

Part 2

Teaching democracy and human rights

Unit 1

Conditions of teaching and learning

Unit 2

Setting objectives and selecting materials

Unit 3

Understanding politics

Unit 4

Guiding processes of learning and choosing forms of teaching

Unit 5

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Students should, for example, not only know their rights of participation, they must also be able to use them. Students therefore need practice and training opportunities within school life by participating in decisions and influencing the school environment in other ways. For example, teachers must give students the opportunity to state their opinions, both on topics in class and on issues related to teaching and running the school. This type of teaching and learning needs preparation. A teacher therefore needs to think beforehand about different elements of his/her profession. This is the case for all teaching. Especially in teaching EDC/HRE this is needed, because the students' life experience is permanently part of this approach. How do I integrate this? How do I ensure that all students are heard? How can I be sure that I will not overwhelm the students with my opinion? Therefore, we suggest five steps that have to be considered:

- What are the conditions of teaching and learning?
- What are the objectives I have to set and which materials shall be selected?
- What are the specific concepts of politics that have to be considered?
- What is my understanding of processes of learning and which forms of teaching do I choose?
- How can the outcomes be assessed (students, teachers and schools)?

We support the teachers in finding answers to these basic questions by supporting them with work files they can use like tools in case of need.

Unit 1

Conditions of teaching and learning

1. Introduction

When planning your lessons, you need a sufficiently clear idea about the characteristics and learning conditions both in the class as a whole and among individual students. It is important to understand the children with their differences: the scope of variation in their skills and abilities, their strengths and weaknesses, their beliefs, attitudes and interests.

On the one hand, you will clarify the learning conditions in a class in terms of the teaching objectives you have in mind. On the other hand, when selecting objectives and topics, you will draw on your knowledge of the characteristics of individual children and the whole class.

By identifying the conditions of learning you will have completed the first part of preliminary clarifications. In your further planning, you must also take into account the general conditions under which your teaching will take place. Finally, you should not forget your own teaching skills; this is to ensure that you will make effective use of them, and develop them further without placing too demanding a burden on yourself in your teaching work.

At the beginning of this unit you will find key questions followed by work files that can be used whenever needed.

2. Task and key questions for conditions of teaching and learning

2.1 Task

At the beginning of this unit you will find the key questions. The subsequent questions for your self-control offer a more detailed approach to different aspects of learning conditions.

2.2 Key questions

- What knowledge and skills do the students already possess?
- What knowledge and skills do I possess?
- What external conditions must I be aware of?
- What do I know about the students as individuals?
- What elements of knowledge and information must the students command to enable them to tackle the new task ahead of them?
- Referring to the new subject matter, what (advance) information, skills and experience have the students already acquired? What is new for them, what is repetition, what is essential and what is supplementary?
- What techniques of working and learning may I expect the students to master, and what experience do they have with different teaching methods and forms of social interaction?
- What positive or negative attitudes, habits, prejudices or convictions may, or must I, expect to encounter?
- How can I overcome learning difficulties, learning barriers and resistance against learning?
- Have I adequately considered the children's willingness to learn, their state of feelings, their responsiveness, their learning needs, their expectations, their interests, their free-time activities, and their living conditions?

- What socio-cultural conditions and influences, and what systems of support are of importance for the work in the classroom? What role do parents, brothers and sisters, peers or other people of psychological importance play?

Conditions of teaching and learning

Work file 1: How to take students' skills and knowledge into account

- What do I know about the class?
- What characteristics of the class should I take into account and respond to?
- How do I want to, or how must I lead the class (communication, social behaviour, disturbed relationships, etc.)?
- What is the class atmosphere like (developments in the group, ties of friendship, outsiders, etc.)?
- Which conventions are to be adhered to (language, duties, seating, rules of social interaction, rituals, special occasions, ceremonies and parties, etc.)?
- What is the size of the class, and what is its structure (gender, multicultural variety, etc.)?

Conditions of teaching and learning

Work file 2: How to take my teaching skills and knowledge into account

- What general experience, skills and knowledge do I have?
- To what extent is my knowledge incomplete – referring to contents and subject matter, objectives, suitable teaching methods and the processes of learning?
- In which fields do I wish to learn myself (knowledge, teaching methods, professional skills, personal qualities, routine, etc.)?
- Which concept of human nature serves as my general guideline?
- What is the theoretical framework, or the simplified version of a theory, which guides my work as a teacher?
- How would I describe and classify my relationship to my students?
- Where are my personal limits, as far as working hours, stress, etc., are concerned? How do I make use of my personal working capacity?
- How can I reduce my workload by better planning, both of my work and other activities?
- How do I use, and economise on, my time budget, and how do I deal with sources of personal stress?

Conditions of teaching and learning

Work file 3: Considering general teaching and learning conditions

- How do I account for the time of the day or year, and the disposable teaching time?
- How has the classroom been designed?
- How is the school equipped: quantity and variety of rooms, available media, materials, etc?
- What framework is provided in terms of school culture (joint projects for different age groups, team work and team obligations, co-operation with parents, authorities or experts for children with specific needs, etc.)?

Conditions of teaching and learning

Work file 4: What are my basic attitudes towards students?

