



in **VET** and **Higher Education**  
for improving their permeability

CONTRIBUTION

**Workshop 3 – QA and accreditation**  
**Rapporteur: Ms Tina Bertzeletou**

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## The various functions of accreditation in VET and HE at national, European and sector levels (1)

In IVET + at national level, the Estonian accreditation model encourages VET institutions to **strive for excellence**. 2 fields of accreditation, current state of art + development perspectives. Based on EFQM, with mandatory SA + positive external assessment by the assessors, VET-providers obtain the right to deliver training. Assessment grids do not define pre-determined levels of good/bad as **each institution is considered unique**. **Progress in relation to past is assessed**.

Therefore, **assessors** have to know well the VET-institution they assess each time and the context it operates because **assessment is contextual**.

Their work difficult + time consuming. The continuous strive for progress leads to excellence, a relative and dynamic process.

## The various functions of accreditation in VET and HE at national, European and sector levels (2)

In the University of Potsdam accreditation is also used for enhancing the **internal responsibility for quality** through the ‘System accreditation’ in which all structures/processes related to teaching/learning are assessed internally on the basis of the ESG and all relevant German criteria/guidelines that apply. The ‘System accreditation’ certifies that the QA system of the Potsdam University is the right one to achieve the qualification objectives of the study programmes + is reviewed periodically. The System contributes to a better study programmes design, greater ownership of quality by staff involved , enhances institutional learning + works as a quality management mechanism.

## The various functions of accreditation in VET and HE at national, European and sector levels (3)

EQUASS model certifies the quality of VET- and social services providers striving for continuous improvement of their services to persons with a disability in Europe. Those who excellent are awarded the **EQUASS quality label**. Based on a multi-stakeholder (incl. service-users and funders), non-prescriptive, compatible with EQF and EQAVET approach, it endorses the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and other human rights conventions.

Providers have to implement the EQUASS own Charter of Rights that providers have to document (indicators) on the persons/learners their rights and duties. **Empowerment of service users through their active participation in all levels** of the organization is verified by external assessors and measured by means of indicators.

## **The various functions of accreditation in VET and HE at national, European and sector levels (4)**

Importance of **cooperation of all stakeholders to enhance a quality culture** in VET + HE.

Time has come to consider the learning impacts of accreditation on society, economy, environment and individuals.

Proposal : Set up of **EU Observatory on QA in the perspective of LLL** to

- Rethink core concepts
- Define learning facilitators
- Produce docs. + information
- Bench mark QA approaches, in particular those empowering students/teachers.

## The various functions of accreditation in VET and HE at national, European and sector levels (5)-challenges to overcome

Accreditation agencies are key actors in accreditation processes. In HE and at EU level, the Quality Accreditation Agencies (QAAs) are registered in EQAR (managed by them with the involvement of HEIs and students). EQAR's goal is to enhance international trust and recognition of the registered QAAs, of their results and accreditation decisions in EHEA. This means that **Governments should accept to open their HE systems to foreign QAAs for evaluating HEIs or their programmes.**

Despite progress made since 2008 and interesting examples in DK, Poland, Austria and Flanders, the **automatic recognition by MS of foreign QAAs** registered in EQAR lags behind even in the case of joint programmes. Reasons: diversity of QA practices; national/historic traditions; linguistic; unwillingness to loose certain control/power; financial impact of assessment decisions.