Re-Integration Project

Information about findings from other European projects

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Quality through Self-Evaluation and Development

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Existing Evaluation approaches: examples

Evaluation has become an increasing subject of interest in educational non profit organisations during the last years because the idea that institutions which receive public funding should prove their quality is increasing outside but also inside the institutions. Evaluation tools with different approaches have been developed and are used in recent time. Regarding evaluation tools and their conception a development from strongly external evaluation approaches to approaches which combine self-evaluation and external evaluation is remarkable. Self-evaluation is becoming a more and more relevant aspect.

Below three actual evaluation tools for educational institutions will be presented. One is originally derived from an evaluation tool for profit organisations and has then been adapted for non-profit organisations in general. In connection with one of the German best practice examples we had the opportunity to be informed and to observe the adaptation of this tool for Re-Integration schemes. The other two evaluation tools are specially addressing schools. All of them combine self-evaluation and external evaluation but they do this to a different extent and they present different ways of utilisation. This has to be seen in the context of the actual stage of development.

At the end of this chapter aspects which can be learned from the three tools for the development of a European evaluation tool for Re-integration schemes will be listed.

The EFQM

The EFQM–Evaluation Tool is a quality management system which follows the TQM[1]-approach. That means that the EFQM-Model is a holistic system of quality management which includes not only the results but also focuses on the processes. The EFQM was originally developed by 14 leading European organisations in 1989. Nestle AG and Renault were two of them. Since the EFQM as a tool addresses

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[1] TQM stands for total quality management.

especially non-profit organisations which means organisations for which financial profit is no (important) target, the main aim is the continuous improvement of quality.

The underlying principle for non- profit organisations to practice evaluation is the conviction as well as the growing societal demand that organisations which are financially supported through taxes over long periods have to prove their quality.[2] This principle is more and more valued by practitioners in educational institutions too.

The aim of this evaluation is the initiation of a continuous improvement of the processes through structured benchmarking. That means that efficiency and the recognised quality of the institution should be developed and improved. The method of benchmarking steams from the economic background and is defined as follows:

> *"Benchmarking is the process of identifying, understanding, and adapting outstanding practices from organizations anywhere in the world to help your organization improve its performance."* [3] *"Benchmarking is a highly respected practice in the business world. It is an activity that looks outward to find best practice and high performance and then measures actual business operations against those goals."* [4]

Based on the EFQM-Modell and its proposed criteria institutions are able to develop their own "stamp of quality".
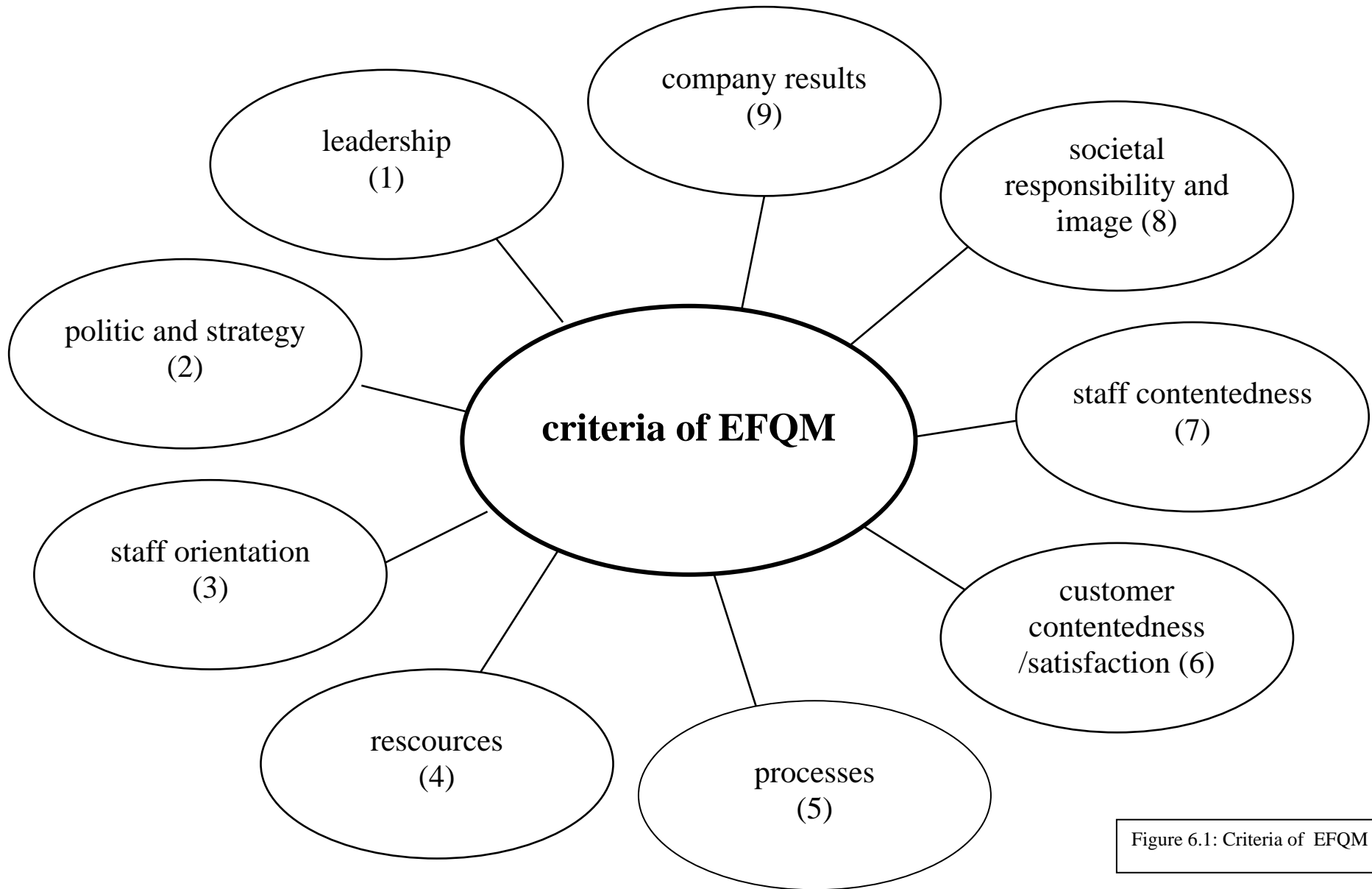
It has to be stated that authors of the EFQM advise potential users to choose two criteria to start the evaluation process with.

The criteria they have to take into account and they could choose from are the following.

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[2] In the German case this is established in the Runderlass 12/2002 of the Bundesanstalt für Arbeit.
[3] www.benchnet.com/wib.htm 6.7.2004
[4] ebd.

