

Quality Assurance in VET: Sweden

This document provides an overview of quality assurance in VET in the respective country. It covers information on VET systems and how quality assurance takes place, which organisations are responsible for VET policy and any recent developments in VET policy.

VET system and quality assurance



Overview of the VET system and how quality assurance takes place

There is little distinction between initial vocational education and training and the general school system in Sweden. Upper secondary education entails 3 years of full-time studying for students aged 16 to 19. Adults over 20 years old can take the same vocational courses. Vocational training can also be offered as an active market policy measure targeting employed individuals registered within the Public Employment Service. The Swedish VET system is a decentralised one in which the national and local governments share education competences according to the Education Act.

In upper secondary school, vocational education is offered based on young people's right to freely choose their education. Young people who choose a vocational programme will have the opportunity to choose an apprenticeship scheme, which offers significantly more time in a workplace during their educational period.

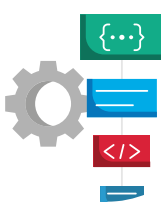


The law stipulates at least 15 weeks of work-based education on all vocational education programmes. In the case of apprenticeships, at least 50% of the programme must take place at local workplaces.

Vocational education at the post-upper secondary level in Sweden is administered by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education, which can involve up to three years of studies after the completion of upper secondary school or an equivalent qualification. Funding is provided by the state.

Sweden introduced reforms to its QA systems in 2011, which were developed independently of EQAVET, but they share many of the same principles in terms of the quality cycle, indicative descriptors, and indicators.



Sweden has a decentralised school system, of which initial VET is an integrated part. The Education Act outlines the responsibilities of national and local Governing Boards for systematic quality assurance and development, which includes work-based learning. Responsibilities of heads and staff in schools as regards this work are also regulated in the curriculum for each type of school.¹

¹ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/205aa0ac-460d-11e9-a8ed-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

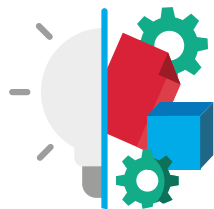
	<p>More information about the VET system in Sweden can be found on Cedefop's VET in Europe database: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/sweden</p>
 <p>System-level QA arrangements</p>	<p>In IVET, the Swedish National Agency for Education has developed a web-based programme for principals and their staff to use in their quality assurance work.² This includes an online quality assurance platform, which uses seven EQAVET indicators and it is an aid for schools to follow an annual cycle for systematically monitoring quality. The School Inspectorate carries out regular inspections of IVET schools.</p> <p>In CVET, the Agency for Higher Vocational Education is tasked with monitoring those educational programmes which have been given government grants to arrange vocational education and it audits a chosen number of providers each year.</p>
 <p>Provider-level QA arrangements</p>	<p>The Education Act details how annual systematic quality work needs to be carried out in upper secondary school and municipal adult education.</p> <p>In IVET, regulations in the Education Act detail how annual systematic quality work in upper secondary school and municipal adult education must be carried out. For adult education the principals/municipalities need to prepare a needs analysis of the municipal labour market to be entitled to specified government grants.</p> <p>In CVET, a detailed educational plan of each intended programme must be prepared and approved by the Agency for Higher Vocational Education.</p>
 <p>Which organisation(s) are responsible for VET policy?</p>	<p>The responsibility for nearly all vocational education in Sweden lies with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Employment. Legislation, framework, and financing are established at the national level. Swedish municipalities carry the greatest responsibility for and have the right to arrange vocational education at the upper secondary school level.</p> <p>Within VET for adults, it is possible for municipalities to outsource education to independent providers but only through regulated quality assurance.³</p>

² https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/developments_in_vocational_education_and_training_policy_in_2015-19_sweden.pdf

³ <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/sweden-u2>

 <p>Recent policy developments (in the last 12 months)</p>	<p>The intentions from the Ministry of Education were to develop the conditions for making data and digital information available on education and the labour market, as well as establishing forms of management of a coherent data infrastructure for the skills supply and lifelong learning. The mission will promote effective skills supply and lifelong learning in the long term and facilitate transition in the labour market. Municipal adult education has been added to the project and is still developing.</p> <p>The aim is for actions included in the mission is to strengthen the conditions for authorities and other actors to create and provide digital services that strengthen individuals' position in the labour market while meeting the skills needs of the private and public sectors.</p> <p>The policy was introduced on 17 June 2021 but is still under development.</p> <p>The agencies involved include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Swedish Public Employment Service. • The National Agency for Education, the Swedish Higher Education Agency. • The Swedish Research Council. • The Swedish Council for Higher Education. • Statistics Sweden. • The Swedish Digital Administration Authority. • The Swedish Agency for Innovation Systems.
 <p>Priority areas for QA in your country</p>	<p>In 2021 the four national agencies for education have proposed national objectives, sub-goals, indicators and success factors. These are intended to form the basis for future dialogues between the Swedish Government and organisers of schools. The dialogues are continuing.</p> <p>Also, the Swedish Government has increased the numbers of students in teacher training programmes and has invested in different pathways to access the teaching profession.</p>

Specific projects in the country (optional)



Please provide a short description of recent projects or initiatives in the field of QA in VET that you would like to highlight for your country

In 2022 the Swedish National Agency for Education created regional vocational education networks around Sweden in order to facilitate discussion and the development of vocational education at a regional level. This is the result of a task assigned by the government to the Swedish National Agency for Education to increase the quality and attractiveness of vocational education. Furthermore, promoting lifelong learning and skills provision are prioritised areas for the agency. The networks aim to create a consensus on education issues and, over the long term, to contribute to greater quality and equality in the education system.

These networks will aim to reach all target groups that work with vocational education at upper secondary level. Some of the target groups that the regional vocational education networks hope to reach include school organisers, education providers, head teachers, study and career guidance counsellors, workplace-based learning coordinators, teachers in upper secondary educations or others within the education system who are interested in creating a dialogue about vocational education.



Which organisation(s) are responsible for the project / initiative

The Swedish National Agency for Education

Use of EQAVET labels

Do you use an EQAVET label or seal to certify VET providers in your country?

No

Yes