Study on quality assurance systems in work based learning and assessment in European VET

Selected cases on quality assurance in apprenticeship programmes - Final report
This study has been commissioned within the framework of the ENQA-VET work programme 2008-2009.
© European Network for Quality Assurance in VET, 2009
All rights reserved.
You are welcome to use this material but please remember to quote ENQA-VET in all references.
# LIST OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Recommendations for all stakeholders</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Recommendations at European level</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Recommendations at national system level</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Recommendations at social partners level</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Recommendations at enterprise level</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Recommendations at VET-college level</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Recommendations at apprentice level</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 Recommendations for further research</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Objectives of the study</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Work based learning</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 Definitions of work based learning</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2 Definitions of apprenticeship programmes</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Quality assurance</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 Quality in general</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 The European Quality Assurance Reference Framework structure</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3 Quality outside European VET</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 The research process</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 Desk research</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 Research questions</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3 Interviews</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Selection of cases</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 ENQA-VET activities within work based learning</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.1 The peer learning activity in Denmark/Sweden 2008</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.2 The conference in Wiesbaden, Germany 2009</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.3 The Study on work based learning, 2009</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 Methodological conclusions</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. CASES AND CONTEXTS</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Introduction to the cases</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 England</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Germany</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Romania</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 The Netherlands</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Leonardo da Vinci projects</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 Conclusions in relation to the cases</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. METHODOLOGICAL FINDINGS</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 The cases has to be constructed</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Lack of clear and commonly used and accepted definitions</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Quality models</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 The different contexts around apprenticeship programmes</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.1 Enterprises versus VET-colleges</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.2 Cooperation and communication</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 General methodological conclusions</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. PLANNING</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Goals and objectives</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1 Strategies for Apprenticeship</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2 Laws and regulations</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.3 Quality structures and systems</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.4 Qualifications and curricula</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.5 Guidance</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.1 Organisational structures</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.2 Funding</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.3 Motivation</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.4 Cooperation</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 SELECTION CRITERIA FOR ENTERPRISES</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.1 Training regulations</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.2 Equipment</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.3 Trainer competences</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO PLANNING</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. IMPLEMENTATION</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 QUALITY ASSURANCE</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1.1 General quality guidelines</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1.2 Quality standards</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1.3 Inspection and supervision</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 RESOURCES</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.1 Funding</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.2 Equipment and technology</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.3 Trainers</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVEMENT</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.1 Enterprises</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.2 VET colleges</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.3 Partnerships and cooperation</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO IMPLEMENTATION</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. EVALUATION</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 MOTIVES FOR EVALUATION</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 EVALUATION AREAS</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2.1 On-going assessments of the learners</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2.2 Final examinations</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2.3 Assessment of education and training providers</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4 APPRENTICE INVOLVEMENT</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5 CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO EVALUATION</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. REVIEW</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1 PROCEDURES, MECHANISMS, INSTRUMENTS</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2 REGULAR REVIEWS AND ADJUSTMENTS</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2.1 Learners and trainer feedback</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2.2 Feed back to VET-colleges</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2.3 Feed back to system level</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3 STRATEGIC LEARNING</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.4 INFORMATION STRATEGY</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.5 CONCLUSIONS IN RELATION TO REVIEW</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES – REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1 RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2 QUALITY OF APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES IN GENERAL</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

A strong quality assurance process to underpin work based learning and assessment has the potential to contribute to the overall quality assurance of VET. Apprenticeship is on of the major types of work based learning and will be the focus of this study.

Irrespective of the context (such as company training, sector-based trade body etc) and the particular arrangements for delivering the training, making consistent, reliable and valid judgements when individuals are assessed is an important aspect of the design and implementation of a VET quality assurance system.

This study seeks to identify the quality assurance systems for work based learning at a local, national and European level. The range of interventions that are used to support quality assurance in assessment will be collated and analysed. The study will draw conclusions in relation to the range of methods used to assure quality in assessment in work based learning and comment on how these systems affect each of the key groups involved in VET.

This study is a part of a group of ENQA-VET activities within the pillar of work based learning. The first activity was the peer learning activity in Denmark and Sweden in October 2008 with 19 participants and experts from 16 countries. This work was followed by the conference on work based learning in Wiesbaden, Germany in December 2008 with more than 140 participants. This study builds on the former activities and goes a step further and deeper within quality assurance systems in work based learning and assessment. The depth of the study was in the call for proposals limited to five cases and around 50 days of research.

The study will cover a number of different aspects of quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes; and the structure of the final report is inspired by the recently endorsed European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF).

The study is not intended to be representative of all European quality assurance systems within WBL and apprenticeship programmes. The five cases are not enough to make a representative study, but we are convinced, that the five cases can give inspiration and that the study can create a good overview of the different answers to the question:

What is quality assurance in apprenticeship programmes?

There are differences between the way apprenticeship programmes are organised and differences in the history and context of apprenticeship programmes in the European Member States. But the similarities are both many and more important to focus on – from an analytical and action-oriented point of view.

The differences and similarities of the apprenticeship programmes influence the way in which the quality assurance and assessments are organised. Again, we focus on the common aspects. Every Member State has structures for quality assurance in VET. The quality assurance in apprenticeship programmes follow, in principle, this quality logic – but with special attention to the specific characteristics of apprenticeship programmes.

The report starts with a number of European and National policy recommendations for all the involved stakeholders: Social partners, Enterprises, Vet-colleges and apprentices.
In the Research methodology, both the objectives of the study and the research definitions and methods are presented. The cases and the selection process are described in chapter 3. The methodological findings cover a number of more general conclusions about quality assurance and assessment of work based learning and especially about apprenticeship programmes.

The analysis of what quality assurance is in apprenticeship programmes is structured according to the EQARF.

Each of the four steps/areas in the quality circle are described separately and cover key questions, selected answers, indicators for quality and examples of best practice at both European, national, VET-college, apprentice and enterprise level in chapters 5 to 8.

The report concludes with reflections on a number of European and National policies and conclusions for the key stakeholders, Social Partners, Enterprises, VET Colleges and Apprentices.
Executive summary

Objectives, methodology and limitations
The main objective of this study is to describe quality assurance systems of apprenticeship programmes (as the most important form of work based learning) in a selected number of Member States and Leonardo da Vinci projects and to make a number of recommendations of interest to all stakeholders based on the analysis and conclusions.

The quality assurance systems in England, Germany, Romania, The Netherlands and from a number of Leonardo da Vinci projects have been the unit of analysis in the study. A comprehensive desk research has been supplemented with a questionnaire and a number of interviews in order to construct these case studies.

The study is not intended to be representative of all European quality assurance systems within work based learning and apprenticeship programmes. Five cases are not enough to make a representative study, but we are convinced, that they are sufficient to provide inspiration and that the study provides a good overview of the different answers to the question: What is quality assurance systems for apprenticeship programmes?

The European Quality Assurance Framework has been used to structure the analysis of the cases.

Conclusions

The quality of the apprenticeship programmes reviewed is in general high, and apprenticeship programmes are considered as one of the most (if not the most) important types of vocational education and training.

The total quality of the apprenticeship programmes comes from the quality of the learning provider, the quality of the employer (and mainly the trainers), the quality of the apprentice framework and the learner.

There are, in principle, two main issues in relation to the quality of apprenticeship programmes: the quality of workplace learning (content, guidance, assessment) and the quality of the connection between workplace and school-based learning.

A limited number of output-indicators (inspired by the indicators in the EQARF) were considered as the most useful in order to get a good picture of the quality of apprenticeship programmes.

The cooperation between the stakeholders and especially between the VET-colleges and the enterprises is considered as the quality area with the highest room for improvement. Specifically, the learners mention the lack of coordination between what is learned in the VET-colleges and what is trained in the enterprises.

Apprenticeship programmes are currently being reformed and revitalised in a number of Member States together with focused activities in order to change the culture around the apprenticeship programme and the image of these.

The study concludes that there has been a clear EU influence on the national quality assurance systems, and that the Leonardo da Vinci programme continues to contribute to further development.
The study shows that there are different laws and regulations and that the quality assurance needs to be organised and regulated. Funding is a key activity at national level and is used to motivate and sanction the different stakeholders.

The major national challenge is to secure the right number of apprenticeship places and to secure a high level of communication and cooperation between all the stakeholders.

The social partners have different roles and responsibilities e.g. responsibility for the final examinations in some Member States.

The quality of the training in enterprises is, in general, high, but enterprises need to be motivated in order to participate actively in the apprenticeship programmes. The main motivations for taking part in apprenticeship programmes for the enterprises are that it is possible to develop young employees who meet the company’s particular requirements, it is a part of their policy, it is possible to choose the best employees, it creates more flexible employees, to secure future employees within the profession, and the enterprise contributes to give the youth a perspective and direction in life.

The technical and pedagogical qualifications of the trainers are the most important quality criteria for most apprentices.

The VET-colleges play very different roles in quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. The activities range from being responsible for the quality to being a part of the examination and assessment process. However teachers do not have contacts with the enterprises regularly enough and the contact is very often dependent of the individual teacher and trainer.

The learners are, in general, satisfied with the quality of their apprenticeship programmes. The roles of the learner differ from being a student to being an employee. The learners need to give feedback to the enterprises and the VET-colleges and to know more about apprenticeship programmes and about their rights and responsibilities.

Recommendations
The selected recommendations cover the most important areas for improvement, and are based on the complete study and are closely linked to the conclusions of the study.

Primarily, all the stakeholders should continue the good work they are doing at the moment. They should focus on cooperation and use the following output-indicators (inspired by the indicators in the EQARF) in order to get a good picture of the quality of apprenticeship programmes:

- The employment rate of the apprentices/students
- The completion rate of the apprentices/students
- Satisfaction rate of individuals and employers with acquired skills/competences
- The time lapse between the completion of training and work based learning and successful employment being secured - important point perhaps reformulate to read “the time lapse between training/WBL and successful employment” – your decision

At European level the Leonardo da Vinci programme should be used even more and the ENQA-VET should continue its activities to support the Member States in quality assurance of VET.

The national system level should, as a primary objective, ensure the adequate supply of apprenticeship places, support communication between the stakeholders, secure the quality of all apprenticeship programmes and update the procedures for new apprenticeship programmes.
The Social Partners should upgrade the focus on quality and support the supply of apprenticeship places.

The enterprises should focus on the skills of the trainer, provide more places for apprenticeship, cooperate with the VET-colleges and focus on the learners.

The VET-colleges should have a closer contact to the trainers and enterprises, and focus on the learner.

The apprentices should to be more active and be encouraged and supported to understand their rights and responsibilities.

Future research should focus on how to get the enterprises to supply places for apprenticeship, on good practices for cooperation between enterprises, VET-colleges and learners and on the internal organisation of the quality assurance of the apprenticeship programmes.
1. Policy recommendations

This first chapter presents a limited and focused number of proposals for recommendations for future progress. The objective is to contribute to policy development, and to enhance the work within quality assurance systems in work based learning (WBL) and apprenticeship programmes in European VET.

The selected recommendations will cover the most important areas for improvement, and will be accompanied with a short description and justification.

The recommendations are based on the complete study and are closely linked to the conclusions in the last chapter of the study.

The first section will come with some more general recommendations to all the stakeholders. The following sections will present the recommendations for each of the stakeholders at European, National system, Social Partner, Enterprise, VET-college and apprentice level. Finally a number of recommendations for further research will be presented and justified.

It is our hope that the study will inspire many readers to make their own conclusions and to make and implement their own recommendations in order to further raise the quality of apprenticeship programmes in Europe.

1.1 Recommendations for all stakeholders

Continue the good work
Studies, surveys and the interviews all conclude that the quality in general is high. This conclusion is supported from enterprises, apprentices, social partners, VET-colleges and system level.

The current reforms and revitalization of the apprenticeship programme are the start of a new era and modernisation of the traditional apprenticeship programmes. These developments need to be followed closely and best practice should be presented in order to inspire other Member States and stakeholders.

The culture around the apprenticeship programmes have been under changes too. Attraction of high performance learners, clear links to further and higher education, competitions and awards, focused information strategies are among the objectives and tool to create a new and more positive culture around apprenticeship programmes.

Use a limited number of indicators
The following output-indicators (inspired by the indicators in the EQARF) were considered by the respondents as the most useful in order to get a good picture of the quality of apprenticeship programmes:

- The employment rate of the apprentices/students
- The completion rate of the apprentices/students
- Satisfaction rate of individuals and employers with acquired skills/competences
- The time from training/WBL to jobs/the labour market
These indicators are relatively simple but give a very good overview of the output quality and indirectly also of the input and process quality of apprenticeship programmes when they are used together.

Focus on cooperation
The cooperation between the stakeholder and especially between the VET-colleges and the enterprises are considered as the quality area with the highest room for improvement. In particular, the learners mention the lack of coordination between what is learned in the VET-colleges and what is trained in the enterprises. This needs to be taken seriously by all stakeholders.

1.2 Recommendations at European level

Maximise the use the Leonardo da Vinci programme
A number of LdV-projects focus on aspects of quality assurance of work based learning and apprenticeship programmes. This work has to be continued and upgraded in order to secure further innovation, exchange best practice, and transfer of innovative practices, contents, methods and procedures within quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes.

The internal organisation of the quality assurance of the apprenticeship programmes, how to get new enterprises to supply places for apprenticeships, good practice in cooperation between enterprises, VET-colleges and learners are all examples of potential topics for new LdV-projects.

Continue the work done by ENQA-VET to support the Member states
Quality assurance systems of work based learning and with that quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes has been one of the pillars in the ENQA-VET work plan for the last years. This work can be continued with focus on how to solve the main challenges in relation to the quality of apprenticeship programmes: the supply of apprenticeship places and the cooperation between the stakeholders in relation to quality assurance of the apprenticeship programme.

This will support the Member States own developments within quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes.

1.3 Recommendations at National system level

Secure the supply of apprenticeship places
There needs to be a significant and rapid increase in the number of Apprenticeships frameworks available.

The knowledge of the benefits and challenges related to apprenticeship programmes varies among the enterprises. This lack of transparency of facts and examples can prevent enterprises from supplying places for apprenticeship.

The ministries should improve the way in which they present and spread best practice – it should be both faster and more structured, but still keep the freedom of the different actors to choose from the options available to them.

The publication of studies like this in a more popular version and the creation of focused information to different types on enterprises could provide further motivation to enterprises, particularly if supported by cost/ benefits and actual case studies relating to their sector or trade.
The many national and international awards and competitions for apprentices helps raise the knowledge about apprenticeship programmes and helps to create a more positive image of apprenticeship programmes.

**Support the communication between the stakeholders**

A finding of our study is that the quality criteria concerning cooperation of learning sites were rated lowest by the apprentices. They often have the impression that their in-company training and their education at school are not closely connected. Therefore collaboration, in which in-company trainers and vocational school teachers work together to design projects and tasks for the apprentices, should be supported.

Focus on learner centred solutions which take account of the needs of the learner and specify the amount, content and timing of the communication between the other stakeholders and the learner.

**Secure the quality of all apprenticeship programmes**

Even if the quality of apprenticeship programmes in general is high are there differences between the enterprises and the VET-colleges. In general, the quality of the apprenticeship programme is very dependent of the skills and motivation of a limited number of persons: the trainer in the enterprise as the key stakeholder and the teachers at the VET-colleges together with the learner.

One potential solution is the introduction and use of national standards for the whole apprenticeship program including both the activities at VET-colleges and in the enterprises.

In general the quality assurance activities in the enterprises are not as transparent as the quality assurance activities in other parts of the educational system. Seen from a learner perspective the expectations to the quality of the quality assurance systems must be the same, independent of where the training and teaching are located.

This can either be solved by introducing quality assurance systems for the enterprises or at least some kind of quality assurance control and/or supervision in addition to what exists at the moment.

**Update the procedures for new apprenticeship programmes**

There seems to be a need for a system where Apprenticeship frameworks, tailored to the needs of individual employers and the market in general, can be brought quickly into play. The current structures with Social Partners organized in the existing sectors, trades and industries is a challenge in relation to the flexibility of the system for creating new apprenticeship programmes. This area and the potential alternative organization of it will be a key topic in the future in order to secure, that the educational system can deliver the skills and competences that is demanded.

1.4 **Recommendations at Social Partners level**

**Upgrade the focus on quality**

The Social Partners are key actors in quality assurance of vocational education and training even if they have different roles in the Member States. In principle quality should be an area where the Social Partners cooperate and where they have almost the same targets and objectives for the work.

Use this situation to focus even more on the quality assurance and development of apprenticeship programmes. This can be done by making common studies or studies with the same theme, but with different point of view, by creating common projects and by spreading good practice.
Support the supply of apprenticeship places
The Social Partners are, in principle, the stakeholders closest to the solution to the challenge of raising the supply of the places for apprenticeship. Both of the Social Partners can contribute to this work by finding the arguments for and against supplying places for apprenticeship and by analysing these answers in order to see if there are any possibilities for change.

1.5 Recommendations at Enterprise level

Provide more places for apprenticeship
The demand for apprenticeship places is much higher than the supply of the places, and the demand is expected to stay high and even grow the coming years. Every enterprise is important in this process, and every enterprise should be encouraged to supply places or at least make the decision of not supplying a place based on real facts and knowledge.

The majority of enterprises do not supply any places for apprenticeship. There must be a huge potential within these enterprises either on the existing conditions or after changes in the conditions. This group of enterprises needs to be actively involved in a discussion on potential conditions in order to supply places for apprenticeship. This can be organised through the employers' organisations sector by sector.

Many enterprises use the paperwork as one of the decisions for not being involved in Apprentice programmes. VET-colleges or other training providers can help the enterprises with managing the recruitment and ongoing paperwork, designing structured off-the-job training and providing other tasks that the enterprises find too time-consuming.

Cooperate even further with the VET-colleges
The cooperation with the VET-colleges can be regulated by law in different ways, but despite the organisational solutions the key challenges are still, that two different stakeholders are responsible for ensuring that the learner gets a high quality education.

It is not enough just to insist on the rules and the way the responsibilities are organised according to the law; both stakeholders must actively take their part of the responsibility and cooperate closely in order to secure the quality of the apprenticeship programme.

Personal contacts between trainers and teachers, a culture of exchanges of personnel, participation in local, regional or international projects are all potential instruments to enhance the cooperation between the enterprises and the VET-colleges.

Focus on the learner
It seems still to be problematic to coordinate the learning content and focus for the individual student, even if the apprentices/learners and the enterprises have regular contacts to the schools. There needs to be more focus on the individual students and their learning, and less on the standardised activities.

Many enterprises focus on their feedback to the VET-colleges on the apprentice as a person and not so much on the learning development of the apprentice. This has to be changed, so the learner and the learning are the focus of the communication and coordination between the enterprises and the VET-colleges.
If the apprentices not are very active or mature it should be an obligation of the enterprises to support the apprentices in raising questions and achieving feedback about their work and their learning.

**Focus on the trainers skills**
The personal, technical and pedagogical qualifications of the trainers are the most important quality criteria for most apprentices. The qualifications are regulated differently, but generally there are a number of quality criteria for the trainers. This work needs to be continued and developed further in order to raise the trainers’ minimum skills and qualifications.

This can be done in a number of ways ranging from the introduction of clear national minimum quality criteria for trainers to more soft and individual solutions like participation in national or LdV-projects.

One of the skills that the learners appreciate but also miss most is the skill of giving constructive feedback to the learner. Many apprentices have also the impression that there is not a very high fault tolerance during in-company training. And from the apprentices’ point of view, there is often too little time to discuss their working results.

The major problem seems to be integrated in the job of the trainer – the trainer is mainly a normal employee, who has a normal job to do – very often with higher priority than the training of the apprentices. Time for reflection and the use of positive feedback are both areas with a potential for further development. This can be done by changes in the internal job-descriptions or by upgrading the function as a trainer.

### 1.6 Recommendations at VET-college level

**Closer contact to the trainers and enterprises**
The cooperation between the trainer, the teacher and the learner are extremely important for the quality of the learning and for the apprenticeship programme. The contacts between the teachers and the trainers require resources (time and competences) to secure that every apprentice gets the same degree of support. The personal relationships between the teachers and trainers are also important for the quality of the learning for the learner. One way of building-up personal relationships is to have teachers in practice in the enterprises and trainers in practice at the VET-colleges. Even short periods of exchange can be very efficient for building relationships and increasing understanding of the different contexts and constraints.

Motivating the top-management in VET-colleges to be more involved in contact with the enterprises and to create an atmosphere of openness and interest in the relationship with the enterprises is a critical factor in achieving greater cooperation and coordination.

The construction of clearly defined structures for how the VET-colleges and the enterprises discuss and communicate in relation to the learning content and the timing of the learning can be made. This can be done by the use of a review schedule with fixed dates and agendas for the meetings.

**Focus on the learner**
The teachers and the VET-colleges have, in general, the pedagogical and didactical skills in order to focus on the learner and to ensure that the other stakeholders do the same. The teacher can be the person that sets the scene in relation to the learner, and tries to support the learner both at the VET-college and in the enterprise.
The creation of a standardised and mandatory feedback system from the colleges to the apprentices might be a good idea in some countries.

1.7 Recommendations at Apprentice level

Be more active
The apprentices/learners are a key participant in the quality assurance of their own education. They have the possibility to react immediately and to ask about both the plans and the daily activities if they feel it necessary. But this requires that they are active and mature enough to be involved in the quality assurance.

They have to learn how to give feedback to their companies so that the training processes might be changed. Especially the vocational schools and the trade unions should help equip the apprentices for this difficult task.

The study showed differences in the apprentices/learners level of maturity and activity. The students continue to demand quality in their education and compare the working and learning conditions internally with those of other students. This creates a pressure on the average quality for all enterprises. If the apprentices are not very active or mature it should be an obligation of the enterprises to support the apprentices to raise questions and seek feedback on their programme.

Know your rights and responsibilities
The learners should know their rights and responsibilities independent of whether they are students or employees. The preparation of students should begin before starting the apprenticeship, so the students know what to expect at the enterprise and at the VET-college. All apprentices shall have the right to a quality education – independent of individual teachers and trainers.

One way of securing that the learners know their rights and responsibilities is to define this as a fixed part of induction of every apprenticeship programme.

1.8 Recommendations for further Research

The research resulted in a number of more general findings and conclusions, mainly related to the research process and to the availability of data.

How to get new enterprises to supply places for apprenticeships?
The supply of places for apprenticeship is lower than the demand for the places. Further research should try to answer the question: how are the supply of places increased?

The research should focus on both how to get the enterprises that at the moment supply places to continue with it, and especially how the many enterprises without experience with apprenticeship places can be motivated and encouraged to supply places.

New approaches to apprenticeship places are a further area for this research.

Good practices for cooperation between enterprises, VET-colleges and learners
The cooperation between the stakeholders is the quality criteria with the lowest ratings among the students in one of the studies.

Further research could search for the motives behind this fact and identify best practice in order to help the stakeholders cooperate better.
The internal organisation of the quality assurance of the apprenticeship programmes

The study showed a clear lack of transparency of the quality assurance in the enterprises and that it is difficult to get an overview of and an insight in the quality assurance activities in the enterprises.

The training in the enterprises is an integrated part of the public funded apprenticeship programme and should, according to this, follow the same rules for transparency and quality assurance as other vocational education. But our knowledge is still limited about this important part of the vocational education and training system. Further research on the internal organisation of the quality assurance of the apprenticeship programmes in the enterprises is expected to support the general knowledge of quality assurance and to inspire and challenge the quality assurance mechanisms and systems in the VET-colleges.

2. Research objectives and methodology

2.1 Objectives of the Study

This study will focus on quality assurance systems in work based learning and assessment in general and more specifically on quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes in European VET. WBL and apprenticeship programmes are both key aspects of any VET system.

The study
• will help to inform and guide current practice through highlighting successes
• will consider how quality assurance systems for assessing work based learning affects training providers (VET institutions) and company trainers at local, national and European level
• seek to gain a better understanding of how any quality assurance system ensures trainers and assessors are kept fully informed
• will help ENQA-VET evaluate how to support the effectiveness of the quality assurance systems and processes that underpin work based learning and assessment
• will provide sufficient information for ENQA-VET to be confident about how quality assurance systems can and do support work based learning and assessment
• will be a “tool-box” for quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes from which the readers may chose to be inspired by what they consider most relevant to them

It is not possible to cover all aspects of quality assurance systems for work based learning and assessment, because this study deals with five different cases and is carried out on a limited time scale of around 50 days of research.

Apprenticeship programmes will, as the major type of work based learning, be the focus of the study.

The study is not expected to be representative of quality assurance systems in European work based learning and apprenticeship programmes. But the selected cases will, together with the comprehensive desk research, cover the most important aspects of quality assurance systems in apprenticeship programmes in European VET.
The cases will not describe a complete picture of quality assurance systems in apprenticeship programmes in each case-country, but will, in general illustrate quality assurance systems in apprenticeship programmes and
- Search for common principles
- Present a distillation of the cases
- Present different ways apprenticeship programmes are quality assured
- Have an analytical approach
- Make conclusions and recommendations for all stakeholders

2.2 Work based learning

Words like "quality", "assessment" and "work based learning" are defined in many ways within the European VET systems and among the many different stakeholders and participants. It is not the intention here to find the one and only definition or to decide on such a definition, but to give an overview of the dimensions within the different definitions.

2.2.1 Definitions of work based learning

Using a very broad definition makes it possible to get a better overview of the dimensions within work based learning, and allow room for National, Regional and Sector based priorities and differences.

Work based learning (WBL) covers a broad range of training activities including company training, apprenticeship programmes, training in partnership with a training provider, sector-based training and placements abroad to name a few. A huge number of Leonardo da Vinci projects organise different aspects of placements abroad, including quality assurance aspects.

After having examined the extensive literature concerning WBL and apprenticeships, two things have become clear.

Firstly, in many academic articles, authors fail to define what WBL is, even though they are writing about how to improve it or have done a comparative case study of different countries. There is a lack of common understanding of the definition of work based learning by all stakeholders. The language barriers between employers and VET-providers are clear (New Engineering Foundation. The Path to Productivity. 2008, p. 8).

Secondly, it has become clear that a number of general definitions exist and even different terms for work based learning: ‘sandwich-programmes’, ‘alternation education and learning programmes’ (Schuetze, 2004, OECD, 2008:1). This does not necessarily have to be a negative aspect, but many of the definitions contain the same elements or are too descriptive and one-dimensional.

However, in some cases, the definitions contain some benchmarks and disclose the purpose of WBL and apprentice programmes:

1 Such as "Placement Support – Development of Support Materials for Foreign Placements in SMEs (NL/01/B/F/PP-123135), Learning from different vocational systems – development of tools to integrate and assess abroad work placement (D/2004/EX/430350323), European Work Placements for Students (A/06/A/F/PL-158,802), BE CuLT eXTeND (DE/08/LLP-LdV/TOI/147131) and INNOVET Mobility (AT/08/LLP-LdV/IVT/158044)."
Vocational programmes differ from academic programmes not only in curricula, but also because they generally prepare the students for specific types of occupations and in some cases for direct entry into the labour market.

Pre-vocational (or pre-technical) education is designed to introduce participants to the world of work and prepare them for entry into further vocational/technical education. Vocational/technical education prepares participants for direct entry into specific occupations without further training.

School-work based learning: less than 75% of the curriculum is presented in the school environment or through distance education. It contains programmes that involve alternate periods of attendance at educational institutions and participation in work based training, also known as ‘sandwich programmes’. (OECD, 2008:1)

Apprenticeship: a type of employment contract. Under the contract, employers call on the work of apprentices, but at the same time are responsible for passing on the concepts and techniques that apprentices need to become skilled workers. Apprentices must attend training schemes (of a minimum of 240 hours per year under the age of 18 and 120 hours per year thereafter) provided by services outside the workplace. Apprenticeship is part of the vocational training system. (http://kms.cedefop.europa.eu/blobs/EN00000493001.html)

Apprenticeship is a kind of alternance learning that takes place at two intrinsically different learning environments and that, due to the didactic-pedagogical integration of these two learning environments, gives added value.


Smith, Betts (2000) have a three-dimensional definition of WBL: learning about work is informational, learning at work is locational and learning through work is experimental. They continue to state that to properly define WBL, learning must reflect the significant qualitative changes. These changes are emerging in its definition, which has been possible through the recognition of active partnerships between employers, students and educational providers.

The definitions above each contribute to some of the dimensions of WBL, which are important for the quality assurance of work based learning. These dimensions can be summarised and presented visually as in Figure 1.
Figure 1. A systemic view of work based learning

The figure gives a good overview of a number of key quality assurance elements like the different actors, and especially “The workgroup and the individual” (the student/the learner) and the “Formal VET” (the VET-system and the VET-schools).

Work based learning can be summed up and defined as

“learning or training undertaken in the workplace, usually on the job, including apprenticeships, on-the-job training under normal operational conditions, and on-site training, which is conducted away from the work process (e.g. in a training room.). Work based learning can be a part of a formal education and done in close cooperation with a VET-provider/school.”

2.2.2 Definitions of apprenticeship programmes

The focus on quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes was decided at the Interim report meeting (24.4.2009) in order to focus the limited research resources on this most important type of WBL.

---

Cedefop\textsuperscript{3} defines apprenticeship as:

\begin{quote}
A systematic, long-term training alternating periods at the workplace and in an educational institution or training centre. The apprentice is contractually linked to the employer and receives remuneration (wage or allowance). The employer assumes responsibility for providing the trainee with training leading to a specific occupation.

Comments: – in French, the term ‘apprentissage’ relates to both apprenticeship and the process of learning (see ‘learning’); – the German ‘dual system’ is an example of apprenticeship.
\end{quote}

Related term: alternance training, which is defined as

An education or training combining periods in an educational institution or training centre and in the workplace. The alternance scheme can take place on a weekly, monthly or yearly basis. Depending on the country and applicable status, participants may be contractually linked to the employer and/or receive a remuneration.

Comment: the German ‘dual system’ is an example of alternance training.

OECD\textsuperscript{4} provides international comparable information on the typical characteristics of apprenticeship programmes and other work based learning programmes. In most OECD countries (Australia, Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom) and partner countries (Israel, the Russian Federation and Slovenia), some form of apprenticeship system exists.

In some countries (e.g. Austria, Germany and Hungary), apprenticeship contracts are established between a student (not the vocational training school) and a company. For the most part, the majority of countries have combined school and work based apprenticeship programmes. In contrast, apprenticeship systems do not exist in Japan, Korea, Spain and Sweden. In the United States, there are apprenticeship programmes, but they are not part of the formal education system.

The minimum entry requirement for apprenticeship programmes varies but is typically the completion of lower secondary education (Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland and the Slovak Republic, and the partner countries Israel and Slovenia). In Austria, the minimum entry requirement is the completion of nine years of compulsory schooling. In Australia, Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States, entry is governed (in full or in part) by age criteria, while in New Zealand, participants must be employed. In Turkey, the minimum requirement is completion of primary education, but entrants must be at least 14 years old and have a contract with a workplace. The Russian Federation has no legal framework for entry into apprenticeship programmes.

In some countries the duration of apprenticeship programmes is standardised; it ranges from one to four years in Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, Poland and the United Kingdom, and the partner countries Israel and Slovenia. In other


\textsuperscript{4} Education at a Glance 2008, OECD INDICATORS, p. 326ff
countries (e.g. Austria and Belgium), it varies according to subject, specific qualification sought, previous knowledge and/or experience.

In most countries, the successful completion of an apprenticeship programme usually results in the awarding of an upper secondary or post-secondary qualification. In some countries, higher qualifications are possible (such as an advanced diploma in Australia).

The following overview is presented in one of the few analysis of apprenticeship in Europe.

### The profiles of apprenticeship programmes in selected countries in Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Between 70 and 80 per cent of time spent in the workplace</th>
<th>Fixed duration of apprenticeship contract (3-4 years)</th>
<th>Statutory entitlement to off-the-job education and training</th>
<th>Externally-set examinations for award of apprenticeship certification</th>
<th>Completed apprenticeship leads to nationally recognised qualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Apprenticeship in Europe. Fading or Flourishing by Hilary Steedman. London School of Economics and Political Science, December 2005

A typical apprenticeship programme has between 70 and 80 % of the time spent in the workplace; the duration of the apprenticeship contract is fixed; there is a statutory entitlement to of-the-job education; the examinations for award of apprenticeship certification are externally set and a completed apprenticeship leads to nationally recognised qualifications. UK was the only Member State with a slightly different profile in 2005 as the table shows. The English Apprenticeship has changed recently, so the two times NO will today be replaced by two times YES.

If we introduce some other quality criteria for the description of the different National apprenticeship programmes the picture will maybe be more heterogeneous. The responsible organisation for the training in the enterprises is one of these criteria that together with the role of the apprentices/students will be described later in this study.

The same questions were raised in our questionnaire in order to investigate, if the conclusions from December 2005 still were valid. The answers was not always the same within the different Member States, and many of the Member States have developed more flexible models, which makes both a clear YES possible, as well as a NO for some parts of the apprenticeship programmes. An example is the Dutch apprenticeship contracts where the duration depends on the learning pathway (school based or work based) and the level of educational education.
2.3 Quality assurance

Quality assurance and development have been on the European VET-agenda for many years and many VET-colleges have, over decades, been inspired by the quality systems in the enterprises they had contact with especially in relation to apprenticeship programmes.

The European work on quality assurance in VET was set at the top of the agenda by the requirements in the Lisbon European Council 2000 in order to make Europe to a knowledge-based society. This process were supported by the Barcelona European Council in 2002 setting the target of making Europe's education and training systems a world quality reference by 2010.

Following the Council Resolution of 19 December 2002 on the promotion of enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training5 ("the Copenhagen process"), and as an outcome of subsequent cooperative work between the Commission, the Member States, social partners, the EEA-EFTA and the candidate countries on the Quality Assurance priority, a Common Quality Assurance Framework ("CQAF") was developed, taking account of existing experience and "good practice" in the different participating countries.

The Education Council in May 20046 endorsed the CQAF approach and invited Member States and the Commission, within their respective competencies, to promote it on a voluntary basis, together with relevant stakeholders.

The European Network for Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training provided a European platform that made possible appropriate follow-up to the Council Conclusions of 2004 and the Helsinki Communiqué, and facilitated sustainable cooperation between countries.

The CQAF has inspired the first proposals for the study, and gave the methodological base for the tender to the study. The final EQARF summarises the main contents of the CQAF and is used as the methodological structure for this final report.


2.3.1 Quality in general

Quality assurance and development in VET have been discussed intensively in recent years. The main arguments for this focus on quality are the broad cost/benefit-relation of VET, which can be optimised by better quality. However, it shows that quality assurance is connected to cost too. An other economical argument is the contribution of the quality of the educations to the results achieved in the individual enterprises and in the countries and Europe as a whole. A number of non-economic arguments like democracy, personal development, transparency, mobility, citizenship are also important parts of the quality discussion.

But quality is nothing new in VET. It has played an important role until now. Among the main quality activities from the past include:

- The huge number of apprentices employed all over Europe
- The modernisation of existing and the development of new educational areas
- The creation of common quality structures and instruments

---

• The number of tests and developments and innovative teaching and learning methods

The assurance and steering of the quality of VET have mainly, until now, focused on input and structural aspects. The quality discussion the last years has changed the direction to a stronger focus on process and output aspects, in order to cope with the changing market situations and the expectations for the competences needed in the future.

2.3.2 The European Quality Assurance Reference Framework structure

The Recommendation of the European parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQARF) is the latest development (adopted 18 June 2009) with quality assurance in VET at European level.

The Recommendation establishes a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework ("the Framework") as a reference instrument to help Member States to promote and monitor continuous improvement of their VET systems based on common European references, which builds on and further develops the CQAF. The Framework should contribute to quality improvement in VET and to increased transparency of, and consistency in, VET policy developments between Member States, thereby promoting mutual trust, mobility of workers and learners, and lifelong learning.

The EQARF is comprised of a quality assurance and improvement cycle (planning, implementation, evaluation/assessment and review/revision) based on a selection of quality criteria, descriptors and indicators applicable to quality management at both VET-system and VET-provider levels. The aim is not to introduce new standards, but to support Member States' efforts, whilst preserving the diversity of their approaches.

The Framework should be regarded rather as a "toolbox", from which the various users may choose those descriptors and indicators that they consider most relevant to the requirements of their particular quality assurance system.

The proposed descriptors and indicators are provided as guidance only and may be selected and applied by users of the Framework in accordance with all or part of their requirements and existing settings.

The EQARF is useful in this study, because it supports the many methodological challenges by
• Creating an analytical structure
• Raising a number of key research questions
• Providing a common language of quality
• Focusing on relatively limited number of key aspects of quality assurance
• Using this known, accepted and used framework on a relatively limited researched area like work based learning and assessment

The main parts of the methodology in this study are inspired by the EQARF-structure, the quality circle, the key questions and the different analytical levels.

The EQARF is used as the analytical framework and has resulted in a number of main research questions, which will be answered in this final report. These research questions are a key part of the methodology, and will be answered by a combination of existing materials and the collection of new data via interviews and other direct contacts.
2.3.3 Quality outside European VET

Quality assurance of VET is on the agenda in most countries and regions all over the world. A part of the desk research focused on the experiences and good practice from areas outside European VET. Some of these findings from Australia and from a number of UK universities are presented in this section. The objective is to inspire and support the work on quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes in Europe.

Australia
One of the Australian focus areas is to support the VET-providers in building capacity and creating incentives to engage in WBL. This includes supporting staff development with respect to supporting, delivering and assessing WBL. It also helps support the VET-providers capacity to manage market-intelligence on skills issues and to undertake regular evaluation of employer satisfaction with graduate skills and qualities.

The following six essential ingredients will – according to the Australian Government - help to make WBL a positive and valuable experience:

1. Efficient, effective and appropriately resourced internal organisational arrangements
2. Strong and enduring relationships with clients and stakeholders
3. Managing demand for places sensitively and effectively
4. Work-place preparation arrangements are systematic and consistently rigorous for employers and students
5. Aim for mutually beneficial and rewarding work-place experiences for employers and students of all backgrounds
6. Reliability of the outcomes of the student’s work-place experience

Universities
Quality is high on the agenda at the universities as the following examples from UK shows.

In England, QAA Quality Assurance Agency for higher education checks how universities maintain their own academic standards and quality. QAA review and report on how they meet their responsibilities identify good practice and make recommendations for improvement. In addition, they publish guidelines to help institutions develop effective systems to ensure students have the best learning experience.

One concrete example can be found from the University of Bath, which has developed a “Quality Assurance Code of Practise” intended for work based learning tutors, students, learning providers.

At Salford University (UK), WBL has been a major part of the BSc Construction Management degree. A completely detailed structure of placement assessment is provided to all students, thereby removing any possibility of ambiguity over what is and is not assessed. Each company has to provide a training coordinator and a placement supervisor. The training coordinator is the training manager in the company and is the person that the student deals with throughout the course. The supervisor is normally a senior member of a project or office team. They are responsible for student training and assessment whilst they are on the placement.

Once on placement, the student discusses with their supervisor their job responsibilities and their Placement Development Plan (IPDP). The supervisor is responsible for assessing the students’

---

performance and for liaising with the university in areas of difficulty relating to the students’
performance.

The company assessment is based on the students’ performance achieved against their own
IPDP. Performance is measured in terms of skills and competences that a student would be
expected to have developed by the end of each year of placement. However, despite the
importance of the company assessment, it does not contribute towards the final academic marks.
Nevertheless, it is a requirement of the programme that the companies’ assessment should remain
at least at “satisfactory” to ensure continued sponsorship.

Salford University (UK) has developed a University “Placement Report”. It has been designed to
record and evaluate experience that has been gained by the student in the course of the
placement. The report includes; placement details, placement description, job role, case study, and
placement review and report presentation.

In the UK, quality improvement for employer responsiveness is a central component of the reform
of the further education system. Key features relating to this aspect of the service include:

- Helping employers to identify the likely impact of training and development on their
  business and to measure the impact in the short and long terms
- Evaluating training and having rigorous quality assurance arrangements to continually
  improve the service
- Sharing information and good practise with colleagues to enable everyone to improve

Learning and Skills Improvement Service is responsible for the key messages and has produced
six pamphlets that consider how the FE sector can develop employer responsive provision. The full
review is available from www.excellentgateway.org.uk/research.

2.4 The research process

The work on the study started after a few rounds of tenders and due to this a bit later than
originally planned. The revised road map of the study shows the major milestones of the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadline</th>
<th>Topic/activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31.1.2009</td>
<td>Kick-off meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.09 – 1.5.09</td>
<td>Desk research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.4.2009</td>
<td>Interim report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5.2009</td>
<td>Interim report meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.5.09 – 30.6.09</td>
<td>Field research, interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.6.09 –1.8.09</td>
<td>Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8.09 – 1.9.09</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.8.2009</td>
<td>Draft report meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10.09</td>
<td>Draft report submitted for comment approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final report agreed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reports published to web</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The research process has in general been more time-consuming and difficult that expected from
the start of the work. The major challenge was to construct good cases, because these had to be
collected from many different sources. Secondly the different experts were very busy, so it was
difficult to plan and make the interviews.
It was expected that the cases were already described, or at least partly described, and “only had to be found” in the existing literature of work based learning and apprenticeship programmes. But this was not the case, so the research team decided to construct/collection the cases based on a number of both primary and secondary sources.

