

EQAVET Peer Review on ‘EQAVET-based quality management system for formal VET institutions in Hungary’ – Flash Report

EQAVET Peer Review in Hungary

The 14th EQAVET Peer Review took place on 28 and 29 March in Budapest, hosted by NOVETAL, the National Office of VET and Adult Learning. Six experts from 5 EQAVET Network member countries, from Finland, Greece, Latvia, Malta and Portugal, acted as peers. The Peer Review focused on reviewing the national quality management system (QMS) for formal VET institutions, which is based on self-evaluation and reflects in full the EQAVET Framework. The requirements for the quality management system and the rules for the introduction of quality management in VET institutions were recently introduced by the VET 4.0 Strategy for the renewal of the VET system¹ as well as the 2019 Act on VET and the associated Implementing Regulation 2020. The Hungarian host invited the peers to reflect on four specific guiding questions and the new QM system as a whole, to review its components and their compliance with EQAVET in terms of content, methodology and procedures.

The new national QMS for formal VET institutions

To kick-off the meeting, the host presented the Hungarian VET system (with special regard to the initial VET pathways). In the last two decades, VET development policy has focused strongly on quality assurance and quality improvement of VET, which is reflected in several activities and projects launched for this purpose. The new institutional quality management system was developed in 2021 and this is the first time that a consistent uniform QM system for formal VET institutions is now in place. By 31 August 2022, all formal VET institutions had to elaborate the description of their own institutional QMS and the implementation process started in September 2022. The Hungarian host considers it important to consult experts of other Member States at an early stage of the implementation process on the new system and on the results achieved so far, in order to identify possibilities for improvement and to receive advice and recommendations.

The host first provided a comprehensive presentation of the new system, which was followed by a panel discussion with key stakeholders in quality assurance of VET in Hungary (including representatives of the Ministry for Culture and Innovation, the Innovative Training Support Centre, the VET QMS working group and of a VET Centre). In a next step, the key components of the new system as well as first experiences from the practical implementation of the QMS were presented. The main components of the QMS include:

- ❖ Quality policy
- ❖ Self-evaluation
- ❖ VET teacher-trainer evaluation system

¹ The full name of the document is: “VET 4.0 Medium-term strategy for the renewal of VET and adult learning: responses of the VET system to the challenges of the 4th industrial revolution”.

Quality policy

VET institutions are required to define their Quality Policy, incorporating their mission and vision. Based on this, the institution's strategic goals, quality objectives and targets are to be developed. The Quality Policy also includes a declaration of the commitment of the institution's leadership to quality and continuous quality improvement, defines the organisational framework of the QMS and elaborates the VET teacher-trainer evaluation system. At each institution, a Quality Management Team has to be set up, consisting of 3-7 competent staff members (representatives of the leadership, teachers and trainers, and other staff members).

Self-evaluation

VET institutions are required to conduct a comprehensive self-evaluation every two years, including the self-evaluation of the institution and its head, following a regulated process as laid down in the Self-evaluation Guidebook (issued by the minister responsible for VET early 2022). The VET institutions develop their own self-evaluation system on the basis of the Self-evaluation Guidebook which contains:

- ❖ the description of the VET institution's quality management system and the description of the comprehensive self-evaluation system,
- ❖ the 21 EQAVET-based self-evaluation criteria against which the institutions and the heads evaluate their activity and the results achieved (the criteria for both self-evaluations are identical, but the leaders' self-evaluation focuses on the leader's personal engagement and role in different activities and on his/her leadership skills),
- ❖ the 11 processes compulsory to be regulated,
- ❖ the 24 VET indicators compulsory to be measured,
- ❖ the measurement tools of partner satisfaction surveys (to be compulsorily conducted amongst the learners, parents, teachers and trainers, dual training providers and companies employing graduates),
- ❖ the work templates to be used,
- ❖ the process and methodology of self-evaluation.

The QMS will be accompanied by an external evaluation, which is required by law to be carried out every four years and will assess the work of the VET institution and its head based on their self-evaluations. A guideline for the external evaluation with the evaluation criteria, the description of the procedure and methodology, the instruments and working templates still has to be developed and will be issued by the minister responsible for VET.

VET teacher-trainer evaluation system

The performance of VET teachers and trainers is evaluated by the head of the VET institution every three years on the basis of the methodological recommendation published by the minister responsible for VET (i.e. referring to procedure, evaluation criteria, methods and tools). The evaluation of VET teachers and trainers was first conducted in June 2020. In 2022 the system has been extended to the institutional leaders. This new performance evaluation system in VET affects also the wages.

Peer discussion

At the end of the meeting, the peer reviewers shared their initial feedback. They agreed that the QMS is a very comprehensive system that leaves some flexibility for VET institutions to adapt it to their own needs, thus taking advantage of the combination of a centralised approach with an approach that allows local flexibility. The strong and well-planned support system for stakeholders, including VET teacher/trainer in-service training, in implementing the QMS was seen as very valuable. In addition, the peers pointed out that the institutional self-evaluation and the planned external evaluation are designed to be evidence-based and provide both quantitative and qualitative results for analysis and comparison. This has the potential to increase transparency and trust in the system. The host and the peers also discussed how student participation in the QMS could be strengthened and how the results could be made available to a wider group of stakeholders to support decision-making at different levels.

A comprehensive feedback report will be drafted and shared with the Hungarian host. The feedback in the peer reviewers' report will help to inform the national stakeholders on further improvements.

The EQAVET Peer Review initiative 2022 - 2023

The [2020 Council Recommendation on VET](#) called upon the EQAVET Network to develop a specific methodology for EQAVET peer reviews, with the objective to support the improvement and transparency of quality assurance arrangements at system level in the Member States. Over the course of 2021, with the support of DG EMPL and the EQAVET Secretariat, the EQAVET Network agreed on a joint methodology and prepared a Peer Review Manual.

The Quality Assurance National Reference Points (EQAVET NRPs) from 21 Member States have agreed to take part in the first phase of the EQAVET Network's peer review initiative. The Hungarian Peer Review was one of twelve Peer Reviews that are scheduled to take place in 2023, following nine peer reviews in 2022.