

The Work Placement Monitor as part of the quality cycle

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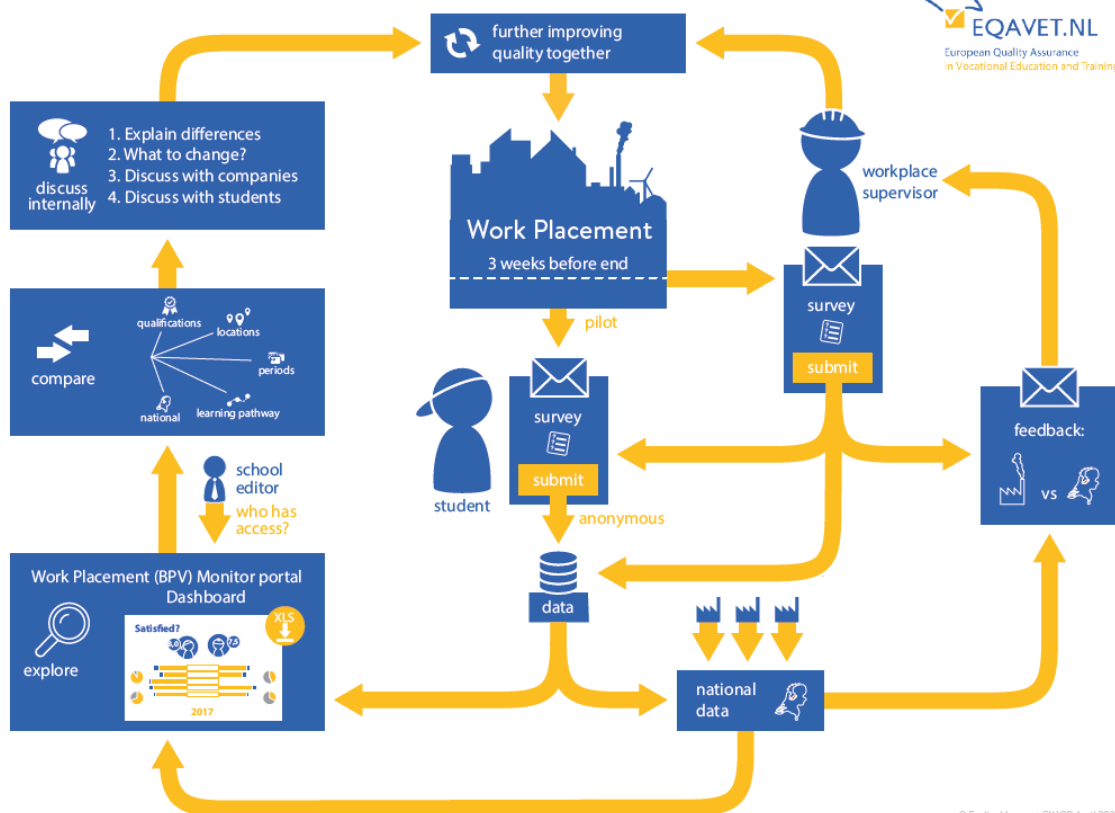
Work placements (beroepspraktijkvorming, BPV) form an important component of a vocational education and training (VET) programme. The vocational education and training sector and industry are jointly responsible for the quality of work placements. The Work Placement Monitor ('BPV Monitor') developed by the Foundation for Cooperation on Vocational Education, Training and Labour Market (Samenwerkingsorganisatie Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven SBB) can be used to measure the quality of work placements by course, educational institution and sector on an ongoing basis. Quality is measured by asking both the placement provider's workplace supervisor and the student questions at the end of a work placement period.

This provides insight into what is going well and what can be improved. It is a useful tool to include in your quality cycle and is already being used by a number of educational institutions.

Work Placement (BPV) Monitor

Continuously measure the quality of work placements
 For the vocational education sector and the labour market

vocational education  labour market



* Eveline Vervoort

Concrete tips

But how can you include the Work Placement Monitor in your quality cycle? And what does a teaching team need for this purpose? To answer these questions, NCP EQAVET talked to Frank Haacke, education and quality adviser at Summa College, and to Levien Rademakers, education strategic adviser, and Maaïke van der Gaag, quality assurance adviser, who both work at Deltion College. The insights obtained were supplemented, in association with SBB, with tips for teaching teams on how to use the insights from the Work Placement Monitor.

