



## Workshop 2

### Quality assurance of new forms and contexts of teaching and learning

Web-based and media-driven forms of teaching and learning and new learning contexts such as learning islands, learning partnerships or communities of practice are increasingly affecting and changing traditional learning processes both in VET and in HE. This workshop is to address and highlight the challenges for quality assurance that are associated with those new developments, which represent a new approach in education, teaching, and learning. The main criterion for selecting this topic is its shared importance for both VET<sup>1</sup> and HE<sup>2</sup>, and consequently they may also share some responses concerning their quality especially under the perspective of lifelong learning. Answers how to tackle with existing challenges should derive from both differences and commonalities between VET and HE.

Assuring and enhancing the quality is critical to the success of the new forms of teaching and learning and the need for standards, criteria and benchmarks against which their quality can be assessed is growing all the more they get adopted. Some of the new tools are already widely used (MOOCs,<sup>3</sup> webinars, social media, learning management systems or learning content management tools), while others are still in a piloting phase (assessments and observations in work-place settings), but the potentials of web-based teaching and varying learning contexts (e-learning, micro-learning, peer learning, counselling) are continuously driven further. Learners can learn more independently and more interactively.

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<sup>1</sup> CEDEFOP: Modernising vocational education and training. Fourth report on vocational training research in Europe. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2008/2009.

[http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3050\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3050_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> European Commission: Report to the European Commission on improving the quality of teaching and learning in Europe's higher education institutions. June 2013. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2013.

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/doc/modernisation\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/doc/modernisation_en.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> See for example: Press release of the European Commission and EADTU on the launch of the first pan-European university MOOCs (massive open online courses):

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-13-349\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-349_en.htm)

They can get access to quality education even without leaving their homes and the boundaries between formal and informal education are getting blurred.<sup>4</sup>

It becomes obvious that due to these new developments the teaching and learning process itself is changing radically and it seems not appropriate just to adapt to them the quality criteria for traditional face-to-face teaching. Specific principles, criteria and guidelines for quality and quality assurance are needed instead:<sup>5,6,7</sup> Adequate technological infrastructure is crucial for provision of high quality training and education, access to professionally pre-produced learning contents for teachers must be ensured, customisation and individualisation of content by the teachers according to type of learners is indispensable, enhancing interaction and communication between all stakeholders involved is essential for ensuring quality within new forms of learning, and sharing of experience between teaching staff should be encouraged to foster improvement of content development and delivery. The European Commission considers promotion of excellence in teaching a key topic for the modernisation of higher education in Europe.<sup>8</sup>

Increasingly learning takes place at any time in flexible, interactive settings and the roles of learners and teachers are changing, too, and they must be adjusted and re-defined accordingly. The teacher is more and more required to act as a developer and facilitator of self-explanatory learning material, whereas the learner is expected to demonstrate significant explorative skills and undertake more interactive self-guided activities but resist to be dominated by the consulted media.<sup>9</sup> Quality in teaching and learning is resulting from cooperative and complementary activities of teachers and learners.

In relation to quality, we may witness another important shift of attention in the near future. Also for the main focus of quality in education we might face another shift of attention. As

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<sup>4</sup> de Witt, Claudia: New forms of learning for vocational education: mobile learning – social learning – game-based learning. In: BWP – Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis (Vocational Education and Training in Research and Practice): BWP, 42, Special Edition 2013, p.27-30.  
<http://www.bibb.de/veroeffentlichungen/en/bwp/show/id/7049>

<sup>5</sup> Stansfield, M., T. Connolly, A. Cartelli, A. Jimoyiannis, H. Magalhães, K. Maillet: The Identification of key issues in the development of sustainable e-learning and virtual campus initiatives. In: Electronic Journal of e-Learning, 7, 2, 2009, p.155-164.  
[www.ejel.org](http://www.ejel.org)

<sup>6</sup> Assessing online learning: Strategies, challenges, opportunities.  
[www.FacultyFocus.com](http://www.FacultyFocus.com)

<sup>7</sup> Moore, J.C.: The Sloan Consortium quality framework and the five pillars. Sloan-C, 2005.  
[sloanconsortium.org/.../books/qualityframework.pdf](http://sloanconsortium.org/.../books/qualityframework.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Supporting growth and jobs – an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems. Brussels, 20.09.2011, Com(2011) 567 final.  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0567:FIN:EN:PDF>

<sup>9</sup> Turkle, S.: Alone together: Why we expect more from technology and less from each other. New York, 2011.

known, in recent years a shift in orientation from input factors to learning outcomes has taken place<sup>10</sup> and we consider that in the near future we may see another change of paradigm: With quality being increasingly produced within a wide web of resources and many active players contributing to, the very process of teaching and learning itself might get into the centre of interest, thus changing the focus of our attention and priorities. Moreover, for assuring quality within this new focus, a specific theoretical framework for quality of its own character might be necessary,<sup>11</sup> impacting probably on our efforts to define the right balance between input, process and outcome again.<sup>12</sup>

Based on the challenges listed below, we propose a specific set of questions in order to brainstorm on the ways of improving cooperation between HE and VET for assuring the quality of the new forms of learning for the benefit of all stakeholders involved (learners, teachers, employers, training and education providers, developers of teaching and learning content).