The conference on work based learning in Wiesbaden (December 2008) gave a better overview of promising and emerging practices within quality assurance systems in work based learning and assessment in European VET.

The European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF) is used as the analytical framework and has resulted in a number of main research questions to be answered. These research questions are a key part of the methodology, and are expected to be answered by a combination of existing materials and the collection of new data via interviews and other direct contacts.

The first structures, analysis and conclusions were discussed with the ENQA-VET board at the Interim meeting in April 2009. A number of constructive ideas and proposals were presented and discussed, and a few key challenges were solved as well.

First of all there was an agreement that the study and the research questions should focus on quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. The many other different activities within work based learning are still important, but this study will focus on quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes only.

Secondly was the discussion of the relevant cases and how to get the best use of the limited number of the five cases that the study would cover: A group of potential cases were proposed and agreed on.

Last but not least was the decision to limit the questions and potential questionnaires to the essence of quality assurance in apprenticeship programmes. This will support getting responses that are focused, reliable and valid.

The overall research process started with a focus on the key quality dimensions and on the key quality stakeholders. The cases were constructed in order to ensure that both the key quality dimensions and the key quality stakeholders were found and described. The descriptions in the coming chapters are organised according to the key quality dimensions. In the final conclusions and especially in the recommendations the perspectives are changed again. Here the focus will be on the different groups of stakeholders, and on what they can do in order to assure and further develop the quality of apprenticeship programmes.

2.4.1 Desk research

The desk-research has been very comprehensive during the whole research process.

In order to gain a general overview of the existing material on work based learning, google and google-scholar were used. By using this search engine, we were able to retrieve articles published via the key academic journals. After having found the academic journals, they were browsed for relevant articles. Having found some relevant articles, these were read through and more importantly, the references used in the various articles were checked to see if they were relevant for our study.
Furthermore, official websites were also searched on, such as the official website for Leonardo da Vinci projects, for Ministries of Education and official government organisations who work on education, work based learning and apprenticeship programmes.

However, it was surprising to discover that many of the official websites were not as easy to navigate around and it was therefore difficult to find relevant documents. However, with the help of some of the contacts, we have been able to retrieve official reports on work based learning.

This general research online was an important first step in gathering information on work based learning in the various countries, as this provided a sound basis for our interviews with the various contacts.

The overview of the main activities within the desk research is presented below. The conclusions from the peer learning on work based learning in Copenhagen/Hässleholm in October 2008 were the starting point for the research process together with the Call for Tender.

### Desk research – main activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic/Source</th>
<th>Methodology and results.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference on work based learning in Wiesbaden, Germany in December 2008</td>
<td>Participation and presentation of the main results from the peer learning on work based learning in Copenhagen/Hässleholm in October 2008. The Conference resulted in a number of personal contacts with key actors from the different Member States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General information about WBL and apprenticeship programmes</td>
<td>Desk research on line, libraries and on a number of different databases. Review of existing literature, articles and research, primarily looking at academic journals such as: Journal of education and training, Education + Training, Journal of vocational education, Cedefops virtual community, OECD’s Education at a glance, and official sites for government institutions/organisations. Collection, collation and analysis of published reports and statistics (at national and European level). A comprehensive review of sector or occupationally based initiatives and company-based programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedefop</td>
<td>The homepage of Cedefop and especially the Virtual Community of Quality Assurance⁹ in VET has been used in order to find potentially interesting materials for this study. This part of the desk research on work based learning gave more than 100 matches. The reports from the two CEDEFOP peer learning activities: Assuring the quality of the training in enterprises and the quality of the cooperation between VET-schools and enterprises (2007) and the Peer review and cross country analysis on quality of training in Enterprises (2005) inspired the further work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>The search for work based learning in Education at a Glance 2008, OECD INDICATORS resulted only in two matches, one at</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

page 28, mentioning how work based learning is central to occupational advancement for adults in a number of countries and the other at page 326, mentioning apprenticeship programmes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leonardo projects on WBL</th>
<th>Desk research (The Leonardo da Vinci project database) and follow-up contacts on selected important projects.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This resulted in a (limited number) of potentially interesting projects within different aspects of WB and apprenticeship programmes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Investigation of existing effective practices and identification of patterns and characteristics of success

| Fieldwork, interviews, personal contact network. |

The desk research resulted in the creation of a questionnaire (annex 9), with the key research questions this study wanted to answer. The questionnaire was mailed to a selected group of respondents and their answers were the basis for further contacts and an interview.

The desk-research was followed by fieldwork (mainly interviews) in order to get a more in-depth overview of the different practices in quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes and in the outcome and motivations of these practices. The interviews and other direct contacts helped to get an in-depth overview of current practice and especially to highlight success and best practice.

But before that a number of key research questions had to be developed, based on the objectives of the study, the content of the EQARF and based on the results from the desk research and other ENQA-VET activities within WBL.

2.4.2 Research questions

The number of interesting questions raised has been very high during the research process. It has been necessary to reduce the number of key questions due to the limited resources and, even more important, the reliability and validity of the answers we could collect.

The final questionnaire covered the following areas of questions (se annex 9 for the questionnaire and the detailed questions):

- general characteristics of apprenticeship
- the Social Partners and enterprises roles in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship
- the VET-providers (Schools) roles in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship
- the apprentices/students’ roles in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship/WBL
- the roles at System Level (Ministry) in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship
- how can the quality be measured by the use of indicators
- how the quality of apprenticeship can be raised

Each of the four steps/areas in the quality circle were included in the questionnaire and in the follow-up interviews in order to collect answers and selected examples at European, national, VET-provider and enterprise level.

All the collected materials were analysed in order to give an overview of:
• the role of national agencies and Ministries;
• the roles of enterprises;
• the roles of the Social partners;
• the contribution of training providers (VET institutions), sector bodies, “Chambers’ of Commerce” and other organisations with an interest in quality assuring work based learning and assessment;
• the contribution of trade unions, professional bodies, representative organisations with an interest in supporting individual learners;
• the institutional arrangements to support the training of work based assessors and the quality assurance processes used to ensure that valid and reliable judgements are made;
• information provided to learners (either those in training providers who undertake a period of work based learning, or those on company-based training schemes) and employers and managers covering assessment and the quality assurance processes which support it;
• information and training provided to assessors on the structure and systems of quality assurance of VET;
• analysis of how each of these approaches is effective in ensuring valid, reliable and consistent assessments;
• comment on how the EQARF is being, or can be used, to further support these approaches of work based learning and assessment;

2.4.3 Interviews

The desk-research was followed by the creation of a questionnaire covering the key questions in relation to quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship programmes.

The respondents were found in close cooperation with the different Member States representatives in ENQA-VET or with persons they had delegated this task to.

There have been interviews with persons from every case, and typically, one representing the system level and the Ministry, one person representing the Unions and one person representing employers’ point of view.

In relation to the Leonardo da Vinci-projects the personal contact has been with the different partners mainly by mail or phone – partners that often represent research institutions, VET-colleges, teachers training organisations and other organisations to support the development within VET in general.

The potential respondents were contacted by mail or phone in order to convince them of the importance of the study and the value placed on their responses. The questionnaires were then mailed and after some follow up activity, contacts responded with more or less clear answers.

The next step was to read and analyse the answers and to contact the respondents in order to find the proper time for an interview by phone. These interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes and focused mainly on the unclear or uncovered areas in the answers to the questionnaire.

The interviews were very successful and all the interviewed persons were willing to share their expertise and experiences with the interviewer and with the European VET-world.

The results from the interviews were added to the answers already given in the questionnaire and analysed together with these.
2.5 Selection of cases

The tender stated that the study should cover five cases and the resources measured in time and money were closely connected to this limited number of cases, and to the assumption that the cases were already described.

A case can be defined “as the detailed and comprehensive description of actions and activities in quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes in a Member State, a region or in a project.”

In principle all Member States were possible cases for the study, but we needed only five cases. A brief profile of the Member States' work based learning practice was made based on the experiences and the analysis from the Peer Learning Activity on work based learning in connection with the tender.

A brief overview of the quality assurance procedures for work based learning in a number of Member States.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member State</th>
<th>Potential arguments for selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Dual system. Informal links between enterprises and vocational schools. Evaluation of apprenticeship training is mainly the task of the social partners. Regional apprenticeship offices. Grants for enterprises who keep a written documentation of WBL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Dual system. Close involvement of the social partners. The Trade Committees continuously assure and develop the quality. Very different involvement of the Trade Committees in quality assurance of WBL. School-based work based learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>Simple organisation of WBL within the existing VET-system. The schools have the rights and responsibilities. Lack of know-how on WBL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>Very comprehensive organisation of the different types of WBL. WBL is based on contracts made between the educational providers and the working place. Quality recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Has a dual system. Has high political focus on education. Company-based programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Skillnets: an enterprise-led support body to enhance the skills of people in employment. 180 private providers offer certification, and include WBL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Has a regional structure with national schemes. The traineeship experiences addressed to unemployed people. The instructors' involvement in the traineeship. A study on quality assurance in WBL has started in 2009.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>Mobility projects under the LLL-programme include on-the-job training. A tutor guides the learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Many ongoing reforms and implemented changes. Establishment of Sectoral Committees. Huge investment in educational structures and in the cooperation between enterprises and VET-colleges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Work with demand training, supply training, and training in alternation with employment. Training in alternation includes a contract for learning. Systems under development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Has a very sophisticated system for advanced VET. Output oriented advanced VET. Decentralised system with a strong focus on student assessment. Win-win-win situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>Accreditation of enterprises before they can train a trainee. Links between the association of VET-colleges and the associations of enterprises. Research from the association of VET-students on QA in WBL.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A group of potential case-countries and case-projects were selected together with the ENQA-VET chair and the ENQA-VET secretariat at the Kick-off meeting in Vienna on 30 January 2009. The selection criteria for the five cases were a combination of content, different approaches, different levels, different Member State motivation and availability. The selection criteria and the potential Member States were discussed at the kick-off meeting. This resulted in a pre-selection of the following nine potential cases:

- Austria
- Czech Republic
- Germany
- Italy
- Lithuania
- Romania
- UK
- Two Leonardo da Vinci projects from the last years

Data was collected from Germany, Austria, UK, Romania and Lithuania together with a comprehensive analysis of potential Leonardo da Vinci projects.

The final selection of the planned five cases was made at the Interim Report meeting in April 2009, based on the available data within each of the cases.

The work with all the potential cases showed, that not all Member States very ready and willing to participate in this study e.g. the feedback from Italy stated that they were not ready to participate in, and contribute, to the study. Austria was very willing and helpful in relation to participate, but had a relatively similar dual-system with apprenticeship as in Germany, so this, was not one of the final cases.

The other Member States have all actively supported the idea of being a case for the study. The analysis of the Leonardo da Vinci projects has resulted in a limited number of potentially interesting projects, which resulted in the following final selection of the cases at the Interim report meeting in April 2009: Germany, Romania, UK, Spain and alternatively The Netherlands, and the Leonardo da Vinci projects as an individual group of cases.
Spain was planned to participate, representing the south of Europe, but were not able to participate. The final selection of the cases were then made during June 2009 and resulted in the following five cases:

- England/UK
- Germany
- Romania
- The Netherlands
- The Leonardo da Vinci projects within quality and WBL

### 2.6 ENQA-VET activities within work based learning

ENQA-VET has decided to have a number of different activities within the area of quality assurance of work based learning in the work-plan for 2008-2009. The synergy between the different activities is important and show a progression in learning and knowledge about quality assurance on work based learning.

The ENQA-VET pillar of work based learning consists of one peer learning activity, one conference co-organized with the German BIBB and this study. The progression is seen both in the potential audience of the activity, the focus of the different activities and especially in relation to the validity and reliability of the conclusions and recommendations.

### 2.6.1 The peer learning activity in Denmark/Sweden 2008

The ENQA-VET peer learning activity on work based learning\(^{10}\) has been important in a wider European quality assurance context. It has supported the Copenhagen process in increasing the quality in VET and it has made European cooperation in the area of quality assurance in VET stronger.

The peer learning concept is central in making European cooperation in the area of quality assurance even stronger. Bringing 19 participants and experts from 16 countries together to view best practice in systems and processes in operation in Denmark and Sweden and to reflect back on the significance of these in their own professional contexts, is European cooperation at its best.

The key findings and conclusions are presented in annex 11 and were the basis for the following recommendations. In order to support the Copenhagen process by increasing the quality in VET and in order to strengthen European cooperation in the area of quality assurance in VET is it recommended:

At European policy level to
- Give more attention to WBL
- Conduct more research within quality assurance of WBL
- Develop quality indicators for WBL
- Develop mechanisms to predict future demand
- Motivate enterprises even further in relation to WBL
- Upgrade the skills of the trainers in the enterprises
- Use the Leonardo da Vinci programme to support European projects on WBL

---

At National policy level to
- Upgrade the documentation on WBL
- Involve WBL enterprises more in the national quality assurance work
- Develop national standards and quality criteria for WBL
- Develop benchmarking methods for WBL
- Develop new and more future oriented structures for advising on future trends and competences
- Use common quality assurance structures in both enterprises and VET-colleges

At enterprise level to
- Ensure a balance between student’s educational needs and short term needs of the enterprises
- Upgrade the training of the trainers
- Create sectoral or cross-sectoral networks within quality assurance of WBL

At VET-college level to
- Contribute to the training of trainers in the enterprises
- Enhance the teachers knowledge about the daily work in the enterprises

Some of these recommendations are already implemented by the conference in Wiesbaden and by this study on quality assurance and assessment in work based learning and apprenticeship programmes.

2.6.2 The conference in Wiesbaden, Germany 2009

The conference “Quality in work based learning meeting demands of labour market and lifelong learning” was held in Wiesbaden in December 2008\(^{11}\).

Some 140 experts gathered in Wiesbaden from across Europe, and many from the host-country, Germany.

Progress in the field of VET quality development in work based learning (WBL) was the underlying theme of their discussions. The participants noted the importance of VET systems and in particular quality assurance, quality development and quality management in the context of the Copenhagen Process 2002, the Education Council Conclusions 2004 and the Bordeaux Communiqué 2008. The development and dissemination of strategies, concepts and tools require research and networking and the Wiesbaden Conference proved to be a useful platform in enabling this process.

The purpose of the Conference, as an integral part of the ENQA-VET work programme for 2008-2009, was to create a structured and sustainable platform for Member States to exchange information and experience, debate, mutual learning and enable consensus building.

The aim of the conference was to develop common criteria for presenting national quality assurance systems in the field of WBL (promoting mutual confidence) and to identify further opportunities for European cooperation (including the need for further research) while at the same time considering the diversity of the European vocational training systems.

\(^{11}\) Source: http://www.enqavet.eu/conferences.html
The conference also considered how quality assurance in WBL could best contribute to the implementation of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQARF).

The key messages from the Conference are presented in annex 12, and were the basis for the following recommendations:

- Conferences are an important development and dissemination tool in providing a basis for ongoing work on WBL;
- The efficient dissemination of results, findings and recommendations to all stakeholders is very important. The Quality Assurance National Reference Points (QANRPs) can play a key role in the process of supporting quality assurance;
- There are clear similarities and differences in the European approaches, specifically the difference in the availability of resources for further improvement;
- In the field of quality management of WBL in companies, especially in small and medium sized enterprises a paradigm shift from input towards outcomes based learning necessitates further development of standards to enhance transparency and visibility;
- In areas of cooperation between schools, companies and other learning sites the “win-win-win” situation of quality assured cooperation needs to be promoted to all stakeholders;
- In considering validation of informal work based learning it is very important to highlight benefits as well as costs;

The presentations at and the participants in the conference have been a good support to the study. The many personal contacts from the conference made access to potential respondents more effective and efficient.

2.6.3 The Study on work based learning, 2009

This ENQA-VET-study on quality assurance of work based learning builds on and goes further than the two above mentioned ENQA-VET activities. The study describes in more detail five cases and examples of quality assurance or at least quality aspects within apprenticeship programmes and work based learning in general. The selection of the cases and especially the developed methodology and questions benefited heavily of the other ENQA-VET activities.

The significant amount of work within work based learning from ENQA-VET is a major strategic contribution at both European and national level. The many participants and contributors show a high interest in the topic and the importance of the work done by ENQA-VET.

2.7 Methodological conclusions

The major expected risks of the project were the limited existing material relating to quality assurance of work based learning and assessment in general and more specifically on apprenticeship programmes. The many personal contacts and especially the desk research showed that there is a lack of material with a focus on quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes in most Member States.

Most of the available material is of a general nature, and the quality and assessment aspects are not explicitly described. Many of the academic articles found are very descriptive in nature and focus on how the different VET systems came into existence and how they have evolved, thereby neglecting the quality dimension. There is a clear need for reflective studies that evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a system with a clear focus on quality and assessment, and which present best practice of quality assurance systems for WBL.
The significant amount of work within work based learning from ENQA-VET is a major strategic contribution at both European and national level. The many participants and contributors showed a high interest in the topic and the importance of the work done by ENQA-VET.

We believe that the selected methodology and the selected key contacts and searches together ensure that the results are both reliable and valid.

The study is not intended to be representative for all European quality assurance systems within WBL and apprenticeship programmes. The five cases are not enough to make a representative study, but we are convinced, that they are sufficient to give inspiration and that the study provides a good overview of the different answers to the question:

*What is quality assurance in apprenticeship programmes?*

The EQARF is useful in this study, because it supports the many methodological challenges by
- Creating an analytical structure
- Raising a number of key research questions
- Providing a common language of quality
- Focusing on relatively limited number of key aspects of quality assurance
- Using this known, accepted and used framework on a relatively limited researched area like work based learning and assessment

The desk research has created a good overview of the existing literature and of the key aspects of both quality assurance of work based learning and especially apprenticeship programmes. This literature has been used to identify promising or emerging practice, which were investigated further through the field research.

The desk research has mainly collected data about plans, guidelines and expectations from public authorities and VET-providers to the quality assurance and assessment of WBL. The desk research described mainly relatively limited the WBL-reality, which then was covered by the field research and especially by the interviews.

The interviews cover the plans, intentions, visions and reflections on the reality; reflections on the daily work with quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. In addition, proposals for future work and for how to raise the quality of the apprenticeship programmes are included in the interviews.
3. Cases and contexts

The call for proposals specifies that five cases should be found, described, analysed and searched for common principles. The study will mainly build on these five cases, which have been constructed by the research team.

Clear and comprehensive descriptions of the quality assurance systems in apprenticeship programmes were not available. Descriptions of the different aspects of quality assurance have been collected and are “the building bricks” of the cases. The intention is not to cover all details of the national quality assurance systems, but to give the readers the possibility to continue the research in the original sources and to be inspired by the work done in the case countries.

3.1 Introduction to the cases

The four Member State cases will contribute with National and regional examples, experiences, best practice and reflections within quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship programmes. These Member States have relatively different traditions of apprenticeship programmes in general, which influence the way in which quality can be and is assured.

Steedman (2005) describe in her study for the European Commission apprenticeship programmes in Europe as a combination of two dimensions:
- The degree of employer commitment
- The degree of the apprentices integration into full-time education structures

Employers’ commitment is here measured as the employer commitment to providing apprentice places, and their responsibilities for the quality of the training. Her conclusions are presented below.

### Apprenticeship: integration and employer commitment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer commitment high</th>
<th>Employer commitment moderate</th>
<th>Employer commitment low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apprentices integrated into full-time education structures</td>
<td></td>
<td>France, Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some apprentice integration into full-time structures</td>
<td>Denmark, Austria</td>
<td>UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No apprentice integration into full-time structures</td>
<td>Germany, Switzerland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The dimensions are difficult to measure and get common agreement on, which is illustrated by the answers from the case countries in the following chapters. However, the dimensions are useful in the selection of cases with different approaches to apprenticeship programmes.

The Leonardo da Vinci-projects (LdV) are defined as the fifth case, but these consist of a number of cases. Each LdV-project can be seen as a case of quality assurance of work based learning or apprenticeship programmes.
The presentation of the LdV-projects will focus on the key WBL-aspects of the projects and specifically on quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes.

The following five sections will give a very short introduction to the VET-systems and the contexts for the quality assurance systems in the different selected Member States, Regions and projects. The main objective is to give the reader a short introduction to the context of the different cases, and not to give a detailed overview of the complete VET-systems. Detailed information is available on the ENQA-VET homepage\(^\text{12}\) and on the different national homepages, where the descriptions are continuously updated.

### 3.2 England

A brief history of Apprenticeships\(^\text{13}\)

Britain has a long history of Apprenticeships, which stretches back to the guilds of the Middle Ages. In 1563 the system became more prescribed and regulated: the Elizabethan Statute of Artificers set out terms and conditions for training (including a duration of seven years) and for the master–Apprentice relationship. Apprenticeships expanded in the following two centuries, with new legislation on working conditions, environment and the conduct of Apprentices in their leisure time.

Another milestone of legislation was passed in 1802 – the Health and Morals of Apprentices Act, whose provisions included a 12-hour working day and a requirement that factory Apprentices were taught reading, writing and arithmetic.

By the late nineteenth century, Apprenticeships had spread from artisan trades such as building and printing to the newer industries of engineering and shipbuilding – and later to plumbing and electrical work. Although there were approximately 240,000 Apprentices by the mid 1960s, there were growing concerns about the effectiveness of Apprenticeship training. It was criticised for its exclusivity, for being male-dominated, for focusing on serving time rather than on outcomes, and for a failure to embrace new and expanding occupations. Numbers had decreased to some 53,000 (‘average in learning’ figure) by 1990.

Since the mid 1990s, governments have been rebuilding the programme in an adjusted economic and institutional context. This has required state support, as has been the case in almost all countries with a sizeable Apprenticeship programme (the level of state intervention in this country has varied over recent decades, from levy-funded programmes via the industrial training boards in the 1960s and 1970s, to no support or intervention at all in the early 1990s).

Since 1997 a number of the programme elements have been reformed. In 1998, the Training Standards Council (subsequently the Adult Learning Inspectorate) began an inspection of work-based learning providers. In 2007, responsibility for inspection was transferred to Ofsted. In 2000, the LSC took on responsibility for funding Apprenticeships from the Training and Enterprise Councils. The technical certificate was introduced in 2003/04 to explicitly require theoretical knowledge from Apprentices (and, implicitly, structured off-workstation training). The Apprenticeships blueprint was introduced in 2005 to provide updated guidance for Sector Skills Councils on how to define their Apprenticeship frameworks.

The result of these changes, coupled with the increased investment made by the Government since 1997, has been a major improvement in the number of Apprentices and in the quality of

---

\(^{12}\) www.enqavet.eu

Apprenticeships. The number of learners of all ages starting on the programme has more than doubled from around 75,000 to around 180,000 today. Completion rates – which once indicated severe problems with recruitment practice and quality – have been transformed. In 2001 only 24% of learners completed the full framework, and today the figure stands at 63% (and this is rising). More than 100,000 learners now leave the programme each year having passed all elements of the framework for their chosen occupation. This is unprecedented in this country. By 2010/11, more than 900,000 learners will have completed a full Apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships – what they are and how they work
There are four core participants in any government-funded Apprenticeship:

• The employer offers a place, is the primary provider of learning in the workplace (which may include structured training away from the workstation), pays the apprentice a wage, and supports their learning time requirements.

• The apprentice is expected to contribute to the productivity of the employer and to undertake the requisite learning.

• The training provider (which might be a further education college, group training association or other work-based-learning provider) provides off-the-job tuition and often takes on much of the administrative workload associated with the Apprenticeship on behalf of the employer.

• The Government – via the LSC – provides funds to cover the training costs of the Apprenticeship, although typically not the wage costs of training time.

An Apprenticeship is not a qualification in itself, but it contains a knowledge-based element (the theoretical knowledge underpinning a job in a certain occupation and industry, typically certified via a Technical Certificate), a competence-based element (the ability to discharge the functions of a certain occupation, typically certified via work-based assessed national vocational qualifications (NVQs)), transferable or ‘key skills’ (literacy and numeracy), and a module on employment rights and responsibilities.

Component qualifications within Apprenticeship frameworks are also accredited by Ofqual.

There are two main levels of Apprenticeship available for those aged 16 and over: Apprenticeships (equivalent to five good GCSE passes) and Advanced Apprenticeships (equivalent to two A-level passes).

Rules Governing Apprenticeship Frameworks
The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill set the Apprenticeships Programme on a statutory basis, and one not defined by Government funding. The Bill makes provision for a statutory function to be placed on the Secretary of State to approve the core elements that are to apply to every apprenticeship framework, regardless of career or level (the specification of apprenticeship standards, the ‘specification’, currently known as the ‘blueprint’); (Clauses 11-15); and for the opportunity for organisations, such as Sector Skills Councils and employers, to submit Apprenticeship Frameworks (high level curricula for an apprenticeship in a specified career) in draft to authorised persons and to the Secretary of State for issue if they comply with the specification; (Clauses 7-10).

Every Apprenticeship framework must conform to minimum requirements set out in the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England on which they are currently consulting.
The model apprenticeship agreement is the contract between the employer and apprentice. Finally, an apprenticeship certificate is awarded to an apprentice who successfully completes the elements of the specific framework while employed under an apprenticeship agreement.

Apprenticeships are available with different types of employers from large national companies such as British Gas, BMW and Orange to smaller local companies.

The time taken to complete an Apprenticeship varies depending on the actual type of Apprenticeship being undertaken, and how the apprentice structures their work and study. For example, the practical and academic demands are quite different for an engineering qualification compared with a hairdressing qualification.

BIS/DCSF Joint Apprenticeships Unit made (July 2009) an overview of the Headline Messages of the Policy commitments, key facts, data and recent progress. A part of this overview is presented here; the other parts are integrated in the following chapters.

Apprenticeships are a key route to building the national skills base and at a time of economic downturn it is vital that we continue to invest in people and their skills. Government is committed to significant growth in Apprenticeships for young people and adults.

In order to fulfil this commitment we need to increase the number of employers offering Apprenticeships. Government is already committed to increasing spending on Apprentices in 2009/10 to over £1 billion.

- In January 2009 the Prime Minister announced a £140 million package for 35,000 additional Apprenticeship places over 2009/10 to help strengthen the Country’s competitiveness and extend opportunities to people facing redundancy; at least 21,000 of these extra places will be in the public sector.
- We are putting in place procedures to use the public procurement process to encourage companies, including SMEs, with access to Government-funded contracts to offer Apprenticeships.
- In the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill, currently before Parliament, we are introducing legislation which, for the first time, will put the Apprenticeship programme on a statutory basis and ensure that an Apprenticeship place is available for all suitably qualified young people by 2013.
- We will maintain our commitment to meeting the demand from suitably qualified young people.
- Over 130,000 employers are offering Apprenticeship places; there are over 180 different types of Apprenticeships available across 80 industry sectors.
- Those with a Level 2 Apprenticeship earn on average around £65,000 more over their lifetime than those with a Level 2 qualification or below.
- The Statistical First Release (SFR) published in June 2009 showed that there were 196,000 Apprenticeship starts in the first 9 months of the 2008/09 academic year, an increase of 15% on the same period in 2007/08.
- The new National Apprenticeship Service became operational in April, providing a dedicated service and single contact point for employers and Apprentices. A key part of this service is the new online system for Apprenticeship vacancy matching.
- In May, an £11 million package was announced to provide 3,000 more Apprenticeship opportunities. This new approach will see large employers expanding existing Apprenticeship
programmes and allow small businesses to benefit from the expertise of companies which have been training Apprentices for some time.

The current reforms and the ambitious strategy of Apprenticeship are expected to be new to most of the readers of this study. It will be very interesting to follow the implementation of the English strategy and especially the results of the many activities and changes.

3.3 Germany

The organisation of the apprenticeship system is the result of the collaboration between the public and private sector and refers to any public or private institution or activities that (in)directly serve to provide occupational qualifications. Vocational education is based on institutional procedures and tripartite negotiations that include three major actors: public authorities, employer organisations and trade unions (Tremblay, le Bot, 2000).

There are different stakeholders in the German dual apprenticeship system:

- The Federal Institute for Vocational Training, or Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB)\(^{14}\), which is a principal stakeholder, who is accountable to the German Federal government. BIBB is responsible for research and development in workplace vocational training. It also functions as a service provider and advisor to the Federal government and vocational education practitioners. Its tasks include the development of bases for initial and continuing vocational training. Furthermore, it also possesses a mandate to modernize and improve vocational training on the basis of technological, economic and social developments.
- Federal government
- VET providers
- The Länder, who each are responsible for establishing its instruction program based on the core curriculum adopted by the Ministry of Education.
- Different stakeholders: regional chambers of commerce and industry, which represent groups of firms in the same industry sector, are responsible for supervising the vocational training process and validation of exams.
- The enterprises that deliver the training of the apprentices in the enterprises

In Germany the Federal Government – in this context generally represented by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research – is responsible for in-company vocational training while the individual Länder are responsible for the vocational schools. Thus, the federal ministries are involved in diverse activities concerning apprenticeship/WBL. The most important competences of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research are stated in BBiG (Berufsbildungsgesetz):

- Recognition of Initial Training Occupations by ordinance (see BBiG section 4)
- Pass other ordinances concerning in-company training (e.g. “Ordinance on Trainer Aptitude” (AEVO))
- Membership on the board of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB), which, among other duties has the task to advise the Federal Government on basic issues relating to vocational education and training and to determine the annual research programme of the BIBB (see section 92 BBiG)

\(^{14}\) For more information, please see: [http://www.bibb.de](http://www.bibb.de)
3.4 Romania

WBL in initial VET\textsuperscript{15} (TVET) in Romania\textsuperscript{16}

The effects of the communist regime, during which all schools were obliged to develop partnerships with enterprises and WBL was part of the study programme. This created a sensitive environment for changing the concept during mid 90’s. Therefore “trust” has a peculiar meaning in the Romanian TVET system; rebuilding trust and ownership development among the main stakeholders (schools and enterprises, but also teachers and enterprise representatives) were major challenges.

Since 1998, in Romanian TVET, WBL is part of the national curricula. It consists of 4 – 8 weeks / year (depending on the level of the qualification) of training in workplaces. In the assessment of TVET schools management, quality criteria related to partnerships with enterprises to facilitate WBL play a major role.

Starting with 2007, WBL for TVET students is regulated by a compulsory WBL Agreement, endorsed by a Ministry of Education decision. The Agreement promotes participative management and increased ownership of all those involved in the process. It is signed by both the TVET schools and the enterprise facilitating students’ WBL. The Agreement sets out how the training provider will cooperate with the employer throughout the process.

Starting with 2007, the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007-2013 (SOP HRD), one of the programmes financed from the European Social Fund in Romania, offers a tremendous opportunity to improve the quality of TVET students’ WBL. Over 50 million euros were allocated to support partnerships between TVET schools and enterprises, training of enterprise tutors, monitoring and assessment of WBL, dissemination of good practice.

The implementation of WBL at system, enterprise and school level\textsuperscript{17}

1. Initial vocational education is organized in "schools of arts and trades", vocational and technological high schools and technical post - high schools. The Work Based Learning is based on training standards validated by Sectoral Committees. The final evaluation of initial vocational education is organized by schools in partnership with the companies which host the practice of the students.

2. Development of continuous education programs (formal education and apprenticeship) based on occupational standards is realized by authorized training providers and companies. The training providers are authorized based on a quality assurance documentation which includes curriculum, training conditions and trainers. The companies which organise apprenticeships are authorised by the Ministry of Labour. The final evaluation of each program (training and apprenticeship) is done by a committee composed of 2 evaluators coming from the local National Training Board for Adults and one representative from the training provider. Any authorized process and program must use an occupational standard which is developed by experts from the working life, recommended by the Sectoral Committees which validates the standards. The whole process of occupational standards development is organized by the National Training Board for Adults Education.

\textsuperscript{15} Initial VET (IVET or TVET) is part of the pre university system of education and training
\textsuperscript{16} Builds on answers from Dana Stroie, National Centre for TVET development, Romania
\textsuperscript{17} Builds on the answers from Felicia Zarojanu, National Training Board For Adults’ Education to the questionnaire for the Peer Learning Activity on Quality Assurance procedures for work based learning, October 1-3, 2008 – Copenhagen.
3. Assessment of competencies achieved in ways other than formal is organised by authorized centres. The national authority for the authorization of Competencies Assessment Centres is the National Training Board for Adults Education and the process follows the occupational standard used, the assessment experts and the evaluation tests.

The organisation of WBL
1. The work based learning in initial vocational education is organized by the Ministry of Education based on training standards.
2. The work based learning in continuous education is organized by training providers (centres, schools and companies) based on occupational standards which development is organized by the National Training Board for Adults Education.
3. The Competencies Assessment Centres are authorized by the same National Training Board for Adults Education and the whole assessment process is organized by these centres based on evaluation tests decided by the assessors.

3.5 The Netherlands

In the Netherlands apprenticeship or work based learning has been more or less rediscovered in the late nineties, but with new learning and working arrangements and with new connections between school and work-based learning. It has become part of an elaborated system of vocational education, which includes two main pathways with different combinations of school and workplace learning. As objectives of vocational education have been expanded to include both effective problem-solving on the job and work process knowledge, workplace learning has become more important.

In the Netherlands, there are approx. 320.000 school based VET-students and 180.000 work based VET-students. The training for both groups is offered by 70 VET-institutions in the Netherlands:
- 40 ROCs (Regional Education and Training Centres)
- 12 AOCs (Agricultural Education and Training Centres)
- 18 Vakscholen (Training centres in one specific branch)

These work in cooperation with more than 185.000 accredited learning companies. All VET-colleges are, in close cooperation with the surrounding, regional service, trade and industry in charge of work based learning.

In The Netherlands the quality assurance in VET is regulated by the WEB (The new Adult and Vocational Education Act) went into force in 1996\(^\text{18}\).

With the implementation of the WEB, the two learning pathways in VET (work based or school based) were put in the same qualification framework. This means that the same qualification can be achieved through different learning pathways.

1. The school based pathway (BOL)
About 65% of the VET students attend the school based learning pathway. They have the status of a student (grosso modo equal to students in HE), including the right for student-grants and generally they are not paid for the compulsory periods of work placement during their education. The share of work placement as part of the entire curriculum varies from minimal 20% to a maximum of 60%, depending on the didactical approach, the branch and the level of

\(^{18}\text{Builds on “Self-regulation and Quality Assurance in Dutch Secondary Vocational Education”, by Jos Verkroost, Siep Jurna; 2001Contribution to the European FORUM on Quality in VET. Updated by Thea van den Boom, November 2007}
education/training. Colleges have a high degree of autonomy regarding the choices that are made here.

2. The work based pathway (BBL)
About 35% of the VET students attend this learning pathway. They have the status of an apprentice and they are paid for their work according to the agreements made by the social partners. Generally, they combine four days working in the week with one day College. There are however some different models according to the sector.

Both learning pathways offer programs on four different levels, ranging from the assisting level to the mid-management level with qualification profiles that are drawn up by branch commissions representing the social partners and the world of education and training. A recognized work placement period (WBL) in both models can only be done at a recognized learning company. The accreditation of these companies is done by so called ‘Centres of Expertise’. In the Netherlands, there are 17 Centres of Expertise, covering all a certain branch from trade and industry.

The proportion of work based learning versus school based learning slightly fluctuates according to the economic situation.

The WEB also regulates the obligation to employ instruments, so that the stakeholders of the institutions can substantiate their claims to quality coming from educational institutions. These include the Education and On-the-Job Training agreements that institutions enter with participants and – with respect to the on-the-job training agreement --, with each on-the-job training company. There are also standard regulations for these instruments. There are standard agreements that regulate most relations between the institutions and other closely-interested parties.

Intrinsic quality: centrally-established educational goals
Education should take place within the framework of a national qualification structure, since qualifications and the educational goals of training are centrally developed (not at institutional level). This task has been assigned to Centres of Expertise for VET-labour market (KBB). Each KBB does this for a group of training courses in a specific sector of the labour market. A KBB consists of representatives of business on the one hand and of education in its sector, on the other.

Quality assurance responsibility of institutions
Educational institutions are primarily responsible for quality assurance. Their job is to determine, assess, assure and, where necessary, improve the quality of their own vocational training courses.

The institutions are free to choose their own model of quality assurance, but a number of regulations exist for their quality assurance systems (QAS):

Funding
Educational institutions are primarily responsible for identifying failings and for taking the necessary improvement measures, for example, raising the expertise of teaching staff. The separate means used for in-service training and quality improvement / renewal projects (prior to the introduction of the WEB in 1996) have therefore been incorporated in the lump-sum amounts for the institutions. The government directs innovative efforts through the use of specific project funds (earmarked funds outside the lump-sum compensation) to support the further development of ‘good practice’.

With its new funding system, which went into effect 1 January 2000, the government is focusing on the achievement levels of participants and on educational achievement:
in the area of accessibility: an amount based on the number of participants, with a bonus for the number of participants at the lowest training levels,
- in the area of qualifications: an amount based on the number of participants who receive certificates

Eighty percent of the national budget will be paid on the basis of participants and 20 percent on the basis of certificates.

Controlling the quality of examinations
Examinations clearly reveal whether participants have actually mastered the intended learning goals. Besides the quality of education, institutions are also responsible for the quality of examinations and, consequently, for quality assurance and public accountability in this regard.

To create additional guarantees, there are external controls (external legitimacy) prescribed to ensure the quality of examinations. A separate private entity KCE (Quality Centre Examinations for VET) assessed the quality of examinations from 2004 until 2007. At the end of 2007 this task was transferred to the inspectorate as a part of the integrated supervision.

From self-evaluation report to annual report on quality performance
According to the WEB a regulation requires periodic publishing of the assessment, of the quality of education and improvement plans. This required annually for examination results. The self-evaluation reports (since 2003) are no longer required by law. The public information from institutions will develop into an integrated annual report. This annual report will contain relevant information for stakeholders (horizontal) and for inspectorate/government (vertical). This process is in development here in late summer 2009.

3.6 Leonardo da Vinci projects

The Leonardo da Vinci programme links policy to practice in the field of vocational education and training (VET). Projects range from those giving individuals the chance to improve their competences, knowledge and skills through a period abroad, to Europe-wide co-operation between training organisations.

The Leonardo da Vinci programme is a major part of the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme. The programme funds a wide range of actions, notably cross-border mobility initiatives; co-operation projects to develop and spread innovation; and thematic networks. The potential beneficiaries are similarly wide – from trainees in initial vocational training, to people already in the labour market, as well as VET professionals and private or public organisations active in this field.

Leonardo da Vinci enables VET organisations to work with European partners, exchange best practices, increase the expertise of their staff and respond to the teaching and learning needs of people. It therefore supports efforts to make vocational education more attractive to young people. By helping European citizens to acquire new skills, knowledge and qualifications, the programme also aims to bolster the competitiveness of the European labour market.

Innovation projects have always been at the core of the Leonardo da Vinci programme. They aim to improve the quality of training systems through the development and transfer of innovative policies, contents, methods and procedures within vocational education and training. The selected and analysed LdV-projects are examples of the importance and show the huge potential of the Leonardo Programme in order to improve the quality of VET in general and in apprentice programmes more specifically.

The official Leonardo da Vinci project homepage has been analysed and searched for work based learning projects.

All types of approved Leonardo da Vinci projects (that National Agencies and EACEA are responsible for) can be found on the ADAM portal:

Searches on “work based learning” in this database resulted in more than 900 matches. All of these projects have been analysed first of all in relation to their title in order to extract potential interesting WBL-projects. This resulted in a selection of around 150 projects that needed further analysis.

Searches on “apprenticeship” in the database resulted in around 31 projects, which all has been analysed in relation to their quality focus.

The basic project information (Title, Project number, Year, Project type, Status, Country, Marketing txt, Summary, Description, Themes, Product types, Product information and Project homepage) were printed for all these projects. The presentation of the projects was read in detail in order to find projects within the area of quality assurance in work based learning. A more detailed analysis of these projects resulted in a limited group of potential interesting and WBL-relevant projects, as presented in annex 8.

Analysis of the objectives, goals, products and contents shows, that the recent years LdV-projects within quality of work based learning and apprenticeship focus on

- Quality assurance
- Quality standards
- Quality management systems
- Partnerships
- Teachers and trainers
- Evaluation
- Work placements abroad
- Analysis of training needs
- Promotion of apprenticeship programmes

These LdV-projects have been analysed and/or been contacted in order to get materials and results for further analysis. The responses have been ranged from: ‘the persons are not in the organisation any more’ to fast and positive responses with relevant materials.

The content of and experiences from the most interesting projects will be presented in the findings together with the conclusions from the four Member State cases.

3.7 Conclusions in relation to the cases

The cases are collected and constructed from a wide range of sources in order to cover the complexity of quality assurance systems in apprenticeship programmes.

The main parts of the case-materials are descriptions of plans and visions for the quality assurance of work based learning. Many of the member States are continuously in a process of reforming and improving the quality of VET in general, which includes work based learning and the more specific apprenticeship programmes. Some have formulated National strategies for Apprenticeship as in England, where the government has decided that Apprenticeships will play a central role in their plans for growing skills in the economy.
Apprenticeship programmes can be organised by more than one pathway as in the Netherlands. Two learning pathways in VET (work based or school based) are in the same qualification framework, so that the same qualification can be achieved through different learning pathways both including work placement as part of the entire curriculum.