- Empathy, devotion (responsiveness to feelings, thoughts, views and needs), benevolent acceptance (personal esteem does not depend on any conditions), sincerity, stability, reliability
- Leadership in a spirit of esteem and respect (emotional devotion, inductive reasoning, authoritative control, support of social integration and democracy)

Relationships and communication in the class

- Mutual understanding
- Symmetric relationships
- Sexually non-discriminating co-education
- Meeting other people
- Friendship
 - Verbal and non-verbal communication
 - Adopting other perspectives and points of view
 - Self-perception and perception by others

Atmosphere of conflict prevention

- Fair and caring community, community of learners, shared responsibilities (teachers and students – both male and female)
- Co-operation, not competition
 - Social learning
 - Rules and conventions
 - Meta-communication and meta-interaction
 - Limitation and reinforcement

Educational measures

- Conflict resolution talks
- “Round table”
- Games
- Co-operation as guideline for modifying personal behaviour
- Supportive feedback
- Individual responsibilities
- Punishment
- Dealing with bullying and violence and in the class or school

Conditions of teaching and learning

Work file 5: Rethinking discipline and order from a democratic point of view

- Order is necessary under all circumstances. A group without order and basic rules cannot be democratic.
- Limits are necessary. Rules may be wrong or inappropriate. But as long as they have not been replaced they must be respected. It must, however, be possible to change them.
- From the very beginning, children should participate in setting up and enforcing rules. Only in this way is it possible for them to identify with the rules.
- A classroom community cannot function without mutual trust and respect. In some cases it may prove difficult to create such an atmosphere.
- Team spirit must replace competition in the classroom.
- A friendly classroom atmosphere is of vital importance.
- The social skills of the teacher have an essential contribution to make (democratic leadership, developing a feeling of belonging to the group, building up relationships, etc.).
- Group communication is a permanent reality in a democratically led class.
- Students, both boys and girls, must be encouraged to explore something new and to learn from mistakes.
- Within the limits set, it must be possible to exercise liberties. Only in this way is it possible for individual responsibility to develop.
- Discipline and order will be accepted and complied with most willingly if they help each individual to express himself or herself, and if they support the group in developing satisfying relationships and working conditions.

Conditions of teaching and learning

Work file 6: Rethinking the teacher's role from a democratic point of view

Teachers have to lead and accompany the class. This is their task. They have to decide on various things and also control everything. What teachers should not do is to aim at also controlling thinking processes and personal development of their students. Especially in EDC/HRE, the teacher becomes a role model for his/her students. How does he/she deal with conflicts? What idea of people does he/she promote? The following list gives a clue where one can position oneself. But it is clear, however, that according to learning situation, mood of the day, moments of danger or set-up of the group of students, etc., it can make sense to be more autocratic or to be more democratic. Generally it is important to note: my idea of a person as a teacher will leave an imprint on my daily work with the students.

Learning situation	
Rather autocratic	Rather democratic
Ruler	Leader
Sharp voice	Friendly voice
Order	Invitation, request
Power	Influence
Pressure	Suggestion
Demand of compliance	Winning over to co-operation
Imposition of tasks	Offering of ideas
Predominant mode of criticism	Frequent encouragement
Frequent punishment	Frequent support and help
"I'm telling you!"	"Let's talk it over."
"I decide, you obey!"	"I make a proposal and help you to decide."
Sole responsibility for the group	Shared responsibility with and in the group

Conditions of teaching and learning

Work file 7: How to develop a democratic atmosphere in the classroom

If a teacher decides to organise the classroom more democratically this is connected with a big goal. The following table shows the steps that could be taken.

1. Where do I stand in which aspects?
2. Which aspect do I choose for tomorrow, for next week, next year?
3. How do I act as a teacher in order to make my school benefit from my learning progress?

Short-term objectives	Medium-term objectives	Long-term objectives
Teacher reduces use of extremely authoritarian expressions	Teacher develops habitual use of reversible expressions	Mutual understanding between students and teacher
Teacher gives reasons for his/her selection of subjects and materials	Teacher offers alternative subjects and teaching materials	Joint lesson planning by students and teacher
Teacher explains learning objectives to students	Teacher presents alternative learning objectives to students	Joint selection of learning objectives by students and teacher
Teacher gives reasons for his choice of teaching methods	Teacher presents alternative options of teaching methods	Joint decision on teaching methods by students and teacher
Teacher gives reasons for his marking of students' performance	Teacher explains problems of marking	Self-assessment by students
Introduction to democratic modes of conflict resolution	Teacher ceases to make authoritative use of power to resolve conflict	Conflict resolution by means of co-operation and communication
Teacher explains principles of how work in the classroom is organised	Students' suggestions on work organisation are considered	Students participate in decisions on organising work in the classroom

Conditions of teaching and learning

Work file 8: How to develop school as a democratic community

EDC/HRE and the way to a democratic atmosphere cannot only take place in the classroom but also have to be developed within the school. In this respect, the most important key player is the school principal.

Within the Council of Europe EDC/HRE materials the tool “Democratic governance of schools” suggests key areas to work in and steps to take on the way to school as a democratic community (see also Unit 5 in this part, Work files 15-18).

These four key areas are:

1. Governance, leadership, management and public accountability
2. Value-centred education
3. Co-operation, communication and involvement: competitiveness and self-determination
4. Student discipline

Governance, leadership, management and public accountability

Various stakeholders such as legislators, local school boards, trade unions, students and parents as well as local communities make demands of school leadership. How are these challenges met by the school leader? What kind of management is applied by him/her in the school? Is leadership built on consensus and trust or is leadership characterised by mistrust and rivalry? How are responsibilities shared in the school? How is diversity dealt with by the school leader? And how does the school show accountability towards different stakeholders?

Value-centred education

How do values such as democracy, human rights and respect for diversity appear in formal and informal contexts in a school? How are values and social skills promoted as a prerequisite for peaceful co-existence in the modern globalised society? How are these values given thought in the school?

Co-operation, communication and involvement: competitiveness and self-determination

School is not separated from the rest of society or from the real world. How does a school communicate internally and externally? How does a school co-operate internally and externally? Does the school resemble more a dissociated company or does it resemble a door to the rest of society through its ways and modes of communication and involvement? What does a school mission statement say? How much is the school determined to put into practice its set goals when communicating and opening itself to the rest of society?

Student discipline

A lot of people work together in a school. What forces should be used to maintain discipline and order in a democratically governed school? What makes students follow given rules, and what makes them oppose them? Does a democratic school mean chaos without the students following any rules?

