consultation phase	10/2009, Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/19300/nqr_positionspapier200910.pdf
Konsultationspapier "Nationaler Qualifikationsrahmen für Österreich"	Consultation paper regarding the NQF for Austria Based on this consultation papers various stakeholders handed in their statements and reference indications.	2008, Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/15830/nqr_konpap_08.pdf
Anhänge zum Konsultationspapier	Annex to above	See above http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/15832/nqr_konpap_ahang_08.pdf
Bericht der Expertengruppe "Konsolidierung der Stellungnahmen zum österreichischen NQR"	Report of expert group – consolidation of statements to the consultation paper regarding the NQF	September 2008 http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/17561/nqr_erg_ksep.pdf

Title (in German)	Content	Date/Published by/link
Stellungnahme der technischen, gewerblichen und kunstgewerblichen Schulen Österreichs im Rahmen des Konsultationsprozesses zur Erstellung eines NQR	Statement by the Austrian schools for technical, art- and commercial trades regarding the elaboration of the NQF[7]	03/2008, Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, Section Vocational Education http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/16854/nqr_sn_bb_009.pdf
Österreichischer EQR Zuordnungsbericht	Austrian Report of referencing EQF to NQF	12/2011, Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture http://www.lebenslanges-lernen.at/fileadmin/lll/dateien/lebenslanges_lernen_pdf_word_xls/nqr/EQR-Zuordnungsbericht/OEsterreichischer_EQR_Zuordnungsbericht.pdf

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[7] On the website of the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture there are many more statements of the individual expert groups. This is stated as an example. See source: http://www.bmukk.gv.at/europa/eubildung/nqr/nqr_sn.xml#toc3-id3

School types and certification related to EQF levels 3, 4 and 5

The table below will list school types and certifications obtained falling into the levels 3 to 5. Please note that the levels 6 to 8 of the EQF mostly correlate to studies within the tertiary education sector and are not subject to this report. There may be some short term studies that apply to level 5. The NQF levels stated on the right are based on data stated in the documents from the table above.

School types and certification related to EQF levels based on official consolidation processes and results; see sources specified in the table above

School type (in German)	Description	Comments	Certification	NQF level
Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schule	Secondary academic high-school – grades 5 to 12	General pre-academic education	High-school diploma Enables graduates to attend university	5[8]
Polytechnische Schule	Polytechnical school – grade 9	Mostly to finish obligatory schooling; often before starting an apprenticeship	Final certificate of completion – permits scholar to assist BMS or apprenticeship	2-3[9]

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[8] Some experts refer these graduates to level 4. They argue that knowledge and skills may correspond to 5 but competence much rather is to be related to level 4.
[9] Certain expertes rate this type of school level 2; nevertheless some experts found that it corresponds to level 3.

School type (in German)	Description	Comments	Certification	NQF level
Berufsbildende Höhere Schule	5 years - Vocational education and training (VET) colleges	There are various branches e.g. in the field of commerce, technical, tourism etc. These colleges can also be done part-time or post-secondary study in a condensed form ("Kolleg")	High-school diploma with specialization in any of the named branches (see comments) Enables graduates to take up certain professions and to attend university.	5
Berufsbildende Mittlere Schule	Vocational education and training schools 3 to 4 years	As above these schools exist in various branches and forms.	Certificate of completion – enables graduates to take up certain professions	2-3[10]
Lehre	Apprenticeship – includes attendance of 2-3 years of accompanying vocational training	Dual-education system	Apprenticeship completion certificate	4
Meisterschule	College to become a master within a trade	These are non-academic "masters" and are to be found within many different branches.	Master's certificate	5

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[10] Similar to the Polytechnical School there are split opinions among the experts weather this corresponds level 2 or 3.

National legal requirements in VET area and characteristics of policy makers

In Austria the institutional framework for Vocational Educational Training needs to be divided in in INITIAL VET (IVET) and COUNTINUOUS VET (CVET). Rules and regulations are different for each of these areas. Generally speaking the IVET is rather clearly regulated in legal terms, however the area of CVET is not regulated by any specific law.

Find the regulations and responsibilities for IVET in the next chapter which outlines the institutional framework. In the following paragraphs the legal situation regarding CVET is being described.

Specifications regarding CVET

Regarding CVET there is one framework called the **"Financing Act on the financing of adult education and public libraries from public funds[11]"**. This act was issued 03/1973. Rules and regulations are mainly described through various **school, university, tax and labour market laws**.

The Adult Education Promotion Act is the basis for authorisation of the Federal Governments to promote Continuing Education and Training (e.g. through subsidising institutions or financing innovative projects). Neither the amount of subsidisation nor any organisational specifications for CVET are provided by law. The Federal Government also does not interfere with the programme or curriculum design in this field. The legal framework demands however that activities of funded institutions are non-profit oriented. With the purpose of maintaining associations' independence, the provider of funds does have no competence in imposing conditions regarding the methods or staff to be employed.

There are also non-mandatory collective bargaining agreements between representatives of the Austrian Federal Economic Chambers and trade unions that contain references on CVET within the framework of employment relationships.

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[11] Also refered to as „Adult Education Promotion Act" in German *„Erwachsenenbildungs-Förderungsgesetz",* Abbreviation *„EB-FG",* to be found in the Federal Act *„BGBl. No. 171/1973"*

The following table includes a list of legal papers regulating the area of VET.

No.	Name of document	Date of publishing[12]	Authority that issued the document (e.g Ministry, District, local self-governments, etc.)	Level of VET to which the document applies	Summary of the content	Link to the document
1	Austrian Federal Constitution	1.10. 1920	Federal Government	IVET	General regulation for VET in Austria	Specific queries can be made here http://www.ris.bka.gv.at
2	Law for Vocational Education Training *"Berufsausbildungsgesetz (BAG)"*	26.03.1969	Federal Government	IVET (Dual VET)	Regulates the dual vocational educational training in Austria	http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/ GeltendeFassung.wxe? Abfrage=Bundesnormen &Gesetzesnummer= 10006276
3	Law for school education *"Schulunterrichtsgesetz (SchUG)"*	1986 (not specified);	Federal Government	IVET	Federal law to regulate education in schools regulated by the law for school organization *"Schulorganisationsgesetz (SchOG)"*	http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/ GeltendeFassung.wxe? Abfrage=Bundesnormen &Gesetzesnummer= 10009600
4	Law for school organization *"Schulorganisationsgesetz (SchOG)"*	25.07.1962	Federal Government	IVET	Federal law to regulate the organisation of schools	http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/ GeltendeFassung.wxe? Abfrage=Bundesnormen &Gesetzesnummer= 10009265
5	Law for school-itinaries *„Schulzeitengesetz"*	1985	Federal Government	IVET	Federal law to regulate the organisation of itineraries.	http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/ GeltendeFassung.wxe? Abfrage=Bundesnormen &Gesetzesnummer= 10009575

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[12] Stated in this table is the initial publishing. In most cases these laws are followed by amendments or changes.

No.	Name of document	Date of publishing[12]	Authority that issued the document (e.g Ministry, District, local self-governments, etc.)	Level of VET to which the document applies	Summary of the content	Link to the document
	Further links for Federal laws in the realm of schools (IVET)			*IVET*	*Various links to laws in relation to the school system*	*http://www.bmukk.gv.at/ schulen/recht/index.xml*
6	Adult Education Promotion Act „*Erwachsenenbildungs-Förderungsgesetz (EB-FG)*"	21.03.1973	Federal Government	CET/CVET	Regulates subsidies of CVET and public libraries	http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/ Dokumente/BgblPdf/ 1973_171_0/1973 _171_0.pdf
7	Law for the organisation of university colleges in education "*Hochschulgesetz (HG)*"	2005	Federal Government	IVET (and CVET)	Regulates the organisation of the university colleges for education	http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/ GeltendeFassung.wxe? Abfrage=Bundesnormen& Gesetzesnummer= 20004626
8	Law for universities "*Universitätsgesetz (UG)*"	2002	Federal Government	IVET – tertiary level	Regulates the organisation of universities, programmes and curriculums	http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/ GeltendeFassung.wxe? Abfrage=Bundesnormen& Gesetzesnummer= 20002128
9	Law for the Austrian Employment Service Office	1994	Federal Government	Labour market CVET	Law for labour market services which also includes CVET activities	http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/ GeltendeFassung.wxe? Abfrage=Bundesnormen& Gesetzesnummer= 10008905& ShowPrintPreview=True
10	Law for agriculture "*Landwirtschaftsgesetz (LWG)*"	1992	Federal Government	IVET	This law regulates the agricultural area. It is stated here because it contains some VET related notes within this field.	http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/ GeltendeFassung.wxe? Abfrage=Bundesnormen& Gesetzesnummer= 10010681

No.	Name of document	Date of publishing[12]	Authority that issued the document (e.g Ministry, District, local self-governments, etc.)	Level of VET to which the document applies	Summary of the content	Link to the document
11	Law for chambers of commerce	24.07.1946	Federal Government	IVET	This law regulates the institution of the chambers of commerce with are involved in VET in certain areas	http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/BgblPdf/1946_182_0/1946_182_0.pdf
12	Law for documentation of education	2002	Federal Government	IVET	Regulates the documentation in education	http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20001727

Institutional Framework for VET

This chapter contains the description of the institutional framework of IVET and CVET in Austria. IVET is divided into school-based VET at upper secondary level, Dual VET (apprenticeship) at upper secondary level, Post-secondary non-tertiary VET and tertiary VET. The institutional frameworks, their responsibilities in terms of policy making, management and administration are described on national and regional level.[13]

Institutional Framework for IVET

The Austrian Federal Constitution (*Bundesverfassung*) is the legal basis for the IVET framework. The competences in VET are shared by various **national and regional institutions.** See the entities and their responsibilities in legal terms and responsibilities listed below:

School-based VET at the upper secondary level

National level

a) **The Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture** (*Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur, BMUKK*)
- supreme supervisory authority for the entire primary and secondary school sector (includes general education and VET schools)
- elaboration of important school-related acts
- maintenance of schools
- preparation of framework curricula
- payment of teachers
- in-service education and training of teachers
- execution of legal regulations (by regional education boards [*Landesschulräte*]).

b) **The Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management** (*Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Umwelt und Wasserwirtschaft, BMLFUW*)
- construction and maintenance of colleges of agriculture and forestry
- selection and payment of teachers.
- costs for teaching staff at schools of agriculture and forestry (shared with provinces)

c) **The Federal Ministry for Health** (*Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, BMG*
- creating the legal bases for programmes for non-medical healthcare professions (e.g. healthcare and nursing occupations, advanced-level medico-technical services, etc.)

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[13] Source of information is the „VET in Europe Country Report Austria" by Sabine Tritscher-Archan and Sabine Nowak, Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft (ibw), issued 2011, p. 25-30, http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_AT.pdf

- elaboration of teaching content, scope, conditions of practical training, examinations and the specification of teaching staff.

d) The **social partners**

- commenting on drafts of school-related acts, curricula and other regulations.

Regional level

a) **Regional education board** (*Landesschulrat*)

- school supervision through regional school inspectors with individual responsibility for a specific school types.
- submission of proposals for appointing principals/head teachers on behalf of BMUKK by the Board.
- issue statements on draft legislation and draft regulations (e.g. on curricula) and adopt regionally applicable provisions (Board's task)

b) **Federal provinces**

- construction and maintenance of schools of agriculture and forestry
- cover 50% of personnel costs for teachers (cost sharing between the federal government and regional government

c) **Provincial governments**

- Taking care of maintenance and construction of educational institutions in the field of nonmedical healthcare professions on behalf of the federal government.

Dual VET (apprenticeship) at upper secondary level

National level

a) **The Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth** (*Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft, Familie und Jugend, BMWFJ*)

- company-based training
- elaborates the Vocational Training Act (*Berufsausbildungsgesetz*, BAG)
- adopts the training regulations for the individual apprenticeship occupations for the company-based part of training in agriculture and forestry

b) The **Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture**

- school-based part of training (e.g. the elaboration of draft legislation, the preparation of framework curricula)
- payment of teachers are shared with the federal provinces
- school-based part of training in agriculture and forestry falls under the responsibility of the Federal Governments.

c) The **Federal Advisory Board on Apprenticeship** (*Bundesberufsausbildungsbeirat, BBAB*) which is a body that consists of representatives of social partners and part-time vocational schools

- submits proposals in the form of expert opinions, e.g. about the introduction of new or modernisation of existing apprenticeships, to the Ministry of the Economy.

Regional level

a) **Apprenticeship offices** (*Lehrlingsstellen*) for engineering, industry and trade are located at the Economic Chambers
   - administration of apprenticeship training (examination of the training companies' suitability jointly with representatives of the Chamber of Labour, the recording of apprenticeship contracts, the organisation of apprenticeship-leave examinations, etc.).

b) **Regional Advisory Boards on Apprenticeship** (*Landesberufsausbildungsbeirat, LBABs*) which consists of representatives of social partners and part-time vocational schools. They are appointed by the provincial governors.
   - elaborate proposals and suggestions on apprenticeship training in the respective province

c) **Regional education board** (*Landesschulrat*)
   - School supervision executed by regional school inspectors.

d) **Federal provinces**
   - construction and maintenance of part-time vocational schools (*Berufschule*)
   - 50% of personnel costs

e) **Apprenticeship bodies and specialist training offices for agriculture and forestry** which are located at the Chambers of Agriculture in the respective federal provinces
   - company-based part of training in agriculture and forestry
   - same tasks as the apprenticeship offices in the field of engineering, industry and trade

f) **Federal provinces**
   - construction and maintenance of schools of agriculture and forestry
   - 50% of personnel costs for teachers

Post-secondary non-tertiary VET

In the field of school-based VET the institutional framework for post-secondary (non-tertiary) programmes is the same as at upper secondary level (as described above). Further responsibilities are listed with the entities below.

Tertiary VET

a) **Fachhochschule[14] Councils**
   - external quality management (accreditation and evaluation) of Fachhochschule institutions (FHs).
   - The **Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture**

b) The **Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture**
   - Carry the major part of the costs of study places (remainder is paid by the provider

c) **Fachhochschule providers** which for example are municipalities, federal provinces, social partners who offer Fachhochschul study programmes
   - their installation and maintenance

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[14] Type of University with a school-like curriculum. Abbreviation is "FH"

d) **Development teams** which are set up by Fachhochschule providers
- develop the study programmes and study plans

e) **Social partner institutions**
- deliver their opinions and feedback on study plans (voluntary)

f) **Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture**
- Design framework curricula for the programmes for **university colleges of education**[15]

g) **Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture and provincial governments**
- payment of teaching staff. The cost for teachers at university colleges of education for agriculture and forestry is carried by the Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (*BMLFUW*).

Institutional Framework for CVET

The institutional responsibilities in CVET are broadly spread among various institutions. The institutions involved and their responsibilities are listed below:

a) **Provincial governments and municipalities** (apart from Federal Government)
- promote CVET in private and non-profit CVET institutions

b) the **Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture**
- CVET provided at schools and higher education (HE) institutions (unless it is within the autonomy of the HE institution). For example Fachhochschule providers are also entitled to install courses for CET in the specialist branches of the FH programmes accredited at their institution.

c) **The Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management** and the **Federal Ministry for Health** (and other ministries e.g. Health)
- subject related rules and regulations depending on the type and subject of CVET

d) **The Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection** (BMASK)
- CVET and CET of older workers and people with disabilities
- labour market-related skills training and qualification measures provided by Public Employment Service Austria[16]

e) **Social partners** such as the Economic Promotion Institute (*Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut, WIFI*) on the employers' side, the Vocational Training Institute (*Berufsförderungsinstitut, bfi*) on the employees' side and the *Laendliches Fortbildungsinstitut* (*LFI*) of the Austrian Chambers of Agriculture
- CET provision outside schools and higher education institutions

f) **The Federal Ministry of Finance** (*Bundesministerium für Finanzen, BMF*)
- For tax-related issues

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[15] „Pädagogische Hochschulen"; abbreviation „PH"
[16] In German *„Arbeitsmarktservice"*; abbreviation: *"AMS"*

National education level - quantitative data

The following charts and tables will provide an overview of the national educational levels and important key figures.

The graph below displays the amount of people between 24 and 64 years regarding their educational level. The data derives from 2009 and was issued by *Statistik Austria* in 2011.
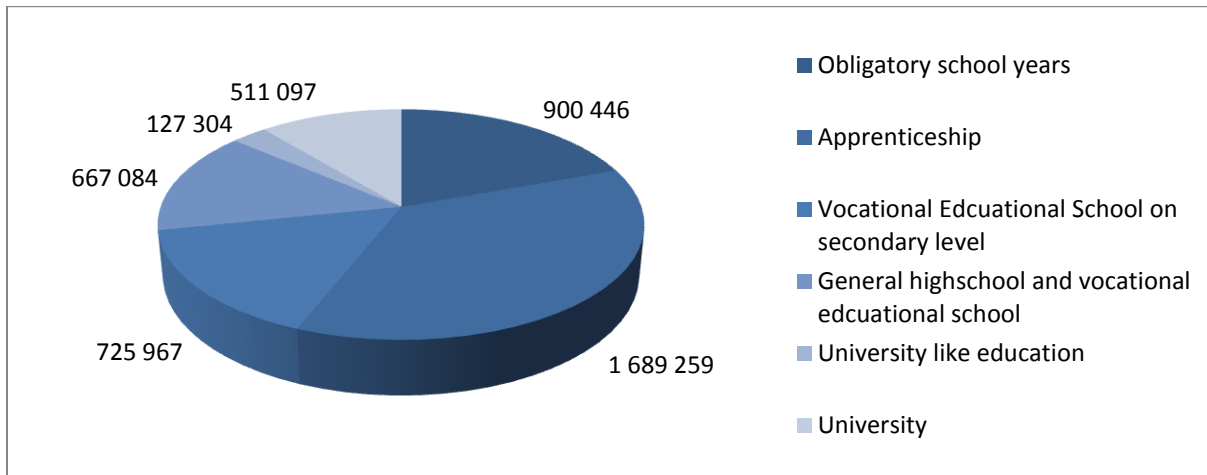
Educational level of Austrians 25-64 years old (2009), Source: Statistik Austria, 2011

The next table displays the percentage of men and women between 25 and 64 years old in each educational area. As above the data is from 2009 and was published by *Statistik Austria* in 2011.
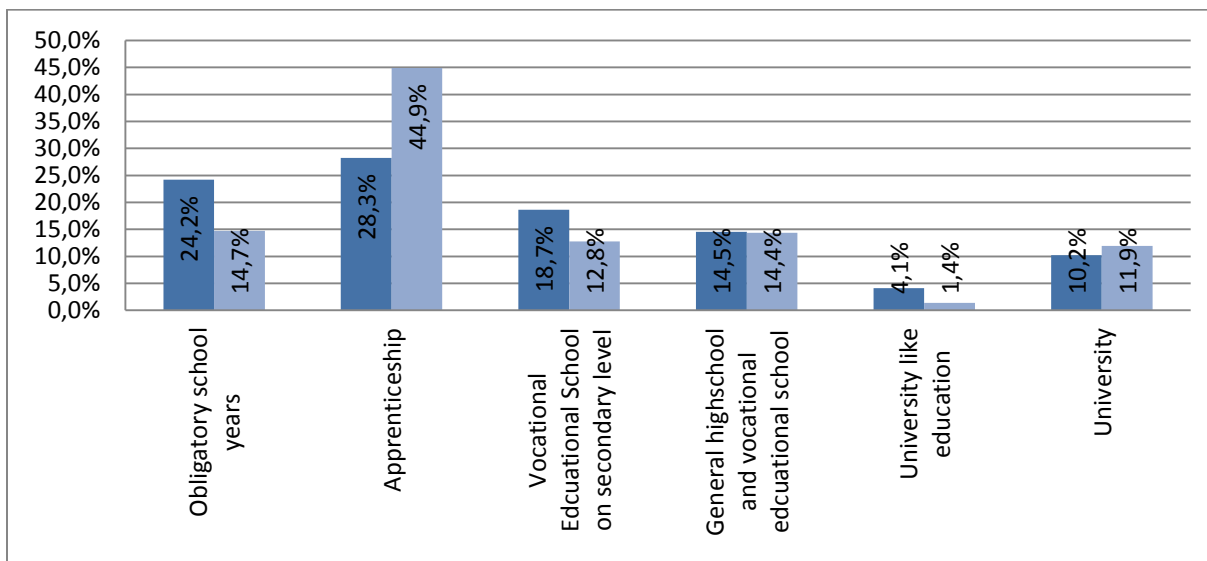
Percentage of men/women and educational level, 25-64 years old (2009), Source: Statistik Austria, 2011

Below find a table that shows the amount of schools, classes by type of school from the school year 2010/2011.

Type of school[1]	Austria, total			
	Schools	Classes	Students	
			all	females
Total for all types of schools (incl. statutes)	5,900	56,529	1,144,080	549,731
All mainstream schools	5,742	55,544	1,126,983	539,651
General schools (incl. statutes)	5,171	41,118	797,186	391,414
General schools	5,071	40,484	787,384	386,599
Compulsory schools	4,730	30,274	552,318	261,893
Primary schools	3,171	17,956	327,663	158,549
Lower secondary schools	1,158	9,611	192,616	91,655
Special (SEN) schools and classes	321	1,797	13,198	4,701
Pre-vocational schools	255	910	18,841	6,988
New secondary schools	323	1,658	34,324	16,189
Academic secondary schools, total	340	8,552	200,742	108,517
Academic secondary schools, lower level	272	4,578	112,330	58,254
Academic secondary schools, upper level (all sub-types)	338	3,974	88,412	50,263
Other general schools (statutes)	119	634	9,802	4,815
Technical and vocational schools & colleges (incl. statutes)	693	14,861	332,872	147,304
Technical and vocational schools & colleges	635	14,510	325,577	142,039
Vocational schools for apprentices, total	158	6,711	137,881	47,516
Intermediate & higher techn. and voc. S&C (incl. statutes)	536	8,150	194,991	99,788
Crafts, technical and arts schools and colleges	171	3,319	78,774	20,087
Technical and crafts (in a narrower sense)	126	2,601	61,045	7,424
Schools and colleges of clothing	16	144	3,161	3,051
Schools and colleges of tourism	27	423	10,778	6,883
Schools and colleges of arts and crafts	17	151	3,790	2,729
Schools and colleges of business administration	120	2,308	54,443	32,389
S&C of management and the service industries	109	1,521	37,078	32,965
Schools and colleges for social professions	58	330	7,344	5,979
Schools and colleges for agriculture and forestry	108	663	17,211	8,245
Schools and colleges for other scopes	3	9	141	123
Intermediate technical and vocational schools, total	420	2,197	50,094	24,270
Higher technical and vocational colleges, total	306	5,602	137,602	70,253
Other technical and vocational schools (statutes)	69	351	7,295	5,265
Institutions for teacher training, total	38	550	14,022	11,013
Intermediate schools for teacher training	4	152	3,535	1,074
Higher colleges for teacher training	34	398	10,487	9,939 [17]

Schools, classes and students by type of school; School year 2010/2011; Source: Statistik Austria, Educationa documentation 2011

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[17] **Additional comments and explanations regarding the table:**
In a narrower sense – without schools & colleges of clothing tourism and arts and crafts.
statutes – schools with a statute of their own.
S&C – Schools and colleges
1 Schools for the medical services are not included
Schools offering several types of schooling are counted only once in sum rows

	2010/11		2009/10		2000/01	
	All	of which females %	All	of which females %	All	of which females %
Children in kindergartens[1]	217,709	49.1	213,997	49.0	208,930	49.1
Children in 1st classes of primary schools	81,488	48.4	81,561	48.1	97,040	48.4
Students in grade 9	97,873	50.5	96,954	50.7	94,134	51.2
Students in graduation (Matura) classes of secondary schools[2]	45,834	56.8	45,367	56.6	39,302	56.7
of which in VET courses	1,828	77.5	1,679	76.2	1,482	69.9
New entrants at University Colleges of Teacher Education[3,4]	4,811	77.3	4,283	76.4	3,175	76.3
New entrants at universities and Fachhochschulen[5]	60,504	53.7	60,113	53.5	34,481	53.5
Students at University Colleges of Teacher Education[3,6]	11,400	77.4	9,521	78.0	7,506	77.1
Students at universities and Fachhochschulen[6]	308,895	52.9	297,475	52.8	239,691	50.2
Graduates from University Colleges of Teacher Education[3,7]	1,744	81.8	2,257	83.6	1,657	79.0
Graduates from universities and Fachhochschulen[7]	30,732	55.5	30,142	55.0	17,051	49.4
Births[8]	78,742	48.8	76,344	48.8	78,268	48.7
Resident population[8]	8,387,742	51.3	8,363,040	51.3	8,011,566	51.6
Resident population with completed secondary education[8,9]	5,239,900	47.8	5,176,800	47.6	4,566,800	46.8
Proportion *in* % of age cohort						
Children in kindergartens[1]	90.7	91.0	88.5	89.5	77.6	n.a.
Graduates from (upper) secondary schools[10]	42.9	49.3	43.2	49.4	38.3	43.9
Resident population with completed secondary education[8,9,11]	83.8	79.3	83.3	78.4	77.4	71.1
Proportion of higher education graduates[8,9,12]	16.8	18.1	16.4	17.9	8.1	7.2

1 Children aged 3 to 5 years (age as at September 1) in public and private nurseries, kindergartens, day-homes and mixed-age child care institutions.
2 Students in graduation classes of secondary schools with Matura school leaving certificate (higher education entrance qualification), school year; including VET courses.
3 2000/01: post-secondary colleges for teacher training.
4 2010/11: winter term; 2009/10 and 2000/01: academic year.
5 New entrants in university degree programmes, Fachhochschule degree programmes and at private universities; respective academic year.
6 Total of all students in degree programmes; winter terms.
7 First degrees of students (diploma, bachelor); respective academic year.
8 Calendar years 2010, 2009 and 2000; births: live births; resident population: annual average.
9 Microcensus annual average.
10 As 2, without VET courses, in relation to the average of the corresponding age group (arithmetic mean of the 18 to 19 year old resident population).
11 Proportion of persons aged 25 to 64 years with at least completed secondary education in relation to the resident population of the same age group.
12 Proportion of persons aged 25 to 64 years with completed higher education or equivalent study programmes (Universities, Fachhochschul courses, other HE institutions, from 2008 including University Colleges of Teacher Education) in relation to the labour force of the same age group.

n.a. – Not available.