Figure 6.1: Criteria of EFQM

The diagram shows "criteria of EFQM" at the center, connected to:

- leadership (1)
- politic and strategy (2)
- staff orientation (3)
- rescources (4)
- processes (5)
- customer contentedness /satisfaction (6)
- staff contentedness (7)
- societal responsibility and image (8)
- company results (9)

The criteria named above are specified more detailed in the concept of the EFQM. In order to give an overview one criterion will be presented including its further specifications: This will be criterion 5:

Processes

This criterion is defined as follows: **How does the institution recognise, identify, carry through tests and improve its processes?**

It is divided into five subsections which deal with the following questions and for which several starting points are given:

5a "How are processes identified which are significant for the company results?"

Starting points could be, how the institution ...

…defines core and support processes (1)
…identifies core and support processes(2)
…values repercussion on the business results(3)

5b "In which way are the processes carried out systematically?"

Starting points could be, how the institution ...

…defines the persons involved in a process and the process leadership(4)
…establishes aims, contents and time related courses(5)
…uses planning and evaluation systems for the leading of processes(6)
…organises relations between the institutions(7)

5c "How are processes tested/ How are aims for improvements established?

Starting points could be, how the institution ...

…knows about, names and ranks methods of improvement(8)
…uses information from the staff, from suppliers and others for establishing achievement norms, priorities, and aims for improvement (9)
…initiates a continuous improvement process which compares former and recent achievements(10)

5d "In which way are processes improved through innovation and creativity?"

Starting points could be, how the institution ...

…integrates the creative talents of the staff into the improvement process(11)

…discovers and practices new forms, ways, cuts, technologies and philosophies(12)

…changes the organisational structure in order to support innovation and
   creativity(13)

5e "How are processes changed/How are the changes evaluated?

Starting points could be, how the institution ...

…uses the feedback from clients, suppliers and others to stimulate innovation and
   creativity for the leading of processes(14)

…tests new or changed processes and controls their introduction (15)

… informs internally and externally about process changes(16)

…qualifies members of staff in advance(17)

…tests short term results during the process in order to ensure the expected
   results(18)[5]

Regarding the questions and their starting points in detail in becomes clear that the term processes is meant in a broad sense. It not only includes learning processes but it means all processes which take place in the institution. Also improvement processes and self-evaluation processes are included. The starting points 8, 9, 10 as well as 18 for instance give information for initiating and testing an evaluation system. The starting points 11-13 take up the involvement of staff.

All the criteria mentioned in the mindmap are those chosen and used by one of our prepaths, the "Jugendaufbauwerk".

They developed their own "stamp of quality" which they call the "JAW Gütesiegel". This stamp of quality is based on the EFQM- Model and it has the following characteristics:

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[5] The definitions and starting points in the frame are a translated section from the list of criteria of JAW-Süderbrarup which has been developed under the leadership of its manager, Holger Delfs.
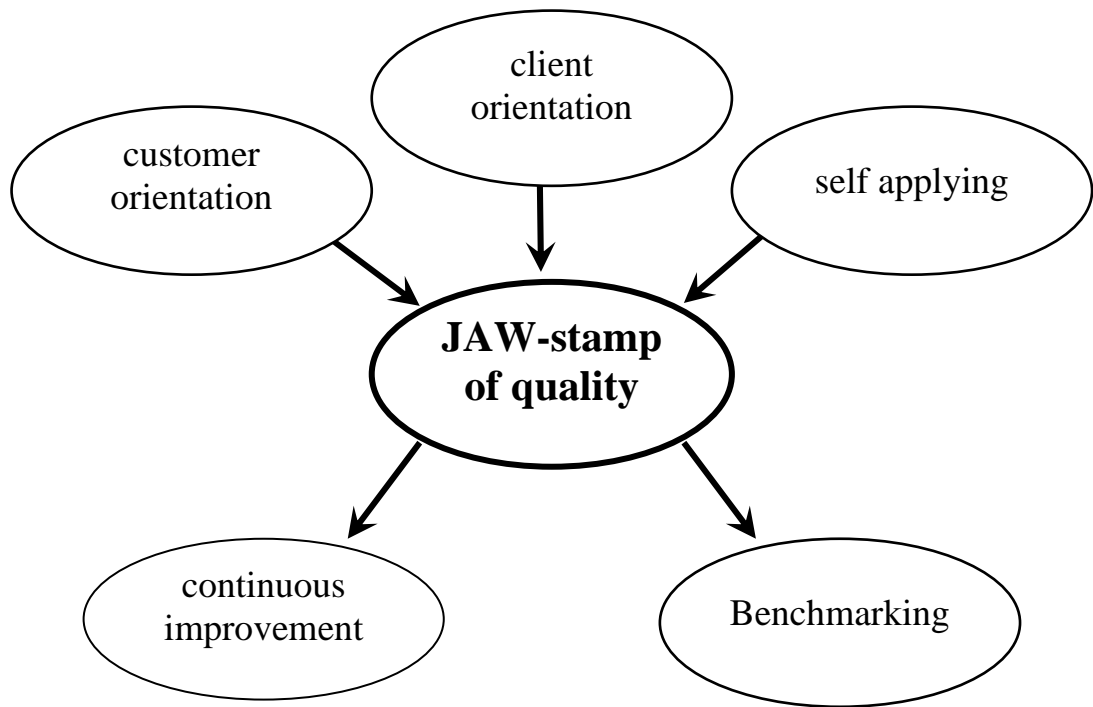
Figure 6.2: JAW-stamp of quality

Using the EFQM as an evaluation tool

The evaluation of the Re-Integration scheme takes place as a combination of external evaluation and self-evaluation. In the **first step** it takes place through self-evaluation which is based on two selected criteria of the table:::::::, a description of the pedagogical and the work processes in the different workshops. Furthermore the business results of the last three years are added. This procedure takes place every twelve months. Each time it is possible to choose different criteria.

The **second step** includes the coming in of external evaluators into the institution. These external evaluators belong to a pool of assessors which is built up by all JAW-organisations in the regional state. They work as follows: Firstly they interview members of staff and also trainees with regard to the information they took from the material of the first evaluation step. Secondly they go through all the papers restructuring the information and processes given in the material from the first evaluation step.

In a **third step** external evaluation can take place either through other quality management systems. The application for the *Quality Award of the Economy in Schleswig-Holstein* is one example. A special price for non-profit organisation is

offered every year. Or external evaluation can be demanded from the JAW-Verbund (Association of all JAWs).

The improvement of the Re-Integration scheme is, according to the leader, not dependent on the feedback of the external evaluators. Through the analysis of the processes new ideas are developed by the staff. Additionally they rethink the established processes. On this basis improvement is going on.