Some Member States like Germany have recently made a series of different research reports on quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. The quality is described and analysed from different points of view e.g. both the enterprises and the apprentices.

This kind of research and especially the many different angles/points-of-view on the same topic can inspire other Member States to consider, if such research can be helpful in their own work on assuring and developing the quality of apprenticeship programmes.

There are differences between the way apprenticeship programmes are organised and differences in the history and context of apprenticeship programmes in the different member States. But there are many similarities which are important to focus on from an analytical and action-oriented point of view.

The differences and similarities of the apprenticeship programmes influence the way in which the quality assurance and assessment are organised. But again we focus on the common aspects. Every Member State has structures for quality assurance in VET. The quality assurance in apprenticeship programmes follows, in principle, this quality logic – but with special attention to the specific characteristics of apprenticeship programmes.

The main challenge and advantage of apprentice programmes in relation to the more traditional VET at colleges are first of all, that the learning takes place in enterprises. Secondly, that the learning in the enterprise is a part of a complete education with learning both at VET-colleges and in enterprises.

This is common for all member States and can – even if the main problems and challenges are the same – be planned, organised and implemented differently. But in principle, the key quality assurance questions are the same in all Member States in relation to apprenticeship programmes:

- How can the quality of apprenticeship programmes be assured and developed?
- How can the quality of learning in the enterprise be assured and developed?
- How can the communication and coordination between all the participants be planned, organised and implemented in order to assure and develop the quality of the learning – both in the enterprise and in the total education?
- Who should do what and when in relation to quality assurance?

These questions will together with a number of other questions be answered in the coming chapters.
4. Methodological findings

The methodological findings below focus on the construction of the cases, definitions, quality models and the different contexts around apprenticeship programmes.

4.1 The cases has to be constructed

The many personal contacts and especially the desk research showed, in general, that complete descriptions and cases covering quality assurance in apprenticeship programmes in the individual Member States does not exist. Most of the available material is of a general nature, cover single aspects of the quality assurance systems, are plans and intentions and the quality and assessment aspects are not explicitly described.

Furthermore, the official websites of government institutions/agencies were not as easy to navigate around. It was expected that many of the websites would function well in English as in their respective language, but this was not the case either. Nevertheless, it was possible to find some relevant reports on some of the websites.

The different materials e.g. studies, research, surveys, official descriptions of the apprenticeship programmes and structures covered only one or more aspects related to quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. The main work for the research team was to extract the quality aspects and to construct the individual cases.

Some of the case countries are in the process of revising their apprenticeship programmes and structures around it. This means, from a research point of view, that a number of visions, strategies and plans exists for the future, but there are few tangible results available.

Quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes are complex and need to be covered from many different angles, in order to create an overview.

The Germans have, last year, completed an impressive piece of work within research on quality assurance in VET in general and especially in quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. The background for all these German research activities was a combination of a demand for further development of the quality in VET in Germany and the lack of data to give direction for this development. The main former sources were:

- Evaluations from individual enterprises and VET-colleges
- Studies on the quality of VET in individual regions
- The lack of data on the quality of VET at national level

However, none of these sources gave an overview of the quality of VET in Germany. BIBB decided to fill this gap of knowledge and data by implementing two research projects within quality in VET.

The first project focuses on quality assurance in educations in enterprises\(^20\). The second project focuses on quality in VET in both enterprises and VET-colleges as seen from the point of the learner/apprentice\(^21\).

The research on the apprentices was made in the first part of 2008 and around 6000 learners from 15 selected branches were asked to answer a number of questions.

---

\(^{20}\) Qualitätssicherung in der betrieblichen Ausbildung.

\(^{21}\) Ausbildung aus Sicht der Auszubildenden.
The point of view of the enterprises is also covered by German research\textsuperscript{22}. The key questions are
\begin{itemize}
\item What connect the enterprises with high quality VET?
\item Which standards do the use and how do they assess their own work?
\item Which strong and weak points of the quality in VET in the enterprises can be found and under which conditions?
\end{itemize}

The main challenge of our study has been to collect all the existing data on quality assurance, to select the topics and materials and finally to construct a National or Regional case covering the key dimensions of quality assurance in apprenticeship programmes.

4.2 Lack of clear and commonly used and accepted definitions

Most individuals have their own personal definition of quality, so too have the enterprises and institutions.

Quality
Odile Quintin\textsuperscript{23} is the BIBB research Heft 109 quoted for: „Vocational Education and Training (VET) covers a wide range of situations, stakeholders and beneficiaries. Thus, to define quality we must consider this range of situations and interests (…)“. 

Cedefop\textsuperscript{24} presents a number of different definitions of quality.

\begin{quote}
\begin{itemize}
\item The totality of characteristics of an entity that bear on its ability to satisfy stated and implied needs. 
Source: ISO 8402
\item or
\item Degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfils requirements.
Source: ISO 9000 - Quality management systems Fundamentals and vocabulary
\item The consistent conformance of a product or service to a given set of standards or expectations.
Source: ISO-9000
\item or
\item The sum of features and properties/characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs.
Source: USEPA, Quality Assurance Division, Washington D.C., Glossary of quality assurance terms and related acronyms
\end{itemize}
\end{quote}

While there is real interest in the questions relating to quality in VET, there is a lack of transparency in the way in which organisations describe and define quality when assessing and

\textsuperscript{22} BIBB Heft 109. Ideal und Realität Betrieblicher Ausbildungsqualität. 2009.
\textsuperscript{24} Quality in training La qualité dans la formation Glossary (Working paper / Document de travail). November 2003
judging it. This creates complexity but does provide the opportunity to view quality from a wide range of perspectives.

The descriptions and analysis in the following chapters will cover different perspectives of quality and try to show both the diversity and the common dimensions and tools within quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes.

Work based learning
Searching for work based learning in the different libraries, international databases and in the different national databases and other relevant web-pages shows that a number of different methods of spelling “work based learning” and a number of different translations and more or less clear definitions exist.

After having examined the extensive literature concerning vocational education and apprenticeships, two things have become clear. Firstly, in many academic articles, authors fail to define what WBL is, even though that this is the subject of their study: They take it as given that the reader knows what is meant by it. Even authors writing about how to improve WBL or have done a comparative case study of different countries seem to fail to define what WBL is. Secondly, it has become clear that a number of general definitions exist and even different terms for work based learning (see chapter 2.2.1).

Different search criteria have been used at the Cedefop-virtual community on quality in VET-homepage25, and resulted in very different results and numbers of matches: Workbased learning (23 matches), Work based learning (120 matches) and WBL (1 match).

This shows both how important the search criteria are, but also how many different spellings a single database can use, and again the lack of commonly used concepts and definitions. There is a lack of common understanding of the definition of work based learning among all stakeholders.

Apprenticeship programmes
Apprenticeship programmes have different structures all over Europe, but the definitions are based on the same key dimensions e.g. the combination of training in enterprises and teaching at VET-colleges.

4.3 Quality models

One way of answering the question: what is quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes? Is to analyse the quality models used in the different case countries and in their different studies.

In many of the academic articles that have been read, a lack of focus on quality assurance and assessment is visible. Many articles are very descriptive in nature and rather than focusing on providing a clear quality assessment of WBL, they mostly focus on the evolution of the system and whether a country-specific system is transferable to other countries. Furthermore, they might focus on the inherent strengths and weaknesses of a WBL system, but will not focus on the actual quality dimension of the system.

However, in recent years a number of studies have been made, contributing with aspects of and detailed data from the daily life of apprentices.

One of the main objectives of this study is to answer the question:

25 http://communities.cedefop.europa.eu/quality?
What is quality assurance of apprenticeship programme?

One way of answering this question is by showing the quality thinking and the quality models behind the quality assurance systems in apprenticeship programmes. Each of the quality models gives an overview of the key quality dimensions, the activities, the actors and very often the relations between the actors and activities.

There seems to be two basic structures for the quality models depending on the types of the quality criteria:

1. Input, process and output quality
2. Quality aspects of key activities

The Dutch and German examples below will show some of the quality models in more detail.

Each of the German research studies on quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes starts with the construction of a quality model. The motivation for this is clear: we need to know the quality criteraria within VET, in order to investigate how the apprentices assess the quality of their education. But, what are the criteria for assessing the quality of an education? There is a common agreement within research, politics and praxis that quality of education is an extremely complex topic to cover, and that a huge number of criteria is needed in order to give a comprehensive and fair picture of the educational quality.

In general the quality criteria can be organised according to:
Input-quality: The preconditions for the education in the enterprises and in the VET-colleges
Process-quality: The educational process
Output-quality: The results of the education

For each of these overarching quality dimensions a number of quality criteria are discussed in order to find “what is a good dual education in Germany? as seen from a learners perspective”.

The quality model in the research on “Education seen from the point of view of the learner (BIBB Report 9/09)” consists of 52 quality criteria, divided between input, process and output-quality.

Input- and process-quality are difficult to separate in practice because the preconditions for the education only get value, when they are actively used in the educational process. The German model works with 42 quality criteria for input- and process-quality and 10 criteria for output quality.26

The selected input- and process quality criteria focus on areas that are especially important seen from both a VET-pedagogical and from an educational policy point of view. There is an extra focus on the quality criteria related to the enterprises, due to the fact that the majority of the education takes place in the enterprises. Important criteria from the quality of the activities in the VET-colleges are included too, together with criteria for the cooperation between enterprises and VET-colleges.

A small number of more personal and youth-specific quality criteria are added in order to cover the specific expectations and values of the learners in relation to their education and their life.

The Law “Berufsbildungsgesetz” gives the main quality goals and the main quality criteria for output-quality. The output criteria shall both cover the more specific results in relation to the learning within the individual sectors and the possibility of further studies.

26 The complete overview of the quality criteria are presented in annex 10.
A final and more methodological criterion for the selection of the 52 quality criteria were, that the quality criteria shall be useful for all the different sectors, and not cover sector-specific quality criteria.

The selected quality criteria will shortly be presented below – together with the quality model - in order to show the reader, both the logic behind the quality model and the main contents.

The following quality criteria support a good dual education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input- and process-quality</td>
<td>The organisation of the learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further information is available at: …………………………………….
How to measure quality?
The first step in order to measure the learners’ assessment of the quality of their education was to develop and agree the quality criteria. The next step is to decide on the way to question and the way to measure the answers.

The German questionnaire raises a number of questions in relation to the quality criteria. The answers in relation to the input and process-quality-criteria are measured on a 6-step-scale from (1) “are very often in my education” to (6) are not at all in my education. The output-criteria are measured by the same student in relation to their expectations about the future results and output of their education. The answers are here measured on a 6-step-scale ranging from (1) “is expected to be fulfilled” to (6) “is expected not at all to be fulfilled”.

How to weight the different quality criteria?
Based on the selected quality criteria and a measurement of the apprentices’ degree of satisfaction with the individual quality criteria is the next step to calculate the overall quality perception. Shall all the criteria have the same weight or are some criteria more important than others?

The Germans decided to ask a number (35) of experts\textsuperscript{28} in order to rate the different quality criteria. This resulted in the following weights in relation to a total quality-index:
- Enterprise (60%)
- VET-college (20%)
- Cooperation between enterprises and VET-colleges (15%)
- Youth specific quality criteria (5%)

Annex 10 shows in detail the different weights of the quality criteria.

\textsuperscript{28} The responsible for the research states, that the students opinions almost are the same as the one made by the experts.
Many of the conclusions from the research are presented in the following chapters. The students’ assessments of the educations quality differ between the sectors, but will not be presented here. The German research will continue with more detailed analysis of both different sectors and regions – all with the purpose of supporting the further quality assurance and development of the dual educations in Germany.

The input, process and output structure is also used in the next example from Germany, where the points of view is the enterprises. 4599 enterprises were contacted and 29.6% of them answered, which gives a total of 1362 answers.

This German study on quality in VET, seen from the point of view of the enterprises, has also developed a quality model. This quality model builds on the fact, that education is a part of the activities in the enterprise. Education is not isolated from their activities and processes, but is a fundamental part of the activities that goes on in the enterprise.

Quality in VET is seen as a multidimensional unit, which includes different and interrelated part-qualities like input, process and output quality. See the model below.

Abbildung 1: Modell betrieblicher Ausbildungsqualität

![Diagram](Quelle: BIBB-Projekt 2.2.201)
The input-quality includes first of all the context and the resources available for the education, where process-quality mainly focuses on the learning process and the use of the resources and context. But the borders between the quality dimensions are floating, because the resources only are active when they are used directly in the education. Output quality focuses on the degree of achievement of the goals and objectives – both for the apprentice and for the enterprise.

The questionnaire covered the following areas.
A. Background data on the enterprise
B. The enterprises context and strategies
C. Educational strategy
D. Recruitment strategy
E. Personnel for the education
F. Steering of the education
G. Input, process and output quality of the education

A 6-point scale was used to measure the degree of importance ranging from (1) not important to (6) very important. The questions cover both how the enterprises expect/hope/plan the work to be and how the reality is.

The quality criteria can be organised across the input, process and output quality dimensions as the Dutch quality model below shows. The Dutch educational system work with a quality model with a number of quality aspects and within each of these a number of quality criteria.

Aspects and criteria of the rating framework for Dutch adult education and vocational training (BE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUALITY ASPECT</th>
<th>CRITERION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Governing capacity</td>
<td>1.1 Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2 Accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3 Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.4 Internal supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Legal requirements</td>
<td>2.1 Legal requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Accessibility</td>
<td>3.1 Access given to disadvantaged groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2 Results of disadvantaged groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Programme</td>
<td>4.1 Coherence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.2 Tailor-made approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.3 Programme time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.4 Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5 Adult education examinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Learning process</td>
<td>5.1 Learning time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.2 Work formats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.3 Guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Guidance</td>
<td>6.1 Intake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.2 Career guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.3 Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.4 Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Interaction and safety</td>
<td>7.1 Treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.2 Safety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Results of level 1
8.2 Results of level 2
8.3 Results of level 3
8.4 Results of level 4
8.5 Information on external success rate

8a. Result of adult education
8a.1 Result of adult education

The different quality models consist of the same general structure and with a number of quality criteria the respondents shall assess. The measurement of the quality can be made more or less complicated. Scales with e.g. 6 levels ranging from positive to negative are often used to rate the respondents degree of satisfaction with the different quality criteria.

The final calculation of the total quality can be calculated based on advanced calculations using different weights of the individual quality criteria. Alternatively a total quality index can be avoided, and only the assessment of the individual quality criteria be presented.

4.4 The different contexts around apprenticeship programmes

4.4.1 Enterprises versus VET-colleges

Enterprises and VET-colleges create very different contexts for learning and have fundamentally different logics and motives behind their activities related to learning.

Learning in the enterprise shall contribute to achieving the goals of the enterprise, and the success of the learning will be measured in relation to the contribution of the learning to the goal-achievement. The learning in enterprises is not clearly related to any certain time span, but is expected to happen as effectively and efficient as possible.

Learning at VET-schools is a part of an education; a progressive process, that is expected to last a predefined time span. The success of the learning is related to the expected time span and to the curricula.

The different contexts of learning in enterprises and VET-schools can be seen in the ways the quality assurance systems and assessments are developed and works.

The quality focus in enterprises is on how the learning contributes to the goals and objectives of the enterprise.

The quality focus at VET-schools is on time and curricula, and the achievement of the objectives of the education.

The two different contexts: enterprises and VET-schools create a number of potential opportunities and threats for both the learners and others in relation to quality assurance and assessment. The preconditions and the logics of the quality assurance systems are different, and still they are both a part of the individual learner’s education.

The above differences in context between enterprises and VET-colleges are very traditional and especially evident in SME’s. But there are enterprises that look at the situation differently and from a broader society perspective.

Larger enterprises have often taken the responsibility of educating apprentices not only for their own enterprise, but for the sector and even for competitors. This social responsibility has been mentioned both by the Romanian and German employers representative in the interviews.
The Romanian employer’s representative motivates the social responsibility with the need for raising the general level of competences in the sector. The German employer's representative adds that a big enterprise like METRO needs to take a part of the responsibility for the development and employment in the regions where they are represented.

4.4.2 Cooperation and communication

Cooperation and communication is needed between all stakeholders in order to get the overall education to be a success. But how can such a dialogue be organised? And which analytical alternatives exist for dialogue?

Scharmer (2000) has looked at these questions and proposes a four-field logic of “languaging” between those who need to communicate and cooperate on learning.

The single most critical issue affecting success or failure of knowledge infrastructures is whether the communication in use has the conversational complexity required to access the particular type of knowledge. Many Knowledge Management systems fail because they do not meet this criterion. Without the capacity for dialogue, for instance, teams are unable to express their tacit, taken-for-granted assumptions about how reality works. This is often the situation between enterprises and VET-providers.

Within each of these four different ways of communication, people relate to each other at a different level of conversational complexity by using different kinds of language structures:
- in field-logic I by talking nice, or using rule-reproducing language games,
- in field-logic II by talking tough, or using rule-revealing language games,
- in field-logic III by using reflective dialogue, or rule-intuiting language games, and
- in field-logic IV by using generative dialogue, or rule-generating language games.

The current situation in many countries is that the partners only very seldom intervene in the other partner’s activities and responsibilities. The current financial crisis has made this fear of intervention and need of talking nice to daily practice in many countries, in order no to disturb the cooperation between the VET-schools and enterprises.

The Dutch dialogue and communication goes directly via schools and enterprises, but sometimes also via the education-advisors. These education-advisors are very important. The work from their home, are travelling a lot, are checking the quality, try to match supply and demand, solve problems, know the labour market, work in every region with a few persons. COLO has five of the same type, just working on higher level.

The Dutch students are communicating directly with the school, the school and the enterprise communicates also directly or via a centre of expertise (education-advisor).

But this is not enough in order to ensure a high quality of dialogue and on the common learning. There is a need to move the conversation through all four types of communication.

The leadership challenge is to help teams and institutions get “unstuck” in “talking nice”, and increase their capacity to move up across all four types of communication. What sort of interventions or speech acts can help leaders move between the different types of communication?

In shifting from “talking nice” to “talking tough”, the principal leverage is based on reconnecting what we think with what we say. An example of this kind of intervention would be to create a space that allows participants to articulate opposing views and to confront difficult issues. Bring the
enterprises and the VET-providers together as we see it in all Member States. No learning or genuine knowledge creation will ever occur without moving the field-logic from being "polite" and to "say what you think", for "being polite" only reproduces what is already known.

The principal leverage in "reflective dialogue" is based on reconnecting what we think and say with what we do. The principal leverage in moving from "reflective dialogue" to "generative dialogue" is based on reconnecting what we think, say, and do with what we see. The issue is how to move from reflective dialogue—that is, from talk that revolves around tacit-embodied knowledge to the emergent space of pre-sensing, that is, toward the self-transcending dimension of knowing.

The four ways of communication-logics represent four generic attractors that define the rules according to which the drama of human conversation plays out. They differ in the degree of complexity that they are able to capture and represent. The more teams and companies learn to move with ease across all four types of communication or field-logics of conversational action, the more they will succeed in turning their relationships into shared bodies of imagination, inspiration, and intuition for continuous, radical innovation.

Quality improvement is a shared responsibility between employers, VET providers and agencies. In providing relevant training the VET providers must be employer-responsive. To do this they should help employers to identify the likely impact of training, to develop training portfolios driven by employer and labour market needs, to evaluate all training and establish quality assurance arrangements. The employers create the demand for learning and skills. To make this demand explicit for the providers and the employee is crucial for the development of relevant training for the labour market. There is a need to establish reliable communication channels between the VET providers and the employers.

4.5 General methodological conclusions

No detailed and comprehensive descriptions of and cases on quality assurance in apprenticeship programmes exist in the selected Member States. The cases have been constructed during the research process from a combination of different sources. A number of recent studies contribute with aspects of and detailed data from the daily life of apprentices.

The current revision and revitalisation of the apprenticeship programmes and the structures around these in some of the case countries means, from a research point of view, that a number of visions, strategies and plans exist for the future, but there is a lack of tangible results available.

Quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes is complex and needs to be covered from many different angles, in order to create an overview. Each of the many stakeholders has their own definition of quality, their own quality criteria and priorities and often their own quality model. There is a common agreement within research, politics and praxis that quality of education is an extremely complex topic to cover, and that a huge number of criteria is needed in order to give a comprehensive and fair picture of the educational quality.

Each of the quality models gives an overview of the key quality dimensions, the activities, the actors and very often the relations between the actors and activities. There seems to be two basic structures for the quality models depending on the types of the quality criteria:

- Input, process and output quality
- Quality aspects of key activities and at key actors
Common to all the quality models is the number of quality criteria that, with different weights, are used/can be used to make a measurement of the overall quality. Alternatively a total quality index can be avoided, and only the assessment of the individual quality criteria be presented.
5. Planning

“Planning reflects a strategic vision shared by the relevant stakeholders and includes explicit goals/objectives, actions and indicators” states the Recommendation on the EQARF.

A number of indicative descriptors of planning are used in the EQARF in order to support Member States with the implementation of the Framework which include

- goals and objectives
- stakeholders involved
- targets and monitoring
- identification of training needs
- organisation of quality management
- involvement of staff in the planning and cooperation between VET-providers

One of the main objectives of this study is to extract the quality dimensions of work based learning in general and especially in apprenticeship programmes. This and the following chapters will be organised according to a number of key quality dimensions and quality descriptors for the quality of apprenticeship programmes. The roles of the stakeholders differ between the key quality dimensions and will be presented within each of the quality dimensions.

This first chapter will focus on the activities related to the planning of the apprentice programme and the related quality assurance aspects of this. The next chapter will continue with the implementation of the apprentice programme and present a number of quality aspects within implementation. Evaluation of the apprenticeship programme and the review of the evaluations will complete the last steps of the quality circle.

The key quality dimensions within the area of planning can be seen as:

- Goals and objectives
- Stakeholder involvement
- Selection criteria for enterprises

The presentations and analysis of experiences and best practice will then be organised according to the key quality activities and actors.

5.1 Goals and objectives

One of the case countries had recently defined a comprehensive strategy for Apprenticeship. This new strategy will be presented in order to inspire the readers and to show the complexity of a strategy within Apprenticeship.

Each of the case countries has a law and a number of regulations that sets the overall goals and objectives with the apprenticeship programmes. Quality structures and systems exist for apprenticeship programmes together with descriptions of qualifications, curricula and guidance. All these quality dimensions will be described in the next four sections of this chapter.

Even if the case countries have different goals and ways of achieving these goals the Governments role and overall goals can be expressed as in England: “We need to ensure that our
employment and training systems are able to respond effectively to all levels of needs – not only helping people into work, but also enabling them to get on at work.²⁹

5.1.1 Strategies for Apprenticeship

All of the case countries have a more or less clearly defined and presented strategy for Apprenticeship programmes. The most recently developed strategy, The English, will be presented here.

The English strategy for Apprenticeship³⁰ during the coming years are primarily focused on providing high quality employers places and ensuring that the focus is on doing this in order to build the number of skilled, productive people in the economy. The more detailed objectives and indicative targets include the introduction of an entitlement to an Apprenticeship place for each suitable qualified young person from 2013, to raise the education and training participation age, first to 17 and then to 18, to have the public budgets to reflect the aspirations for 400.000 Apprentices in England by 2020, and to be aiming for significant growth in Apprenticeship for those aged 25 or over.

The major tools to achieve these strategic goals are

- Strengthening the Apprenticeships
- A new delivery system
- Boosting employer supply
- Culture change around the value of Apprenticeships
- Addressing inequality

Strengthening the Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships will be strengthened by a number of activities including protection of the Apprenticeship brand, integration of Apprenticeship in the rest of learning, by issuing National completion certificates and by defining and increasing the quality of the Apprenticeship experience. A clear description of the rights and responsibilities of both employers and Apprentices is a major part of increasing the quality of Apprenticeship.

A new delivery system

The new delivery system will be constructed with the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) as end-to-end accountable for the Apprenticeship programme. A dedicated field force, significant staffing at regional and sub-regional level will together with leadership of NAS secure the new delivery system.

Boosting employer supply

The key to success for the Apprentice programme is the supply of learning places from the business community. This will be done by introducing a greater range and flexibility for Apprenticeships, by recognise all Apprentice experience as “an Apprenticeship”, by better funding of the enterprises, by committing the public sector to be more active in Apprenticeship programmes, and by promoting Apprenticeship in strategic projects like the Olympic and Paralympics games.

Currently the penetration of the Apprenticeship programme is very uneven: by sector, by region, within sectors by region, and by employer size (to name just some of the axes of variation).

Culture change around the value of Apprenticeships
The culture has to change around the value of Apprenticeship in order to make it more popular both among the learners and among their friends, parents, relatives and in the enterprises. This is in England planned to be done by setting up dedicated information channels for Apprenticeship, by celebration of the achievements of Apprentices and by building clear progression routes to higher education.

Addressing inequality
The profile of Apprentices does not fit with the profile of the population and the employment in general taking sex, origin, and needs for special attention in consideration. This inequality is planned to be reduced by a number of positive actions taken for under-represented learners including increased funding in order to create places for those learners. Pilots, “Super-mentors” and contractual wage regulations are among the other tools to secure the possibilities for all learners.

Strategies like the English give a good overview of both how simple the goals and objectives can be and how complicated and multifaceted the required tools are.

5.1.2 Laws and regulations

The thinking behind the laws has changed over the last five to ten years and is constantly under revision and has resulted in new roles for those involved in VET and apprenticeship programmes.

With the shift of executive responsibility from the Dutch government to educational institutions, the government’s role changed from supplier to buyer of educational products. Its regulatory role changed from providing detailed regulations for organising training to general regulations about the task assignments of the institutions and the preconditions within which educational suppliers had to operate.

General policy aims are, in The Netherlands, designed to achieve the following:

- greater accessibility: more participants (in particular, greater accessibility for disadvantaged groups – both youth and adults),
- greater yield of graduates and fewer early-school leavers, more added value (qualification gains),
- more tailored education, effective educational tracks, study and career choice information, in line with the shifting needs and capabilities of a heterogeneous participating population,
- better links between the education on offer and the changing demands of society, particularly the demands of the labour market.

The Dutch described practices in school based (BOL) and work based (BBL) pathways are based on the 1996 Adult and Vocational Training Act (Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs, WEB), which has been evaluated in 2001. Since then, the Ministry has aimed at developing a new qualification system, which is based on competences and is more closely linked to vocational practice and should provide a more solid basis for the adaptability of workers to a continuously changing labour market. This development is still continuing.

The “Supervision framework vocational training and Adult education (VET), 2007 gives a good overview of the roles of the different actors and the supervision from the Inspectorate of Education.
The German regulations differ from the Dutch, mainly due to the two level governance structure in Germany: national (“Bund”) and Regional (“Länder”).

In Germany regulates the following laws and regulations VET:

- The German Vocational Act “Berufsbildungsgesetz” and “Ausbildungsordnungen” regulate the part of the education in the enterprises.
- The regional Länder have each their own laws for the VET-colleges: “Schulgesetze” and their local learning plans “Lehrpläne” which regulates the activities in the VET-colleges.

This combination of laws and regulations leaves a high degree of freedom to the enterprises. But the ministry can – in very rare occasions – withdraw the enterprises permission to train apprentices e.g. due to a high rate of drop outs.

The current reforms of the Romanian VET-system builds on experiences from a number of countries but seem to be more complicated in relation to the number of laws involved than the situation in Germany and The Netherlands.

In Romania exists a number of the laws and orders that support the quality assurance of WBL:

- Education Law 84/1995 , modified and republished,
- Law 87/13.04.2006 regarding assuring educational quality;
- VET Qualifications Catalogue;
- Order 4931/29.07.2008 on the approving of the methodology regarding transfer and recognition of learning outcome acquired by students in VET and stages of WBL;
- Order 4338/09.06.2008 regarding the approving of methodological reference points for designing Curriculum in local development in VET;
- Professional Training Standards;
- Order by the Minister of Education no 6308/19.12.2008 regarding approving of the quality assurance tools in VET;
- Self-Assessment Manual for quality Assurance in VET;
- Inspection Manual for external monitoring of quality in VET.

One of the Romanian respondents’ mentions that a market-oriented argument is missing: there are no regulations for the payments of the students. This is considered as a very important aspect of quality of WBL, both seen from the learner and enterprise side.

Apprenticeship in England is not regulated like in the other case countries. The non-statutory “Blueprint for Apprenticeships31” is made for sector skills councils, employers and awarding bodies involved in the design of Apprenticeship framework. The content of each Apprenticeship is designed by Sector Skills Councils, Sector Bodies and their employers in accordance with the design principles of the Apprenticeship Blueprint. The Blueprint provides the specification for Apprenticeships and is used by Sector Skills Councils to design and revise Apprenticeship frameworks.

The Blueprint sets out the essential content and areas where flexibility is possible as a basis for agreement by those principally concerned with the design and implementation of Apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships are intended to provide an integrated programme of learning leading to the acquisition and application of the skills, knowledge and understanding required by employers.

---

The Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) will replace the existing non-statutory ‘Blueprint’ for Apprenticeships and is in response to the commitments set out in World Class Apprenticeship, published in January 2008.

The consultation document\(^{32}\) will set out the role of the National Apprenticeships Service (NAS) which will become the main organisation responsible for the successful delivery of Apprenticeship provision from April 2009. The document will consult on the role of Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) in supporting Apprenticeship growth and developing high quality Apprenticeship frameworks.

The consultation document will set out minimum national requirements for Apprenticeship frameworks, including vocational and transferable skills, off-workstation learning time and minimum entry requirements. The Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England will be published at the end of August 2009.

The SASE will set out the Government’s expectations to ensure that Apprenticeship programmes meet the needs of individuals and employers, and deliver comprehensive programmes of vocational and academic training of the highest quality. The Government are introducing legislation which, for the first time, will put the Apprenticeship programme on a statutory basis and bring the SASE into effect.

Laws and regulations steer the overarching activities within apprenticeship programmes and the quality assurance. The apprenticeship contract regulates the daily activities between the apprentice, the enterprise and the VET-provider.

The Dutch Practical Training Contract under the Adult and Vocational Education Act is a contract between the educational institution, the participant and the organization providing practical training. It contains 19 articles covering areas e.g. the occupational practice training, supervision, reimbursements, content of the training, assessment, termination, insurance, confidentiality. The contract is signed by all three partners.

The completion of an Apprenticeship framework shows both current and potential employers that the holder has achieved competence in the skills covered by the Apprenticeship, has demonstrated the knowledge required by the Apprenticeship and has attained the level of transferable skills required by all Apprenticeships.

The content of each Apprenticeship is designed by Sector Skills Councils, Sector Bodies and their employers in accordance with the following:

All apprentice frameworks must comprise:
- a competence based element
- a knowledge based element
- transferable, or ‘key’, skills
- employment rights and responsibilities.

Apprenticeship frameworks will be achieved through a combination of requirements made in the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England, and through directions or guidance where the matter is not a condition which apprentices necessarily have to fulfil for the purposes of certification.

5.1.3 Quality structures and systems

A number of different laws state the goals and objectives of the apprenticeship programme and the laws define, together with a number of regulations, the quality assurances systems.

The quality structures and systems can be described from two angles. The first covering the structures and standards for quality; the second covering the different roles in relation to quality e.g. quality assurance teams and inspectors, VET-colleges, enterprises and apprentices.

The Dutch WEB set the rules and conditions for quality through a creation of structures.

The Dutch WEB was the first law to place all types of (secondary) vocational and adult education in a coherent framework. The aim was to do away with the existing barriers between adult and vocational education, as well as between different forms of and educational tracks in vocational education. A single quality regime would apply to all vocational training.

The WEB also laid the basis for broad educational institutions – all training ‘under a single roof’, along with regional, large-scale operation, so that educational institutions would have sufficient critical mass to make optimum use of policy leeway and act decisively to deliver the necessary made-to-measure education to meet external needs.

With this Act, there was a desire from the Dutch government to create a system of ‘checks and balances’ to ensure the responsiveness of the BVE (adult and vocational education) sector vis-à-vis its social environment and inherent dynamic. The BVE system should be largely self-regulating. This would allow the government (in its role as lawmaker) to occupy a more modest position, while still providing sufficient guarantees of quality, which remains the ultimate responsibility of the Minister.

Quality standards are one key aspect of the quality structures.

The Training Quality Standard is the only Standard dedicated to helping employers identify not just high quality training, but the organisations best equipped to ensure training is both flexible and approached in a manner that will help to establish the return on the enterprises investment.

In England, the Training Quality Standard is an assessment framework designed to recognise and celebrate the best organisations delivering training and development solutions to employers. The Standard allows organisations to explain their strategy, the approaches they deploy, and the results they achieve, and to submit this for robust assessment with the potential of certification for those meeting the high standards set for capability and performance. The Standard has been created by the Learning and Skills Council to develop a new higher standard for the certification of training providers, including those previously recognised as Centres of Vocational Excellence.

The Training Quality Standard recognises and celebrates the best organisations delivering training to employers. The Standard highlights high quality, high impact training, by looking at the organisation’s responsiveness, flexibility, expertise and commitment to continuous improvement. The Standard is a mark for training providers to aspire to because it’s tough to achieve – and through it, their performance is what really sets them apart from the competition.

33 http://www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk/
Providers holding the Standard’s mark have been rigorously assessed to ensure they have the capability, the performance track record and the customer endorsement to make them a good choice for employers.

The Assessment Process includes talking to past customers of training providers making them integral to the evidence base and assessment process, meaning that the training received is endorsed by those who have already experienced it.

32 statements make up the assessment framework of the Training Quality Standard, with 22 Indicators across two Parts, A for Responsiveness (Annex 5) and 10 indicators in part B for Expertise (Annex 6).

The Mapping Guide is for use by organisations preparing applications for the English Training Quality Standard. It sets out a set of maps to allow identification of evidence prepared in applying for, or assessing against, five other quality assessment frameworks: Customer First, Customer Service Excellence, the EFQM Excellence Model, Investors in People and matrix.

An application provides an evidence based narrative against each of the indicators in the assessment framework. For many organisations, this is work that’s been done for different aspects of their operations, because they’ve already implemented other quality frameworks.

It is a common challenge in all Member States that the quality requirements and practices differ among the many stakeholders. Coordination like this and the possibility for making use of prior learning is one way of making more efficient quality structures across the different levels.

The English VET-colleges/providers are responsible for the quality of their own provision, and are required to ensure that they have robust self assessment and internal quality assurance processes in place.

The Government sets the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England which all Apprenticeships must comply with. Departments develop the quality assurance structures (Framework for Excellence) in partnership with the LSC and sector.

One of the priorities of the English National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) is in 2009-2010 to develop and implement Service Quality Standards to all key stakeholder groups. This is planned to be done through the following activities:
- Map each customer journey to ensure that every lead is maximised.
- Benchmark and monitor employer and learner service delivery standards.
- Remove unnecessary bureaucracy throughout the entire Apprenticeship process.
- Extend electronic record-keeping to reduce the burden on employers and providers.
- Develop and agree a Provider Quality Improvement Plan.

The different stakeholders are influenced both by the quality structures and standards and especially the public organisations and agencies controlling the quality are important.

The Quality Assurance team at the English Learning and Skills Council consists of the following three areas:
- Equality and Diversity

http://www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk/uploaded/files/tqs-mappingguide-1v0.pdf
• Health and Safety
• Quality Assurance and Intervention

Concerning the control on quality, the government, by way of the ‘Inspection’, does research at the VET colleges, but not at the companies for WBL. The quality of this has to be guaranteed by the ‘Centres of Expertise’.

The quality roles of the VET-colleges differ across the case countries.

The internal quality assurance and the external supervision is done by the Inspectorate in the Netherlands, and is one instrument for ensuring public accountability for quality and quality assurance to all interested parties. The Dutch VET-colleges are responsible for the whole education track included apprenticeship WBL, but will not have a detailed overview of the daily work of the students in the enterprises. The school will have a part of the overview and will be able to react if somebody complains. The Centres of Expertises will also have the same possibility to contact and supervise the enterprises. This is, in general, a challenge for the schools. How much can they intervene? And how low a quality will the students accept in order to keep their apprentice place in the enterprise?

A general challenge is that the quality assurance can be under pressure during economic crisis, so, bad quality might be accepted because the alternative is too problematic.

The Dutch educational institutions are primarily responsible for quality assurance. Their job is to determine, assess, assure and, where necessary, improve the quality of their own vocational training courses. Educational institutions must meet the following legal requirements:

- organise and employ a quality-assurance system to guarantee the quality of training and examinations;
- establish relevant policy and goals in dialogue with stakeholders and in cooperation with other institutions;
- assess periodically the quality of education with involvement of independent experts and relevant stakeholders;
- publish periodically (for examination results annual) assessment, results of quality of education and improvement plans.

Every Dutch school develops its own plan according to their philosophy and their possibilities. Unfortunately the thinking is generally rather conservative according to one of our respondents. Schools make planning for a school year according to their needs, not necessarily according to the needs of a student. Why do courses generally last one, two or three years? Why not one year and four months if that is the time that a student might need?

In Germany the 16 Länder (federal states) are in charge of VET at schools. Therefore there are different state education acts. Overall there is a tendency to define the output quality which should be reached by the vocational schools while they have greater leeway to organize their processes. This “new public management” should motivate schools to enhance their profile (see Euler 2005).

The quality assurance of the training in the enterprises is the most important quality assurance activity.

The German training enterprises are responsible for the quality assurance within the enterprise. The quality of the training is controlled by the relevant chambers.
The Romanian employers are involved in quality assurance of the WBL process through:

- Participating in the design of the whole WBL process
- Facilitating appropriate work placement assignments for the students
- Nominating tutors with appropriate qualification and work experience, to supervise the students throughout the process
- Using appropriate formative assessment methods and instruments, designed / agreed by both schools and employers representatives.

Employers’ representatives are fully involved in the process of assessment of WBL competences.

The German workers councils take active part in the work on quality assurance in close cooperation with the trade unionists within the competence body for VET and within the chambers for commerce and industry.

The Unions in Germany focus on ‘that every apprentice shall have access to an education with the same high level of quality – independent of the apprentice, the trainer, the area of education and the enterprise’. The Unions propose the introduction and control of a nation wide minimum standard for the quality of the apprentice programme - a standard that goes further than the Training Act.

The 17 Centres of expertise function also guarantees the quality of the training in the enterprises and are responsible for offering enough apprenticeships and for a good workplace trainer. They are the link between employers and education. Besides developing and updating qualification files and the qualification structure, the Dutch Centres of Expertise recruit training firms and monitor the quality of these training firms. Centres of Expertise and educational institutes ensure sufficient influx of new and qualified talent in the various sectors. Together with the Centres of Expertise, the social partners, training firms, stakeholders on education and training and government make a contribution to good and attractive vocational education. The interests of the Centres of Expertise on regional, national and international level are represented by their association Colo.

The quality of the Dutch apprenticeship however is heavily debated. There are two main issues: the quality of workplace learning in terms of content, guidance and assessment and the quality of the connection between workplace and school-based learning.

All aspects of WBL (including QA requirements) in Romania are detailed in an Annex to the compulsory Agreement signed between the school and the enterprise facilitating WBL.

Employers are involved in quality assurance of the WBL process through:

- Participating in the design of the whole WBL process
- Facilitating appropriate work placement assignments for the students
- Nominating tutors with appropriate qualification and work experience, to supervise the students throughout the process
- Using appropriate formative assessment methods and instruments, designed / agreed by both schools and employers representatives.
- A combination of practical assessment and interviews in cooperation between schools and enterprises

Employers’ representatives in Romania are fully involved in the process of assessment of WBL competences and the tutors have the main responsibility and they are involved in meetings and practical training.

The apprentice is a major participant in the quality assurance even if their roles differ between the case countries.
The German apprentices have no stipulated role in relation to quality assurance of their own education. The workers council at the majority of the larger enterprises can support the students and make a difference. But even here the apprentices are dependent on the level of activity that the workers council has.

The interest of the Dutch students is represented through the organization JOB (youth in VET). They also conduct a research on the opinion of students about the quality assurance of WBL. If the quality of the apprenticeships is low, the apprentices should report this to the school.

Planning is a key part of the quality process. One of the LdV-projects: “Developing the planning of work-based learning by transferring and implementing existing good practices in Common Quality Assurance Framework (WBL-TOI_MANUAL)” focuses on the planning experiences across Europe.

In this project the tools and methods which reveal and share the tacit knowledge associated with the good practices and the description of the transfer process to be developed in CQAF-model are collected in a Draft Manual. The guidelines of the Draft Manual will be piloted and validated during the project in real transfer of good practices of work-based learning between partners. Especially the focus is on planning of the work-based learning according to needs of partners and national experiences. The apprenticeship training partners are involved, too.

5.1.4 Qualifications and curricula

In Germany, legislation on education describes the minimum standards for the workplace (companies) part of vocational education. To secure the completion and quality of the work placement of the students, companies are required by law to create a curriculum, which is to function as the guiding principle of the learning process at the workplace. In a questionnaire conducted by BIBB in 2005, almost all companies responded positively to the question, whether their education took place as is required by law. However, the smaller companies stated that they make use of the curricula created by the Chambers of Commerce.

The structures for qualifications and curricula influence the quality assurance activities in relation to which qualifications shall be achieved by the apprentices and how this work is structured through the different curricula. The length of the training in enterprises is a part of the curricula and differs between the case countries from around 70% of the time to much less as the Romanian example shows.

WBL has been a part of the national curricula in Romania since 1998, and consists of 4 to 8 weeks of training in workplaces every year, depending on the level of the qualification. Since 2007, WBL for TVET students in Romania is regulated by a compulsory WBL agreement, endorsed by a decision of the Ministry of Education.

The qualifications can be split into competence-based and knowledge-based qualifications.

The consultation papers for the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) (p.6ff) include a section on “Qualifications Concerned with the Sector”. They raise a number of challenges and ask all stakeholders for responses and reflections on their proposals:

“Apprenticeships traditionally consist of both skills and knowledge which, for the majority of existing Apprenticeship frameworks, have had separate ‘competence-based’ and ‘knowledge-based’ qualifications.”

We propose that where the knowledge and competence elements are combined, they should be separately identified and separately assessed, though they do not need to be accredited as separate qualifications. We believe that it is important to retain this distinctiveness between the two components in order to allow individuals to gain credit towards an Apprenticeship through participation in other programmes.

An SSC/SSB may include more than one qualification of each type as alternatives within an Apprenticeship framework. This would allow options for apprentices and providers – for example some knowledge-based qualifications lead more readily to higher-level opportunities while others are more occupationally focused. Different apprentices may be suited to different qualifications, all of which fulfil the basic requirements of relevance to performance in, and relevant knowledge concerning, the occupation.

The consultation process will result in the final decisions in relation to these qualifications, but a genuine choice between work-based and classroom-based learning for more learners is a part of the Apprenticeship strategy in England, as it is in the Netherlands.

Education in The Netherlands should take place within the framework of a national qualification structure, since qualifications and the educational goals of training are centrally developed (not at institutional level). This task has been assigned to Centres of Expertise for VET-labour market (KBB). Each KBB does this for a group of training courses in a specific sector of the labour market. The national qualification structure provides a guarantee that the qualifications and certificates have national standing. It also ensures that vocational education is transparent, with internationally comparable levels.

Coherence is one of the Dutch quality criteria in relation to WBL. The programme shall, both in the institution and in practical training, offer a sufficient framework, be coherent in its content and teaching and be co-ordinated with the exit qualifications / qualification dossiers, including the learning and citizenship competencies.

The Dutch curriculum is the responsibility of the VET-Colleges. The qualification files however are the result of the advice from so-called branch based Commissions based on parity between education and employers. The qualification files deliver a description of the work processes and the required competences. The descriptions are made on three levels (A, B and C) ranking from description in rough lines (A) to a very detailed description in the C part. Although the planning of the learning process is made by the college, this is generally done in cooperation with the company, which provides the work based learning.

The learning targets for the period of internship are formulated in close consultation with the Dutch company, the college and the apprentice. Learning outcomes for every VET program are formulated as competences (skills, knowledge and job related attitude). There are however no guidelines about competences to be learnt on the job and competences to be learnt at the College. This is up the involved actors (triangle company-college-student) and might differ from case to case.

The degrees of freedom for the key stakeholders (enterprise, VET-colleges, learner) in relation to curricula and in how the qualifications can be achieved varies among the case countries. But there are trends toward a number of daily activities being decided in cooperation between enterprises, VET-colleges and learners.
5.1.5 Guidance

Guidance is a key quality activity both in relation to all the actors and especially to the VET-providers and learners. Guidance is needed before, during and after the apprenticeship programme. The Dutch example shows the possibilities for the apprentices to raise the quality of their choices of apprenticeship place.

The Dutch student has influence on a good match for a suitable apprenticeship by some instruments. For example: www.stagemarkt.nl. The learning companies present themselves and the content of the apprenticeship. The student has the possibility to select a suitable apprenticeship.

Work based learning in The Netherlands is carried out in companies or other organizations offering a real working environment. The tasks to be fulfilled during the work placement period are the result of the needs of the student, the possibilities of the company and the requirements of the VET program. There is a high individual differentiation, which requires a high quality of connection between workplace and school-based learning and the interaction (guidance) between college and company.

The expected learning outcomes from the work placement period are formulated and recorded in a work placement assignment document. Every student has a work supervisor from the company, who is responsible for the guidance on the job and for the approval of the expected learning outcomes. Generally, it is expected that the trainee works on the learning targets by being involved into day to-day operations of the company, with a changing focus according to his expected learning outcomes. Moreover it is expected that a tutor from the college maintains regular contact with the work supervisor and the student. In this respect, in all situations there is always the communication/guidance triangle of supervisor company- tutor college – student.

One of the Dutch requirements of such a learning-company is, that the student guidance is done by a work supervisor who is in possession of a supervisor certificate, also delivered by the ‘Centres of Expertise’.

Some of the Dutch quality criteria are related to guidance both in the institution and in practical training.

**Dutch quality criteria: Guidance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Quality criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>The students are given effective and simulating guidance in their individual learning process during educational activities both in the institution and in practical training. The guidance is geared to the degree of the student's independence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td><strong>Guidance</strong></td>
<td><strong>Students are given careful guidance in their school career.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Intake</td>
<td>Students are given detailed information, intake and placement through active exchange with relevant schools or departments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Career guidance</td>
<td>From the time of their enrolment, students are given careful, individual guidance in mapping out their career, with the progress of their studies, with elective processes, with transfers, personal problems and with potential school-leaving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>For the sake of prevention and interventions, structural collaboration with chain partners takes place in the case of risk students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>Data on the school career of the students and potential risks are systematically registered and lead to the identification of problems on time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guidance is a part of the new delivery system in England. Supportive work to help careers guidance staff in schools and colleges is expected to offer well informed and balanced advice to all their students about the Apprenticeship programme. The NAS field force staff may be invited by schools and colleges to participate in careers guidance evenings or other events to give students direct information, but it is not expected that the NAS field force will be the direct, primary providers of careers guidance to school and college students.

As a part of the Skills for Life Improvement Programme the UK Quality Improvement Agency has developed assessment and Learning Guidance Booklets. These booklets can help VET-providers in raising their quality within assessment and guidance.

The QUINORA LdV-project\(^{36}\), whose aim is to develop an international quality assurance programme for training measures in vocational careers guidance is one of the few projects on quality assurance of the guidance activities. The project have analysed the competencies that English careers guidance professionals\(^{37}\) tend to possess are and these include the following:

- Knowledge of information related to the industry
- The ability to deliver relevant information effectively
- Knowledge of the emotional skills necessary to achieve the desired outcome
- The ability to provide training for a range of individuals with differing needs
- The ability to work with people with special needs
- The ability to plan
- The ability to establish positive working relationships
- The ability to provide counselling
- The ability to evaluate and develop contributions
- The ability to assist clients to gain access to other services
- The ability to negotiate
- The ability to manage information and activities
- The ability to propose projects
- The ability to promote the importance of the type of instruction offered
- Knowledge of personal roles and responsibilities
- The ability to use skills assessment tools
- Institutional training and networking.

Comprehensive overviews of the competences of the careers guidance professionals make it possible to make clear profiles and to train according to these profiles.

### 5.2 Stakeholder involvement

The stakeholders are involved in the planning of the apprentice programmes and in the quality assurance of the same programme in a number of ways. The organisational structures for this work, the funding, the motivation and the cooperation of the stakeholders are all key quality dimensions of the apprenticeship programme, and will be described in the following four sections.

---

\(^{36}\) Project number A/05/B/F/PP-158.201.

\(^{37}\) [http://theresearchcentre.co.uk/files/docs/publications/rs4106.pdf](http://theresearchcentre.co.uk/files/docs/publications/rs4106.pdf)
5.2.1 Organisational structures

The quality of apprenticeship programmes is directly influenced by the way the educational system in general and VET specifically are organised. In order to give a better overview of the individual organisational structures, this section is organised by case countries and regions.

England

England has changed its structures within Apprenticeship recently and is still in the consultation phase on the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE).

The proposed contribution of the responsibilities is presented in the figure below.38

Figure 2: Effect of delivery system proposals on system accountability

National Apprenticeship Service

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will become the main organisation responsible for the successful delivery of Apprenticeship provision with a remit to oversee an 'end to end' responsibility for Apprenticeship delivery. It was launched in April 2009.

In the context of the SASE, its primary role will be to provide the funding for Apprenticeships and to ensure that places are available, working with employers and Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), Standard Setting Bodies (SSBs), Trades Unions and training providers to support Apprenticeship training at all levels. The NAS will be housed within the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and subsequently will be part of the Skills Funding Agency (SFA). It will work with the Young People’s Learning Agency, employers, learning providers and Local Authorities to ensure that sufficient Apprenticeship places are available to meet demand.

A core part of the NAS role will be to work with employers to provide high quality Apprenticeship places that bring a benefit both to the individual and the employer through a better skilled, more productive employee. The NAS will also maintain the online vacancy matching system to enable

employers to advertise Apprenticeship opportunities, and for potential apprentices to apply for such vacancies. The NAS field force will work with a range of stakeholders including union learning representatives and through Connexions, schools, Jobcentre Plus and other advice and guidance organisations to raise awareness of Apprenticeship opportunities.

The NAS will keep the delivery of the Apprenticeship system under constant review to ensure that delivery is as efficient as possible. It will support training providers to continue to enhance their offer, and will work with the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) to ensure quality provision. In addition, it will continue to work with the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils to ensure that standards are maintained so that Apprenticeship remains a high quality training route for individuals and employers.

The NAS will also be responsible for awarding the Apprenticeship certificate at the end of the Apprenticeship as well as recording data on the number of starts and completions by apprentices.

Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) and Standard Setting Bodies (SSBs)
SSCs/SSBs have a key role to play in developing the provision for Apprenticeships and in supporting Apprenticeship growth. They will have a key role in relation to the content and standards of Apprenticeship frameworks. SSCs/SSBs will:

- Develop frameworks which comply with the SASE, and work with others to ensure that frameworks within the sector comply with SASE;
- Set and monitor standards for the sector which go beyond the minimum requirements of the SASE;
- Issue frameworks and maintain their currency;
- Ensure that there is coherence in the range of Apprenticeship frameworks within their sector.

Following implementation of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) the LSC/ SFA will only fund qualifications, sitting within an Apprenticeship framework, which have been accredited under the QCF. The SSCs/SSBs will be responsible for approving the qualifications that will form part of an Apprenticeship framework. For qualifications used by 14–19 year olds, the Joint Advisory Committee for Qualifications Approval will have responsibility for confirming the eligibility of these qualifications for public funding. For “provision”, all vocational qualifications eligible for public funding will be approved by the SSCs before being entered on the QCF. This will provide a bank of existing qualifications and units that SSCs/SSBs and employers, through their SSC/SSBs, may draw on to develop an Apprenticeship framework.

Employers, through their SSC/SSBs, who wish to develop an Apprenticeship framework will submit a short description of their plans, the qualifications and units they wish to use and how they meet the requirements set out in the SASE plus any further important elements that the SSC/SSB considers desirable for the sector. Employers will also be able to use their own qualifications or units, accredited onto the QCF, so that they may tailor their Apprenticeship appropriately. All qualifications within the framework that seek public funding will need to be accredited on the QCF.

All Apprenticeship frameworks must show clear progression routes into and from Apprenticeships. The SSC/SSBs are taking the lead in drawing up the content of Diplomas, and have a key role in the design and content of all vocational programmes and qualifications and so will have a core responsibility to show route maps for learning.

The Alliance of Sector Skills Councils will be responsible for promoting continuous improvement and consistency across Apprenticeship frameworks through a process of peer review and support.
Trade unions support their members, including apprentices in terms of welfare, training quality, equality of opportunity.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC)
The Learning and Skills Council\(^{39}\) exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. LSC have a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to ensure we have a workforce of world-class standard. The LSC is a non-departmental public body which began work in 2001. LSC are responsible for planning and funding high quality education and training for everyone in England other than those in universities. They have a national office in Coventry and nine regional offices overseeing the work of local partnership teams throughout the county. Their annual budget for 2006-07 is £10.4 billion.

The LSC’s major tasks are to:

- raise participation and achievement by young people
- increase adult demand for learning
- raise skills levels for national competitiveness
- improve the quality of education and training delivery
- equalise opportunities through better access to learning
- improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the sector

Their vision is that by 2010, young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce.

The employers
NAS describe the arguments for and the roles of the employers at their homepage\(^{40}\):

“Apprenticeships are the proven way to train your workforce. Apprenticeships can make your organisation more effective, productive and competitive by addressing your skills gaps directly, even in uncertain economic times.

There are real business benefits to taking on apprentices. This section outlines these benefits as well as answering other questions you may have about Apprenticeships.

The Apprenticeship programme has been designed to help your employees reach a high level of competency and performance and with over 180 different types of Apprenticeships, there’s bound to be a place for an apprentice in your organisation.

As Apprenticeships are work-based training programmes, most of the training is ‘on the job’ – at your premises. The rest can be provided by a local college or by a specialist learning provider, or you could deliver everything yourself.

As the employer you must give your apprentices an induction into their role and provide on-the-job training. You are also responsible for paying your apprentices’ wages.”

In the frequent questions and answers is described what Apprenticeship involves for an employer:

- A minimum of 16 hours per week paid employment.
- A knowledge based element.
- A competency based element.
- Transferable or “key skills”.
- A module on employment rights and responsibilities.

\(^{39}\) http://www.lsc.gov.uk/aboutus/

\(^{40}\) http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/About-Us.aspx
The roles of the employer are one of the frequently raised questions from potential Apprentices, and the answer are here⁴¹:

“The employer will give you an induction into the company and your role. They provide on-the-job training and pay your wages. Each apprentice has a manager at work who will be responsible for helping you throughout your training.”

Learning provider (VET-college)

A learning provider is usually a local college or specialist training organisation responsible for an apprentice's off-the-job training. When an enterprise takes on an apprentice the learning provider will appoint a mentor who will work with the enterprise to make sure that the training is well planned. Once the apprentice begins the mentor will follow their progress and deal with any issues that may arise.

A learning provider will provide an employer representative who will be able to support and guide the enterprises interested in Apprenticeship. They will work with the enterprise to:

- help the enterprise to decide which Apprenticeship is right for the enterprise;
- explain the way that Apprenticeships might work for the enterprise and if funding is available;
- agree a training plan with the enterprises apprentice;
- recruit an apprentice or support the enterprises existing staff into Apprenticeships;
- manage the training and evaluation; and
- ensure that national quality standards are met and deliver integrated, coherent training.

If the enterprises wish to find a learning provider themselves the NAS have a facility that allows enterprises to search for a provider in their area by sector or Apprenticeship framework.

The learning providers will need to register their details on the LSC Qualified Provider Framework⁴². Once registered the learning providers will be able to apply to become pre-qualified. If they are successful in their application to pre-qualify, they will then become eligible to receive invitations to tender from LSC when they run their tendering rounds. The learning provider can apply to pre-qualify at any time during the year, according to their business need.

The Qualified Provider Framework

As of 31st October 2008, the LSC has opened a Qualified Provider Framework (QPF) for providers of education and training services. The Qualified Provider Framework is a maintained list of all providers from which the LSC will secure education and training services. This list will incorporate those providers with whom the LSC will negotiate and/or invite to tender.

The Qualified Provider Framework will streamline the way the LSC commissions and contracts for provision and will remove barriers for new providers wishing to work with the LSC.

The organisation of the quality assurance in England still includes a number of participants, agencies and departments. The main responsibilities of the quality assurance are within the National Apprenticeship Service housed within the Learning and Skills Council.

⁴¹ http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Be-An-Apprentice/Other-Questions.aspx#Question111
⁴² http://www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/commissioning/newproviders/
The Netherlands
The Dutch legislation is limited. The WEB prescribes the following central tasks for educational institutions. These entail providing vocational and adult education geared towards:

- qualifications,
- accessibility,
- effective educational tracks and information,
- alignment with external developments

These tasks can be seen as key points of educational quality. The WEB does not provide a specification of these tasks. It is up to the institutions to flesh them out, in interaction with the various institutionally-related actors.

The ministry improves the internal quality assurance between the relevant actors at system level (VET council, COLO, employers' representative and the department), by the use of many different tools: meetings with all participants, QA systems in the centres, transparency of performance indicators and in the future more common accreditation criteria.

The Dutch Ministry is responsible for the supervision in the schools on the education track and for the supervision of the centres of expertise by the inspectorate. The input (qualification dossier), throughput (education process) and output (examination) of the apprenticeship is subject of supervision in The Netherlands.

Further, the legislation chiefly provides (pre) conditions. Matters arranged in the past via organisational and examination decisions now have to be regulated by the institutions themselves in Training and Examination Rules. This involves the use of standard regulations.

Centres of Expertise and COLO
The Dutch Social Partners are both represented in the (boards) of the VET-colleges and of the Centres of Expertise. The accreditation of the Dutch learning companies is done by 17 ‘Centres of Expertise’, covering the entire world of services, trade and industry. The representation within the board of the ‘centers of expertise’ is always tripartite, with representatives from employers, employees and education.

The Centres of Expertise have a big role in defining the quality of the apprenticeships. The expertise centres are in charge of the requirements (the "what") and the Colleges of the programmes (the "how").

The Centres of Expertise on vocational education, training and the labour market are the institutions that develop the Dutch qualification structure for vocational education. Together with companies and schools they are responsible for senior secondary vocational education and training.

Centres of Expertise and educational institutes ensure sufficient influx of new and qualified talent in the various sectors. Together with the Centres of Expertise, the social partners, training firms, stakeholders on education and training and government make a contribution to good and attractive vocational education.

The interests of the Centres of Expertise on regional, national and international level are represented by their association COLO.

http://www.colo.nl/homepage.html
VET-colleges
The Dutch WEB assumes that educational institutions are primarily responsible for:

- (the quality of) education and examinations,
- quality assurance,
- public accountability

Within the legal framework and the context of the national qualification structure, the institutions determine the organisation of training and examinations. For example, the institutions themselves establish the training and examination rules for each course. They must do so in close cooperation with the parties most directly affected, so that the training is in tune with the needs.

MBA-Raad
The contacts/communication between the VET-provider and the enterprise in The Netherlands are organised throughout a network of quality assurance advisors of all vet providers. This network is organised by the Dutch Association of Vet providers (MBO Raad).

The contacts and communication is organised in three periods of qualification. 1. Before: development of the qualification. 2. During with the learning companies (visiting and guidance school). 3. After: by the assessment of the student and after finishing school by analyzing matching and supply indirectly.

In The Netherlands there is a contract, mentioning the activities of the students and the envisaged learning outcomes. In order to encourage employers to take trainees on board, college, company and student are trying to find a way that not only helps the student to fulfill his internship, but that also meets some needs of the company.

Germany
The Social Partners in Germany are involved in the following activities/institutions which concern quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship/WBL:

a) Vocational Training Committee of the Competent Body (see division 3 BBiG): Competent bodies have to establish vocational training committees consisting of employers’ and employees’ representatives and vocational school teachers. The committees shall be informed of and consulted on all important matters related to vocational training. They shall also endeavour to steadily improve the quality of vocational training.

b) Board of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) (see section 92 BBiG): Representatives of the employees’ and the employers’ are members of the board of the BIBB. It is the board’s task – among other duties – to advise the Federal Government on basic issues relating to vocational education and training and to determine the annual research programme of the BIBB. Through their membership in the board the Social Partners are involved in decisions concerning quality assurance of apprenticeship.

The German BBiG also states that the “competent bodies” are responsible for the actual supervision of in-company training. Competent bodies include the chambers, relevant bodies in the public service sector and relevant bodies that fall under the purview of the churches or other religious communities established under public law.

These bodies have the task of:
- supervising the provision of vocational training preparation, initial vocational training and retraining,
- maintaining the register of training contracts in which the essential provisions of each initial training contract are to be entered (in the skilled trades, this is known as the apprentice roll),
- advising firms on all training issues via training advisors,
- monitoring the aptitude of training personnel and the suitability of training firms,
• conducting interim, final and journeyman examinations,
• supporting and providing flanking assistance for periods of training undertaken abroad\textsuperscript{44}.

In the German “Betriebsrat” the social partners have influence on questions in relation to quality assurance and on the assessment of the enterprises involved in training.

Conclusion on the case countries
The organisational structures are relatively complex and build on numbers of years of cooperation between the many different stakeholders and the development of educational structures that is flexible in relation to an ever changing labour market.
The laws on VET describe the tasks for the different actors and a number of regulations, organisations, contracts, formal and informal communication and negotiations secures, that the daily activities get a high degree of quality.
The responsibility for the quality assurance of the apprentice programmes is placed differently.
One solution is that the enterprises and their organisations together with the unions have this responsibility. Alternatively there is a model with the VET-colleges as responsible in close cooperation with the enterprises and the Social partners.

5.2.2 Funding

Funding is a key topic when quality is discussed. The central questions are: \textit{what shall be funded?} and, \textit{who shall be responsible for the funding?}

The key activities to be funded are the quality assurance in enterprises, quality assurance in VET-colleges and the learners and apprentices. The roles of the Governments and their agencies and the overall result of the funding are also part of the quality dimensions of funding.

OECD\textsuperscript{45} states that in most OECD countries, expenditure per student varies between general and vocational programmes. In the 14 OECD countries for which data are available, expenditure per student in upper secondary vocational programmes in 2005 was, on average, USD 925 higher than in general programmes.

In countries with dual-system apprenticeship programmes at the upper secondary level (e.g. Austria, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland) the difference between expenditure per student in general and in vocational programmes tends to be larger. For example, Germany and Switzerland spend USD 6 284 and USD 7 118 more per student, respectively, in vocational than in general programmes, with employers contributing a large part. This difference is smaller in Austria (USD 793). The Netherlands has higher expenditure per student in general programmes than in vocational programmes, while Luxembourg’s expenditure per student is similar for both. Among the four other countries – Australia, the Czech Republic, Finland and the Slovak Republic – with 60% or more of upper secondary students enrolled in vocational programmes, the Czech Republic and Finland spend more per student enrolled in vocational programmes than in general programmes.

The quality assurance in the enterprises can be funded by the enterprises or by the governments, directly or indirectly as the examples from Germany, The Netherlands and England shows.

The use of quality assurance instruments during training in Germany financed by the companies themselves. The supervision of in-company training is funded by the competent bodies (Chambers) which are financed by their members (in most cases is companies). Other activities

\textsuperscript{44} See Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training 2006: 14-15.
\textsuperscript{45} Education at a Glance 2008, OECD INDICATORS. P. 329
concerning quality assurance in VET are funded by employees’ or employers’ associations and public funds. The Unions raised doubts in relation to the enterprises willingness to pay for the quality assurance, especially if the quality assurance of the apprenticeship programme requires extra resources from the enterprise. This is especially a challenge for and a problem within SMEs.

The fee for the final assessment/examination (offered by the competent chambers) is paid by the training enterprise. The size of the fee varies with the complexity of the examination and the equipment needed. The fees comprise all services of the chamber concerning the vocational training including the final examination and are mainly from 260 to 700 Euro⁴⁶.

Funding can be seen as a ‘game’ between the Dutch enterprises and the government. Enterprises would like to receive money for offering apprenticeships to students. But the government thinks it is the responsibility of the sector to teach students. In the Netherlands the enterprises take their part of the costs of the WBL. There is more or less a good agreement between the government and the social partners. There is now and than a discussion about the investments and financial arrangements.

The discussion between the government and the enterprises is about money. The schools have raised the time used for training in enterprises (but still within the law and regulations) and the enterprises find that they need to get paid further for these activities. This discussion about money is – according to the Ministry - very traditional and common.

The Dutch government gives financial support for the most relevant actors (VET-schools, centres for expertise and student representative JOB,). The Dutch ministry of Finance gives tax reductions to the learning companies and subsidies the Centers of Expertise for the quality of apprenticeships.

One of the priorities of the English National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) in 2009/2010 is to ensure that the funding for Apprenticeship places is available, responsive to need and delivers value for money. This is planned to be done by the following means:

- Develop a clear process for funding Apprenticeship places, ensuring consistency with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and the Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA).
- Ensure clarity of shared services between the three organisations (SFA, YPLA and NAS).
- Continuously review whether Apprenticeship provision offers value for money.
- Embed key business processes, systems and controls.

Funding is one of the tools planned for boosting employer supply of Apprenticeship places in England. This is expected to be done through both direct incentives payments and by additional funding for Apprenticeships for those aged 25 or over.

The direct incentives payments will be introduced (in addition to formal training costs) for some businesses to encourage growth in Apprenticeship places. Similar incentives will be introduced to encourage large companies to ‘over-train’ for their supply chain. Pilots will be set up to increase the age ceilings for fully-funded Apprenticeships for sectors with barriers to recruiting under-18s, and there will be statutory backing for an Apprenticeship Agreement to clarify employer and Apprentice expectations.

Trade Union Congress in England receives (project) funding to raise awareness promote Apprenticeships, and provide guidance to union representatives.

---

⁴⁶ IHK-Gebühren für die Berufsausbildung. Industrie-und Handelskammer zu Berlin I Fasanenstraße 85 I 10623 Berlin
The quality assurance in the VET-colleges is funded more or less in the same way in the case countries. The quality assurance in the part-time VET-colleges is the responsibility of the Länder governments.

The cost of the training (and assessment) in Apprenticeships in England is generally government funded (100% for 16-18 year olds, less for adults), but the individual/employer can pay where funding is not available. The quality assurance of the training is managed through inspection etc by publicly funded bodies.

Learners
The learners are funded in a number of different ways, depending on their status as a student or as an employee.

The employers in England pays either the apprentice a wage or the Government – via the LSC – provides funds to cover the training costs of the Apprenticeship, although typically not the wage costs of training time.

The minimum Apprentice wage will rise from £80 to £95 per week from 1 August 2009. However, as skills develop, many employers tend to increase wages – in fact; research has found that apprentices earn an average of £ 170 net pay per week.

Apprenticeship funding is available from the National Apprenticeship Service. The size of the contribution varies depending on the sector and the age of the candidate. If the apprentice is aged 16–18, organisations will receive 100 per cent of the cost of the training; if they are 19+, they will receive up to 50 per cent.

This is paid directly to the organisation that provides and supports the Apprenticeship; in most cases this will be a learning provider. Large employers with a direct contract with the National Apprenticeship Service may receive the funding themselves.

The Governments and their agencies can introduce new stakeholders and funding mechanisms as the example from England shows.

The NAS support employers through the process of recruiting and training a candidate, including signposting them to providers and advising on the Apprenticeship frameworks available. The National Apprenticeship Service also manages Apprenticeships vacancies - a free online recruitment tool that can be used to match apprentices with prospective employers.

There is also the cost of the supervision, support and mentoring that is needed to put in place to support the apprentice. These associated costs are not insignificant - however, the National Apprenticeship Service will match employer’s commitment to hiring apprentices by covering in full, or in part, the training costs.

In the New Opportunities White Paper: Fair Chances for the Future (January 2009), The English Government has committed to help individuals and businesses through the downturn by providing another 35,000 Apprenticeship places, bringing the total number of apprentices to well over a quarter of a million for the first time ever. In order to fulfil this commitment, they will need to work closely with employers, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, to understand and respond to their changing needs.
One of the ways these ambitious targets\(^4^7\) are expected to be fulfilled is to create up to 10 new Apprenticeship training associations across the country by the end of 2009, with the potential to deliver up to 15,000 Apprenticeship places by 2014/15. This will develop new and innovative approaches drawing on the Australian model, where apprentices are employed by a recruitment agency and hired out to host businesses.

The discussion about funding can be seen from a more overall economic perspective.

The main conclusion of the German study\(^4^8\) is that the companies benefit from providing in-house vocational training. More detailed analysis shows that the variance between the enterprises for all calculated values is high. This means that some enterprises benefit and some lose from providing in-house vocational training. This is an area for improvement if the purpose is to give the enterprises the same working conditions.

First of all the study shows that there are major differences between the eastern and the western part of Germany. Secondly larger enterprises have substantially higher net costs than SMEs. Differences are also seen between training sectors, the amount of training workshops, the length of the training,

In the Dutch school based pathway (BOL) the learner has the status of a student including the right for student-grants and generally they are not paid for the compulsory periods of work placement during their education. This is almost like the Romanian students conditions. In the Dutch work based pathway (BBL) the learner has the status of an apprentice and they are paid for their work according to the agreements made by the social partners.

The German apprentices are employed in the enterprises and get a salary/compensation around 800 Euro per month. This amount is paid by the enterprise.

### 5.2.3 Motivation

The drivers behind the different stakeholders are important quality dimensions, showing what motivates each to contribute to the quality of apprenticeship programmes.

The English non-statutory “Blueprint for Apprenticeships” describes that each “owner” commits something different to the Apprenticeship and seeks something different from it, as presented in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment and Returns of Apprenticeship in England</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Return on investment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
<td>Primary provider of learning in the workplace</td>
<td>Well-trained, highly-productive and motivated employee</td>
<td>Reputation for valuing its people and being prepared to invest in their development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support for young person’s learning and wages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentice</td>
<td>Participates in training</td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Secure employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completes rigorous training process</td>
<td>Broad, relevant and transferable skills and qualifications</td>
<td>Opportunities for progression in learning and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(possibly) lower starting wages than peers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^4^8\) BIBB REPORT Issue 8/09 exists in both a German and English version
The motives at system-level, for employers, VET-colleges and apprentices are described below.

System-level
Steedman (2008)\textsuperscript{49} presents a number of general motives for why governments are subsidising apprenticeship:

Benefits to young people and to the economy
- Easier transition from school to work
- Provides transferable skills
- Higher earnings
- More effective learning environment than school classroom for many young people

Benefits to business and the economy
- Many more business now need all their employees to have “customer-facing” soft skills
- Apprenticeship is increasingly designed to develop these skills in young people in addition to specific occupational skills and knowledge
- If well-designed and administrated, apprenticeship can provide cost-effective training for business.

Many of these motives and arguments will be found in the cases below.

The Dutch Ministry has an interest in a good economy, via new employees, so they see the need for investing in apprenticeships for students. In the other cases the conclusions and arguments are the same at system-level.

Apprenticeships are a key to the English Government’s strategies on skills and 14-19 educational reform and investment in the programme has been greatly expanded (over £1bn in 2009/10).

The returns to Apprenticeship are shown in the figure below and show clearly, the economic motivation for the English Government to boost the Apprenticeship programme.

The net present value (NPV) calculates the NPV of the benefits (including increased earnings for the individual, employment gains and an uplift for non-wage labour costs – but not including the wider social benefits of people doing Apprenticeships, e.g. improved health, reduced crime) minus the costs (including estimates of productivity costs for the length of time a young person spends out of work) plus employer costs (providing equipment and materials) and government costs (subsidy element). These are discounted over time using the Treasury-approved discount rate according to when the costs and benefits are incurred (benefits are assumed over working life – around 40 years – and costs are assumed over the duration of the Apprenticeship). Rate of return is also known as an internal rate of return – the discount rate that serves to drive the NPV of an investment to zero. The higher the rate of return, the more attractive the investment appears to be against a risk-free investment that provides – according to the Treasury’s Green Book – a rate of return of 3.5%.

Apprenticeship in England has the highest net present value among the vocational qualifications, and a number of non-economic benefits exist as well. Apprenticeships have been shown to facilitate the often-difficult transition between full-time learning and work, together with the fact that it provides choice for learners and is an important option for those who learn most successfully in work-based learning environments. This combination of economic and social benefits is one of the major arguments of re-vitalisation of Apprenticeship Programmes we see in several countries.

One of the priorities of the English National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) in 2009/2010 is to increase the number, quality and background of people applying for Apprenticeships, and in particular supporting 16- to 18-year-olds. This is expected to be done by the following activities:

- Build relationships with key partner organisations to stimulate a demand from learners, e.g. Connexions, Jobcentre Plus, nextstep.
- Develop plans to engage young people currently in employment without training.
- Introduce mentoring support for those learners who need it.
- Improve the number of learners from diverse backgrounds on the Apprenticeship programme.
- Work with DCSF to establish Apprenticeships alongside other 14–19 options.
- Highlight the range of options and careers available within Apprenticeships for young people.
- Work with partner organisations to increase progression opportunities for learners.
- Provide case studies and role models to highlight the opportunities of Apprenticeships.

Enterprises

The enterprises are mainly motivated by the same parameters in all the case countries.

The Dutch employers are high committed according to the MBA Raad and medium seen from the point of view of the Ministry and COLO. But the daily activities in the SMEs are a challenge for the potential and realistic level of involvement of the employers. The medium judgement is a kind of average for all enterprises, indicating that some are very committed and some not.

New employees are important for the Dutch Social Partners, so they realize the need of investing in apprenticeships for students. Social partners want qualified employees and also the assurance of enough qualified personnel in the future.

The German enterprises are motivated by training mainly their own future workforce. It is in their interest to provide training which leads to a high standard of skills. Training is integrated in the work process of the company, which are generally quality assured. The enterprises see themselves as responsible for that the apprentices pass the final examination.

The representatives from the German employers see no major change in the willingness of the employers to continue the investment in the apprentice programmes. “They are fully aware of the future workforce they will need (for the background of the demographic change) and that it is up to them to train for it” states Susanne Müller from BDA, Berlin.

The German 2005 BIBB study showed that companies are devoted to securing quality assurance in education and want to spend even more resources on it in the future. Importantly, this is not because the companies are forced to do this, but because they themselves see the relevancy and necessity of quality assurance.

There is a mutual interest of the German Social Partners to assure an excellent apprenticeship. From the employees’ point of view the apprentices should be qualified for skilled occupational activity in a changing working world. From the employers’ point of view lack of skilled employees should be avoided. In the Vocational Training Act (BBiG) it is also stated that the vocational training committee of the competent bodies shall improve the quality of vocational training (see section 79 BBiG).

Enterprises can co-operate in England by match-making of SME groups within sectors and regions, to enable SMEs to share Apprentices (with one acting as “lead”) and to provide adequately broad experience.

Romania has – due to the historical development of the society – a special need for rebuilding trust and for development of ownership among the main stakeholders (schools and enterprises, teachers and enterprise representatives) in the VET –system.

The Romanian enterprises are mainly motivated to participate in quality assurance due to:

- The need for helping hands
- It is a cost efficient way of recruiting well trained employees
- The general improvement in the level of qualifications within the sector and in the country in general
- A faster integration of the student in the enterprises after the education is over
- The schools get practical experience
- Participation in joint programmes enables the access to structural funding

In total the apprenticeship programmes in Romania are seen as a win-win-win situation for the learner, the school and the enterprise.
Learners
In Romania the students are mainly motivated by the fact, that a high quality WBL increases their employment chances and contributes to their professional development. The employers’ respondent adds further, that students can make their viewpoint known, they can actively be involved in their own training and finally they can get better qualifications.

The learners can be motivated in a number of ways. The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) in England present a range of apprentice case studies\(^51\) at their homepage. Each case study\(^52\) tells you how the apprentice has benefited from their Apprenticeship and what they have achieved.

Example of a case:
“Samina Bi is 21 years old and lives in Keighley. Samina started an apprenticeship with Airedale General Hospital where she now works full time as a work force information assistant in the human resources. Samina wanted to work and gain qualifications and may one day go to university. The community motivated Samina to do well and her older sister has always been a great support to her.”

The brochure\(^53\) Interested in earning while you are learning? - Learner brochure - June 2009 is targeted at the learners and explains what Apprenticeships are, the levels and types of Apprenticeships available as well as outline the next steps needed to undertake in order to take an Apprenticeship.

The short answer from Germany is, that it is in the students own interest to gain excellent training.

The German research BIBB 9/09 concludes that the learners’ expectations in relation to the outcome quality of their education are very high, and even higher than their assessment of the education they are a part of at the moment. The highest expectations to the output quality are among the bankers and the lowest among painters and salespersons in the retail-sector.

Good apprenticeships for the Dutch apprentices are a good experience for learning a profession. The general working conditions and atmosphere is among the Dutch quality criteria for WBL, together with treatment. Students and staff are expected to treat one another with respect and consideration both in the institution and in practical training. Safety is another quality criterion. Students shall be sufficiently safe socially and physically in the institution and in the practical training.

VET-colleges
The motivations of the VET-providers are a combination of “it is our job” and “we want to make a difference with the youth”.

The English VET-colleges will also be likely to be motivated to do so as it will increase the chances of retaining and growing their contract with the LSC.

\(^51\) Link: http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Be-An-Apprentice/Apprentice-Case-Studies.aspx

\(^52\) Each of the many cases includes a picture of the apprentice, and manages to personalise the Apprenticeship.

\(^53\) http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/About-Us/~media/Documents/NAS-Learner-Brochure-June-2009.ashx
5.2.4 Cooperation

Cooperation among all stakeholders is a precondition for quality assurance of WBL, and is described in the laws and regulations for apprenticeship programmes. Especially important is the cooperation between the employers and the VET-colleges central for the quality of the apprenticeship programmes.

The first example from England show a number of different stakeholders and the areas they are involved within. Vocational Partnerships networks exists across the whole system of Vocational Education & Training in the UK. The key partners and networks represent the VET organisations’ infrastructure and bring a range of capabilities that embrace the complete system from policy to practice i.e. –

- Government, Department for Education & Skills [DfES] - development of education and training policy, approving and funding Sector Skills Councils
- Learning Skills Council [LSC] – strategic integration, planning and funding of all post compulsory learning below higher education
- Sector Skill Councils [SSCs], in all occupational; areas - development of occupational standards, occupational mapping and functional analysis, facilitating national training targets
- Awarding Bodies [ABs] i.e. Edexcel, City & Guilds, EMTA, AAT - centre approval and qualification certification
- Training Inspection bodies i.e. Adult Learning Inspectorate [ALI] – development and implementation of inspection frameworks for ensuring the quality of training and the effectiveness of learning
- Regulatory bodies i.e. Qualification & Curriculum Authority [QCA] / Scottish Qualification Authority [SQA] - qualification systems and accreditation and quality assurance systems
- Delivery and consultancy i.e. FE Colleges, training and consultancy organisations – staff training and development, curriculum materials.
- Management organisations i.e. British Council - contract and project management

The cooperation between enterprises and VET-colleges and apprentices has room for improvement. The German research BIBB 9/09 concludes that the organisation of the learning and the cooperation between the enterprises and VET-colleges are the quality criteria the learners are most dissatisfied with. The arguments for this are, that the enterprises are relatively weak at giving feedback (orally and written) to the learners both during the daily activities and at the end of the education.

The same problem exists in relation to the lack of a clear and detailed planning of what the learner can expect to learn in the enterprise.

The following cases from England and The Netherlands show examples of ways VET-colleges can help enterprises or how the system-level can introduce structures to support the cooperation.

In the UK-report “Reaching further Workforce development through employer-FE college partnership” thirteen case studies of employer-college engagement are described. The key conclusions from this research project as central to strengthening employer-college partnership and by that raise the quality of WBL by managing the client interface are:

- Defining objectives and positive outcomes in business terms at the outset is important for relations with clients and for providing a basis for measurement

54 The UK Vocational Education and Training System, Sue Tappin, British Council
• Review meetings should be held at the end of training interventions to assess outcomes, gather feedback and to consider further potential training needs

The training providers in England help with managing the recruitment and ongoing paperwork, designing structured off-the-job training and provide the elements of the Apprenticeship that are most efficiently delivered ‘at scale’ (like training in the transferable skills that might not be adequately picked up on the job in a small company). This reduces the burdens of the enterprises and the strategy behind is to attract even more enterprises to supply Apprenticeship places.

All Dutch colleges have a regional network of companies and organisations, which are involved in WBL. There is a practical contract between the student and the learning company in The Netherlands. In the future there will be an apprentice code for supporting the quality of the apprenticeship as a part of a practical contract. The code is a common agreement between MBO Raad (VET council), COLO, the employers and ministry OCW. The code is introduced because of complaints from students on the guidance and quality and content of WBL and because the accreditation criteria for trainers differs between sectors/centres of expertise.

Lack of cooperation is also a topic in many countries, as the example from England shows.

The cooperation between Apprentice programmes and the public sector in England shows a number of inconsistencies in the public sector’s usage of Apprenticeships. This has resulted in, that a part of the boosting employer supply of Apprenticeship places is expected to come from the public sector. At the moment the public sector employs around 20 % of the national workforce\textsuperscript{55}, but provides less than 10 % of the apprenticeship places.

5.3 Selection criteria for enterprises

Not every enterprise can be responsible for an apprenticeship programme. The enterprises have to match a certain standard or to be able to deliver a certain quality. The enterprises can be selected to be training enterprises in a number of ways with different degrees of formal procedures for accreditation and certification. First of all the enterprises have to fulfil the general training regulations. Equipment, technology and trainer competences and motivation are other key quality dimensions of the apprenticeship programmes.

In May 2003, the German government suspended the regulation for the education enterprises\textsuperscript{56}, in order to get even more enterprises motivated to take apprentices. The decision on reducing the requirements for the enterprises was heavily influenced by the labour market in 2003. The regulation, including a description of the competences of the internal trainers in the enterprises, are now revised and updated in order to be in operation again from August 1\textsuperscript{st} 2009.

There exist no clear and common standards for the training enterprises in England. Each sector has their special requirements and each Apprenticeship framework specifies the qualifications. The employers are involved in the design of the frameworks according to the needs of the sector together with Sector Skills Councils.

The German Study (BIBB heft 109) shows, that the German enterprises set high expectations for the quality in their work with the apprentices.

\textsuperscript{55} There are age restriction issues in certain parts of the public sector, for instance in the police force and some care occupations.

\textsuperscript{56} Ausbilder-Eignungsverordnung (AEVO)
The context of the education in the enterprises is seen as a precondition for a high quality education, and can be described in three main areas: equipment, personal, organisation.

The following three sections will describe the major selection and quality criteria of enterprises involved in apprenticeship programmes: training regulations, equipment and trainer competences.

5.3.1 Training regulations

The enterprises training activities have to follow a number of more or less flexible training regulations. These regulations can be general, describing in-company training, off-workstation training, employee rights and responsibilities and how to handle new learning.

The German “Rahmenlehrplan” and the “Ausbildungsordnung” sets the minimum requirements for every educational area/occupation. These are made centrally and define more or less a minimum quality standard.

The appropriate Federal Ministries are responsible for the training regulations which set the minimum standards of the in-company training. The relevant Ministries of the Länder are responsible for the framework curricula in part-time-VET-colleges.

In the coming Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England is it proposed to introduce minimum off-workstation training. The consultation paper states:

“In World Class Apprenticeships we recommended that the SASE should include a requirement for ‘a reasonable absolute minimum for off-workstation learning time.’ Ministers have also committed to a minimum of 280 Guided Learning Hours (GLH) per year for all Apprenticeship frameworks.

We have considered whether we should simply ask SSC/SSBs to state a minimum ‘off workstation learning time’ (which might differ in each case) or whether we should set out an absolute minimum for all frameworks. However we are attracted to setting a national minimum in order to guarantee that all apprentices can benefit from dedicated time for acquiring knowledge, receiving instruction and reflecting on their performance, away from the pressures of work. We should welcome views on what that minimum might be.

We suggest a definition of ‘off-workstation training’ as a period of “instruction or supervised study, conducted at a separate physical location from that in which an apprentice normally works”. This could include periods of study which take place in an employer’s premises and ‘near the job’ (for example in a company training room), but it does not include periods of private, unsupervised study. We would expect this training to take place during normal working hours, and this will be made clear in the Apprenticeship Agreement.”

Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR) are proposed to be included in the coming Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England. The consultation paper states:

“We propose to make it a requirement for apprentices to learn about their rights and responsibilities as a worker, particularly in the fields of equal opportunities and health and safety. There are arguments for and against introducing a formal, separate credit for ERR.

We propose that ERR should be included in a qualification, though we do not specify the form of this qualification, which is left to the SSC/SSB. Frameworks would have to require the formal assessment, and passing, of the ERR material.”
The Social Partners are involved in developing new/revising existing initial training regulations (see section 5 BBiG): In case of new vocational initial training regulations being developed or existing initial training regulations being revised the employers’ associations and the trade unions are closely integrated in the process (see Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training 2006: 22). In this way they contribute their expertise and demands to the training regulations. In other words: The Social Partners help to define the output quality which should be reached through training (“the vocational skills, knowledge and qualifications to at least be imparted in the course of initial training” see BBiG).

The review of the “old educations” and the consideration in relation to change the “Lehrpläne” can be very seldom, and no automatic mechanism regulates this activity, which the Länder are responsible for. These differences in timing between the requirements of the market and the daily work at the VET-colleges in relation to the Lehrpläne can bee seen as a dilemma for the VET-colleges. The VET-colleges shall follow the Lehrpläne even if the reality has changed and the market conditions are different. This will result in, that the VET-colleges mainly will be behind many of the enterprises in equipment and insight in the market.

New educational areas can be challenged by how they can combine the different Lehrfelder in order to create a new education.

5.3.2 Equipment

The enterprises are expected to have the updated technology and equipment, which is needed both for their daily business and for apprenticeship programmes. All the respondents across the case countries judge the enterprises equipment and technology to be sufficient and of high quality.

The German research BIBB 9/09 concludes that the enterprises are assessed more positively than the VET-colleges in relation to a number of key quality criteria according to the learners.

Vergleich einzelner Qualitätskriterien des betrieblichen und des schulischen Kontextes

| Vergleich einzelner Qualitätskriterien des betrieblichen und des schulischen Kontextes |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Evaluation on a scale from 1 = “trifft sehr stark zu” to 6 = “trifft gar nicht zu” |

Alle Mittelwerte des berufsschulischen Kontextes fallen signifikant ungünstiger aus als die entsprechenden
Mittelwerte des betrieblichen Kontextes (T Test, einseitige Testung, Irrtumswahrscheinlichkeit <0,01 %)

Quelle: BIBB-Studie „Ausbildung aus Sicht der Auszubildenden“ (ungewichtete Fallzahl n = 5.901)
Both the personal and the technical resources of the enterprises are assessed more positive by the learners in the German research.

The German study (BIBB Heft 109) shows, that – according to the enterprises – the technical equipment is updated, that the learning materials are available for the apprentices and that the apprentices have their own working places.

5.3.3 Trainer competences

The trainers are the single most important quality factor in relation to the quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. Despite the importance of the trainers, the regulations and standards for the trainers are very different among the case countries.

Dutch companies, mainly SMEs are delivering work based learning. In the health and care programs, WBL is offered by hospitals, rest homes etc. These companies or institutions need to be accredited by the sector based ‘Centres of Expertise’ as a learning-company. One of the requirements of such a learning-company is that the student guidance is done by a work supervisor who is in possession of a supervisor certificate, also delivered by the ‘Centres of Expertise’.

In the work based system (BBL) students generally work four days in the week and attend school for one day. In some sectors however (shipping), the school part is done in a number of blocks.

In the school based system (BOL), the internships are generally done in a number of blocks, but with the introduction of ‘competence based learning’, there are more and more examples of integrated learning, resulting in a few days school and a few days company in a week.

Supervision of the apprentice is one of the Dutch quality criteria and is covered in article 3 of the Dutch practical training contract:

1a. The organization shall appoint (name) ............................................................... as practical work supervisor, charged with the supervision of the participant in the organization.
1b. From its staff, the organization shall appoint (name) ............................................................... as practical work teacher, charged with the supervision of the participant.

The enterprises and especially the practical work supervisor and the practical work teacher are motivated and committed to the apprentice by signing this contract.

The German enterprises (BIBB Heft 109) have the highest expectations to the personal competences – both pedagogically and within the profession of the trainers within the enterprises. The study shows, that the trainers competences almost match the enterprises expectations, but with the largest difference between ideal and reality within the pedagogical competences of the trainers.

One of the major changes in the revised and updated German regulation for the training enterprises is the focus on the pedagogical competences of the trainers in the enterprises. The new requirements are further restructured and defined/described as competences.
The new profile for the German trainers is described in four action fields:

• Test of educational preconditions and planning of the education
• Preparation of the education and participation in motivation
• Implementation of the education
• Finalisation of the education

Within each of these action fields are a number of competences for the German trainers in the enterprises described.

The organisational context in the German Study (BIBB Heft 109) is measured by how the enterprises appreciate areas like: the possibilities for trainers to get a further pedagogical education within their sector, and the time the trainers have to train the apprentices.

The largest difference between the ideal-situation and the reality is found within the training possibilities for the trainers and the time for training. Both areas have room for improvement.

The German Study (BIBB Heft 109) shows a high degree of match between the ideal situation and the reality in relation to how the education is implemented didactical and methodological. The main areas for improvement are within simulation, self-study programmes, project work together with monthly agreements of learning objectives and the feedback from the apprentices to the trainer.

Romania has a Pedagogical Annex to the compulsory WBL agreement, and this annex is signed by the learner, the schoolteacher and the tutor (the enterprise’s representative) and includes:

• WBL schedule and work placement assignments
• Roles and responsibilities of the schoolteacher and the enterprise tutor
• Competence units/competences/learning situations related to work places
• Assessment methods and instruments

The German research BIBB 9/09 concludes that the learners in general are satisfied with the quality of their education – both in the enterprises and at the VET-colleges. Especially positive are the learners judgement of the enterprises’ trainers attitude and skills together with the technical equipment of the enterprises.

5.4 Conclusions in relation to planning

“Planning reflects a strategic vision shared by the relevant stakeholders and includes explicit goals/objectives, actions and indicators” states the Recommendation on the EQARF.

Strategies for apprenticeship programmes show both the objectives and the huge number of different tools used to achieve the goals and objectives. The laws and regulations vary in complexity and focus between the case countries, but are linked directly to the overall policy goals and objectives. Most of the law and regulations are relatively broad and leave room for the Social partners, the VET-colleges and the enterprises to make their own decisions. One of the major differences in the laws is the responsibility for the training in the enterprises – this can be the VET-colleges as in The Netherlands or it can be the Social partners and especially the enterprises as in Germany.

The apprenticeship contracts are a key tool in regulating and specifying the cooperation between the enterprise, the learner and the VET-college.
The quality structures and systems follow many of the same principles and structures e.g. the roles of the social partners, the systematic approach, broad quality discussions. The quality challenges are found within the degree of cooperation between enterprises and VET-colleges, the different possibilities for SME and larger enterprises, the motivation and involvement of the trainers and teachers, the pressure the current economic crisis put on the apprentices and VET-colleges in order to accept even low quality of training, the content, guidance and assessment of WBL, the length of the work based learning and the planning cycles of the VET-colleges, the apprentices security for a minimum quality of their apprentice programme.

It is a common challenge in all Member States that the quality requirements and practices differ among the many stakeholders. Coordination like this and the possibility for making use of prior learning is one way of making more efficient quality structures across the different levels.

The qualifications are mainly influenced or defined by the Social Partners in cooperation with the responsible ministries. The Social Partners are organised in sectors and branches and the qualifications are closely related to the national or local labour markets needs and often defined as competences (skills, knowledge and job related attitude).

The curricula and especially the learning targets can be defined by cooperation between the enterprises, the VET-college and the apprentice.

Guidance is an important quality criterion for apprentices, and can be supported by both a tutor from the VET-college and by a work supervisor from the enterprise.

The organisational structures are relatively complex and build on numbers of years of cooperation between the many different stakeholders and the development of educational structures, that is flexible in relation to an ever changing labour market.

The laws on VET describe the tasks for the different stakeholders and a number of regulations, organisations, contracts, formal and informal communication and negotiations ensures that the daily activities get a high degree of quality.

The responsibility for the quality assurance of the apprentice programmes are placed differently. One solution is that the enterprises and their organisations together with the unions have this responsibility. An alternative model is with the VET-colleges as responsible in close cooperation with the enterprises and the Social partners.

The funding of apprenticeship programmes is relatively complex, and it is difficult to separate the amounts used on quality assurance from the many other (educational) activities in the enterprise. Discussions on who shall do which activities and how they shall be paid for there work, is high on the agenda in all the cases.

The apprentices can either be employed, at have a contract with the enterprise or they can be students with an educational contract with the VET-college.

Calculations show that some enterprises get a positive economic result from taking part in apprenticeship programmes, even in the short term.

The motivation of the different stakeholders is almost the same across the cases. The Ministries focus on policy objectives like economic development, human resources, life long learning. The enterprises are motivated by both the economic aspects, the responsibility for the future personnel both in the individual enterprise and in the profession and sector and the possibility to give the youth a perspective and direction in life.
Cooperation among all stakeholders is a precondition for quality assurance of WBL, and is planned and described in the laws and regulations for apprenticeship programmes. The major challenge is, how to ensure that all those involved in fact follow these plans and work together in the same direction. This can be done by giving the different stakeholders and especially the enterprises, the social partners and the VET-colleges a certain degree of freedom for organising their own work.

Cooperation is the quality criteria that the apprentices are most unsatisfied with, and an area of great importance and with possibilities for further progress.

General training regulations show the basic expectations from the enterprises, and can be seen as fundamental quality standards that every enterprise has to take in consideration and to fulfil.

The trainers in the enterprises are the most important quality dimension of apprenticeship programmes. The trainers are expected to both have technical and pedagogical skills. The requirements for the trainers differ between the cases, but the profile of a good trainer is the same in all the enterprises.

The largest difference between the ideal-situation and the reality is found within the training possibilities for the trainers and the time for training. Both areas have room for improvement.

The apprentices assess the enterprises much more positively than they assess the VET-colleges on the key quality dimensions.
6. Implementation

"Implementation plans are devised in consultation with stakeholders and include explicit principles" states the Recommendation on the EQARF.

A number of indicative descriptors of implementation are used in the EQARF in order to support Member States with the implementation of the Framework e.g. Resources aligned and assigned partnerships, stakeholder involvement, resources, capacity, tools, guidelines and standards, quality assurance frameworks.

The last chapter covered mainly the quality aspects of the plans and objectives of the apprenticeship programme. This chapter will focus more on the daily activities and the activities done in order to implement the plans. The following sections will cover quality assurance, resources and stakeholders involvement in the implementation activities.

6.1 Quality assurance

The quality assurance of the implementation activities includes a number of general quality guidelines, quality standards together with inspection and supervision.

6.1.1 General quality guidelines

Quality is regulated in a number of ways, where laws, orders together with other regulations set the general regulations, as the cases below shows.

In Germany the Vocational Training Act (BBiG) is the most important law at system level to support the quality of apprenticeship. It regulates how employers, trade unions, chambers and government bodies work together to achieve an excellent quality in VET. Especially the involvement of all players in the development of initial training regulations and in the work of the board of the BIBB ensures the inclusion of the different interests.

The annual report on Vocational Education and Training of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (including the annual “Data Report” of the BIBB) provides information about developments concerning apprenticeship. Based on this information activities to enhance quality of apprenticeship are established.

The situation is the same in The Netherlands, where the Dutch quality assurance in VET is regulated by the WEB and focus on the following topics57

- Instrumentation of a quality dialogue with interested parties
- Intrinsic quality: centrally-established educational goals
- Quality assurance responsibility of institutions
- Quality Assurance System (QAS)
- Improvement, reform and promotion of expertise
- Controlling the quality of examinations
- Settling for Quality and Sanctions

From self-evaluation report to annual report on quality performance

The Dutch institutions are free to choose their own model of quality assurance, but the following regulations apply to their Quality Assurance System:

- quality assurance should relate to the central tasks of the institutions: qualifications, accessibility, effective educational tracks, study and career-choice information,
- all elements of the quality-assurance cycle should be realised:
  - formulating goals or quality standards, targeted results
  - establishing assessment methods (including measuring instruments) and assessment (including the commitments of extraneous parties),
  - establishing/measuring the results achieved,
  - evaluating the results achieved with respect to goals/standards,
  - (in the event of shortcomings) instituting improvement measures,
  - where necessary, adjusting the goals and measurement instruments
  - outside experts and other educational institutions should be brought in to evaluate quality;
  - examination institutions should be brought in for external evaluation (outside legitimacy) of the quality of examinations

The case from the Netherlands above shows the mix between public steering and the freedom of the VET-providers. The Romanian case show how a pedagogical annex is used to force the work and the quality of apprenticeship programmes.

In Romania is there an order\(^58\) that set the agenda for quality assurance regarding approving of the quality assurance tools in VET. The different aspects of the quality assurance system are described, including the way in which information is collected from VET providers.

The relations between the learner, the school and the enterprises are often regulated and described in a formal contract. In Romania are the WBL-Agreement supplemented by a Pedagogical Annex signed by the learner, the school teacher and the tutor (the enterprise’s representative).

This pedagogical annex includes 12 points focusing on:
- WBL schedule and work placement assignments
- roles and responsibilities of the school teacher and the enterprise tutor
- competence units / competences / learning situations related to work places
- assessment methods and instruments

This pedagogical annex is a key part of the quality assurance, especially due to the specification of the rights and responsibilities of the different stakeholders.

Quality guidelines can be collected and presented in a quality management handbook, as it is done in the LdV-project “Improvement of Quality Management System for vocational education and training organizations in the field of agriculture”\(^59\). The objective is the introduction of the international standard of the Quality Management System - ISO 9001:2000. This international standard promotes the procedural approach to application in creating, implementing and improving the efficiency of the Quality Management System and is targeted to ensure that the user is satisfied as much as possible. The project focuses on the system for vocational education and training and training organisations in the fields of agriculture.

\(^{58}\) Order by the Minister of Education no 6308/19.12.2008
Quality systems like these are expected to assure and develop the quality for all those involved and activities including apprenticeship programmes.

Conclusion
The general quality guidelines are set by laws, regulations and orders depending on the different traditions in the case countries. Quality is explicitly mentioned and described, both in detail but also with a certain degree of freedom for different stakeholders.

6.1.2 Quality standards

Quality standards can be defined and set in many different ways, ranging from maximum standards (visions) to minimum standards, which every organisation shall achieve in order to keep the required quality level.

The implementation of the Dutch qualification file is a matter of regional agreements between the VET-Colleges and the companies and it is the college who decides where the learning takes place. This is part of the institutional autonomy, although it needs to meet the required national quality standards. One of these quality standards is that WBL can only take place in recognized learning companies. Accreditation of these companies is the legal task of the sector based Centres of Expertise.

Not all activities have national quality standards, which the LdV-projects on learning periods abroad show.

Learning periods abroad are a key element in most Member States' VET, and very often supported and organised as Leonardo da Vinci projects. The LdV-project: “Vocational Qualification Transfer System” (A/03/B/F/PP-158.034) includes a proposal for quality assurance of learning periods abroad, including the introduction of a number of minimum standards for a company or school to train and coach students at a placement abroad:

1. The hosting organisation provides a safe training environment for the student in which the student can develop and learn;
2. The hosting organisation informs the student and the sending organisation on the applicable laws and regulations regarding the terms and conditions of employment and training in the specific country and abides by these regulations;
3. The hosting organisation takes into consideration the level of the student: the years of training/work experience;
4. The hosting organisation has an e-mail and a permanent internet access and provides the student access to it when necessary;
5. The hosting organisation allows enough time, room, means and resources for the training and coaching the student;
6. The student can practise (when necessary under guidance) the daily company activities in relation to the education of the student (in case the hosting organisation is a company);
7. The student can attend the needed school classes in relation to the education of the student (in case the hosting organisation is a school);
8. The hosting organisation appoints a person who will be the representative of the working place / school training in training, coaching and supervising the student;
9. The hosting organisation provides a detailed programme/plan including an introduction programme, evaluation interviews with the student on the progress of the placement and the final assessment of the student;
10. The hosting organisation cooperates with the sending organisation and makes the appropriate training agreements as described further on in the MoU;
11. The hosting organisation gives the necessary information on the conditions and equipment concerning the work itself and the work environment (in case the hosting organisation is a company) or concerning the training and classes to be attended (in case the hosting organisation is a training institute).

12. A representative of the hosting organisation, on behalf of the sending organisation, monitors and evaluates the achievement of the learning objectives.

13. The student works under the supervision and responsibility of the hosting organisation, following the specific working hours (in case the hosting organisation is a company).

14. The student attends classes and fulfils other tasks that are part of the agreed training plan (in case the hosting organisation is a training institute).

15. The student follows the discipline and working/schools hours, and respects the rules in force and legal provisions concerning professional confidentiality.

The LdV-project “Vocational Qualification Transfer System” can add to the example above and proposes a Mobility procedure where the activities are split between the training provider in the home country and the training provider in the host country. The procedure are organised in a preliminary, an implementation and a final phase.

Another LdV-project: Practical Approaches to optimize and implement joint cross-border vocational education and training in crafts and skilled trades has developed a Checklist for LaWA (learn and work abroad) implementation. Most of the conclusions support the finding in the other projects.

6.1.3 Inspection and supervision

Quality can be assured in many different ways, ranging from control and inspection to supervision and motivation. In general is the quality assurance from system-level a mixture of these tools and instruments.

The inspection and supervision is often handled by a Governmental agency like the cases from England and the Netherlands shows.

Ofsted are responsible in England for regulation of training providers’ and inspection reports are published. They report directly to Parliament. Feedback from employers is channelled through the National Apprentice Service (NAS).

The Dutch inspectorate has recently changed their tasks and ways of working towards a more supportive and focused type of supervision. The following case will show how they work.

The Dutch Inspectorate is responsible for the supervision of the VET-colleges, who again are responsible for VET including the training in enterprises. To give the supervision direction, the Inspectorate will have to provide answers to a number of questions. The central question in the supervision is:

- Is the education that is provided of sufficient quality?

This central question can be divided into sub questions, parallel to the quality aspects.

If the question is or is expected to be answered negatively, then in accordance with Article 11 of the WOT, the causes of the deficiencies are determined in a subsequent study. So in these cases an additional question arises:

- **What are the causes of this insufficient quality?**

In the study into the causes there are no restrictions for the Inspectorate: in principle, every possible circumstance can be looked at to provide an explanation.

If insufficient quality is found, then after a time a study into quality improvement is conducted. This pertains to two matters: what improvements have been made and did these improvements have the intended effect, in other words, is the quality now sufficient? Thus, three questions are asked here:

- *What measures were taken to achieve an improvement?*
- *Have the specific deficiencies now been rectified?*
- *Is the education that is provided now of sufficient quality?*

These fundamental questions can be used for every Inspectorate or supervision organisation in order to quality assure the apprenticeship programmes.

Even the more detailed quality criteria used by the Dutch Inspectorate can be found in other Member States, but is presented here in order to give a detailed and in-depth picture of the Dutch way of working.

**The quality aspects and criteria used in the Dutch supervision system**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governing capacity</td>
<td>There is a systematic assessment, accountability and an improvement in the quality of the achievements delivered in combination with internal supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal requirements</td>
<td>The legal requirements are met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>The access given to and results of disadvantaged students meet the objectives of the institution which were set in dialogue with the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>The set-up and implementation of the programme are effective and meticulous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning process</td>
<td>The learning process is effective and stimulating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>Students are given careful guidance in their school career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction and safety</td>
<td>The institution offers students a respectful and safe environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result</td>
<td>The institution / organisational unit realises a sufficient result in vocational education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportionate supervision is based on risk profiles. The risks are identified by the Inspectorate on signals, annual accounts, results and governing capacity. One of the reasons for updating supervision and inspections was the introduction of ‘good governance’. With the updated supervision the inspectorate focuses on further strengthening the responsibility of educational institutions for the quality of education. It refers to the internal supervision provided by a Supervisory Board over the degree to which the educational achievements agreed to are being delivered, combined with the account given to the dialogue with interested parties form the institution, such as students and the labour market.
The aim is to secure intensive supervision where necessary and remote supervision where possible.

The focus of and thinking behind delivering “good governance” has resulted in new structures for the inspection in the Netherlands. The Inspectorate had to change their procedures as the case below shows.

The “Periodical Quality Research” (PKO) is made every 3 years, and is based on supervision on risk profiles. Each the institution will be visited. The risk profile will be discussed with the management board and supervision arrangement will be set. If necessary the inspectorate can do a ‘Research of Quality Improvement’ (OKV): in the case of serious failings the inspector visits the school within 2 years after the PKO (and NO) to see if the quality of the involved processes or results has been improved. An Incidental Research (IO) is possible: investigation because of serious complaints or questions asked by the parliament or by the minister. Also thematic research e.g. on competence based learning or drop-outs is instruments.

### The Dutch selective supervision within VET (BE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Role of governing capacity</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. First detection phase at institutions and units</td>
<td>Annually and, in the case of new information, immediately</td>
<td>Selection for further analysis based on risks in results, signals, annual reports and governing capacity</td>
<td>Basic Registration Education Number (BRON) Annual Report Information supervisors Signals</td>
<td>Governing capacity is one of the detection factors</td>
<td>Selection of institutions and units for further analysis. Other institutions are given the basic arrangement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Second detection phase</td>
<td>Annually and, in the case of new information, immediately</td>
<td>Select organisational units for further problem analysis</td>
<td>See above, plus possible other sources outside the institution.</td>
<td>Governing capacity is one of the detection factors</td>
<td>Selection of institutions and units for problem analysis. Other institutions are given the basic arrangement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Problem analysis</td>
<td>Annually and, in the case of new information, immediately</td>
<td>Determine the supervision arrangement with interventions</td>
<td>See above, plus: Specific information from the institution on the problem Discussion during an annual discussion</td>
<td>Governing capacity has an impact on supervision arrangement</td>
<td>Supervision arrangement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Interventions, including the assessment of the quality of the education provided</td>
<td>Immediately after establishing the arrangement</td>
<td>Where a risk is found, give a formal assessment of the quality of the education, and if quality is insufficient,</td>
<td>See above, plus, if necessary, observations, discussions, review of basic documents</td>
<td>Additional inspection on site is complementary to the internal assessments of the institution.</td>
<td>Formal determination of the quality of the institution or the organisational unit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

63 Currently, in the context of the education number, there is no registration of the organisational unit where a student is enrolled. The possibility for introducing this registration is being studied at present. Until this study has been completed, result data on organisational units will have to be collected with a separate survey.
The public accountability documents are the starting point for the new supervision. The internal accountability documents and basic documents only play a role if the external accountability documents (still) provide insufficient information. In this supervision, the Inspectorate wants to call on as little ‘administrative effort’ as possible and therefore relies as much as possible on the information that is already available to the government.

The risk detection takes place immediately and as deep as possible into the institution. This prevents institutions or larger units from having to be inspected further over their full breadth while the problem possibly arises only in a small part of it. Locating the problem quickly contributes to a reduction in the supervision load.

This Dutch approach to inspection and supervision is based on a close cooperation between Social partners, enterprises, VET-colleges and the Ministry and on a high level of trust among these partners.

Conclusion
Quality can be assured in many different ways, ranging from control and inspection to supervision and motivation. In general the quality assurance is, from system-level, a mixture of these tools and instruments.

The key questions in relation to inspection and supervision can be seen as:
- **Is the education that is provided of sufficient quality?**
- **What are the causes of this insufficient quality?**
- **What measures were taken to achieve an improvement?**
- **Have the specific deficiencies now been rectified?**
- **Is the education that is provided now of sufficient quality?**

Systematic and well described procedures are needed in order to secure the quality of the inspection and supervision.

### 6.2 Resources

Funding, equipment and technology and trainers are among the key resources involved in this part of the quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes.

#### 6.2.1 Funding

Funding is important in securing the quality, and can be done in many ways and with many arguments. The case from the Netherlands shows a funding principle that is seen in many countries.

The Dutch government pays the Centres of Expertise and the schools (the amount is dependant on of the number of students). The Centres of Expertise are different in size both financially and in relation to number of employees. This results in different contributions from the Centres of Expertise in relation to their work on the educational quality. The COLO receive different fees from
the individual Centres of Expertise due to the differences in the number of students, but seeks to offer each Centre the same level of service.

The Dutch educational institutions are primarily responsible for identifying failings and for taking the necessary improvement measures, for example, raising the expertise of teaching staff. The separate means used for in-service training and quality improvement / renewal projects (prior to the introduction of the WEB in 1996) have therefore been incorporated in the lump-sum amounts for the institutions. The government directs innovative efforts through the use of specific project funds (earmarked funds outside the lump-sum compensation) to support the further development of ‘good practice’.

The funding of the training in the enterprises is often discussed. The example from Romania show how the costs can be shared.

The costs of the quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship in Romania are shared between the ministry and the enterprises. The main cost for the enterprises is the time used by the internal trainers. This time is a part of the total salary cost in the enterprises, and the trainers do not get extra paid for their training responsibilities.

The basic assumption in discussions on funding of work based learning is often, that apprenticeship/WBL always causes costs for the enterprises. Based on the 2007 BIBB Cost-Benefit Survey is this not always the case in Germany:

“The initial findings from the current BIBB survey\textsuperscript{64} Costs and Benefits of In-company Vocational Training show that the surveyed 2986 enterprises generally benefit from providing in-company vocational training for youths. Although enterprises incur numerous costs as a result of providing training, these costs can be compensated for by retaining trainees upon completion of their training, thus eliminating the costs of recruiting and familiarising new skilled workers from outside. Compensation also arises from other less easily quantified factors such as image gains. At any rate, one third of the enterprises generate positive net gains by putting their trainees to productive use. For these firms, hiring their trainees is one way to generate further benefits. Retention is not however an absolute prerequisite for a positive cost-benefit balance. Just how important the productive work done by trainees is for enterprises is evident in other areas as well. Asked directly about this, 55% of the enterprises surveyed said that being able to deploy trainees as workers during their training is an important reason for providing in-company vocational training. Only 17% do not consider this important. The companies’ assessments also confirm that providing in-company vocational training is worth their while financially. The majority of firms surveyed are satisfied with the balance between costs and benefits. Only 11% are dissatisfied. The majority also view positively their ability to meet their training needs by providing dual vocational training. More than half of the enterprises surveyed said they were satisfied with the dual vocational training system, while only some 14% were not.” (Wenzelmann/Schönfeld/Pfeifer/Dionisius 2009)

The German conclusion above is a bit controversial, the calculations and the more detailed conclusion will be presented below.

The training costs and gains were calculated on the basis of a comprehensive calculation model in which various key variables were first separately calculated and the added together to determine total costs and total gains.

\textsuperscript{64} BIBB REPORT Issue 8/09 exists in both a German and English version
The gross costs are the sum of the personnel costs for the trainers and instruction personnel, equipment and material costs and miscellaneous costs – as shown in the table below.

Personnel costs for trainees account for 61% (€ 9,490) of the gross costs on average and consist of the annual gross wages and the voluntary and statutory social security contributions.

Instruction personnel are broken down by full-time instructors, employees who provide instruction in addition to their regular work (part-time instructors) and external instructors. Conducting training is the primary job of full-time instructors. External trainers are hired to provide special instruction in in-house classes or at the training workshop. In this case, the calculation includes the external trainer's fees, travel expenses and accommodations. Personnel costs for instructors average a total of € 3,292 per trainee. This represents approximately 22% of the gross costs.

Equipment and material costs average € 691 or approximately 5% of the total gross costs. This category includes costs that are incurred at the individual company learning venues (workplace, training workshop and in-house classes) such as the cost of tools and equipment, costs for the training workshop and in-house instruction and for the expendable materials that are needed for the trainees to practise on. Miscellaneous costs average € 1,814 per year. They account for 12% of the gross costs and include chamber fees, the costs of instruction materials, for external courses and the administrative costs for in-company vocational training.

Trainees generate not only costs for the firm providing their training. As a rule, they also make a significant contribution to their company's regular production and services. This productive work lowers the company's costs and therefore has to be considered a gain and deducted from the gross costs.

The gains from productive work were calculated using the equivalence principle. In other words, the costs were determined that would arise for the company were trainee tasks to be performed by regular employees.

Not quite one out of every ten enterprises receives funds from funding programmes sponsored by the federal government or a state government, the European Social Fund (ESF) or the Federal Employment Agency. These funds come to an average of € 168 per trainee and year. Since they also reduce the gross costs, they are added to the gains generated by the trainees' productive
work. Thus the net cost of providing training - € 3,596 - is the difference between the gross costs and the gains.

One additional benefit for the enterprises is that retaining trainees upon completion of their training saves recruitment costs. These costs in the study are calculated to be around EUR 4214. If this figure is included in the calculation the results will be positive and show a net gain for the enterprises.

6.2.2 Equipment and technology

The Romanian respondents agree in that the enterprises partly have the updated technology in order to deliver high quality WBL. In addition, the internationally represented enterprises use best practice from other countries to inspire the local Romanian solutions.

Apprentices in Germany rate the material conditions within the companies relatively good compared to other quality criteria. However, the assessments vary from trade to trade (see Beicht/Krewerth/Eberhard/Granato 2009:11).

The Dutch enterprises according to the MBA Raad, and COLO have the required updated technology.

6.2.3 Trainers

Trainers in the enterprises are the single most important factor in relation to the quality of apprenticeship programmes as the following cases and studies will show.

The quality of the trainers in the workplace in Germany are analysed from both apprentices and enterprises point of view.

a) Apprentices point of view

From the apprentices' point of view the quality of in-company trainers is the most important for the overall quality of their apprenticeship. Compared to other quality criteria the apprentices rate the quality of the in-company trainers very good. Especially the technical qualifications of in-company trainers and their ability to explain training subjects get high marks from the apprentices.

The apprentices often have the impression that they could contact the trainers at any time if they have problems with a work task. As stated above however, from the apprentices’ point of view there is often not enough time to reflect on the work results together with the trainers. Another problem seems to be that apprentices are often criticized for poor work results while good performances are seldom praised.

b) Enterprises point of view

From the enterprises point of view motivated and skilled trainers are also a very important factor for successful training. That’s why they assure that only persons with long working experience and motivation to train young people are assigned to carry out training. The enterprises also rate the actual quality of trainers relatively good compared to other quality criteria.

One reason for the high quality of in-company trainers in Germany is the “Ordinance on Trainer Aptitude” (AEVO) which specifies the didactic and methodological qualifications needed to

---

65 see Beicht et al. 2009; Beicht/Krewerth 2009
66 see Ebbinghaus 2009:37
organize in-company training (for overview see Ulmer/Gutschow 2009). Trainers have to pass a test to prove their aptitude and get the permission to train apprentices. From 2003 to 2009 there has been a temporary suspension of the AEVO. A study on the effects of the suspension which BIBB published in 2007 shows that specific lacks in quality occur if training is organized by trainers who have not passed the AEVO test (see Ulmer/Jablonka 2007).

The German Unions have supported the AEVO-process of making the obligations of the enterprises and especially the trainers up to date, clear and focused. The Unions are especially focused on trainers having permission before they are allowed to train. This permission shall be followed by control and consequences for enterprises and trainers, that don’t follow the rules.

All German trainers have to fulfill legal standards in order to get the right to train. There are of course differences between the enterprises, but the average quality of the trainers is judged by the representative of the enterprises to be good. The German research BIBB 9/09 concludes that the competences and attitude of the trainers in the enterprises are at a relatively high quality level according to the learners.

The German BIBB study (Heft 109) states that it is not problematic to find employees who want to be trainers. The study concludes that the main internal criteria for selection of a trainer are:

- Personal motivation and attitude to train apprentices
- Several years of experience within the topic
- Fulfilled AEVO-test
- Participated in other pedagogical training

Most of the German enterprises offer support to their trainers often with checklists, materials for the apprentices, and evaluation schemes.

The German quality criteria for the trainers are relatively similar to the Dutch accreditation criteria for trainers.

A part of the Dutch accreditation of learning companies is to assure the quality of the trainers. The QA-procedures of the accreditation is subject of policy development and the Centres of Expertise are supervised by the inspectorate.

There will in future (2010) be further work on the QA-procedures of the accreditation. At the moment each of the Centres of Expertise has, from each branch, their own (maybe different) criteria for accreditation of the enterprises, but the Ministry are not sure about these criteria and if they are sufficient. As there are no indicators of problems a collection of the different accreditation criteria can help to support the positive development in the different Centres of Expertise – if they can inspire each other.

The Centres of Expertise have a slightly different point of view on this matter. They are guaranteeing the quality of the trainers, so it must be good. The group of Centres has last year made an overview of the quality criteria and they are in principle using the same criteria for accreditation. The criteria are collected in a protocol⁶⁷. Practice show differences in the number of check visits even if this not mentioned in the protocol.

The protocol was developed in June 2009 by the Ministry, MBO-Raad (representing the schools), Colo and MKN-Nederland (social partner). In this document rules are formulated to improve the

---

cooperation between student, school, enterprises and the Centres of Expertise. The rules are about preparation, accompaniment, assessments and evaluation of a traineeship.\footnote{BPV is: Beroepspraktijk Vorming; and is the same as traineeship.}

There is in general a high level of satisfaction in relation to the trainers as the examples above and the case from Romania below shows.

The quality of the trainers varies heavily between the different enterprises in Romania. A large number of enterprises nominate high quality tutors to supervise students during their WBL stages, but there are also situations when, mostly due to lack of highly qualified personnel or due to the lack of time to spend with the students, the quality of trainers needs to be improved.

The main activity to solve this challenge is the sectoral programme with focus on the relationship between schools and enterprises – a huge investment has been made here.

One of the employer’s representatives states that the quality of the trainers is closely related to the objectives of the trainers. Here the objectives are mainly the daily business, and the trainers are not trained to train students. Materials for the students are developed in some of the big international enterprises and are very popular by the students, because it is so practical and better than many of the students other books.

The trainers can be supported in different ways as the LdV-projects shows.

The tools from the European pilot project "Work & Learning Partners" (WLP) the "KLearn"\footnote{Project number D/704/B/F/PP-146 169 and http://www.workplace-learning-partners.org/tools/tutorial_tools} shall help trainers in the individual enterprises, and focus especially on the pedagogical issues and skills.

The heading "KLearn" refers to the idea of promoting "Knowledge upon one’s own learning". The developed set of Power point presentations draws attention to certain pedagogic issues and tensions related to the development of workplace learning and partnership cooperation.

The LdV-project “STOP & RESTART -- Spiral Training for training Operators: REfreshing Skills, Tools And Remotivating on Target”\footnote{Project Number I/03/B/F/PP–154058. http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/project/view.htm?prj=3978} focus also on the training of the trainers and mentors in the enterprises. This project has processed training models and instruments for the operators (trainers, tutors and mentors) involved in learning processes characterized by the theory-practical alternation.

The outcomes of the project are, guidelines/handbook for training operators and in the production of prototypes for three training pathways on multimedia and multi-language supports, enjoyable at distance and directed to develop management competences (either with regard to the competences transmission moments -teaching- either with the management moments - alternation management) directed to trainers (coming from the scholastic system and the business one), pedagogical tutor/mentor; and business tutor/mentor.

One of the other LdV-projects focusing on trainers in the enterprises is the project “Setting Up A Common European Strategy Toward Tutors Of Trainees In The Building Companies”\footnote{FR/06/B/P/PP-152512. http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/project/view.htm?prj=3048 and www.copilote.org.} The main outputs of this project are

- Description of the tutoring function in small & medium sized construction companies: analysis of national systems.
- Analysis of the perception of the tutoring function in the partner countries.
• Reference frame for activities & competencies of the company tutors in the construction sector in Europe.
• Tools permitting to accompany the company tutors in their function as trainers.

The LdV-projects have contributed to the quality of the trainers in a number of cases, as the projects above show.

The trainers in the enterprises and the teachers of the VET-colleges cooperate in a number of ways as the examples from Romania and the Netherlands show.

The case: “Together for education and training – partnership between S.C. „Daewoo Mangalia Heavy Industries” S.A. and 4 TVET schools in the naval construction domain” from Romania describes a long term agreement (10 years) aiming to improve the quality of WBL. The company has fully equipped Training Centres, located in the schools’ premises. The Training Centres are jointly used by TVET students for in – school training and by the company’s staff for continuous professional development workshops. All tutors involved in TVET students’ work based learning stages attend regular trainings in order to update their theoretical knowledge and to improve their pedagogical and communication skills.

The focus is not only on the trainers in the enterprises, but can be on the teachers at the VET-colleges. The Dutch COLO has a project on how to get the teachers closer to the real life/labour market. This is a project together with the social partners.

6.3 Stakeholders involvement
Enterprises, VET-colleges, partnerships and cooperation are the key actors and activities that will be described in this section.

6.3.1 Enterprises
The level of the enterprises commitment, the motivations and business benefits, the employers satisfaction with the results and how new enterprises can be attracted; will be presented in this section.

The employers are in general interested in apprenticeship programmes as the case from Romania illustrates.

The employer commitment in Romania is judged differently by the respondents. The Ministry argues for two groups of employer commitment – one group with very high commitment and one large group with very low commitment. The employer respondent argues for a medium level of employer commitment, and explains this by the fact, that the trainers still are mainly focused on the daily activities and have to train and support students as a part of their normal job.

The reasons for the motivation of the employers and enterprises are relatively similar in the case countries as the series of examples show below.

The German study (BIBB Heft 109) shows that the enterprises are relatively satisfied with the results they achieve on the enterprise oriented results e.g. to give the enterprise-culture to the youth, to get new ideas in the enterprise, to get a positive image and to build a close relation between the enterprise and the apprentices. The profession oriented results like making the apprentices proud of the profession, to get good results in the final examination, and to motivate the apprentices to further education are seen as positive from the enterprise point of view.
The German enterprises state that both the ideal and realised results in relation to the world of working are high. A good dual education shall make the apprentices interested in being in the front of the profession, teaches the apprentices discipline, and helps the apprentices to find their position in the enterprise. The German enterprises state, that both the ideal and realised results in relation to the world of living are high. The dual education shall, among others, support that the students will be tolerant in relation to other cultures, to be able to reflect critically on their own and others behaviour.

The BIBB study (Heft 109) concludes, that the main motives for enterprises participating in education of apprentices are:

- It is a fixed part of the enterprise policy for personnel
- Own educated employees are more flexible
- In order to give the youth a perspective and direction in life

These motives are followed by motives like
- Because education is an obligation for the enterprises
- To avoid lack of qualifications
- It belongs to our enterprise tradition
- To reduce the degree of errors made in relation hiring new persons
- The cost of an apprentice is lower as a normal employed

The benefits that the provision of in-company vocational training offers German enterprises consist of various elements that can be assessed only partly in monetary terms. In order to determine which of the elements is the most important for such companies, the firms in the sample were asked to assess a number of statements that describe different aspects of these benefits. The respondents answered on the basis of a scale from 1 (very important) to 5 (not important at all).

The main conclusions from the study are presented below.

**Chart 6: Importance of reasons for providing in-company vocational training (in %)**

---

72 BIBB Report 8/09
Asked about the reasons for providing in-company vocational training, 84% of the sample agreed\textsuperscript{73} with the statement that an enterprise provides in-company vocational training in order to develop young employees who meet the company's particular requirements, making this the most-cited reason by far. Large segments of the sample also agreed with the following statements, indicating that enterprises are very interested in hiring their trainees following completion of training and in providing high-quality training:

- Enterprises provide in-company vocational training in order to be able to choose 'the best' trainees to retain (70%).
- Enterprises provide in-company vocational training in order to avoid hiring the wrong person when recruiting workers from outside (60%).

