

EQAVET's European experience of peer review and the use the EQAVET framework

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Quality assurance in VET

EQAVET is a **European framework** which has been adapted for use in individual countries or regions. The EQAVET framework:

- covers quality assurance at the **system** and **provider** level
- is voluntary and based on the principle of subsidiarity
- was introduced in 2009 and updated in the 2020 VET Recommendation
- includes **10 indicators** (based on inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes)
- describes high quality VET provision at the system and provider level by using **indicative descriptors**
- is based on a quality assurance cycle of ***Planning – Implementation – Evaluation – Review***
- is based on an agreed definition of VET

What is covered by EQAVET?

- there is an agreed definition

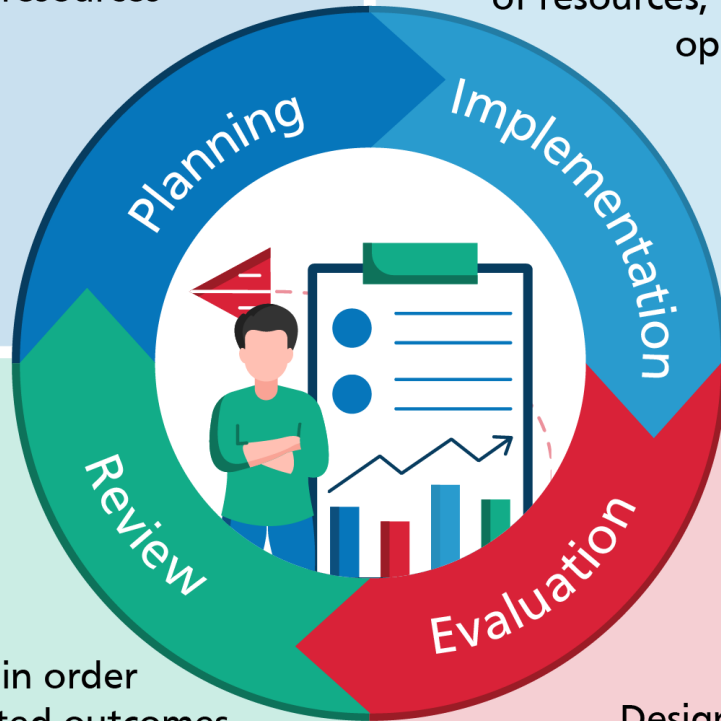
For EQAVET, vocational education and training aims to equip young people and adults with knowledge, skills and competences required in particular occupations or more broadly on the labour market. It may be provided in formal and in non-formal settings, at all levels of the European Qualifications Framework, including tertiary level, if applicable.

The Quality Assurance Cycle

Set up clear, appropriate and measurable goals and objectives in terms of policies, procedures, tasks and human resources



Establish procedures to ensure the achievement of goals and objectives (e.g. development of partnerships, involvement of stakeholders, allocation of resources, and organisational or operational procedures)



Develop procedures in order to achieve the targeted outcomes and/or new objectives; after processing feedback, key stakeholders conduct discussion and analysis in order to devise procedures for change

Design mechanisms for the evaluation of achievements and outcomes by collecting and processing data in order to make informed assessment

Using the EQAVET framework

- Regular surveys of the national reference points for quality assurance show the quality assurance cycle is very popular and **all** the indicators are used at the system level (**most** are used at the provider level)
- The **outcome** indicators are used less frequently
- National and regional approaches to quality assurance vary as EQAVET offers a framework to guide practice
- EQAVET is more often used for initial VET **but** it is also used for continuing VET, on-line learning, accreditation of provision, the development of the curriculum, non-formal and informal learning, assessment of prior learning etc.

