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HAKA Estonian Quality
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Transnational Peer Review Webinar Conclusions

Joint activity of Croatia, Estonia, Finland and Slovenia:

Benefits and mutual learning in Transnational Peer Reviews by VET providers

PLA webinar on 21 April 2023, 11-14 CET/12-15 EET

I think the webinar was very well organised and provided a great opportunity for participants to discuss international peer review at the VET provider level. The combination of theory, practicalities and personal experiences of peer review enabled the organisers to cover all aspects of peer review.

From the discussions, the importance of the following issues were emphasised:

- the need for the host institution to describe their quality assurance arrangements rather than the national or regional VET systems. When the hosts focuses on describing the VET system, the preparatory documents become very detailed and this creates significant workload issues for international peers;
- the provision of sensitive and carefully worded feedback to the hosts;
- there is a lot of work for the hosts, the peers and any agency/organisation which manages the international peer reviews;
- agreeing the questions for the peer review needs a lot of thought. The peers need to be able to answer the questions, the questions need to focus on the quality assurance of the VET host, and the questions need to avoid very general answers;
- the selection and training of peers needs to be considered. As well as the need for the international peers to be able to use a common language with the hosts, it helps if the international peers work in a similar institutions and have responsibility for quality assurance;
- international peer reviews need a managing organisation. To ensure high quality international peer reviews, a national or regional authority needs to be involved in setting up and implementing reviews. If VET providers are invited to organise their own peer reviews, without the support of an external organisation, there is no guarantee of quality and consistency of experience;
- the possibility of using Erasmus+ funds for staff mobility to support international peer review at the VET provider level was an excellent suggestion. I think this is something that could be explored further. Focusing staff mobility on peer review seems more productive than Erasmus+ which focuses on study visits.

I think the organising experiences of ETF and the EQAVET secretariat highlight the importance of having an external body which can support the peer review hosts. It seems to me that a similar organisation (it could be the NRP) is needed at the national/regional level to ensure the success of international peer reviews at the VET provider level.

Written by Keith Brumfitt, Keynote Speaker of the Webinar