Underlying assumptions and targets of evaluation according to EFQM

The aspect which is central for the evaluation is similar to that in profit institutions: It is the question *"Is the client content with the product which is given?"*. In order to answer this question the customers – in this situation that means the labour office or the social ministry - are not asked directly, but it is presumed that the customer is content if his demands are fulfilled. Therefore the basis of evaluation are the standards demanded and established by the customer. This fact can not be regarded positively from all perspectives, because not all the standards given by the customers are sensible with regard to the Re-Integration process in practice. As an example the finding of long term placements for the trainees can be stressed. According to the standards given by the customer (– the labour office –) a social pedagogue - and not a member of staff with another professional background - in the Re-Integration scheme is responsible for finding a long term placement for a trainee. This demand is dismissing the interests and the attitude or the companies that should be convinced to offer a long term placement. Members of staff in such companies – often these are crafts enterprises – do not like to talk to the social pedagogue. They prefer to clear up the responsibility connected with the placement with persons who have a similar professional background. They are more willing to take in a trainee if they could talk to the master and get information about the skills of the trainee who should be taken on. But because the standards of the customer demand the above named persons to find the placements it is organised according to their demands.

This example shows that in this case the evaluation results can not have any improving influence on the practice of the Re-Integration scheme.

We do not want to judge the EFQM-Evaluation tool in a critical way because in practice the approach of reflecting the processes in several circles seems to work well. Although it is not clearly pointed out in the guide of EFQM self-evaluation

seems to play a major role in the whole EFQM-evaluation in practice. Nevertheless it has to be stated that to some extent the EFQM is an example for the aspect mentioned in chapter 3: Evaluation is often dominated by the national evaluation trends given through administrative bodies. Furthermore EFQM is an European evaluation tool, its design addresses the special customer interests which are based on the national context.

An aspect which appears to be even more problematic is the fact that the careers service focus´ mainly on the transition rates of each scheme when it comes to the provision of funding. It is important how many trainees are (re-)integrated into mainstream education, but the contents and the processes which are provided are ignored. Evaluation carried out as well as evaluation results do not seem to play a role for the award of financial support. This situation is calling the value of evaluation into question.

Advantages of the EFQM in comparison with other evaluation tools

The choice for EFQM instead of using quality management systems like ISO 9000ff was made because the EFQM-model has a special focus on non-profit organisations and on evaluating soft skills. For these reasons the EFQM—model is suitable for the JAW which offers Re-Integration schemes for young people who dropped out of the mainstream education for various reasons. Quality management systems like ISO 9000ff have a focus on the precision of products and are therefore not suitable for the institution because the latter ´s products are human beings who have to develop mainly soft skills and also "hard" competences. As it is said in chapter 3 soft skills demand a new design of evaluation and a specific type of evaluators. Nevertheless, the EFQM which leaves the evaluation in the first step with the practitioners can be seen as a big step towards the evaluation of soft outcomes.

Q2E as an example for an evaluation tool for schools

Below the evaluation tool Q2E which stands for *"quality through evaluation and development"* will be summarized. At some points aspects which are important for the QSED or the TRDM will be taken up. Q2E is an evaluation tool which was especially developed for schools also vocational schools in Switzerland during the

late nineties and which has already been tested successfully by a great number of schools. The Q2E tool combines self evaluation and external evaluation.

It demands a new understanding of quality within schools and it takes up three aspects of quality management in profit organisations and discusses and adapts them to the special situation of schools. These aspects are the following:
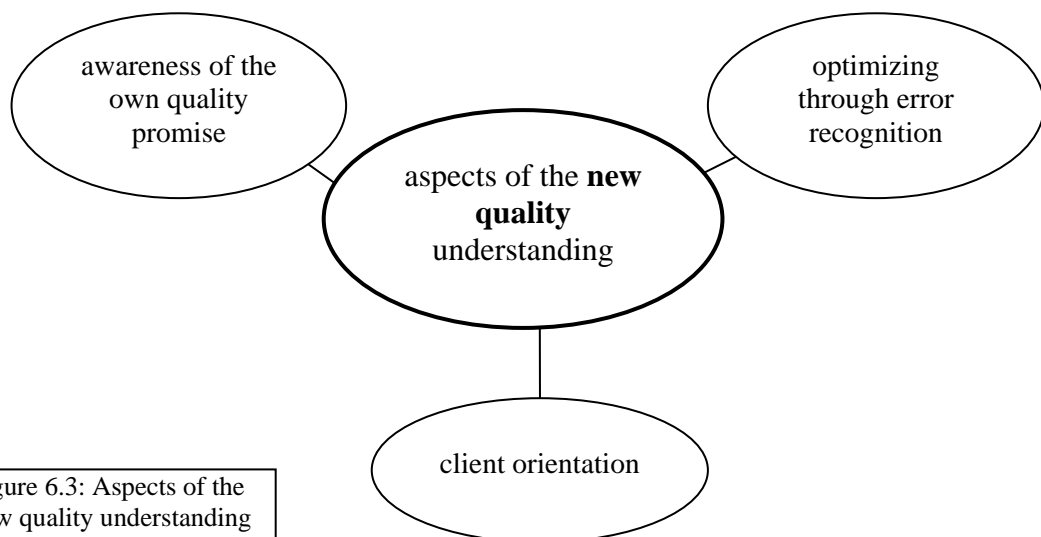

Figure 6.3: Aspects of the new quality understanding

According to the authors of Q2E LANDWEHR and STEINER (2003) these aspects need to be transferred into the new context of schools through redefining them.

If the **awareness of the own quality promise** means to prove and communicate self-established quality demands into an economic context this is an aspect which can not be taken over directly for non-profit organisations like schools in the educational sector. Even for Re-Integration schemes which are in some cases carried out by profit organisations this aspect is not directly transferable. In the educational sector it is important that the practitioners agree on a common approach which recognises the specific convictions of all/most members of staff.[6]

Optimizing through error recognition and analysis means to optimize products. While processes continuously change within an economic context it is different for educational processes. In these a definite division between right and wrong actions is not possible.

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[6] The TRDM could be the basis for constructing such a common approach or design for a Re-Integration scheme because it provides action criteria which are important cornerstones of Re-Integration at the institutional- and the structural-level. These action criteria can be filled with content and processes according to the convictions of the participating practitioners.

For the understanding of this characteristic within the educational sector LANDWEHR and STEINER suggest that all persons involved should search for quality deficits and possibilities for improvement. A quality discourse should be initiated in which results of the quality research are discussed. This is the basis for improvement in educational practice.

If **client orientation** means to meet client´ demands and as a result cause customer contentedness within the economic context this is a difficult aspect within educational systems. The authors of Q2E mention two specific difficulties within this context. Firstly schools or similar institutions have to recognise that their client group includes several subgroups which have different and often divergent demands. Regarding the situation of schools subgroups are e. g. pupils, parents and policy makers. Secondly in some cases client orientation can include to act against the subjective individual aims of the clients. School can not always correspond to the aims of pupils.