Many of the same motivations and arguments from the enterprises are found in England, where a research\textsuperscript{74} was commissioned for Apprenticeship Week 2009. Populus interviewed a sample of 500 respondents who were responsible for Apprenticeship programme recruitment in their companies by telephone between 5th January and 29th January 2009. Comparisons are with a sample of 204 respondents who were responsible for Apprenticeship programme recruitment in their companies and were interviewed by telephone between 7th January and 6th February 2008.

Company benefits from Apprenticeship Programmes.

Apprentices will continue to play an important role within businesses despite the current economic downturn. The majority of employers recognise that there are many benefits in providing an Apprenticeship programme. 81% of businesses say that employing apprentices generates higher overall productivity for their company, while over two thirds of businesses say that their programme makes them more competitive in their industry (66%). Over two thirds of respondents say that their programmes allow them to lower both recruitment (67%) and training costs (71%) while also enabling them to fill vacancies more quickly (68%) with a better calibre of job applicant (74%). The majority of employers think that Apprenticeship programmes are beneficial because they lead a lower level of staff turnover (82%), while nearly all employers believe that their Apprenticeship programme creates a greater level of motivation and job satisfaction among their staff (92%).

Apprentices compared to other employees

Alongside the perceived benefits of providing an Apprenticeship programme, employers recognise that there are also many advantages in hiring an apprentice rather than other recruits. Over two fifths of respondents say that apprentices have a greater level of job satisfaction and motivation (43%) together with a greater level of commitment (41%) compared to other employees. Employers also think that Apprenticeship programmes lead to a lower level of staff turnover overall (41%), with nearly three quarters agreeing that apprentices tended to be more loyal, remaining at their company longer than non-apprentices (74%).

Orientation of all enterprises on these advantages of apprenticeship programmes can be done by the use of advertising, homepages and brochures.

\textsuperscript{73} http://www.bibb.de/en/51130.htm#fussnote_11#fussnote_11
\textsuperscript{74} http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/About-Us/-/media/Documents/Publications/Apprenticeship-Week-2009-Business-Case-Research-Executive-Summary.ashx
The employers in England are the target group for a brochure: The proven way to train your workforce - Employer brochure - June 2009

The brochure identifies the business benefits an apprentice brings to an organisation. It also highlights the wide range of Apprenticeships that are available across a range of industry sectors. The brochure outlines the next steps an enterprise need to take in order to take on an apprentice.

The English National Apprentice Service works intensively on attracting new employers to offer places for Apprenticeship. The employers section of their homepage includes both a description of the training, the funding, the types of Apprenticeships and proposals for the employers’ next steps:

Step 1. Your Apprenticeship representative will call to arrange a meeting;
Step 2. Your Apprenticeship representative will help you identify a suitable learning provider;
Step 3. Discuss your specific needs with the learning provider;
Step 4. Confirm the number of employees who will start Apprenticeships;
Step 5. Start the recruitment process – new apprentices can be recruited using Apprenticeship vacancies online;
Step 6. Employees start Apprenticeships.

The homepage includes a number of cases from employers with experiences from Apprenticeships. The cases cover topics like why the enterprise is involved in Apprenticeship and the benefit of the Apprenticeship seen from both the employer and the learner. The cases are illustrated with pictures of the persons and from the enterprises.

The current financial crisis might influence the demand and the supply of apprenticeship places. But the example from England shows that this is not the expectations from most of the employers.

Although most employers are not taking on apprentices to help them through the economic situation (78%), Apprenticeship programmes were expected to play a major part in their recruitment processes in the future (78%), with 82% of employers relying on their Apprenticeship programmes’ in providing them with the skilled work they will need in the future.

6.3.2 VET colleges

The roles of the VET-colleges have been described in other parts of the text, so the focus here will be on the challenges of coordination between VET-colleges and enterprises and on the roles of the individual teachers.

The German teachers of the vocational schools take part in the final examinations and are members of the Vocational Training Committees of the Competent Bodies.

75 http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/About-Us/~/media/Documents/NAS-Employer-Brochure-June-2009.ashx
76 http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers.aspx
The German apprentices have regular contacts with the schools, and so does the enterprises. But it seems still to be problematic to coordinate the learning content and focus for the individual student.

The German research BIBB 9/09 concludes that the competences and attitude of the teachers at the VET-colleges are at a relatively high quality level according to the learners.

The German VET-colleges are responsible for the school part of the apprenticeship, but not for the complete education. This is a challenge for the cooperation between enterprises and VET-colleges. The quality of the communication is dependent on individual teachers, their personal motivations and their working conditions. The amount of extra work for the teacher depends on the number of apprentices and especially on the number of different enterprises, where the apprentices work. This part of the teachers work and roles are regulated by the different Länder and their local Ministries.

It is in general easier for larger enterprises (often with classes with apprentices) to secure a high quality contact and communication with the VET-colleges, than it is for the SMEs.

The motivation and the priorities of the top-managers in the German VET-colleges are influencing the quality of the contacts to the enterprises.

The Adult and Vocational Education Act (WEB) and the external supervision by the inspectorate motivate the Dutch VET-providers.

The teachers are one of the key target groups for the LdV-project FACILICODE77. The project will develop, test and improve a Teacher Training Programme (TTP) that will support HEI and VET teachers in planning and facilitating tailor-made continuing professional development. A number of SME’s will be involved as test cases. HEI and VET teachers from project partners will be introduced to tools and guidelines to negotiate with SME’s on identifying needs, specifying learning objectives and facilitate a tailor made learning process, based on the applicants experience from earlier projects with SME’s. An important aspect is to plan courses matching the learner’s background and knowledge level from education and work experience. One of the partners will bring experience with Recognition of Prior Learning into the project and into the TTP. Another partner will contribute with processes and methodology for Quality Assurance of tailor-made CPD. As outcomes from this project is a training programme that will qualify HEI and VET teachers to be involved on close cooperation with SME’s on tailor-made knowledge transfer and skills and competence development. The TTP will be applicable in different European contexts and different industrial sectors.

Conclusion
The VET-colleges play very different roles in quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. The activities range from being responsible for the quality to being a part of the examination. There are often contacts between the enterprises and the VET-colleges, but it seems still to be problematic to coordinate the learning content and focus for the individual student.

The competences and attitude of the teachers at the VET-colleges are at a relatively high quality level according to the learners. The motivation and the priorities of the top-managers in the VET-colleges are influencing the quality of the contacts to the enterprises.

6.3.3 Partnerships and cooperation

Quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes involves a number of different stakeholders and requires a close cooperation between these. This section will describe different ways of cooperation, how cooperation can be enhanced including new ways of cooperation.

Stronger partnership between the Government, the private sector, the third sector and individuals is one of the tools in the English strategy for Apprenticeship the coming years.

Cooperation can be enhanced by a number of activities like sponsoring, awards, ambassadors’ network like described in the cases from England.

Cooperation exists between different stakeholders in England as the following example shows. City & Guilds are delighted to announce that it is sponsoring the 2009 National Apprenticeship Awards to be held in July. This is the fifth successive year that City & Guilds is the premier sponsor of the Apprenticeship Awards, highlighting the successful partnership enjoyed by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and City & Guilds in promoting Apprenticeships.

Chris Jones, City & Guilds Director General commented: “City & Guilds, the UK’s leading vocational awarding body, offers skills for a brighter future. We’re proud to sponsor the Apprenticeship Awards for the fifth year running.”

The Apprenticeship Awards are designed to recognise employers who are successfully using Apprenticeships to improve their businesses’ performance and champion the key role apprentices play in today’s business world. Apprenticeships are crucial for providing employers with the skills they need to succeed, particularly in the current climate, spanning the breadth of the economy from accountancy and engineering, to construction, creative industries and sport. Apprenticeships also provide a high-quality alternative route to future career success for ambitious individuals.

The English Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network (AAN) supports the work of the Apprenticeships Task Force, which aims to ensure that the Apprenticeships programme responds to the changing needs of employers and young people. Behind ANN are a group of senior business leaders who believe in Apprenticeships because they have seen the benefits that Apprenticeship bring to their businesses, including increased productivity, greater staff retention, increased profitability and more highly motivated workforces. These are just a few of the benefits that make a compelling business case for Apprenticeships and there is more specific evidence available on the website.

Studies have shown the problems related to cooperation, and how to solve the problems.

The cooperation between the enterprises and the external partners (mainly the VET-colleges) are one of the main areas for improvement according to the German study (BIBB Heft 109). The study concludes very strongly (p. 42): “In practice are there only very limited cooperation between the actors” a conclusion that involves both the cooperation between the enterprises and the Chambers, the VET-colleges and other enterprises.

The challenges in relation to the Chambers are related to:
• help for educational plans in the enterprise
• advice in relation to learning processes
• certification of the education

The challenges in relation to the VET-colleges are:
• implementation of common projects
• coordination of learning and education plans
• teachers praxis in enterprises
• trainers participation in the schools educational activities
• Common working teams
• exchange of information’s on working conditions and the effort of the apprentices

The challenges in relation to the other enterprises are
• common educational projects with enterprises in the region
• cooperation with enterprises abroad
• agreements on educational standards

The projects below have a number of proposals in relation to strengthening the employer – college partnerships.
In the English report “Reaching further Workforce development through employer-FE college partnership” thirteen case studies of employer-college engagement is described. Key conclusions emerge from this research project as central to strengthening employer-college partnership and by that raise the quality of WBL by the college offering:

VET-colleges
• Colleges need to be clear about the place of employer engagement in their strategies.
• Successful employer engagement involves recognising the employer as the primary client and establishing processes to support that – this can represent a major cultural adjustment
• Dialogue with employers on training issues must be based on skills needs and conducted in business language
• Colleges have an essential role to play in interpreting and analysing employers’ needs in ways that allow effective training programmes to be put in place.

Employers
• Employers must identify in broad terms the skills they need and help colleges understand these adequately to develop appropriate programmes
• While employers are interested in skills rather than qualifications, it is important they appreciate the value placed on formal qualifications by employees and colleges
• For workplace delivery to be effective, employers must be able to offer adequate training and assessment facilities
• Defining and agreeing training objectives at the outset helps ensure results are in line with expectations

At the end of a programme, jointly reviewing processes and results with the college helps shape any future programme and identify return on investment.

One of the Leonardo da Vinci projects\textsuperscript{76}: Improving Quality of Informal Learning through Tools and Instruments for Workplace Learning Partnerships (WLPs) focus on partnerships.

This project seeks to develop sectoral Workplace Learning Partnerships (WLPs) – networks of specialised enterprises with shared sectoral HRD interests, which offer a broad range of informal learning provision. Target sectors are – automotive supply chains and machining industry.

\textsuperscript{76} Project number D/04/B/F/PP-146 169. Funded by the European Commission Leonardo da Vinci Programme, and led by ITB, University of Bremen, the project will involve 30 partners from 9 European countries
The project\textsuperscript{79} has developed tools for VET teachers, trainers and managers with which sectoral informal learning opportunities can be fully exploited and WLPs can be initiated and managed.

The Work and Learning Partners (WLP) project developed two tools that help training providers and enterprises to consider how to develop closer cooperation to support workplace learning.

- Learning Potential Analysis (LPA) helps to clarify what areas of learning are well represented at certain workplaces (and which areas are not represented). By analysing different learning contexts it is possible to see how different workplaces can combine their areas of strength by partnership-oriented cooperation.
- Learning Achievement Review (LAR) helps to clarify in which areas of learning the learners have provided evidence on learning progress (and in which areas not). By undertaking this review in different learning contexts it is possible to see how the workplace learning has supported long-term learning goals.

The combination of these two tools can be seen as a part of the quality assurance of the offers to the apprentices and for the quality assurance of the cooperation between different workplaces.

The project has further developed support tools\textsuperscript{80} for facilitators of workshops on partnership development. The first workshop tool focuses on different preconditions for workplace learning and for related partnership concepts. The second workshop tool focuses on different arrangements for networked learning and on their relevance for developing local and regional patterns of ‘knowledge management’. The third workshop tool focuses on examining the specific issues regarding the development workplace learning and on the implications for local or regional cooperation. In this respect the tool makes links to the different national cases in the WLP project.

The employers can be helped in order to select the right Training provider as in England. The English LSC has developed an Employer's Guide to Training Providers\textsuperscript{81} that will help employers to choose the most suitable training provider for their business and workforce needs. The Guide provides the employers with questions to ask and things to consider when they are looking for training provision. It also allows enterprises to search for providers who offer courses on a subject of their choice.

The Social Partners are especially closely involved in the quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes.

Education and quality assurance are, in general, an area, where the social partners mainly have the same interests. In Germany the cooperation is good and most of the goals are the same. The differences in point of view between the employers and the unions are in areas like e-learning where questions are raised around ‘Who shall pay for the equipment, the connections to internet and the time used’?

New ways of cooperation and partnerships between enterprises and apprentices are planned in England, starting with pilots in October 2009. The reason behind this is the English Government commitment to help individuals and businesses through the downturn by providing another 35,000 Apprenticeship places, bringing the total number of apprentices to well over a quarter of a million for the first time ever. In order to fulfil this commitment, a closely cooperation with employers,

\textsuperscript{79} http://www.workplace-learning-partners.org/
\textsuperscript{80} http://www.workplace-learning-partners.org/tools/workshop_tools
\textsuperscript{81} http://www.lsc.gov.uk/whatwedo/employer/egtp.htm
particularly small and medium-sized enterprises is needed, to understand and respond to their changing needs.

One of the ways these ambitious targets are expected to be fulfilled is to create up to 10 new Apprenticeship training associations across the country by the end of 2009, with the potential to deliver up to 15,000 Apprenticeship places by 2014/15. This will develop new and innovative approaches drawing on the Australian model, where apprentices are employed by a recruitment agency and hired out to host businesses.

The apprentices are employed by the Training Association and “hired out” as a flexible workforce to other employers, known as “host companies” for the work-based element of their apprenticeship.
Host companies pay the Training Association a fee for the hire of the apprentice, which comprises their salary plus a service charge which covers the management costs of employing and supporting the apprentice.

The Training Agency takes on most of the administration, dealing with the payroll, support and supervision of the apprentice and being their legal employer.
A benefit for host companies is that they can hand back the apprentice with two weeks’ notice, resulting in a far more flexible and demand-led approach to the employment of apprentices. This is particularly attractive in the current economic climate, particularly for SMEs.

The National Apprenticeship Service are at the moment (late Summer 2009) seeking a small number (i.e. 10-15) of high impact proposals, outlining models which draw on the characteristics of GTAs/ATAs and which will contribute towards a 15,000 starts target (by 2014), particularly for 16 to 18 year old learners and impact on the following identified needs:

• SMEs
• New and emerging sectors, particularly where GTA-type delivery is under-represented
• sectors that tend not to take Apprentices, such as those that have previously largely recruited graduates
• sectors with a very high proportion of SMEs
• Geographical areas and sectors with low proportional Apprenticeship penetration

The proposals should demonstrate clear evidence of need in terms of sector, geographical area and employer engagement. Proposals selected will need to demonstrate how they address the number of criteria e.g.:
• Regional and sectoral need
• Deadweight, displacement and additionallity
• Employer engagement
• Innovative delivery models

Cooperation can be seen even broader and from a pathway perspective, as the proposals in the Consultation on the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) on minimum entry requirements and progression routes does.
The consultation paper states, that:
“We would expect all frameworks to give details of clear entry routes into Apprenticeships and progression routes on to further training including higher education. We propose that

---

Apprenticeship frameworks should set out the prior qualifications which are a necessary starting point for the learning expected in an Apprenticeship, including demonstrating how other qualifications such as Diplomas, GCSE and A Levels can lead to routes into an Apprenticeship.

We would expect to include the principal occupations to which each framework led, together with avenues of career progression within the sector via further training and education, and higher education.

It is clearly desirable that there should be pathways between Diplomas and Apprenticeships, as young people in education move closer to the world of work. We would also wish to encourage the possibility of young people entering Diplomas after their Apprenticeships, if this made sense to them (for example to undertake more intensive preparation for higher education). The design of additional and specialised learning associated with Diplomas can clearly help, for example through providing a basis for the knowledge elements demanded in an Apprenticeship. We are less clear that any requirements should be made of Apprenticeship frameworks in linking with Diplomas, beyond – as is done in the draft – specifying that available progression routes should be set out.”

6.4 Conclusions in relation to implementation

“Implementation plans are devised in consultation with stakeholders and include explicit principles” states the Recommendation on the EQARF.

The technical and pedagogical qualifications of the trainers are the most important quality criteria for most apprentices. The qualifications are regulated differently, but generally are there a number of quality criteria for the trainers. These regulations are under or have recently been revised in some of the case countries. The major changes are the upgrading of the pedagogical competences of the trainers and the introduction of common criteria across trades.

The major problem seems to be integrated in the job of the trainer – the trainer is mainly a normal employee, who has a normal job to do – very often with higher priority than the training of the apprentices. Time for reflection and the use of positive feedback are both areas with a potential for further development.

Internally, in the enterprises, there are no problems related to finding new trainers. The internal selection criteria are a combination of motivation and attitude, experience, formal tests and pedagogical training.

The enterprises are, in general, highly motivated, but there exist huge differences related to trade and size of the enterprise. Larger enterprises seem to be more motivated than SMEs.

The main motivations for taking part in apprenticeship programmes for the enterprises are that it is possible to develop young employees who meet the company's particular requirements, it is a part of their policy, it is possible to choose the best employees, it creates more flexible employees, to secure future employees within the profession and the enterprise contributes to give the youth a perspective and direction in life.

The technology and equipment are up to date in most enterprises, but there are differences which exist between the trades.

The VET-colleges play very different roles in quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. The activities range from being responsible for the quality to being a part of the examination. There are often contacts between the enterprises and the VET-colleges, but it seems still to be problematic to coordinate the learning content and focus for the individual student.
The cooperation between the enterprises and the external partners (mainly the VET-colleges) are one of the main areas for improvement according to the apprentices. There are a number of activities that have to be solved and managed through partnerships and cooperation between the Social Partners, the enterprises, the VET-colleges and the apprentices.

The cost of quality assurance can be covered in a number of ways. They can be shared by the Ministry and the enterprises, paid only by the ministries via the VET-colleges or paid by the enterprises and their organisations.

The main costs of an apprenticeship programme are personnel cost for trainees, personnel costs for instructors and equipment and material costs. However, apprentices not only generate costs for the firm providing their training, they make a significant contribution to their company's regular production and services and save the enterprises for recruitment costs.

The quality guidelines are set by laws, regulations and orders depending on the different traditions in the case countries. Quality is explicitly mentioned and described, both in detail but also with a certain degree of freedom for different stakeholders. The quality standards are mainly minimum standards.
7. Evaluation

“Evaluation of outcomes and processes is regularly carried out and supported by measurement” states the Recommendation on the EQARF.

A number of indicative descriptors of evaluation are used in the EQARF in order to support Member States with the implementation of the Framework e.g. self assessment, evaluation areas, stakeholder involvement, quality standards and processes, data collection.

The following four sections will present examples of the main quality dimensions within evaluation. The motives for evaluation are presented, followed by three different but complementary evaluation areas: on-going assessments of the learners, final examinations and assessment of education and training providers.

Evaluation methodologies are described with a number of practical examples and finally the focus on the apprentices’ involvement in evaluations is addressed.

7.1 Motives for evaluation

Each assessment and evaluation has it own objective as the following examples will show.

Certificates are one type of showing the results of the evaluations.
In Germany, there are three types of certification, which can either be characterised as internal or external:
- A certificate issued at the end of the training period upon successful completion of a national final examination
- A certificate issued by the firm’s trainer
- An assessment issued by the vocational school

This German assessment and certification system helps ensure that standard competencies are maintained and not left solely under the control of the training provider. As one might expect, each assessment has its own objectives: where the certificate issued by the firm will show the competencies gained in the field of practice at the firm, the assessment issued by the vocational school will show the theoretical knowledge acquired at the school.

The impact of this triple certification system on the German labour market seems to be quite complex, as not all assessments or certificates are always asked for, they are perceived more as a recognition and not a position in the labour market. Furthermore, the balance between the certificates and their method of assessment is often debated: the Länder, who are in charge of the education system prefer a more internal (school-based) assessment, whereas some firms want to play an even bigger role in skills assessment. However, the positive effects of this certification cannot be denied, as it leads to highly standardised training and sufficient information about the jobseekers for the employers (Tremblay, le Bot, 2000.).

The UK project “The assessment of Work based Learning in foundation Degrees”\textsuperscript{84} points out that the aim of the assessment is not only to assure quality of provision and achievement by its end, but to develop the student as a reflective practitioner. In addition this must be done within

\textsuperscript{84} The Assessment of Work based Learning in Foundation Degrees, Claire Taylor, Bishop Grosseteste College, Lincoln
appropriate quality benchmark standards and/or professional standards, and with due regard for the workplace setting in order to promote an authentic context.

The objectives of the English Framework for Excellence\(^{85}\) is to increase both the quality of FE provision and the way in which that provision meets the needs of all users. In addition, it will simplify the way employers and learners chose the provider best-suited to their needs.

The Framework for Excellence is the Government’s performance assessment tool for further education colleges and post-16 education and training providers who receive funding from the Learning and Skills Council. The Framework has been designed in consultation with the sector and our partners including the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), Ofsted and the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS).

It is a single, unified framework that will help increase both the quality of FE provision and the way in which that provision meets the needs of all users. In addition, it will simplify the way employers and learners choose the provider best-suited to their needs.

From 2009, the Framework is much simpler and more sensitive to the diverse nature of the further education sector. It has a small number of core performance indicators that will apply to all types of provider. The core indicators are supplemented by specific indicators that are relevant to particular types of provider and provision.

Another way of looking at the motivations for making evaluations is to focus on the results and the information the results gives in relation to further development and decisions.

The survey of The Benefits of Completing an Apprenticeship report was carried out by BMG in England throughout January 2009 and commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council. BMG spoke to a total of 3,808 apprentices. Of these, 3,215 had completed their Apprenticeships. An additional 593 apprentices who did not complete all their framework elements were also interviewed.

Key Research Findings of the survey is
- Over 9 out of 10 apprentices are in work or education on completing their Apprenticeship, comparing favourably with the national unemployment rate;
- Of those apprentices currently unemployed, just under two thirds (63 per cent) believe their Apprenticeship will directly help them find work;
- Apprentices’ earning power has increased significantly and over three quarters (76 per cent) of apprentices believe that without their Apprenticeship they wouldn’t be earning their current salary;
- Apprenticeships are a great route to further education – two thirds (60 per cent) of apprentices who completed an Advanced Apprenticeship showed an interest in pursuing a degree level equivalent course;
- An overwhelming majority (89 per cent) of apprentices would recommend an Apprenticeship to other people in similar circumstances to themselves.

Studies or evaluations like these support the policy debate and give direction for further development.

\(^{85}\) http://ffe.lsc.gov.uk/
7.2 Evaluation areas

There exist a number of different evaluation areas. This chapter will focus on three interrelated and complementary evaluation areas: on-going assessments of the learners, final examinations and assessment of education and training providers.

7.2.1 On-going assessments of the learners

On-going assessments are a key quality dimension in apprenticeship programmes and are a right of the Dutch apprentices.

Article 7 in the Dutch practical training contract cover Participation in Examinations and states: “The organization shall allow the participant to get tests or examinations held during the period of occupational practice training and set by the institution.”

The Romanian case: “Together for education and training – partnership between S.C. „Daewoo Mangalia Heavy Industries” S.A. and 4 TVET schools in the naval construction domain” describes a monthly assessment of each student’s progress by both the tutor and the school representative. The case describes even how the company’s representatives take part in the certification exams of the TVET schools graduates.

One of the challenges in the case countries is to secure a high quality guidance of the students during their training. The Dutch have found one efficient and effective solution.

There is an increasing use of ICT in the guidance of students in The Netherlands. As it is not always feasible for the college tutor to visit the student regularly at the company the possibilities of ICT cannot be underestimated.

This solution can raise the quality of the contact between the learner and the VET-college and even the enterprise; only with a limited use of extra resources.

In many countries, the educational plans are one of the tools that should steer and focus the daily activities for the learner. But this requires that the educational plans are updated.

The German study (BIBB Heft 109) shows that the educational plans not are adapted/updated as often as the enterprises want to do it. The German experiences show that there is room for improvement in relation to the update and use of the educational plans.

7.2.2 Final examinations

The rules for the final examination are in general described in the laws and regulations including a specification about the roles of the VET-colleges and the social partners in relation to responsibilities of the examinations.

The Dutch examination system has been reformed recently and gives a good overview of the quality elements. It is now characterised by

- There will be national standards for the quality of examinations.
- Educational institutions will remain responsible for the quality of examinations, along with (improving) internal assurance (that the examinations meet the standards) and public accountability for the quality of examinations and for performance.
• External assurance (making sure that the examinations comply with the standards) will be performed by a single authority, the KCE (inspectorate).
• Without a statement of approval from the KCE (inspectorate), the Minister will take away an institution’s right to hold examinations. Institutions that cannot hold examinations should contract them out to an educational or specialist examination institution that is capable and qualified to do so.
• The Inspectorate conducts external reviews of the quality of KCE’s performance. This will change in future when KCE is abolished.
• A stronger role for the Knowledge Centres for VET-labour market (KBB) and collaboration with the KCE in internal assurance and in actually holding examinations for the practical component of training courses.
• A better positioning of the examination chains in the total field of education; and parties holding each other accountable for their responsibilities in the chain.

A common development in the case countries is the focus on competences, as the Dutch example shows.

Examinations in The Netherlands are on both practice and theory. Students have to demonstrate more and more their competences instead of their theoretical knowledge. There are oral evaluations with the instructor from the company and the teacher from the school.

The participants in and the responsibility for the final examinations differ as the examples from Germany and The Netherlands show.

The Social Partners in Germany are involved in the final examination. It is assessed if the apprentice has acquired the necessary vocational competence specified in the initial training regulation. The competent bodies establish boards of examiners to administer final examinations which must include equal numbers of employers’ and employees’ representatives and at least one vocational school teacher.

The German VET-colleges do not, in principle, play any role in the final assessment, except for Baden-Württemberg, where schools offer the written part of the final examination. The VET-colleges have nothing to do with the quality of the learning in the enterprises, even if there seem to be a need for a closer cooperation and a better communication between enterprises and VET-colleges in relation to the quality of the individual apprentices learning.

Article 6 in the Dutch practical training contract cover Assessment, and states that
• The final responsibility for assessing whether or not the participant has achieved the attainment targets for the occupational practice training shall rest with the institution.
• The institution shall consult the opinion of the organization with regard to those partial qualifications that do not require external legitimation.
• The assessment procedure and the manner of examining the attainment targets for occupational practice training are set out in the educational and examination procedures of the programme.

The Dutch VET-college shall co-organise this procedure with the enterprises.

7.2.3 Assessment of education and training providers

VET-colleges in the Netherlands have the overall responsibility for the whole apprenticeship programme. A number of standards are introduced in order to evaluate VET-colleges.
In the Dutch standards, a distinction is made between the following aspects of evaluation and assessment of VET-colleges:

**Governing capacity:** this plays a clear role in the detection phases and problem analysis. In establishing the quality of the education, it is not taken into consideration. However, during the annual discussion at institution level, the governing capacity is described in terms of phase of development.

**The legal requirements:** these have to be met in any case. If one or more legal provisions are not met, then the legal requirements have not been met and this should be rectified within the agreed period. This aspect plays no role in the standards used to assess the quality of the education.

**Accessibility:** this is studied only if, in the detection phases and problem analysis, it is suspected that the institution insufficiently meets the legal requirement to ensure accessible education. The study in this case is an aspect study at the institution level. For a satisfactory assessment of these aspects, both criteria should be satisfactory.

The standards used in a quality study at an organisational unit, therefore, only involve selected aspects as follows.

- first the quality of the teaching process is assessed
- then the results are assessed
- finally, a weighting takes place for the assessment of the process and results.

The Dutch system focuses on reducing the evaluations and the resources of the Inspectorate to a minimum and only to go into details if this is absolutely needed, as the example shows.

The English way of handling the same challenges in relation to assessment of the VET-colleges performance are mainly handled by LSC and can be seen in their work plan for the coming 18 months (2009/2010):

- Integrate Framework for Excellence surveys as far as possible with colleges’ and providers’ own processes.
- Make the timescale for the collection of responses as flexible and as wide as possible to align with colleges’ and providers’ own surveys.
- Provide access for colleges and providers to underlying response data at as detailed a level as we can to support improvement activity.
- Work with Ofsted and DCSF to create a single survey for piloting by schools with sixth forms in 2009/10, to include health and well-being questions relevant to Every Child Matters outcomes.
- Agree lessons learnt from piloting and the first assessment exercise in 2009 and use this to prepare effectively for the planned publication of results in 2010.
- Agree further development requirements and seek solutions to these.
- Involve sector experts in technical aspects of future development work.
- Enhance awareness and understanding of the Framework’s purpose, use and potential for improving performance and achievements; and work to ensure this is communicated to all who work in and use the sector.

These objectives for 2009 and 2010 have resulted in the following performance indicators in order to monitor and measure the performance.
The English Framework for Excellence has the following performance indicators for 2009/10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Core or specific</th>
<th>Published or unpublished</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learner and qualification success</td>
<td>Qualification success rates</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>Published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner views</td>
<td>Learner views</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>Published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner destinations</td>
<td>Learner destinations (including a statement of volume of employment outcomes)</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>Published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsiveness employers</td>
<td>Employer views</td>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>Published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amount of training statement of volume for information; not graded)</td>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>Published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training Quality Standard</td>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>Published</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial health and management</td>
<td>Financial health</td>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>Unpublished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial management and control evaluation</td>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>Unpublished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of resources</td>
<td>Use of resources</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unpublished</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This development towards integrated performance indicators both at system level and at provider level are seen in the Dutch system too. This is a change of governance structure towards a more integrated and coordinated approach, where Ministries work closer together with the providers on measuring their performance.

The employers view of the work done by the VET-colleges complement the different governmental assessments, as the example from England shows.

The Responsiveness to Employers performance indicator considers employers views of their provider’s ability to meet their needs in key areas of delivery. Key areas correspond to the core elements of the Training Quality Standard for Employer Responsiveness\(^{86}\) – in particular the ‘Respond’, ‘Deliver’, ‘Relate’, and ‘Perform’ elements.

The quality of the performance of the enterprises is also assessed as in Germany\(^ {87}\).

The German assessments are two-dimensional: firstly, they focus on the possible areas, in which the learners might be lacking and focus on areas in which the learners are particularly strong. The other dimension is for the workplace itself: to see whether they are able to apply the content of the learning in a proper way. One could therefore say that it acts as a “check” for the successfulness of the curriculum they employ.

One of the other conclusions from the German study on quality assessment in the workplace, was that assessments of training success are carried out more frequently, due to the fact that the

\(^{86}\) [http://www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk/index.php](http://www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk/index.php)

\(^ {87}\) German 2005 BIBB study on quality assessment
number of bigger firms has increased. However, the frequency of these assessments is different depending on the size of the firm.

The experiences and the roles of the mentors in relation to assessments are important for the quality of the assessment.

In addition, the work in UK on assessment\textsuperscript{88} has helped to reconsider some aspects of the mentoring role. Within the workplace, mentors must be supported in generating mentoring skills appropriate for the needs of students. This may involve inducting mentors more fully in understanding the range of assessment modes and criteria used on Foundation Degrees. In addition, it is essential for all participants involved in work based programmes to have a shared view of what work based learning means in principle and practice, in order that the student experience is valid, effective and appropriate for work based routes.

7.3 Evaluation methodology

Evaluation and assessment can be done in a number of different ways. A selection of different methodologies and fundamental questions will be presented in this section; starting with the challenge of evaluating and assessing work based learning.

A UK project “The assessment of Work based Learning in foundation Degrees\textsuperscript{89}” sought to investigate and develop approaches to the assessment of WBL. The project conclusion is that to assess WBL demands a secure knowledge of the workplace context and of professional workplace knowledge by academic staff. High levels of evaluation and reflection are demanded from students and materials from the tasks also provide learning in the workplace is as much, if not more, about process as about output. In the report it is highlighted that the challenge for assessment of WBL is the need to balance competency-based assessment (output) with assessment of process (reflection and self-direction).

The UK project “Assessment and Mentoring of Work based Learning in Foundation Degrees\textsuperscript{90}” has developed approaches to the assessment of work based learning in the context of Foundation Degrees for Teaching Assistants. Considering a range of assessment approaches within a case study methodology, it has investigated best practice in the light of student experience, the existing literature on work based assessments, and the particular demands of the Foundation Degree format. The project has built on the experience of the participating institutions in running a Foundation Degree, and related work based courses, for Teaching Assistants since September 2001.

The conclusion of the project is that it is clear that diverse and innovative forms of assessment are wholly appropriate for work based learning. In addition, the most appropriate and effective assessment modes are those where learning is situated in the workplace yet fully underpinned by rigorous academic scrutiny and reflection.

There is scope for the further development of work in this area, including the investigation of additional assessment modes. In this respect the list of ways in which we assess work based learning could be extended considerably, and could include the following, plus more:

\textsuperscript{88} The Assessment of Work based Learning in Foundation Degrees, Claire Taylor, Bishop Grosseteste College, Lincoln
\textsuperscript{89} The Assessment of Work based Learning in Foundation Degrees, Claire Taylor, Bishop Grosseteste College, Lincoln
\textsuperscript{90} The Assessment of Work based Learning in Foundation Degrees, Claire Taylor, Bishop Grosseteste College, Lincoln
The personal learning and thinking skills are covering other parts of the learning of the apprentices.

It is proposed in the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England to integrate the assessment of personal learning and thinking skills (PLTS) with the assessment of the main knowledge and skills of the Apprenticeship, and that they should not be taught through stand-alone units. The proposals and argumentation continues:

“We propose that while each framework must contain each of the six PLTS, it is for the SSC/SSB to ensure that PLTS can be referenced within the relevant underpinning National Occupational Standards (NOS). SSC/SSBs should determine the extent, level and location of PLTS within the various elements of their frameworks. However SSC/SSBs would be required to account for the presence of PLTs by indicating where, within their frameworks, the learning and demonstration of each PLT would be required.

We do not propose to require formal summative assessment of the PLTS although SSC/SSBs may require this if they wish. However, SSC/SSBs must avoid adding unnecessary assessment complexity. We propose at least formative assessment to ensure that apprentices be given feedback about their performance in the PLTS.”

The main point of the English example above is to avoid unnecessary assessment complexity and to secure reliable and valid assessments of the personal learning and thinking skills. This is done in the Netherlands by a combination of tools and activities.

Assessment of learning success in The Netherlands takes place in the form of regular progress reports which have to be compared to the initial project plan. In addition, conversation (visits) between the tutors from the college and the supervisor from the company, including the student should guarantee timely assessment. At the end of the internship there is a general assessment of the learning outcomes conducted by the triangle and the student is expected to draft a final report, which has to be approved by the tutor from the college and the supervisor from the company.

All the evaluation and the following discussions and decisions builds on the assumption, that the data is reliable and valid.

One of the priorities of the English National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) in 2009/2010 is to develop high-quality data and management information, supported by ongoing research into apprenticeship delivery. This is planned to be done by the following means:
• Develop enhanced datasets to enable us to drive the business plan and support strategic decision-making.
• Develop an annual research programme to provide evidence and insight.
• Improve data to ensure effective monitoring of public sector employers.

At the moment, there are various ways of counting the number of Apprenticeships in England. These methods have evolved over time as the programme has developed, and variability in the timing of Apprenticeship training has also created complexity. The strategy for the coming years includes some considerations about measurement. The focus in the future will be on the two most instructive metrics91: the number of people starting an Apprenticeship in the year (‘starts’) and the percentage of those who complete that Apprenticeship (‘completion rate’).

The Dutch inspectorate is very focused on the limitations of both the standards used and the evaluation and assessment methodology.

The considerations in these standards, firstly, are that the results of the education provided are of a different order than the teaching process that produced these results. Secondly, the results by definition come after the teaching process (especially in multi-year programmes): a recently improved process will take several years to lead to good results; a recently deteriorated process can still produce good results.

7.3.1 Indicators


The respondents to the questionnaire have been asked about the potential indicators of quality of apprenticeship programmes and during the interviews were the focus on making a priority among the many proposed indicators.

The following indicators were considered as the most useful in order to get a good picture of the quality of apprenticeship programmes:

• The employment rate of the apprentices/students
• The completion rate of the apprentices/students
• Satisfaction rate of individuals and employers with acquired skills/competences
• The time from training/WBL to jobs/the labour market
• The stakeholders (social partners, students, parents, VET-providers,..) involved (number, motivation, activities, dialogue, ..)
• Share of accredited training places

The indicators are presented according to the respondents’ priorities, which shows that output indicators like employment rates, completion rates and satisfaction rates are considered as the best indicators for the quality of apprenticeship programmes.

7.4 Apprentice involvement

The apprentices are heavily involved in the evaluations both as the object for the evaluations (e.g. examinations) and as the evaluators. This section will focus on the apprentices’ roles as evaluators.

Student assessment is a key quality assurance mechanism, as one of the LdV-projects\textsuperscript{92} shows. Assessment focuses here on the students’ opinion, the mentors’ opinion and on social and work/training-related skills. The VQTS project has developed an ECVET approach (European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training) that involves a system of a structured description of work-related competences and their acquisition (including Credit Points). The VQTS model enhances transparency of vocational competences and in particular offers a solution for the description of the acquisition of work-related competences that could support the understanding between the world of education and the world of work.

The core elements of the VQTS model are the Competence Matrix and Competence Profiles:
- A Competence Matrix displays competences of a specific occupational field in a table. The competences are structured according to core work tasks in the respective occupational field and the progress of competence development.
- Competence Profiles (including Credit Points) are formed from individual parts of this Competence Matrix. The "organisational profile" identifies competences relevant for a certain training programme or qualification. The "individual profile" notes the competences acquired by a person in training.

The VQTS model can be used for different purposes where the transparency of competence profiles is highly important (e.g. for transferring and recognising competences acquired within the official VET system as well as competences achieved through non-formal or informal learning; developing qualifications, training programmes and curricula; enhancing the visibility of differences in qualifications).

The VQTS model can be used in the assessment and translation of the apprentices’ competence profiles.

The English LSC collects learner views\textsuperscript{93} as part of its performance assessment tool the Framework for Excellence, and most good providers will have a system in place for receiving regular learner feedback. The Learner Views Survey\textsuperscript{94} is a very short survey, where the learner will be asked no more than 17 questions. The key questions are:
- How good was the information you were given when you were choosing your learning programme?
- How good was the help staff gave you in the first few weeks of your learning programme?
- How good is the training on your learning programme?
- How good is the respect staff show to you?
- How good is the advice you have been given about what you can do after this learning programme?
- How good is the support you get on this learning programme?
- How good is the learning provider at listening to the views of learners?

\textsuperscript{92} Format for a memorandum on understanding for a VET-placement abroad using the VQTS-model. Draft version, 180209, Tom Arends and Martin Bröcker (Kenteq) page 9. and http://vqts.netletter.at/.
\textsuperscript{93} http://ffe.lsc.gov.uk/learnerviews/
\textsuperscript{94} http://surveys.globalepanel.com/wix/p339946267.aspx
How good is the learning provider at acting on those views?
Overall, how good do you think the learning provider is?

The possible answers range from Very good, Good, Not good but not bad, Bad to Very bad.

One of the international enterprises in Romania uses a standard feedback template with the following topics included:
- Interesting and attractiveness for the future,
- theoretical content,
- practical content, the development of the student, support, improvements,
- liked most,
- disliked most

The apprentices are not only asked by the VET-colleges. The enterprises have often their own evaluations as the Romania example shows.

The reliability and validity of the assessments depends on the apprentices’ level of activity and how honest the students are as the examples from Germany and Romania shows.

The German apprentices are in general more active in the dialogue within larger enterprises, and see the possibilities and the conditions for dialogue in SME more problematic and difficult. In order to secure the rights of the apprentice each apprentice has a contact person at the Chamber. This person shall react if the student asks for help, but it seems to be a possibility, that only few students know.

The students are not so critical in the school, but raise questions and challenge the practice in the enterprises, according the representative of the employers. The students often demand quality in their education and compare the working and learning conditions internally with the other students. This creates a pressure on the average quality for all enterprises.

Students in Romania provide regular feedback regarding the quality of the WBL. The degree of honesty is very dependent of how the assessments are organized: if the teachers are the moderators the students will not be completely honest. But if the student’s council arranges the assessments the students are more honest. So the validity and reliability of the assessment depends on the procedures and the evaluator.

The students in the Romanian enterprises are judged relatively honest and constructive. The experiences of the enterprise are that the main reactions and problems will be found anyway and very often even more directly by contacts as soon as a problem exists.

The high degree of freedom for the enterprises in the education and the limited knowledge about the reality and daily life of the apprentices were the background for a German study on the quality of the dual VET in Germany seen from the point of view of the apprentices. The knowledge of how the enterprises and VET-colleges are handling their relatively high degree of freedom in relation to educational praxis was relatively limited until now. The same was the case for the apprentices’ assessment of the quality of the VET.