Key data on educattion and population statistics, 2000/1, 2009/10 and 2010/11, Source: Statistik Austria,
http://www.statistik.at/web_en/statistics/education_culture/formal_education/teaching_staff/index.html

The last two tables in this chapter will reflect the graduates on ISCED levels 3 and 4 as well as 5 and 6.

	2009					
	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC
M	12.3	18.9	52.7	-	-	16.2
F	18.6	13.0	41.1	-	-	27.3
T	15.3	16.0	47	-	-	21.6
	2009					
	5A1	5A2	5B1	5B2	6	
M	55.8	16.0	23.9	-	5.2	
F	66.2	11.0	19.2	-	3.6	
T	61.3	12.9	21.4	-	4.4	

Percentage of graduates on ISCED levels between 3 and 6 in the year 2009
Source: VET in Europe - Country Report Austria, Sabine Tritscher-Archang, Sabine Nowak, Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft (ibw), 2011, http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011

18

To conclude the provision of quantitative data and in order to draw a comprehensive picture of the situation we would like to add additional information about youth education attainment and adult participation in lifelong learning.

The youth education attainment in Austria rated 86.0% in 2009. This is 7.4 points above the European average (EU-27 = 78.6%).[19] The percentage of adults participating in lifelong learning is 13.8 per cent. This is also higher than the EU-27 average of 9.3 per cent. In both cases more women are active in education than men.

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[18] Additional explanations regarding the table:
Figures are stated in per cent.
M = male, F = female, GEN = general education, PV = pre-vocational education, VOC = Vocational education and training , 5A1 = tertiary sector A/HE/first degree, 5A2 = tertiary sector A/HE/second degree, 5B1 = tertiary sector B (in A e.g. post-secondary VET college (*Akademie*), post-secondary VET course (*Kolleg*), university college of education (*Pädagogische Hochschule*), part-time industrial master college (*Werkmeisterschule*)), /1st qualification, 5B2 = tertiary sector B/2nd qualification, 6 = tertiary sector/HE/advanced
research-oriented programmes e.g. doctorate
[19] Source: Eurostat, May 2010

Quality assurance system for each level

In the chapters "National Legal Requirements" and "Institutional Frameworks for VET", there has already been clarification to some extend regarding the responsibilities which can also be linked to quality assurance. We could not recognise level specific quality assurance measures. However we could identify some important entities, methods, characteristics and standards.
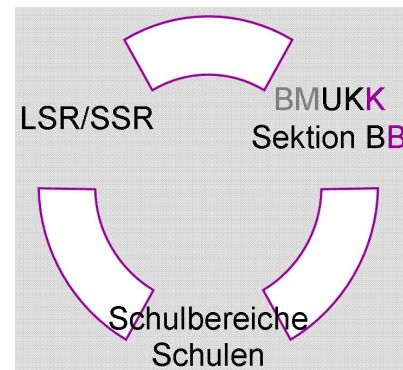
Quality-Initiative for Vocational Training[20].

A leading body regarding quality assurance measures in the EQF levels 3, 4 and 5 is the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture. This is apparent since most of the responsibilities regarding legislation, administration etc. for IVET is on behalf of this ministry (see chapter "Institutional Framework for IVET", p. 45).

The department responsible for Vocational Education within the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture is in charge of the Quality-Initiative for Vocational Training. The purpose of this initiative is the systemic quality assurance and improvement regarding the education and administration services in this sector.

The parties involved in the initiative are:

- Department for Vocational Education from the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture (read in graph: "BMUKK Sektion BB")
- School supervisory Institutions (read in graph "LSR = Landesschulrat" and "SSR = Stadtschulrat) on the provincial level and
- The schools directly; involving all areas (read in graph "Schulbereiche/Schulen")

Entities involved in the Quality-Initiative for Vocational Training (source: https://www.qibb.at/de/ueber_qibb.html)

The project handbook[21] of QIBB provides an outline of the project and explains structure, content and processes in a detailed manner. A major goal of tQIBB is the definition of standards throughout the project.

These standards may be:

- standards applicable to all school-types OR
- school-type specific standards e.g. economic, technically oriented, human-sciences etc.

The structural model in order to reach the final results within the QIBB-project is described in the following three steps:

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[20] German: *"Qualitätsinitiative Berufsbildung (QIBB)"*, see www.qibb.at
[21] See http://www.bildungsstandards.berufsbildendeschulen.at/fileadmin/content/bbs/Handbuch_BIST_18.12.2012.pdf

1. Establishing of competence model
2. Definition of descriptors (based on NQF/EQF)
3. Practical examples in educational context

White Book for Quality Development and Quality Assurance

Prior to the present quality initiative described above the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture[22] had issued a "White Book for Quality Development and Quality Assurance in the Austrian System of Education"[23]. The elaboration and publishing of this document was an answer to the already growing significance of high-quality education. In the preamble of the document it is said that *"Austria is experiencing a shift of priorities from central input control to process and, in particular, output control."*[24]

The referred document was elaborated as a reference point for discussion amongst experts and stakeholders in vocational training. In this book there are valuable thoughts and inputs regarding the main topic (Quality assurance and development) contained. It approaches the issue taking into account: educational contents, statistics, administration, regional dimensions (provincial, federal, European context), involved parties, surroundings etc.

The chapters are:

- Overview of quality development and quality assurance
- Quality in teaching
- Quality development and quality assurance at school level
- Quality development and quality assurance at the higher levels
- The changing educational profession
- The quality environment
- Implementing strategies

Realisation of selected quality strategies

The QIBB initiative mentioned above and the white book evidence very well, that quality assurance within the realm of vocational education has been an on-going issue and is deservedly receiving this attention. The importance shift from input control to process and result improvement is evidently taking place. In the National Report on Education in Austria from the year 2009 there is a chapter dedicated to the quality development and assurance in the past 15 years[25].

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[22] Later transformed into the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture
[23] To be found here: http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/10094/whitebook_quality.pdf, Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture, 2003
[24] See page 1 of document stated in footnote above.
[25] „past 15 years" refers to the 15 years prior to publishing (2009) of this report;
„Nationaler Bildungsbericht Österreich 2009", see https://www.bifie.at/system/files/buch/pdf/2009-06-16_NBB-Band2.pdf -
See also: https://www.bifie.at/buch/1024/c/1

The strategies described as being realised are:

- Location-based profiling of individual schools
- System-monitoring

These are briefly described below:

Location-based profiling of individual schools

This means the promotion of flexibility regarding the legal framework, particularly the educational directive[26] for schools. This way individual schools are enabled to modify and steer (to a certain extend) the selection of subjects and adopt their educational offer to the needs and interests.

Schools may decide on a specific topic or host individual classes with a focus area. The increase in quality is perceived in educational and social processes due to the higher motivation and identification with the school or its content. The negative effect being observed is that schools become competitive trying to win the most scholars.

System-monitoring (educational standards)

The continuous data collection and hereby the monitoring of the system is one approach to quality assurance in vocational education. The purpose of this system would be to identify indicators in order timely detect and swiftly be able to react crises or bad state of affairs.

The system monitoring is thought to be based on 4 pillars:

- Statistics regarding education[27]
- Standardised measuring of scholar's performance (e.g. programmes implemented in Austria: COMPED – Computers in Education, TIMSS – third International Mathematics and Science Study, PISA – Programme for International Student Assessment)[28]
- Questioning of school partners and
- Questioning of the public[29]

A systematic analysis of the effects of system-monitoring in Austria could not be found. However there are many studies, pilot projects and initiatives. The approach to be seen as most promising is the "revision of educational standards" as already taken up by QIBB (see above).

ARQA-VET - Austrian Reference Point for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training

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[26] = „Lehrplan"; It regulates learning contents and curriculum.
[27] Legally based on the „Bildungsdokumentationsgesetz", published 2002; see:
http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20001727
[28] Austria participates in TALIS (Teaching and Learning International Survey) which means also involving teachers in system monitoring.
[29] The last two are being done regularly in Austria since 2003 through market research insitutes.

At last this body founded in 2007 by the OeAD-GmbH, the Austrian Agency for International Co-operation in Education and Research, is to be mentioned in this context. The purpose of this service institutions is to provide services and know-how in the fields of quality assurance and quality development. Furthermore it wants to cross-link involved stakeholders and to play an active role as a mediator from and to the European level.

These are the activities as defined by their mission statement[30]:

- Information of the national stakeholders (these are the actors in vocational education, e.g. educational institutions, social partners and companies as well as those in vocational further education and training) about the activities of the European network and vice versa.

- Active support of the implementation of the work programme of ENQA-VET.

- Development of specific measures to support quality assurance and quality development in the field of vocational education and training.

- Awareness-raising amongst stakeholders concerning the advantages of the application of the principles, methods and tools of quality assurance.

- Operational support of section II Vocational Education and Training of the Federal Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture in the implementation of QIBB (Quality Initiative Vocational Education) and the national and European activities of ENQA-VET

Quality and education

ARQA-VET presents in its documentation various Quality Management Concepts - coming from the industrial realm that can be applied to institutions offering education. Specifically interesting within the context of applied quality management in education may be the the following models (in addtion to QIBB, which has been explained above):

- „Learner-oriented quality testing in further education (LQW)" [31] and „Learner-oriented quality testing for schools (LQS)"[32]

- ISO-Standards for education and educational instititutions[33] specifically:

  o ISO 29990 - for processes and training institutes and

  o ISO 17024 - for trainers

- Swiss certificate for institutions of further education - EDUQUA[34]

- Quality seals for educational institutions on regional levels in Austria; e.g.:

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[30] See the self-concept and activity profile of ARQA-VET: http://www.arqa-vet.at/arqa_vet/what_we_do//EN/
[31] German abbreviation for „Lernerorientierte Qualitätstestierung in der Weiterbildung"; see http://www.artset-lqw.de/
[32] German abbreviation for „Lernerorientierte Qualitätstestierung für Schulen"; see http://www.artset-lqs.de/
[33] See http://www.iso.org/iso/home/search.htm?qt=education&published=on&active_tab=standards&sort_by=rel for more.
[34] see http://www.eduqua.ch/002alc_00_en.htm

- o „CERT" in lower Austria [35]
- o „EQBS" in Upper Austria[36]

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[35] see http://www.certnoe.at/
[36] see http://www.ibe.co.at/ebqs.html

Identification of target group for EXPANDVET project - types of VET providers

See point 2 of structure(referring to level 3, 4 and 5) and match them with the types in the benchmarking tools, so to:

• Lower Secondary vocational education and training

School type (in German)	Description	Comments	Certification	NQF level
Polytechnische Schule	Polytechnical school – grade 9	Mostly to finish obligatory schooling; often before starting an apprenticeship	Final certificate of completion – permits scholar to assist BMS or apprenticeship	2-3[37]

• Upper Secondary vocational education and training

School type (in German)	Description	Comments	Certification	NQF level
Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schule	Secondary academic high-school – grades 5 to 12	General pre-academic education	High-school diploma Enables graduates to attend university	5[38]

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[37] Certain expertes rate this type of school level 2; nevertheless some experts found that it corresponds to level 3.
[38] Some experts refer these graduates to level 4. They argue that knowledge and skills may correspond to 5 but competence much rather is to be related to level 4.

- Post Secondary non-tertiary vocational education and training

School type (in German)	Description	Comments	Certification	NQF level
Berufsbildende Höhere Schule	5 years - Vocational education and training (VET) colleges	There are various branches e.g. in the field of commerce, technical, tourism etc. These colleges can also be done part-time or post-secondary study in a condensed form ("Kolleg")	High-school diploma with specialization in any of the named branches (see comments) Enables graduates to take up certain professions and to attend university.	5

- Higher vocational education

School type (in German)	Description	Comments	Certification	NQF level
Meisterschule	College to become a master within a trade	These are non-academic "masters" and are to be found within many different branches.	Master's certificate	5

- Further education and training

School type (in German)	Description	Comments	Certification	NQF level
Berufsbildende Mittlere Schule	Vocational education and training schools 3 to 4 years	As above these schools exist in various branches and forms.	Certificate of completion – enables graduates to take up certain professions	2-3[39]

- Apprenticeship training

School type (in German)	Description	Comments	Certification	NQF level
Lehre	Apprenticeship – includes attendance of 2-3 years of accompanying vocational training	Dual-education system	Apprenticeship completion certificate	4

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[39] Similar to the Polytechnical School there are split opinions among the experts weather this corresponds level 2 or 3.

Part 2 – Austria. National Report – References

Links

Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture	http://www.bmukk.gv.at
OeAD – Austrian Agency for International cooperation in Education and Research	http://www.oead.at
Quality-Initiative for Vocational Training	http://www.qibb.at
Federal Institute for Educational Research, Innovation and Development of the Austrian School-system	https://www.bifie.at
Austrian Reference Point for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training	http://www.arqa-vet.at/home
Project: EQF Referencing Process - Examples and Proposals	http://www.eqf-ref.eu/
Educational standards for vocational educational institutions	http://www.bildungsstandards. berufsbildendeschulen.at
Research Institute for Vocational Training and Adult Education at the Johannes Kepler University Linz	http://www.ibe.co.at/englisch
Certifier for Educational providers in Lower Austria	http://www.certnoe.at

Other literature

1. Tritscher-Archan, Sabine and Nowak, Sabine (eds.) (2011): *VET in Europe. Country Report Austria. Report within the Framework of ReferNet Austria.* Vienna, Austria. ibw – Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft
2. Various Authors, editing by Ursula Fritz. (2012): *Bildungsstandards in der Berufsbildung – Projekthandbuch*. Vienna, Austria. Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture
3. CEDEFOP; (2009): *The relationship between quality assurance and VET certification in EU Member States.* Luxembourg. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities
4. Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture; (2009): *Schlussfolgerungen, Grundsatzentscheidungen und Maßnahmen nach Abschluss des NQR Konsultationsverfahrens.* Vienna, Austria.
5. Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture; (2008): *Bericht der Expertengruppe - Konsolidierung der Stellungnahmen zum Konsultationspapier zum österreichischen Nationalen QualifikationsRahmen(NQR).* Vienna, Austria.
6. Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture; (2011): *Österreichischer EQR-Zuordnungsbericht.* Vienna, Austria.
7. Coles, Mike and others, (2011): *Referencing National Qualification Levels to the EQF - European Qualifications Framework Series: Note 3*. Luxembourg. Publications Office of the European Union.

8. Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture; (year not specified): *White Book - Quality Development and Quality Assurance in the Austrian System of Education.* Vienna, Austria.

Part 3 - Lithuania National Report

Description of general structure of national education level

The following graph provides an overview of the national education system in Lithuania.
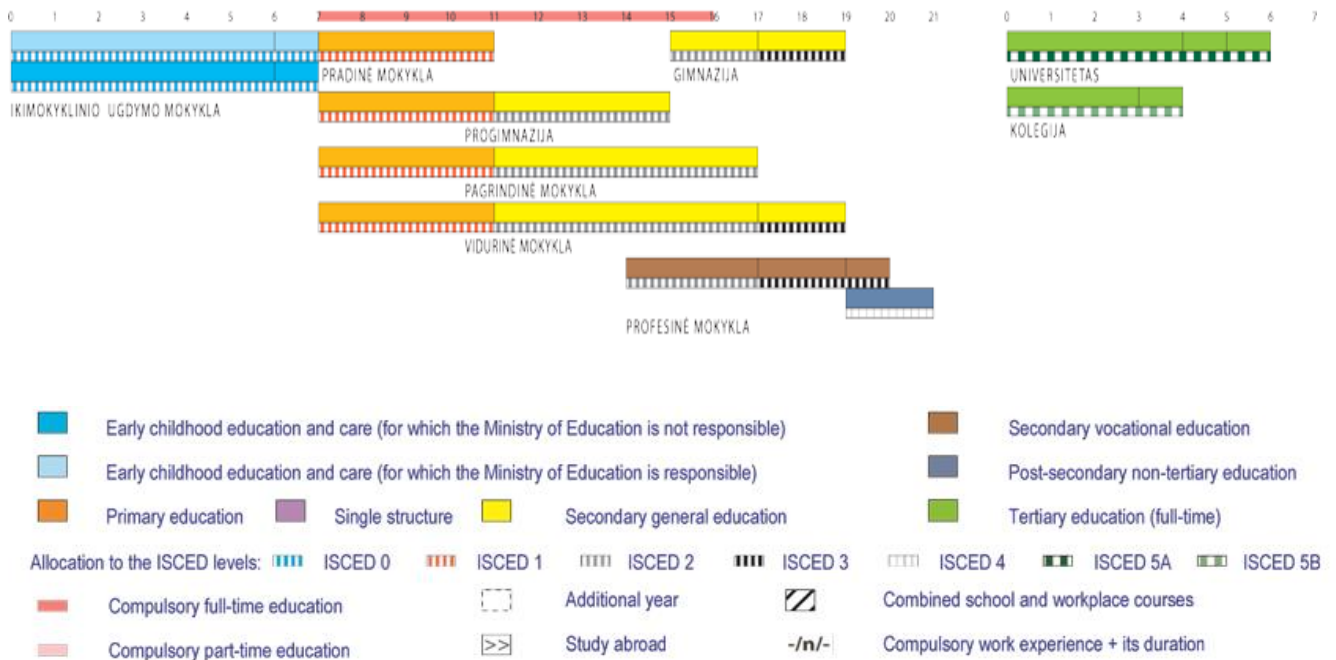
General structure of the Lithuanian education levels. Source:
https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Lithuania:Overview)

Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania , new edition of which was approved by the Seimas on 17 March 2011, distinguishes three education sectors where state recognized certificates or diplomas are issued[40]:

> • general education that covers primary, basic, and secondary education;
>
> • vocational education and training;
>
> • higher education.

General education

- ### *Primary education*

    The goal of the primary education is to educate an active and creative child, who has acquired the fundamentals of elementary literacy, social, cognitive, informational, activity abilities and common values, and is ready to further learning according to basic education programmes. The duration of the initial education programme is 4 years.

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[40] Referencing the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area. National Report of Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre, 2012

- ***Basic education.*** The purpose of basic education is to provide an individual with the basics of moral, socio-cultural and civic maturity, general literacy and the basics of technological literacy, to foster the intent to continue learning, etc. It is a six-year curriculum. The basic education curriculum consists of two education content concentres, i.e. concentre I for grades 5–8 and concentre II for grades 9–10. At his level Youth schools provide basic education and pre-vocational training. Basic education can also be carried out at a vocational school.

- ***Secondary education.*** The purpose of the curriculum of secondary education is to assist a person in the acquisition of general academic, socio-cultural and technological literacy, moral, national and civic maturity, and the basics of vocational competence and/or qualification. Secondary education is offered to learners that have attained the basic education level. It is a two-year curriculum with focus on profiling and differentiation of the content of education. Profiles offered are humanitarian, real, technological and artistic. Secondary education can also be carried out at a vocational school.

Vocational education and training

Lithuanian vocational education and training (VET) system comprises initial and continuing VET and vocational guidance and counselling.

Higher education

Studies in higher schools of Lithuania are delivered through degree study programmes and non-degree study programmes. Two types of study programmes are available: university and college programmes. Studies are delivered in three cycles:

1) first cycle – professional bachelor and bachelor degree studies;

2) second cycle – master degree studies;

3) third cycle – doctoral degree studies.

Studies in higher schools are delivered in six areas: biomedical sciences, physical sciences, technological sciences, social sciences, humanities and arts. The study areas are divided into groups of fields, which are further divided into smaller fields. Branches of study fields can be found within some fields.

The following chapter describes in more detail vocational education and training in Lithuania.

1.4. Description of the VET System in Lithuania[41]

Lithuanian vocational education and training (VET) system comprises initial and continuing VET and vocational guidance and counselling. Responsibility for the development of the system lies with the Ministry of Education and Science.

Initial vocational education and training (IVET): vocational education and training intended for the acquisition of a first qualification (Law on the Amendment of the Law on Vocational Education and Training, 2007).

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[41] Profesinis mokymas Lietuvoje. Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministerija, 2010

Continuing vocational education and training (CVET): vocational training intended for upgrading a qualification or for the acquisition of another one (Law on the Amendment of the Law on Vocational Education and Training, 2007)

- **IVET**

The institutional model of IVET system in Lithuania can be characterised as school based model with certain fragmentic movement towards market and dual models. There is a clear domination of public VET schools and training centres providing theoretical training in the classroom and practical training in the specially equipped training sites or workshops with the final stage of training cycle in the form of internship in the enterprises (10-15 weeks), where students learn and work with the supervision of representatives of enterprises. Public VET schools and regional training centres are responsible for organization of both theoretical and practical training processes.

Initial vocational education and training awards qualifications that correspond to EQF and LTQF levels 2-4. [42]Applicants who are 14 years of age and older, who have not acquired general lower secondary (basic) education are admitted to programmes that are designed for acquiring qualification at EQF and LTQF level 2. Persons, who have completed at least basic education, can seek qualification that corresponds to EQF and LTQF level 3 or 4. Trainees with basic education have two options – seeking vocational qualification only (EQF and LTQF level 3) or acquiring secondary general education along with the vocational qualification (EQF and LTQF level 4). On the first option, the duration of training is two years. On the second one, the programme duration is three years. This level of VET programmes is also offered to those with secondary education. Depending on the complexity of the qualification, the programme duration may vary between 1, 1.5 and 2 years.

In IVET programmes, practical training comprises 60-70% of study time allocated to vocational subjects. In the last year of training, up to 15 weeks are allocated for practical training in an enterprise or in a school-based workshop simulating working conditions. Graduates are awarded a maturity certificate. Further, they can choose either to stay in vocational school and continue education and training according to IVET programmes or to enter higher education. Divisions of gymnasiums in VET institutions, firstly, make VET more open to general education and vice versa, and secondly, promote participation in IVET.

- **CVET**

CVET encompasses both formal vocational training and non-formal adult education. Adults, depending on their former education and needs, may choose to study at vocational schools, colleges, universities, labour market training centers or attend courses organised by other companies. The State secures CVET for civil servants, unemployed people, those facing redundancy and, to some extent, for SME employees. Additionally, certain ministries and public institutions organise and finance qualification improvement programmes for their sector employees. There is no single system for planning CVET in Lithuania.

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[42] Source of information: draft project of referencing VET programmmes to LTQF/ EQF levels. Qualifications and VET Development Centre and Ministry of Education and Science

Characteristics of National Quality Frameworks for Level 3, 4, 5 according to EQF division

Generally speaking the Lithuanian National Qualification framework (adopted by Government of Republic of Lithuania in 2010 with amendments in 2011) corresponds to the European Qualification Framework and contains 8 qualification levels. Clear and demonstrable link exists between the qualifications levels in the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework and the level descriptors of the EQF. The relationship is as follows[43]:

LTQF	EQF
8 level	8 level
7 level	7 level
6 level	6 level
5 level	5 level
4 level	4 level
3 level	3 level
2 level	2 level
1 level	1 level

National qualifications framework of Lithuania provides for 8 qualification levels:

- Levels 1-4 qualifications are acquired by completing vocational education and/or general education programmes. According to the LTQF/ EQF referencing report (published in 2012) , basic education is attributed to level 2 qualifications and secondary education – to level 4 qualification. Level 1 and 2 vocational qualifications are intended for persons with learning difficulties, unemployed training, whereas IVET programmes result in level 2-4 qualifications. CVET programmes result in Levels 1- 3 qualifications.
- Level 5, which is an interim level between vocational and higher education qualifications and which is acquired according to the programmes of post-secondary education in VET institutions or according to short cycle study programmes in colleges. At the moment this level qualifications are not awarded in Lithuania.
- Level 6 to 8, which include qualifications attributed to the higher education system.

School types and certification related to EQF levels 3, 4 and 5 are presented in table.

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[43] Referencing the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area. National Report of Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre, 2012, p.6

School types and certification related to EQF levels 3, 4 and 5

NQF level	Types of VET providers	Short description	Certifications/ qualification
3	Labour market training centres, vocational schools, VET centres, private companies	The qualification is intended for activities consisting of actions and operations in narrow areas of activities. The activities may include several or more specialised activity tasks that require the application of well-known and tested solutions. The activities are carried out autonomously, under the guidance of an employee of a higher qualification and subject to external performance quality control. The qualification of this level can be acquired learning both to IVET and CVET programmes, including those for special needs persons.	*Qualification certificate*, witnessing acquisition of qualifications that correspond to LTQF/EQF level 3. Example of qualification: *Painter; the painter's vocational training programme, state code 262058203.*
4	Vocational schools, VET centres In case of Apprenticeship - companies, social partners, etc.	The qualification is intended for activities consisting of actions and operations in relatively broad areas of activity. The activities are performed by carrying out several or more specialised activity tasks, solutions to which are not always tested or known. The activities are performed autonomously, assuming the responsibility for the quality of the procedures and outcomes of performance. This level of qualification is awarded only in case a person has acquired secondary education. The qualification is based on secondary general education which creates conditions for effective application of factual and theoretical knowledge related to area of activity. The qualification is awarded only in the IVET system.	*Qualification certificate (until 2012 - Vocational education and training diploma),* witnessing acquisition of qualifications that correspond to LTQF/EQF level 4. Example of qualification: *Decorator; the construction finisher training programmes*, state codes 330058201 and 440058201.
5	n.a.	The qualification is intended for activities distinguished by integrated coordination of activity tasks in different activity areas. The activities include the evaluation of the competences of lower-qualification employees and training thereof. The activities require coordination of comprehensive knowledge of the activity area with general knowledge in dealing with various specialised activity tasks in several different activity areas. The employee performs the activities independently and is supervised only as regards the evaluation of results. The activity tasks are set by an employee of a higher qualification, who frequently grants the employee the discretion as to the choice of methods and measures to complete the tasks. Qualifications are supposed to be acquired by completing training programmes intended for persons with a professional qualification as well as fixed-duration professional experience, and higher education programmes not leading to a degree.	Till 2004 qualifications of this level were awarded in vocational colleges. Currently, there are no qualifications of this level provided, although there is a demand for such level specialists following the labour force demand research. Therefore the pathways for the acquisition of this type qualifications should appear when implementing LTQF.