Unit 2

Setting objectives and selecting materials

1. Introduction

Teachers repeatedly face the problem of justification: what are the reasons for my selection of possible objectives and topics? Identifying a teaching objective and selecting topics mean making a fundamental decision related to teaching. Objectives should not simply be copied or adapted, nor should they merely be dogmatically imposed. Rather, they should be scrupulously questioned, and their choice should be based on sound reasoning and justification. And then you make – maybe together with the students – a deliberate choice of topics and objectives for teaching, you reflect your decision in a range of wider contexts and you check on your selection of topics to identify their educational value. This task is of crucial importance, as the number of possible teaching topics is endless, while the time disposable for planning and teaching is limited.

The following key questions are intended to guide and assist you in this complex task of selecting and preparing topics for teaching.

2. Task and key questions for setting objectives and selecting materials

2.1 Task

Teachers with a sense of responsibility in their work repeatedly face the problem of justification: what are the reasons for my selection of possible objectives and topics?

Identifying a teaching objective means making the most fundamental of all decisions related to teaching. Objectives should not simply be copied or adapted, nor should they merely be dogmatically imposed. Rather, they should be scrupulously questioned, and their choice should be based on sound reasoning and justification. It is important for a teacher to relate the teaching objectives he or she is considering to the students' learning conditions and to adjust them accordingly (see Unit 1, Conditions of Teaching and Learning).

As soon as the objectives have become more concrete, aspects of content need to be included. Not until you have decided on the desired level of attainment concerning content matter, that is, the topics to be included, will it be possible for you to define your teaching objectives.

In the planning process, the work on aspects of contents in teaching is both difficult and time-consuming. At first sight, little effort might seem necessary, as the curriculum sets clear guidelines and some teaching media offer detailed suggestions. The main task, however, is left to you, the teacher: you must be well informed on the whole field of knowledge that you wish to teach, you must structure it, acquire a comprehensive understanding of it, analyse it thoroughly, evaluate it critically, make a deliberate choice of topics and objectives for teaching, reflect your decision in a range of wider contexts, check on your selection of topics to identify their educational value, etc. This task is of crucial importance, as the number of possible teaching topics is endless, while the disposable time for planning and teaching is limited.

The following key questions and follow-up questions for your self-control are intended to guide and assist you in this complex task of selecting and preparing topics for teaching. We suggest you co-operate with other teachers, and perhaps also with the students.

2.2 Key questions

For setting objectives:

- What objectives do I wish to achieve?
- What competences will be most important at the end of the unit?

- What reasons do I give for the selection of these objectives?
- What priority do I give to my objectives (primary and secondary objectives)?
- What objectives are important now – for the class as a whole, for individual students, male and/or female?
- Have I ensured that the objectives that I have selected serve the main interests and needs of my students? Do my lessons really respond to what my students are preoccupied with?
- Is it possible for the students to participate in the definition or selection of the learning objectives?
- How much time (lessons and weeks) has been assigned to achieving the objectives?
- What objectives should be achieved by all the students within the disposable teaching time (general standard of attainment)?
- Are specific levels of attainment to be defined for individual students (education according to individual ability)?
- Have I enabled the students to move forward from knowledge to action, that is, can they confidently apply the knowledge they have acquired?
- What do I focus on in my teaching – cognitive, personal or social competence?
- Have I got a clear idea of the short- and long-term objectives which are of primary importance for my class, for learning groups, for individual male and female students?
- Have I clearly and explicitly stated the objectives?

For selecting topics and materials:

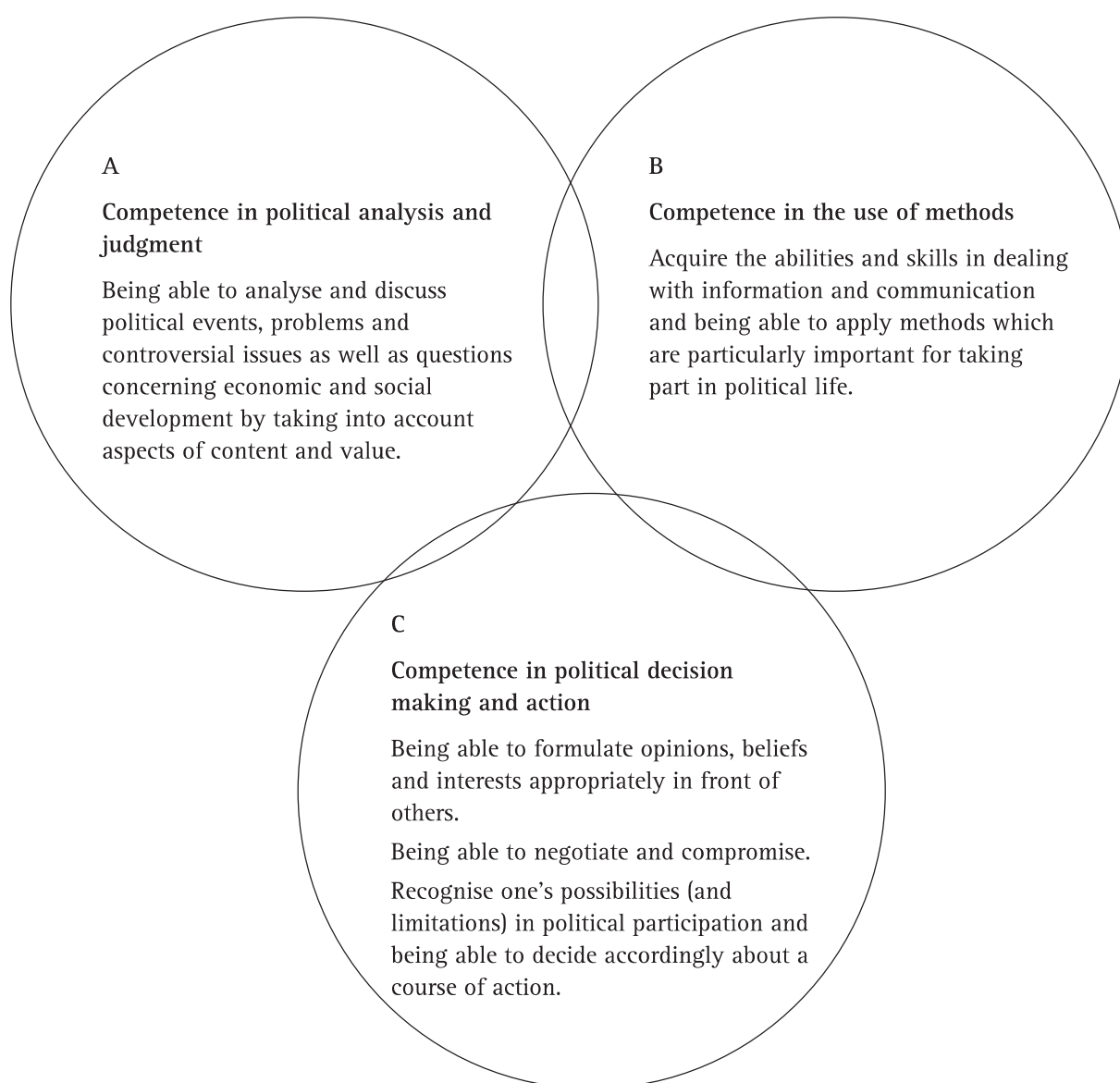
- Which topic have I chosen?
- What are the reasons for my choice?
- What is the structure of my topic?
- Does my choice of topic comply with the syllabus?
- Which aspects of my topic are interesting for my students?
- In what way is learning in school linked with learning out of school?
- Is there a connection between the topic and real life and the students' environment?
- Do I have a general understanding of the whole subject matter which enables me to select a specific topic? How can I become better informed? Do I need to carry out any studies or experiments before treating the subject in class?
- What teaching materials are available for the specific aspects of the topic?
- Will there be a chance for the students, both boys and girls, to draw on their personal experience, knowledge and skills in the lessons (for example, children with a different cultural or linguistic background)?
- Will the topic be equally suitable for the specific needs of the two sexes?
- Does the selected topic interest me?