The study has asked around 6000 apprentices from 15 dual branches.

---

7.5 Conclusions in relation to evaluation

“Evaluation of outcomes and processes is regularly carried out and supported by measurement” states the Recommendation on the EQARF.

The students’ opinion, the mentors’ opinion and social and work/training-related skills are among the key evaluation areas. The responsible organisation for the training is also evaluated in relation to governing capacity, legal requirements, and accessibility.

The apprentices are involved in the evaluations and assessments and give feedback both to the enterprises and to the teachers at the VET-colleges. Some enterprises have developed their own standard feedback templates and use these in a structured way to collect the points of view of the apprentices. The larger enterprises seem to be better than SMEs at structuring and securing a dialogue between the trainers and the apprentices.

The validity and reliability of some of the evaluations can be challenged due to the apprentices’ dependence of the enterprises’ motivation and interest in continuing with the apprenticeship programme.

Most apprentices have monthly meetings with the trainers and teachers, and get more or less formal feedback on their progress and on their activities in general. The educational plans can be developed further and especially the updating of the plans has a potential for progress. ICT can be a very efficient tool to support the communication and assessments between the apprentices, the enterprises and the teachers at the VET-college.

The evaluation methodologies are still relatively traditional with questionnaires as the major evaluation tool. Projects have presented a number of potential new methodologies for evaluating the quality of apprenticeship programmes, which still need to be developed, tested and accepted during the coming years. The quality criteria for the final examinations are generally clearly described in the laws and regulations.

The final exams can be held by the Social Partners, who will then be represented in equal numbers together with a teacher from the VET-college.

In other countries the VET-colleges are responsible for the final examination, and the trainer from the enterprise is a part of the examination team.

A development towards integrated performance indicators both at system level and at provider level are seen in some of the case countries.
8. Review

Review are not defined in the Recommendation of the EQARF, but can be presented as: *Review of evaluations is regularly carried out and is discussed with relevant stakeholders and appropriate action plans are put in place.*

A number of indicative descriptors of review are used in the EQARF in order to support Member States with the implementation of the Framework e.g. procedures, mechanisms, instruments, learners and teachers feedback, strategic learning, information strategy.

8.1 Procedures, mechanisms, instruments

Review can be done in a number of ways, as the examples below show.

The timing is important as the case from Romania shows.

In Romania the collection and analysis of annual feedback from enterprises are a part of the self assessment procedure of all IVET providers. The most common techniques involve contact with employers, either through meetings or surveys. There is a direct contact to both schools and students including a monthly feedback and feedback after the period is over. Questionnaires are used to assess the level of satisfaction regarding the quality of educational provision, and obtain suggestions for further improving and adapting it.

Coordination of the review activities and the involvement from system level are other aspects of the review procedures and mechanisms.

At local level in Romania, the inspectorates do coordinate the external monitoring process of all TVET providers. This includes the quality of WBL. Annual external monitoring reports are elaborated at local level and form the basis of the annual national report on the quality of VET providers (WBL included), elaborated by the National Centre for VET Development and submitted to the Ministry of Education.

The Romanian Ministry is closely involved in the most important projects between enterprises and VET-colleges, and will either participate in the meetings or receive the minutes. This makes the decision process faster and more flexible and is seen as an important quality activity.

The system level in England works on creating review mechanisms through the development of a policy analysis programme.

One of the priorities of the English National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) in 2009/2010 is to develop a policy analysis programme which focuses on the immediate and longer-term needs to improve the quality of Apprenticeships. This is expected to be done by the following means:

- Complete the consultation on the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards and begin its implementation.
- Produce guidance on implementing flexibilities for Apprenticeship training through the economic downturn.
- Review the strategy for Programme-Led Apprenticeships and make recommendations to Ministers.

Another aspect of the review procedures, mechanisms and instruments are the limitations of the evaluations and the consequences for the review and the potential decisions that can be made.
The case from The Netherlands shows some of the limitations of the evaluations, and the challenge of a public discussion on quality in apprenticeship programmes. Through the close cooperation between college and company in The Netherlands, there is always an evaluation (including the student) to improve the situation for the future and to create reflection for all those involved. If policy goals and objectives are well described, they are also measurable. On the national level, the discussion on quality assurance does not always match with the daily practices in the colleges, due to large differences between the various regions, levels, and branches. It is very important to have a differentiated look at situations and problems of WBL, but research mostly gives only general descriptions.

The feedback and reaction has to take this fact into consideration before major changes are proposed without detailed knowledge of the daily activities in the enterprises and in the VET-colleges.

8.2 Regular reviews and adjustments

Learners and teachers feedback, feedback from enterprises to VET-colleges, feedback to system level are the most central regular reviews and adjustments.

8.2.1 Learners and trainer feedback

Both learners and trainers give and receive feedback from each other as the examples below shows. Most countries have a number of ways for learners to come with their points of view.

In the UK, a number of policy proposals refer to listening to the voice of learners through a National Learner Panel and improved learner feedback. There are several students’ satisfaction surveys in The Netherlands held in a year (Odin, deelnemersmonitor, ROA and the Centres for Expertise. Also the schools monitor the satisfaction.

The main trends in the Romanian students’ satisfaction surveys\(^{96}\) are

- to give a bigger importance to the local and school decision curriculum
- to develop school orientation services
- to develop more partnerships with the local companies

In continuous education the main trends in student/enterprises satisfaction are:

- a better perception of the market needs
- better occupational standards with a higher impact on the market
- certifying the adults’ trainers
- development of modern adults’ education methods
- a high importance of the practice in the companies (2/3 parts from the whole) for qualification programs
- certifying the competencies evaluation assessors
- training the continuous training programs evaluators

Many of the arguments and trends seen in Romania can be found in the other case countries too.

The apprentices give feedback to the enterprises as a part of the apprenticeship programme.

\(^{96}\) Builds on the answers from Felicia Zarojanu, National Training Board For Adults' Education to the questionnaire for the Peer Learning Activity on Quality Assurance procedures for work based learning, October 1-3, 2008 – Copenhagen.
For enterprises in Germany it is very important that apprentices give feedback concerning the quality of their apprenticeship. Also enterprises expect apprentices to take responsibility for their own training and to produce new ideas for the training. In practice however, there is a gap between these demands and reality (see Ebbinghaus 2009:41). This is in line with the apprentices' point of view: They have the impression that they are relatively seldom asked in the enterprises how they get along with their apprenticeship. There are only few enterprises obtaining written feedback from their apprentices (see Beicht et al. 2009).

On the other side is the feedback to the apprentices from the enterprises.

In Germany is the feedback from enterprises to students done at several different times.

During training: There is no legal regulation concerning the feedback from enterprises to students during training. Therefore there is a great variety of feedback cultures and a systematic approach to feedback is missing. The quality of the feedback is mainly dependent of the individual trainers and the individual apprentices. The apprentices can use the workers councils that exist in most of the larger enterprises, to help them if it is needed. The workers councils can even contribute to the feedback if needed.

The companies state that it is a very important quality criterion for them to review the work results with the apprentices (see Ebbinghaus 2009:39). However, from the apprentice's point of view there often seems to be too little time for a systematic feedback (Beicht et al. 2009:11).

Interim Examinations (see section 48 BBiG): Usually in their second year of training, apprentices have to pass an interim examination administered in accordance with the initial training regulation to ascertain the level of competence they have attained. The results of the interim examination are an important point of reference for students and enterprises.

At the end of training (see section 16 BBiG): At the end of the initial training relationship, training employers shall provide trainees with a written certificate. The certificate must contain particulars of the nature, duration and purpose of the initial training as well as the vocational skills, knowledge and qualifications acquired by the trainees. If trainees so request, it shall also include particulars of their conduct and performance.

The key messages from the apprentices can be targeted at a broader audience as the example from Germany shows.

The German Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (Federation of German Trade Unions) has the latest three years publish a report on the quality in VET seen from the points of the learner. The latest report97 (2008) builds on answers from 4725 learners in the 25 most popular educations. Quality is measured by the learners by the use of a series of quality-indicators with different weights:

- The content of the education
  - Content of the plans for the education
  - Amount of activities that do not belong to the education
- The trainers qualifications
  - Pedagogical skills of the trainer (can he explain it?...)
- Education time and extra working hours
  - Weekly number of working hours

This kind of feedback from the apprentices is used in the ongoing improvement of the quality of apprenticeship programmes in Germany.

### 8.2.2 Feed back to VET-colleges

The VET-colleges get feedback from the enterprises and students. The enterprises can give their feedback in different ways and with different focus as the examples show.

Usually vocational schools host consultation days in Germany. At these occasions in-company trainers could talk to the teachers about the learning progress of their apprentices. In addition to this, the competent bodies often run working groups for the different trades in their district, where in-company trainers of different companies, representatives of the vocational school and the competent bodies discuss developments concerning VET.

The quality of the feedback is very often totally dependent of the individual trainer and the enterprise, which can create huge differences for the students. Many German enterprises focus in their feedback to the VET-colleges on the apprentice as a person and not so much on the learning development of the apprentice.

The Dutch Centres of Expertise organise meetings between the employer-organisations and the schools, via an ‘education-adviser’. Each Centre of Expertise has few education-advisers in the regions. They are mediating between enterprises and schools.

The feedback is a good opportunity for both enterprises and VET-colleges to assure that they work in the same direction.

Also the Dutch school organises feedback from enterprises to VET-colleges and students and vice versa by visiting during the apprenticeship WBL. There are at the moment no specific rules for the teacher’s visits at the enterprises. It is in general up to the teachers to decide, even if it is a part of their job. The will in the future be a “code” on this in order to ensure, that every student gets what they need or at least a certain level of visits.

The VET-providers will get feedback from the system level too, as this example from England shows. The English LSC are getting tougher with poorly-performing providers as part of meeting their commitment to eliminating inadequate provision across the FE system. By withdrawing delivery contracts from poor providers and awarding them to better providers, the LSC has secured a massive improvement in the consistency and quality of providers, and will continue to do so.
Specifically for Apprenticeship providers, will the LSC, through minimum levels of performance and otherwise, retain the challenging expectations of annually increasing completion rates. This will ensure that the taxpayer, Apprentices and their employers all get good value for money. Where training providers fail to meet minimum levels of framework completion rates, the LSC will intervene.

8.2.3 Feed back to system level

The feedback to system level comes both from enterprises, students and VET-colleges, as the cases from The Netherlands and Germany shows.

The feedback from the enterprises and the VET-colleges to the ministry in The Netherlands goes via the Education Inspection (part of the Ministry). The Education Inspection takes care of checking the quality of the education; schools, examination and the work of the Centres of Expertise. The Dutch inspection seems – according to the interviews - to function fine, but a close communication is needed in order to secure that the new rules are understood correctly.

The German enterprises accumulate their feedback to the Ministry by head quarters of employers and trade unions. The work by the German Unions on the quality in VET seen from the point of the learner – the so called Black Book - is discussed with the system level together with the employers.

There exist several committees, working groups etc. with all relevant stakeholders in Germany that give feedback to the system level:

- high political level with yearly meetings at Ministry of Economics monitoring VET and with discussions of more political matters eg. number of places
- BIBB committee with two yearly meetings
- a number of various meetings

The feedback can be directed to both the Social partners and to the Ministry and system level, as the following example from Germany shows.

The main conclusion of the German dgb-jugend study is, that the majority of the German students are satisfied with the quality of the education they get. The satisfaction rate is closely connected to the size of the enterprises and the sector. On average, the perceived higher quality is in larger enterprises and the main challenges are related to the SMEs. The sector of Industrial mechanics is the one the learners judge with the highest quality, where the hotel-sectors are seen as having the lowest quality of the VET.

But there exists still a number of problems that have to be solved according to the study:

- Delayed or completely missing payments to the students (Ausbildungsvergütungen)
- Missing content in the education
- Too many non-educational activities
- Lack of support from the trainers
- Too many extra working hours

In order to make the perceived quality of the learners even better, a number of actions are proposed.

- The social partners (Kammern und Gewerbeaufsicht) have to accept, that everything is not OK in all the enterprises.
• At higher level the stakeholders (Politik and Verbände) shall secure, that their control functions are used and, if needed, that sanctions are taken in relation to the enterprises that do not fulfil their obligations.

Sanctions must be one of the potential consequences of the feedback, as the case from The Netherlands shows. Article 14 of the Dutch Education Supervision Act (WOT) says:

1. If the Inspectorate judges that the quality of the education provided is seriously deficient or has been deficient for a long time, it informs Our Minister and makes proposals about measures to be taken.
2. The Inspectorate informs the board of the institution about its proposals to Our Minister.

The Explanatory Statement attached to the WOT gives further information (par 2.13). It states that “the supervision exercised by the Inspectorate can lead to the launch of a follow up process if there is a serious and/or long term deficiency in the quality of education. As a rule, the Inspectorate will inform the Minister only once all phases of the periodic quality study have been completed and it appears that the institution is unable to realise the necessary improvement in quality under its own steam or with normal extra support”.

In view of the judgement of the Inspectorate, the Minister launches suitable management initiatives, if he finds it necessary, aimed at the educational institutions. If the quality of a study programme is deficient for a number of years, or if legal regulations are not being met, the Minister can institute sanctions such as withholding funding. It is also possible for incentive measures to be taken. In the Adult and Vocational Education Act (WEB), this possibility is included in Articles 6.1.5 and 6.2.3a.

Funding is a further tool for awarding or sanctioning the patricipants in apprenticeship programmes.

With its new funding system, which went into effect 1 January 2000, the Dutch government is focusing on the achievement levels of participants and on educational achievement:
- in the area of accessibility: an amount based on the number of participants, with a bonus for the number of participants at the lowest training levels,
- in the area of qualifications: an amount based on the number of participants who receive certificates.

Insufficient quality should not be ignored. The main expectation of interested, institutionally-related parties is to hold the institutions responsible for quality flaws in what they see as relevant quality aspects. Contractual agreements can be enforced. The WEB also gives the Minister authority to impose two types of sanctions on institutions:
• deprivation of privileges (issuing certificates and/or government funding) for courses where there is non-compliance with legal rules (i.e. training, examinations, quality assurance, public accountability) or in the event of protracted insufficient quality;
• withholding or suspension of funds when actions conflict with legal provisions

These potential sanctions give the government ‘a big stick’ in persuading institutions to take suitable (improvement) measures. The intention is to refine further the instruments for administrative intervention; there should be a made-to-measure response.

98 In this chapter this refers to the Ministers of OCW and LNV in so far as it concerns agricultural education.
8.3 Strategic learning

Feedback is in general the most problematic part of the quality circle. Generally it seems to be difficult to follow the conclusions from the evaluations and especially difficult to introduce major changes.

The cases in this section show a number of good examples of Member States that in fact have introduced major changes based on the results of evaluations. This is seen as good examples of strategic learning in the case countries.

Reviews of the students work based learning activities can result in changes as the Romanian case shows.

The Romanian case: “Improving continuity and coherence of competences’ development through work based learning” – partnership between a TVET high school and a range of 4 stars hotels” from Romania describes how the TVET school self assesses its performance, collected and analysed feedback on WBL from students and work placement hotels’ representatives. This led to a review on the students’ work based learning schedule, and a change in the amount and stages of practical training.

The strategic learning can be made in different ways. The example from Germany shows how a study resulted in a number of focus areas, that later were followed by action in order to secure a better quality of the apprenticeship programmes.

The German 2005 BIBB study identified some key areas, which should be focused on the future to secure a better quality assessment and assurance in the German VET system:
- Understanding and goals of quality assurance,
- Development, application and linkage of quality-assuring instruments, such as the achieved operationalisation and evaluation of the objectives
- Related to this could be a study, which focuses on analysing quality assurance in a specialised line of business99
- To build on empirical findings, it should be attempted to create a phase- or level model of quality assurance in vocational education. This model should be used to further develop quality assurance and more specifically the interaction of the school and the workplace.

The Germans have continued their work after 2005, and made a number of coordinated activities and research studies in order to secure a better quality assessment and assurance system. Many of the research activities and studies are mentioned throughout the different chapters of this study.

Dutch evaluations have resulted in the creation of a new qualification system.

The described Dutch practices in BOL and BBL are based on the 1996 Adult and Vocational Training Act (Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs, WEB), which was evaluated in 2001. At the basis of this evaluation the Minister of Education considered improvement necessary of the national vocational skills standards, the so-called qualification system. Since then, the Ministry has aimed at developing a new qualification system, which is based on competences and is more closely linked to vocational practice and should provide a more solid basis for the adaptability of workers to a continuously changing labor market. To date, this development is still going on.

Complaints and different accreditation criteria can also result in changes as the Dutch case shows.

99 The are already published a number of studies made during the latest years.
There is a practical contract between the student and the learning company in The Netherlands. In the future there will be an apprentice code for supporting the quality of the apprenticeship as a part of a practical contract. The code is a common agreement between MBO Raad (VET council), Colo, the employers and ministry OCW. The code is introduced because of complains from students on the guidance and quality and content of WBL and due to the opinion in the Ministry that the accreditation criteria for trainers differs between sectors and Centres of Expertise.

Changes in the labour market and evaluations of different policies can result in strategic learning at system level, as the example from Germany shows.

The German discussion of suspending the regulations of the training enterprises in 2003 to 2009 were made with the expectation, that it would make the enterprises more motivated in taking part in education and especially in creating places for apprentices.

BIBB made an evaluation of the situation in 2006 and concluded that the decision had positive quantitative effect, even if the rise in new educational places was less than expected. The evaluation showed that the number of drop-outs increased and this was especially the case in enterprises without AEVO-qualified personal.

The reaction on the evaluation from the German government was to update the regulation together with the Social Partners and the new regulation started again August 1st 2009.

German apprentices and enterprises share the opinion that cooperation between the learning sites is an area where further improvements must be achieved. In the research project “Apprenticeship from the Apprentices Point of View” the quality criteria concerning cooperation between enterprises and VET schools reached the lowest evaluation of all criteria.

The German study (BIBB Heft 109) summarises p 47ff how the different quality areas/dimensions are assessed by the enterprises – both in relation to the ideal situation and to the reality. This overview can and will be used by the enterprises in order to develop their work with apprentices and education even further. The figure below shows the main results: (figure 15 p. 48).

---

101 Ausbilder-Eignungsverordnung (AEVO) and the organisation provides certified education fort the trainers.
The main conclusions of the German study are that the enterprises are very responsible in relation to the quality of the dual education. The enterprises fulfil their own expectations even in a situation where the standards for a good education very often are defined by the enterprises themselves.

The cooperation with others is clearly the area with the greatest potential for improvement. The enterprises have a high focus on input and context factors in order to secure the quality of the dual education. This is especially interesting because the more general public discussion in recent years have focused mainly on process and output quality criteria.

Most of the other quality areas can be developed further by the enterprises, but the potential for improvement is relatively limited – even if the ideal targets can be discussed. Well documented overviews like this support the feedback process and potential changes.

### 8.4 Information strategy

Quality discussions in the public domain are very often based on feelings and on single and problematic cases with individual learners, enterprises and VET-colleges. A clear information strategy combined with valid and reliable research can raise the level of the public discussion on quality in apprenticeship programmes.

A Marketing and Communication Strategy can support the awareness of the benefits of apprenticeship programmes as the case from England shows.
One of the priorities of the English National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) in 2009/2010 is to deliver a Marketing and Communication Strategy that ensures that stakeholders are aware of the benefits of Apprenticeships. This is planned to be done by the use of the following activities:

- Review current strategy and amend where appropriate.
- Develop and publish information for learners, employers, providers and intermediaries which clearly describes the benefits of Apprenticeships.
- Celebrate the success of apprentices and employers through a regional and national Awards programme.
- Create a 2010 Apprenticeship Week which actively engages a full range of stakeholders.
- Develop and implement a communication strategy to employers articulating the business case.
- Manage and develop the Apprenticeships brand.

The Unions can contribute to the public policy discussion by presenting the quality of the apprenticeship programmes as the apprentices see it.

The German dgb-jugend has, in the last three years, published a report on the quality in VET seen from the points of the learner. The latest report \(^{102}\) (2008) builds on answers from 4725 learners in the 25 most popular educations. The report is not intended to be representative but gives a good overview of the challenges learners face in the German VET-system.

The report is discussed at high political level with the key stakeholders from ministries and employers, together with the Unions. The report gives a ranking of the different educational areas in relation to the perceived quality seen from the learners’ perspective. The purpose of this ranking is first of all to make the quality and the working conditions transparent and to show a picture of the daily life for the learners. Secondly is it the hope that the ranking will influence the enterprises and the different other participants to control the quality and to develop the quality further.

Ranking seem to be a good tool for creating a discussion on the quality within the different educational areas. This way of dissemination of the results of the study results in a public interest in and access to the points of view of the learners'. The main conclusion is, that the majority of the German students are satisfied with the quality of the education they get.

It is not only the German Unions that contributes actively to the public discussion on quality assurance of VET and work based learning. BIBB has with two of the latest publications contributed strongly to a fact-based public discussion on quality in VET.

One of the reports describes the quality of the dual VET-system in Germany seen from the point of view of the learners\(^{103}\). The other report\(^{104}\) focuses on in-company training as a worthwhile investment for enterprises, giving an overview of the costs and benefits for enterprises in relation to in-company vocational training.

Both these German reports give a good basis for decision making and further progress within quality assurance in apprenticeship programmes.

Annual reporting on the internet makes it possible to keep a public eye on the developments, as the Dutch case shows.

\(^{102}\) Ausbildungsreport 2008. dgb-jugend. www.dgb-jugend.de/ausbildung

\(^{103}\) BIBB Report 9/09: .........

\(^{104}\) BIBB Report 8/09 .......
According to the Dutch WEB a regulation requires periodic publication (annually for examination results) of the assessment, of the quality of education and improvement plans.

The self-evaluation reports (since 2003) are no longer required by law in The Netherlands. The public information from institutions will develop into an integrated annual report. This annual report will contain relevant information for stakeholders (horizontal) and for inspectorate/government (vertical). This process is in development.

The Dutch report from the Inspectorate will contain the supervision arrangements and results of all the research. All reports - with the exception of the incidental research (not automatically) – are published, on the internet. Also improvements are published. In this way all stakeholders have a good view of the quality of different institutions and so benchmarking is made possible. The site of the inspectorate (www.onderwijsinspectie.nl) also includes thematic reports on different educational topics. For the institution concerned this publicity means an additional incentive to improve quality.

It is not only the German and Dutch cases that include strategies for reaching a broader audience. The example from England shows how both the Government and their agencies can inform students and the public in general of apprenticeship programmes. The Government in England has taken steps to ensure that all young people hear the full story about Apprenticeship. It is further expected that the coming Education and Skills Bill will place a duty on schools to present their pupils with a full range of options for their learning at age 16 onwards and not unduly promote any particular option over any other.

The different awards and competitions in relation to Apprenticeship support the external perception of the quality of Apprenticeship programmes as the example from England shows:

“The national Apprenticeship Awards took place at Old Billingsgate in London on Thursday 16th July 2009. Held at Old Billingsgate in Central London on 16 July, the sixth National apprenticeship Awards recognised the hard work, commitment and achievements of apprentices and employers from a vast range of sectors, from retail to upholstery and from engineering to hair and beauty.

This year’s Awards attracted a total of 1,058 entries. All the apprentice and employer finalists had previously won Regional Awards before proceeding through to the National final, where one finalist from each category was crowned the overall winner.”

The EuroSkills competition regulations and the possibilities for participating in competitions like this, is also a part of the broad marketing of apprenticeship programmes as the LdV-project shows.

The main objective of the project: “European Electronics Workshop Team Promoting EuroSkills and National Competitions (EEWT)” is to support participants in training and further training activities in the acquisition and the use of knowledge, skills and qualifications to facilitate personal development. This means preparing of a technical outline and competition tasks proposals which base on EuroSkills competition regulation.

The competitions develop and promote vocational education and training and prepare students for the challenges of working life.

School leavers from vocational training measure their skills with each other in FinnSkills, the

105 http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Awards.aspx
Finnish national skills competition. The international competition is known as WorldSkills and it is held every second year. Nowadays there is also EuroSkills – a European competition for championships. Different trades also arrange their own skills competitions. Among the best known are the competitions in catering and hairdressing.

These competitions and especially the public interest in these competitions and the apprenticeship programmes which are behind them is a very effective way of getting positive attention around apprenticeship programmes.

8.5 Conclusions in relation to Review

Reviews are not defined in the Recommendation of the EQARF, but can be presented as: Review of evaluations is regularly carried out and is discussed with relevant stakeholders and appropriate action plans are put in place.

The procedures, mechanisms and instruments for review and feedback are many and complex. The feedback is very often a part of the annual evaluations and self assessments done by the enterprises and the VET-colleges. Meetings, surveys, national and local monitoring reports and questionnaires are used as instruments to assess the level of satisfaction regarding the quality of educational provision, and to make suggestions for further improving and adapting it.

On the national level, the discussion on quality assurance does not always match with the daily practices in the colleges, due to large differences between the various regions, levels, and sectors.

The learners have a number of different ways to give feedback about their point of view on the quality of the apprenticeship programmes they are a part of. This can be organised centrally as Learners panels or by Ministry initiated research or by the student organisations and Unions. Even if this feedback is judged as a very important quality criteria by the employers and the apprentices there often seems to be too little time for a systematic feedback.

The feedback can be given at different times during the apprenticeship programme at interim examinations or at the end of the training. There are only few enterprises obtaining written feedback from their apprentices, even if this is judged as very important by the enterprises.

The feedback from enterprises to VET-colleges is organised in a number of different ways and both formal and informal types of feedback exist. Consultation days at the VET-colleges, working groups arranged by the Social Partners and the employers' organisations, education-advisors are among the methods used in the case countries. Many of these activities are more or less informal, and there exists in general no specific formal rules for the feedback activities between the enterprises, the VET-colleges and the apprentices. This area is under development at the moment.

The quality of the feedback is very often totally dependent on the individual trainer and the enterprise, which can create huge differences for the students. Many enterprises focus their feedback to the VET-colleges on the apprentice as a person and not so much on the learning development of the apprentice.

Feedback to system level is made both by the VET-colleges and by the enterprise, mainly through their collective organisations. A number of committees and working groups exist and deliver feedback to system level at a number of meetings and through reports.
The organisations that collect the feedback can focus on good governance of the VET-providers, on being selective in their supervision and instead of assessing intentions and planning documents they want to focus on the education that student actually experience at the time of the inspection.

Sanctions are a part of the potential feedback and include withholding funding, deprivation of privileges like issuing certificates and receiving governmental funding and the right to provide VET. Funding is mainly related to the number of apprentices and can be connected to the number of participant at different training levels, number of participants who receive certificates combined with a lump sum.

The cases describe a number of good examples of strategic learning at system level in the different case countries. Common for all the examples are, that problems and challenges presented by the evaluations are taken seriously and that action is taken in order to achieve a higher degree of quality in apprenticeship programmes.

The coordination, systematic approach and amount of the work done differ between the case countries but is mainly a combination of research, analysis, focused changes and implementation and follow-up on the work.

The major contributions in relation to this strategic learning are the reviews of learning schedules, changes in the amount and stages of practical training, a focus on cooperation between all those involved in apprenticeships, the development of an apprentice code for supporting the quality of the apprenticeship programme and research that provides documentation of the daily activities of apprentices.

Information has no value before it is available and used. Transparency of and insight into the daily life for the learners are, together with the possibility of influencing the decisions process, among the main arguments behind the different information strategies in the case countries.

The major instruments used in the information strategies are the publication of studies and research, participation in the public discussion, participation in the policy discussion, making the studies, research, evaluations available on the internet in general and especially on the Ministries and VET-colleges homepages.
9. Quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes – reflections and conclusions

The previous chapters present a number of examples of (best) practice in quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. Many of the examples are very detailed in order to inspire readers with practical and hands-on examples on the topic. The references make it possible, relatively efficiently, to find the original source if more details or contact persons are needed. It is our hope, that the study will be used as a source of inspiration and as a starting point for action in order to quality assure apprenticeship programmes even further.

This chapter will include a number of reflections on the analysis in the previous chapters together with the key conclusions in order to answer the question:

How can the quality of apprenticeship programmes be assured and further developed?

This final chapter is organised according to stakeholders and draws on the conclusions from the planning, implementation, evaluation and review chapters. A structure like this makes it easier for each stakeholder to find the conclusions relevant to their organisation – in order to further develop the quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes.

The first sections cover the conclusions related to research and methodology, in order to present the methodological frames and constraints of the study. The second section will focus on quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes in general. The general conclusions here are useful for all stakeholders and summarise, in many ways, the overall context for quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. The following sections present the conclusions for each of the stakeholders at European, National system, Social Partner, Enterprise, VET-college and apprentice level.

9.1 Research and methodology

The objectives of the study
The study do not give a complete picture of quality assurance systems in apprenticeship programmes in each case-country, but do, in general illustrate quality assurance systems in apprenticeship programmes and

• Search for common principles
• Present a distillation of the cases
• Present different ways in which apprenticeship programmes are quality assured
• Have an analytical approach
• Make conclusions and recommendations for all stakeholders

The study is not intended to be representative of all European quality assurance systems within WBL and apprenticeship programmes. The five cases are not enough to provide a representative study, but we are convinced, that they are sufficient to give inspiration and that the study provides a good overview of the different answers to the question:

What is quality assurance in apprenticeship programmes?
The research methodology
The quality assurance systems of work based learning in five cases from England, Germany, Romania, The Netherlands and from a number of Leonardo da Vinci projects are the basis of analysis in this study.

The desk research has created a good overview of the existing literature and of the key aspects of both quality assurance of work based learning and especially apprenticeship programmes. This literature has been used to identify promising or emerging practice, which were investigated further through the field research.

The interviews cover the plans, intentions, visions and views on the reality and reflect on the day to day work of quality assurance in apprenticeship programmes. In addition, proposals for future work and how to raise the quality of the apprenticeship programmes are included in the interviews.

We believe that the selected methodology, key contacts and searches together ensure that the results are both reliable and valid.

The cases have to be constructed
Complete and comprehensive descriptions of quality assurance systems in apprenticeship programmes do not exist in the case countries. In recent years a number of studies have been made within research on quality assurance in VET in general and especially in quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. This work has been the major source for this study together with the questionnaire and the interviews with key stakeholders.

The EQARF structures the analysis of the cases
The EQARF is useful in this study, because it supports the many methodological challenges by
- Creating an analytical structure
- Raising a number of key research questions
- Providing a common language of quality
- Focusing on relatively limited number of key aspects of quality assurance
- Using this known, accepted and used framework on a relatively limited researched area like work based learning and assessment

The definitions of quality are subjective and context dependent
Quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes is complex and needs to be covered from many different angles, in order to create an overview. Vocational Education and Training (VET) covers a wide range of situations, stakeholders and beneficiaries. Thus, to define quality we must consider this range of situations and interests.

Some of the national studies and research look at the same quality dimensions, but from different point of views e.g. the apprentices and the enterprises. This research shows clearly both the differences and similarities in the definitions of quality and of what is important for the individual actors.

Instead of using energy on searching for the right and commonly accepted definition of quality we propose that each stakeholder will accept the fact, that all definitions of quality are subjective and context dependent.

The quality models are relatively similar
Each of the quality models gives an overview of the key quality dimensions, the activities, the stakeholders and very often the relationships between the stakeholders and activities. There seems to be two basic structures for the quality models depending on the types of the quality criteria:
• Input, process and output quality
• Quality aspects of key activities and at key actors

Common to all the quality models is the number of quality criteria that, with different weights, are used/can be used to make a measurement of the overall quality. Alternatively a total quality index can be avoided, and only the assessment of the individual quality criteria be presented.

**There are different contexts around the apprenticeship programmes**

The two different contexts: enterprises and VET-schools create a number of potential opportunities and threats for both the learners and the others involved in apprenticeship programmes, seen in relation to quality assurance and assessment.

The preconditions and the logics of the quality assurance systems are different, but both are still a part of the individual learner’s education. In principle, the key quality assurance questions are the same in all Member States in relation to apprenticeship programmes:

- **How can the quality of apprenticeship programmes be assured and developed?**
- **How can the quality of learning in the enterprise be assured and developed?**
- **How can the communication and coordination between all the participants be planned, organised and implemented in order to assure and develop the quality of the learning – both in the enterprise and in the total education?**
- **Who should do what and when in relation to quality assurance?**

These questions are answered in the study.

### 9.2 Quality of apprenticeship programmes in general

The analysis of the selected case countries, regions and projects has shown, that a number of similarities exist in relation to the quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. The key quality questions are the same, the quality criteria are relatively similar and many of the activities done in order to secure the quality are similar across the cases. Differences exist too and are mainly related to the overall organisation of the apprenticeship programmes and roles of the social partners.

**The quality of the apprenticeship programmes is, in general, high**

Students and enterprises are interested in and focused on the quality of the apprenticeship programme. Studies, surveys and the interviews all conclude that the quality in general is high. This conclusion is supported from enterprises, apprentices, social partners, VET-colleges and system level.

Apprenticeship programmes are a major part of Vocational Education and Training in all the case countries. Apprenticeship programmes provide apprentices with real life work place experience, and the opportunity to develop industry related skills.

**The key quality criteria's for apprenticeship programmes**

The results from the studies, research and the experiences from the different cases show that quality in work based learning and in apprenticeship programmes are both influenced and can be developed by a number of quality criteria.

The total quality of the apprenticeship programmes comes from the quality of the learning provider, the quality of the employer (and mainly the trainers), the quality of the apprentice framework and the learner.
There are, in principle, two main issues in relation to the quality of apprenticeship programmes: the quality of workplace learning (content, guidance, assessment) and the quality of the connection between workplace and school-based learning.

Among all the different quality dimensions, one of the most important quality criteria is the formalization of the expectations of all actors and especially the learner and employer throughout the apprenticeship programme. Without clear goals and expectations it is not possible to secure the quality.

**Indicators for quality of apprenticeship programmes**

The measurement of the quality of apprenticeship programmes is a relatively complex matter, due to the fact that the definition of quality is complex and context dependent. The best alternative to a single and specific measurement of quality is the introduction of a number of indicators. The purpose of using a group of indicators is to get a more nuanced picture of what the quality of apprenticeship programmes is and can be.

The following output-indicators (inspired by the indicators in the EQARF) were considered by the respondents as the most useful in order to get a good picture of the quality of apprenticeship programmes:

- The employment rate of the apprentices/students
- The completion rate of the apprentices/students
- Satisfaction rate of individuals and employers with acquired skills/competences
- The time from training/WBL to jobs/the labour market

One of the trends is to develop common quality indicators that can and will be used by all stakeholders.

**The quality of apprenticeship programmes varies across the providers**

The different studies and research shows that the quality of apprenticeship programmes has a high variance between the providers and enterprises. The interviews supported this conclusion.

One of the consequences of this high variance is that the learners get very different quality of educational experiences and that the final employer gets employees with very different qualities in terms of their competences.

**The cooperation between the stakeholders has room for improvement**

The cooperation between the stakeholders and especially between the VET-colleges and the enterprises are considered as the quality area 'with the highest room for improvement. Specifically, the learners mention the lack of coordination between what is learned in the VET-colleges and what is trained in the enterprises.

Some critics also argue that training places fail to generate knowledge-based competencies and only skill-based competencies based on experience. It can be said that apprenticeship programmes are in a 'stress field' between private interests and commitment on the one hand and public and state intervention on the other.

Both the enterprises, the VET-colleges and the Social Partners are aware of the challenges in relation to communication and cooperation. Different and more intensive interaction patterns between employers, vocational schools and the students are developed in many countries to improve the connection between learning in school and in the workplace.
Many different instruments for review and feedback
The procedures, mechanisms and instruments for review and feedback are many and complex. The feedback is very often a part of the annual evaluations and self assessments done by the enterprises and the VET-colleges. Meetings, surveys, national and local monitoring reports and questionnaires are used as instruments to assess the level of satisfaction regarding the quality of educational provision, and to make suggestions for further improving and adapting it.

The apprenticeship programmes are currently being reformed and revitalized
Apprenticeship programmes are considered extremely important for the economic and social development in the different case countries and regions. The case countries have worked with new laws and regulation, new institutional structures, new tasks and approaches for inspection and supervision, national strategies and studies and research in order to reform and revitalize the apprenticeship programmes.

Some of the case countries are currently revising their apprenticeship programmes and structures around it. This means, from a research point of view, that a number of visions, strategies and plans exist for the future, but there is a lack of tangible results available.

The image of apprenticeship programmes are changing
One of the challenges of attracting more apprentice places and learners has been the image of apprenticeship programmes of not attracting the high performance learners and of lack of articulation to further and especially higher education.

The culture around the apprenticeship programmes have been under change too. Attraction of high performance learners, clear links to further and higher education, competitions and awards, focused information strategies are among the objectives and tools to create a new and more positive culture around apprenticeship programmes.

A number of countries have worked with the perception of apprenticeship programmes and developed information strategies in order to change the image and to present the reality of modern apprenticeship programmes.

The major instruments used in the information strategies are the publication of studies and research, participation in public discussion, participation in the policy discussion, making the studies, research, evaluations available on the internet in general and especially on the Ministries and VET-colleges homepages.

9.3 European level

Clear EU influence on the National quality assurance systems
The European focus on quality assurance and development of VET during the last ten years or so has supported the developments in all Member States. Member states have inspired each other and realised, that common problems benefit from common solutions.

The CQAF and the process against the EQARF have supported the Member States in their work on quality assurance in VET in general and in WBL mainly by the focus on quality assurance and by presenting a common reference framework that can coexist with the existing different National and regional quality assurance systems.

The ENQA-VET activities within quality assurance of work based learning actively supports and enhances the development of best practice used in the different Member States.
The Leonardo da Vinci programme contributes to further development.
A number of LdV-projects focus on aspects of quality assurance of work based learning and apprentice programmes. The selected and analysed LdV-projects are examples of the importance and show the huge potential of the Leonardo Programme in order to improve the quality of VET in general and in apprentice programmes more specifically.

9.4 National system level

Different laws and regulations
The laws and regulations vary in complexity and focus between the case countries, but are linked directly to the overall policy goals and objectives. Most of the law and regulations are relatively broad and leave room for the Social partners, the VET-colleges and the enterprises to make their own decisions. One of the major differences in the laws is the responsibility for the training in the enterprises.

The quality assurance shall be organised and regulated
The national and regional apprenticeship programme have a long tradition with structures that, until recently, had only changed relatively little. A number of quality related activities should be organised from system level in order to secure the quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes.

Two major models for apprenticeship exist, and within those two, in principle, different quality systems:
- Demand-led, dual system characterised by
  Employer commitment
  Weak links to tertiary education
- Supply-led, low employer commitment characterised by
  Stronger links to tertiary level provision

Collecting and analysing feedback from employers on a regular basis and using the results to improve the WBL process is also an activity to be organised at system level. Each stakeholders should be challenged in order to ensure their quality.

Some countries (E.g. The Netherlands) have public inspection and supervision as a part of the quality system. This integrated supervision is a simple approach to the institutions and a limitation of the supervisory burden of institutions.

Other countries (E.g. Germany) have separated responsibility for the learning in the VET-colleges and the training in the enterprises. The quality assurance systems for the training in the enterprises are here mainly decided by the enterprises, and there exist no national wide standards for quality in apprenticeship programmes that ensures that every apprentice gets the same opportunities. The overall quality of the apprenticeship programme is not stipulated by the vocational training act, and both the part in enterprises and the part in VET-colleges are not covered by the same law.

In England, they make use of Governmental agencies to raise the quality of Apprenticeship through effective contract management, ongoing provider dialogue, closely integration with other qualifications and pathways, a united approach to quality, and the use of success rate data to inform commissioning decisions. The Government can even influence the quality of the
apprenticeship programmes by avoiding competing policy priorities, securing the resources needed, and by a clear system of accountability and oversight.

**Funding is needed**
Funding is a key activity related to quality assurance. Funding is very often a part of the political discussions and priorities. The funding can be more or less direct to the enterprises to the Social partners and the VET-colleges.

The funding mechanisms applied at system level in relation to the enterprises, range from direct subsidies to tax reductions. Funding of the VET-colleges is mainly related to the number of apprentices and can be connected to the number of participants at different training levels, number of participants who receive certificates combined with a lump sum.

The funding of apprenticeship programmes is relatively complex, and it is difficult to separate the amounts used on quality assurance from the many other (educational) activities in the enterprise. Discussions on who shall do which activities and how they shall be paid for their work, is high on the agenda in all the cases.

The costs of quality assurance can be covered in a number of ways. They can be shared by the Ministry and the enterprises, paid only by the ministries via the VET-colleges or paid by the enterprises and their organisations.

The main costs of an apprenticeship programme are personnel costs for trainees, personnel costs for instructors and equipment and material costs. However, apprentices generate not only costs for the firm providing their training, they make a significant contribution to their company's regular production and services and save on recruitment costs for the enterprises. Studies show that many enterprises have a positive economic result in relation to the apprenticeship programmes.

**Securing the right number of apprenticeship places is a challenge**
The apprenticeship places are the precondition for apprenticeship programmes. A permanent recurring obstacle is the availability of the places, which depends heavily on the economic situation.

Only a limited number of enterprises supply places for apprenticeship and there is an uneven distribution of the places within sectors and regions.

Some countries have decided to boost the employer supply and to raise the number of places radically. This can be done by getting current suppliers to continue or expand their activities or by getting new enterprises without experience of apprenticeship places to supply more places.

