

## TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT EXPERTS



## Leonardo da Vinci

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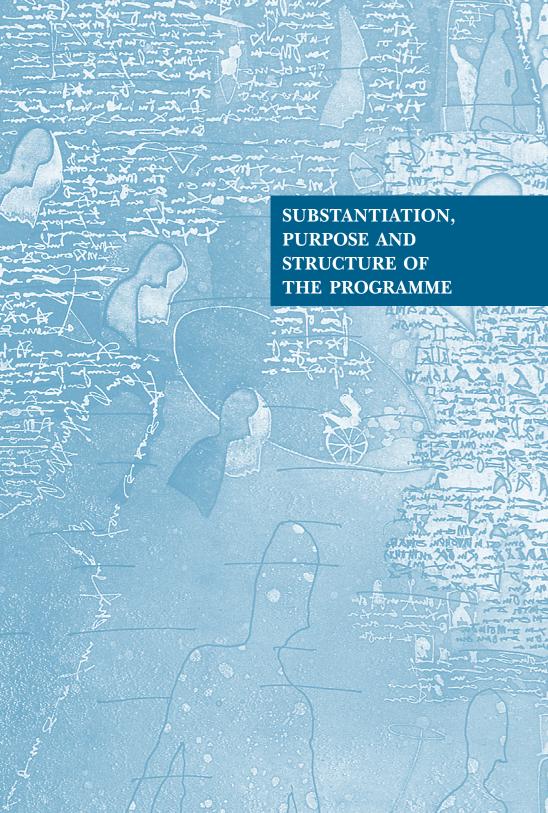
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A Training Programme for External Quality Assessment Experts (hereinafter referred to as the Programme) has been designed in the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci Project No. LT/03/B/F/PP-171005 Curriculum Development for External Quality Assessment Experts Training (hereinafter referred to as the Project). The content of the publication does not have to coincide with the opinion of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme Coordination Support Foundation and does not incur any liability thereof.

# TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT EXPERTS

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#### INTRODUCTION

A Training Programme for External Quality Assessment Experts (hereinafter referred to as the Programme) has been designed in the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci Project No LT/03/B/F/PP-171005 Curriculum Development for External Quality Assessment Experts (hereinafter referred to as the Project). The Programme aims at training institutional quality assessment assessors\*. The authors of the Programme have made use of the analysis of assessors training experience in foreign countries (there has been a publication issued Training External Quality Assessment Experts of European Vocational Education and Training Institutions: Needs Analysis and Recommendations for the Implementation of Good Practice in Lithuanian, Latvian and English). The preparation of the Programme has been within the responsibility of the Methodological Centre of Vocational Education and Training (contractor): V. Dienys, A. Jančauskienė, J. Kazlauskas, J. Pudanaitė, G. Žibėnienė and specialists of the Lithuanian Centre of Quality Assessment in Higher Education: A. Čižas, N. Skaburskienė, A. Šerpatauskas, and Latvian Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre: J. Dzelmė.

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The conformity of the European level equivalence is ensured by the Project partners from the United Kingdom, Belgium, Greece and Latvia. Practical applicability is ensured by a continuing co-operation with representatives of education institutions and experienced assessors when working on the Project.

The content and implementation of the Programme is reflected in its three parts: A Training Programme for External Quality Assessment Experts and its objectives; the breakdown of the Programme for the learner and Teaching materials and visuals for the lecturer (trainer).

The Programme integrates innovative teaching methods and study forms; it involves individual work combined with IT, a distance learning course etc. However, the quality of teaching/studies is a dynamic process. The authors of the Programme would be grateful for any feedback on its content. You are kindly asked to send your comments and suggestions to the following address:

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<sup>\*</sup> The terms "Expert" and "Assessor" are treated equally in this document

#### PROGRAMME CONTENT

#### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

- 1.1 Challenges for the European Education and Vocational Education and Training
- 1.2 Quality Assurance in Europe (history, experience)
- 1.3 Expert Training Programme: key aims and objectives
- 1.4 National Systems of EU Member States, the Bologna Process and the Copenhagen Process
- 1.5 Lithuanian System of Education
  - National System of Education;
  - System of Vocational Education and Training (types of institutions of vocational education and training, classification of vocational education and training and the legal basis);
  - Aims, Main Activities, Management and Structure of Vocational Education and Training Institutions.
- 1.6 Latvian System of Education
  - An Overview of the National System;
  - System of Vocational Education and Training (types of institutions of vocational education and training, classification of vocational education and training and legal basis);
  - Aims, Main Activities, Management and Structure of Vocational Education and Training Institutions.