Setting objectives and selecting materials

Work file 1: Students' competences for EDC/HRE

Three areas of competence for living and learning democracy and human rights education

The aim of Education for Democratic Citizenship is to support the development of competences in three areas, which, however, are always strongly interconnected and therefore should not be treated separately.



Competence in political analysis and judgment

The aim is to develop the competence to analyse political events, problems and controversial issues and be able to explain the reasons for one's personal judgment. School can contribute to this process by supporting students to use structured analysis to attain a more sophisticated understanding of matters.

In order to be able to do this, the following skills are necessary:

- recognising the importance of political decisions for one's own life;
- recognising and judging the consequences of political decisions;

- recognising and presenting one's personal point of view and the point of view of others;
- recognising and understanding the three dimensions of politics:
 - a) the institutional,
 - b) the content-bound,
 - c) the process-oriented dimension;
- analysing and assessing the different phases of political processes at micro-level (for example, school life), meso-level (for example, community) and macro-level (national and international politics);
- presenting facts, problems and decisions with the help of analytical categories, identifying the main aspects and relating them to the fundamental values of human rights and democratic systems;
- identifying the social, legal, economic, ecological and international conditions, interests and developments in the discussion about current controversial issues;
- recognising the way politics are presented by the media.

Competence in the use of methods

In order to be able to take part in the various political processes not only basic knowledge about political contents, structures and processes are needed but also general competences which are acquired in other subjects (such as communication, co-operation, dealing with information, figures and statistics). Special abilities and skills such as being able to argue for or against an issue, which are particularly important in taking part in political events, must be trained and promoted in Education for Democratic Citizenship. The aim is to use these skills in methods which are widespread in the political discourse (discussions, debates).

In order to be able to do this, the following skills are necessary:

- being able to find, select, process and present autonomously information given by the mass media and/or new media in a critical and focused manner (collect, organise, evaluate statistics, maps, diagrams, charts, caricatures);
- using the media with a critical eye and being able to develop one's own media products;
- applying empirical methods in a basic way (for example, survey and interview techniques).

Competence in political decision making and action

The aim is to acquire the competences to appear and act in a confident and adequate manner in the political context and in public.

In order to be able to do this, the following skills are necessary:

- being able to voice one's political opinion in an adequate and self-confident way and to master different forms of dialogue;
- taking part in public life and being able to act politically (oral communication skills such as explaining one's point of view, discussing, debating, leading or moderating a discussion; written presentation and visualisation techniques for posters, wall newspaper, minutes of a meeting, letters to the editor, etc.);
- recognising one's own possibilities to exert political influence, forming a team and working together;
- asserting oneself, but also being able to compromise;
- recognising anti-democratic thoughts and tendencies and being able to respond to them adequately;
- being able to behave naturally in a intercultural context.

Setting objectives and selecting materials

Work file 2: Two categories of materials in EDC/HRE

Teaching and learning without materials of some kind is impossible, as materials are the media that provide the subject matter, the topics, the information and data. Students develop their competences by activities, which means they “do something” with an object. What first comes to mind is perhaps the school textbook or a handout, and indeed they are important in EDC/HRE.

Two categories of materials in EDC/HRE

However, the specific profile of EDC/HRE is reflected by the wider concept of materials and media. The school textbook and the handout are examples of printed media. In interactive constructivist learning, a different category of materials is created by teachers and students. They are authentic, as they are first-hand materials, produced on the spot, in a particular situation, for the people present there and then. In EDC/HRE, therefore, teachers and students are not only users of materials, but also producers. Volumes II to VI of this EDC/HRE edition give many examples for this category of materials, very often created by students in settings of task-based learning or in projects, and the unit and lesson descriptions explore their rich learning potentials for the students.

A matrix of learning requirements and materials

The following matrix links some typical examples for these two categories of materials – delivered by media, and produced in the processes of interaction involving teachers and students – to different aspects of competence development in EDC. We do not recommend any kind of bias towards one type of material, but rather an integrated approach. However, teaching through democracy and human rights requires teachers to take the products created by students seriously.

Aspects of competence development	Materials transmitted through media	Materials produced in processes of learning	
		Materials produced by teachers	Materials produced by students
Students' previous development	(Such media and materials exist, of course – for example, children's books or films – but they are beyond the teacher's scope of perception)		Preconcepts, previous experience and socialisation processes in the family or with peers, previously acquired information in and outside school
Defining a topic, setting the agenda for a lesson or topic			Brainstorming and discussion inputs
Information	Current news reports (printed media, TV, DVD, Internet) School textbook	Lecture Provision of basic materials (such as flipcharts, markers, coloured paper)	Student inputs (such as deconstruction of messages transmitted through media, summaries, follow-up homework, presentations, arguments in discussions and debates, comments, questions)
Analysis and judgment	Issues and controversies in politics and science (handout, school textbook)	Instruction on key concepts Criticism demanding deconstruction	
Skills training	Handout (training instructions)	Demonstration and coaching	Feedback
Participation and action		Chairing of sessions	Experience Questions, comments, insights, interests
Assessment and evaluation	Test sheets Questionnaires Portfolios	Observation	Self-assessment Feedback Expression of learning needs

Setting objectives and selecting materials

Work file 3: Selecting and using materials in EDC/HRE

Selection of materials transmitted through media

The wider concept of materials implies that both teachers and students select materials. Students do so in their processes of constructivist learning. Here, we focus on the teacher's role in selecting materials that are to be used in EDC/HRE classes.

Criteria for selecting materials produced by media

- **Reliability:** are the author, source, date of production, etc., clearly identifiable? Have the text, data, etc., been taken from the original version, and can the students (at secondary level) see if alterations have been made?
- **Suitability:** does the material meet the student's level of understanding and competence development, including their experience in deconstructing messages transmitted by media? The materials should be neither too easy nor too difficult; they should demand an effort that improves the students' skills and adds to knowledge, understanding, and power of judgment.
- **Relevance:** does the material meet the students' interests? Does it address a topic or issue that the students regard as important? Can they link the contents to their preconcepts or experience?
- **Principle of non-indoctrination or pluralism of perspectives:** do the materials show different perspectives? Do they avoid the trap of indoctrinating students – in whatever direction of thinking, judgment or interests (see the file on the professional ethics of EDC/HRE teachers in this volume)?

Handling materials produced by students

Written materials, images, etc: the teacher can study these before or after lessons and decide what steps to take.

Spoken student inputs set considerably more difficult tasks for the teacher, as she/he must react spontaneously and often improvise. See the file on chairing plenary discussions in this volume.

Unit 3

Understanding politics

1. Introduction: what must students learn?

The objective of EDC/HRE is to enable students to take part in decision-making processes that affect their interests and the community as a whole.

I can only take action when I have made up my mind, that is, when I know what I want. In somewhat more analytical terms, I must have identified or prioritised my interests or must have judged an issue, a conflict or a problem and decided which line of action to support. Judging in turn requires understanding, and understanding requires sound information.

Students should therefore understand important political topics – both for their own sake (learning “about” politics), but also to learn the competences that enable them to work independently in taking the necessary steps themselves: acquiring information, analysing and understanding a political issue or problem, and judging. This then enables a young citizen to participate and take action (learning “for” democratic participation).

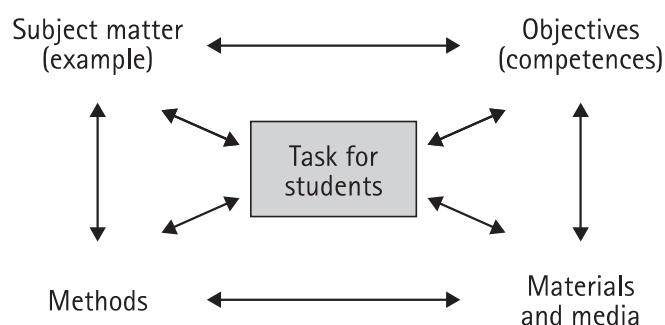
2. Task and key questions to understand politics

2.1 Task for teachers in EDC/HRE

In all domains of teaching and learning, not only in EDC/HRE, students understand complex subject matter best by studying well-chosen examples. The teacher’s manuals in this EDC/HRE edition for elementary, lower and upper secondary level (Volumes II-V) demonstrate this principle in every unit and show different possible approaches. The manuals also show that these examples can be taken from the context of school governance or political decision making from any level – depending on the age of the students, the material that is available or can be produced by the students, and the desired learning outcome.

These examples are basically of two types – the analysis of a political problem or issue, or the analysis of a political decision-making process. The teacher must decide what examples are suitable and clarify what material is at hand or can be obtained.

The EDC/HRE teacher’s task is to link the following elements in planning a lesson sequence on politics:



No lesson planning is possible without thinking about all of these teaching and learning elements and linking them. A change in one position will affect the others. On the other hand, the subject matter can be exchanged to achieve a certain objective, and vice versa.

2.2 Key questions

- What should my students be able to do after this teaching unit? What should they have understood and be able to explain to others, and what criteria should they be able to use in judging a political issue?
- In what way can I assess their competence development?
- In what way can students draw on their experience in everyday life or in school to understand politics?
- How do my students perceive political decision making?
- To what extent are my students aware of their interests?
- What current issues affect my students?
- What current issues are my students able to understand?
- Are these issues linked to school governance, or politics on a local, regional, national or international level?
- How can I encourage my students to participate in the choice of an issue?
- What media or materials will I choose to present different opinions on the issue?
- What tasks will I set my students to work by themselves?
- What inputs can my students give?
- What key concepts can they apply to the topic or issue?
- What opinions do I expect my students to express on an issue?
- What is my opinion? What criteria have I given priority to in my judgment?
- How will I ensure that I will not overwhelm my students by persuading them to adopt my point of view?
- In what way could my students take action?