Policy on using the Work Placement Monitor within educational institutions

It became clear from discussions with both Deltion College and Summa College that a clear policy on managing and using the Work Placement Monitor is required to make it a permanent component of the quality cycle. A survey using the Work Placement Monitor generates data. It is important for educational institutions to consider in advance how the data obtained will be used. Who will receive the data, for example? How will the data then be communicated to the teaching teams? At what moments will the data be examined? Who will take the lead? And how will any actions to improve the quality of work-based learning be monitored? Moreover, the policy on using the Work Placement Monitor may focus on the management level. How will information from the teams be fed back to management, for example? And what trends can they identify at sector level?

Frank Haacke explained to us that Summa College shares the results of the Work Placement Monitor through the usual communication channels, such as the weekly email to team leaders or the intranet.

This means that all teams have access to the survey results.

There are teams that work on this on a structural basis and there are teams that work on this just before an internal audit, for example.

In addition, a report providing insight into developments relating to the quality of work placements is shared with the executive board annually. It provides the executive board and management with the insights needed to define any follow-up actions.

Deltion College also uses the results of the Work Placement Monitor for an annual analysis, which is also used to evaluate the quality of work placements at every level of the organisation.

Make the Work Placement Monitor part of your quality cycle

When educational institutions have established their policy on managing and using the Work Placement Monitor, it will be clear where the data will be received and who will be responsible for communicating the data to the levels at which the results should be evaluated.

The method of evaluating the data may differ per educational institution, college or institutional level.

Frank Haacke explained that a number of the teams at Summa College regularly discuss the data from the Work Placement Monitor during team meetings. They discuss whether they recognise the figures and try to link them to the team plan.

Maaïke van der Gaag added that the results of the Work Placement Monitor can become a structural component of the quality cycle by using them to drive discussions during various meetings with students or the professional field.

In her view, Deltion College currently still often reads the results for information only. The aim is to make the data an actual component of the quality cycle, but this requires a higher response rate. Actively approaching students to complete the monitor appears to be helping, according to a pilot that is currently being carried out.

Tips for using the Work Placement Monitor

Based on the discussions, experience and expertise, SBB and NCP EQAVET have formulated the following tips for using the Work Placement Monitor on a structural basis as part of the quality cycle:

- Don't be fixated on the results, but use them to make a diagnosis and on that basis develop an improvement process. Try to make the connection between the data and practice.
- Discuss the results of the Work Placement Monitor as a recurring item during team meetings. Link results to objectives in the team plan. Are the results recognisable and/or explainable? Feel free to ask each other and the rapporteur additional or clarifying questions!
- Institutions should focus attention internally and externally on the importance of the Work Placement Monitor. Communicate information about the monitor to teachers, students and the professional field, and actively encourage them to participate in the monitor.
- Use insights from the Work Placement Monitor to drive panel and other discussions with students. Verify the recognisability of the results with them, and ask whether they can support the results with examples from practice and

whether they have any suggestions for improving work placements. This will enable you to combine quantitative data from the Work Placement Monitor with qualitative insights from panel or other discussions. At the same time, you will also 'solve the problem' that the Work Placement Monitor will not provide every institution with immediate insights into specific programmes and/or locations.

- Use insights from the Work Placement Monitor to drive the evaluation of the organisation of work placements by teaching teams. Present the insights to workplace supervisors and discuss with them whether they recognise the results, can provide examples from practice and see room for changes and/or improvements.

Educational institutions are taking various initiatives to constantly tighten up and/or improve the organisation of work placements. This includes organising regular meetings with the professional field, during which the workplace supervisors, contact persons from the placement providers and the teaching teams exchange information. Use the insights from the Work Placement Monitor to drive these discussions by, for example, discussing statements based on the results. Meetings with the professional field can also be used to ask questions about specific themes in the Work Placement Monitor and offer the opportunity to make suggestions for improvements.

- Examine whether trends can be observed in the results of multiple Work Placement Monitor surveys. Can you see an upward trend in the results on a theme between the first and second survey conducted? Great! In that case, any adjustments appear to have a positive effect. Can you see a downward

trend in the results on a theme between the first and second survey you conducted? In that case, this appears to be an important point that should be raised during work placement improvement discussions.

- Exchange information between programmes on what is going well and what could be improved. You might be able to learn from each other. If another college seems to be doing very well on a particular theme where you are struggling with issues, contact them to find out how they have organised work placements.
- Make choices based on the insights from the Work Placement Monitor. What steps can be taken to improve work placements? Try to focus on no more than one or two themes at a time, rather than reorganising everything in one go.

Interested in learning more about this topic?

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<https://eqavet.nl/in-gesprek-met-studenten-docenten-en-kwaliteitszorgmedewerkers-2/>

<https://www.s-bb.nl/feiten-en-cijfers/bpv-monitor>

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