Construction of Q2E

The Q2E mainly includes five quality sections which should be evaluated in schools. These are **input qualities**, **process qualities regarding the institution**, **process qualities regarding teaching**, **output-/outcome qualities** and the section **quality management**. Every section contains three dimensions.

Every school needs a special evaluation tool according to its specific characterisitics.

Therefore the quality characteristics are formulated on a medium level of abstraction and complexity.[7]

As an example the following table from the Q2E should be presented as an example:

Shaping of teaching and learning processes(methodical-didactical arrangements)	1	2	3	4
1)The teacher attaches the importance that aims and intentions of the lessons are understood by the pupils. The learners see the importance of learning aims and contents.				
2)The teacher arrives at explaining complex learning processes and difficult facts in relation to experiences and knowledge of learners.				
3)The teacher arrives at initiating the pupils interest for the				

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[7] Landwehr (2003): Basisinstrument für Schulqualität, S. 5

contents and engaging them for participation.				
4)Space of active participation and self-directed learning of the pupils in the lessons is offered				
5)The teacher arrives at making the pupils aware of their responsibility for their learning and he supports this through adequate measures.				
6)The teaching is shaped in a way that pupils could create a strong relation between theory and their own experiences.				

This table is taken from the dimension *"social relations within teachin"g*. The numbers on the right side should be used as points or marks. The institution which uses Q2E has to define by itself if *"1"* should mean *"completely fulfilled"* or *"not considered"*. The second aspect of the above table should be taken to show the process of use in the institution in detail: *"The teacher arrives at explaining complex learning processes and difficult facts in relation to experiences and knowledge of learners*."

In order to evaluate this aspect through self-evaluation as well as through external evaluation the understanding of this aspect needs to be specified. Different options of fulfilling this aspect like project teaching or action orientated teaching are possible but not all of them are common and applicable in each school. For this reason it is up to the users of Q2E to establish more specific criteria. Additionally not all of the five sections and their fifteen dimensions are suitable for each school that wants to use Q2E. Furthermore it would be an overtaxing demand for one school to evaluate and to be evaluated through all fifteen dimensions. Therefore the school leader team and the evaluation team of a school are obliged to choose some of the aspects which are suitable for their school and which should be specified further.

In this context LANDWEHR proposes six ways of using the Q2E for evaluation practice[8] which are presented in the following graphic:
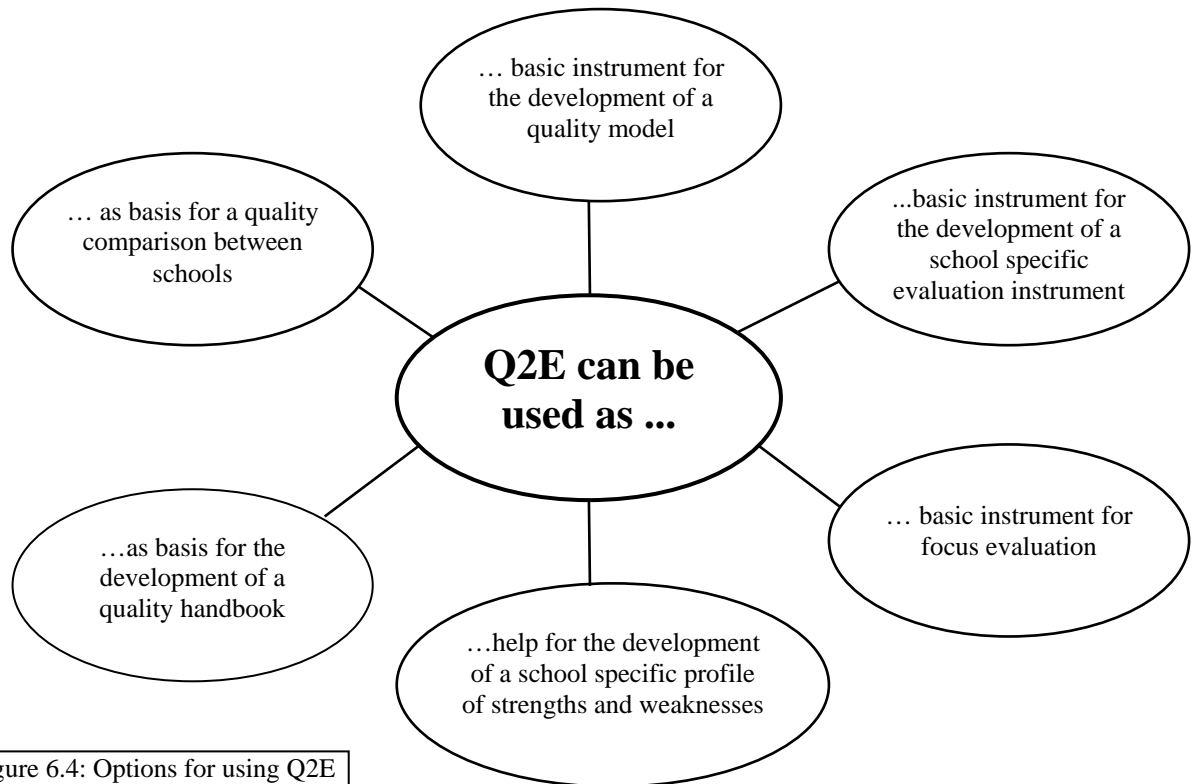
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[8] Landwehr(2003), S. 6-8.

Figure 6.4: Options for using Q2E

In the following the focus will be on aspects of **process qualities regarding teaching**. A second excerpt of the Q2E tool will be presented as an example. Both excerpts belong to the dimension "social relations and class leadership", one deals with the subject "social relations within teaching" and includes six questions which need to be developed further according to the special field in which the Q2E should be utilized in. The other which is already presented above deals with the subject "Shaping of teaching and learning processes (methodical-didactical arrangements)". In relation to each excerpt one way of using Q2E should be explained in more detail.

The characteristic "social relations between teacher and pupils" has been chosen because social relations – especially those between staff and participants - are an important aspect within Re-Integration schemes too. Some of these aspects might be transferable to the evaluation tool for Re-Integration schemes if the term "teacher" is replaced by the term "practitioners".

There are overlaps between the points mentioned in the following table and the criteria and questions which are mentioned under the headline "pedagogy" in the QSED.

Similar to the specifications which are demanded to be developed by the teachers using Q2E the QSED[9] demands users to choose questions from a pool which stands in relation to their specific scheme.

Relation between teacher and pupils	1	2	3	4
1) The contact between the teacher and the pupils is corresponding with the aims and values postulated in the whole school. The contact is determined by positive expectations.				
2) The teacher´s relation to the pupils is personal, highly regarding, friendly, respectful.				
3) The teacher takes time outside the lessons to look after pupils with problems				
4) In conflict situations the teacher makes efforts to search for the reasons and avoids convicting somebody as guilty before knowing all details.				
5) The teacher shows understanding if someone gives a wrong answer without intention. Mistakes are taken as learning chances.				
6) The teacher is regarded as fair.				