Understanding politics

Work file 1: How can I address politics in my EDC/HRE classes?

In EDC/HRE, students should learn how to understand politics. But what is politics? What makes a topic a political one? The following example may serve as an introduction.

A case story

A small town in a rural area has one school that serves not only students who live in the town, but also up to 20 km away. They use a bus service to shuttle between their homes and school. The municipal government supports families with a low income, particularly if they have two or more children at school. The families receive a relief on the bus fare, ranging from 25% to 75%.

The economic crisis has now led to a sharp drop in tax revenues. The representatives in the municipal parliament are now discussing how spending can be cut to avoid financing by credits as far as possible. Some influential politicians and commentators have suggested reducing the bus fare allowance, or even cutting it completely. They argue that the total spending cuts are considerable, but it is spread among many families who would hardly “feel the pinch”. But many parents disagree with this view and want the system of family allowances to stay as it is.

This case story is fictitious, but probably quite typical for the discussions on reducing public spending in times of economic recession. What is political about this story?

A three-dimensional model of politics

Different definitions for the concept of politics are possible. A quite common one that is useful for teaching and learning applies a three-dimensional model of politics: issues, decisions, and institutions.

The dimension of political issues: in politics, people argue for their interests or about the question how a problem or a dilemma is to be identified and solved. Sometimes people organise themselves in groups in order to express their collective interests. Debate and controversy are something normal in politics; they reflect different interests and opinions in a pluralist society, and no one need fear them if such issues are resolved peacefully.

The dimension of political decision making: in politics, problems are urgent – they affect the interests of the community as a whole, or a big group of people. They demand action to be taken, so the discussion must lead up to a decision, with subsequent action.

The institutional dimension of politics refers to the framework in which politics take place. What powers are given to whom? How are elections held? How are laws made? What rights does the parliamentary opposition have? How do individuals and special interest groups influence these political processes? This dimension therefore includes the constitution, rules and laws that define how political issues are dealt with peacefully in democratic decision-making processes. A wider concept also includes a cultural dimension, the values and attitudes that govern the citizen’s political behaviour.

Key questions from three political perspectives

The three dimensions allow us to view politics from different perspectives. This helps to bring order to the complexity that political subject matter may have. Each of these three political perspectives leads to interesting key questions. The questions asked here serve as an example and should be adapted as the case being studied requires.

The dimension of political issues	Answers		
What is the problem that must be solved?	The danger of rising public debt in times of economic recession		
Who is involved, and what objectives or interests do they advocate?	Local politicians: avoid credits by reducing public spending Families with low income: continue support for families in need		
What human rights are at stake?	Equality and non-discrimination Right to education Right to social security		
What solutions have been suggested or are being discussed to solve the problem?	Reduce or cut school bus fare allowances for families		
The dimension of political decision making			
Who is taking part in the process of decision-making?	Politicians	Media commentators	Families
Who is in agreement or disagreement with each other?	Agree in suggesting cuts on family allowances		Oppose cuts
What chances do different players have to influence the final decision?	Direct access to members of municipal parliament		May find support among citizens or in the media
Who has more power, who has less?	That depends. The case story gives no information on this point		
Who has bigger or smaller chances to find a majority?	Politicians may find a majority in parliament quite easily; however, if the decision is unpopular, they may lose support at the next election and may therefore be careful		
The institutional dimension (framework)			
What key principles of the constitution or legislative environment are relevant or are being applied?	Checks and balances, rule of law, social security, freedom of the press, freedom of expression (parents)		
What are the relevant international and/or regional human rights standards?	Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) European Convention on Human Rights (1950) Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)		
What political institutions are involved, and what are their powers of decision?	Municipal parliament as legislator		
What laws and legal principles are to be applied?	The case story delivers no information; this is, however, a standard question that should always be included		

How does this analysis support EDC/HRE?

A structured and systematic analysis of a political topic helps the teacher in preparing EDC/HRE lessons, and the students in understanding politics.

The teacher:

- can decide whether to focus on one dimension only, using a case story such as this to demonstrate how the system of political institutions works, how a political decision is made, or what a political issue is and how it may be resolved;
- can turn this case story into a decision-making game; the students act in different roles, and they negotiate a solution;
- develops a keener eye to identify suitable materials on current issues in the media.

The students:

- train their competences to understand and select information on political issues, decision-making processes and political institutions;
- learn to ask questions that guide their analysis;
- learn how to deal with complex subject matter by focusing on parts of it at a time and analysing it from different perspectives.

Understanding politics

Work file 2: How can I support my students in judging political issues?

The core objective of EDC/HRE is to enable students to take part in their community and in politics. To take action in this way, the students must know what they want to achieve; objectives and strategies of political participation rest on analysis and judgment.

How can EDC/HRE teachers therefore support their students in judging political issues? Students permanently judge issues and decisions, perhaps emotionally, perhaps intuitively. How can the students develop a more reflected approach to political judgment?

What criteria are appropriate for political judgment?

The same case story that has already been used in the preceding work file is used as an example to demonstrate how criteria in political judgment may be set in contrast and balanced. By using the same case story, the two work files show how a political topic may be analysed from different perspectives. Political judgment focuses on the dimension of political issues (see the preceding work file), probing it in more depth.

A case story

A small town in a rural area has one school that serves not only students who live in the town, but also up to 20 km away. They use a bus service to shuttle between their homes and school. The municipal government supports families with a low income, particularly if they have two or more children at school. The families receive a relief on the bus fare, ranging from 25% to 75%.

