

## Quality Assurance in VET: Portugal

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

The education and training system comprises pre-primary, basic, secondary, post-secondary non-tertiary, and tertiary education.

Secondary education lasts for 3 years, it comprises a single cycle and begins at the age of 15. It can be completed either by studying general courses in the sciences and humanities with a view to pursuing studies at a higher level, or by following a vocational pathway – vocational courses, apprenticeships, education and training courses, specialised art courses, technology courses, adult-education courses. These qualify students to enter the labour market, but it also allows them to continue their studies.

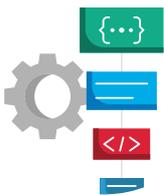
Post-secondary and non-tertiary education comprise specialised technology courses, which prepare and qualify students for work. Their successful completion leads to a diploma in specialised technology. These courses are divided into credit units which can be transferred to tertiary education courses to which they give access. The usual age of entry into this level of education is 18.<sup>1</sup>

The National Qualification Catalogue<sup>2</sup> is a framework that reflects the system of continuing vocational and training in Portugal. It is a range of flexible training pathways which makes possible to build a vocational qualification project organised in short credit units that allow for the independent certification of skills.

The main forms of CVET are aimed at adults of working age, including adult education and training courses that are intended to raise academic ability and vocational qualifications and enhance employability and certification of acquired learning. This is aimed at adults over the age of 18 who have no qualification or whose qualifications are inadequate to allow their integration into the labour market. The Recognition, Validation and Certification of Skills process is the most common way to access these courses. There are also training courses aimed specifically at groups that face challenges to enter the labour market, most of which are promoted by the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/portugal-u2>

<sup>2</sup> <https://catalogo.angep.gov.pt/Home/CNQ/>

	<p>CVET is also provided by companies and social partners in accordance with the Labour Code which establishes the employers' obligation to ensure that every year, at least 10% of workers on permanent contract take part in training courses and to assert the right of every worker to receive a minimum of 35 hours certified training each year.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>More information about the VET system in Portugal can be found on Cedefop's VET in Europe database: <a href="https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/portugal">https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/vet-in-europe/systems/portugal</a></p>
 <p><b>System-level QA arrangements</b></p>	<p>The certification system for training providers is regulated by Portaria (Ordinance) nº 851/2010 that was amended by Portaria (Ordinance) nº 208/2013. The General Directorate for Employment and Industrial Relations (DGERT) of the Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security has the responsibility for quality certification of training providers. Certification can be granted to any legally established public or private entity which meets the necessary requirements regarding its structure and training practices.</p> <p>The Directorate-General for Employment and Industrial Relations undertakes regular audits of VET providers to verify their compliance with quality standards, including self-assessment and using performance indicators. This audit is a precondition for maintaining accreditation. Quality standards include results analysis and continuous improvement measures, as well as post-training follow-up and an annual evaluation of results. A few EQAVET indicators are being used in Portugal's IVET system-level management, but not in CVET.<sup>4</sup></p>
 <p><b>Provider-level QA arrangements</b></p>	<p>Providers are required to use an established quality assurance framework, which can be EQAVET but could also include other quality assurance frameworks such as ISO. Providers are also required to have audits and undertake performance evaluations.</p> <p>Further reforms in 2017 stipulated that only Portuguese providers who can demonstrate they have appropriate quality assurance systems in place will receive a certified quality mark for their quality assurance system and therefore public funding. These systems include a self-assessment approach and use appropriate indicators to measure performance. In Portugal, the indicators providers use must be based on the EQAVET framework.</p>

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

<sup>4</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/205aa0ac-460d-11e9-a8ed-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>



**Which organisation(s) are responsible for VET policy?**

The major actors in the administration of the education and training system include three Ministries:

- Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security.
- Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education.

Their intervention is made predominantly by three Directorates:

- Directorate-General for Employment and Industrial Relations.
- Directorate-General for Innovation and Curricular Development.
- Directorate-General for Higher Education.

Additionally, the National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education and Training and the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training play an important role in the Portuguese VET system.

### Use of EQAVET labels

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

No

Yes

According to the EQAVET national approach, the assessment of quality assurance systems created or adapted by VET providers is carried out by quality experts from Higher Education Institutions.

An EQAVET Seal will be awarded by the National Agency for Qualification and Vocational Education and Training (ANQEP, IP) based on the experts' proposal resulting from the assessment of paper evidence and field interviews (one day) against the EQAVET alignment criteria.

The principles behind the chosen EQAVET alignment criteria are as follows:

- Strategic vision and transparency of processes and results.
- Use of the quality cycle, quality criteria and VET-provider level indicative descriptors.
- Engagement of the relevant stakeholders in the quality cycle.
- Continuous improvement using indicators, necessarily, the EQAVET indicators selected, among others.