National legal requirements in VET area and characteristics of policy makers

VET related laws may be divided into those which regulate VET directly or indirectly. They regulate the general principles of VET with further details set out in secondary legislation. This framework provides a more flexible approach whereby changes can be made without resorting to primary legislation. In Lithuania the institutional framework for Vocational Educational Training needs to be divided in initial VET (IVET) and continuing VET (CVET). Some rules and regulations are applicable to both areas, whereas some are different for each of these areas. The following table includes a list of the main legal documents regulating the area of VET.

The Law on VET (2007) stipulates that a VET provider may be any VET institution, a freelance teacher or any other provider (general education school, enterprise, organisation whose main activity is other than VET) that is entitled to develop and implement VET programmes. VET providers may accept students and start implementing formal VET programmes after receiving a licence from the Ministry of Education and Science if its resources are sufficient for implementation and if its teachers correspond to requirements set in the training programmes and legal acts.

A list of legal documents regulating the area of VET.

No	Name of document	Date of publishing	Authority that issued the document	Level of VET to which the document applies	Summary of the content	Link to the document
1.	The Law on Education (Švietimo įstatymas); Law on amendment of Law on Education (Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo įstatymo pakeitimo įstatymas)	1991, new edition 2011-03-17, Valstybės žinios, Nr. 38-1804	Parliament of Republic of Lithuania	**IVET** **CVET**	It is an umbrella law which establishes the goals and principles of the educational system, the framework for institutions, as well as the obligations of the State. It stipulates that the educational system is comprised of formal (primary, basic and secondary education, VET and higher education studies), non-formal children and adult education, informal education, and educational assistance (informational, consulting, etc.) for both learners and teachers.	http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=395105&p_query=&p_tr2=

2.	The Law on vocational education and training; Law on the amendment of Law on vocational education and training (Lietuvos Respublikos profesinio mokymo įstatymo pakeitimo įstatymas)	1997, new edition 2007-04-03 Valstybės žinios, Nr. 43-1627	Parliament of Republic of Lithuania	**IVET** **CVET**	Sets out the structure and management of the VET system, design, management and award of qualifications, organisation and management of VET as well as VET funding. Based on this Law, the VET system in Lithuania covers initial VET (pirminis profesinis mokymas), continuing VET (tęstinis profesinis mokymas) and vocational guidance (profesinis orientavimas). The Law establishes the legal preconditions for the implementation of the qualifications system and the integration of the initial and continuing vocational education and training systems, expands the variety of training organisation forms (introduces apprenticeship) and shapes provisions for quality assurance.	http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=295408&p_query=&p_tr2=
3.	Resolution on the approval of licensing rules for formal VET (Dėl formaliojo profesinio mokymo licencijavimo taisyklių patvirtinimo)	2004. June 29. No. 822; new edition 2011 July 7. No 833	Government of Republic of Lithuania	**IVET** **CVET**	Regulates licenses for the implementation of formal training legal persons, refusal to issue, suspension, cancellation and suspension of revocation of licenses duplicate the issue, as well as licensing the rights and obligations of the license conditions and compliance monitoring.	http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=403871
4.	Law on Non-formal Adult Education (Neformaliojo suaugusiųjų švietimo įstatymas)	1998-06-30	Parliament of Republic of Lithuania	**CVET**	Regulates the system of non-formal adult education, its structure and management and provides legal guarantees for participants. The Law establishes that non-formal adult education includes fostering an individual's general culture as well as acquisition and upgrading of knowledge and skills needed for individual's professional activities.	http://www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter3/dokpaieska.showdoc_l?p_id=60192&p_query=&p_tr2=

No	Name of document	Date of publishing	Authority that issued the document	Level of VET to which the document applies	Summary of the content	Link to the document
5.	Law on Support for Employment (Užimtumo rėmimo įstatymas)	2006-06-15; new edition 2009-07-14	Parliament of Republic of Lithuania	**CVET**	Defines the legal background for the employment support system for jobseekers, its aim, tasks, the functions of institutions implementing the employment support policy, the employment support measures, as well as the organisation and funding of their implementation. The Law establishes that the vocational training of the unemployed and of the employees who have been given a notice of dismissal is organised seeking to award qualifications and/or develop professional skills.	http://www3.lrs.lt /pls/inter3/dokpai eska.showdoc_l?p _id=279173&p_qu ery=&p_tr2=
6.	Order of Minister of education and science regarding the approval of description of order of designing and legitimating of formal VET programmes (LR švietimo ir mokslo ministro įsakymas Nr. „Dėl Formaliojo profesinio mokymo programų rengimo ir įteisinimo tvarkos aprašo patvirtinimo")	2010-08-27, Valstybės žinios, Nr. 105-5436	Ministry of education and science	**IVET Formal CVET**	Establishes an order for formal vocational training programs and change, evaluation and validation procedures.	http://www.smm.l t/prtm/p_reng/do cs/5.pdf
7.	Order of Minister of education and science regarding the approval of formal VET procedure (Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro įsakymas „Dėl formaliojo profesinio mokymo tvarkos aprašo patvirtinimo")	2012-03-15 Nr. V-482	Ministry of education and science	**IVET Formal CVET**	Determines training in formal training programs, registered education, training programs and qualifications register, planning and vocational training programs	http://www.smm.l t/prtm/p_reng/do cs/isak_%20Forma liojo%20profesinio %20mokymo%20t varka.pdf

No	Name of document	Date of publishing	Authority that issued the document	Level of VET to which the document applies	Summary of the content	Link to the document
8.	The Law on Science and Study (Mokslo ir studijų įstatymas)	2009	Parliament of Republic of Lithuania	**CVET**	Establishes that universities and colleges may provide study programmes for re-qualification that do not lead to a degree.	http://www3.lrs.lt /pls/inter3/dokpai eska.showdoc_l?p _id=343430&p_qu ery=&p_tr2=

Institutional Framework for VET

VET organigramme is provided in figure 1.
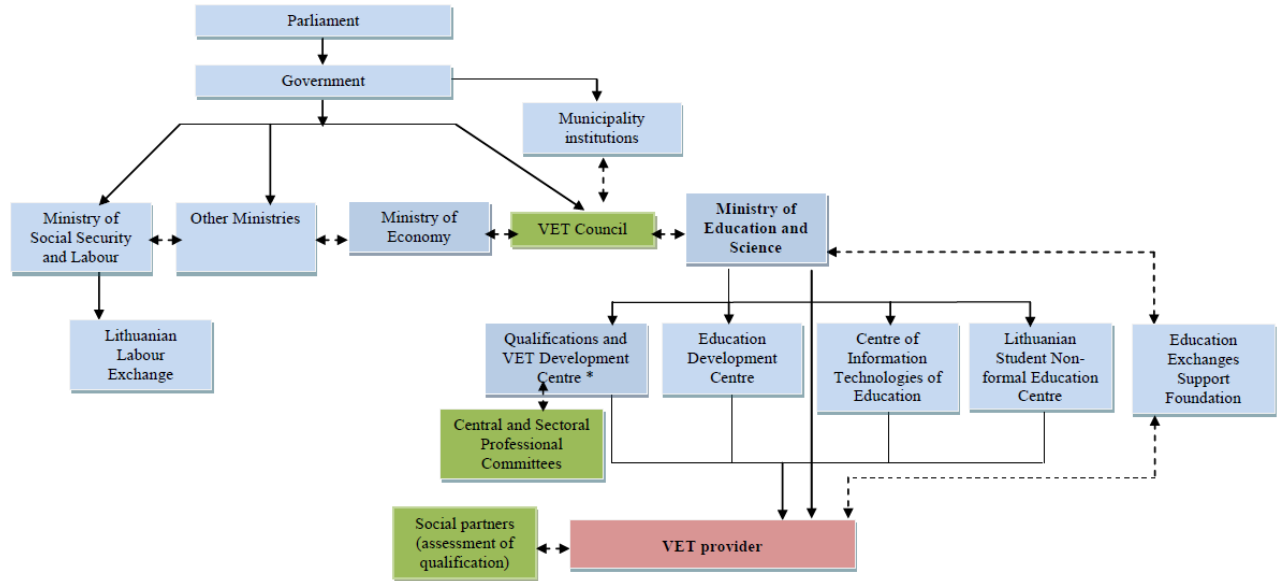
* to January 2010 – Methodological Centre for VET

VET organigramme (Source: Lithuania. VET in Europe – Country Report, 2011; available at http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_LT.pdf)

Institutional framework IVET

Key institutions with the responsibility for VET policy decision-making[44]:

National level:

Seimas (Parliament) is the supreme legislative body of the Republic of Lithuania;

Government of Republic of Lithuania implements the laws stipulating education, the decrees of the President of the Republic of Lithuania and the resolutions of the Seimas, the long-term national education programmes. It implements the chapter on education of the Government Programme, approves the implementing programmes and coordinates the work of the Ministry of Education and Science, other ministries and Governmental institutions regarding education issues;

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[44] Referencing the Lithuanian qualifications framework to the European qualifications framework for lifelong learning and the qualifications framework for the European higher education area, 2011

Ministry of Education and Science (Švietimo ir mokslo ministerija, MES) shapes and implements vocational education and training policy at the national level. Vocational training is led by the Department of **General Education and Vocational Training.**

Special powers in the development of human resources are given to the Ministry of Economy, commissioning it to participate in the creation and implementation of the human resources development policy, to participate in the creation and implementation of the VET policy, as well as to organise research of the future skill needs and to disseminate its results in the course of the vocational guidance.

Other ministries take part in shaping and implementing VET policy.

The Vocational Education and Training Council (Profesinio mokymo taryba) functions as an advisory body for the Ministry of Education and Science and other governmental institutions in making decisions regarding strategic questions in VET. The Council is comprised equally of members representing state and municipal institutions, members representing employer and business organisations as well as members representing employee organisations;

To ensure effective social dialogue the Central Professional Committee (CPC, *Centrinis profesinis komitetas*) and 17 sectoral professional committees (SPC, *Sektoriniai profesiniai komitetai*) has been established at Qualifications and VET Development Centre (QVETDC). The CPC coordinates strategic issues pertaining to the development of the qualifications system, whereas SPC is responsible for qualification formation issues in concrete sectors of the economy. The main functions of SPC are as follows: to advise the QVETDC regarding sectoral qualifications and competences needed to acquire them, to set priorities for the development of qualifications standards, to endorse standards and to analyse the consistency of training programmes with the requirements prescribed in the standards.

Local level:

Municipality institutions are involved in VET management. They initiate the establishment of a VET provider network in line with the needs of the municipality residents, take part in organising the admission of persons to the state funded VET programmes, organise the assessment of general education attainments and matura examinations, plan and implement vocational guidance, etc.

Key institutions implementing vocational education and training policy

With the aim to ensure the uniform assessment of VET graduates preparedness for practical activity, the function of the final qualification assessment is delegated to the *social partners*. Social partners take part in organising and carrying out the assessment of competences acquired by students. From 2012 accreditation of competences assessment institutions is carried out and social partners, enterprises, employers associations may apply for accreditation.

Social partners also participate in setting up content of new qualifications, standards, VET curricula and assessing VET programmes in regard to their correspondence to the needs of the economy and in organisation of students' practical training.

The Qualifications and VET Development Centre (*Kvalifikacijų ir profesinio mokymo plėtros centras*, QVETDC (until January 2010 - Methodological Centre for VET*)* under the MES perform functions of Qualifications Management Institution as established in new edition of Law on VET (2007) including organisation of VET and qualifications standards development, research of qualifications demand and

qualifications formation. It also accumulates and analyses information on VET, initiates and implements applied VET research, designs methodologies for the development of VET, assesses and develops VET quality and performs functions of Quality Assurance National Reference Point for VET and EQF National Coordination Point.

The Education Development Centre *(Ugdymo plėtotės centras, UPC)* under the MES develops general education, non-formal children and adult education content, organise and perform assessment and accreditation of teachers' qualification development programmes.

The Centre of Information Technologies of Education *(Švietimo informacinių technologijų centras)* under MES organises and coordinates events for teachers and educational institutions' personnel related with IT implementation, coordinates ICT implementation in education institutions, administers education information systems, collects, manages and accumulates databases of educational statistics.

Nationwide vocational guidance is coordinated by the Lithuanian Students Non-Formal Education Centre *(Lietuvos mokinių neformaliojo švietimo centras).* It provides methodical assistance and consultancy to schools and educational support agencies, participates in the qualification development processes of the pedagogical personnel of schools and educational support agencies, ensures the accessibility of modern methodological and informational tools on vocational guidance, and participates in monitoring vocational guidance for students nationwide.

Institutional framework for CVET

The bodies responsible for CVET policy decision-making and implementation are the same as in case of IVET. In addition to vocational schools and colleges, CVET is provided by universities, private enterprises, labour market training centres, etc.

The Lithuanian Labour Exchange, LLE *(Lietuvos darbo birža)* under MSSL is responsible for the implementation of active labour market policy measures and the organisation of vocational training for the unemployed. It assesses the situation in the labour market, designs annual "Barometer of employment possibilities" and assesses the needs for vocational training (focusing to a larger extent on the needs of the unemployed and the labour market). The unemployed and people notified of dismissal personally choose training providers from the training providers list published on the LLE website. Training providers apply LLE for inclusion into training providers list.

National education level - quantitative data

The following tables and charts will provide an overview of the number of VET institutions, students in VET, graduates, etc.

Number of VET institutions in Lithuania, 2005 - 2012

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
VET institutions								
Total:	76	80	80	80	78	78	75	77
state	74	78	78	78	75	75	72	74
public	8	14	15	15	15	15	15	25
private	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3

The number of planned and actual students admitted to a vocational training institutions, 2008-2012
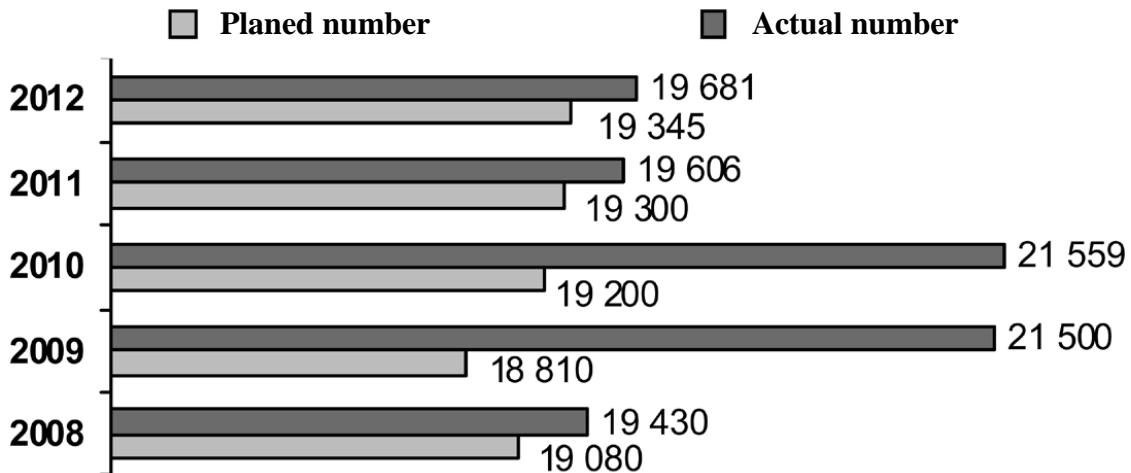
Source of both tables: Lithuanian Ministry of education and science

Expandvet: Expand Quality assurance in VET (Benchmarking Tool)

Participation in general and vocational education

Indicator	[educ_enrl1ad]
Short description:	Students in upper secondary general and vocational education (as % of all upper secondary students). Upper secondary education corresponds to ISCED level 3, 4 .
Source of Data	Eurostat, UOE

GEO/TIME	Students at ISCED level 3- General orienation - as % of all students at ISCED level 3	Students at ISCED level 3- Vocational orientation - as % of all students at ISCED level 3	Students at ISCED level 4- Vocational orientation - as % of all students at ISCED level 4
	2010	2010	2010
European Union (27 countries)	50,1	49,9	83,7
Belgium	27,0	73,0	99,3
Bulgaria	47,8	52,2	100,0
Czech Republic	26,9	73,1	63,5
Denmark	53,5	46,5	0,0
Germany (including former GDR from 1991)	48,5	51,5	74,0
Estonia	65,8	34,2	100,0
Ireland	62,5	37,5	100,0
Greece	69,3	30,7	100,0
Spain	55,4	44,6	:
France	55,7	44,3	61,6
Italy	40,0	60,0	100,0
Cyprus	86,8	13,2	:
Latvia	64,0	36,0	100,0
Lithuania	72,3	27,7	100,0
Luxembourg	38,7	61,3	100,0
Hungary	74,2	25,8	100,0
Malta	50,7	49,3	85,6
Netherlands	33,0	67,0	100,0
Austria	23,2	76,8	100,0
Poland	51,8	48,2	100,0
Portugal	61,2	38,8	100,0
Romania	36,2	63,8	100,0
Slovenia	35,4	64,6	38,8
Slovakia	28,7	71,3	100,0
Finland	30,3	69,7	100,0
Sweden	43,9	56,1	84,3
United Kingdom	67,9	32,1	0,0
Iceland	65,7	34,3	100,0

notes : Data for Luxembourg refer to 2009.

Data for U27 are Estimated

:=Not available e=Estimated value b=Break in series i=See explanatory text p=Provisional value u=Unreliable or uncertain data

Hyperlink to the table: **http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_enrl1ad&lang=en**

Expandvet: Expand Quality assurance in VET (Benchmarking Tool)

Indicator: **Pupils in upper secondary general and vocational education (full-time/part-time)**

Source of Data Eurostat

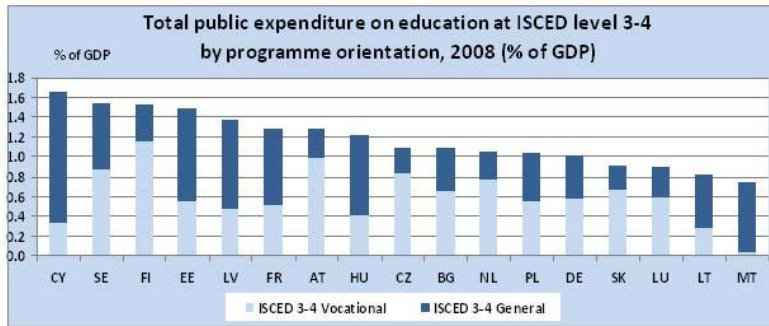| WORKTIME	Part-time	Part-time	Part-time	Full-time	Full-time	Full-time
GEO/ISCED97	Upper secondary education - ISCED level 3 - general programmes (ISCED 1997)	Upper secondary education - ISCED level 3 - pre-vocational programmes (ISCED 1997)	Upper secondary education - ISCED level 3 - vocational programmes (ISCED 1997)	Upper secondary education - ISCED level 3 - general programmes (ISCED 1997)	Upper secondary education - ISCED level 3 - pre-vocational programmes (ISCED 1997)	Upper secondary education - ISCED level 3 - vocational programmes (ISCED 1997)
YEAR	2010	2010	2010	2010	2010	2010
European Union (27 countries)	557146	695	904219	10366571	154287	9813564
Belgium	0	:	334898	233331	:	295376
Bulgaria	3922	:	21841	144967	:	140815
Czech Republic	0	0	0	126492	0	343416
Denmark	27814	:	125	124185	:	131906
Germany	38080	:	:	1294209	:	1414360
Estonia	6371	:	135	28719	:	18090
Ireland	700	0	0	98505	51538	7951
Greece	10109	:	11735	242206	:	100003
Spain	41491	:	149395	609072	:	373713
France	:	:	:	1460725	:	1163535
Italy	:	:	:	1139813	:	1708779
Cyprus	603	:	191	28422	:	4236
Latvia	11906	:	64	48829	:	34142
Lithuania	8224	:	:	73906	:	31408
Luxembourg	:	27	0	:	0	13221
Hungary	50371	668	5026	352279	55766	78261
Malta	0	0	4437	5565	0	966
Netherlands	14125	:	8987	228939	:	484419
Austria	:	:	:	88935	22015	271965
Poland	211383	:	48649	705406	:	804575
Portugal	:	:	:	296057	18947	168978
Romania	39188	:	50840	305757	:	557388
Slovenia	450	:	12963	33861	:	49571
Slovakia	1116	:	8068	78720	:	190752
Finland	:	:	:	112088	:	257588
Sweden	77023	0	56664	162686	6021	243602
United Kingdom	14270	:	190201	2342897	:	924548
Iceland	4398	21	2890	12934	492	5629
Liechtenstein	:	:	:	296	:	1207
Norway	5834	:	7196	106381	:	123799
Switzerland	461	:	1285	106063	:	207739

Diagram 1. Public expenditure on education at ISCED level 3-4

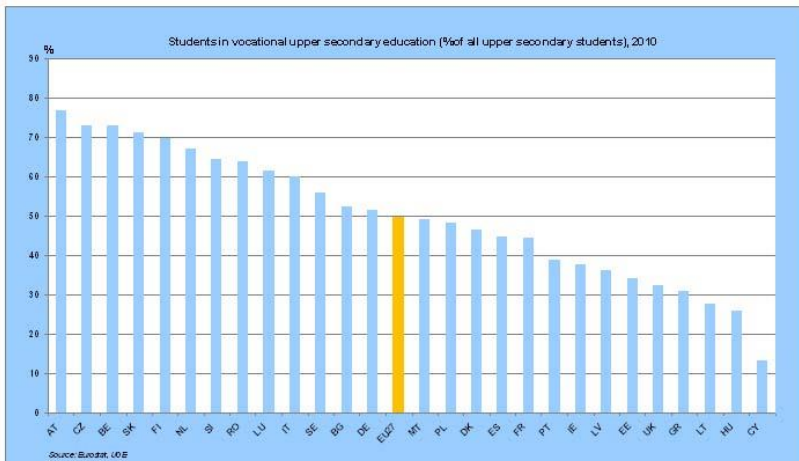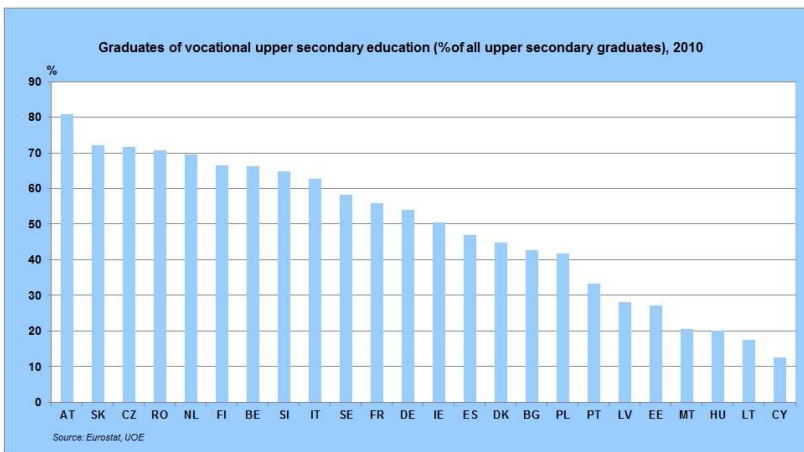**Diagram 2. Students in VET (uper secondary education), 2010**

Diagram 3. Graduates from VET (uper secondary education), 2010

Diagram 4. Early leavers from education and training, 2011

Early leavers from education and training (% of population 18-24), 2011

Source: Eurostat, LFS
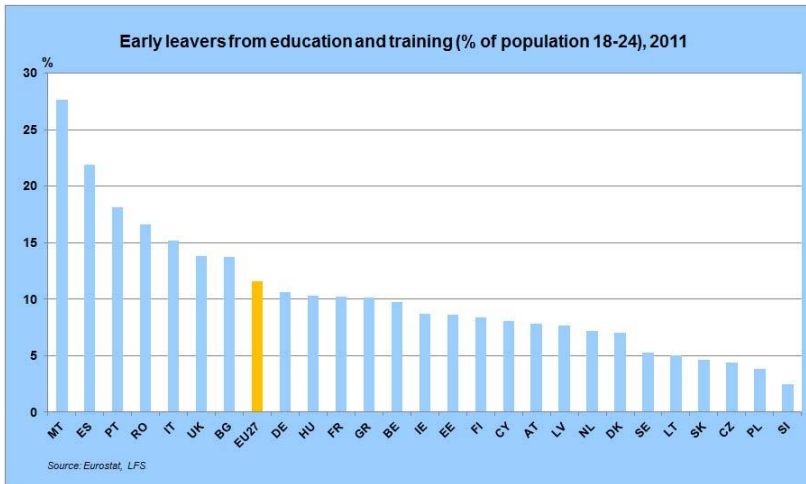
Diagram 5. Students in VET by study intensity, 2010

Students in vocational upper secondary education by study intensity
(%of all upper secondary students), 2010

Source: Eurostat, UOE

Source of all diagrams: http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011
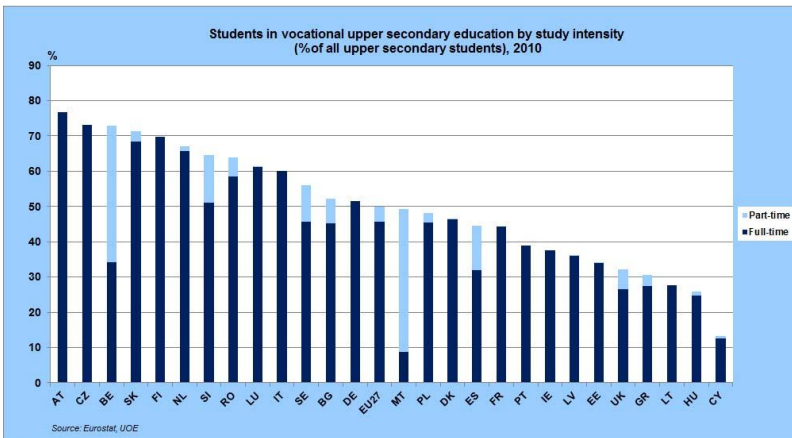
Quality assurance system for each level

The principles for the VET quality assurance in Lithuania have been established in the new edition of *the Law on VET* (2007). The amended Law has legitimated the internal and external assessment of the VET providers activity and defined the responsibilities for the quality assurance.