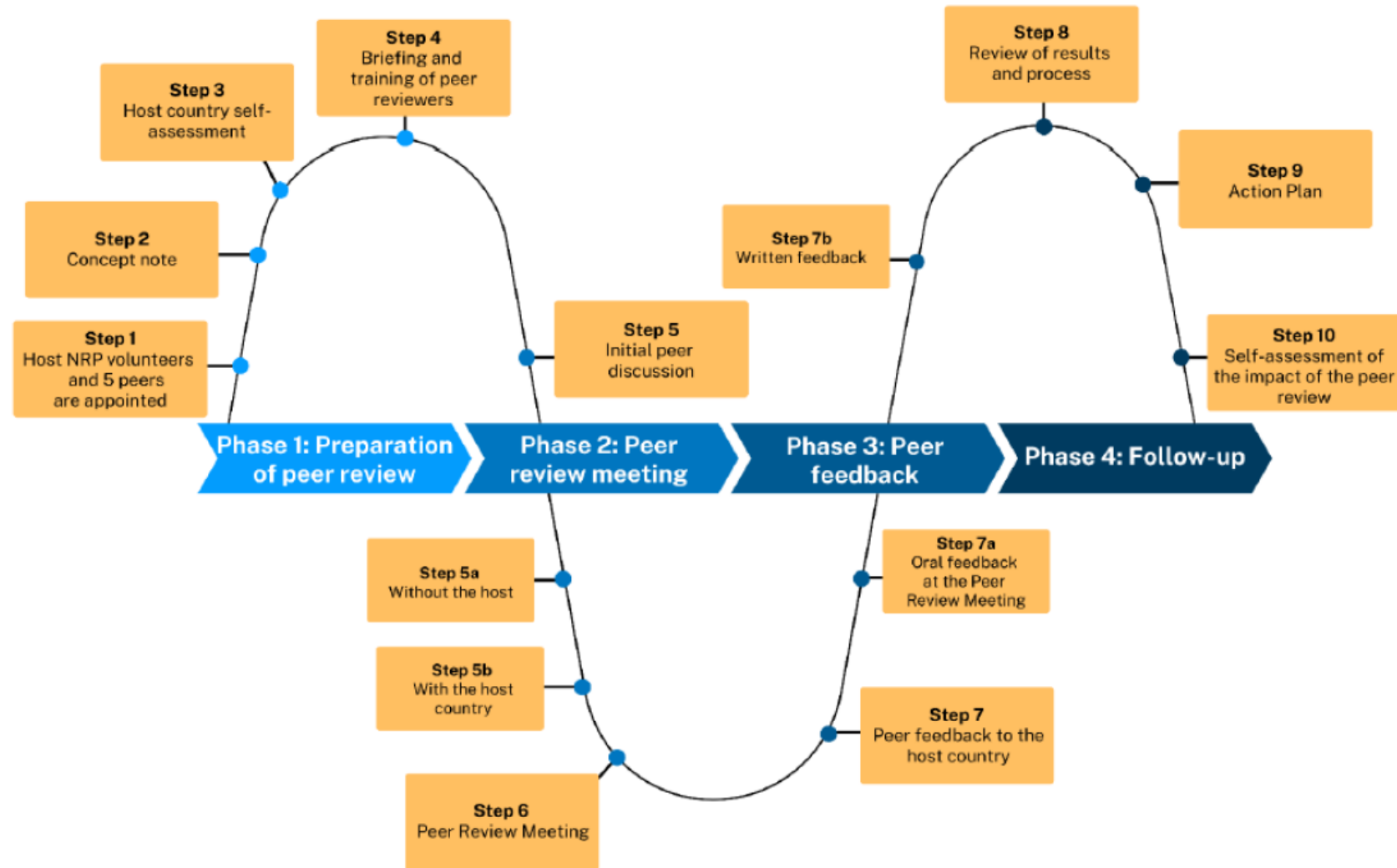
European countries support each other in relation to the quality assurance of VET

- There is a European network of National Reference Points and European stakeholders (the EQAVET network)
- Expert working groups have produced guidance on quality assurance
- Examples of good practice are published on the EQAVET website
- Annual meeting for members of the EQAVET network
- A large amount of informal networking and many joint projects
- Peer learning activities from 2009
- Peer reviews from 2020

The European peer reviews

- the EQAVET peer review is a voluntary mutual learning activity with the objective to support the improvement and transparency of quality assurance arrangements at the system level
- participants from 21 Member States have been involved in this peer review initiative. There were nine peer reviews in 2022 and twelve in 2023
- each Member State hosted a peer review and visited five other countries to look at other approaches to quality assurance
- each peer review focused on **one** aspect of quality assurance

The European peer review model



The strengths of the peer review process

- provide hosts with an external perspective on existing and new VET policies
- strengthen mutual trust and participants' understanding of different ways of organising quality assurance
- increased transparency
- the approach is flexible and can be adjusted to meet the needs of the hosts
- the peer reviewers increase their understanding of quality assurance systems and approaches

What helps peer reviews to succeed?

- the expertise and experience of the peer reviewers
- a clear focus from the hosts - this helps the peer reviewers to discuss **one** aspect of quality assurance
- the initial self-assessment enables the peer reviewers to understand the aspect of quality assurance which will be discussed
- peer reviewers are able to discuss quality assurance with VET providers as well as those who oversee the quality assurance system
- the report from the peer reviewers is confidential and the hosts decide how best to use any recommendations

Final thoughts

- the peer review methodology is also being used at the **provider level** as a way of offering an external perspective on quality assurance
 - peer reviews requires a significant commitment from the hosts (approximately 20 days of work) and the peer reviewers (approximately 5 days per person)
 - each peer review lasts 1.5 to 2 days
 - each peer review includes participants from five other quality assurance systems
 - the national reference points for quality assurance and EQAVET will continue organising peer reviews in 2024
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