The above table could e.g. be used as basis for focus evaluation. All colleagues or a selected evaluation team of one school choose one or two of the fifteen dimensions because they recognise the significance of these dimensions for the specific situation of their school. In the case of this example the dimension "social relation and class leadership" has been chosen and the aspect "Relation between teacher and pupils" will be regarded and adapted to the specific school situation in detail. The evaluation team has three options. Either they could develop *"questioning items"* for interviews or questionnaires ," *observation items"* for teaching observations, conferences or school events or they could develop *"formulations of questions and criteria"* for the analysis of documents. Using these specific tools data regarding school quality should be collected and analysed. In a next step activities which strive for optimising the results should be planned, introduced into practice and finally evaluated again.

An important aspect which is additionally mentioned by LANDWEHR is that in the cases of some dimensions it might be useful to integrate the target groups into the choice of the dimensions and the further development of the basic instrument as well.

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[9] See chapter 7.

According to the different aspects which are mentioned in the above table different further developed tools might be applicable. Regarding the feature *"2)The teacher´s relation to the pupils is personal, highly regarding, friendly, respectful."* it might be useful to develop questionnaires which offer pupils to give anonymous statements. In relation to the feature *"5)The teacher shows understanding if someone gives a wrong answer without intention. Mistakes are taken as learning chances."* it might be useful to develop observation items which can be used for sitting in on teaching..

In this special case such observation items could be: If someone gives a wrong answer …

- - the teacher asks the others to contribute
- - smiles and gives non-verbal signs which signal that the answer is not correct

A second way of using the Q2E should be presented in relation to the excerpt "Shaping of teaching and learning processes (methodical-didactical arrangements)" which has already been presented above.

This table could be part of the basis of a comparative evaluation between schools.

It could be evaluated to what extend the approach of action orientation is realised in practice. Therefore, firstly the schools which participate in the comparison need to agree about the dimensions and features which should be taken into account. Data regarding the quality of teaching and learning processes will then be identified e.g. through observation of teaching and through analysis of teaching material. Data will be analysed. Finally schools with high quality results should be honoured and used as source or consultant for other schools.

In addition to the mentioned ways the Q2E could be used as basic instrument for the development of a quality model. This option of using the Q2E is presented in very detailed steps by LANDWEHR (2003). He argues that the development of a quality model is an indispensable basis for quality management in schools, because in a quality model the values, norms and standards of a school are established. These are the values, norms and standards which the school has chosen for self and external evaluation. In the quality model it is said "How the school wants to be?" Furthermore it can build the basis for the development of tools for school evaluation.

For instance, questionnaires for parents, pupils and teachers could be developed according to the quality model. In this context it is important to state that the quality

model is not identical with a school profile. A quality model is an internal not an external working tool.

Furthermore such a quality model can be the basis for employee interviews. It defines the frame for external school evaluation and it defines school development targets.

EVIT

EVIT stands for *"external EValuation Im Team"* and it is an evaluation tool which is on the way to be established in the general schools of the state Schleswig-Holstein in Germany at the moment. During the last two years it has been tested by a few schools in pilot projects. EVIT is strongly linked to Q2E. It combines external evaluation with self-evaluation. The aims of EVIT are defined as follows in the handbook[10]

-schools should take over responsibility for their strengths, their deficits and
   development requirements
-make sure which effects they have achieved through their work
-give schools input for their development

EVIT offers questionnaires for the different clients of the and persons involved in the school: pupils, parents and teachers The questionnaires take up contents like "social behaviour" and "communication". The addressees of the questionnaires answer through ticking one of six boxes with headlines from "often" to "never" or from "completely fulfilled" to "not realised at all".

Self-evaluation should be carried out continuously through an evaluation team in each school. External evaluation is proposed to be carried out every five to six years.

The EFQM and the Q2E include good and challenging aspects – nevertheless a different evaluation tool is necessary

The EFQM-Model and its use in the JAW-Gütesiegel as well as the Q2E seem to be useful for their utilisation in practice. According to our accompanying observations the EFQM works well and is highly regarded by the members of staff of our best

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[10] Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kultur in Schleswig-Holstein
   (2003):Externe Evaluation im Team – EVIT - Handbuch für die Pilotphase.

practice examples. Also the description of the use of Q2E give the impression that practitioners appreciate the evaluation tool and especially the options for self evaluation.

Nevertheless there are some aspects which seem of great importance to us and which lead us to developing the basis for a different evaluation tool: QSED which stands for Quality through Self-Evaluation and Self-Development. The reasons for developing a completely new evaluation tool have three dimensions:

Firstly the aims, the contents and the organisation of Re-Integration schemes are different from those in schools and they are different in the European countries. Therefore an European evaluation tool for Re-Integration needs to be broad in order to fit in with all national contexts. Nevertheless it has to include specific criteria which address central aspects of each scheme.

Secondly in relation to these content related aspects it becomes clear that regarding Re-Integration schemes the extent of self-evaluation needs to be extended.

Thirdly the presented tools EFQM and Q2E address mainly the institutional and individual level but they do not stress aspects which are related to the socio-economic context. Especially in relation to Re-Integration schemes which deal with problems of political relevance the socio-economic dimension cannot be excluded.

In comparison with the presented evaluation tools EFQM and Q2E, the QSED has a much stronger focus on self-evaluation. Before presenting the new evaluation tool the critical points which lead to its development will be mentioned in relation to the other two tools which were fruitful and assisting steps on the way to the development of QSED.

Evaluation is a great issue in non-profit organisations in Germany - e.g. large evaluation processes for school evaluation (EVIT – external Evaluation in a Team/Quabs – Qualitätsverbesserung in der Berufsschule) have just completed the pilot phases and will be used in all schools in Schleswig-Holstein respectively in different regional states, especially in Bavaria, within the next three years. But it has turned out that evaluation is always connected with fears of the staff in the institution that has to be evaluated. People are afraid that their work will be devalued, that they will lose funding through the results of the evaluation and that they will lose reputation. This is one reason according to which we suggest that self-evaluation or

better said self-reflection, not external evaluation should be the central focus fostering and initiating evaluation of Re-Integration schemes.

According to our experiences during the Re-enter and the Re-integration research we assume that self-evaluation by using an European tool could be especially fruitful because new aspects, for example regarding the subjects and the work processes that are offered or regarding the institutional organisation, could be taken on. A European evaluation tool - like QSED - always names aspects which seem to be unfamiliar to the practitioners in their national context. Rethinking and discussing such aspects with colleagues might initiate the introduction of new aspects into their Re-Integration scheme then. This process can be understood as mutual learning.

