

# Quick and easy referral to support measures

## Description

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Formal protocols for the referral of young people to specialist support services saves time for the VET provider, and facilitate a quicker response to the learners' needs.

## Countries

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 Austria

 Netherlands

## Why is this approach useful?

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VET providers may not have the capacity to provide all the support a learner needs to continue in education and training. Some young people may need more intensive support related to their education and training, or other challenges they are facing in their lives, such as health or social issues.

The following questions should be answered for VET providers:

- Which organisations or services can offer additional support to our students?
- How can we be sure that the learner is referred to the most adequate support service?
- How can we ensure that the referral is successful, i.e. that they receive support from the service they are referred to and do not 'fall through the net'?

## Why is it a quick win?

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Establishing a procedure to determine who a VET-provider should contact to address different support needs of their students does not necessarily involve high costs. The use of formal protocols for the referral of young people saves time for the VET provider, and facilitates a quicker response to the learners' needs.

## How to make this approach successful?

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It is important for staff within a VET institution to have a good understanding of the types of issues young people may be facing outside of school (e.g. mental health issues, bullying in various forms, problems at a work-based placement, etc.) and how to spot these. It is also essential for staff working in VET providers to be aware of the services available to young people in their local area (and, if necessary, beyond) and how to refer them to these. It is also crucial to ensure the commitment of VET providers to using the referral systems. They will be responsible for encouraging learners to participate in other support measures as

needed. To ensure VET providers' commitment, it is important to ensure that the referral protocols are easy to use and do not result in an additional administrative burden for VET providers.

## Examples of measures using this approach

### Referral procedures in case of medical absence. The Dutch initiative Medical Advice for Sick-reported Students

The Medical Advice for Sick-reported Students (MASS) intervention aims to address school absenteeism attributed to sickness. It consists of an integrated approach in which schools, in direct collaboration with youth healthcare physicians, reach out to students and their parents to discuss aspects of the student's medical absence, and to design and monitor a management plan to optimise students' health and maximize students' participation in school activities. The role of physicians is to advise on the emotional and/or physical well-being of students and to provide care guidelines to them and their parents.

The introduction of this measure requires a partnership between the healthcare system and the education system. Although in the Netherlands this is not common on a national level, the West Brabant region has agreed on such a partnership for the implementation of MASS. No additional registration systems are needed to implement MASS in schools, which allows it to fit easily into current administrative and operational school structures.

[Read good practice factsheet](#)

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### Referral procedures to coaching schemes. The Austrian Youth coaching scheme

The Youth Coaching Scheme was designed by the Austrian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in 2012. It aims to keep or re-integrate young learners, up to the age of 19, into the education and training system on a sustainable basis. Most young people accessing this measure are referred to it by schools.

Schools are asked to identify learners who are considered at risk and to report this using a central early-warning system. Afterwards, a coach will contact the young adult.

[Read good practice factsheet](#)

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## Related intervention approaches

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**Comprehensive support to tackle complex needs**



**Counselling to address barriers to learning**



**Second chance measures**

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