

Quality Management and VET

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Beware – this is expensive

- Costs

- Resources for agreeing quality standards
- Resources for undertaking inspection, observation
- Time for managers and teachers to reflect collectively
- Emotional costs of effecting large scale change

- Benefits

- Improved experience for learners
- Better outcomes for learners
- Increased efficiency and effectiveness
- Labour market and economic benefits?

What is quality?

- Do you have a clear, shared understanding of the meaning of quality in relation to VET provision?
- How is that understanding operationalised – e.g. through defined standards with agreed performance measures against the standards?
- Are you interested in the quality of inputs, outputs or both?

High quality VET teaching

- Teaching is inherently risky and can never be made fool proof
- It is inherently difficult/impossible to standardise
- Without standardisation how do you reach agreed and shared standards of quality?
- By focussing on learner outcomes, e.g. making progress?

Grounding quality concepts

- ‘Quality’ has to be an ongoing concern of practice not just another thing to be done.
- But ‘quality’ may mean different things in the practice of different groups of VET teachers within different sectors
- Thus there is a need to translate the abstract language of quality into the concrete practice of VET teachers – who does this translation work?

This is really personal

- Experience from the English FE system suggests that developing quality assurance processes is not easy because they are construed as a threat to autonomy and professional judgement
- Letting others into 'your classroom'
- Now normal practice in England to be observed but still stressful and high stakes; you have to think about the unintended consequences

From inspection to habits of practice

- We want quality to become a habit of practice
- How do VET teachers read and make sense of the organisational context they find themselves working in? What habits of practice are engendered by that sense making?
- How are VET teachers developed, initially and in service? How do they reflect upon their teaching – with what evidence; practical theorising?
- What incentives are VET teachers faced with – do these support a focus on quality as a habit of practice?
- Japanese lesson study – a case in point