The economic crisis has now led to a sharp drop in tax revenues. The representatives in the municipal parliament are now discussing how spending can be cut to avoid financing by credits as far as possible. Some influential politicians and commentators have suggested reducing the bus fare allowance, or even cutting it completely. They argue that the total spending cuts are considerable, but it is spread among many families who would hardly “feel the pinch”. But many parents disagree with this view and want the system of family allowances to stay as it is.

This case story is fictitious, but probably quite typical for the discussions on reducing public spending in times of economic recession. How is the issue to be judged?

The local government must attempt to achieve two objectives that are difficult to achieve at the same time.

1. Families with low income need support; this implies that a certain amount of the budget is reserved for family benefits.
2. The government must address the problem of falling tax revenues in a period of economic recession; this raises the question to what extent spending, including family benefits, should be reduced.

The objectives are in conflict with each other because their ways of achievement mutually exclude each other. While the first requires spending, the second requires saving. The way out – financing by debt – has serious undesired consequences. It provides short-term relief, but the interest payments, plus paying back the credit loan, tends to strangle public finances. Moreover, credit financing may add to inflation.

Two basic criteria for judging political decisions

In a democratic state, not only political leaders, but also citizens should judge the options in decision making. Only then will citizens be able to support or to oppose the decisions made by the government.

We may conceive political judgment as a process of constructivist thinking that resembles an inner debate. Different inner speakers propose different values or principles that lead to different decisions. The individual is like a judge who listens to all the speakers, balances or prioritises their arguments and then passes a verdict that opens up a path of action. We may imagine an ideal-type inner debate on the political issue about family allowances like this.

First speaker

Our community is devoted to human rights and has integrated many of them in our constitution. They include the right to education³⁰ and to an adequate standard of living.³¹ Families in particular enjoy the protection of the state. Families serve society as a whole by taking responsibility for the upbringing of the young generation. Therefore we are bound by obligation to care particularly for families living on low incomes. I therefore demand that the allowances for school bus fares remain untouched, particularly in these difficult times.

Second speaker

Taking responsibility for the community means that we must identify the problems and dangers that threaten us and make sure that we solve them. In the medium run, we cannot spend more than we earn. If our tax revenue goes down, so must our spending. We are doing the families a favour if we finance their allowances through credits. All of them, and particularly their children, will have to repay their part, plus the interest. An efficient solution of our finance problem will serve everyone. I therefore request that spending be reduced to the extent that credit spending can be avoided, and ask the families to contribute their part.

More speakers can take the “inner floor”, expressing further basic points of view. A third speaker, for example, considers the desired and undesired long-term impact of a decision, for example, in terms of sustainability. What is the impact on the planet, the interests and living conditions of the next generation, on economic growth, or on social groups at the bottom of the social ladder?

Two basic perspectives of political judgment

The first two speakers argued for different understandings of responsibility. The first speaker’s definition of responsibility was normative, based on the value system of human rights. Poverty is a serious violation of human dignity, and therefore the state must not reduce support for low-income families. The second speaker’s definition of responsibility was not values based, but purpose based. The efficient solution of an urgent problem is important, and no taboos are acceptable to distract from this priority.

The third addresses aspects of both in considering the long-term consequences of a decision.

Put in simple words, people want to be treated as humans by authority and have a say in how the country is run (first speaker), and they want to be governed well and efficiently (second speaker).

Discussions may lead to a dead end if speakers resort to different points of reference, such as values and purpose. Both points are justified in their way, but they do not meet unless linked by judgment.

Political judgment in EDC/HRE classes

In school, students exercise their freedom of thought and opinion.³² Students who have listened to their inner debate are therefore free in their decision. The teacher should not intervene as a further speaker in this process of judgment and give his or her view on the “right” decision;³³ in democratic

30. Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights (20 March 1952), Article 2.

31. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 December 1948), Article 25.

32. Convention on the Rights of the Child (20 November 1989), Articles 13, 14; European Convention on Human Rights (4 November 1950), Articles 9, 10.

33. See the work file on the EDC/HRE teacher’s professional ethics in this volume.

politics, no-one possesses absolute standards of judgment to define the right decision. In particular, the teacher should not moralise or urge the students to take action in a certain way, or even to take action at all. This remains for the students to decide, not the teacher.

The students are therefore free in their choice of criteria. In reflecting their political judgment, they should become aware of them. This is a big step forward, compared with judgments based on emotions or intuition (“good” and “bad”). At an even more advanced level, they can give reasons for their choice of criteria.

However, the students should realise that in politics decisions must be made, and in effect, not judging amounts to a decision as well. Therefore, it is not enough for them to listen to their inner debate and dismiss their speakers without deciding which decision to make. Basically, when considering conflicting objectives as in the case here, the students may:

- prioritise, that is, decide to keep up family allowances or adopt a policy of tight spending cuts;
- find a compromise: in this case, this would amount to mild cuts in family allowances and moderate credit spending; by thinking more carefully how to spend a smaller budget in a way that those who help most still receive it gives technical details a new significance in the light of human rights.

Different methods, but not all, support the students in carefully thinking about questions of political judgment. They include:

- plenary sessions – critical thinking, debates and discussions;
- written work with feedback by the teacher;
- task-based learning followed up by a phase of debriefing and discussion.

The topics that the teacher chooses should allow convincing choices of controversial views and be within the students’ reach, that is, not too complicated. Current issues arouse the students’ interests, but are more difficult as both teachers and students act as pioneers.

Unit 4

Guiding processes of learning and choosing forms of teaching

1. Introduction

Initiating and supporting processes of learning in students is one of the most fascinating tasks that our profession has to offer. If you do not have a sufficiently clear idea which processes of learning your students embark on to achieve the learning objectives you (and/or they) have decided on, you will not be in a position to adequately plan the modes and settings of teaching, learning activities, tasks and methods of work. In EDC/HRE these ways can be very varied and whoever devotes time and effort to questioning how individuals learn something best will, in time, develop into an expert on learning.

