

The Relevance of Quality Assurance for Work-Based Learning

Conference

“QUALITY IN VET IN THE POST-COVID ENVIRONMENT: the case of Bequal.app” hosted by EVBB -
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Need for improving Quality in Work-Based Learning

Different challenges in different countries

For instance:

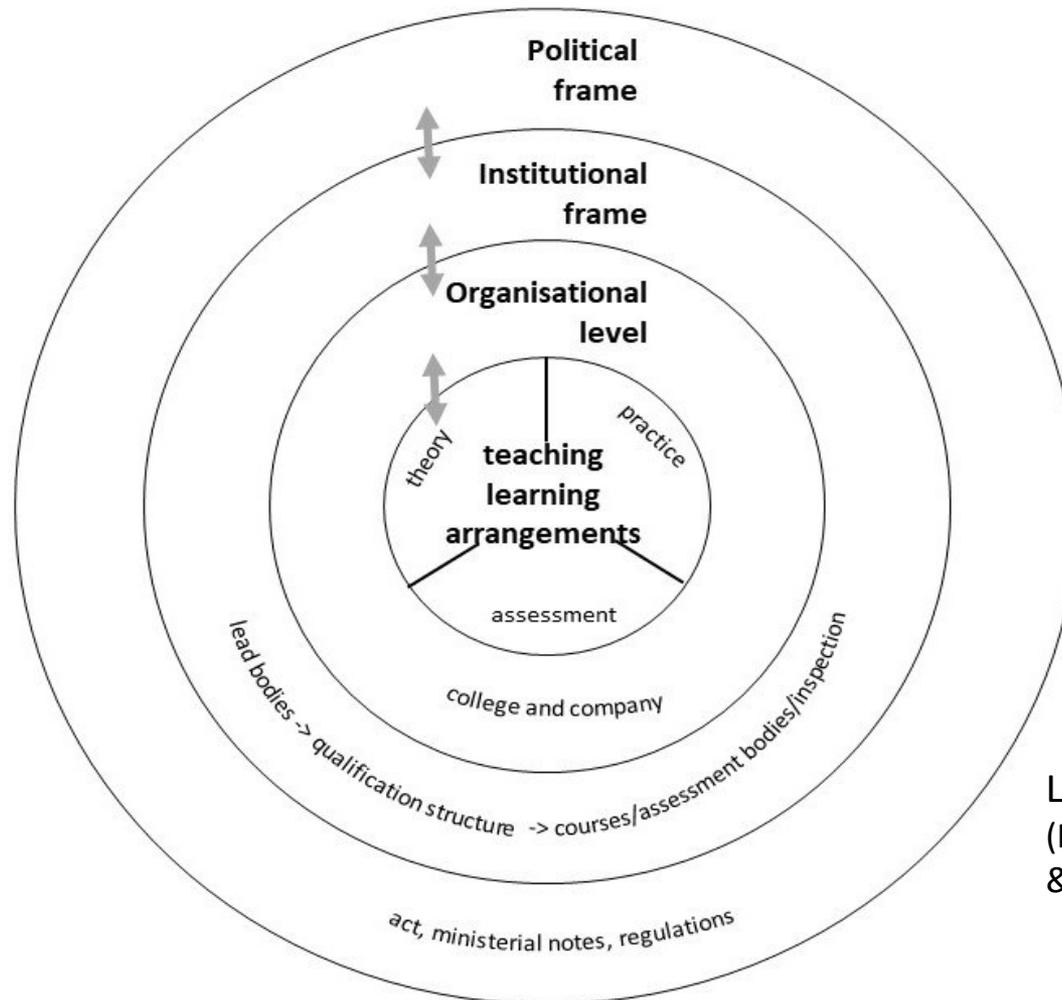
- Unemployment
- Migration
- Quantitative discrepancy demand – supply at labour market
- Qualitative discrepancy demand – supply at labour market
- Restrictions in resources (companies, VET colleges)
- Lack of required competences work force
- Motivation and interests apprentices
-

Definition Work-Based Learning

Definition of WBL of BEQUAL.app project:

Work-based learning is formal organized learning where the content is relevant for current and future jobs, can take place in the company, educational institutions or in form of simulation, and is part of a (vocational) education programme for young students or adults.

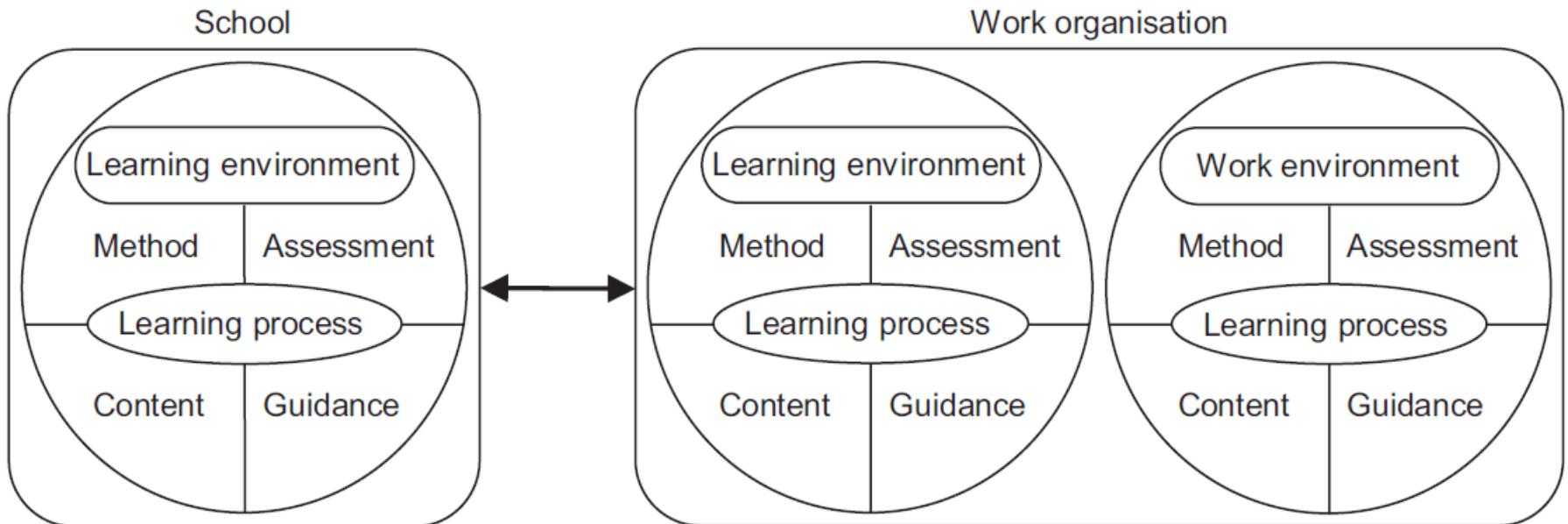
Challenges for Organising Quality in Work-Based Learning: different actors in the system



Layers VET system
(Nieuwenhuis, Mulder,
& Van Berkel, 2004, p. 139)

Challenges for Organising Quality in Work-Based Learning: relation school - work

Components of the different VET training contexts
(Mulder, Messmann & König, 2015, p. 501)



Definition Quality (Education)

Holistic understanding of quality (Harvey and Green, 1993).

Quality is relative in terms of for instance the user of the term

Five distinct but interrelated ways of thinking about Quality:

- as exceptional → TOOL
- as perfection (or consistency) → is needed
- as fitness for purpose
- as value for money
- as transformative

Development of the tool (with all BEQUAL.app partners!)

Question:

What are the (relevant and important) quality indicators for quality assurance in Work-Based Learning for companies and educational institutions in European countries?

Three sub aims by using a method triangulation:

1. Identification of similarities and differences in European frameworks regarding quality assurance in WBL
→ Review (*Dec 18 - Apr. 19*)
2. Validation of the quality indicators, which are derived from Part I: relevance for quality assurance for WBL in different European countries and for different stakeholders
→ Validation (*May 19 - Sept. 19*)
3. Exploring to what extent the quality indicators apply to the current situation in the different countries
→ Piloting (*Oct. 19*)

Development of the tool: (1) Review

Method

- Literature search
- Selected Frameworks →
- Analysis of documents

Results

- 79 Quality indicators

Documents	Reference
Recommendation of the Council of the European Union on a Quality Framework for Traineeships	Council of the European Union (2014)
Recommendation of the Council of the European Union on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships	Council of the European Union (2018)
Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Establishment of a European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training	European Parliament and Council of the European Union (2009)
EQAVET Quality Cycle EQAVET Building Blocks WBL	European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) (2020) European Quality Assurance for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) (2012)
Towards a European Quality Framework for Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning: Best Practices and Trade Union Contributions	European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) (2013)
European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships	European Youth Forum (2011)
ISO 9001 Standard	International Organization for Standardization (ISO) (2014)
EFQM-Model	European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) (2013)

Development of the tool: (2) Validation

Aim: Validation of the quality indicators, which are derived from Part I: relevance for quality assurance for WBL in different European countries

Sample

- a) N = 36 external stakeholders (Croatia=7; Slovenia=8; Italy=3; Greece=4, Lithuania=5, Germany=7; unknown=2); (e.g., VET schools, organizations providing post-secondary initial or continuing VET, companies providing work-based learning, policy maker, or chambers of commerce, crafts, or industry)
- b) Internationally recognized researcher in the domain of VET
- c) Internal project partners

Method

- Questionnaire: Estimation of 79 quality indicators
- ➔ To what extent are the mentioned aspects an important indicator of quality of WBL in the context of educational institutions and/or companies (5-point Likert scale: 1= not important; 5=very important)

Result:

- Reduction of quality indicators
- Formulation of statements

Development of the tool: (3) Piloting

Aim: Exploring to what extent the quality indicators apply to the current situation in the different countries

Sample

- N = 66 participants (Austria=2; Croatia=33; Germany=6; Greece=3; Lithuania=14; Romania=1; Slovenia=6; unknown=1)
 - 33 for educational institutions (e.g., teachers, training coordinators, vocational trainers and mentors)
 - 33 for companies (e.g., managing directors or managers of human resources development)

Method

- Questionnaire: Estimation of 51 quality indicators
- ➔ To what extent do the following statements apply to your current situation?" (4-point Likert scale: 1=not at all true; 4=completely true)

Result:

- Reduction of quality indicators
- 40 categorized quality indicators

Content of the tool: 7 categories of indicators

1. Relation with VET system
 - Our WBL programme is certified by national or regional institutions.
 - Our WBL programme is in accordance with a larger vocational educational programme.

2. Characteristics of WBL programme
 - Required facilities for WBL are available in our organisation.
 - Students participating in our WBL programme have the possibility for mobility in our country.

3. Focus on students
 - Our WBL is in accordance with the students' expectations.
 - Our organisation offers equal opportunities in the access to our WBL programme.

4. Communication and agreements between partners
 - National Institutions or other relevant stakeholders in our country support our organisation regarding WBL.
 - We communicate with educational institutions/companies on student achievements in WBL.

Content of the tool: 7 categories of indicators

5. Monitoring and assessment

- Our organisation systematically monitors and evaluates our WBL.
- We measure student's satisfaction on WBL.

6. WBL trainers/teachers

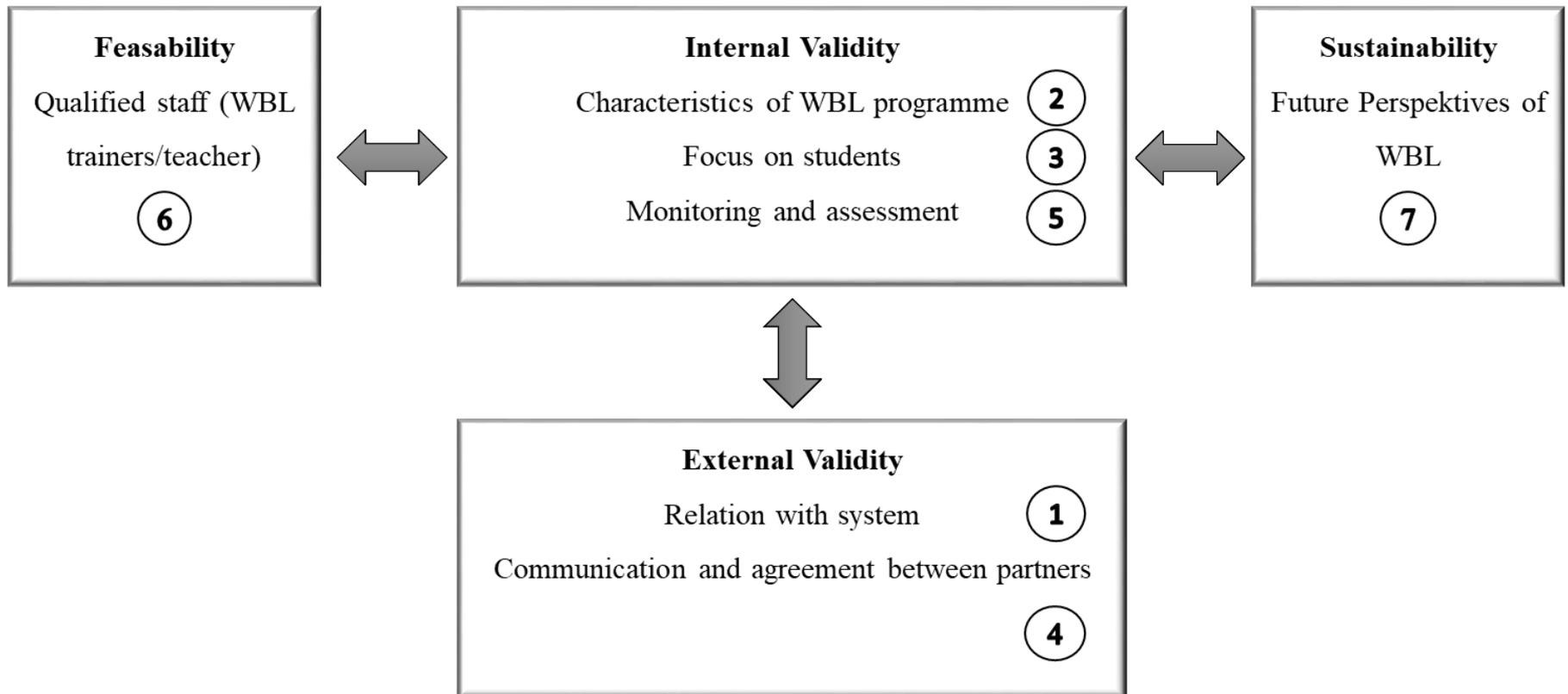
- Our managers*/leaders** take responsibility for WBL in our organisation.
- Our WBL trainers/teachers have all required competences for WBL.

7. Future perspectives in WBL

- Our WBL programme contains future needs of the labour market.
- Our organisation continuously improves the WBL programme.

Model: Structure of categories of quality indicators

(Watzek & Mulder, accepted)



Implications for use of BEQUAL.app Tool

➔ Fill out the BE-Questionnaire at the bequal.info platform (<https://bequal.info>):

Prerequisite:

1. To benefit. Understanding of the tool: kind of categories (meaning and structure)

Gain:

1. Raise awareness Indicators for Quality
2. See where you stand (high/low scores)
3. Comparison with others (companies, VET colleges, (inter)national)
4. Analyse what is possible (what can be improved)

Use of outcomes (scores):

1. In practice:
 - Focus on topics: often political decision, contextbound
 - Prioritize
 - Involve different Stakeholders (including apprentices)

Use longterm:

1. Evaluation: use tool again, compare scores and determine if situation has improved.
Info for further actions

Thank you for your attention!

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And many thanks to our partners in BEQUAL.app!

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