

Quality assurance and learning needs of VET teachers and trainers

Claudio Dondi



Berlin, 3-4 November 2005

Objectives of the study commissioned by CEDEFOP

- ❖ To clarify the theme of quality related to LNI of VET T&T;
- ❖ To report on the method utilised to collect good practice examples;
- ❖ To report on the analysis;
- ❖ To identify quality factors;
- ❖ To classify existing LNI approaches observed;
- ❖ To propose some next steps.

Analysis grid structure

- ❖ **Context**
- ❖ **Stakeholders' involvement**
- ❖ **Aims, objectives and time perspective**
- ❖ **Technical and methodological elements**
- ❖ **Quality approaches**
- ❖ **Strengths, weaknesses, critical view**
- ❖ **What makes quality of TNA**

Cross-case analysis

- ❖ Very broad range of contexts, aims and methodological approaches.
- ❖ Strategies and modalities of LNI are often defined accordingly to broader emerging priorities.
- ❖ Some examples aim at the individualisation of eLearning paths, others differentiate training strategies in order to propose key common sets of competences.
- ❖ Not all cases refer to competence schemes, but those which do, tend to refer to competences when mentioning quality sectors of LNI.
- ❖ In some cases the teachers/trainers are asked about their own learning needs; in other cases, a “negotiated” or consultative approach is applied.
- ❖ Only two cases out of the 15 collected explicitly refer to formal quality approaches being used for the identification of learning needs.

3 categories of learning need identification

1. **Survey approach** → target group as source of information.
Basic assumption = respondents know what they need to learn;
2. **“Imperative-led”** → top-down approach
Major innovation programmes determine learning needs that target group may not recognise, but “force majeure” changes are requiring without any reasonable doubt;
3. **Change Process approach** → participative process
Learning needs have to be identified by all stakeholders and learners in relation to a change process.

Study conclusions

- 2004 -

- ❖ Three main paradigmatic approach categories emerging. One approach is not “a priori” better than another: they respond to different needs and are often “combined” in reality.
- ❖ Several quality factors identified, but the enhancement of a dialogue among relevant stakeholders is now needed to push research on quality further.
- ❖ Criteria- should be balanced with a more subjective/context-related element (weighting of criteria according to the specific approach selected for LNI).
- ❖ The CQAF approach can be taken as a basis for collaborative benchmarking of good practices starting as soon as quality principles, criteria and indicators are agreed among the relevant parties.

Identified quality principles

- 1. Participation**
- 2. Continuity**
- 3. Clarity of purpose, validity, reliability**
- 4. Openness**
- 5. Transparency**
- 6. Relevance to labour market and socio-economic development**
- 7. Utilisation**

Quality indicators (1/7)

QUALITY PRINCIPLES	QUALITY CRITERIA	PROPOSED INDICATORS
<i>Participation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Involvement of T/T in the process of identification• Participation of stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• % of T and T who are engaged in formal review of practice at least once a year• Periodic consultation of stakeholders on T/T LNI is planned and implemented

Quality indicators (2/7)

QUALITY PRINCIPLES	QUALITY CRITERIA	PROPOSED INDICATORS
<i>Continuity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LNI as part of Continuing Professional Development of T/T• LNI as a planned and cyclic or on-going process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LNI is a recognised element of CPD plans• Aims, procedures and periodicity of LNI are defined in the Quality Assurance Documents

Quality indicators (3/7)

QUALITY PRINCIPLES	QUALITY CRITERIA	PROPOSED INDICATORS
<p><i>Clarity of purpose, Validity and Reliability</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of LNI is clearly defined • Tools and procedures adapted to the objectives of LNI • Tools and procedures are consistently applied to relevant sample/population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T/T are made aware of LNI aims through written and easily accessible communication • Methodological choices for LNI are validated by relevant expertise (expert advice or peer review)

Quality indicators (4/7)

QUALITY PRINCIPLES	QUALITY CRITERIA	PROPOSED INDICATORS
<i>Openness</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitivity to emerging and unforeseen needs • Receptivity to new contributions to the LNI process • Teachers/trainers can influence process and results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data capturing methods encourage the expression of new and unforeseen needs • Unforeseen contributions are fully processed and considered in data processing • T/T are committed on LNI process and informed on preliminary results

Quality indicators (5/7)

QUALITY PRINCIPLES	QUALITY CRITERIA	PROPOSED INDICATORS
<i>Transparency</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of LNI process • Visibility and accessibility of LNI process and results • Transparency of LNI evaluation • LNI tools and procedures are previously agreed with participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to tools, synthesis data and main results of LNI is guaranteed to all stakeholders • LNI is evaluated and evaluation reports are easily accessible to all stakeholders • Stakeholders' feedback on tools and procedure is collected and utilised

Quality indicators (6/7)

QUALITY PRINCIPLES	QUALITY CRITERIA	PROPOSED INDICATORS
<i>Relevance to labour market and socio-economic development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Involvement of labour market actors in LNI• Focus on both labour market development/needs and social cohesiveness requirements• Relation to national/regional/local development plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LNI reports show awareness of socio-economic context and dynamics, and prove involvement of relevant, labour market actors

Quality indicators (7/7)

QUALITY PRINCIPLES	QUALITY CRITERIA	PROPOSED INDICATORS
<i>Utilisation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LNI results are used to evaluate current provision of learning opportunities• Professional development of T&T is systematically (re)planned according to LNI results• Management is clearly committed to LNI in view of its utilisation• Adequate resources are made available to respond to identified learning needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• LNI results are promptly made available to managers, planners and designers of TT training activities• Time necessary to implement changes in training supply resulting from LNI

Further developments

- ❖ A flexible framework (weighting criteria, choosing and adding indicators)
- ❖ T&T as lifelong learners – the charter
- ❖ Relation to CQAF
- ❖ From analysis to practise – the guidelines
- ❖ From LNI to the whole process?

Reccomendation (1/6)

Build a culture of continuous LNI rather than launching massive and discontinuous surveys based on an emergency priority: LNI is not only a “technical” process but its success depends on involvement of stakeholders, first of all teachers and trainers.

Reccomendation (2/6)

Combine top-down with bottom-up: it must be clear that policy agencies are seriously interested in LNI, but not only to find what they expect.

Reccomendation (3/6)

To be effective, all players need to take LNI seriously and implement change as required: not using LNI to produce change is probably a worse practice than not conducting LNI.

Reccomendation (4/6)

Make every teacher and trainer a lifelong learner able to detect learning needs and to express a demand for Continuous Professional Development; mobilisation of individual teachers/trainers towards LNI and lifelong learning is a key condition for them to be credible models of lifelong learners to their learners.

Reccomendation (5/6)

Value change processes as contextualised LNI occasions and collaborative learning opportunities: LNI itself may be an occasion for starting organisational improvement and learning processes, in which individual and group motivation become more important than planning and funding.

Reccomendation (6/6)

Evaluate the LNI process and results (and use the indicators). LNI is the first milestone of effective training of Teachers and Trainers: there is always space for improvement, but this is enormously facilitated by a practice of LNI evaluation and the adoption of a quality assurance approach.

Thank you for your attention

cdondi@scienter.org