Furthermore we assume that, related to the fact that in none of the countries is a special profession for those working in Re-Integration schemes, the fears to be evaluated are huge.[11]

As a result of the lack of special professional characteristics for staff in Re-Integration schemes judgement is feared especially because the content of evaluation seems broad and difficult to ascertain for them. A clear definition of what a good Re-Integration scheme and a good Re-Integration practitioner are not existing.

Even the existing tool Q2E which already has a strong focus on self-evaluation needs further development regarding self-evaluation for Re-Integration schemes. This is due to the fact that the underlying principles and aims of schools are common in all European countries. In contrast the underlying principles and aims of Re-Integration schemes are different in the European countries as it is pointed out in chapter 2 and in chapter 12 because the countries have different vocational education systems and these have to be seen in relation to different socio-economic systems.

Another aspect that does not only legitimate the development of a different evaluation tool but also demands an extended evaluation tool is the fact that is already mentioned above: Evaluation carried out for example through the EFQM will not face a great number of challenges between the **meso-** and the **macro-level** because tools like the EFQM are customer orientated. For this reason the evaluation addresses the demands of the customer and it is not evaluated if aspects on the **macro-level** disturb the scheme process. As it will be mentioned in chapter 9 some

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[11] In the chapter „Practitioners Voices" this is partly confirmed.

practitioners have the opinion that rules and regulations on the socio-economic level bother their daily work. In the case of Germany for example the aspect that trainees are assigned to the Re-Integration schemes through the labour office is seen as an obstacle. Within an evaluation that takes into account the customer interests this obstacle would never be identified. For this reason the partners of the project agreed that a different European evaluation instrument is necessary in order to give the practitioners a tool to reflect their schemes themselves. They need a methodology to identify obstacles on the different levels of their schemes and as a result be able to improve the scheme or in an ideal case to engage in influencing the socio-economic level.

Learning from the EFQM, Q2E for the development of an European evaluation tool for Re-Integration schemes

The following aspects can be taken from the Q2E for the development of an evaluation instrument for Re-Integration

Evaluation tools designed by researchers …

- should and could only be basic instruments which need to provide options for further development and adaptations through practitioners of the specific field.

  - ➢ should be designed in a way which offers multilevel applications
  - ➢ should support and demand the self-responsibility of practitioners through the definition of specific common aims.
  - ➢ should contain information about the start the self-evaluation process

(Self-)Evaluation for Re-Integration schemes

Following the critical reflection on the existing approaches for evaluation the instrument for the field of re-integration schemes was developed, the "QSED". As was described in chapter 5 it is based on comprehensive qualitative field research, identifying as a first step the general preconditions for successful situated learning processes of the participants where learning is understood in a broad sense as development of occupational, social and personal competences, the combination of

which leads to autobiographical action competence. The latter means the capability of people on the one hand to reconstruct their lives as a sensible succession of stages even if difficult breaks have been experienced. On the other hand, this means that the next thresholds to be surmounted can be viewed as a sequence of challenges that can be met instead of only unsolved problems which linger on in the future.

The next step was to construct lists of criteria for the evaluation of adequate conditions for situated learning and training concepts and processes and their further development, with special regard to the three levels (macro, meso, micro). These lists of criteria had to be generated in a self-reflective way, based again on extensive field research, employing the method of "Grounded Theory" (Glaser, Strauss). In this way, they are specific to the socio-economic and cultural peculiarities of the participating countries although exchange between the partners introduced new theoretical aspects by way of mutual learning.

The macro-level is especially important since not only the conditions for models and processes in the single schemes are of relevance. Rather the "landscape" of the programmes implemented in a country has to be analysed as a whole.

Afterwards the task was to assess and improve the validity of the lists of criteria by applying the to different schemes, including in this way new criteria; to design on this basis sets of criteria which are systematically constructed so as not to leave out important features.

The main aim here was to assess the validity of the criteria by finding out if the respective list is comprehensive and to construct a theoretically founded set of dimensions to which they are to be related. In this way an analytical tool was developed which can be used for systematic evaluation

In pursuing this task theoretical differences between two main approaches had to be dealt with. In a strongly actor-based approach evaluation, even self-evaluation, is seen as an instrument of external control which introduces criteria that can not catch the peculiarities of a very specific course. In a strongly market-based society the question of "value for money" has of course a much higher esteem, and therefore external evaluation according to objectified, measurable indicators is viewed as self-evident. Even if the researchers from the different countries did not, of course, represent the respective dominating approaches it was still indispensable to take into

account the opposition between these two approaches which are more or less in variance.

Nevertheless, beside the three-level approach (macro-, meso- and micro-level) another central result could be consented on: Six dimensions of criteria which are always of relevance could be commonly defined, even if a lot of the criteria themselves depend heavily on the particular scheme and the cultural setting. For that it was also decisive if the criteria were defined according to a nearly exclusively actor centred approach or following a more generalising method which let more overarching theoretical structures evolve like the one mainly employed in the project, according to the "Grounded Theory" of Glaser/Strauss. The six dimensions mentioned will be explained later, in connection with the tool for evaluation, mainly self-evaluation, called "Quality through Self-Evaluation and Development" (QSED), as described in chapter 7. In order to open up this approach to the highest possible degree of influence by the actors a "Transnational Reflection and Development Methodology" (TRDM) was developed at the same time which emphasises action research in the strict sense. It avoids the concepts of even self-evaluation and quality management and stresses even more than the QSED the relevance of reflection by the actors. In this way, it may be perceived as a methodology which can be employed for critical reflection on the first mentioned concepts, thus making the users of the QSED aware of the implicit assumptions underlying these concepts.

In this way the two basic approaches mentioned were not superficially reconciled but brought explicitly to the fore. Nevertheless, a very close mutual interaction of them is represented in the results.

The critical arguments presented in chapter 5.2 led to a combination of action research and more "observing" research. Action research can be understood as a special version of the "interpretive approach" in the Humanities. It deliberately tries to reduce the distance between the researcher and the "object" because the latter, being a human being, is not objectifiable. "Observing" research, on the other hand, whilst also acknowledging the individual as a human actor, still tries to find out about regularities in human behaviour. This is, in its distinct form, called the "conventional approach". It is easy to see that the two approaches quoted in the Executive Summary under 1.3.1 are to be detected here. Accordingly, some partners

were inclined more to the one or to the other. But because the conventional methods were applied in an attenuated version common results could be achieved.

The indicators which had been gained through the extensive field research had to be assembled to construct lists of which could fit in well with the respective cases. On the other hand, they had to be based on theoretical foundations which, however, should not impose assumptions made beforehand. The obvious choice was to employ the method of "Grounded Theory" which was developed by Glaser/Strauss for ethnographic research and has already for some time expanded it's field of application from ethnomethodology to areas like work research. Indeed similarities can be found between researching into the behaviour of an ethnic tribe and the rites prevailing in a working group or, for that matter, in a Learning Community Centred on Practice (LCCP). The theory is then built up from the bottom and generated through continuous loops of reflection on empirical evidence gained in the participative, collaborative, observing field research that has employed all the methods mentioned above.

Thus, however, it is not only inevitable but also desirable to arrive at lists of indicators which are specific for the case concerned. This is valid even if the indicators are "enriched" and transformed through theoretical deliberations. These transformed indicators were henceforth called "criteria". In addition, the partners laid different stress on the various indicators leading to a great variety of lists. Most important for that was the fact that it had turned out that from the outset the institutional conditions (meso-level) and the economic, societal and cultural framework (macro-level) needed the utmost attention, particularly the latter being very different for the participating countries.

To expand, from the start, the lists of indicators for evaluating the conditions of processes of situated learning so as to include all three levels at the same time lead to the construction of a set of dimensions of criteria where each dimension is subdivided, although in a strongly interactive way, into the three levels.

 In this way the QSED can also used as the foundation of external evaluation similar to the one described above.

In order to allow for the highest possible degree of adaptation of the European tool "QSED" it is presented as an interactive IT-tool on a CD to be used on a conventional PC. In contrast to the usual programmes which are also called

interactive this tool makes it possible to change it nearly completely, by altering the questions themselves, not only selecting different answers. The only feature to be retained is the basic structure, that is the three levels (macro-, meso- and micro-level) and the six dimensions of the criteria employed.

The six dimensions… of the criteria were developed from the field research in a spiral of repeated interpretation of the issues detected, thus employing the methodology of "Grounded Theory" elaborated by Glaser and Strauss, as described in the chapter 4 and 5 about methodology.

The six dimensions are:

➢ Self-Evaluation and Reflection:
Here the basic aims, possibilities and limitations of evaluation (self-evaluation, perhaps combined with external evaluation) should be reflected upon.

➢ Collaborative networks of actors:
Here the importance of networking (internal, within the institutions, and external, among different institutions) should be discussed.

➢ Inclusiveness:
At issue are here the opportunities and limitations of retaining the young people at risk of dropping out as close as possible to the mainstream (including assistance for gaining the necessaries of life).

➢ Funding/Administrative structures:
This relates to the general funding and administrative rules for re-integration schemes as well as far each single measure; in addition, the question of how the individual participants can be supported through adequately organised funding should be dealt with.

➢ Situated learning:
This has been elaborated as the main means for providing the most adequate learning opportunities for the disadvantaged clients; in particular the task is to design re-integration programmes in such a way as to promote vocationally oriented competences in close connection with furthering social and personal development.

➢ Recognition of skills/Assessment:
This regards the possibilities and limitations of officially recognizing the often

small steps of progression of the participants as well as the balance between the evaluation of progress in personal and social competences and the demands of the funding bodies for assessing objectifiable results.

How to use the tool is explained in the CD at the beginning. Also the main principles which led to it's construction are shortly outlined, as is described in the following section 6.4.

The content is reproduced in chapter 6 of this report. In order to experience the true value of the high interactivity and adaptability the readers are, however, strongly advised to try out the tool on the CD directly for themselves. This outcome of the project transcends considerably the objectives which the partnership had announced in the proposal.

Nevertheless, as is described in the chapter about the critical reflection of the methodology (chapter 4.2) there exist also strong reservations against every form of even self-evaluation the methods of which are prescribed from outside. Therefore the partnership developed, together with the QSED tool, a methodology which puts the practitioners' views even more into the centre and leaves the way how to deal with the situation of their scheme completely to them as the main actors. It is closely connected to the QSED in applying the same three-level approach where now, however, the individual and the structural level come into view nearly exclusively from the perspective of the practitioners while reflecting upon and further developing their respective re-integration scheme. This is called the "Transnational Reflection and Development Methodology" (TRDM), described in chapter 8. It is based on the above mentioned "interpretive approach" of evaluation and employs the action research methodology in the strictest sense with which this was originally developed. The TRDM can and should be understood as a methodology for critically reflecting upon a tool like the QSED which, although also strongly actor oriented, still retains the claim of having elaborated objective quality criteria based on scientific research.

But because the development of the QSED and the TRDM proceeded in parallel, at the same time and based on the same outcomes of the field research, the basic dimensions for reflection used in the TRDM are identical with the six dimensions for self-evaluation and development employed in the QSED as outlined above.

Transnationality as European added value for the QSED

In view of the great diversity of Re-Integration programmes regarding cultural and socio-economic context (c.f. chapters 3 and 9) it is obvious that severe thresholds have to be overcome in order to construct a transnational tool. Indeed, it has turned out during the research that already on the national-level the diversity is so great that it is difficult to find common quality criteria. On the one hand, this diversity may represent an advantage because very often it is due to the also different needs of the students and the various contexts, especially regarding the status of the programme (short term or established), the network it is operating in (e.g. close connection with a VET school or rather the local community), the ways of access (students sent by the labour office, picked up through an outreach service) etc. On the other hand, the diversity may be an expression of the fact that the task of re-integrating young people is not valued enough in the respective socio-economic context, and that therefore the "landscape" of various initiatives is developing by chance, without much overall planning. As has been mentioned before, in order to take this into account as much as possible the outcome of the Re-Integration project is twofold. On the one hand the tool "Quality through Self-Evaluation and Development" (QSED),on the other the "Transnational Reflection and Development Methodology" (TRDM).

It is important to notice that the two "instruments" are thought to be connected through a dialectical relation: Although they represent rather different approaches, they are strongly influencing each other and can be seen, in this was, as forming a whole entity together. The TRDM is a methodology which mainly enables actors of a specific programme to analyse its distinct features, reflect upon them and devise developmental orientations and actions for improvement. Transnationality is represented particularly through the fact that the researchers committed to the paradigm of action research, who are engaged in a dialogue with the actors, are members of transnational communities of (research) practice.

The QSED is a tool for enabling evaluation following the three level approach. Its main target is stimulating self-evaluation by the actors on the meso-level in the first place. For that it is of course necessary to evaluate the effects for the learning processes of the participants. But also necessary or possible improvements on the macro-level should be evaluated by the practitioners because very often those are perceived as restrictions. Therefore the tool is also important for planners and policy-

makers. In addition, not only the processes of personal development of the participants should be observed. Rather it is in the interest of the actors, on all levels to also notice the development processes of the programmes (courses, schemes, measures) in order to improve them. This is actually the focus of the objectives of self-evaluation, here represented through the QSED, critically enriched by the TRDM. That makes external evaluation, if it aims at doing justice to the respective programme and not only at measuring outcomes like transitions to the labour market or formal VET, much more effective, also for the practitioners themselves. The transnational commonalities are represented by the fact that the areas put forward for self-evaluation, reflection and development are common for all cultural settings. However, it has turned out during the development of the national systems of criteria in the field research that regularly some areas are much more important than others, dependent on the cultural setting. Some may even appear to be nearly superfluous whilst others may be represented much too little. Therefore the actors are encouraged and challenged to think out their own set of important criteria, only retaining the basic structure of six dimensions and the three levels. The TRDM may open up even a wider horizon.