One other way of getting more apprenticeship places is to develop new and innovative approaches, drawing on the Australian model, where apprentices are employed by a recruitment agency and hired out to host businesses.

Host companies pay the Training Association a fee for the hire of the apprentice. The Training Agency takes on most of the administration, dealing with the payroll, support and supervision of the apprentice and being their legal employer.

The learners show a growing interest in apprenticeship places. One way of balancing the supply of places with the demand is to have more than one educational pathway.

There is a general expectation, that there will be a period with lack of apprenticeship places, but this will be solved in the long term due to the need for employees at the enterprises.
Communication and cooperation is needed among all stakeholders

Structured communication and cooperation are needed at all levels and are organised in a number of ways and with many stakeholders involved and many committees, meetings on all levels and with different timescales.

The cooperation between the enterprises and the VET-colleges is the most important in relation to the quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. The social partners can also play a major role together with the organisations of the VET-providers.

The cooperation focuses on the grey zones between the enterprises and the VET-colleges in relation to their common task which is to contribute to and to quality assure the apprenticeship programme. In Romania the key challenge is the lack of confidence between the different stakeholders.

Developing new apprenticeship frameworks takes too long time

The process by which an Apprenticeship framework comes into existence can be a lengthy one. A lead time of two years is not uncommon from the start of the development phase to the first Apprentice being put onto a framework.

In other countries (like The Netherlands) the VET-colleges can decide to develop their own apprenticeship programmes and frameworks. The flexibility concerning the curricula also leads to institutional agreements, offering students the possibility to follow a program from the pre-vocational level through the vocational level and ending up at the polytechnic level. These uninterrupted learning pathways prevent early school leaving and are highly time-efficient.

Every learner shall have the same opportunities

One of the basic democratic principles in the educational systems is that every learner shall have the same opportunities for personal development.

This democratic principle can be reached in many ways e.g. by national standards, more than one educational pathway, broader representation of all types of enterprises in apprenticeship programmes.

The variation in the quality of the apprenticeship programmes between the enterprises and the high level of dependency on the skills and motivation of the individual trainers influence all aspects of giving each learner the same opportunities.

9.5 Social Partners level

The Social Partners have different roles

The Social Partners have different roles in the quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes in the case countries. The main roles are to come with estimates for the future demand for competences, qualifications and skills, to ensure that the different apprenticeship programmes are up to date and to ensure that new programmes are developed, when there is a need for them.

The qualifications are mainly influenced or defined by the Social Partners in cooperation with the responsible ministries. The Social Partners are organised in sectors and branches and the qualifications are closely related to the national or local labour markets needs and often defined as competences (skills, knowledge and job related attitude).
The Social Partners responsibilities
The Social Partners can be responsible for the final quality assurance in the enterprises by arranging the final examinations or they can be more or less involved in the work of defining the content of the different apprenticeship programmes. The Social Partners are involved in projects related to quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes.

9.6 Enterprise level

The quality of the enterprises training is, in general, high
The technology and equipment are up to date in most enterprises, but there exists differences between the trades and enterprises.

The internal organisation of the apprenticeship programme and especially the internal organisation of the quality assurance is not very transparent in most enterprises.

The larger enterprises seem to be better than SMEs at structuring and securing a dialogue between the trainers and the apprentices

Enterprises have to be motivated
Enterprises are motivated to contribute to the quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes in many different ways. The enterprises can be supported both financially and by managing the recruitment and ongoing paperwork, by reducing the bureaucracy, by designing structured off-the-job training and by providing other tasks that the enterprises find too time-consuming.

The main motivations for taking part in apprenticeship programmes for the enterprises are that it is possible to develop young employees who meet the company’s particular requirements, it is a part of their policy, it is possible to choose the best employees, it creates more flexible employees, to secure future employees within the profession, and the enterprise contributes to give the youth a perspective and direction in life.

The economic benefit of being involved in apprenticeship programmes has been studied in Germany, and the main conclusion is, that many of the enterprises have a positive economic result from their activities within apprenticeship.

In order to get more apprenticeship places is it necessary to convince enterprises with limited or no knowledge of apprenticeship programmes that they too should contribute. This group of enterprises is relatively huge in all the countries, but it seems difficult to convince these enterprises about the benefits of supplying an apprenticeship place.

The skills of the trainer is the most important quality dimension
The technical and pedagogical qualifications of the trainers are the most important quality criteria for most apprentices. The qualifications are regulated differently, but generally are there a number of quality criteria for the trainers. These regulations are under or have recently been revised in some of the case countries. The major changes are the upgrading of the pedagogical competences of the trainers and the introduction of common criteria across trades.

The quality of the trainers at the enterprises is a combination of personal, technical and pedagogical skills and competences. A number of Leonardo da Vinci projects have focused on different quality aspects of the trainers in the enterprises.
One of the skills that the learners appreciate but also miss most is the skill of giving constructive feedback to the learner. Many apprentices also have the impression that there is not a very high fault tolerance during in-company training. And from the apprentices point of view there is often too little time to discuss their working results.

The quality of trainers varies in some of the case countries, but is generally assessed very positively both by the apprentices and by the enterprises themselves. The major problem seems to be integrated in the job of the trainer – the trainer is mainly a normal employee, who has a normal job to do – very often with higher priority than the training of the apprentices. Time for reflection and the use of positive feedback are both areas with a potential for further development.

Internally in the enterprises are there no problems related to finding new trainers. The internal selection criteria are a combination of motivation and attitude, experience, formal tests and pedagogical training.

**Communication and cooperation is important**
An open and honest communication about the expectations of the apprentices and from the VET-colleges is important to the quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. Very often the quality is completely dependent of the engagement and motivation of individual trainers and not secured by agreements between the enterprise and the learner or VET-college.

The enterprises can raise the quality of the apprenticeship programmes by taking part in innovative projects, competitions, placements abroad, games etc.

**Not enough focus on the learner**
The focus in the enterprises is very often on the standardised activities within the training and the daily work and not on the individual students and their learning. Many of the learners would appreciate more time on their jobs in the enterprises being devoted to helping them to learn better.

The dialogue between the learner, the trainer and the teacher from the VET-college needs more focus on the individual learner.

**It is difficult to control and supervise the quality of the training**
The fact that most of the learning is physically located across many thousands of workplaces creates formidable challenges for quality control. The challenge is the same regardless of who is responsible for the control and supervision of the quality of the apprenticeship programmes.

The enterprises are not very interested in (new) systems for quality assurance of the apprenticeship programmes and the quality assurance systems in the enterprises are, in general, not transparent and well described. Every single company has different structures, processes etc.

**9.7 VET-college level**

**The VET-colleges play different roles**
The VET-colleges play very different roles in quality assurance of apprenticeship programmes. The activities range from being responsible for the quality to being a part of the examination. There are often contacts between the enterprises and the VET-colleges, but it still seems to be problematic to coordinate the learning content and focus for the individual student.
The Dutch schools are responsible by law for the quality of the whole education programme – including the activities in the enterprise. This is a challenge for the VET-colleges even if The Centres of Expertise also assure the quality. The German VET-colleges have no responsibility for the quality of the training in the enterprises.

**The teachers do not have regular contacts with the enterprises**
The relationship and level of cooperation between the teachers at the VET-colleges and the trainers in the enterprises are important – independent of who has the official responsibility for the quality of the learning. The quality of these links between teachers and trainers is very dependent on the motivation and skills of both persons.

Most college-tutors do not have enough time to visit the companies regularly, as the budget for the Colleges is too limited to realize this in an optimal way.

The competences and attitude of the teachers at the VET-colleges are at a relatively high quality level according to the learners. The motivation and the priorities of the top-managers in the VET-colleges are influencing the quality of the contacts to the enterprises.

**9.8 Apprentice/learner level**

**The learners are in general satisfied with the quality**
The apprentices and students involved in apprenticeship programmes are in general satisfied with their education and are particularly satisfied with the learning and the equipment in the enterprise rather than at the VET-colleges.

The apprentices have often responsibility for complex work tasks at their workplace. These work tasks are in many cases part of the real business processes of the companies. That is why, in many companies, the work apprentices do cover the cost of providing their training. These working conditions are in line with the demands of the apprentices: For them it is very important to do real and complex work and to gain recognition from the other employees.

There is a risk at the moment with the financial crises that the learners accept lower quality of the apprenticeship programmes and only focus on getting the apprenticeship place.

**The learners can be students and employees**
The learners can either be students or employees with an employment contract with the enterprise that supplies the apprenticeship place. If the learners are employed they get a salary or compensation for their contribution. If the learners are students they have the same right as other students for subsidies and loans.

**The learners shall give feedback to the enterprises and VET-colleges**
Learning is a process that requires active participation from both trainers and learners. The learners can be more active and they need to find an appropriate way to demand adequate learning conditions in the companies. They have to learn how to give feedback to their companies so that the training processes might be changed.

The communication to the VET-colleges is also important for the learners and can be organised in different ways. The students can communicate directly with the school, the school and the enterprises can communicate directly or via the Social Partners.
Most apprentices have monthly meetings with the trainers and teachers, and get more or less formal feedback on their progress and on their activities in general. The educational plans can be developed further and especially the updating of the plans has a potential for progress. ICT can be a very efficient tool for a part of the communication and assessments between the apprentices, the enterprises and the teachers at the VET-college.

**The learners should have a better knowledge about apprenticeship programmes**

The knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of the apprenticeship programmes varies a lot between the learners. This influences both the choice of the educational pathway and influences the realism of the expectations of an apprenticeship programme.

The learners would benefit from a better knowledge about what they can expect from the enterprises and from the apprenticeship programme.

The learners are in general not so focused on their rights (both as students and especially as apprentices) and the level of knowledge of the rights varies a lot and is generally low.
Annexes

Annex 1. Sources from UK and England

Contact persons
Alison Rowland
Head of Strategy and Performance
LSIS – Learning and Skills Improvement Service
Friars House, Manor House Drive, Coventry CV1 2TE
Direct Line: 024 7662 7940
www.lsis.org.uk

Chris Lewis. LSC (Learning and Skills Council). chris.lewis@lsc.gov.uk.

Jonathan Eddy. DBIS / DCSF Joint Apprenticeship Unit.
jonathan.eddy@bis.gsi.gov.uk

Millar MacDonald OBE MinstLM
BIS/DCSF Joint Apprenticeships Unit| W3c Moorfoot| Sheffield S1 4PQ|*T:
0114 259 4315 |E: Millar.MacDonald@bis.gsi.gov.uk

Liz Aitken

Martin Ward. NAS (National Apprenticeship Service). Martin.Ward@lsc.gov.uk

Mike Davis. Ofsted. Mikedavis@ofsted.gov.uk

Muriel Green

Iain Murray [IMurray@TUC.ORG.UK]

Sources
Quality Improvement Agency: Supporting good practice in employer responsiveness: a guide to quality improvement.

Quality Improvement Agency: The Development Programme for Train to Gain. 2007.
Raising awareness of employer responsiveness across the college.

“Quality Assurance Code of Practise”, University of Bath
Janet Lonsdale
Broadening and Developing Participation
Division for Lifelong Learning
Carpenter House
Broad Quay
Bath
BA1 1UD
Tel: 01225 388703 / 388704
The Learner Provision Team,
Funding & Student Finance,
DCELLS,
2nd Floor,
Ffynnon Las,
The Orchards,
Ilex Close,
Llanishen,
Cardiff,
CF14 5EZ.
WBLEng@Wales.GSI.gov.uk.

About the project “The Assessment of Work based Learning in Foundation Degrees”
Claire Taylor
Programme Leader: FdA in Educational Studies for Teaching Assistants
Bishop Grosseteste College, Lincoln, LN1 3DY

Selected links
http://wcs.excellencegateway.org.uk/case-studies
http://www.lsis.org.uk/LSISHome.aspx
http://www.ukces.org.uk/
http://www.skillsforbusiness.biz
www.businessballs.com/kirkpatricklearningevaluationmodel.htm
http://www.dius.gov.uk/news_and_speeches/press_releases/~/media/publications/W/world_class_apprenticeships
http://www.dius.gov.uk/consultations/sase
http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/About-Us/Publications.aspx
Annex 2. Sources from Germany

Contact persons

Bundes Institut für Berufsbildung:
Arbeitsbereich 2.1: Berufsbildungsangebot und -nachfrage / Bildungsbeteiligung
Andreas Krewerth:
krewerth@bibb.de
Tel.: 0049 (0) 228/107-1110
Fax : 0049 (0) 228/107-2955

Margit Ebbinghaus:
ebbinghaus@bibb.de

Nehls, Hermann
Confederation of Trade unions
Germany
Hermann.Nehls@dgb.de

Stefan Noppenberger
METRO AG
Berufsbildung
Vocational Training
Schlüterstraße 1, 40235 Düsseldorf

Tel: +49 (211) 6886-1301
Fax: +49 (211) 6886-1300
E-Mail: stefan.noppenberger@metro.de

www.ausbildung-metrogroup.de

Susanne Müller
Bildung | Berufliche Bildung
BDA | Bundesvereinigung der Deutschen Arbeitgeberverbände
Haus der Deutschen Wirtschaft, Breite Straße 29, 10178 Berlin
T +49 30 2033-1512
F +49 30 2033-1505
s.mueller@arbeitgeber.de

Sources


Beicht, Ursula; Krewerth, Andreas; Eberhard, Verena; Granato, Mona: Viel Licht – aber auch Schatten. Qualität dualer Berufsausbildung in Deutschland aus Sicht der
Behrens, M. et. al. (2008)
Taking a straightforward detour: learning and labour market participation in the German apprenticeship system. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, vol. 60, nr.1, pp.93-104

BIBB (Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung), (2006)
*Gestaltung der Flexibilitätsspielräume in der Berufsbildung: Ausbildende Fachkraft und selbstorganisiertes Lernen.*
http://www2.bibb.de/tools/gesamtverzeichnis/index.php?action=medium&mid=3098

BIBB (Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung), (2006)
*Qualitätssicherung von beruflicher Aus- und Weiterbildung. Ergebnisse aus dem BIBB.*
Wissenschaftliche Diskussionspapiere, Heft 78:

Bund-Länder-Kommission für Bildungsplanung und Forschungsförderung (BLK), 2005

The German Dual System – a model for Europe? *Education + Training*, vol.39, nr. 8, pp.297-302

Deissinger, T. & Hellwig, S. (2005)

http://www.dgb.de/themen/themen_a_z/abisz_doks/a/ausbildungreport_2008_lang.pdf


Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training: Vocational Training Regulations and the Process Behind Them. Bonn 2006. URL:


German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, 2008
*Berufsbildungsbericht 2008.* Retrieved from the WWW, 26th March, 2009 from:
http://www.bmbf.de/pub/bbb_08.pdf


Annex 3. Sources from Romania

Contact persons

Dana Stroie
Quality Assurance Expert
National Centre for TVET Development/ Project Implementation Unit for PHARE

10-12, Spiru Haret Street, Bucharest, 1, cod 010176
Tel + 4 021/311.11.62
Fax + 4 021/312.54.98
Website: www.tvet.ro
dana.stroie@tvet.ro

Nela Plugarescu
National Adult Training Board
Nela.plugarescu@cnfpa.ro

Employer representative from an international enterprise. (Wanted to be anonymous).

Sources

S.C. „Daewoo Mangalia Heavy Industries” S.A. and 4 TVET schools in the naval construction domain

“Together for education and training” – partnership between S.C. „Daewoo Mangalia Heavy Industries” S.A. and 4 TVET schools in the naval construction domain.

“Improving continuity and coherence of competences’ development through work based learning” – partnership between a TVET high school and a range of 4 stars hotels.

METRO EDUCATION – a cooperation project between the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth and the Metro Group, regarding the development of the quality of TVET students practical training.

WBL Agreement for TVET
Self Assessment Manual (national) for QA in TVET
External Monitoring Manual for QA in TVET
Annex 4. Sources from The Netherlands

Contact persons
Mirjan de Lange, COLO, +31-79-3294047
MBO Raad: Jurgen Holz: 030 - 221 98 61

Thea van den Boom, Senior Beleidsmedewerker, Directie Beroepsonderwijs en Volwasseneneducatie

Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap
Rijnstraat 50, 2515 XP Den Haag/ IPC 2150
Postbus 16375, 2500 BJ Den Haag/ IPC 2150

Sources
Engelstalige BPV-overeenkomst

Manfred Polzin (MBO Raad) for de LdV project WBL Toi Manual: Good practices WBL in The Netherlands (29 June 2009)

MBO-Ra-MEMO GP in WBL

Practical Training Contract for . ,Under the ADULT AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACT


The Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) in its report Blijken van goede dienstverlening [Marks of Good Service] (December 2004),

Supervision Framework for Adult Education and Vocational Training 2007, established 12 July 2007 by the IGO

Toezicht in vertrouwen, vertrouwen in toezicht (2006) [Supervision in Trust, Trust in Supervision].

Zes principes van goed toezicht [Less burden, greater effect. Six principles of good supervision]. Dutch Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2006

Links

www.colo.nl
www.mboraad.nl
www.minocw.nl
www.rekenkamer.nl
http://www.nlnrp.nl/en/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>A.0.1 Define aims</th>
<th>The strategy for working with employers defines aims and approaches which are communicated to appropriate stakeholders.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.0.2 Define market</td>
<td>The strategy for working with employers includes an analysis of the market, key customer groups and sectors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.0.3 Define results</td>
<td>The strategy for working with employers defines specific, measurable and time-bound objectives, which are communicated to appropriate stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamentals</td>
<td>A.1.1 Manage people</td>
<td>The people arranging and delivering training solutions are reviewed regularly for performance and capability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.1.2 Manage resources</td>
<td>The resources used to deliver training solutions are reviewed regularly for availability and quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.1.3 Manage information</td>
<td>Employers are made aware, through appropriate information channels, of the range of training solutions available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respond</td>
<td>A.2.1 Manage enquiries</td>
<td>An employer’s enquiry is handled promptly and flexibly, and is reviewed regularly against standards of customer service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.2.2 Understand needs</td>
<td>An employer’s wants are established and underlying business needs identified to shape solutions tailored to its requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.2.3 Manage referrals</td>
<td>An employer is referred to appropriate alternatives when an appropriate training solution cannot be provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.2.4 Propose solutions</td>
<td>Proposals for the delivery of a solution are based on specific and realistic outcome targets reflecting the employer’s business needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.2.5 Present proposals</td>
<td>Proposals are presented in ways which recognise the employer’s preferences and circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver</td>
<td>A.3.1 Prepare delivery team</td>
<td>The people delivering training solutions are briefed fully on the requirements and background of the employer before they begin working with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.3.2 Prepare customers</td>
<td>The employer and its employees are given appropriate briefing before delivery of a training solution begins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.3.3 Manage progress</td>
<td>Training solution delivery is reviewed regularly for quality and customer service, and the employer is informed of progress made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.3.4 Manage feedback</td>
<td>The employer’s feedback on training solution delivery is sought and acted upon promptly where appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relate</td>
<td>A.4.1 Review outcomes</td>
<td>The outcome targets agreed at the proposal stage are reviewed upon delivery to identify and address the employer’s unmet business needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.4.2 Manage relationships</td>
<td>The relationship with an employer is managed and developed, with contact maintained at appropriate intervals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform</td>
<td>A.5.0 Achieve results</td>
<td>Indicators and outcomes of performance against strategic objectives show an improving trend or a sustained high level of performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.5.1 Satisfy employers</td>
<td>Employers’ satisfaction with services shows an improving trend or a sustained high level of performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.5.2 Impact employers</td>
<td>Employers’ assessment of impact on business needs shows an improving trend or a sustained high level of performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve</td>
<td>A.6.1 Review performance</td>
<td>Performance against strategy and in satisfying and impacting employers is reviewed at an appropriate level, and as a result improvements are implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.6.2 Develop services</td>
<td>The range and content of training solutions offered continues to evolve and improve.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: http://www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk/uploaded/files/tqs-mappingguide-1v0.pdf

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Define aims</th>
<th>Define market</th>
<th>Define results</th>
<th>Understand employers</th>
<th>Understand stakeholders</th>
<th>Deploy products and services</th>
<th>Deploy people</th>
<th>Deploy resources</th>
<th>Achieve results</th>
<th>Achieve impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.0.1</td>
<td>The strategy for working with the sector defines aims and approaches which are communicated to appropriate stakeholders.</td>
<td>The strategy for working with the sector includes an analysis of the market and key customer groups.</td>
<td>The strategy for working with the sector defines specific, measurable and time-based performance objectives, which are communicated to appropriate stakeholders.</td>
<td>Input is sought from sector employers on their expectations for training solutions and common business needs.</td>
<td>Input is sought from appropriate stakeholders to share good practice and understand the sector's common business needs.</td>
<td>Products and services are developed and delivered to sector expectations and employers' business needs.</td>
<td>The people arranging and delivering products and services have the knowledge and skills to meet sector expectations.</td>
<td>The resources used to arrange and deliver products and services meet sector expectations.</td>
<td>Indicators of performance against strategic objectives show an improving trend or a sustained high level of performance.</td>
<td>Impact on the sector shows an improving trend or sustained high level of performance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk/uploaded/files/tqs-mappingguide-1v0.pdf](http://www.trainingqualitystandard.co.uk/uploaded/files/tqs-mappingguide-1v0.pdf)
Annex 7. Sources from Leonardo da Vinci projects

Contact persons
Pavol Krempasky
Project Manager
Phone +32 2 299 78 60 (direct line)
Fax +32 2 292 13 27
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu
Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
P3 Leonardo da Vinci and Studies, Indicators and Dissemination BU29 2/78
Avenue du Bourget 1
B-1140 Brussels
Belgium

All type of approved Leonardo da Vinci projects (national agencies and EACEA are responsible for) could be found in ADAM portal:
http://www.adam-europe.eu/adam/homepageView.htm

Projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Project number and year.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and Guidance Measures for Job Seekers on the System Level.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing the planning of work-based learning by transferring and</td>
<td>(2008-1-FI1-LEO05-00452)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implementing existing good practises in Common Quality Assurance Framework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(WBL-TOI_MANUAL).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review Extended II - Transfer and further development of the European</td>
<td>(LLP-LdV/TOI/2007/AT/0011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review methodology as an element of the Common Quality Assurance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework (CQAF).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of Quality Management System for vocational education and</td>
<td>(LdV/TOI/2007/LV/007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>training organizations in the field of agriculture.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving Quality of Informal Learning through tools and instruments for</td>
<td>(D704/B/F/PP-146 169).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>workplace learning partnerships (WLPs)</td>
<td>Phillip Grollmann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:Grollmann@uni-bremen.de">Grollmann@uni-bremen.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://itb.uni-bremen.de">http://itb.uni-bremen.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STOP &amp; RESTART -- Spiral Training for training Operators:</td>
<td>(I/03/B/F/PP–154058)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REfreshing Skills, Tools And Remotivating on Target</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Dissipation of the FWBL methodology to innovative continuing professional development | (LLP-LdV-ToI/2008/806). Bente Nørgaard  
Aalborg University, Denmark  
bente@cpd.aau.dk  
www.elite.auu.dk |
| Past Experience Recognized for Future Excellence through Coaching and Training 50+ | (DE/07/LLP-LdV/TOI/147029) |
| SETTING UP A COMMON EUROPEAN STRATEGY TOWARD TUTORS OF TRAINEES IN THE BUILDING COMPANIES | (FR/06/B/P/PP-152512) |
| Vocational Qualification Transfer System VQTS I and VQTS II. | (A/03/B/F/PP-158.034).  
http://vqts.netletter.at/  
Mag.a Karin Luomi-Messerer  
Research 3s research laboratory  
Wiedner Hauptstraße 18, 1040 Wien  
Tel +43-1-5850915-41, Fax –99  
luomi-messererr@3s.co.at, |
<p>| BE CuLT eXTeND INNOVET Mobility | (DE/08/LLP-LdV/TOI/147131). (AT/08/LLP-LdV/IVT/158044.) |
| Practical Approaches to optimize and implement joint cross-border vocational education and training in crafts and skilled trades | DE/07/LLP-LdV/TOI/147032 |
| European Electronics Workshop Team Promoting EuroSkills and National Competitions (EEWT). | 2008-1-FI1-LEO05-00458 |
| Work placement evaluation: more professional competences in graphic and design. | (D/2005/PL/43040001F8) |
| Placement Support – Development of Support Materials for Foreign Placements in SMEs. (NL/01/B/F/PP-123135). | (D/2005/PL/43040001F8) |
| Learning from different vocational systems – development of tools to integrate and assess abroad work placement. | (D/2004/EX/4303500323). |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Work Placements for Students.</td>
<td>(A/06/A/F/PL-158.802)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality management and qualification needs analysis</td>
<td>(DE/95/2/190/III.2a/C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Elements for Quality Assurance within practice oriented Higher Education</td>
<td>(A/05/B/F/PP-158..215)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality development and quality assurance with labour market reference.</td>
<td>(D/05/B/F/PP-146 274)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Annex 8. Overview of Leonardo da Vinci projects within WBL and quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Key WBL-aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality Assurance</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUINORA - International Quality Assurance Programme in Vocational Orientation and Guidance Measures for Job Seekers on the System Level. (A/05/B/F/PP-158. 201).</td>
<td>Develop a quality assurance programme in scope of international quality standards and of an e-learning tool to implement these measures on the system and meta level. Make aware the influence of different core actors on the quality of vocational orientation and activation. Improve communication between core actors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality development and quality assurance with labour market reference. (D/05/B/F/PP-146 274)</td>
<td>Development of a systematic support for the development, assessment and assurance of quality of the learning offers. Quality aspects of outsourcing of enterprises training departments. Development of a quality assurance and development system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of Elements for Quality Assurance within practice oriented Higher Education (A/05/B/F/PP-158..215)</td>
<td>Developing elements of quality assurance in selected “key processes” for practice and professional field oriented higher education. Focus on practice oriented higher education institutions with an outlook to their integrative role between VET and HE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing the planning of work-based learning by transferring and implementing existing good practises in Common Quality Assurance Framework (WBL-TOI_MANUAL) (2008-1-FI1-LEO05-00452)</td>
<td>The focus is on planning of the work-based learning according to needs of partners and national experiences. The apprenticeship training partners are involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review Extended II - Transfer and further development of the European Peer Review methodology as an element of the Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF)</td>
<td>Facilitate the transfer and further development of the European Peer Review methodology as an element of the Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF). New types of schools including schools for apprenticeship training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Standards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Management Systems</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of Quality Management System for vocational education and training organizations in the field of agriculture. (LdV/TOI/2007/LV/007)</td>
<td>Clarifying and intensifying training and advisory services of the partner organisations by using Quality management System (QMS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improving quality of VET offered by the advisory organizations for rural entrepreneurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developing competitiveness of rural enterprises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase professional qualification of staff of the Ministry of Agriculture and the institutions reporting to the Ministry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partnerships</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improving Quality of Informal Learning through tools and instruments for workplace learning partnerships (WLPs) (D704/B/F/PP-146 169). <a href="http://itb.uni-bremen.de">http://itb.uni-bremen.de</a></td>
<td>Development of sectoral Workplace Learning Partnerships (WLPs) networks of specialised enterprises with shared sectoral HRD interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop tools for VET teachers, trainers and managers with which sectoral informal learning opportunities can be fully exploited and WLPs can be integrated and managed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers and Trainers</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STOP &amp; RESTART -- Spiral Training for training Operators: REFreshing Skills, Tools And Remotivating on Target (I/03/B/F/PP–154058)</td>
<td>Training models and instruments for the operators (trainers, tutors and mentors) involved in learning processes characterized by the theory-practical alternation. Guidelines/handbook for training operators and in the production of prototypes for three training pathways on multimedia and multi-language supports, enjoyable at distance and directed to develop management competences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Further develop the quality of VET.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning by the use of “best practice”. Exchange of methods and tools among teachers and trainers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TrainerGuide - a web-tool for in-company trainers</strong>&lt;br&gt;(LLP-LdV-Tol/2008/802).</td>
<td>Increase the quality of in-company training of apprentices/trainees within VET.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dissipation of the FWBL methodology to innovative continuing professional development</strong>&lt;br&gt;(LLP-LdV-Tol/2008/806).</td>
<td>Facilitated work based learning methods for designing tailor-made continuing professional development of individuals or groups of employees consistent with the company needs, project schedules and workload of the employees. Test and improve a teacher training programme that will support VET teachers in planning and facilitating tailor-made continuing professional development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past Experience Recognized for Future Excellence through Coaching and Training 50+</strong>&lt;br&gt;(DE/07/LP-LdV/TOI/147029)</td>
<td>Development of a curriculum that empowers trainers in vocational education and training in companies to support elderly employees in regard to VET. Focus on trainers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SETTING UP A COMMON EUROPEAN STRATEGY TOWARD TUTORS OF TRAINEES IN THE BUILDING COMPANIES</strong>&lt;br&gt;(FR/06/B/P/PP-152512)</td>
<td>1. Description of the tutoring function in small &amp; medium sized construction companies: analysis of national systems. 2. Analysis of the perception of the tutoring function in the partner countries. 3 Reference frame for activities &amp; competencies of the company tutors in the construction sector in Europe. 4. Tools permitting to accompany the company tutors in their function as trainers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work placement evaluation: more professional competences in graphic and design.</strong>&lt;br&gt;(D/2005/PL/43040001F8)</td>
<td>Evaluation of work placement Professional competences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Work Placements Abroad**

<p>| <strong>Placement Support – Development of Support Materials for Foreign Placements in SMEs.</strong>&lt;br&gt;(NL/01/B/F/PP-123135). | Focus on learning needs of young workers taking up employment in another European country. Analyse training needs and develop specific training modules to address identified skills gaps. |
| <strong>Vocational Qualification Transfer System</strong> | Quality assurance processes for learning periods abroad. Minimum quality standards for a company or school to train and |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project/Programme</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A/03/B/F/PP-158.034).</td>
<td>coach students at a placement abroad. Assessment of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.vocationalqualification.net">www.vocationalqualification.net</a></td>
<td>Learning from different vocational systems – development of tools to integrate and assess abroad work placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BE CuLT eXTeND (DE/08/LLP-LdV/TOI/147131).</td>
<td>Develop a learning platform suitable for trainees who leaves for a placement abroad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INNOVET Mobility (AT/08/LLP-LdV/IVT/158044.)</td>
<td>International experience for the students. Publication of the international experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Approaches to optimize and implement joint cross-border vocational education and training in crafts and skilled trades DE/07/LLP-LdV/TOI/147032</td>
<td>Checklist for LaWA (learn and work abroad) implementation. Grit for self assessment. Practical Approaches to optimize and implement joint cross-border vocational education and training in crafts and skilled trades.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis of Training Needs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mapping of competencies as a new tool of knowledge management in a company (2008-1-PL1-LEO05-02057)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Promotion of apprenticeship programmes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
The ENQA-VET study on quality assurance systems in work based learning and assessment in European VET

QUESTIONNAIRE

The main objectives of this ENQA-VET study are:

(1) to provide ENQA-VET with sufficient information to be confident about how quality assurance systems can and do support work based learning and assessment. The final report will present a range of approaches and include an analysis of how each of these approaches is effective in ensuring valid, reliable and consistent assessments;

(2) to help ENQA-VET by commenting on how the EQARF is being, or can be used, to support further approaches to work based learning and assessment.

(3) to help Member-States to consider what more could be done, in their particular circumstances and from their perspective, to enhance quality assurance systems which support work based learning and assessment.

Work based learning cover a broad range of activities: apprenticeship, company training, training in partnership with a training provider, sector-based trade body and/or a local “chamber of commerce”.

The focus of this questionnaire is Work Based Learning (WBL) in youth educations, which mainly is covered by apprenticeship.

We will collect opinions from different actors:
- System level
- VET-provider level
- Social partners level (both employers and employees)

I will call you and find and find the time for an interview based on the enclosed questions. But I will be glad if you can complete the questionnaire and return it to faco@spo.dk before the interview.

Deadline: July 1st 2009.
General characteristics of apprenticeship

In this section we would like to obtain information about apprenticeship in general.

| How big a proportion of the total education time is spent at the workplace? |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Below 50%                  | Between 51% and 70%         | More than 70%               |
| No                         | Yes                        |                             |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the apprenticeship contract have a fixed duration?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are the apprenticeship governed by a statutory framework (e.g. regulating the duration for apprenticeship)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are the examinations for award of apprenticeship certification externally set?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does a completed apprenticeship lead to a nationally recognized qualification?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who pays for the quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are the apprentices integrated into full-time education structures (e.g. does apprenticeship constitute a separate track from full-time education?)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is the employer commitment?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The roles of the Social partners

In this section we would like to obtain information about the Social Partners roles in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are the roles of the Social Partners in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship/WBL?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What motivates the Social Partners to contribute actively in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship/WBL?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are the enterprises expected to be more or less willing to bear the costs of apprenticeship/WBL the coming years?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do the enterprises have the updated technology in order to deliver high quality apprenticeship/WBL?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
The roles of the VET-providers

In this section we would like to obtain information about the VET-providers (Schools) roles in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship.

- What are the roles of the VET-providers in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship/WBL?
- What motivates the VET-providers to contribute actively in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship/WBL?
- How are the contacts/communication between the VET-provider and the enterprise organised?

The roles of the students

In this section we would like to obtain information about the students’ roles in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship/WBL.

- What are the roles of the students in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship/WBL?
- What motivates the students to contribute actively in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship/WBL?
- How are the contacts/communication between the VET-provider, the enterprise and the student (apprentice) organised?
- Are the students expected to demand more or less places for apprenticeship/WBL the coming years?

The roles at System Level
In this section we would like to obtain information about the roles at System Level (Ministry) in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the roles of the Ministry in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship/WBL?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What motivates the Ministry to contribute actively in quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship/WBL?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which mechanisms at system level (e.g. laws, structures, funding) shall support the quality of apprenticeship/WBL?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the feedback on quality assurance and assessment of apprenticeship/WBL from the enterprises and the VET-providers to the Ministry organised?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General questions in relation to quality and assessment of apprenticeship**

In this section we would like to obtain information about the how the quality of apprenticeship can be raised and how the quality can be measured by the use of indicators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How can the quality of apprenticeship be raised?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the dialogue between the different actors?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You do not say what you think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You say what you think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You do what you say, and you say what you think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You see what you do, you do what you say, and you say what you think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What will be good quality indicators for the quality of WBL and assessment?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The actors (social partners, students, parents, VET-providers, ...) involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(number, motivation, activities, dialogue, ....)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The completion rate of the apprentices/students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The employment rate of the apprentices/students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The time from training/WBL to jobs/the labour market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The qualification rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The length of apprenticeship/WBL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share of VET providers applying internal quality assurance systems defined by law/at own initiative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Share of accredited VET-providers
Share of accredited training places
Share of teachers and trainers participating in further training
The amount of funds invested in further training of teachers and trainers
Number of participants in apprenticeship/WBL
Satisfaction rate of individuals and employers with acquired skills/competences
Percentage of participants in apprenticeship/WBL classified as disadvantaged groups
Success rate of disadvantaged groups
Information on mechanisms set up to identify changing demands (training needs) at different levels
Information on existing schemes used to promote better access to VET

CONTACT DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-mail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Potential files</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you!
### Annex 10. Quality criteria from BIBB REPORT 9/09

#### Übersicht 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitätsebene der Ausbildenden</th>
<th>Gewichte zur Berechnung der Qualitätstrends (siehe Anmerkungen)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lernpriorisierung und Einhaltung</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Einholung von Auszubildenden-Feedback</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhalte, Methoden und Lemklima</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lernen im Arbeitsprozess</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fachliche Eignung der Ausbildende/innen</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pädagogische Eignung der Ausbildende/innen</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materialienbedingungen</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eignung und Präsenz der Lehrer/-innen</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materialienbedingungen</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lehrerklima</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kooperation der Lernorte</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zusätzliche Jugendspezifische Aspekte</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Indizes-Ebenen: I Kontexte, II Qualitätsbereiche, III Qualitätsunterbereiche

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitätsbereich der Ausbildenden</th>
<th>Gewichte</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>„Wie stark trifft es in Ihrer Ausbildung zu, dass...“</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Sp. T | Sp. 2 | Sp. 3 | Sp. 4 | Sp. 5 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sp.  T</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sp.  T</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sp.  T</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sp.  T</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sp.  T</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annex 11. Key findings from the peer learning activity in Denmark/Sweden 2008

Among the key findings and conclusions are:

- National plans and structures exist for WBL and are covered by law in all Member States.

- Apprenticeship training is in many Member States an integrated part of a “dual system”, combining training in workplaces with education and training at VET-colleges. Short and long term labour market training is also a major part of the work based learning activities in Europe. Many actors are involved in the implementation, with different roles of the students, VET-providers and enterprises in the Member States.

- Enterprises and VET-providers are often linked by different types of partnerships and contracts and the social partners are often heavily involved in curricula development which together with the upgrading of the trainers and teachers is key aspects of the quality assurance of WBL.

- A number of different mechanisms are in place in order to evaluate WBL, ranging from activities at provider level in enterprises to system level. The quality assurance procedures are mainly a matter for the enterprises and the knowledge and insight in the procedures are in general very limited.

- The use of quality indicators differs between the Member States, and is in general very limited.

- The feedback and procedures for change are organized very differently in the Member States. Participation in the feedback procedures also differ between the Member States both in relation to involvement, responsibility and methods. In general the feedback procedures are relatively unclear and not well described.

- The roles of the key stakeholders differ between the Member States, but the cases show the importance of the social partners and especially the role of the enterprises. The documentation of the quality assurance procedures for work based learning in enterprises is in general very limited.

- The motivation of enterprises to participate actively in the many forms of work based learning differs between the Member States. Financial support to the enterprises, taking responsibility for the next generation of workers, access to new workers and close contacts with providers is among the most used motivational tools.

- Partnerships between enterprises and VET-providers are commonly used way to make the links closer between these two worlds, which together are responsible for the whole education.
Annex 12. Key messages from the conference on WBL in Wiesbaden, Germany 2009

Key messages from the Conference:
- Member States that have developed a dual-system understand the importance of WBL in the efficiency of their economies.
- Due to the complexity of the different structures, motivating Member States to further improve this successful system has proven to be difficult.

Common issues related to QA for WBL among Member States:
- Quality assurance is seen as a key tool to improve WBL
- Exchange-platforms, like the Wiesbaden Conference, are seen as important for the process of improving WBL cross Member States.

Conference Workshops
Four topics were discussed with a view to achieving common conclusions and policy recommendations as follows:
1. Work based learning and the development of competences.
2. Quality management of work based learning in companies, especially in small and medium sized enterprises.
3. Cooperation between schools, companies and other learning sites: assuring quality.
4. Validation of informal work based learning.

The key policy conclusions from the Workshops are:
- Factors contributing to the development and improvement of employability are not only the adaptation of curricula to qualification requirements of working life but also the drafting of work based and practice oriented training units.
- Cooperation with other players in education for example the chambers of commerce, vocational schools and other small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) plays a particular role in quality assurance in SMEs. Qualification and continuing education of the training staff also plays a central role. The education policy aim is to motivate more SMEs to provide training.
- Cooperation between learning sites plays a central role in basic vocational training and in the development of competencies for apprentices’ in their occupation.
- Cooperation between learning sites also provides all players in VET with a platform for cooperating in the apprentices’ learning process at different levels. Learning site cooperation is the task of in-company or intercompany trainers and vocational school teachers.
- In order to make informally acquired skills visible and practical to the labour market, valid measuring and evaluation of the learning outcome is necessary. Outcome orientation is important in the discussions on the validation of informal learning.
Annex 13. General sources

Aarkrog, V. (2005)

Ainley, P. (2007)


Behrens, M. et. al. (2008)
Taking a straightforward detour: learning and labour market participation in the German apprenticeship system. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, vol. 60, nr.1, pp.93-104

Biermans, H. et. al. (2004)

Botrup, P. (2005)


CEDEFOP peer learning activities: Assuring the quality of the training in enterprises and the quality of the cooperation between VET-schools and enterprises (2007).

CEDEFOP. The Peer review and cross country analysis on quality of training in Enterprises (2005).


Dockery, A.M. et. al. (1998)

Fuller, A. & Unwin, L. (1998)

Patterns of work based learning. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, vol.55, nr. 1, pp.47-64

http://communities.cedefop.europa.eu/quality


http://www.enqavet.eu


The concept of competence in the development of vocational education and training in selected EU member states: a critical analysis. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, vol.59, nr.1, pp.67-88


OECD (2008:1) Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators


SELF-TRANSCENDING KNOWLEDGE: Sensing and Organizing Around Emerging Opportunities. Forthcoming in: Journal of Knowledge Management. Special Issue on Tacit Knowledge Exchange and Active Learning


Smith, P.J. (2001)
Learners and their workplaces: towards a strategic model of flexible delivery of training in the workplace. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training,* vol.53, nr.4, pp.609-628

Learning as partners: realising the potential of work based learning. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training,* vol.52, nr.4, pp.584-604.

Contact Details

For further information please visit www.enqavet.eu or contact the ENQA-VET Secretariat.

FETAC, East Point Plaza,
East Point Business Park,
Dublin 3, Ireland.

T: 00353 1 865 9546
F: 00353 1 865 0072
E-mail: info@enqavet.eu
Website: www.enqavet.eu