Funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Project No **2016-1-BG01-KA202-023714**

GUIDELINES

ASSISTING VET SCHOOL BOARDS IN DELIVERING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH AD/HD

Different needs but equal rights

O2-A3 Final version 06/04/2018

Folkuniversitetet (SE)

Acknowledgement

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Individual Education Plan (IEP) according to EQAVET Quality Cycle

Step 1 - Planning of Individual Education Plan (IEP)

At its core the planning process is the same for all students: it is a collaborative process in which the student, the parents and educators identify educational goals that are appropriate to the student, and the ways of attaining them. For students with special needs it is important that

THE QUALITY CYCLE

of the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training

1. Purpose and Plan
Set up clear, appropriate and measurable goals and objectives in terms of policies, procedures, tasks and human resources.

2. Implementation
Establish procedures to ensure the achievement of goals and objectives (e.g. development of partnerships, involvement of stakeholders, allocation of resources, and organisational or operational procedures).

Planning

Implementation

Review

Evaluation

4. Review
Develop procedures in order to achieve the targeted outcomes and/or new objectives; after processing feedback, key stakeholders conduct discussion and analysis in order to devise procedures for change.

3. Assessment and Evaluation
Design mechanisms for the evaluation of achievements and outcomes by collecting and processing data in order to make informed assessment.

The planning process begin at school entry or as soon as their special needs become known. This process results in an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which identifies appropriate goals and objectives, and describes the nature of the commitments which the educational system makes to assist the student in attaining these goals and objectives.

Over the length of their school experience, students with special needs may experience a number of significant transitional steps: from home to kindergarten, from elementary school to secondary school, from program to program, from one school to another, from school to adulthood. Careful and sensitive planning should be undertaken within an IEP that addresses the needs of the student and the family members involved as they pass through each transition. Early introduction to the new environment or staff, assignment of a school "buddy", or early provision of information on timetables and school organization are examples of transition support.

It is important that students with special needs take an active role in the design of their IEPs to the maximum extent that their developmental level and ability permit. Factors affecting student participation in the development of an IEP include: age, level of maturity, and capacity for sustained, considered deliberation based on awareness of possibilities and consequences.

For students with special needs moving into adulthood, transition planning is a key element of their Individual Education Plan. This transition planning should include a statement of transition goals and, where appropriate, should identify inter-agency responsibilities or linkages that should occur before the student leaves the school setting. The school is in a key position to provide a variety of co-ordinated activities that lead to employment and/or further education for students with special needs. The commitment should be to early, collaborative and well-planned transitions from school to further training, supported work, or other environments. The success of an individual student in accessing post-secondary options and necessary supports for the future depends in part on consistent information flow and advanced planning, as well as establishing firm linkages with other available agencies and community partners. The transition plan in the IEP should incorporate the elements outlined in the Graduation Portfolio Transition Plan which include career, education and personal goals.

The content of Individual Education Plan (IEP)

An IEP is a documented plan developed for a student with special needs that describes individualized goals, adaptations, modifications, the services to be provided, and includes measures for tracking achievement. It serves as a tool for collaborative planning among the school, the parents, the student (where appropriate) and, as necessary, school district personnel, other ministries and/or community agencies.

Typically an IEP includes individualized goals with measurable objectives, adaptations and/or modifications where appropriate, the strategies to meet these goals, and measures for tracking student achievement in relation to the goals. It also documents the special education services being provided as these relate to the student's identified needs. Some students require small adaptations and minimum levels of support; other students with more complex needs may require detailed planning for educational modifications, adaptive technologies, or health care plans. The IEP will reflect the complexity of the student's need and, accordingly, can be brief or more detailed and lengthy.

The development of an IEP serves a number of purposes:

a) It formalizes planning decisions and processes, linking assessment with programming.

b) It provides teachers, parents, and students with a record of the educational program for an individual student with special needs, and serves as the basis for reporting the student's progress.

c) It serves as a tool for tracking individual student learning in terms of agreed-upon goals and objectives.

d) It documents the relationships between any support services being provided and the student's educational program.

e) It provides parents and students with a mechanism for input into the individualized planning process.

The IEP document does not describe every aspect of the student's program. It makes reference to those aspects of the education program that are adapted or have been modified, and identifies the support services to be provided. IEP learning outcomes are often described as goals and objectives.

An IEP must have one or more of the following:

a) the goals or outcomes set for that student for that school year where they are different from the learning outcomes set out in an applicable educational program guide; or

b) a list of the support services required to achieve goals established for the student; or

c) a list of the adaptations to educational materials, instructional strategies or assessment methods.

An IEP should also include the following:

a) the present levels of educational performance of the student;

b) the setting where the educational program is to be provided;

c) the names of all personnel who will be providing the educational program and the support services for the student during the school year;

d) the period of time and process for review of the IEP;

e) Evidence of evaluation or review, which could include revisions made to the plan and the tracking of achievement in relation to goals; and plans for the next transition point in the student's education (including transitions beyond school completion) and linkages to Graduation Portfolio during Grades 10-12.