Article 12 in the Part IV of the Law on Vocational Education and Training "Organisation and Quality of Vocational Education and Training" indicates that "the programme of formal VET is intended for awarding qualification that is included into the Register of Study, Training Programmes and Qualifications, established by the government". In the same article paragraph 6 states that "VET programme shall meet VET standard or qualifications standard that describes the qualification". Paragraph 8 of the Article obliges to register formal VET programmes and standards in the Register of Study and Training Programmes and Qualifications.[45]

In 2005–2008, the Concept of VET Quality Assurance System in Lithuania was developed, applicable both to initial and continuing (including non-formal education) VET.

Quality assurance mechanisms[46]

VET quality is assured by implementing the following measures:

Development and approval of standards regulating VET qualifications. Until recently VET standards were the basis for the development of VET programmes and assessment of the achievements of pupils and students. The VET standard is comprised of the following parts: general description of occupation; occupational purpose; areas of activity; competences and their range; training objectives; assessment of competences; key competences; and final assessment of qualification. After approval of new or amended VET standards, programmes had to be revised accordingly. At the moment Lithuania is piloting a sectoral qualifications standards *(profesiniai standartai)* approach with a pilot national project. Unlike the VET standard, the sectoral qualifications standard is developed for a particular sector of the economy by describing the most important characteristics of the qualifications at all LTQF levels.

Development and registration of training programmes and issuing licences. A VET provider is entitled to implement a registered training programme if its resources are sufficient for implementation and if its teachers correspond to requirements set in the training programmes and legal acts.

Supervision of training provision. Since the internal quality assurance system in Lithuanian vocational training institutions is still under development, an important role is assigned to the supervision of training quality. The respective divisions at the Ministry of Education of Science are engaged in the supervision of the training process and performance.

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[45] Conformity of Quality Assurance in Lithuanian Education System with the Common Principles Indicated in EC Recommendations' . Research Report, Annex 3, Vilnius, 2011
[46] Lithuania. VET in Europe – Country Report. Qualifications and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre, 2011

The National Audit Office *(Valstybės kontrolė)* conducts selective examinations of training institutions, which include analysis of the efficiency of their performance. Other public bodies authorised to exercise control can also perform thematic inspections.

Independent assessment of qualification. From 2003 social partners are responsible for the final qualification examination. They delegate employers' representatives to the qualification exam commission, take part in preparing tasks and tests for the exams.

As established in the new edition of the Law on VET the principal liability for the enhancement of training quality lies with VET providers. They are responsible for Quality assurance for each VET level they have a licence from the Ministry of Education and Science. For assuring and improving VET quality it is foreseen to implement monitoring of VET on the basis of monitoring indicators approved by the minister of education and science, quality self-assessment and external assessment, assessment of VET programmes and learning outcomes and supervision of VET implementation and qualifications awarding. The main responsibility for VET quality assurance lies with the VET provider, who:

- together with stakeholder is responsible for proper facilities for training provision;
- organises the development of training programmes corresponding economy needs and relevant VET standard;
- implements internal assessment of management and training provision.

Within the framework of the national ESF project "Development and Implementation of the Common Quality Assurance System in VET" (2005-2008) the Concept of VET Quality Assurance System in Lithuania was developed. The Concept is applicable both for initial and continuing (including the non-formal education) VET. The Concept was developed on the basis of the Study of Quality Assurance in VET in Lithuania and other Countries (2007), with consideration of the Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF) for VET in Europe. The concept is implemented through the measures of the Practical VET Resources Development *Programme*. In 2012 projects were launched to introduce internal VET quality assurance mechanisms in VET institutions and to develop and pilot external assessment of VET programmes implementation – a process that is to be completed until 2014. All formal IVET providers and a part of CVET providers received ESF and national budget funding to implement internal quality assurance systems (e.g. ISO, EQUASS, etc.). External assessment of quality of VET programmes will be organised to assess the quality of most popular VET programmes and to prepare recommendations for improvement of training at institutional and national levels.

Identification of target group for EXPANDVET project - types of VET providers

The Law on VET (1997, new edition adopted in 2007) defines **a provider of vocational education and training** as a vocational education and training institution, a freelance teacher or another provider of vocational education (a school of general education, organisation, enterprise, the main activity of which is not vocational education), which, in accordance to procedures established by the law, are authorised to perform programmes of vocational education and training. A provider of vocational education and training can admit individuals and start providing programmes of formal vocational education and training only after receiving a license issued by the Ministry of Education and Science. List of all formal IVET and CVET providers, higher education institutions and part of non-formal adult education providers is published in the AIKOS system (open information, guidance and counseling system): http://www.aikos.smm.lt/aikos/institutions.htm.

The main IVET providers lower secondary, upper secondary and post secondary education levels are vocational schools (profesines mokyklos) or VET centers, which implement both initial and continuing VET, both vocational and general education. According to Statistics Lithuania in 2012, there were 75 IVET providers; 72 of them were public. Since 2003, 25 vocational schools have been granted self-governing status (viešoji įstaiga) what allows them to have a variety of stakeholders in the management (enterprises, regional and municipal government representatives, etc.). This change has helped to improve the cooperation with employers and has strengthened the standing of VET. Since 2000, divisions of gymnasiums have been established at vocational schools. They provide upper secondary education and pre-vocational or vocational education.

Higher VET programmes (ISCED 5B) are provided by colleges (higher non university education institutions). In 2012, there were 24 colleges, 13 of them were public.

In addition to IVET providers, 260 institutions (higher education institutions, private training centres, enterprises, associations, etc), the main activity of which is other than VET, have licences for formal CVET. However, systematic data about CVET has not yet been collected and thus, no reliable data is available to indicate how many providers implement CVET programmes. The list may be found at AIKOS system: http://www.aikos.smm.lt/aikos/institutions.htm

There are no specific requirements for non-formal CVET providers. It is implemented by variety of education providers and organisations whose main activity is other than education that are entitled to provide educational services. In some cases the institutions that wish to provide training for certain groups (e.g. civil servants) must participate in the assessment procedure and prove relevance of their staff and facilities.

Alternance Training (incl. Apprenticeship)

A new edition of the Law on VET (2007) legitimates apprenticeship as a form for VET organisation. However implementation of this training form has just started. In 2013 it is foreseen to allocate national and European structural funds funding for special pilot project for the apprenticeship development.

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Part 4 - Poland
National Report

Description of general structure of national education level - Poland

The following graph provides an overview of the national education system in Poland

General structure of the Polish education levels - Structure of the national education system 2012/13
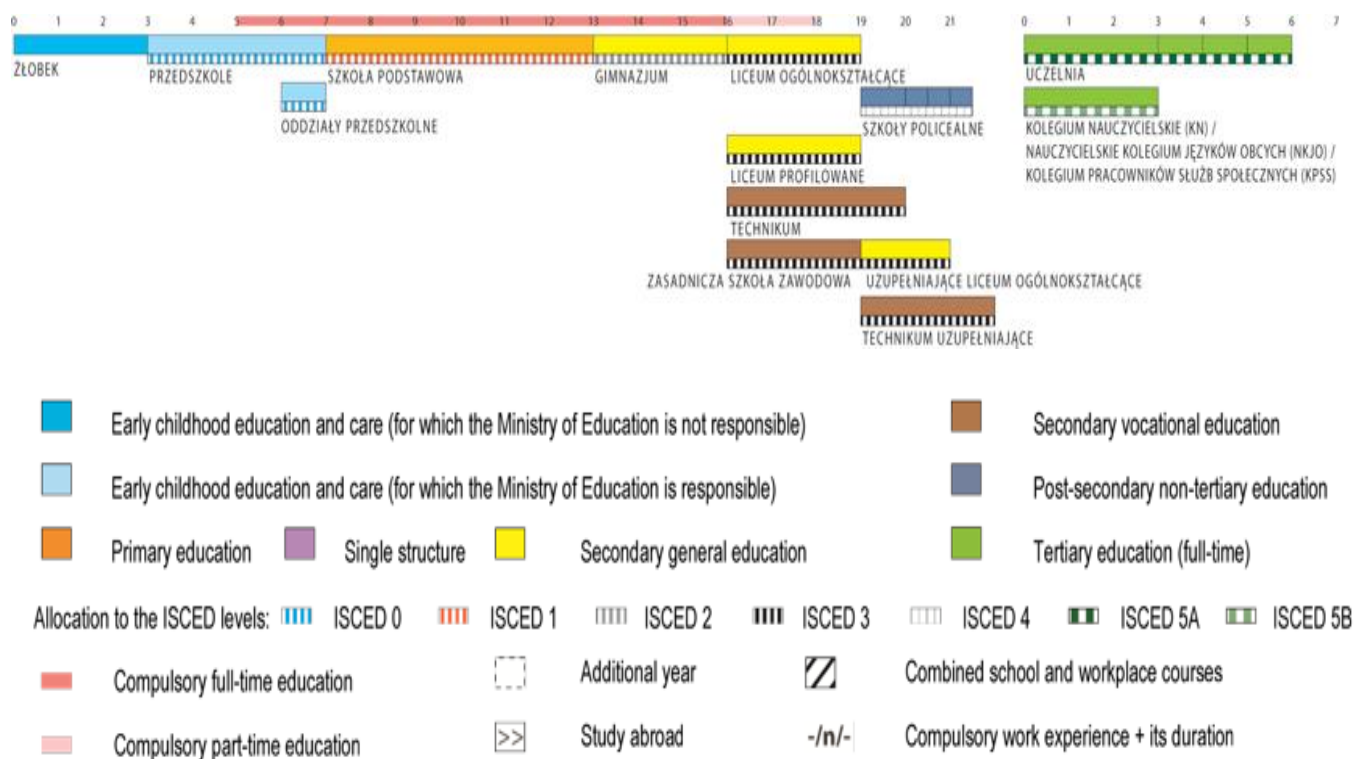
General overview

Generally the education system in Poland consists of obligatory and voluntary education. Full-time compulsory education (to be received in school) covers children and young people aged 6-16 years, whereas part-time compulsory education (to be received in school or non-school settings) concerns young people aged 16-18 years. Compulsory education includes the final year of pre-primary education, 6-year primary education and 3-year lower secondary education. **Nursery schools** (przedszkole), **primary schools** (szkoła podstawowa) and **lower secondary schools** (gimnazjum) are administered by commune (gmina) authorities. **Upper secondary schools**, which are not compulsory, are attended by the vast majority of the population in the age group 16-19/20 years and are administered by district (powiat) authorities. Autonomous **higher education institutions** offer mainly first-, second- and third-cycle programmes (long-cycle Master's degree programmes are available only in a few fields of study). **Adult education** is provided by continuing education centres, practical training centres and further and in-service training centres.

To describe the system in details, we can divide the compulsory system into three levels:

- One-year pre-school preparation
- Full-time education in school settings that lasts until the completion of lower secondary school , but not beyond the age of 18
- Part-time education until the age of 18 in school or non-school settings

The one-year compulsory **pre-school preparation** for 6-year olds was introduced in the school year 2004/05. As from the school year 2011/12, one preparatory year is compulsory for 5-year old children and may be completed in kindergartens (*przedszkole*), pre-school classes in primary schools (*oddziały przedszkolne*) or in alternative pre-school education settings. Optional pre-school education is offered to children at the age of 3 and above. In 2011 pre-school education became compulsory for 5-year-old children. 6-year-old children attend either a kindergarten or pre-school classes in primary schools. As from the school year 1999/2000, children between the ages of 7 and 13 attend a 6-year **primary school** (*szkoła podstawowa*) (the previous 8-year single structure at primary level ceased to exist in 2000). The amendment to the School Education Act of 1991 made primary school education compulsory also for 6-year-old children. This change, however, has been implemented gradually i.e. from 2009 to 2013 it is still optional, whereas in 2014 it will become compulsory for this age group. Primary education is divided into two stages: the **first stage** (grades 1 to 3) offering integrated early school education, and the **second stage** (grades 4 to 6) at which subject-based teaching is provided. At the end of the 6-year primary school, pupils take an external compulsory test (set by the Regional Examination Boards and assessed by examiners selected by these boards). The external test, which is designed to provide information (and is not an examination), was conducted for the first time in April 2002. As from 1999/2000, all primary school leavers continue their education in the 3-year **general lower secondary school** (*gimnazjum*). At the end of lower secondary education, pupils take a compulsory external examination organised by Regional Examination Boards.

The continuation of lower secondary school education is **upper secondary education** in the following types of schools:

- 3-year general upper secondary school (*liceum ogólnokształcące*) leading to the receipt of the matriculation certificate (*świadectwo maturalne*) upon passing of the external matriculation exam (*Matura*);
- 3-year specialised upper secondary school (*liceum profi lowane*) offering education in specializations of general vocational education that leads to the receipt of the matriculation certificate upon passing of the matriculation exam. This type of school is being phased out; no admission is possible as from 2012;
- 4-year technical upper secondary school (*technikum*) leading to the receipt of a diploma confirming vocational qualifications upon passing of an examination, and also offering a possibility of the receipt of the matriculation certificate upon passing of the matriculation exam;
- 3-year basic vocational school (*zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa*) that leads to the receipt of a diploma confirming vocational qualifications upon passing of an exam as well as further education in a 2-year supplementary general upper secondary school (*uzupełniające liceum ogólnokształcące*) or a 3-year supplementary technical upper secondary school (*technikum uzupełniające*) that also lead to the receipt of the matriculation certificate upon passing of the matriculation exam. However, as from 2012, these types of schools are being phased out and

admission is not possible anymore. Basic vocational school leavers may continue their education in the adult education settings;

- 3-year special schools preparing pupils with disabilities (special educational needs) for employment leading to the receipt of a certificate confirming preparation for employment.

Graduates of general upper secondary schools can, upon an admission interview, continue their education in a **post-secondary school** of maximum 2.5 years duration that leads to the receipt of a diploma confirming vocational qualifications upon passing of an examination.

Graduates of upper secondary schools in Poland who hold the matriculation certificate have a wide variety of educational possibilities at the level of **tertiary education**:

- college programmes (ISCED 5B), provided by public and non-public teacher training colleges (*kolegium nauczycielskie*), foreign language teacher training colleges (*nauczycielskie kolegium języków obcych*) and colleges of social work (*kolegium pracowników służb społecznych)*,

- degree programmes (ISCED 5A), provided by both public and non-public university type and non-university higher education institutions which comply with relevant requirements, including: first-cycle (Bachelor's degree) programmes; second-cycle (Master's degree) programmes; long-cycle (Master's degree) programmes. Holders of a Master's degree or equivalent may apply to third-cycle programmes i.e. doctoral studies that provide advanced knowledge in a specific area or discipline of science, and prepare for independent and creative research and for the award of a doctoral degree. Holders of Bachelor's or Master's degrees may also follow non-degree post-graduate programmes that typically last one or two years[47].

VET system in Poland –overview

Vocational education for young people in Poland starts at "Post Gymnasium School". Pupils can choose between Vocational School and Technical School. As a supplement after the Vocational School is "Technical School after Vocational School". After this level pupils can pass the exam (matura). The next level in vocational education is "Post lyceum school" or higher education. Higher education can be proceeded only with "matura". In other case students can continue education in "Post lyceum school". Furthermore adults can achieve vocational qualifications by participation in non formal vocational education (courses, training, seminars, vocational practice).

IVET

No official definition of the initial vocational education and training (IVET) system is used in Poland and such term is rarely used — only for European publications to enable comparison of the systems. In such cases IVET is understood as vocational education carried out in schools, usually before entering working life. The following types of schools provide initial vocational education at upper secondary:

(a) four-year technical secondary school (*technikum*);

(b) three-year supplementary technical secondary school — existing only until the end of 2012(*technikum uzupełniające*);

(c) two/three-year basic vocational school (*zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa*);

(d) three-year special needs school preparing for work students mentally or physically handicapped (*szkoła specjalna*).

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[47] The system of education in Poland in 2012 – http://www.eurydice.org.pl

Vocational education is also provided in post-secondary schools:
(e) two and a half year post-secondary school (*szkoła policealna*).
VET at the tertiary level is provided by 2 types of teacher colleges and higher education institutions.
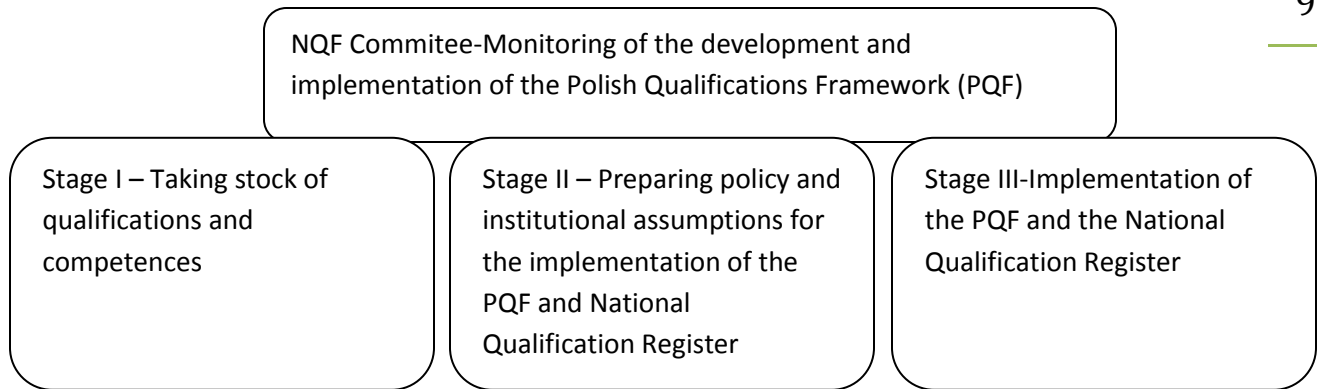
CVET

Continuing vocational education and training takes place either in schools for adults or out of school schemes targeted to people who, after compulsory education want to gain or supplement their knowledge and skills, to gain access to qualifications. The term 'continuing education' is used not only for vocational education and training but also for complementing by adults general education at a higher level than the one reached during compulsory education. Continuing education can be formal when it takes place in the schools and institutions supervised by the Ministry of National Education or non-formal when being offered by other providers. Formal learning in CVET takes place in schools for adults, continuing education centres (CKU), practical training centres (CKP), vocational upgrading and further education centres (ZDZ) and higher education /research institutions offering post-diploma studies, courses and distance learning. Continuing education is also provided by chambers of crafts. Non-formal education can take forms of training, workshops, conferences, seminars, correspondence courses or e-learning courses.

Characteristics of National Quality Frameworks for Level 3,4,5 according to EQF division

Poland started work on the development and implementation of its qualification framework in October 2008. In the first stage (October 2008 – January 2010), experts were working on the PQF as part of a systemic project entitled: "Establishing a balance sheet of competences and qualifications for the Polish labour market and development of the National Qualification Framework model" (Fig. 1). As a result, an experts' model of the PQF was developed, including initial implementation guidelines. The findings of the team of experts have been published in the document entitled: *From the European to the National Qualification Framework*2.

In order to coordinate activities accompanying the development of the Polish Qualification Framework, on 17 February 2010 the President of the Council of Ministers set up an Interdepartmental Team for Lifelong Learning, including the National Qualifications Framework. To ensure that tasks related to the monitoring of the development and implementation of the Polish Qualifications Framework are fulfilled, a subteam was created within this Interdepartmental Team, i.e. the Steering Committee for the National Qualifications Framework and Lifelong Learning (NQF Committee), chaired by the Minister of Science and Higher Education. The NQF Committee is made up of representatives delegated by: Minister of Science and Higher Education; Minister of National Education; Minister of Economy; Minister of Labour and Social Policy; Minister of Regional Development; Minister of Foreign Affairs; Minister of Culture and National Heritage; Minister of Health; Minister of National Defence; Minister of Internal Affairs, and Minister of Infrastructure.

In the period from July 2010 to the end of 2013, the Educational Research Institute (IBE) will continue work on the Polish Qualifications Framework, as part of the project entitled: "The development of terms of reference for the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework and the National Qualifications Register for lifelong learning". This is the second stage of work on the development and implementation of the PQF (The following graph).

Development and implementation stages of the Polish Qualification Framework

NQF Commitee-Monitoring of the development and implementation of the Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF)

| Stage I – Taking stock of qualifications and competences | Stage II – Preparing policy and institutional assumptions for the implementation of the PQF and National Qualification Register | Stage III-Implementation of the PQF and the National Qualification Register |

The Polish Qualifications Framework based on learning outcomes will be at the heart of the qualifications system. The PQF will show interactions between qualifications and will integrate the different national qualifications subsystems. It will also describe the hierarchy of the qualification levels. The PQF distinguishes eight levels of qualifications, each linked to a corresponding level in the European Qualification Framework (Table)

European Qualification Framework for lifelong learning – basic levels

EQF	Polish educational system
Level 1	Pre-school
Level 2	Primary school
Level 3	Gymnasium
Level 4	High school
Level 5	College/ seminars
Level 6	Bachelor's studies
Level 7	Masters studies
Level 8	Doctor's studies

In the Framework, each of the levels is defined by descriptors which define, in general terms, the learning outcomes required at a given level. The descriptors in the PQF are intended to encompass the entire spectrum of learning outcomes, from the lowest to the highest level. They intend to make visible learning that takes place in work, life and study situations; they also take into account initial learning (at school/university) as well as learning that takes place later on (upon completion of education at school/university, during occupational activity, for example). The PQF also takes into account outcomes that are attained in formal and non-formal education and through informal learning.

Similarly to the EQF, learning outcomes in the PQF have been divided into three groups:

- Knowledge – a set of substantiated judgments (a body of facts, theories and principles of conduct) resulting from the cognitive activity of a human being. In the context of the qualification framework, knowledge is described as theoretical or factual, using the categories of "scope" and "depth of understanding";
- Skills – In the context of the qualification framework, skills are described as cognitive and practical; they are defined in terms of such skills as "solving problems and applying knowledge in practice", "learning" and "communicating";
- Social competence – proven (in work and study situations or personal development) ability to use one's knowledge and skills within the context of an internalised system of values. For the purposes of the qualification framework, these competences are described using the following categories: "identity", "cooperation" and "responsibility".

The descriptors of each subsequent level in the PQF differ from those at the preceding (lower) level. The differences are significant, and relate to the amount and depth of knowledge, degree of complexity/difficulty of required skills as well as to the level of autonomy and ability to assume responsibility for one's own work, activity or study (individually or in a team) and, at the higher levels, also responsibility for the work, activity or study of others.

According to the European concept of the qualifications framework, the level descriptors in the Polish Qualifications Framework are generic, which means that they are formulated in general terms and are therefore relevant to different fields. The point of reference for the Polish Qualification Framework is the descriptors defined in the European Qualifications Framework. This will allow the Polish qualification levels to be clearly related to the eight levels of the EQF. The descriptors in the Polish Qualifications Framework differ in the extent of detail provided in the description and the field that they relate to. The PQF distinguishes three degrees of genericness of the descriptors (Graph).

Degrees of genericness of the descriptors in the Polish Qualification Framework
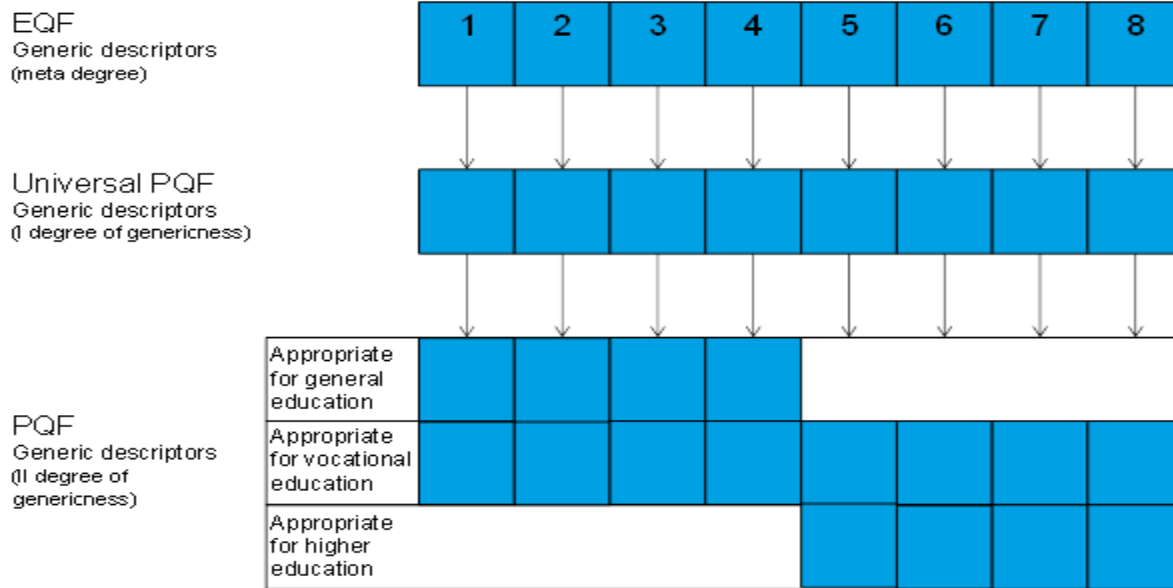
Source: A.Chłoń-Domińczak, H.Dębowski, S.Sławiński – NQF Development on Poland, http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/Poland_NQF_development.pdf

The first degree of genericness includes descriptors which are universal in scope. They show learning outcomes at all the levels, in general, tertiary and vocational education.

The second degree of genericness includes descriptors which address differences in the specific areas of general, tertiary and vocational education. These are:

- Descriptors of learning outcomes relevant to general education. These descriptors may be used in another sector, but are not universal in scope. They describe learning outcomes at levels 1-4,
- Descriptors of learning outcomes relevant to vocational education. These descriptors may be used in another sector, but are not universal in scope. They describe learning outcomes at levels 1-8,
- Descriptors of learning outcomes relevant to tertiary education. These descriptors may be used in another sector, but are not universal in scope. They describe learning outcomes at levels 5 – 8.

Graph does not show descriptors of the third degree of genericness, which are important for the entire system. An example of this category includes descriptors which have been developed for eight areas of tertiary education. Preliminary analyses indicate that some provisions in the core curricula will serve as third degree of genericness descriptors for general education. The descriptors in sectoral qualifications frameworks will also be third degree of genericness descriptors[48].

Taking into consideration the fact, that works on PQF are still continued (The systemic project "The development of terms of reference for the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework and the National Qualifications Register for lifelong learning" is being implemented by the Educational

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[48] More information: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Index.aspx

Research Institute from July 2010 to the end of 2013 within the framework of the Human Capital Operational Programme of the European Social Fund, Priority III High quality of the education system, Measure 3.4 Education system openness in the context of lifelong learning, Sub-measure 3.4.1 Development and implementation of the National Qualifications System), so for the need of this report only general exemplary descriptors relevant to vocational education on 3,4,5 levels can be mentioned.

Exemplary descriptors for levels 3,4,5 of PQF

		Exemplary descriptors		
PQF Level	Types of VET providers	knowledge	skills	social competences
3	Eg.Upper secondary vocational	* basic concepts and terminology * conventionally used technology, materials and organisational solutions * basic information about the tools, equipment, machines, and procedures * basic safety principles, rules and procedures	* communicate in the workplace: receive simple commands from their superiors, communicate with customers concerning simple contracts * monitor the work of a small team of employees * discuss their work, assess its progress and results	* take responsibility connected with their work * respond to simple opinions concerning their job * talk about their work with their co-workers * independently contact their potential employer
4	Eg. Post – secondary non tertiary	* the features and properties of technologies, materials and organisational solutions used for performing professional activities * basic theories and principles of complex tools, equipment and machinery used in the work	* prepare a plan for performing their and their team's professional duties and adapt a standard plan of action to the circumstances * diagnose and solve simple	* take responsibility for their own tasks and the management of a small team of employees * discuss the performance of the team they manage and listen to the employees; react to opinions concerning their performance

			problems encountered in the performance of their or their subordinates' professional tasks * evaluate the economic aspects of their professional tasks * diagnose and solve more complex problems encountered in their and their subordinates' professional tasks	* coordinate their own work and the work of the team they manage with other people or teams
5	Eg. Tertiary education	* a wide range of principles concerning the functioning and usage of tools, equipment, machines used in the performance of their professional tasks * a wide range of characteristics and properties of materials, techniques or procedures used in the performance of their professional tasks, as well as products manufactured in the performance of their professional tasks	* prepare an action plan for their own and their team's professional tasks and analyse the course of these tasks * take into account the economic and legal context of their professional tasks	* take into consideration a wide range of economic, legal and other relevant results when solving problems and performing their professional tasks * observe the principles of professional ethics in their and their small team's work

National legal requirements in VET area and characteristics of policy makers

General overview

The main legal basis for the school education and higher education systems is provided by the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. Its provisions referring to fundamental freedoms and citizens' rights state that:

- every person has the right to education. Education is compulsory until the age of 18. The manner in which compulsory education is received is regulated by an act of Parliament;
- education in public schools is free of charge. An act of Parliament may allow public higher education institutions (HEIs) to charge fees for providing educational services;
- parents are free to choose schools other than public for their children. Citizens and institutions have the right to establish primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and post-secondary schools and HEIs as well as childcare centres. An act of Parliament lays down the conditions for establishing and administering non-public schools, the contribution of public authorities in terms of funding and the principles of pedagogical supervision over schools and childcare centres;
- public authorities provide citizens with general and equal access to education. Towards this end, they establish and support individual fi nancial and organizational support systems for pupils and students. The conditions for providing support are laid down by an act of Parliament;
- the autonomy of HEIs is ensured in accordance with the principles laid down in an act of Parliament;
- In accordance with the School Education Act of 7 September 1991 the education system comprises pre-school institutions as well as primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and post-secondary schools. In the light of the existing law, institutions of higher education form a separate higher education system or sector.

The Polish school education system is based on the following legislation (parliamentary acts):
- The School Education Act of 7 September 1991 (with further amendments)
- The Act of 8 January 1999 on the Implementation of the Education System Reform (with further amendments)
- The Act of 26 January 1982 Teachers' Charter (with further amendments)

The higher education system in Poland is based on the following legislation (parliamentary acts):
- The Act of 27 July 2005 'Law on Higher Education' (with further amendments)
- The Act of 14 March 2003 on Academic Degrees and Title and on Degrees and Title in Art
- The Act of 17 July 1998 on Loans and Credits for Students (with further amendments).

All these Acts are supported by implementing Regulations.

Main national legal requirements for VET

Vocational education and training in Poland is regulated by many legal documents. Main acts and regulations (ordinances) are listed in the following table [49].

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[49] More: http://www.ksztalceniemodulowe-koweziu.pl/o-ksztalceniu-modulowym/akty-prawne.html?start=2

Main acts and regulations for VET in Poland

No	Name of document	Date of publishing	Authority that issued the document (e.g Ministry, District, local self-governments, etc.)	Level of VET to which the document applies	Summary of the content	Link to the document
1.	Act on the System of Education	Act from 7th September 1991 with further amendments	The lower house of the Polish parliament – the Sejm	Educational system, including vocational education and continuing education for youth and adults.	Act includes the basic principles of the Polish education system where education is defined as part of 'the common welfare of the whole of society'	http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU19910950425
2.	Act on Promoting Employment and Labour Market Institutions	Act from 20th April, 2004 with further amendments	The lower house of the Polish parliament – the Sejm	CVET	The questions of training of the unemployed and other job seekers and the question of vocational guidance and counselling/ Training of unemployed and other job seekers; vocational guidance and counselling.	http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20040991001
3.	Act Law on Higher Education	Act from 27 July 2005 with further amendments	The lower house of the Polish parliament – the Sejm	Public and private, academic and vocational higher education.	Act put in place the outline structure of tertiary education in Poland as it is today. Among the key provisions of the 1990 Act were academic freedom, institutional autonomy and the creation of the General Council for Higher Education. This Act has been superseded by the Law	http://isip.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20051641365

				on Higher Education of 27 July 2005 which details the roles and funding for public and private university and non-university type institutions. includes legal regulations regarding post-graduate studies and training courses offered to adults by higher education institutions	
4.	Regulation on vocational preparation of youth and their remuneration	28 May 1996 (with further amendments)	Council of Ministers	Vocational upper secondary education	Document regulates the vocational training of juvenile persons and their remuneration	http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU19960600278
	Regulation on initial teacher training institutions	12 August 1997	Minister of National Education	Tertiary education (public and non-public teacher training colleges and foreign language teacher training college)	The Regulation defines the types of teachers trained in colleges, and procedures for the establishment and liquidation of public and non-public colleges and programmes offered in colleges. It lays down arrangements concerning pedagogical supervision over colleges exercised by the educational authorities and academic supervision exercised over a given college by a HEI, the internal organisation of colleges and the provision of education in colleges.	http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU19971040664
5.	Regulation on the programme requirements	30 June 2006	Minister of National	Tertiary education	Documents lay down "national standards" for programmes to be	http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id

	for initial teacher training in teacher training colleges and foreign language teacher training colleges		Education		offered by colleges of social work and in teacher training colleges and foreign language teacher training colleges. Both Regulations specify the duration of programmes, groups of courses (subjects) to be taught, the minimum course load and general curricular contents, the scope and duration of practical placements, and the profile of graduates. The requirements provide a basis for the development of curricula to be implemented in colleges	=WDU20061280897
6.	Regulation on the programme requirements for initial training in colleges of social work	of 7 April 2005	Minister of Social Policy	Tertiary education		http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20050620555
7.	Regulation on the classification of the professions in vocational education	23 December 2011	Minster of National Education	Vocational schools on levels 3,4	Document is a part of the changes in the vocational training system to improve the quality of vocational training and adapt the educational offer to the needs of changing labor market	http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20120000007
8.	Set of regulations related with new vocational education (issued gradually) implemented by amendment to the Education System Act of 19 August 2011	2011-2012	Minster of National Education	Vocational schools on levels 3,4	Amended in August 2011 Act on the System of Education introduced changes to vocational education. Main aims were related with: better correlation of VET with the labour market, modified classification of occupations used in vocational and continuing education, new core curriculum for VET - introduced on the learning outcomes basis, the adoption of a new approach to vocational	http://www.men.gov.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=291&Itemid=385

					qualifications in line with the European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET), modernisation of the examination system, Creation of opportunities for enhanced cooperation between VET institutions and enterprises	

Source: www.men.gov.pl; http://www.ksztalceniemodulowe-koweziu.pl; http://www.mnisw.gov.pl; http://www.eures.praca.gov.pl

Institutional Framework for VET (levels: national, regional, district, local level)

The management and administration of the education system, including the VET system, has a 4-level structure resulting from the administrative division of the country.

NATIONAL LEVEL

The educational policy is formulated and implemented centrally at the level of the Ministry of National Education. The Minister of National Education, by means of regulations and detailed arrangements, creates a legal framework for functioning of all educational establishments, including vocational education and training. The Minister of National Education co-operates with other branch ministers supervising vocational schools: the Minister of Culture and National Heritage (artistic schools), the Minister of Agriculture (agricultural schools) and the Minister of Environment (forestry schools). The Minister of National Education accepts the curricula and approves the textbooks that can be used in both general and vocational education. Furthermore, the Minister of National Education partly supervises the operation of school superintendents (*kurators*). The main institutional platform for social partners' involvement in VET at national level is the Tripartite Commission on Socio-Economic Issues (*Komisja Trojstronna ds. Spoleczno-Gospodarczych*) established by resolution of the Council of Ministers of 15th February 1994. The Tripartite Commission is composed of representatives of public administration, employers (e.g. Business Centre Club, Confederation of Polish Employers, Polish Confederation of Private Employers, Association of Polish Crafts and the National Chamber of Commerce), the largest trade unions (*NSZZ Solidarnosc, OPZZ* and Trade Unions' Forum) as well as some sectoral trade unions. All these organisations function in 2 capacities in the VET field: both as consultative bodies and as initiators of legal measures. Another body for social dialogue at national level is the Central Employment Board (*Naczelna Rada Zatrudnienia*) which fulfils an advisory role to the Minister of Labour. It consists of representatives of public administration, employers' organisations, trade unions and representatives of territorial self-governments. It is consulted on, amongst other things, issues concerning training for unemployed people, programmes promoting employment, planning and use of the Labour Fund (state purpose fund).

REGIONAL LEVEL

The regional authorities (*wojewodztwa*) mainly play a co-ordinating role: they supervise the implementation of the national policy and provide pedagogical supervision. The representative of the educational authority at this level is a school superintendent (*kurator*), who is appointed by the head of the regional government (*wojewoda*). The regional authorities also run schools and educational establishments of regional significance, including schools for medical staff and social workers, public establishments for teacher training and development, as well as teachers' libraries. Regional commissions for social dialogue consist of representatives of regional administration, employers' organisations, trade unions and representatives of regional government. Sometimes the representatives of district governments are invited to the meetings. The commissions meet at least once every three

months and discuss social and economic matters crucial for the region, including questions of education organisation and financing.

DISTRICT LEVEL

The district authorities (*powiaty*) and their heads (*starosta*) are in charge of managing upper secondary education (including vocational education), post-secondary schools and special schools (primary and secondary), sports schools and schools of sports mastery, practical and continuing education centres, psychological and pedagogical centres. At regional and district levels, regional and district employment boards take actions to achieve full employment in the region, evaluate the management of the Labour Fund, submit applications and give opinions on VET

LOCAL LEVEL

In Poland, the local level is the municipality (*gmina*). All kindergartens, primary schools and lower secondary schools (*gymnasium*) are run by local governments. At the level of a school or an educational establishment, the headmaster, elected in a competition for a 5-year period, is the person responsible for management. He/She chooses curricula realised in the school, provides pedagogical supervision, hires and dismisses personnel. In enterprises, social partner involvement in vocational education is mostly through either the organisation of practical training or of working placements for vocational education students based on agreements concluded between employers and particular schools, or organising vocational training under the apprenticeship scheme[50].

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[50] More in: VET in Europe. Country Report-Poland 2011. Refernet – Cedefpop, http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/PL_2011_VET_in_Europe_CR.pdf

THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

NATIONAL LEVEL

• **The Minister of National Education**

- formulates educational policy,
- creates a legal framework for functioning of all educational establishments, including vocational education and training,
- manages the national budget for education,
- sets out the core curricula for general and vocational education,
- accepts the curricula for particular subjects,
- approves the textbooks used in both general and vocational education,
- partly supervises the operation of school superintendents (kurators)

• **The Board of National Education (consultative body)**

- co-operates with the Minister of National Education in formulating educational policy for higher education
- gives opinions to the proposed directions of changes in education,
- consults the proposals of legislative acts,
- provides the suggestions of reforms in education.

• **Institutions of Social Dialogue**

- consult the proposals of legislative acts,
- gives opinions in issues concerning vocational education, training for unemployed people, programmes promoting employment.

REGIONAL LEVEL

• **The Regional Authorities represented by School Superintendent (kurator)**

- supervise the implementation of the national policy
- provide pedagogical supervision for educational establishments in the region,
- run schools and educational establishments of regional significance, including schools for medical staff and social workers, public establishments for teacher training and development, as well as teachers' libraries.

• **Institutions of Social Dialogue**

- give opinions concerning VET in the region,
- consult questions of educational organization and financing.

DISTRICT LEVEL

• **Institutions of Social Dialogue – District Employment Boards, (consultative bodies)**

- give opinions concerning VET in the district,

• **The District Authorities (powiaty) represented by their heads (starosta)**

- are in charge of managing upper secondary education (including vocational education),
- run post-secondary schools and special schools (primary and secondary), sports schools and schools of sports mastery,
- manage practical and continuing education centres,
- are in charge of psychological and pedagogical assistance centres.

LOCAL LEVEL

• **Local self-governments (gmina)**

- are in charge of managing lower secondary education,
- run primary schools,
- are in charge of pre-school education (kindergartens).

SCHOOL LEVEL

• **The headmaster of a school or educational establishment**

- chooses curricula,
- provides pedagogical supervision,
- hires and dismisses personnel,
- manages the school budget.

National education level - quantitative data

The following tables will provide an overview of the national educational levels and important key figures for VET in Poland.

Economic activity rate fir population aged +15 by level of education (in 4Q; in %)

Level of education	Total economy activity rate	
	2009	2010
Higher (ISCED 5-6)	80,7	80,6
Secondary vocational* (ISCED 4)	66,9	67,8
Secondary general (ISCED 3A)	47,0	48,1
Basic vocational (ISCED 3C)	63,9	62,9
Lower secondary, primary and incomplete primary (ISCED 1-2)	19,1	18,6
Total	55,5	55,0

*including post-secondary non tertiary schools

Source: http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_PL.pdf

Employment rates by age groups and highest level education attained (%)

Level of education	Employment rate by age group and highest level of education attained (%), 2003,2006,2009								
	2003			2006			2009		
	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64	15-24	25-49	50-64
Higher (ISCED 5-6)	57.3	89.3	63.0	55.8	88.9	65.8	52.6	89.4	67.8
Secondary vocational*, secondary general and basic vocational (ISCED 3-4)	32.9	69.9	40.9	37.0	73.2	41.4	41.4	77.0	47.5
Lower secondary, primary and incomplete primary (ISCED 0-2)	6.6	50.5	27.3	6.2	51.0	29.0	6.4	54,5	29,6
Total for +15 age group	21.2	70.7	38.9	24.0	74.4	41.5	26.3	78.9	47.0

*including post-secondary non tertiary schools

Graduates at ISCED level 3 and level 4 by level of education, programme orientation and sex (numbers), 2007 and 2009

Year		2007						2009					
GEO	S	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC	3 GEN	3 PV	3 VOC	4 GEN	4 PV	4 VOC
PL	T	340148	:	192576	:	:	82542	308805	:	200576	:	:	74273
	F	141790	:	119463	:	:	33446	124062	:	125817	:	:	30311
	M	198358	:	73113	:	:	49096	184743	:	74759	:	:	43962
EU 27*	T	2393291	:	2595569	49493	:	424537	2319746	:	2480373	:	:	394682
	F	1022202	:	1400317	23958	:	194372	995733	:	1344532	:	:	188195
	M	1371089	:	1195251	25535	:	230165	1324013	:	1135842	:	:	206487

Available total – calculated by Cedefop;

S= sex; M=males; F=females; T= total; GEN=general; PV=pre-vocational; VOC=vocational

Eurostat original label: educ_grad2-Graduates in ISCED 3 and 4 by age and sex

Link to data: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_grad2&lang=en

Further selections: Level=ISCED 3 general, ISCED 3 prevocational, ISCED 3 vocational, ISCED 4

general, ISCED 4 prevocational, ISCED4 vocational, sex =Total, male, female, age =total

Link to metadata: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/EN/educ_esms.htm

AGE=Total; INDICATORS= OBS_FLAG

Source: http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_PL.pdf

IVET at lower secondary level

Name of IVET programme	Admission requirements	Main economic sectors	Corresponding ISCED level and orientation/destination	Balance between general and vocational subjects [%]	Balance between school and work-based training [%]	Average duration of studies	Acces to (horisontal /vertical) to other pathways
Lower secondary schools*	Positive decision of school headmaster, following a resolution of the teachers' board, with the consent of parents and upon consultation with a doctor or a counselling centre.	Similar as in basic vocational schools	2 A	85:15 (**)	85:15 (***)	3	Basic vocational schools, General secondary schools, Profiled general secondary schools, Technical secondary schools, Special schools

* work preparation classes concern only 1.35% of the total lower secondary population and are addressed to pupils reaching the age of 15 with learning and truancy problems

** this percentage concerns only work preparation classes

***this percentage concerns only work preparation classes and participation in Voluntary Labour Corps

Source: http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_PL.pdf

IVET at upper secondary level (mainly school-based)

Name of IVET programme	Admission requirements	Main economic sectors	Corresponding ISCED level/ destination	Balance between general and vocational subjects	Balance between school and workbased training	Average duration of studies	Acces to (horisontal /vertical) to other pathways
Profiled general secondary schools	Apply to all IVET programmes: completion of the lower secondary school (*gimnazjum)*. Other criteria usually comprised in the school statute. They may concern the number of points obtained at the final *gimnazjum* exam, a pupil's marks in Polish language and three other compulsory subjects and his special achievements.	• Chemical tests of environment • Business and administration • Forestry and wood technology • Fashion design • Shaping the environment • Mechanical techniques of productions • Mechatronics • Electronics • Electrotechnics • Agricultural and food processing • Art and usable metal craft • Social • Transport and dispatching • Services and economies • Information management • Ordinance of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 26 Feb 2002	3 A	87 / 13 %		3	Postsecondary schools, Tertiary education courses subject to passing of the maturity examination

| Basic vocational schools | | • Agriculture
• Horticulture
• Forestry
• Fishing
• Mining
• Construction
• Metalworking
• Mechanics of machines
3 C 47 / 53 % 40 / 60 % 2-3 Supplementary technical school, supplementary general secondary school
59
• Toolmaking, smithery
• Electricity and electronics
• Ceramics, accessories, printing
• Classification of VET Occupations | 3 C | 47 / 53 % | 40 / 60 % | 2-3 | Supplementary technical school, supplementary general secondary school |
| Supplementary technical secondary schools | | • Mining
• Construction
• Engineering
• Chemistry
• Economy
• Administration
• Electronics
• Electrotechnics
• Sea transport, inland navigation
• Mechanics
• Mechatronics | 3 A | | From 25 % / 75 % (*) to 75 % / 25 % | 3 | Tertiary education courses subject to passing of the maturity examination |

		• Agriculture • Textiles • Transport • Information management • Classification of VET Occupations					
Technical secondary schools		• Mining • Construction • Engineering • Chemistry • Economy • Administration • Electronics • Electrotechnics • Sea transport, inland navigation • Mechanics • Mechatronics • Agriculture • Textiles • Transport • Information management • Classification of VET Occupations	3 A	64 / 36 %	From 20 % / 80 % for such profession as Tuner to 75 % / 25 % (**)	4	Tertiary education courses subject to passing of the maturity examination

** e.g. optical Technician or Technician - clothing industry

** e.g. Technician - water engineering or Technician - railway roads and bridge building

Source: http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_PL.pdf

Students in upper secondary education by programme orientation, 2009

Countriess	Total ISCED 3	Vocational programmes as a percentage of total ISCED 3		
		Vocational (%)	Pre-vocational (%)	Vocational and pre-vocational (%)
EU27	20 633 767	47.0	:	47.0
PL	1 837 850	47.2	:	47.2

Source: Eurostat, UOE data collection extracted on 19-05-2011; last update: 13-05-2011; http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_PL.pdf

Public and non-public schools for children and young people, including special schools

Type of school	Number of Schools	Pupils (in thousands)
Primary schools	13922	2191,6
Lower secondary schools	7278	1261,4
General upper secondary school	2447	634,5
Basic vocational schools Technical upper secondary schools Specialised upper secondary schools	4520	820,6
Post-secondary schools and colleges*	2941	298,8

*Post-secondary schools for young people and adults, including colleges – day, evening and extramural courses.

Source: http://www.eurydice.org.pl/sites/eurydice.org.pl/files/system2012.pdf

Number of schools for adults and students in these schools

Type of school	Number of schools	Number of students
Primary school	5	237
Lower secondary school	164	16092
General upper secondary school	2599	218316
Basic vocational school	112	5552
Technical upper secondary school/specialised upper secondary school	863	48974
Total	3743	289171

Source: http://www.eurydice.org.pl/sites/eurydice.org.pl/files/system2012.pdf

Changes in the number of pupils attending upper secondary general education and vocational schools for youths (in thousands), 2010
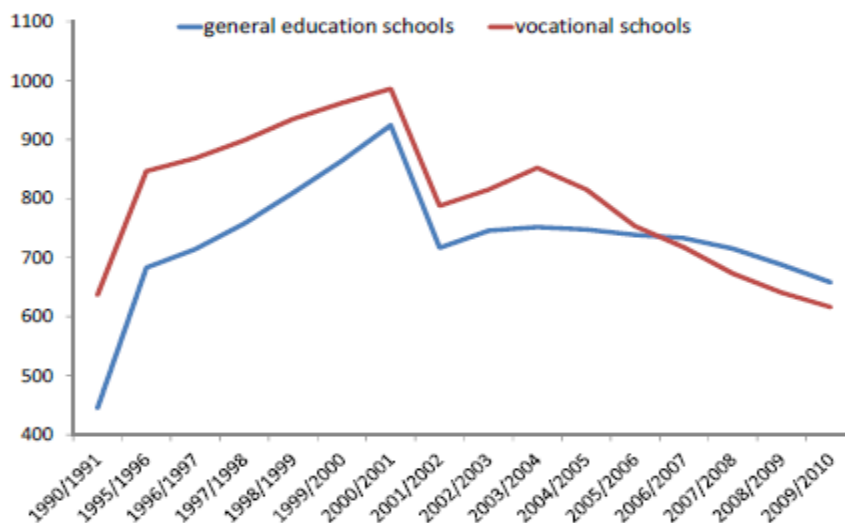
Source: http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_PL.pdf

Changes in number of persons attending schools for adults with a general education or vocational profile (in thousands)
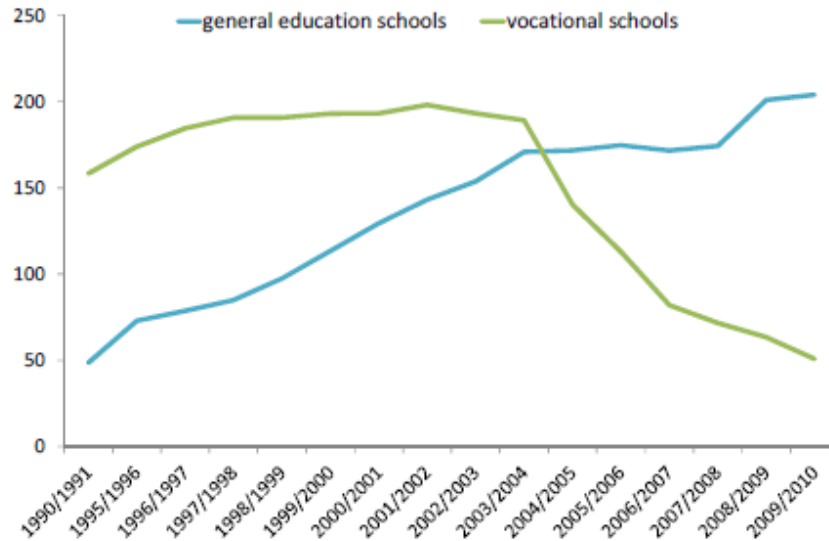
Source: http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_PL.pdf

More quantitative data related with system of education in Poland and national VET system are available in Country Report published by Cedefop Refernet Poland.

Quality assurance system for each level

The whole Polish reform of vocational education and professional examinations is dedicated for increasing the quality of education.

The quality of vocational education in Poland is related to the exiting model of school supervision. A new regulation came into force as of the school year 2009/2010. The Minister of National Education in communication with the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Minister of the Environment, the Minister of Infrastructure, the Minister of the Interior and Administration, and the Minister of National Defence signed the Regulation on pedagogic supervision. The goal of this solution is to strengthen the system of pedagogic supervision including in particular analysis and assessment of the quality of education activities of schools and institutions. Pedagogic supervision should contribute to improvement of the education system.

According to the Education System Act, pedagogic supervision includes:
1) assessment of the status and conditions of teaching, education and care activities of schools, institutions and teachers;
2) analysis and assessment of the results of teaching, education and care as well as other statutory activities of schools and institutions;
3) support for schools, institutions and teachers in their teaching, education and care activities;
4) inspiring teachers for pedagogic, methodological and organisational innovation.

Pedagogic supervision is to be exercised in a planned manner but it can also be performed on an ad hoc basis, in compliance with the principle of transparency of requirements and the principle of collecting information about schools and institutions from many sources, including information obtained in the course of supervision exercised by the headmaster of the school or the director of the institution.

The main goals of the system of pedagogic supervision set out in the Regulation include:
- to enable school faculty (headmasters and teachers) to work effectively on improving the quality of work of schools and institutions by providing them with information about quality;
- to provide information and tools necessary to test the compliance of schools and institutions with the requirements set out in the Regulation;
- to enable analyses of the quality of work of schools and institutions.