Nevertheless, the common transnational research process made it clear that there are indeed important challenges and opportunities for inter-cultural mutual learning. This becomes particularly obvious if one looks at the possible transnational interaction of intentions, contexts and "solutions". To take up the distinction of the four main cultural settings (c.f. chapter 3) important examples are:

a) Influence of the strong non-formal setting:

    - on all the other systems:

    The role of the family should be taken into account much more.

b) Influence of the market driven setting:

    - on the occupation-related and the strong school-based setting:

    A combination of strong personal support in a course and of regular work tasters, and the high relevance of leisure activities, combined with a rather "relaxed" work environment in the course should be strengthened.

c) Influence of the occupation-related setting:

    - on the market-driven setting, maybe also on the strong non-formal setting:

    The role of a rather strict orientation towards fields of a possible future

occupation could support young people's self-confidence and self-esteem.

- on the strong school-based setting:

The role of work-based learning in "real" businesses outside the school could facilitate the school-to-work transition.

d)   Influence of the strong VET-school based setting:

- on the market driven, the occupation related and the strong non-formal setting:

The furthering of inclusiveness, trying to keep disadvantaged young people in the mainstream wherever possible, should be considered much more, even if these settings are less favourable for such an endeavour.

The role of education for citizenship could be strengthened.

These mutual influences will be taken into account in the "Transnational Recommendations" (chapter 12).

Introduction to the QSED and it´s relation to the "Transcultural Recommendations"

This is an evaluation tool which aims at helping practitioners to reflect, to discuss and to improve their practice together with their colleagues. The practitioners can use this tool on their own, but we suggest that they rather use it in a small group with two to five colleagues.The following instrument is divided into six dimensions which were considered to be important features for Re-integration schemes by an European Project focussing on the evaluation of such schemes across Europe.Practitioners of Re-integration schemes as well as educational researchers were involved in this project. Each of the six dimensions includes criteria and accompanying explanations which are categorised into three different levels: The structural level, the institutional level and the individual level. These three levels are related to each other, they determine or influence each other in different ways.-Self-Evaluation and Reflection

-Collaborative networks of actors-Inclusiveness

-Funding/Administrative structures-Situated Learning

-Recognition of skills/AssessmentThe structural level takes into account the societal conditions, the political conditions and the economic context of Re-integration provision. On this level criteria are formulated as statements or demands. It is obvious that these conditions can not be influenced or changed directly by a

single person or a small group, but the practitioners might have suggestions regarding these conditions which are worth to discuss with others and which could then be put forward to local policy and decision makers.

The institutional level which focus´ in detail on the conditions and requirements within the institution which provides a Re-integration course. The criteria in this dimension are formulated as questions which the practitioners can ask and answer themselves. It might be the case that some of the questions are not applicable to their practice or that they might want to change a question or add one. The tool will give them options to do so and to create their own tool. The first of the six dimensions which we think to be very advisable for each user explains these processes further.

The individual level which focus´ on the interaction and the relation between the practitioners and the learners of the courses. The criteria on this level are – as on the institutional level - given as questions which the practitioners can ask and answer themselves. These criteria might be those which could be directly influenced by each single practitioner in a course in his everyday work.

For using the QSED-tool for the first time we suggest to work through the first dimension "Self-evaluation and reflection" and to choose one or at a maximum two further dimensions which should be worked through by all but at least by a selected group of practitioners. It is crucial that the use of QSED is discussed with and accepted by all members of staff and that everybody within the team who is interested has access to the tool. Furthermore we suggest to print the" Word "-documents in which they have written in their answers/changes and suggestions.

Relation between the QSED-tool and the transnational recommendations

There is a strong correlation between the *"transnational recommendations for the improvement of the quality of re-integration programmes"* and the self-evaluation tool *QSED*. **Both** of them use a **three level-approach**, which means that they distinguish between aspects that should be espoused on a structural level, aspects which should be recognised on the institutional level and aspects which should be introduced or raised in practice as it has been described before: The structural level

takes into account the societal conditions, the political conditions and the economic context of Re-integration provision.

The institutional level which focusses in detail on the conditions and requirements within the institution which provides a Re-integration course. The individual level which focusses on the interaction and the relation between the practitioners and the learners of the courses.

Both, the recommendations and the QSED take up a transnational context.

But the way of using the transnational context is different in the two documents. Because the recommendations derive their advice for specific settings of the (vocational) education system or specific welfare regimes from the transnational context of the project they are formulated for these groupings of countries, so they include suggestions for rather targeted improvements. In contrast the QSED presents a combination of questions which are sometimes related only to the specific context of some of the countries. The users of the tool can decide themselves if they want to use questions which are not related to their specific context as new input and as a chance for mutual learning or if the questions and statements are not related to their practice and need to be deleted.

Furthermore there is a high correspondence between the aspects Collaboration, Reflexivity, Inclusiveness and Situated Pedagogy in the recommendations on the one hand and four of the the six dimensions of the tool on the other hand: Collaborative Networks, Self-Evaluation, Situated Learning, Inclusiveness, Funding/ Administrative Structures and Recognition of Skills/Assessment. In most cases the correspondences between the aspects of the recommendations and the dimensions of the tool are obvious when comparing the terms of the headlines.

Nevertheless they address different target groups, the recommendations address policy makers and planners while the QSED is produced mainly for practitioners in the field of re-integration although the QSED can be used as a tool for reflection by policy makers and planners, too. Against this background they use different approaches to point out the results and outcomes of this project.

While the tool aims at activating the practitioners of Re-Integration schemes to reflect and improve their practice by themselves; the recommendations propose potential changes in a direct manner to policy makers and planners who are in a position of power. Against this background the way of speaking in the two

documents is different. While the QSED-tool invites practitioners to enter a dialogue about the outer circumstances of their Re-Integration scheme, about their institutions and their relation to other institutions and about their ways of dealing with the clients, the recommendations state more clearly which changes and developments seem to be necessary from the point of view of the research team of the Re-integration project.

Through their different approaches and their different target groups the recommendations and the tool can be regarded as two ways of transferring the outcomes of the Re-Integration project and its precursor project Re-Enter in a holistic and constructive way that is involving the target groups and that is asking them to carry on the processes of improvement and evaluation of Re-integration schemes.

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