Where the goals established for the student are different from the expected learning outcomes for the age or grade, these should

a) Be set at a high but attainable level to encourage parents, students and staff to hold high expectations.

b) Be accompanied by measurable objectives developed for each goal to enable IEP review and evaluation.

The IEP may be brief, or it may be more detailed and complex, depending on the complexity of the student's needs. For example, the IEP for a student who needs examinations with adaptations and support with note-taking can be relatively simple. In contrast, a student with multiple disabilities who requires the involvement of a variety of professionals, adaptive technologies and major curricular modifications will require a much more extensive IEP.

All students with special needs must have an IEP. An exception can be made if:

a) the student with special needs requires no adaptation or only minor adaptations to educational materials, or instructional or assessment methods;

b) the expected learning outcomes established by the applicable educational program guide have not been modified for the student with special needs; and

c) The student with special needs requires in a school year, 25 hours or less remedial instruction, by a person other than the classroom teacher in order for the student to meet the expected learning outcomes.

Some students will require services and supports provided by agencies in the community. For example, some students may need medical or therapeutic services offered through child development centres or clinics; others may require the support of a mental health worker or a drug rehabilitation counsellor, or the services of a social worker or a probation officer.

It is essential that school and community services be co-ordinated to avoid duplication, and to ensure consensus regarding goals, consistency in interventions and an integrated approach to

service delivery. The school-based team should be responsible for co-operating with these community services, and plays a key role in:

a) keeping school staff informed of services available in the community;

b) acting as a referral source for these community supports;

c) through the case manager, planning the delivery of services with community partners;

d) ensuring school-based services are co-ordinated with community services;

e) documenting in the IEP the community services provided and those responsible for delivering them;

f) assisting in the review and evaluation of service delivery;

g) facilitating and planning the transition of students from the school to the community;

h) documenting the need for services; and

i) Facilitating the continuity of co-ordinated supports when students transfer between schools/districts.

Planning and service delivery works best when parents and students are active participants in the process. With older students who live independently, however, parent participation may not be appropriate.

Step 2. Implementing Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Program support/implementation is putting into practice the plans, strategies and support agreed upon in the IEP. Prior to implementing the IEP:

a) Plans need to be understood and supported by those involved, including the student. This is particularly critical in secondary schools.

b) Every effort should be made to ensure resources are in place, including necessary in-service (e.g., evidence-informed teaching strategies).

Implementation works best when:

a) it is sensitive to cultural, linguistic and experiential factors;

b) it is based on the IEP;

c) it incorporates observation, assessment and evaluation to refine and/or validate goals, strategies, etc.;

d) it is carried out through collaborative consultation within the school, and/or with other ministries and/or community agencies; and

e) The student with special needs is seen as first a student and not defined exclusively by those special needs.

Implementation usually includes one or more of the following:

    a) adaptations to make the learning environment more accessible;

    b) alternate approaches to instruction and/or evaluation;

    c) use of adaptive/assistive technologies;

    d) provision of intensive, direct instructional intervention (e.g., remedial, compensatory);

    e) modifications to the curriculum content;

    f) provision of services that are beyond those offered to the general student population and are proportionate to level of need.; and/or

Step 3. Evaluation of Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Wherever possible, students will be evaluated using standards established for other students and on all components of their program, including those that have been modified and those that have not. It is important that evaluation and reporting procedures accommodate the range of adaptations and modifications, so as to recognize that students with special needs may:

    a) take part in the regular program with some adaptations (i.e., the student is following the same curriculum but aspects of the program require adaptation);

    b) take part in the regular program but have some modified components (i.e., in some areas, the expected learning outcomes are substantially different from the regular curriculum; for example, math may be totally individualized, with a life-skills orientation); and/or

    c) Participate in a program that is completely modified (e.g., a student with profound intellectual disabilities whose program may focus on independence and self-care skills).

Step 4. Revising Individual Education Plan (IEP)

There are many students whose learning outcomes are identical to those of their classmates, but for whom teachers use adapted evaluation procedures (e.g., an oral exam rather than a written one). Use of adapted evaluation procedures should be noted in the student's IEP. For these students, evaluation is based on whether the learning outcomes for the course/program have been met. The methods of evaluation and reporting progress must be consistent with ministry grading and reporting policies for the VET program.

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Project: 2016-1-BG01-KA202-023714

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Some students may require extensive modifications to their program. Some or all of their learning outcomes will be substantially different from the regular curriculum. Evaluation will be based on the degree to which such outcomes are achieved. In this case, evaluation must be referenced to individually established standards.