A fundamental principle of the new system of pedagogic supervision is the identification of three supervisory tasks of supervisory authorities including school superintendents, namely:
1) to evaluate education activity of schools and institutions;
2) to check compliance with regulations concerning teaching, education and care activities of schools, institutions and teachers;
3) to support schools, institutions and teachers in their teaching, education and care as well as other statutory activities.

The evaluation of education activity of schools and institutions is a practical test to determine the degree of compliance of a school or institution with the national requirements on the basis of an assessment of processes and results of teaching, education and care activities as well as conditions of a school or institution, its quality of management and its interaction with the environment. Evaluation performed by the authority of pedagogic supervision is external evaluation. Evaluation performed by the headmaster of the school or the director of the institution is internal evaluation.

External evaluation will include:
- collecting and analysing information about education activity of a school or institution;
- evaluating the degree of compliance of a school or institution with the requirements set out in the Regulation by the minister responsible for education.

The requirements are set out under four areas of activity of schools and institutions:
1) effects of teaching, education and care as well as other statutory activities of a school or institution;
2) processes in a school or institution;
3) interaction of a school or institution with the local environment, in particular relations with students' parents;
4) management of a school or institution.

External evaluation of a school or institution aims to determine the degree of compliance with the requirements where:
1) level A – means a very high level of compliance of a school or institution with a requirement;
2) level B – means a high level of compliance of a school or institution with a requirement;
3) level C – means a medium level of compliance of a school or institution with a requirement;
4) level D – means a basic level of compliance of a school or institution with a requirement;
5) level E – means a low level of compliance of a school or institution with a requirement.

Evaluation is to be performed in all areas of activity of a school or institution (comprehensive evaluation) or only in selected thematic areas of activity of a school or institution (thematic evaluation). As a result of performed evaluation of a school or institution, the authority of pedagogic supervision prepares a report describing the level of compliance of the school or institution with each requirement. Thus, a report does not contain overall assessment of the school but rather assessment of the degree of compliance with each requirement subject to evaluation. The new model of pedagogic supervision is supported by a system project of the Human Capital Operational Programme (Priority III, Measure 3.1, Sub-measure 3.1.2) "Programme improving the effectiveness of the system of pedagogic supervision and evaluation of the quality of work of schools" implemented by the Ministry of National Education in 2009-2010. One of the existing means of testing the degree of preparation of students for the labour market is the examination confirming vocational qualifications, which evaluates knowledge and skills necessary for an occupation acquired by school graduates. Based on the experience of several years of practice of the education system and employers, MEN has taken measures to modernise the system of external examinations confirming vocational qualifications. The implemented change consists mainly in

the possibility of confirming each individual qualification of an occupation acquired by a student in the education process and the issuance of a certificate confirming the qualification. On the confirmation of all individual qualifications for an occupation, the school graduate will receive a diploma and a supplement to the diploma. The proposed change will strengthen the practical aspect of vocational examinations at the technical secondary level, develop an IT databank of examination tests, and eliminate the seasonal cycle of examinations (currently only two sessions, in winter and in summer) to be replaced with vocational examinations held by examination centres all year round. System projects modernising vocational examinations will also improve the quality of vocational education. The quality of vocational education is also a result of existing curricula. Unfortunately, no research is available to evaluate the curricula and textbooks used in vocational education. In particular, vocational schools face a major challenge of combining general education providing adequate general vocational and social skills necessary for social life with skills necessary for an occupation. A new challenge is posed by development of new core curricula of vocational education and implementation of modular curricula and educational packages complementing the curricula. This segment of qualitative change in vocational education will be supported by the following system projects under HC OP:

- *Improving core curricula as a the key to modernisation of vocational education (2008-2013).*
- *System of support for schools and educational institutions implementing modular curricula of vocational education (2009-2013).*
- *Modernisation of examinations confirming vocational qualifications (2010-2013).*

In order to ensure high quality of training for the unemployed and job seekers, the Promotion of Employment and Labour Market Institutions Act delegates to the minister responsible for labour the task of developing national vocational qualifications standards based on the requirements of job positions and employers as well as developing modular curricula of vocational training. The gradually developed qualifications standards and training modules are available in a public database open to employers free of charge for use in their enterprises. New labour market instruments have been introduced to enable some degree of monitoring of the quality of training for the unemployed and job seekers: a financial award for training institutions for high quality of services as expressed by high employability of graduates after training, and registration of training institutions by voivodship labour offices. Few institutions offering training for the unemployed hold ISO 9001 quality certificates. Quality of modular training is also assured by means of "peer accreditation" of training institutions and programmes by the Polish Network of Modular Education (PSKM). The efforts of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MPiSP) to develop a quality assurance system of training for the unemployed and job seekers are supported by HC OP Priority I: "Employment and social integration", Measure 1.1: "System support of labour market institutions." The timetable of qualitative change includes among others:

- 2008: Council of Ministers approves a draft amendment of the Promotion of Employment and Labour Market Institutions Act (the amendment aims at improvement of the quality of training) – introduction of a new instrument of activation: vocational training of adults.
- 2009: new regulation on the new instrument: vocational training of adults, amendment of the regulation on placements of the unemployed.
- 2010: amendment of the classification of occupations and specialties – adjustment of the new classification to the new ILO standard ISCO 08 and issuance of a new regulation.

- 2008 – 2011: modernisation of the IT tools

Promoting excellence in VET

Initiatives taken by the Minister of Education in order to improve the quality of education services, especially in the out-of-school system, are reflected in the Education System Act, which has introduced a system of accreditation of institutions offering education in out-of school forms. Accreditation is an external means of quality assurance of the education process and its results. If an institution enters the accreditation process, it is on track to quality. Accreditation is voluntary. According to the Act, accreditation is a competence of the school superintendents. The Minister of National Education and Sport has defined in a regulation specific rules for accreditation including the specific terms and mode of granting and withdrawing accreditation of continuing education institutions, practical education institutions and further vocational education and training centres, offering initial vocational education in out-of-school forms, and institutions performing education activities managed pursuant to regulations on economic activity. Institutions eligible for accreditation must offer education within the scope defined in the accreditation application for at least one year, in out-of-school forms listed in the application, including not less than 30 hours of education; it should also implement and disseminate innovative curricula and methodological and organisational solutions enhancing the quality of offered education.

An institution is eligible for accreditation if:
- it has necessary infrastructure equipped with teaching facilities;
- it employs qualified personnel;
- it develops and distributed methodological and teaching materials.

The accreditation process involves a team of evaluators who assess the institution applying for accreditation. The team includes representatives of school superintendents as well as external parties: representatives of employers and labour offices. This ensures objectivity and impartiality of evaluation as well as closer correlation of education with the needs of the labour market and expectation of employers. Thus, the teams provide external evaluation and recommendation to school superintendents.

Accreditation of an institution ensures:
- improved quality of provided services;
- higher confidence in the training institution;
- enhanced competitiveness on the education services market;
- higher marketing potential;
- better motivation of employees to improve qualifications;
- focus of the institution on achievement of set standards;
- higher prestige of the institution;
- -extended training offer.

Benefits to clients of accredited institutions include:
- credits from vocational training can be transferred to schools for adults offering vocational education;
- access to high quality education services;
- better employability;
- obtaining a training certificate issued by a recognised institution;
- educational obligation can be performed in out-of-school forms.

Thanks to accreditation applications, school superintendents have detailed information on the type and quality of education services provided by continuing education institutions. Poviat labour offices which select training providers can take into account their accreditation. In particular, continuing education institutions accredited by a school superintendent may be entered in the register of training institutions maintained by the voivodship labour office. Registration is obligatory for training institutions which apply for benefits from the Labour Fund or the National Rehabilitation Fund for the Disabled for training of the unemployed and job seekers according to Article 20 of the Promotion of Employment and Labour Market Institutions Act. Employers interested in improving the qualifications of their employees can commission training from accredited institutions which ensure a high quality of offered services. Employers who hire an employee may take into account certificates of out-of-school education from such institutions. Quality assurances of vocational education and training is also supported by the Lifelong Learning Programme. This includes among others the Leonardo da Vinci programme (mobility) project "Exchange of experience of vocational education and training professionals" (VETPRO). In Leonardo da Vinci programme projects, the term "exchange" refers to transfer of knowledge, experience and innovative methods and practices of vocational education and training. Experience exchange projects include foreign visits of vocational education and training professionals and training of employees of training institutions and enterprises. Such projects aim at transferring interesting foreign solutions to Poland and at improvement and modernisation of vocational training methods. Experience exchange projects give participants an opportunity of personal development help to improve vocational education and training systems by introducing new solutions in the home institution.

The Polish Chamber of Training Providers (PIFS),45 established in 2005, has recently contributed to promotion and improvement of the quality of vocational training. PIFS provides information and opinions about the situation on the training market and changes in legal regulations applicable to the sector. The leading media regularly ask the opinion of PIFS representatives and experts about training of adults, co-financing of training from EU funds, the professional status of trainers, etc. This position of PIFS is a result of hard voluntary work of members of the Chamber. Their professionalism is appreciated by government institutions, local governments and other organisations. PIFS integrates the training providers community around its mission and goals. After years of lobbying, PIFS representatives are now members of many groups of consultation of issues relevant to the community of training providers. The Chamber has built lasting relations and partnerships with the key ministries, their agencies (e.g., PARP – Polish Agency for Enterprise Development) and local governments. The Chamber is a real representation of the sector. Regional Representatives in 10 voivodships are building local structures of PIFS; in some cases they are active in Monitoring Sub-committees of HC OP within the Marshal Offices. PIFS has

developed a Code of Best Practice observed by Chamber members. PIFS has also developed Poland's first Glossary of Training Terms and continues to promote it in the media. PIFS cooperates with organisations of enterprises in the Polish Chamber of Commerce (since 2006) and employers in the Confederation of Private Employers Lewiatan as a partner. The Polish Chamber of Training Providers groups over 300 training institutions (February 2009) from all over Poland and new members join every month. Its member training providers represent all regions, including both large cities and small towns. 140 Centres of Excellence (CE) have been established in Poland (mainly at universities) under the EU Firth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP5).

Their mission is:
- to promote the best Polish research centres in the EU;
- to develop international cooperation within the European Research Area;
- to increase the role of science and research as a driver of the competitiveness of the Polish economy;
- to strengthen the links between research and practice stimulating new innovative
- solutions;
- -to strengthen cooperation of science teams pursuing similar research goals;
- to strengthen the national innovation system by creating strong research and implementation structures.

Most of the Centres of Excellence also disseminate knowledge by organising seminars, courses and conferences and publishing monographic studies and articles. Centres of Excellence are research institutions or organisational units engaged in scientific research and developing state-of-the-art technologies at the top global level. They group research teams with an outstanding track record of achievements, which cooperate in joint areas, perform joint research and technology projects, cooperate closely with the industry, and offer training and education. In principle, Centres of Excellence should enjoy organisational independence, but they must be organised around a recognised research centre (for example, a unit of the Polish Academy of Sciences, a higher school, or a research and development institution). The Centres of Excellence programme does not provide for creation of new research institutions; instead, a Centre is a "laboratory" closely cooperating with the industry or other research centres. Centre of Excellence researchers focus on strategic areas and use the infrastructure of several institutions operating under joint scientific and organisational leadership, and they enjoy relatively much autonomy. In the system controlled by the Minister of Education which includes schools for adults, continuing education institutions, practical training centres and further training centres, the pedagogical supervision is performed by school headmasters and school superintendents (Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 23rd April 2004, on detailed provisions governing pedagogical supervision, qualifications indispensable for performing pedagogical supervision as well as qualifications of the persons who can be ordered to conduct a survey and develop expertise). The model of supervision is based on the concept of "measuring the school work quality" which, in turn, is based on quality standards and indexes which are developed for the whole country by the Minister of National Education. The school or educational institution's work quality is measured internally by the school principal every year. External measurements are carried out by the school superintendents– at least

once in 5 years. The school superintendent can withdraw from measuring the school or institution's work quality if the school or institution has documents confirming implementation of the quality management and quality assurance systems. The quality of education in the schools for adults which educate in a specific vocation should be assured also within the framework of the external assessment system, similarly to the school system for youngsters. External vocational examinations aim at confirming vocational qualifications acquired during the course of school education. They are based

on examination requirement standards established by the Central Examination Commission and conducted by Territorial Examination Commissions. From the point of view of quality assurance in continuing education institutions which provide continuing education in out-of-school forms, article 68b of the Education System Act is essential. Pursuant to the provisions included in the Act, both public and non-public institutions can apply for accreditation which will refer to the whole or a part of the education provided. Accreditation is awarded by the school superintendent competent for the seat of the institution. However, the accreditation, introduced in 2003 is voluntary, therefore the out-of-school establishments providing education in compliance with the principles of free business activity are able to escape any control over the standard of services rendered by them[51].

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[51] http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2010/vetpolicy/2010_NPR_PL.pdf

Identification of target group for EXPANDVET project - types of VET providers

It should be noted that there is no explicit assignment of VET providers to certain levels of NQF. An indication of specific types of providers, can be done only on the basis of descriptors and comparison the core curriculum of vocational education.

Due to the fact, that NQF in Poland are still being developed, for the need of Expandvet project, as a target group we identify, providers of competences from Levels 3,4,5:

• Upper Secondary vocational education and training

• Post Secondary non-tertiary vocational education and training

• Higher vocational education

• Further education and training

• Apprentiship training

These aspects are represented by IVET and CVET providers in Poland.

Introductory vocational training in Poland is integrated with the national educational system where two levels of vocational schools exist :

Zasadnicze szkoły zawodowe (basic vocational schools) – prepare qualified workers (a title equal to czeladnik (apprentice) in apprenticeship, for the fundamental branches of economy. The education lasts 2 to 3 years (vocational training takes up 1260–1800 hours, out of which 60% is devoted to practical training). Graduation from basic vocational school enables further education on secondary level in supplementary secondary general schools or supplementary technical secondary schools.

Średnie szkoły zawodowe (vocational secondary schools) include: technika (technical secondary schools - last 4 years, around 1800 hours of vocational training), technika uzupełniające (supplementary technical secondary schools - 1224 hours of vocational training), new type of school – liceum profilowane (profiled secondary school) which offers pre- vocational training aimed at particular discipline (486 hours), although there is a current debate whether this type of school shouldn't be given up.

Continuing education takes place in "schools for adults, continuing education centres (CKU), practical training centres (CKP), vocational upgrading and further education centres and in higher education

/research institutions offering post-diploma studies, courses and distance learning. Continuing education is also provided by chambers of crafts [52].”

Part 4 – Poland. National Report - References

Links:

Overview on national education system – Poland 2012/2013, available at:

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Poland:Overview

The system of education in Poland in 2012, available at:

http://www.eurydice.org.pl/system_edukacji_w_polsce

A.Chłoń-Domińczak, H.Dębowski, S.Sławiński – NQF Development on Poland, available at:

http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/Poland_NQF_development.pdf

Matching Models and Tools for Certifying and Highlighting Informal and Formal Experiences in Vocational Training and Guidance. The system of Evaluation and Certification of competences in Poland. National Report, available at:

http://www.adam-europe.eu/prj/4501/prj/Report%20POLAND.pdf

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, available at:

http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Index.aspx

The National Centre for Supporting Vocational and Continuing Education, available at:

http://www.ksztalceniemodulowe-koweziu.pl/o-ksztalceniu-modulowym/akty-prawne.html?start=2

Ministry of Education - Vocational and Continuing Education Section, available at:

http://www.men.gov.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=291&Itemid=385

Ministry of Science and Higher Education – Legal Acts

http://www.nauka.gov.pl/ministry/legal-acts/

Eures Poland – Educational System in Poland 2012

http://www.eures.praca.gov.pl/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=85&Itemid=118

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[52] http://www.eqavet.eu/gns/what-we-do/implementing-the-framework/poland.aspx

VET in Europe, Country Report-Poland

http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/PL_2011_VET_in_Europe_CR.pdf

A bridge to the future European policy for vocational education and training 2002-10. National policy report – Poland
http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2010/vetpolicy/2010_NPR_PL.pdf

Introduction to the VET system in Poland

http://www.eqavet.eu/gns/what-we-do/implementing-the-framework/poland.aspx

Others useful links:

www.standardyiszkolenia.praca.gov.pl

http://www.kwalifikacje.edu.pl/images/download/Media/MaterialyPrasowe/broszury_ulotki/broszura_ang.pdf

https://www.men.gov.pl/images/stories/pdf/raporty/raport%20koncowy_tematyczny_final.pdf

http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/4105_en.pdf

http://www.qualificationsrecognition.ie/poland-QualityAssurance.html

http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdf-versions/Poland.pdf

http://www.bwm.ukw.edu.pl/files/PLNationalReport.pdf

http://www.emcet.net/download/products/description/pdf/modular_education_and_training_in_poland.pdf

Part 5 – United Kingdom National Report

Description of general structure of national education level

The United Kingdom (UK) is a union of Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) and Northern Ireland. For education and training, the UK has a devolved system of governance. There are differences and similarities between the education and training systems of Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and England. Scotland in particular has an education system with a long history of independence from other parts of the UK.

As part of examining the national structures for education it is important to understand some of the terms as used in the UK – and some of these are listed in **Annex 1** on page 30.

Skills development and lifelong learning are a responsibility of the Devolved Governments of the UK - all four countries prioritise increasing skill levels of the current and future workforce and have identified priorities in lifelong and adult learning.

European VET matters are progressed cooperatively across the four nations and experiences are shared through a UK VET coordination group which includes Government representatives, qualifications regulators, higher education and employer representatives, among others.

The following is a summary of the key elements of the education system, with references to particular countries where appropriate:
Central government has overall responsibility for the education system in England (The Welsh and Northern Ireland Governments in their parts of the UK), but responsibility for the provision of education is decentralised, lying with local authorities, voluntary providers including churches, the governing bodies of educational institutions and the teaching profession.

Overall responsibility for the education service lies with the Department for Education (DfE) and with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), (The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in Wales and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) in Northern Ireland). DfE responsibilities include planning and monitoring the education service in schools and early years settings, ensuring the provision of integrated services for children, and bringing together policy relating to children and young people. BIS is responsible for science and innovation, skills, further and higher education and enterprise.

The Education Funding Agency (EFA) is involved in the funding of education and training in schools and colleges up to age 19. It directly funds academies (public-sector independent schools) and passes funding to local authorities for maintained schools. The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) is responsible for funding and commissioning post-19 education and training. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) (the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) in Wales and the Northern Ireland Higher Education Council (NIHEC) in Northern Ireland) is responsible for funding in higher education. The direct costs of specific research projects are funded by the UK Research Councils which have a remit across the UK.

Ofsted, the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, is responsible for the inspection and regulation of day care and children's social care, and the inspection of children's services,

schools, colleges, initial teacher training, youth work, work-based learning and adult education. (In Wales this responsibility is held by Estyn, the office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales; in Northern Ireland the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI), part of the Department of Education (DE), inspects both schools and further education institutions). At higher education level, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) provides quality assurance services across the UK. It is independent of UK governments and is owned by the organisations that represent the heads of UK higher education institutions.

Local authorities have a duty to secure sufficient suitable education and training opportunities to meet the reasonable needs of all young people in their area. The three core responsibilities of the local authority in education are to ensure a sufficient supply of school places; to tackle underperformance in schools and ensuring high standards; and to support vulnerable children and young people.

Education is compulsory between the ages of 5 and 16 years. The great majority of young people continue with full-time education after the age of 16. The Government is committed to raising the participation age in England to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015, so that all 16 and 17 year-olds participate in education or training. Many post-compulsory secondary programmes are of two years' duration, i.e. for 16- to 18-year-olds however the funding framework applies to 16- to 19-year-olds and for this reason the age bracket 16–18/19 is adopted throughout this section of the report.

Overview of educational phases, years, ages and ISCED levels (The International Standard Classification of Education levels)

	England			Wales			Northern Ireland			
		Years	Ages		Years	Ages		Years	Ages	ISCED
							Pre-Primary	-	3-4	
Early years	Foundation stage	-	3–5	Foundation Phase	Up to Year 2	3-7	Foundation stage	1-2	4-6	0
Primary	Key stage 1	1–2	5–7				Key stage 1	3-4	6-8	1
Primary	Key stage 2	3–6	7–11	Key stage 2	3-6	7–11	Key stage 2	5-7	8-11	1
Secondary	Key stage 3	7–9	11–14	Key stage 3	7–9	11–14	Key stage 3	8-10	11-14	2
Secondary	Key stage 4	10–11	14–16	Key stage 4	10–11	14–16	Key stage 4	11-12	14-16	3
Post-compulsory secondary	-	12–13	16–18/19		12–13	16–18/19		13-14	16-18/19	3

Descriptions of the different levels of education:

Early Childhood Education and Care (Early Years)

In England, the phase of education incorporating early childhood education and care is known as the early years foundation stage (EYFS). Introduced in 2008, the EYFS covers children from birth to age five in what may be known as 'early years', 'nursery', 'pre-school' or 'pre-primary' education. Participation in the early years foundation stage is not compulsory. All three- and four-year-olds are now entitled to 15 hours per week of free education for 38 weeks of the year. This free, part-time provision is available from a broad range of providers in the maintained (fully government-funded), private and voluntary sectors.

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills to progress through school and life.

Primary Education

Primary education forms a separate level of compulsory education, generally covering pupils who have reached, or are approaching, the compulsory school starting age of 5, up to the age of 11. Many children start in the reception class of primary school at age four. Virtually all primary schools are mixed gender. The basic principle underlying compulsory school education is that it should provide a balanced and broadly based curriculum which is suitable to a child's age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs (SEN) which he/she may have. The Education Act 2002 defines a balanced and broadly based curriculum as one which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society
- prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Secondary and Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education

This section covers educational provision for young people aged 11 to 18/19 years. Brief information on vocational programmes and apprenticeships for those aged 16–18/19 are also included. The first five years of secondary education, for pupils aged 11 to 16 years, fall within the period of compulsory education. The institutions that cater for this age range are known as secondary schools. Many secondary schools also provide post-compulsory secondary education for students aged 16 to 18/19 years in units known as 'sixth forms'. 16- to 18/19-year-olds can also attend separate sixth form colleges.

Further education institutions are major providers of full-time programmes for this age group. Programmes available in further education institutions include the same programmes that are available in schools, as well as a wider range of vocational programmes. The choice between types of provider depends in part on the local organisation of provision and in part on individual student choice. Under

the Education and Skills Act 2008 the age for compulsory participation in education or training will be raised to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015.

Pupils aged 11–16 follow the National Curriculum and other statutory subjects as part of the school's wider curriculum. A range of vocational or 'applied' subject options may be available for pupils aged 14–16 years to follow alongside the National Curriculum.

The purpose secondary education is to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and to prepare such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Higher Education

Higher education covers courses providing education above advanced level (EQF Lv 4, Lv 3 in UK) and is mainly delivered through universities and to a lesser extent colleges. Some colleges offer the first 2 years of honours programmes as 'Foundation Degrees' with an opportunity for students to progress to a 3rd year honours 'top-up'. Higher education institutions (HEIs) are diverse, ranging widely in size, mission and history. HEIs are private bodies which are independent of government. The structure of programmes is not regulated by law. Institutions are free to design their own programmes and awards and to determine the conditions on which they awarded, subject to the status of their degree-awarding powers. However, all institutions structure their programmes along broadly similar lines within a three cycle framework, which conforms to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) qualifications framework.

First cycle: First cycle programmes include bachelor's degrees with honours – the largest group of higher education qualifications – and other qualifications at Level 6 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ).

Second cycle: Master's degrees are awarded after completion of taught courses or programmes of research, or a combination of both. Second cycle programme also include short courses and professional 'conversion' courses, usually taken by those who are already graduates in another discipline, leading to, for example, graduate certificates or graduate diplomas at Level 6 of the FHEQ.

Third cycle: All doctoral degrees are expected to meet the generic statement of outcomes set out in the qualification descriptor for doctoral degrees in the FHEQ. Doctoral programmes generally take three to four years full time or five to seven years part time to complete. The majority of doctoral degrees are taken at universities and other higher education institutions. However, there are some opportunities for studying in partnership with a university, in government laboratories, hospital laboratories and research institutions.

Professional Doctorates that combine a research component with a substantial taught core are now available in some vocational areas for those interested in professional rather than academic careers. These lead usually to awards which include the name of the discipline in their title (e.g., EdD for Doctor of Education, DClinPsy for Doctor of Clinical Psychology, EngD or DEng for engineering and DBA for business. Many are accredited by professional bodies and paid for by employers

Programmes outside the Bachelor and Master Structure:

There are also some short higher education programmes, e.g. Higher National Certificates (HNCs) and Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE) at Level 4 of the FHEQ. These programmes typically take one year to complete full-time and are often offered through further education colleges. They are intended to encourage the development of flexible learning paths and in this way to facilitate lifelong learning.

Adult Education and Training

This section deals with programmes and qualifications targeted at adult learners over the age of 19 outside of higher education. It includes both formal and informal learning. With regard to formal learning, a vast range of both general and vocational qualifications is available. In many cases the same qualifications are available to both adult learners and young people under the age of 19.

This broad categories of provision are as follows:

- Skills for life and work including basic skills in literacy, numeracy, ICT and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- General programmes including GCSEs and A levels and Access to Higher Education programmes
- Vocational programme including nationally regulated vocational qualifications
- Work-based programmes including government funded work-based learning programmes.

There is an 'Adult Entitlement to Learning' that enables eligible adults aged 19+ to study for specified qualifications for free, although for Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications learners have to pay exam registration, assessment and certification costs. However, in 12/13 this changes for those aged over 24. In 2013/14 new further education loans will be available to those who wish to do full Level 3 (2 A Levels or the vocational equivalent) or Level 4 (Higher Vocational Education) in order to qualify for a professional job and/or progress to higher education.

Apprenticeships for adults are a current priority of the government which has set out plans to improve apprenticeships, focussing on where they bring the greatest returns and wider benefits, including targeting younger adults, new employees, higher level qualifications and particular sectors where investment will make the greatest impact.

Community learning (formerly known as informal adult and community learning) has recently been the subject of review. The purpose of government supported community learning is to:

- maximise access to community learning for adults, bringing new opportunities and improving lives, whatever people's circumstances
- promote social renewal by bringing local communities together to experience the joy of learning and the pride that comes with achievement
- maximise the impact of community learning on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities.

Source: Adapted from: **Europedia – Overview for England** (including sub-pages)
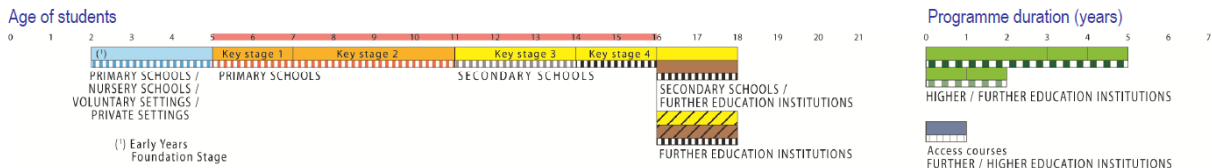**https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:Overview**

Description of the VET system in the UK:

In the UK the a distinction has in the past been made between 'academic' education and 'vocational' training. Traditionally the academic route has been through general 'A levels' (advanced level) at secondary schools or colleges through to higher education in universitities. The vocational training route was largely delivered by 'technical colleges' or colleges of further education and through apprenticeships based in the workplace.
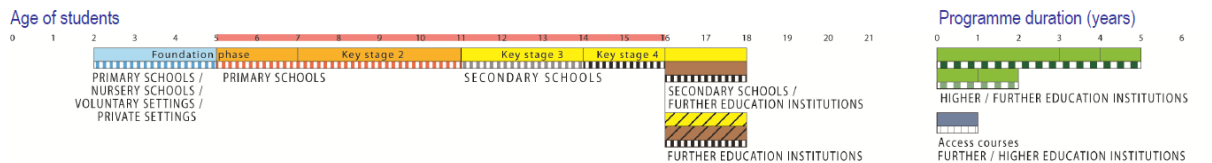
Through a series of reviews and reorganisations of education and training a clearer steer has been provided by successive governments in recent years to prioritise funding of vocational training on programmes that lead into jobs and/or higher education and have a direct impact on improving the nation's productivity and competitiveness. No clear distinction is made in the UK between IVET (Initial VET) and CVET (Continuing VET) (more is said about these in the report under the legislation section). However, there has been a trend towards encouraging more work-related studies in secondary schools and further education colleges will also soon be free to recruit students from age 14, which gives them an opportunity to begin a vocational study programme earlier. There have also been developments in qualifications to provide a pathway for those with vocational qualifications to progress into higher education. This has improved the parity between 'academic' and 'vocational' qualifications.

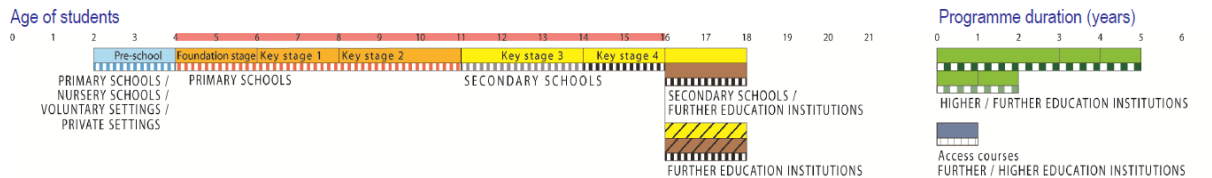**Diagrammatic representations of the structures of education across the UK:**
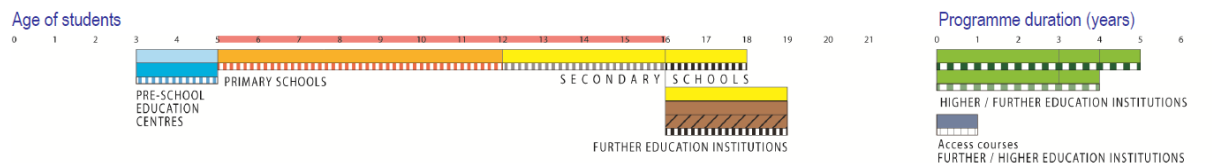
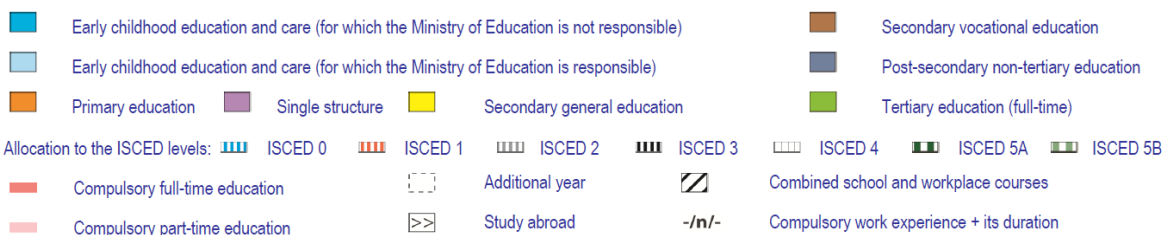### United Kingdom – England

United Kingdom – Wales

United Kingdom – Northern Ireland

United Kingdom – Scotland

Early childhood education and care (for which the Ministry of Education is not responsible)

Early childhood education and care (for which the Ministry of Education is responsible)

Primary education   Single structure   Secondary general education

Secondary vocational education

Post-secondary non-tertiary education

Tertiary education (full-time)

Allocation to the ISCED levels: ISCED 0   ISCED 1   ISCED 2   ISCED 3   ISCED 4   ISCED 5A   ISCED 5B

Compulsory full-time education   Additional year   Combined school and workplace courses

Compulsory part-time education   Study abroad   -/n/-   Compulsory work experience + its duration

Source: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/facts_and_figures/education_structures_EN.pdf

The different levels of VET in the UK fit into the structure for all qualifications (shown in Table in the next section) and the providers engaged at each level are described on the page following.

The government's desire to raise standards of vocational education and training is displayed through what could be called their 'skills agenda'. Whilst it has always been the case that employers have delivered training to their own employees, most government-funded vocational training (and achievement of qualifications) is delivered through colleges and 'private providers' offering vocational qualifictions and/or apprenticeships. The government's wish to see vocational training meeting the needs of employers more effectively is reinforced in the publication 'Rigour and Responsiveness in Skills' – published in April 2013 (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rigour-and-responsiveness-in-skills). In this, the government sets out it's plans for its skills reform programme.

Characteristics of National Qualification Frameworks for Level 3,4,5 according to EQF division

The concept of 'qualifications' in the UK is a rather particular one. In some European countries the term is used to denote a complete set of skills acquired during a phase of education or training (achievement), referring to the instruction and whole experience of that phase as well as to the certificate that results. In the UK, though, the term is generally used rather more narrowly to refer to a certificate attesting to learning or validated attainment.

Five qualifications frameworks are in use among the four parts of the United Kingdom (England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland). They are:

1. Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)
2. National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
3. Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), including the Framework for
    Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland (FQHEIS)
4. Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW)
5. Framework for Higher Education Qualifications for England, Wales and Northern Ireland
    (FHEQ).

Together, these frameworks accommodate the majority of qualifications in use in the various sectors of education, training and lifelong learning in the UK. All feature structures of levels defined in terms of learning outcomes.   A more detailed explanation of the qualification frameworks is available from the Ofqual website (www.ofqual.gov.uk).

Referencing UK Qualifications Frameworks to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
In December 2009, the UK Government on behalf of the Devolved Administrations (Northern Ireland Assembly, Scottish Government and Welsh Assembly Government) submitted a report to the European Commission which referenced the UK frameworks to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The report described the approach taken as follows:

- QCF, CQFW and SCQF are referenced directly to the EQF by a process described in the report
- NQF, as an out-going structure, is not directly referenced to EQF; however, the NQF levels are entirely comparable with the QCF levels so that the referencing of QCF to EQF can be understood as a parallel referencing of NQF
- FHEQ and FQHEIS have been verified as compatible with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA).

Professional Qualifications
Qualifying for many higher-level occupations in the UK involves gaining qualified status through professional membership or regulatory bodies. This qualified status normally takes the form of a membership designation or a chartered or accredited title rather than a certificate or diploma. As such, it is outside the scope of the qualifications frameworks described in this section. However, many

professions use qualifications within the national frameworks as part of their routes towards qualified status.

Source: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:National_Qualifications_Framework

The Frameworks in the UK:

The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)
The QCF focuses on vocational and related qualifications, however, it has been developed to include all qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland other than HE qualifications (which are covered by the FHEQ). The framework comprises Levels 1-8 and an Entry Level (Levels 1-3). It is based on learning outcomes, as well as a system of credit and therefore has wider application as a unit-based credit framework.

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
The NQF was the framework for general and vocational qualifications in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. All vocational qualifications accredited to the QCF will replace the NQF. General educational qualifications – principally the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and the General Certificate of Education at Advanced Level (A Levels) – will continue to be located in the NQF until a decision is made whether or not to move them into the QCF. The NQF and QCF use the same system of Levels (Entry 1-3 and Levels 1-8).

The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF)
The SCQF contains twelve levels, the first three of which are broadly comparable with the Entry Levels in the QCF and CQFW. It makes full use of learning outcomes, units and credits across all types of qualifications and learning programmes. Higher education qualifications are integrated into SCQF in the FQHEIS, which has been verified as compatible with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (the 'Bologna Framework').

The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW)
The CQFW in Wales incorporates the QCF/NQF and FHEQ and is composed of three "pillars"; two (the QCF and the FHEQ) are shared with England and Northern Ireland and the third (Quality Assured Lifelong Learning (QALL)) is distinctive to CQFW. QALL is designed to bring all learning in Wales, which is not already included in the other two pillars, into the Framework. The CQFW has Levels 1-8 and an Entry Level (1-3).

The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)
The FHEQ is a five-level framework for higher education qualifications based on learning outcomes. The five levels are designated 4-8. It is verified as compatible with the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (the 'Bologna Framework').

Links to details of individual frameworks:

England (joint with Northern Ireland) Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) Ofqual www.ofqual.gov.uk
Northern Ireland (joint with England) Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) CCEA www.ccea.org.uk
Scotland Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework SCQF Partnership www.scqf.org.uk
Wales Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales CQFW www.cqfw.net

Source: http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_UK.pdf

Comparisons between EQF levels and the Qualification Frameworks in the UK:

Main stages of education/employment	EQF Level	Qualifications and Credit Framework/National Qualifications Framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. www.ofqual.gov.uk		The Scottish Credit and Qualificaitons Framework www.scqf.org.uk		Credit and Qualification Framework for Wales www.cqfw.net		Framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandards AndQuality/AcademicInfrastructure/Pages /default.aspx	
	Level	Level		Level		Level		Level	
Professional or postgraduate education, research or employment	8	8	Doctoral Degrees Vocational qualifications Level 8	12	Professional Development Awards, Doctoral Degrees	8	Doctoral Degrees	8	Doctoral Degrees
Higher education Advanced skills training	7	7	Postgraduate Diplomas. Master's Degrees, Fellowships, NVQ Level 5, Vocational Qualifications Level 7	11	SQV Level 5, Professional Developmnet Awards, Postgraduate Diplomas. Master's Degrees, Integrated Master's Degrees, Postgraduate Certificates	7	Master's Degrees, Integrated Master's Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas, Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Postgraduate Certificates	7	Master's Degrees, Integrated Master's Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas, Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Postgraduate Certificates
Entry to professional graduate employment	6	6	Bachelor's Degree with Honours, Vocational Qualifications Level 6	10	Bachelor's Degree with Honours, Professional Development Awards, Graduate Diplomas, Graduate Certificates	6	Bachelor's Degree with Honours, Bachelor's Degrees, Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Graduate Diplomas, Graduate Certificates	6	Bachelor's Degree with Honours, Bachelor's Degrees, Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Graduate Diplomas, Graduate Certificates
				9	Bachelor's/Ordinary Degrees Professional Development Awards, SVQ Level 4 Graduate Diplomas, Graduate Certificates			5	Foundation Degrees, Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE) Higher National Diplomas (HND),
Specialised education or training	5	5	NVQ Level 4, Higher National Diplomas (HND), Vocational Qualifications Level 5	8	Higher National Diplomas, SVQ Level 4, Professional Development Awards, Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE)	5	Foundation Degrees, Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE) Higher National Diplomas (HND),	4	Higher National Certificates (HNC), Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE),
		4	Vocational Qualifications Level 4 Higher National Certificates (HNC),	7	Professional Development Awards, Higher National Certificates (HNC), Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE), SVQ Level 3, Advanced Highers	4	Higher National Certificates (HNC), Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE),		
Progression to skilled employment Continuation of secondary education	4	3	NVQ Level 3 Vocational Qualifications Level 3 GCE AS and A Level, Advanced Diplomas	6	Highers, SVQ Level 3, Professional Development Awards, National Progression Awards, National Certificates	3	NVQ Level 3 Vocational Qualifications Level 3 GCE AS and A Level, Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification Advanced		
Progression to skilled employmnet Continuation of secondary education	3	2	NVQ Level 2, Vocational Qualifications Level 2 GCSEs at grade A* to C, ESOL skills for life, Higher Diplomas, Functional Skills Level 2 (English, Maths and ICT)	5	Intermediate 2, Credit Standard Grade, SVQ 2, National Progression Awards, National Certificates	2	NVQ Level 2 Vocational Qualifications Level 2 Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification Intermediate, GCSEs Grade A* - C		
Secondary education Initial entry into employment or further education	2	1	NVQ Level 1, Vocational Qualifications Level 1 GCSEs at grade D to G, ESOL skills for life, Foundation Diplomas, Functional Skills Level 1 (English, Maths and ICT)	4	Intermediate 1, General Standard Grade, Cottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) 1, National Progression Awards, National Certificates	1	NVQ Level 1, Vocational Qualifications Level 1 GCSEs at grade D to G, Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification Foundation		
	1	Entry 3	Entry Level Certificates (sub-level 3)	3	Access 3, Foundation Standard Grades, National Progression Awards, National Certificates	Entry 3	Entry Level Certificates (sub-level 3)		
	No EQF equivalent level	Entry 2	Entry Level Certificates (sub-level 2)	2	Access 2, National Progression Awards, National Certificates	Entry 2	Entry Level Certificates (sub-level 2)		
		Entry 1	Entry Level Certificates (sub-level 1)	1	Access 1	Entry 1	Entry Level Certificates (sub-level 1)		

Description of qualification levels in the UK:

As can be seen from the Table, the different nations of the UK have different numbers of levels. However, in general terms the following summary applies:

- At EQF Level 1 (in England and Wales) these are called 'Entry' qualifications. These qualifications recognise basic knowledge and skills and the ability to apply learning in everyday situations under direct guidance or supervision. Learning at this level involves building basic knowledge and skills and is not geared towards specific occupations.

- At EQF Levels 2 to 4 qualifications recognise the ability to gain, and where relevant apply a range of knowledge, skills and understanding. At level 4 this level involves obtaining detailed knowledge and skills. It is appropriate for people wishing to go to university, people working independently, or in some areas supervising and training others in their field of work. There is considerable freedom for institutions to choose their own mix of qualifications based on how best they want to meet the needs of their students, and the requirements of employers. Apprenticeships are offered at these levels and are work-based programmes each comprising a range of qualifications that all have to be achieved for the apprenticeship to be completed. The main aim of qualifications at these levels is to enable people to progress into work (or <u>in</u> work if it is professional updating) and/or progress into 'higher education'.

- At EQF Level 5 most of the vocational programmes are offered by colleges and universities. Many are available on a part-time study basis to enable people in work to enhance their knowledge and skills whilst still working. Level 5 qualifications recognise the ability to increase the depth of knowledge and understanding of an area of work or study to enable the formulation of solutions and responses to complex problems and situations. Learning at this level involves the demonstration of high levels of knowledge, a high level of work expertise in job roles and competence in managing and training others. Qualifications at this level are appropriate for people working as higher grade technicians, professionals or managers. Level 5 qualifications are at a level equivalent to intermediate Higher Education qualifications such as Diplomas of Higher Education, Foundation and other degrees that do not typically provide access to postgraduate programmes.

- Most programmes at EQF Levels 6 to 8 are offered by universities, although an increasing number of colleges are able to offer Level 6 programmes – usually in partnership with a higher education institution.

Source: Includes some extracts from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Qualifications_Framework

Description of providers of qualifications at levels 3 to 5:

EQF Level 3:

<u>Schools</u> are responsible for planning the whole curriculum experienced by pupils, taking into account the school's particular needs and circumstances. 14–16 secondary education leads to combinations of single subject qualifications, provided by external awarding organisations within a qualifications system common to England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The majority of qualifications offered in this age range are EQF Level 3.

EQF Level 4 and above:

16–19 secondary education is characterised by subject specialisation and a range of providers: sixth forms in **secondary schools** (11 to 18/19), **sixth-form colleges** (16 to 19) in England or **further education**

colleges (16+) in England and Wales. The landscape of providers varies according to local arrangements but all areas provide young people with a wide choice of programmes leading to general/academic, pre-vocational or vocational qualifications. Qualifications are provided by centrally regulated awarding organisations, external to the school or college within a qualifications system common to England, Wales and Northern Ireland. **Secondary schools** and **sixth-form colleges** focus primarily on delivering academic and vocational qualifications at EQF Level 4. **Further Education (FE) Colleges**, however, offer a much wider range of qualifications at all EQF Levels up to Level 5. Many FE colleges offer what is called 'higher education' at EQF levels 5 to 6, either in partnership with Higher Education Institutions (see below) or even in their own right if they have acquired degree-awarding powers. Whereas secondary schools deliver to young people up to the age of 18/19, most further education colleges also cater for adults, either on joint programmes with young people and/or on professional qualifications or non-formal education.

Private Training Providers can offer a wide range of qualifications required in the workplace, but many focus on Apprenticeships – which are now offered at EQF levels 3 to 6. Apprenticeships provide work-based training in a broad range of sectors to people learning new skills and gaining recognised qualifications while they are working. They normally last between one and three years. Apprentices can enter H.E. or employment depending on the successful completion of the corresponding Apprenticeship training. There are now 'Higher Apprenticeships' that are mainly at EQF level 5.

Following the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act 2009, the Specification for Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) was published by BIS and the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) in 2011. It sets out the minimum requirements to be included in a recognised English Apprenticeship framework to which compliance is now a statutory requirement.

Apprentices in England are employed people who are receiving official, structured training, normally delivered one day per week at a vocational provider (FE College or commercial company). The programme is flexible and the employer decides how it is delivered and the content of the course.

EQF Level 5 and above:
Higher education institutions (HEIs) are diverse, ranging widely in size, mission and history. They offer programmes mainly at EQF level 5 and above, although some also deliver 'further education' at lower levels. HEIs are private bodies which are independent of government. They receive their income from a number of sources, including from student fees, through research projects and by generating business. However, they also receive a portion of their income from public funds. The structure of programmes is not regulated by law. Institutions are free to design their own programmes and awards and to determine the conditions on which they awarded, subject to the status of their degree-awarding powers. However, all institutions structure their programmes along broadly similar lines within a three cycle framework, which conforms to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) qualifications framework.

Various EQF levels:

Adult Continuing Education: Policy relating to further education and training for adults focuses on building an internationally competitive skills base. In addition to FE colleges and HEIs adults can also receive training from providers of Adult Community Education (ACL).

Source: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:Overview
Source: Development of national qualifications frameworks in Europe October 2011
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/6112_en.pdf

Examples of courses offered (based on the NQF for England and Wales)

NQF level (EQF level)	Types of VET provider	Short Description	Certification/qualification (examples)
2 (3)	Secondary Schools, FE Colleges and private providers	Secondary schools focus on the General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSEs) and some vocational programmes. FE Colleges offer the widest range of vocational programmes – some linked to Apprenticeships (which are also offered by private providers)	GCSE at grades A*–C in Mathematics, English, Information Technology, History, Geography etc. Level 2 Diploma in Motor Vehicle Maintenance Level 2 Certificate in Construction Level 2 Award in Animal Care Level 2 NVQ in Painting City & Guilds, Level 2 Catering
3 (4)	Secondary Schools, Sixth Form Colleges, FE Colleges and private providers	At this level secondary schools and Sixth Form colleges focus on Advanced Subsidiary (AS) and Advanced (A) Level programmes. FE Colleges offer some 'A' and 'AS' level course too, but also many Level 3 vocational programmes – some linked to Advanced Apprenticeships (which are also offered by private providers)	A Level English, Drama, Music, Law, French etc. AS Level Religious Studies, Mathematics, Spanish, Design and Technology etc. Advanced Diploma in Information Communication Technologies National Diploma Business Administration National Certificate in Environmental Conservation National Award in Engineering Level 3 Diploma Computer Aided Design Level 3 Certificate in Fashion City & Guilds, Level 3 Horticulture NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety. Access to Higher Education Diploma
4 & 5 (5)	FE Colleges, private providers and Universities	At this level colleges run professional qualifications and Foundation Degrees (often in partnership with universities). At universities an ordinary bachelor degree is achievable (typically after 2 years of study), but most degrees offered are at honours level (level 6).	Level 4 Professional Diploma in Management Level 4 Professional Certificate in Leadership International Diploma in Computer Studies Higher National Diploma in Public Servces Higher National Certificate in Painting and Decorating Level 5 Professional Diploma in Management Studies International Advanced Diploma in Computer Studies (IADCS)

			Foundation Degree in health and Social Care Bachelor Degree in Agriculture	143

National legal requirements in VET area and characteristics of policy makers

No single piece of legislation provides an education and training legal framework in the UK. Governance and system development has been regulated in a series of laws, each tackling different aspects of education and training. Moreover, there is no clear cut off between the IVET (Initial VET) and CVET (Continuing VET). Devolution of powers to the DAs required legislation to define the boundaries of each responsibility. Detailed regulations (e.g., lists of approved qualifications) do not form part of the legislation itself; instead the law provides for the Government Minister (acting on advice from the relevant advisory body) to issue lists or regulations from time to time.

Training in the UK has traditionally been voluntary on the part of employers, rather than regulated by the state, or negotiated by social partners, thus there is little legal obligation for employers to train staff, except where licensing of organisations or individuals is a requirement. Unions now have statutory status for Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) and established their Learning Fund to assist in workers' training. However, the link between training, access to a job, salary level and progression is less clearly defined or regulated than in countries where a social partnership approach structures these arrangements.

Legislative framework for IVET

Within the UK, there is no unified VET structure and provision is profuse. Historically, VET has developed in an ad hoc way, rather than through central planning. Nonetheless, VET provision can be summarised according to the various contexts within which it takes place. Government and institutional frameworks differ between England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales, all of which have extensive autonomy. The institutional framework is complex.

In England and Wales, pre-employment IVET may be undertaken at secondary school, FE College or other training providers. There are two forms:

1. General vocational education is undertaken either at school (for those aged up to 18) or FE College (for those aged 16+). Successful completion could lead to direct employment or to further training within a FE college or other training provider.

2. Programmes of specific training are undertaken at a FE college and allow entry to a particular trade or profession, e.g., hairdressing, construction trades. This form of VET is a blend of initial training (IVET: meeting pre-entry requirements) and continuing training (CVET: providing the recognised vocational qualification for practice within a particular trade or profession).

Legislative framework for CVET

The provision of CVET in England is spread across the learning and skills sector, as with IVET, but with employer and private training provider provision accounting for a more substantial part of the market than with IVET. UKCES works with all DAs and the UK Government to ensure closer working relations between employment and skills systems to meet employers' and individuals' needs. In 2010, it advised the Government to introduce a statutory entitlement to training and to simplify the skills institutional

landscape by reducing publicly-funded agencies, followed by the abolition of Lifelong Learning UK in March 2011. Ministers in each of the four nations have the right to appoint a National Commissioner who works with UKCES to represent national interests, reporting to Ministers in their own nation and, in some cases, overseeing employment and skills issues locally and chairing their national employment and skills boards. SSCs all have representatives of TUs and professional bodies on their boards. Their role includes collecting and communicating labour market data on their respective sectors, drawing up Sector Skills Agreements and respective Sector Qualification Strategies. This provides input to vocational qualification reform and development and revision of National Occupational Standards (NOSs), on which qualifications and training programmes are based. (Note: this role for SSCs is currently under review and may be subject to change for 2012/13 and beyond.)

Some universities and all FE colleges offer CVET education. In addition to three or four-year first degrees, Masters and Doctorates, universities offer a wide range of shorter courses including two-year HNC/Ds and Foundation degrees. Vocational Higher Education, whether undertaken in universities, other HE or FE institutions, is the responsibility of the HE funding and quality agencies. However, in Scotland, the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) only has a remit for HNC/HND provision delivered in UHI and not in other Scottish colleges. The quality assurance role in the latter is conducted by SQA through external verification and through institutional reviews undertaken by Education Scotland (formerly known as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education).

A selection of legislation and reports relevant to VET in the UK:

This table shows some of the legislation and reports that have had an impact on the education and training sector in the UK. Most of the 'steering' of VET by government comes through making changes to the funding arrangements and learning and skills infrastructure. The Acts are not prescriptive with regard to what providers can offer, so do not impose the same level of regulation of VET that is seen in some other European countries.

No.	Name of document	Date	Issuing Authority	Level of VET covered	Summary of the content	Link to the document
1.	Education Reform Act	1988	UK Parliament	Up to level 6	Although primarily about schools, aspects of it also impacted on VET and HE	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/contents
2.	Further and Higher Education Act	1992	UK Parliament	Up to level 8	Introduced changes to the funding of FE and HE and removed colleges of further education from local government control, and created quality assessment arrangements.	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/13/contents
3.	Higher Education Act	2004	UK Parliament	4 to 8	Chiefly about funding of HE through tuition fee changes.	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/8/contents
4.	Education and Skills Act	2008	UK Parliament	3 to 5 mainly	Determined the raising of participation age changes to be implemented in 2013 and 2015.	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/contents
5.	Apprentice-ships, Skills, Children and Learning Act	2009	UK Parliament	2 to 4 mainly	Provided for a statutory framework for apprenticeships and made changes to funding for 16-19 year old training.	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/22/contents
6.	New Challenges, New Chances	2011	BIS report	Up to level 8	It emphasises that students at the centre of the strategy, and explains how the funding will be prioritised for programmes delivered by the FE and Skills system.	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/32313/11-1380-further-education-skills-system-reform-plan.pdf
7.	Rigour and Responsiveness	2013	BIS report (with Dept. for Education)	3 to 5 mainly	Summarises proposals for a responsive skills development system that ensures the flexibility for education and training providers to deliver what learners and employers really want.	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rigour-and-responsiveness-in-skills

Institutional Framework for VET (levels: national, regional, district, local level)

Previous sections of this report have outlined the various government departments and institutions engaged in VET delivery in the UK. The legislative framework sets the national context for each area of the UK (England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland) and within this the various institutions and other providers are free to operate. In the further education sector (which is the most relevant to the EXPANDVET project) there are no controls at district or local level. Each institution is able to operate independently, but within the funding rules set by the various funding agencies and complying with the quality assurance requirements of Awarding Bodies (who accredit the qualifications).