## 2. QUALITY AND ITS ASSESSMENT

- 2.1. Quality and the Concept of its Assessment
  - Approach to Quality;
  - Quality Defining Factors;
  - International Systems of Quality Assurance (ISO, EFQM, Tuning Project etc.);
  - Quality Assurance in Europe;
  - Quality and Autonomy;
  - Tasks for Assessment: Improvement and Accountability;
  - The Role of Assessment Agencies;
  - The Structure of Assessment (self-assessment and external assessment, types of assessment: assessment of teaching programmes, research, institutional assessment);
  - Assessors (selection of assessors and drawing teams, meta-assessment);

- 2.2. Quality Assessment in Lithuania
- 2.3. Quality Assessment in Latvia

#### 3. FIELDS AND CRITERIA OF INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

- 3.1. Identification and Assessment of Fields and Criteria
- 3.2. Assessment of Sample Fields, setting up Assessment Criteria and Indicators
- 3.3. Examples of two sample Fields
  - Staff;
  - System of Internal Quality Assurance.

#### 4. INTERNAL ASSESSMENT. SELF-ASSESSMENT

- 4.1. A System of Internal Quality Assessment in Education: objectives, responsibilities; procedure; solutions; implementation
- 4.2. Analysis of Institutional Self-assessment Report: structure of self-assessment report; aims of analysis

# 5. SITE VISIT OF ASSESSORS TO THE INSTITUTION UNDER ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. Requirements for Assessors (impartiality, ethical code; introduction to aims and criteria of assessment, main concepts, accrediting procedure)
- 5.2. Preparation for the Site Visit (guiding principles for assessors; analysis of self-assessment report; visit planning)
- 5.3. The Proceedings of the Visit (required documents; categories of persons participating in meetings; schedule of the visit; working principles of the assessor team; sample analysis).
- 5.4. Peculiarities of the Visit of External Institutional Assessment Assessors in Lithuania
- 5.5. Peculiarities of the Visit of External Institutional Assessment
  Assessors in Latvia

#### 6. FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

- 6.1. Structure of the Final Assessment Report
- 6.2. Decision making
  - Methodology of decision making;
  - Recommendations to the educational institution;
  - Proposals on accreditation;
  - Recommendations to the agency in charge of assessment and state institutions;
  - Decision implementation.
- 6.3. Preparation of the Final Assessment Report in Lithuania
- 6.4. Preparation of the Final Assessment Report in Latvia

# SUBSTANTIATION AND PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAMME

The Programme was prompted by the analysis of literature and a conclusion made on the basis of the materials collected that the problem of training external quality assessment assessors in vocational education and training has been in the international context neither sufficiently developed nor widely discussed. The Programme was designed in the framework of main European tendencies and needs analysis in the Leonardo da Vinci Project No LT/03/B/F/PP-171005: experience and needs analysis of external quality assessment assessors of European institutions of vocational education and training (all reflected in a publication). Therefore the authors of the Programme expect that the product will be useful for the countries with less experience in teaching quality assessment and which are in pre-accession stage to the EU.

The European Commission confirmed a need to join the efforts of European countries for strengthening quality assurance and implementation of quality assessment systems in education institutions. The analysis of European countries has testified to the fact that some, though not all European countries have a clearly-defined institutional assessment assessor training system which includes the training of assessors as well as criteria of their selection.