Parents can assist the school in achieving and evaluating progress toward learning outcomes - particularly with respect to achievement of social goals, acquisition of life skills, and career exploration and development.
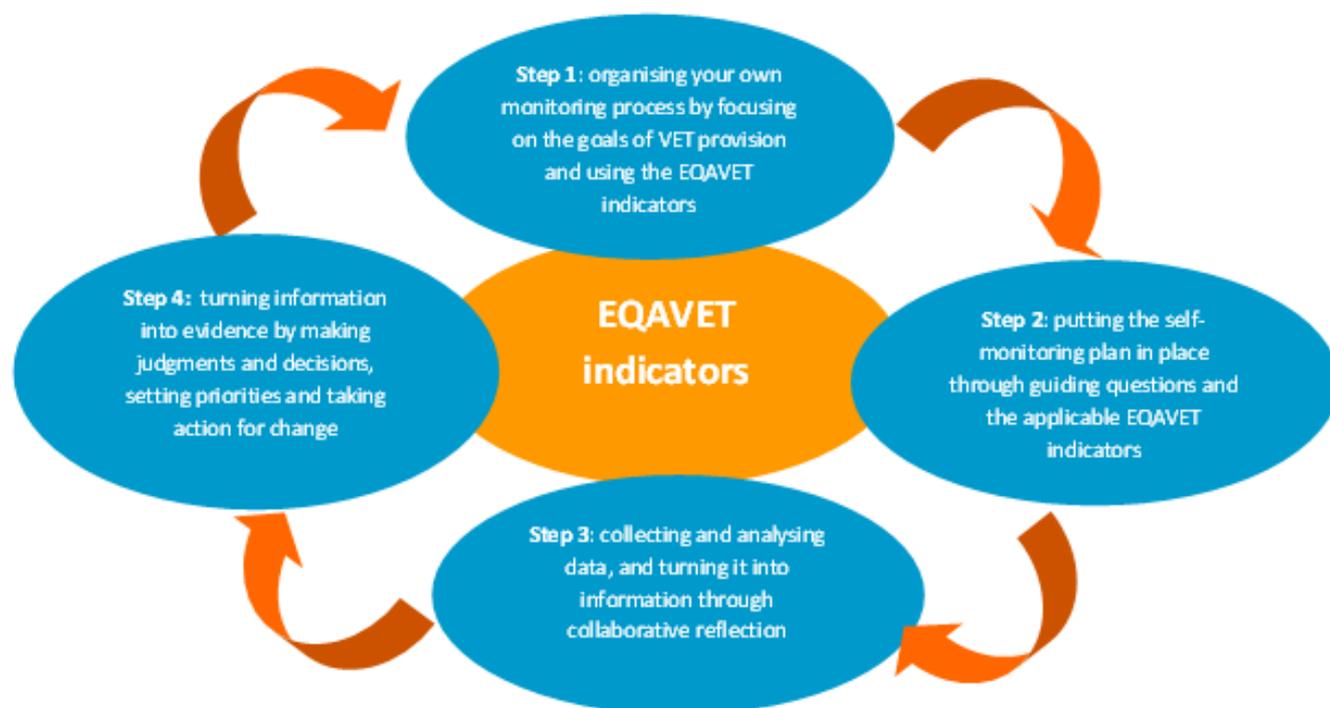
Students with other ethnic background

Learning another language and new cultural norms, adjusting to a different social and physical setting, or overcoming homesickness or trauma can affect a student's school adjustment and learning. These factors, when combined with a disability or impairment, can significantly undermine school achievement. Assessing and planning for students with special needs becomes more complex when language, cultural or migration factors are involved.

Except for cases of obvious disability (e.g., profound intellectual disability, physical or sensory disability), teachers should fully consider cultural, linguistic and/or experiential factors that can affect learning before assuming the presence of a disability or impairment. Consideration should be given to prior educational experience, and the student should be

allowed sufficient time for second-language learning and social adjustment. Students may need additional support for language development, and academic upgrading (e.g., math), or assistance with social integration, without necessarily presenting with a disability.

When assessing and planning for students with special needs with different cultural or linguistic backgrounds, teachers should:

a) Communicate with the parents regarding the student's progress and discuss the factors which may be affecting learning. It is important to obtain a developmental and educational history, and parental perceptions and expectations regarding schooling.

b) When language is a barrier, use an interpreter for communicating with the parent or the student to assist with meetings, assessments and planning sessions. The interpreter should be an adult who is familiar with the language and the culture of the parents and student.

c) Request testing of the student's vision and hearing, and, if appropriate, a medical examination. Examiners should be alerted to cultural, linguistic or experiential factors.

d) Be aware of and sensitive to cultural factors that may influence the relationship between the teacher and parents, the developmental and educational expectations as well as parental beliefs about special needs.

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Coordinated by: **Ali Rashidi** Folkuniversitetet Uppsala, Sweden.

In the context of:

Q4ADHD - Quality Assurance in VET for learners with ADHD

Project Number: 2016-BG01-KA202-023714 ERASMUS+ PROJECT

http://qa-adhd.uni-sofia.bg/

http://tools4adhd.eu/

ISBN: