

VET Quality Initiative – QIBB

QIBB, the VET Quality Initiative (www.qibb.at), is an initiative of the General Directorate for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education (or: GD VET) of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF) to **implement systematic quality management (QM) in the Austrian VET school sector**. The objectives pursued with QIBB are the assurance and further development of school and teaching quality as well as the quality of administrative services at the executive levels of schools, provincial governments and the federal government.

Development activities on the QIBB concept started in 2004. Since the school year 2006/07 QIBB has been implemented at nearly all locations of the VET school sector in Austria: at part-time vocational schools; at schools and colleges for engineering, arts and crafts; at schools of business and colleges of business administration; at schools and colleges of social and services industries; at colleges of agriculture and forestry; and at nursery teacher training colleges and colleges of social pedagogy.

Part of the national strategy to implement the EQAVET Recommendation

The implementation of QIBB is in line with the developments of European VET policy. QIBB is part of the national strategy to implement 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 (EQAVET)**, which was adopted in the context of the Copenhagen process in 2009. QIBB corresponds to the model of the European reference framework as regards objectives, guiding principles, priorities and structure.

Quality development at the levels of the schools, provincial governments and the federal government

QIBB comprises all institutional levels of the school system. According to the QIBB model, **schools, school supervision** (provincial level) and the **GD VET of BMBWF** (federal level), which is responsible for the VET school sector, regularly evaluate and continuously improve the activities that are required to carry out their tasks. The goal is to enable and organise successful learning. Therefore the horizon for reflection comprises **pedagogical action** (initiating, supporting and facilitating school-based education and training processes) and **administrative action** (creating, securing and further developing the framework conditions necessary for teaching and learning).

Quality assurance cycle and quality management instruments

Quality development is implemented in QIBB as a target-driven continuous improvement process based on the model of the **four-phase quality assurance cycle** according to Deming (plan – do – check – act). The process is controlled, supported and structured by applying specific QM instruments.

As part of QIBB, the following QM instruments are applied to organise processes and projects in the school and administrative sector in a systematic, target-driven and transparent manner:

- **Mission statement:** long-term target orientation, core messages regarding mission and self-conception
- **Quality matrix (Q-matrix):** long- and medium-term objectives, measures, outcomes, indicators and evaluation methods in table format
- **Quality focuses:** nationwide and province-wide as well as school-specific quality focuses (such as the individualisation of teaching and learning)
- **Definition of key processes**
- **Work programme and school programme including development and implementation plan:** the objectives and measures for the current working period
- **Review and objective-setting discussions** between managers to reflect and agree on development and implementation objectives
- **Evaluation:** individual feedback, system feedback, QIBB evaluation platform (internet) and Peer Review in QIBB
- **Quality report:** school, provincial and federal quality reports
- **Follow-up tool:** participatory shaping of change processes
- **Personnel development:** in-service and continuing education and training for managers, teachers and staff (**QUALI-QIBB**, Qualification in and for QIBB)

Guiding principles

The **structure and core elements** of QIBB correspond to the following guiding principles:

- Outcome orientation
- Transparency
- Participation
- Systematic approach
- Application of recognised QM instruments and methods
- Economical use of time and financial resources
- Ethics in relation to evaluation objectives, evaluation measures and the handling of data
- Gender equality

Evaluation: individual feedback and system feedback

Evaluation carried out as part of QIBB is mainly in the form of self-evaluation. On the one hand, the work includes the **individual feedback**, which serves to reflect on and further develop the teachers' and managers' professional activities. On the other hand, the work covers **system feedback**, which serves to optimise teaching and administrative processes at organisation and system level. The organisation and implementation of the evaluation is supported technically by an **online platform** which provides evaluation instruments (questionnaires, survey grids, guidelines) and tools to draw up standardised data evaluations.

Peer Review in QIBB

An external evaluation procedure to support school development at the school location:

The **Peer Review in QIBB** (www.peer-review-in-qibb.at) is a service which has been offered for the VET school sector since 2009 and supports **quality development and school development at the school location**. The main feature of the peer review process is that a team of external experts (peers) is invited by the school to evaluate the quality areas that have been specified by the school. Peers are not members of the evaluated school but are familiar with the practical area "VET school or college" and have relevant expertise. When the peer review process is completed, the school gets oral feedback and a written report from the peers. The decision to implement a peer review is made by the school management (voluntary participation!).

Quality report and agreement on objectives

In QIBB, every establishment submits a quality report to the respective higher management level (school, provincial and federal quality reports). The report comprises a **review** taking into account the evaluation results and a **development and implementation plan** with strategic and operational objectives and measures. The agreement on future objectives and priorities of an establishment is made in the form of a discussion between the managers of the two management levels which are responsible in the respective case (such as regional school inspector and school principal) – the **review and objective-setting discussion**. The quality report forms one of the bases of these discussions.

Management and organisational culture

The implementation of QIBB is a **cooperative endeavour of all managers of the VET school sector**. As well as the subject-related competence, the willingness to learn and commitment of a large number of people, one major prerequisite for the success of QIBB is the joint conviction that quality management not only implies that specific management methods are applied but should also be understood as a **management and organisational culture**, which can only emerge if **everyone plays or can play an active part in the quality process**.

QIBB Quality assurance cycle (according to Deming)