### **Common challenges in VET and HE**

- Using creatively the new learning tools for flexible and responsive training and education in VET and HE and apply appropriate principles, criteria and standards of quality.
- Ensuring the achievement of complex learning outcomes by facilitating acquisition of knowledge, skills *and competences* with the new forms of learning.
- Motivating and supporting teachers to acquire the competences needed for designing adequate learning scenarios, aligning learning activities, and role-shift in the teaching and learning process.
- Empowering learners to work independently, explore and exploit existing learning resources, and collaborate interactively with other learners and teachers.
- Developing specified criteria, indicators, methods and tools for measuring the achievement of the above-mentioned pre-requisites for quality of new forms of teaching and learning.

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<sup>10</sup> CEDEFOP: The shift to learning outcomes. Policies and practices in Europe. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2009.  
[http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3054\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/3054_en.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Masoumi, D. & B. Lindström: Quality in e-learning: a framework for promoting and assuring quality in virtual institutions. In: Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 2012, 28, p.27-41.

<sup>12</sup> Jung, I., T.M. Wong, T. Belawati: Quality assurance in distance education and e-learning. London, Sage 2013.

## Issues for discussion

Participants in the workshop 2 are invited to reflect on and answer to the following questions:

- What are the specific characteristics in quality assuring the new forms of teaching and learning? How would an appropriate systematic approach like?
- Which are the appropriate principles and criteria, methods and guidelines for their quality assurance that could apply in both VET and HE? Which differences between VET and HE in assuring quality in this field should be kept in mind?
- How to consider the different needs of individual learners in the new forms of teaching and learning? How to bridge the gap between pre-produced (e-) learning content with the requirements for customisation and individualisation according to various types of learners?
- Which kind of support and assistance do teachers and trainers need to be able to design, develop and deploy high quality courses and learning activities within these new forms of learning? What kind of empowerment do different learners need in order to cope with the specific requirements of these news forms and contexts of learning both at VET and HE level?
- Learning outcomes play a key role in orientating training and education in VET and HE. How to ensure this role and achieve the inherent quality standards when using the new forms of teaching and learning? How to assess the competences acquired via the new forms of learning and how to ensure their validity and consistency within specific qualifications?
- What about the potential shift of focus in quality in training and education towards a new paradigm: Will teaching and learning processes get into the centre of interest? What could be the elements of a suitable theoretical framework for quality and quality assurance in VET and HE?
- Assessment and evaluation of quality objectives and learning achievements is essential for assuring and improving quality in training and education. How to enhance communication and interaction and how to organize feedback processes between all stakeholders involved in developing, customizing, deploying, adopting and learning under the new forms of teaching and learning?

## Objectives

The workshop on quality assurance of new forms and contexts of teaching and learning should facilitate insights into common challenges for VET and HE and identify core elements for a reinforcing joint approach to quality assurance. Following the seminar's overall approach, it should identify differences and commonalities but privilege those elements that are common to HE and VET. As a by-product, the workshop may define crucial areas for

further research to support deeper investigations into the common challenges. Reflexion should be encouraged by the input presentations, which cover several aspects of quality assurance in new forms and contexts of teaching and learning from the perspective of HE or VET or of both.

<b>Workshop 2</b>		<b>Quality assuring the new forms and contexts of learning</b>	
Chair		Ms Karena Maguire, Head Quality Assurance, QQI, Ireland (tbc)	
Rapporteur		Prof. Erwin Seyfried, HVR-Berlin	
HE	Finland	<i>New TEL settings-new prospects for teaching in VET and HE</i>	Adj.Prof Raija Hamalainen, Jyväskylä University
HE	Sweden	<i>The Gothenburg University and its "Framework for promoting and assuring quality in virtual institutions"</i>	Dr Davoud Masoumi, University of Gothenburg
VET	Austria	<i>The Network of VET schools in mobile learning</i>	Mr Christian Schrack, Austrian Federal Ministry for Education
HE	Spain	<i>Quality assurance of e-learning degrees</i>	Dr Esther Huertas, AQU Catalunya
HE	Hungary	<i>Social challenges in distance and e-learning</i>	Dr. Andras Szucs Secretary General, EDEN European Distance and E-Learning Network