For the purposes of the EXPANDVET project the following table shows the various responsibilities etc. across the UK within the further education sector (i.e. post-secondary school). For CVET, the main addition would be the funding agencies for higher education.

Institutional Framework for IVET within the further education sector:

	England	Wales	Northern Ireland	Scotland
Overall Policy				
Government Department	Department for Business, innovation and Skills (BIS)	Department for education and Skills (DfES)	The Department for Employment and Learning (DEL)	Scottish Government
Government Agencies	Skills Funding Agency (SFA), Education Funding Agency (EFA) and national Apprenticeship Service (NAS)	n/a	Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)	
Sector led organisations and partners	Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)	Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), Professional bodies and Colegau Cymru		Scotland's colleges and Education Scotland
Qualifications				
Regulator	Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulations (Ofqual)	DfES	Ofqual (vocational qualifications) and CCEA (non-vocational qualifications)	Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) answerable directly to Scottish Government Ministers
Qualifications development	Awarding Bodies	Awarding Bodies	Awarding Bodies	SQA in partnership with key stakeholders
Regional Planning and Support	SFA	DfES		
Institutional Framework	General FE Colleges, Specialist Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges, Private Providers and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)	FE Institutions, Sixth Form Colleges, Private Preferred Providers and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)		Tertiary Colleges and Private Providers
Funding	SFA and BIS	DfES	DEL	Scottish Funding Council

FE colleges, the largest providers in the sector, are general-purpose institutions covering general and vocational education and are all-age institutions, with large numbers of adults enrolled, offering a range of both short and long courses. The FE sector consists of ABOUT 400 colleges including general FE colleges, tertiary colleges, specialist colleges (mainly in land-based provision and art and design), colleges that cater for people who have learning difficulties or disabilities, and Sixth Form Colleges. According to UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Services) data, in 2009 FE institutions in the UK supplied 18.4% of students for higher education. In Scotland, 22.5% of HE students came from colleges.

Source: Cedefop United Kingdom Country Report 2011:
http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_UK.pdf

Implications on institutions of recent government reforms:

16- to 19-year-olds
The Government is increasing the age until which all young people in England must continue in education or training. Young people must stay in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 rising to their 18th birthday from 2015. Students in the current year 11 (2012/13) are the first cohort to be affected by the changes and must continue in education and training until the end of the school year 2013/14. Students in year 10 and below in 2012/13 will need to continue until at least their 18th birthday. This change is likely to lead to an increase in 16 and 17 yr olds in FE colleges.

The Government has also announced that it will expand the University Technical Colleges (UTCs) programme to establish at least 24 new colleges by 2014. UTCs offer full-time courses to students aged 14 to 19 combining practical and academic studies, and are sponsored by a university.

The Wolf Review of vocational education for 14- to 19-year-olds, commissioned by the Secretary of State, was published in March 2011. The review's recommendations included the following:

- Vocational study programmes should be governed by a set of general principles and institutions should be free to offer whatever vocational qualifications they wish from regulated awarding bodies.

- Programmes for the lowest attaining learners – including many with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as those highly disaffected with formal education – should concentrate on the core academic skills of English and maths and on work experience.

- Students who are under 19 and who do not have GCSE A*–C in English and/or mathematics should be required, as part of their programme, to pursue a course which leads directly to these qualifications.

- Young people who do not use up their time-based entitlement to education (including apprenticeship) by the time they are 19 should be entitled to a corresponding credit towards education at a later date.

- Funding for full-time students aged 16–19 should be on a programme basis, with a given level of funding per student.

- Qualified further education teachers should be allowed to teach in schools.
- The legal right of colleges to enrol students under 16 is to be made explicit and colleges enrolling students in this age group should be required to offer them a full key stage 4 programme.
- Apprenticeships should be made easier for employers to offer - employers who take on 16-19 year-old apprentices should be eligible for payments, providing the apprentices receive clearly identified off-the-job training and education.
- The qualifications regulator, Equal, should move away from regulating individual vocational qualifications and concentrate on regulating awarding bodies.

The Government response, published in May 2011, accepted these recommendations in full. Following the Wolf Review, '16–19 Study Programmes' will be introduced in September 2013 based on the principle that all 16- to 19-year-olds in full-time state-funded provision, including those on academic or vocational education programmes, should have the opportunity to study coherent, well-thought-out programmes which offer them breadth and depth, are rigorously assessed and do not limit their options for future study or work.

Higher Education
Higher education is undergoing reform to make it financially sustainable, whilst ensuring teaching quality remains high and universities remain accessible (see the subheading 'Headline Targets for Education and Training' in the article on 'Education in the Europe 2020 Strategy' referenced below).

Useful links:

Specific Ongoing Reforms and Policy Developments at National Level

Source: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:Specific_Ongoing_Reforms_and_Policy_Developments_at_National_Level

Education in the Europe 2020 Strategy:

Source: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:Education_in_the_Europe_2020_Strategy

National education level - quantitative data

'Success' in the UK is a measure of the percentage of students starts that finish and achieve

	Participation No.	Success %	Participation No.	Success %
EQF Level				
Level 3 (UK 2) 11/12	**Adult FE and Skills**			
FE & Skills	1,320,000	82.7%		
Intermediate Apprenticeship	329,000	72.6%		
Workplace Learning	252,200	90.9%		
10/11 full year data by provider type:	**Apprenticeships** (all age)		**General FE** (all age)	
All Provider Type (10/11)	175,100	75.3%	857,090	81.5%
General FE College (including Tertiary)	37,460	74.4%	584,880	81.7%
Other Public Funded i.e. LA's and HE	18,490	83.3%	50,010	77.9%
Private Sector Public Funded	115,750	74.8%	103,750	76.9%
Schools	50	70.8%	1,060	76.6%
Sixth form college	290	83.2%	72,740	84,2%
Specialist Colleges	3,060	53.4%	44,650	88.2%
Level 4 (UK 3) 11/12	**Adult FE and Skills**			
FE & Skills	542,600	79.4%		
Advanced Apprenticeship	187,900	76.5%		
Workplace Learning	34,200	86.9%		
10/11 full year data by provider type:	**Apprenticeships** (all age)		**General FE** (all age)	
All Provider Type (10/11)	85,350	78.6%	1,114,780	81.1%
General FE College (including Tertiary)	20,680	76.1%	578,030	78.6%
Other Public Funded i.e. LA's and HE			14,620	75.6%
Private Sector Public Funded	57,190	78.8%	3,660	75.9%
Schools			390	69%
Sixth form college	190	78.1%	496,420	84.1%
Specialist Colleges	680	9.7%	21,650	83.7%
Level 5 (UK 4 & 5) 11/12	**Adult FE and Skills**			
FE & Skills	39,200			
Higher Apprenticeship	3,700	72.6%		
Workplace Learning	2000			
10/11 full year data by provider type:	**Apprenticeships** (all age)		**General FE** (all age)	
All Provider Type (10/11)	1,080	84.6%	22,490	73.4%
General FE College (including Tertiary)	180	84.6%	20,080	72.6%
Other Public Funded i.e. LA's and HE			1,430	80.3%
Private Sector Public Funded	900	84.6%	230	81.9%
Schools			60	72.1%
Sixth form college			290	85%
Specialist Colleges			400	77.8%

Source: Compiled from: http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/Statistics/success_rates/nsrt/

## Adult Attainment in the Population in 2011

The Labour Force Survey is used to measure the level of adult educational attainment in the population. Provisional data for 2011 show that of men aged 19 to 64 and women aged 19 to 59:

- 78.9 per cent were qualified to at least Level 2;
- 59.5 per cent were qualified to at least Level 3;
- 37.9 per cent were qualified to Level 4 and above.

Chart 1: Highest Level of Qualification Held by Adults of Working Age
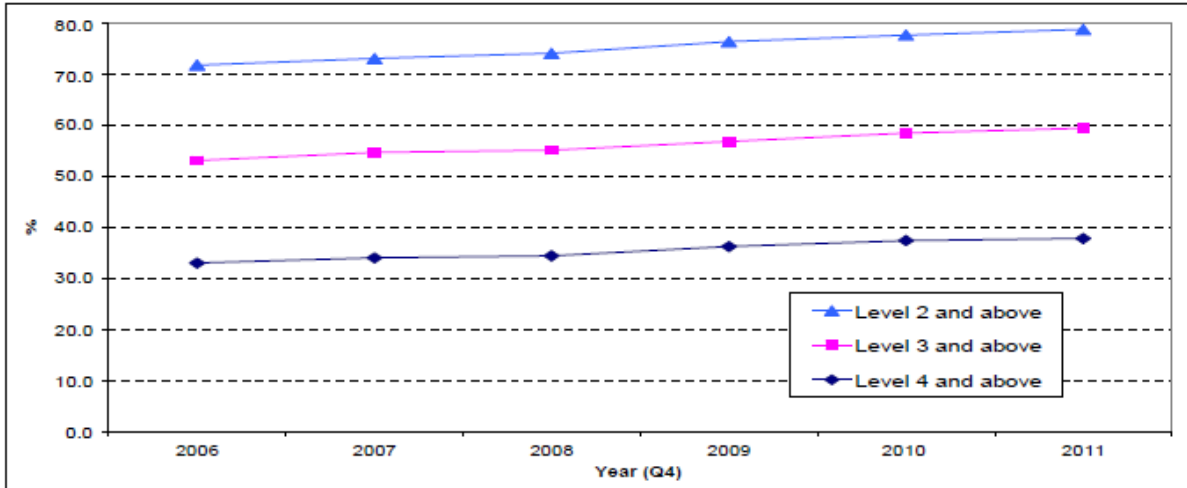
Adult Learner (19+) Participation and Achievement in Government-funded Further Education
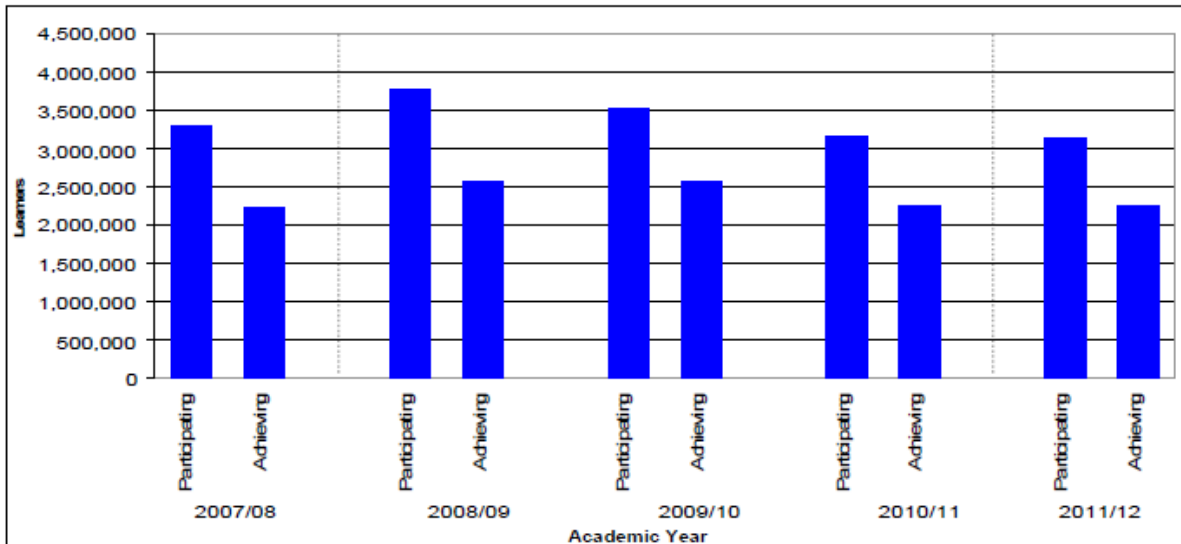
The total number of adult learners participating in government-funded further education was 3,149,700 in 2011/12, a similar volume to 2010/11. The total number of adult learners achieving a government-funded further education qualification was 2,258,500 in 2011/12, a similar volume to 2010/11

Source: Statistical first release.
http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/068EC90D-2CBF-4DB7-A0BC-D6866FA88D4B/0/SFR_commentary_January_2013_March_Update.pdf

Quality assurance system for each level

The following section outlines the approach to quality assurance within the Qualification Frameworks in the UK, and the arrangements used in England by the inspection body Ofsted.

Further details on the quality assurance processes for the QCF specifically are provided in the Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (the 'Regulatory Arrangements'), available at: www.rewardinglearning.org.uk/docs/regulation/qcf_regulations/regulatory_arrangements_qcf_28_08_08.pdf
or
http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/Regulatory_arrangements_QCF_August08.pdf.

Quality Assurance in VET

Outside of traditional higher education, which works to a separate set of principles and quality assurance processes, the qualification system in England and Northern Ireland is essentially an open market in which a wide range of qualifications are made available to learners, subject to national quality assurance arrangements. The quality assurance processes for EQF levels 3, 4 & 5 applies to the majority of VET providers.

Within this system the principal actors are:

> • **Centres**, meaning educational institutions, training organisations, employers and other bodies that provide learning and assessment opportunities leading to recognised qualifications;
> • **Awarding organisations**, meaning bodies that award credit and qualifications, set assessment requirements, monitor assessments and issue certificates; and
> • The **qualifications regulators** (Ofqual for England and CCEA for Northern Ireland), who act to ensure that national expectations for standards of learning and assessment are met and that the operations of awarding organisations are of consistently good quality.

> The principal roles of the **qualifications regulators** are to:
> > • establish and uphold criteria for units and qualifications;
> > • establish regulatory arrangements that specify clear requirements and rigorous and appropriate quality standards for awarding organisations and for organisations recognised to submit units to the framework;
> > • recognise these organisations and monitor their systems and standards;
> > • accredit qualifications; and
> > • keep users informed about units and qualifications, publish a definitive record of all recognised units and accredited qualifications in the qualification frameworks, and report publicly on the organisations that operate within it.

Awarding organisations (or bodies) must have sufficient resources, expertise, and organisational and administrative processes to provide qualifications to the standards required. They are also required to have procedures in place to monitor their compliance with the regulatory arrangements, to review their operations with a view to continuous improvement, and make available the outcomes of their reviews to the qualifications regulators.

The roles of **awarding organisations** are to:
  • approve and monitor centres to provide units and qualifications to the standards required for the qualification frameworks;
  • ensure assessment is carried out in a way that is fair, valid, reliable and conforms to the requirements of the qualification frameworks;
  • ensure equality of access to units, qualifications and assessment;
  • award credit and qualifications to learners who have met the unit and qualification requirements;
  • maintain records of learner achievements and report on the achievement of units and qualifications;
  • collect and retain data as required by the qualifications regulators; and
  • maintain and implement appeals procedures and procedures for dealing with malpractice.

Individual **centres** must have sufficient resources, expertise, and organisational and administrative processes to support and assess learners to the standards required for the qualification frameworks. They are responsible for internal quality assurance and must make their systems, processes and practices available for inspection and review by the awarding organisation.

Centres must:
  • assess units and qualifications in a way that is consistent with the awarding organisation's requirements;
  • undertake internal quality assurance of assessments; and
  • have processes in place for the recognition of prior learning from certificated and non-certificated sources, as appropriate for the units and qualifications that they offer.

In addition to the quality assurance provided through the qualifications regulatory systems, education and training providers who receive public funding are also subject to monitoring by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in England and the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) in Northern Ireland. These bodies carry out periodic inspections of providers to agreed national standards concerned with the overall governance and operation of the institution, the standards of teaching, learning, assessment and learner support, and the performance of learners.

Source: Referencing the Qualifications Frameworks of the United Kingdom to the European Qualifications Framework.
http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/eqf/ukreport_en.pdf

Further Education Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges and private providers of VET are all subject to periodic inspection by Ofsted – who use what is called the 'Common Inspection Framework'. A summary of this is provided on the next page.

Common Inspection Framework for post-16 provision of VET: (not H.E.)

The latest Ofsted framework for inspecting colleges was launched in Sept 2012. It has a clear focus on the quality of teaching and learning and the experiences and outcomes for learners. The following 3 sections identify the evaluation schedule used by inspectors:

Outcomes for learners

Outcomes for learners include: achievements that take account of learners' attainment and their rate of progress; progress by different groups of learners; the quality of learners' work; skills development; and progression, including into employment, further or higher education.

Criteria

In judging 'Outcomes for earners', inspectors are required to evaluate the extent to which:

- all learners achieve and make progress relative to their starting points and learning goals
- achievement gaps are narrowing between different groups of learners
- learners develop personal, social and employability skills
- learners progress to courses leading to higher-level qualifications and into jobs that meet local and national needs.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Ofsted states that the most important purpose of teaching is to promote learning and improve outcomes for learners. They consider a rigorous and informative assessment process to be essential to successful learning, as is the support learners receive.

Criteria

In judging the 'Quality of teaching, learning and assessment', inspectors are required to evaluate the extent to which:

- learners benefit from high expectations, engagement, care, support and motivation from staff
- staff use their skills and expertise to plan and deliver teaching, learning and support to meet each learner's needs
- staff initially assess learners' starting points and monitor their progress, set challenging tasks, and build on and extend learning for all learners
- learners understand how to improve as a result of frequent, detailed and accurate feedback from staff following assessment of their learning
- teaching and learning develop English, mathematics and functional skills, and support the achievement of learning goals and career aims
- appropriate and timely information, advice and guidance supports learning effectively
- equality and diversity are promoted through teaching and learning.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

The main focus in judging the Effectiveness of leadership and management is how successfully it has an impact on improving outcomes and teaching, learning and assessment for all learners.

Criteria

Inspectors are required to evaluate the extent to which leaders and managers at all levels, including, where relevant, governors:

- demonstrate an ambitious vision, have high expectations for what all learners can achieve, and attain high standards of quality and performance
- improve teaching and learning through rigorous performance management and appropriate professional development
- evaluate the quality of the provision through robust self-assessment, taking account of users' views, and use the findings to promote and develop capacity for sustainable improvement
- successfully plan, establish and manage the curriculum and learning programmes to meet the needs and interests of learners, employers and the local and national community
- actively promote equality and diversity, tackle bullying and discrimination, and narrow the achievement gap
- safeguard all learners.

Source: Adapted from: Ofsted Handbook for inspecting colleges:
http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012

Quality Assurance in Higher Education:

Quality assurance for EQF levels 5 and above delivered by higher education institutions is not regulated by law. Higher education Institutions are responsible for the approval of their own programmes and for ensuring that appropriate standards are achieved. They are judged on how well they fulfil these responsibilities and the effectiveness of their processes by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

From 2012/13 QAA introduced the UK Quality Code for Higher Education which is replacing the previous set of reference points known as the 'Academic Infrastructure'. Developed with the support of higher education practitioners and students, the code sets out expectations in relation to academic standards, academic quality and information about higher education provision.

Periodically each HE institution is subject to a quality review. This involves a team of external reviewers (including student representatives and employers) spending a week (usually) at the university investigating whether academic standards are being maintained; whether the quality of the learning experience is good; and whether the information provided to students prior to and during a university course is comprehensive and accurate. The reviewing team make judgements about the provision, highlight good practice and identify recommendations for consideration or implementation.

Useful link: UK Quality Code for Higher education:
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/quality-code/Pages/default.aspx

Identification of target group for EXPANDVET project - types of VET providers

Earlier sections of this report have indicated that the VET landscape in the UK is complicated, not least as a result of different approaches taken in the different countries of the UK. In addition, there are many different types of education and training provider – many of whom have considerable freedom to determine their own range of programmes (within the constraints of government priorities, funding methodologies and awarding body quality assurance requirements).

The EXPANDVET benchmarking tool identifies the following categories of VET provision, aligning somewhat with the EQF levels

- Lower Secondary vocational education and training
- Upper Secondary vocational education and training
- **Post Secondary non-tertiary vocational education and training**
- **Further education and training**
- **Apprenticeship training**
- **Higher vocational education**

The 4 highlighted in **bold** are the ones that the UK representatives consider most appropriate to focus on in terms of the EXPANDVET project. These are the sectors that primarily are covered by general further education colleges – of which there are about 250 institutions in the UK. It is not proposed to target HE institutions. Although HEIs clearly deliver the higher level programmes they are less likely to gain advantage from involvement with the project.

Part 5 – United Kingdom. National Report - References

European Encyclopedia on National Education Systems:
https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:Overview
(and also Northern Ireland: Overview; Wales:Overview and Scotland:Overview)

Europedia – Overview for England (including sub-pages)
https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:Overview

The structure of the European education systems 2012/13: schematic diagrams:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/facts_and_figures/education_structures_EN.pdf

Rigour and Responsiveness in Skills
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rigour-and-responsiveness-in-skills

National Qualifications Framework:
https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:National_Qualifications_Framework

Description of EQF Levels:
Some extracts from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Qualifications_Framework

Cedefop United Kingdom Country Report 2011:
http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_UK.pdf

Referencing the Qualifications Frameworks of the United Kingdom to the European Qualifications Framework. http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/eqf/ukreport_en.pdf

2011/12 Data by level compiled from:
http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/Statistics/success_rates/nsrt/

Statistical first release.
http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/068EC90D-2CBF-4DB7-A0BC-D6866FA88D4B/0/SFR_commentary_January_2013_March_Update.pdf

Ofsted Handbook for Inspecting colleges:
http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/handbook-for-inspection-of-further-education-and-skills-september-2012

Useful links:

Specific Ongoing Reforms and Policy Developments at National Level

Source: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:Specific_Ongoing_Reforms_and_Policy_Developments_at_National_Level

Education in the Europe 2020 Strategy:
Source: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/United-Kingdom-England:Education_in_the_Europe_2020_Strategy

UK Quality Code for Higher education:
Source: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/quality-code/Pages/default.aspx

Annex 1:   Definitions of some terms as used in the UK:

Vocational Education – the term VET is not widely used in the UK where the preference is for the term 'vocational qualification'. It may be defined as a course of training usually in a school or a learning institution that is oriented towards a specific job or element of work. VET can involve training in specific technical skills for certain types of job/occupation to training in general skills and aptitudes relating to an industry, as well as developing specific and general soft and core skills. There are certain occupations where a specific qualification at a certain level is required to practice. A qualification may be described as vocational but not immediately qualify the learner for work in a particular occupation. Traditional academic subjects (GCSEs, A-Levels and most university qualifications) are not referred to as vocational.

Apprenticeship – is a structured programme framework developed by the Subject Sector Councils (SSCs) based upon the Skills Funding Council (SFA) template of training which gives young people the opportunity for both classroom and work based learning in order to learn on the job and build up knowledge and transferable skills. More specifically, it is defined as a work-based learning programme that combines paid employment or work experience with on the job and off the job learning.

Higher Education (HE) - learning that generally takes place after the age of 18 and is more to do with level of provision being delivered rather than age. In Scotland it is not uncommon for learners to enter HE at 16 or 17, especially if undertaking Higher National Certificates (HNCs)/Higher National Diplomas (HNDs). It is of a higher academic standard than A-Level or National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3. HE includes degree courses, postgraduate courses, and Higher National Certificates and Diplomas (HNC/D). This type of provision is usually delivered in universities, higher education colleges, and for Scottish HNDs, all further education colleges.

Further Education (FE) - is the type of learning or training that takes place after the age of 16, but before degree level. It can be full or part time, academic or vocational. It is also called post-16 education or post-16 learning in England. In Scotland, **tertiary** education is used as a descriptive term, as provision in Scottish colleges is a mixture of non-advanced and HE qualifications, over a quarter of Scottish full-time HE and much part-time HE is undertaken in Scotland's colleges.

Training – the process of coaching in or accustoming an individual to a mode of behaviour or performance; or to make proficient with specialised instruction and practice. In the labour market context, it refers to the process of improving workforce skills, either by employer instruction or by educational institution, on or off the job, with or without formal qualification.

Continuing Vocational Education And Training – the usual definition of 'continuing' in the UK context refers to learners over 19 years of age.

Qualification – an award made to a learner for the achievement of a specified combination of units or credits required for that award. In the labour market context, it represents an endorsement or

achievement that demonstrates an individual's competence and proficiency in a specialised area of activity. Qualifications are often used as conditions of entry to particular jobs, sometimes as a proxy for measuring the broader and more amorphous concept of skills.

Skills – at its broadest level, a skill is a special ability to do something. In the context of the labour market, it relates to a special ability to perform a task in work. Skills could be personal; or it may be learnt as they relate to cognitive or "thinking" skills, such as analysis, evaluation and interpretation.

Competence – is the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attributes at a level of expertise sufficient to be able to perform in an appropriate work setting (within or outside academia). It is used as a measure of learning achievement. In a context of competence based qualifications, competence is linked to the ability to perform activities within an occupational function; work consistently to agreed standards – a person's performance must meet specific criteria before he/she can be termed competent; transfer skills to a range of situations within, and even external to, an occupational area.

Competence is often closely linked to the development of National Occupational Standards (NOS), which exist for most sectors and job occupations. The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), an HE admission service, defines a competency as fundamental knowledge, ability or expertise in a specific subject area or skill set.

Pre-Vocational Education – focuses on basic skills, such us numeracy and literacy and is below Level 2 (SCQF Level 4). Vocational training may still contain general skills but would also include more vocation-specific training. In Scotland, usual terms are adult literacy and numeracy, adult literacies and are below SCQF Level 4.

Source: Cedefop United Kingdom Country Report 2011:

http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2011/2011_CR_UK.pdf