

1. *Please list existing national laws, regulations and policies establishing norms and standards for quality of education in your country. Please also include any guidelines on the quality of education.*

#### School Education

In June 2002, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (Kultusministerkonferenz – KMK) passed a resolution to introduce national educational standards. In 2003 and 2004, educational standards were adopted for the primary sector, the Hauptschulabschluss and the Mittlerer Schulabschluss. In 2012 educational standards will be adopted for the Allgemeine Hochschulreife.

In June 2006, the Standing Conference adopted a comprehensive strategy for educational monitoring which consists of four interconnected areas (for more detail see question 3)

In June 2004 the Standing Conference set up the Institute for Educational Progress (IQB) at the Humboldt-University Berlin to contribute towards improving comparability and permeability in the education system.

Other essential elements of quality assurance in the school sector are represented by the Standards for Teacher Training: Educational Sciences (Standards für die Lehrerbildung: Bildungswissenschaften) and the content requirements for subject-related studies and subject-related didactics in teacher education and training (Ländergemeinsame inhaltliche Anforderungen für die Fachwissenschaften und Fachdidaktiken in der Lehrerbildung).

#### Higher Education

Quality development and quality assurance in higher education are primarily the responsibility of higher education institutions. However, the Laender have to create the necessary framework conditions and to ensure that higher education institutions maintain a permanent and comprehensive quality management. On the basis of common regulations of the Laender and in the wake of the transition of the academic structure to a consecutive graduation system with bachelor and master degrees, a fundamental structural change has been initiated with the objective to promote quality and transparency. Additionally at Laender level numerous measures and instruments of quality assurance have been established through legal provisions and contractual agreements with higher education institutions.

An overview of the relevant regulations in higher education (in particular concerning quality assurance in teaching and research, accreditation and evaluation as well as the quality framework for German higher education degrees) is available at the website of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Land (KMK):

<http://www.kmk.org/dokumentation/veroeffentlichungen-beschluesse/wissenschaft-hochschule.html#c7176>

2. *Please describe briefly applicable norms and standards and minimal requirements, especially with regard to following:*

- a. School infra-structure

Generally, children are admitted to Grundschule (primary school) from the age of 6 to the age of 10 or 12. At primary level, children undergoing compulsory schooling enter a local primary school, which is the same for all of them. Transition from primary school to one of the school types at secondary level (Gymnasium /Realschule/Hauptschule/Gesamtschule (comprehensive school) and types of schools offering several courses of education (Schularten mit mehreren Bildungsgängen) is subject to different regulations depending on legislation in the Land concerned. Children attend the secondary level schools from the age of 10/12 to 16. The different school types with their respective leaving certificates and qualifications are permeable, so that

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a transition in another school is possible. All compulsory schooling is free of charge. Once pupils have completed compulsory schooling they move into upper secondary education. The range of courses on offer includes full-time general education and vocational schools, as well as vocational training within the duales System (dual vocational education and training system).

b. Class size and pupil-teacher ratio

Pupils are generally grouped by age and, at secondary level, setting occurs in some subjects. Primary classes initially have one teacher for all subjects, whereas secondary pupils have separate subject teachers.

**Pupil-teacher-ratio in selected school types 2006 - 2010**

school type	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
primary schools	19,4	19,0	18,5	17,8	17,4
Hauptschulen	13,5	13,1	12,9	12,4	12,1
Realschulen	18,9	18,7	18,6	18,0	17,6
Gymnasien (grade 5 to 9/10)*	17,8	17,5	17,3	16,7	16,2
part-time vocational schools	38,7	38,6	38,8	37,9	36,9

\*As from 2008: grades 5 to 9/10, until 2007 grades 5 to 10.

c. Teacher qualification

The required level of certified education to work as a teacher is the second stage of tertiary education in usually two subjects and in educational sciences and the completion of the preparatory service (Vorbereitungsdienst) with the second Staatsprüfung (state examination). In recent years, consecutive study courses have been introduced in initial teacher education.

In December 2004, the Standing Conference adopted Standards for Teacher Training: Educational Sciences. In October 2008 the Standing Conference adopted common content requirements for subject-related studies and subject-related didactics in teacher training which apply to all Länder. In conjunction with the Standards for Teacher Training in the Educational Sciences, these serve as the basis for the accreditation and regular evaluation of all teacher-training courses.

The efforts of many Länder aim to focus on the following measures, amongst others, to enhance the quality of their teacher-training courses: a more extensive practical orientation during teacher training, intensification of the relations between the theoretical and practical phases of training, particular significance of the induction period for newly qualified teachers and measures to improve teaching practice with regard to diagnostic and methodical competence.

d. Working conditions for teachers and their professional development

Teachers are generally employed by the Land and have either civil servant or public service employee status. This guarantees a very high level of security of employment. All teachers have access to continuous professional development through courses offered by the Länder ministries of education or associated institutions.

#### e. School curricula content and pedagogical materials

The Länder ministries determine the curriculum, recommend teaching methods and approve textbooks. Core subjects in primary education generally include reading, writing, arithmetic, Sachunterricht as an introduction to natural and social sciences, art, music, sport and religious education. Secondary curricula depend on the type of institution, but usually continue primary core subjects, and include at least one foreign language as well as natural and social sciences.

#### f. Teaching-learning processes

In the face of altered conditions within society and the broader scope of schools' mandate, teachers in their capacity as experts for instruction and education increasingly act as part of a personal network which is supported by communication and cooperation, e. g. with school social workers, Sozialpädagogen (graduate youth and community workers), psychologists, parents, and scientists. Against this background, a changed image of the teaching profession emerges, which is mainly characterized by

- early identification of pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses
- a professional approach to the increasing heterogeneity of learning groups
- building up and maintaining structures which facilitate an exchange with other educational institutions as well as an involvement of parents, training companies and the school community
- the orientation of work along the lines of the national Bildungsstandards (educational standards) and their evaluation and deriving measures which promote quality and secure educational opportunities from such evaluations and
- the willingness to face the challenges of a life-long learning process.

#### g. School management, including student and parents' participation

In the Federal Republic of Germany, responsibility for the education system is conditioned by the federal structure of the State. According to the Basic Law (Grundgesetz), educational legislation and administration are primarily the responsibility of the Länder (in a system comprising the Land Ministries of Education, Cultural affairs and Science, the regional authorities (Bezirksregierung/Oberschulamt) and the lower-level school supervisory authorities (Schulamt). This particularly applies to the school system, higher education and the adult education/continuing education sector.

School supervisory authorities in each Land are responsible for inspection and exercise academic, legal and staff supervision within the school system. Each school has a teachers' council responsible for educational matters, and a school council (comprising teachers, parents and pupils), which decides on school regulations or disciplinary rules.

#### h. Methods to evaluate student performance and assess learning outcomes

Centralised reviews of the achievement of educational standards in a comparison between the Länder is the main task of the Institute for Educational Progress (Institut zur Qualitätsentwicklung im Bildungswesen – IQB). Within this framework, the IQB develops standardised assignments for the educational standards of the Standing Conference. So-called anchor assignments (Ankeraufgaben) which are standardised within the framework of international studies ensure an international connection to the educational standards. Since 2009 the Länder

have been examining and comparing the attainment of their educational standards by pupils at primary school and lower secondary school level, based on the IQB assignments.

Comparative studies for primary school and lower secondary level (VERA 3 and VERA 8) have also been implemented. Surveys on learning levels are conducted annually and are regularly to provide important information for the promotion of pupils and schools. Different to international studies and centralised comparisons between the Länder which are based on representative samples, comparative studies serve to investigate the performance levels and grading of all schools and classes throughout a Land.

3. *Please identify the institutional mechanisms in your country used to collect and process information and to assess adherence to norms and standards established to ensure quality of education.*

#### School education

The measurement of the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the classroom needs to be embedded in a systematic monitoring of the education system and its outcomes which in turn is a prerequisite for quality development at all levels of the education system. In 2006, the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder adopted a comprehensive strategy for education monitoring which consists of four conceptually interconnected areas:

1. International comparative studies of student achievement:

In order to monitor the efficiency of the German education in international comparison and to be able to initiate necessary reforms, the Länder in cooperation with the Federal Government, take part in the international comparative studies PISA, PIRLS and TIMSS.

2. Central review of the achievement of the educational standards in comparison between the Länder:

With the introduction of educational standards for the primary level, the lower secondary level and soon also for the upper secondary level the Länder have created the necessary foundation for the improvement of teaching quality, more comparability among the Länder and more equity of outcomes. Following the obligatory introduction of the educational standards in all Länder under the auspices of the Institute for Quality Development in the Education System (IQB), tests have been developed which serve as an instrument to substantiate the required competencies and to allow for empirical review. Since 2009 a central examination of the educational standards has been carried out in the Länder comparison.

3. Comparative tests on the basis of or in connection with the educational standards to review the effectiveness of individual schools within the Länder (VERA):

Since 2009 cross-Länder comparative tests have been carried out in the grades 3 and 8 (VERA 3 and VERA 8) on the basis of or in connection with the educational standards. These surveys on achievement levels are carried out annually and are regularly to provide important information for the targeted support for students and schools.

4. Joint education reporting of the Federal Government and the Länder:

In addition to the international comparative studies the joint educational reporting of the Federal Government and the Länder which takes place every two years constitutes a central ele-

ment of the joint task of the Federal Government und the Länder. Based on the guiding principle “education in the course of life” the indicator-based reporting ranges from early childhood education and care to further education and also includes – as far as feasible - informal learning.

### Higher Education

The two-cycle degree system of German higher education is subject to accreditation as an external quality assurance procedure. The task of accreditation is to ensure that relevant subject-specific standards are met and upheld. In each case, this involves reviewing the concept for the relevant study programme, the manageability of the workload, the quality of the teaching, the relevance of the coursework to the workplace and the degree to which gender mainstreaming is practiced. As a rule, introduction and continuation of bachelor's and master's degree programmes are made contingent upon accreditation / reaccreditation.

Additionally system accreditation was introduced, as a complement to existing programme accreditation. In each case, system accreditation focuses on a higher education institution's own internal quality assurance system. Positive system accreditation certifies that the relevant higher education institution's quality assurance system, for the areas of study and teaching, is able to ensure that required learning outcomes are achieved and that study programmes are of high quality. In each case, the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, the requirements imposed by the Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) and the criteria applied by the national Accreditation Council are taken into account.

Non-state higher education institutions are subject to an institutional accreditation procedure operated by the Science Council. In each case, that procedure evaluates whether the relevant higher education institution is meeting requirements pertaining to scientific / academic teaching and research.

4. *Please provide information on other relevant initiatives and developments aiming to promote quality in education.*

### School Education

Since the 1980s, disabled pupils have been increasingly included in general schools under school pilot projects. Also, various forms of co-operation between general schools and special schools have emerged and approaches to inclusive teaching have been developed in educational science. The recent development of special needs education, under the impact of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, is a process which involves the whole network of education. Recent years have seen a growing number of different assistance measures which have pursued the common aim of inclusion. Consequently, various methods are used to provide opportunities for disabled children to receive instruction together with non-disabled children. A focus on institutions has given way to a focus on the needs of the individual. Formerly, the prevailing concept when making choices for a child's school career (i.e. the decision in favour of a mainstream school or a special school) was the need for education at a special school. This has since been superseded by the concept of inclusion. In November 2011 the Ministers of Education of the Länder have decided on supporting the idea of “inclusion” as understood in the UN Convention and thus supporting a new understanding of disabilities and educational needs, improved diagnostic techniques, more effective early detection and prevention as well as better overall conditions at mainstream schools, more open approaches to instruction and education and, finally, a greater appreciation of the benefits to children attending

a school close to their home.

### Higher education

In order to ensure quality assurance and quality development in teaching different complementary measures and procedures are necessary. They include all higher education institutions in Germany, but in terms of implementation leave room for university- and Laender specific priorities and developments. Further indispensable core elements of a sustainable quality assurance system are, among others:

- Evaluation

The objective of evaluation is the improvement of the outcomes of teaching and learning. The results of evaluations are guiding target agreements either between the state and higher education institutions or internal to university. Target agreements constitute the basis for further quality assurance measures such as performance –related allocation of funds, remuneration of professors and granting of premiums.

- Support concept

This includes, among others. tutoring and mentoring programmes, counseling systems, possibly the obligation for counselling services in specific phases of study, guidance for first-semester students, information on courses on internet.

- Promotion of teaching competencies

This includes in particular offers by the higher education institutions and possibly cross-university and cross-Laender centers and institutes for university teaching and the organization of training programmes, in particular targeting the new generation of academics. Higher education institutions are responsible to organize respective measures, but it falls within the remit of the state to ensure that higher education institutions meet their obligation. This can be achieved, for example through target agreements.

- Quality assurance by results-based financing of higher education

Personnel responsibility and extensive financial responsibility are the prerequisites that higher education institutions are able to play their role as key actors in quality management. Higher education institutions nowadays have a great extent of flexible options of budget implementation. Concerning the allocation of funding the Laender are bound to performance-based and load-oriented criteria. State financing in particular is oriented to workload and performance in teaching. Thus funding allocation becomes an important element to provide state incentives for the improvement of teaching.