The results and recommendation of the analysis lead to the needs identification of the assessor, quality assessment agencies and the whole education sector. They have to be able:

- To analyse and apply the innovations and experience of European countries in training external quality assessment assessors of institutions of vocational education and training;
- To identify general principles, common requirements and criteria for assessor work;
- To improve the criteria of assessor selection and training;
- To improve and develop competencies of assessors;
- To build a team of highly-qualified assessors ready to work in a rapidly developing and changing education environment.

## The Training Programme for External Quality Assessment Experts would enable:

• To implement the European experience in national quality assessment systems of vocational education and training;

- To prepare highly-qualified external assessment assessors able to identify strengths and weaknesses of the institution under assessment, prepare final assessment recommendations leading to improving the institution's performance;
- To contribute to the development of the national quality assurance system.

Until now Lithuania has had no such programme. The modular programme provides conditions for individuals to acquire relevant knowledge, skills and competences in conformity with the institutional assessment.

## The Target Groups of the Expert Training Programme:

- Assessors of external quality assessment of institutions of vocational education and training;
- Institutions or organisations involved in the external quality assessment of institutions of vocational education and training.

## Potential Customers/Users of the Expert Training Programme:

- Institutions of vocational education and training;
- Employer associations and social partners;
- National institutions;
- European organisations concerned with vocational training or their specialists.

# The innovation, flexibility and applicability of the assessor training programme are ensured by the fact that it:

- Is modular:
- Is based on integrating theory with actual practical experience;
- Is flexible, can be amended and further developed and improved;
- Is based on the concept of continuing development and improvement;
- Ends with issuing certificates for its graduates;
- Is based on modern technologies and methods.

The Programme preparation and implementation group consists of specialists in the theory and practice of quality assessment of education institutions.

The main principles of the Programme are in conformity with national and international institutional assessment principles. The objectives and contents of the Programme are in conformity with the key international documents: Lisbon Declaration (2000), Bologna Declaration (1999), Salamanca Convention (2001), Prague Communiqué (2001), Berlin Communiqué (2003), Barcelona European Council Statement (2002), Copenhagen Declaration (2002), Maastricht Communiqué (2004).

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

The key aim of the training programme is to train quality assessment assessors of institutions of vocational education and training qualifying as competent specialists of external quality assessment in national and foreign education institutions.

The aim of the Programme can be achieved by first attaining the following objectives:

- Introducing assessors into the education system of the country;
- Improving their knowledge in the quality assurance principles of vocational education and training;
- · Providing knowledge on the assessment methodology;
- Assisting assessors in identifying the mission, responsibility and objectives of the assessor work;
- Providing conditions for assessors to acquire skills for institutional quality assessment.

## SCOPE, STRUCTURE AND ORGANISING PRINCIPLES OF THE PROGRAMME

The scope of the assessor training programme is 40 hours, or 1 credit. The training programme consists of 6 modules. Each module starts with lectures (theory), later on, some modules (Nos 3, 4, 5 and 6) have seminars and workshops and finally, each module ends with assignments for individual work.

Since the assessor training programme is divided into modules, the participants of the programme can choose a learning strategy after discussing it with the lecturer(s).

	Length (hours)			
Title of Module	Total	Theory	Seminars and workshops	Individual work
1. Education system	4	2	0	2
2. Quality and its assessment	4	2	0	2
3. Fields and criteria of institutional assessment	6	2	2	2
4. Internal assessment. Self-assessment	6	2	2	2
5. Visit of assessors to the institution under assessment	12	2	4	6
6. Final assessment report	8	2	4	2
Total	40	12	12	16

The total length of the assessor training programme is 1 (one) month. The assessor training programme is divided into three sessions; the length of one session is one day. During the sessions, learners participate in lectures and seminars and workshops; they also discuss individual home assignments. Between sessions, there are intervals of at least one or two weeks for individual work of learners co-ordinated by lecturers.

## **Schedule of Assessor Training Programme**

Week 1	One day (8 hours)	Session I
Week 1 and 2	8 hours in two weeks	Distance learning, individual work and lecturer-coordinated assignments
Week 2	One day (8 hours)	Session II
Weeks 3 and 4	8 hours in two weeks	Distance learning, individual work and lecturer-coordinated assignments
Week 4	One day (8 hours)	Session III

Assessor Training Programme Implementation in Sessions according to Modules

Session	Length of session	Modules of the session	Content
Session 1	8 hrs	Modules 1–4 (inclusive; only theory)	Learners are introduced into the purpose of the Programme, its objectives, structure and organising principles. During the session, the theory of the first four modules is dealt with and assignments for individual work are given.
Session 2	8 hrs	Theory of modules 5 and 6; seminars and workshops of modules 3 and 4	Learners discuss and summarise the results of individual assignments. Then they study the theory of modules 5 and 6, work in seminars and workshops of modules 3 and 4. At the end of the session, lecturers give further assignments for individual work.
Session 3	8 hrs	Seminars and workshops of modules 5 and 6	At the beginning, assessors discuss and summarise the content of individual assignments, later they do the practical task of Module 5, i.e. they simulate a site visit to the institution under assessment. After they complete it, they do the practical task of Module 6, i.e. they prepare the final assessment report. At the end of the session, the Programme is summarised, suggestions and recommendations for improvement of learners are submitted.

In individual cases, an individual study plan can be drawn. Such individual study plan can be made for a learner who works in the national system of education and who has some experience in institutional assessment and relevant skills. So the skills of an assessor are improved.

## Schedule of Expert Training Programme

1 day (8 hours)	Session I
8 hours per 1–2 weeks	Distance learning
One day (8 hours)	Session II
8 hours per 1–2 weeks	Distance learning
One day (8 hours)	Session III

The assessor teaching programme takes three sessions, the length of one session is one day. Between the sessions, there are periods of one-two weeks for individual work.

- Session I the theory of modules No 1–4 (8 lectures). During the sessions, assessors receive tasks for individual work.
- Session II the theory of modules No 5–6 (4 lectures). Seminars and workshops within module No 3 (2 hours) and seminars and workshops within modules No 4–5 (2 hours).
- Session III Seminars and workshops within module No 6 (4 hours) and seminars and workshops within module No 5–6 (4 hours).

#### SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

The assessor training programme is accessible to all interested in vocational education and training institutions or colleges. There are no special requirements for those who seek improvement in accordance with the Programme, however, the institution in charge of the teaching programme shall reserve a right to limit the number of learners or make their selection, if needed. The selection of participants depends on the requirements for institutional assessment assessors prescribed in each country.

The selection for training is implemented in accordance with the clearly specified requirements for assessors in a particular country. The programme is open for representatives of vocational education and training institutions and colleges, the academe, education policy makers, representatives of the labour market. The participants should be aware of the working principles of vocational education and training institutions or colleges.

#### ARRANGING THE TEACHING PROCESS

All institutions, which were participated in the project, have a right to implement the assessor training programme and courses.

An exclusive feature of the Programme is its modern approach. Therefore, it is important that the Programme is delivered by experienced trainers, who would ensure the compatibility between theory and practice: people active in institutional assessment, education policy makers, academics. To ensure the innovative content of the teaching programme, requirements for the assessor qualifications are high:

- Profound theoretical knowledge and practical experience in the discipline;
- Capability to implement the aims of the Programme in accordance with the learner needs and their level of knowledge;
- Capability to make proposals on the Programme improvement and improvement of the teaching content;
- Implementation of new teaching methods in the process of learning/teaching;
- Application of innovative methods in the teaching process.

**Institutions exercising a right to implement** the Expert Training Programme and arrange courses are in charge of the innovativeness of the teaching content of the Programme, conformity with national acts stipulating the quality assessment of vocational education and training and conformity with international ideas. They are also responsible for the following:

- Supervision of the teaching process;
- Updating and improvement of the teaching subject matter;
- Qualifications of the teaching staff;
- Selection of learners/instructors;
- · Financial issues:
- Material resources;
- Self-assessment of the Programme.

## Forms of teaching arrangements and teaching methods

In the course of the assessor training programme, there are lectures, seminars and workshops, individual work, group work and distance learning/teaching as well as consultations planned.

It is recommended that a variety of teaching methods and modes are applied, and they should be in conformity with the following requirements:

- They should provide knowledge and promote individual improvement (lectures).
- They should stimulate communication and group work with active participation of all learners (discussion, discussion groups, debates, forums).
- They should develop analytical and problem solution skills as well as ability to assess the situation (problem teaching).
- They should stimulate the development of individual skills (presentations of learners' homework, presentations of practical work, sample analysis).

The main teaching methods recommended: a lecture, a lecture based on visuals; lecturer-guided discussions; discussion groups, debates, forums, problem solutions, presentation of projects and homework. Depending on the age of learners, there are principles of andragogy\* to be implemented.

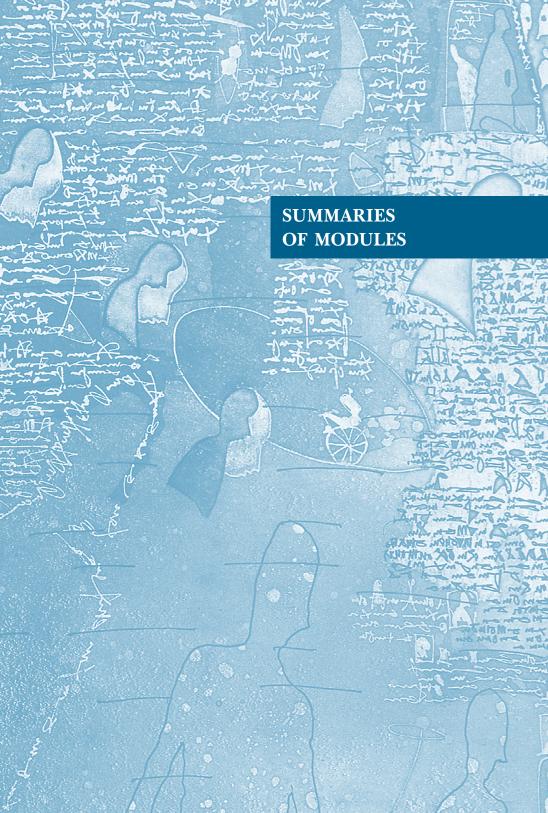
**Assessing learners** (criteria of assessment, arranging the procedure of assessment).

A learner is an equal participant of the learning and teaching process and shall be assessed in accordance with the principles of respect to a person. The assessment will focus on practical work and reflection on the results.

## As a result of the Programme, the learner shall be able:

- To assess the performance of the education institution individually;
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses of the education institution and submit recommendations for improvement;
- To work in a team and take decisions individually.

<sup>\*</sup> A course adapted to learning and teaching adult learners.



## **EDUCATION SYSTEM**

#### Length (hours)

Total:	4
Theory:	2
Seminars and workshops:	0
Individual work:	2

## Objectives of the Module:

- To introduce the aims, tasks and implementation procedure of the Expert Training programme;
- To introduce the education system of the country implementing the Expert Training Programme;
- To introduce the main tendencies of vocational education and training in Europe.

- Challenges for the European education and vocational training;
- Quality assurance in Europe (history, experience);
- Key objectives and tasks of the Expert Training Programme;
- National Education Systems of European Union member states.
   The Bologna Declaration (higher education). The Copenhagen Declaration (initial vocational education and training, continuous vocational education and training);
- Lithuanian System of Education (national system of education, vocational education and training system, tasks of vocational education institutions, main trends of their activities and structure);
- Latvian System of Education (national system of education, vocational education and training system, tasks of vocational education institutions, main trends of their activities and structure).

## **QUALITY AND ITS ASSESSMENT**

## Length (hours)

Total:	4
Theory:	2
Seminars and workshops:	(
Individual work:	2

## Objectives of the Module:

- To introduce the concept of quality;
- To provide knowledge into the quality assurance in education;
- To introduce the European traditions and experience to ensure high quality education;
- To provide knowledge into the national system of quality assurance.

- The concept of quality and its assessment:
  - Approach to quality;
  - Quality defining factors;
  - Main concepts of quality.
  - International quality assurance systems (ISO, TQM, EFQM, Tuning Project etc.);
  - Education quality assurance in Europe;
  - Quality and autonomy;
  - The role of quality agencies;
  - The structure of assessment (internal and external assessment, types of assessment: programme assessment, research assessment, institutional assessment);
  - Assessors (selection of assessors and convening teams, meta-assessment).
- Quality assessment in Lithuania;
- Quality assessment in Latvia.

# FIELDS AND CRITERIA OF INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

## Length (hours)

Total:	6
Theory:	2
Seminars and workshops:	2
Individual work:	2

## Objectives of the Module:

- To provide knowledge to be able to define the concepts of fields, criteria, indicators and evidence of institutional assessment;
- To introduce some sample fields and criteria of assessment, including national experience;
- To introduce an assessment model (scheme) of several fields according to selected criteria and indicators.

- Identifying assessment fields and criteria. Assessment methods;
- Assessing selected fields by identifying assessment criteria and indicators;
- Two selected sample fields and criteria and their analysis:
  - Staff:
  - A system of internal quality assurance.

## INTERNAL ASSESSMENT. SELF-ASSESSMENT

## Length (hours)

Total:	6
Theory:	2
Seminars and workshops:	2
Individual work:	2

## Objectives of the Module:

- To introduce the system of internal quality assurance used in education.
- To introduce the opportunities of implementing the results of self-assessment in the process of external assessment.
- To provide conditions to acquire skills in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the institution when analysing the self-assessment report.

- A system of internal quality assurance used in education:
  - Definition and scheme of quality assurance
  - Objectives and accountability
  - Process
  - Decisions
  - Implementation.
- Analysis of institutional self-assessment report:
  - Structure
  - Aims of analysis.

# VISIT OF ASSESSORS TO THE INSTITUTION UNDER ASSESSMENT

## Length (hours)

Total:	12
Theory:	2
Seminars and workshops:	4
Individual work:	6

## Objectives of the Module:

- To provide knowledge about the procedure of arranging visits of assessors in a particular country;
- To introduce and discuss the ethical code of assessors;
- To assist in acquiring skills for assessing the institution during the visit.

- Requirements for assessor work (composition of the team, their impartiality, ethical code, aims of assessment);
- Preparation for the visit (methodological requirements, analysis of self-assessment report, planning the visit);
- The proceedings of the site visit (relevant documents, participants of meetings, schedule of the visit, a workshop as a simulated visit);
- Peculiarities of the assessor visit of external institutional assessment in Lithuania;
- Peculiarities of the assessor visit of external institutional assessment in Latvia.

#### FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

## Length (hours)

Total:	8
Theory:	2
Seminars and workshops:	4
Individual work:	9

## Objectives of the Module:

- To provide knowledge on the principles of writing and structure of the final assessment report;
- To give access to the international experience in writing the final assessment report and presenting them orally;
- To provide conditions to acquire skills important for writing the final assessment report and preparing recommendations.

- Structure of the final assessment report;
- Decision making:
  - Methodology of decision making;
  - Recommendations to the educational institution;
  - Proposals on accreditation;
  - Recommendations to the agency in charge of assessment and state institutions;
  - Decision implementation.
- Writing the final assessment report in Lithuania;
- Writing the final assessment report in Latvia.

#### IMPROVEMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

To ensure the quality of the Programme, there is a systemic self-assessment planned. It includes the content of the Programme as well as the arrangements of the teaching process. The internal assessment of the Programme is performed twice a year on the basis of opinions of participants of the Programme and their assessment according to some selected features and criteria. Therefore, in the course of internal assessment of it is important that the opinions of learners and learners are taken into consideration. A continuous improvement of the Programme is also important, with due consideration of its updating.

## Key Criteria of the Programme Self-assessment:

- Innovation and topicality of the Programme;
- · Efficient teaching;
- Progress of ls;
- Compliance of the qualifications of teachers to the content of teaching;
- Material resources;
- Supervision of distance learning and updating the content of the Programme in accordance with the amendments made;
- Other improvement-related aspects.





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