2. Task and key questions for guiding processes of learning and choosing forms of teaching

2.1 Task

Initiating and supporting processes of learning in children is one of the most fascinating tasks that our profession has to offer – but also one of the most demanding!

Your thoughts and ideas on processes of learning form, as it were, the backbone of your whole planning effort. If you do not have a sufficiently clear idea which processes of learning your individual students embark on to achieve the learning objectives you (and/or they) have decided on, you will not be in a position to adequately plan the modes and settings of teaching, learning activities, tasks and methods of work.

Dealing with the question how individual students learn something best is a time-consuming and often difficult task. But whoever devotes time and effort to this question, discusses it with his or her students, and finally evaluates and reflects on the accumulated experience will, in time, develop into an expert on learning. Learning processes are complex, and their success and perfection depend on many factors.

2.2 Key questions

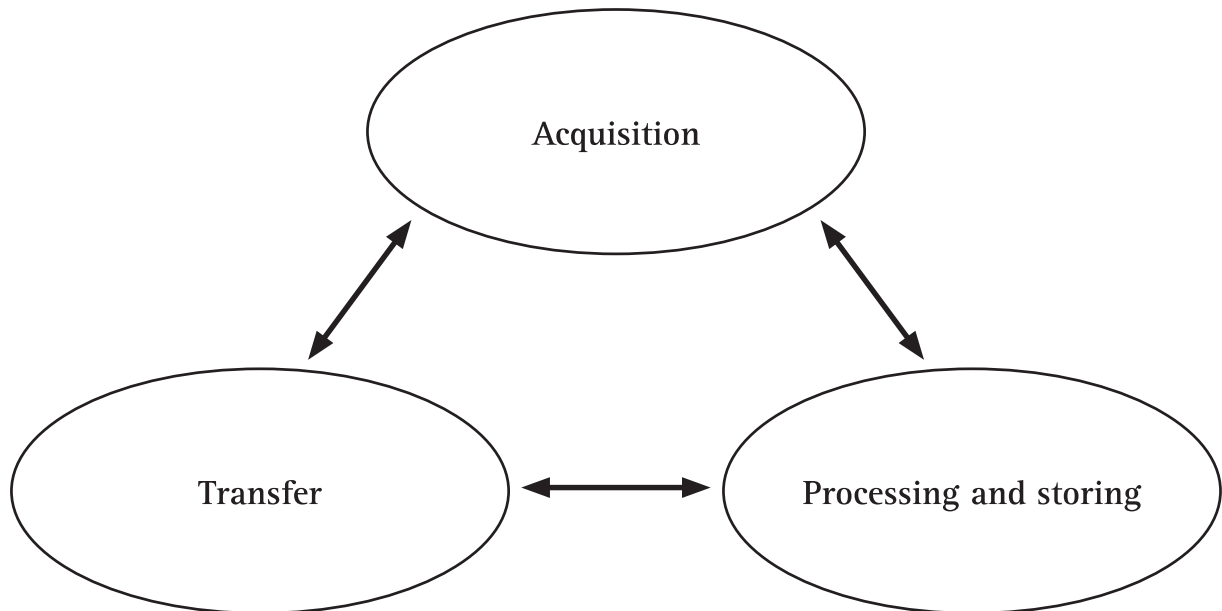
- Which learning processes will allow the students to achieve the objectives?
- How can I enable the students to fully take in (acquire), understand (process) and remember (store) new information?
- Does the form of learning encourage the students to apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills to new tasks?
- Does the planned learning setting or sequence primarily focus on the absorption, processing and storing of information or on transfer tasks?
- In planning this learning sequence, have I considered the important aspects (ideal learning conditions)?
- Is the main objective of the learning process for the students to build up structures of meaning, to acquire skills or to develop attitudes, and have I provided for adequate forms of teaching and learning to achieve these respective objectives?
 - by action (by being active, producing or forming something, etc.)?
 - by thinking (by mental experimenting, by “creating” new insights)?

- by observation?
- by being verbally taught (lecture, story-telling, etc.)?
- by instruction, assistance and co-operation?
- by discussion and debate?
- by producing a written documentation (report, learner's diary, etc.)?
- by a medium?
- by specific events in real life and experience?
- by experiment, trial and error?

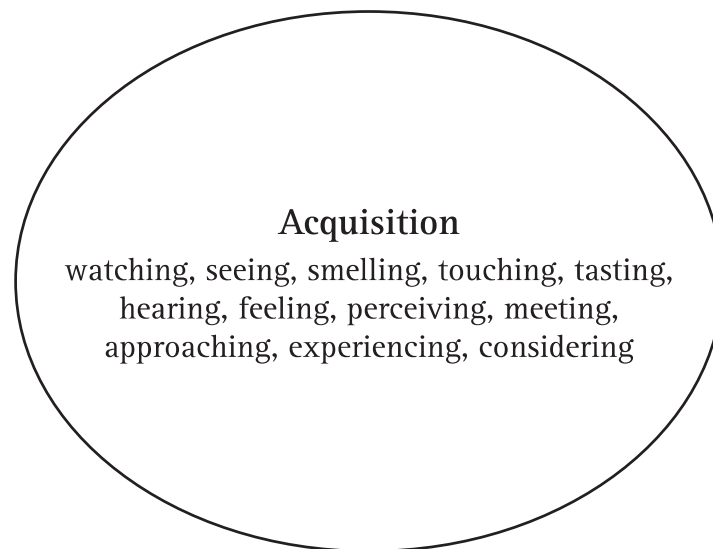
Guiding processes of learning and choosing forms of teaching

Work file 1: Three stages in a learning process

In every learning process we may distinguish between three closely linked phases which support one other.



Acquisition of information



Questions on the students' acquisition of information

Previous knowledge

How can the students (re-)activate their previous knowledge?

Asking questions

Can the students deal with the topic in a way that they may think of questions?

Senses

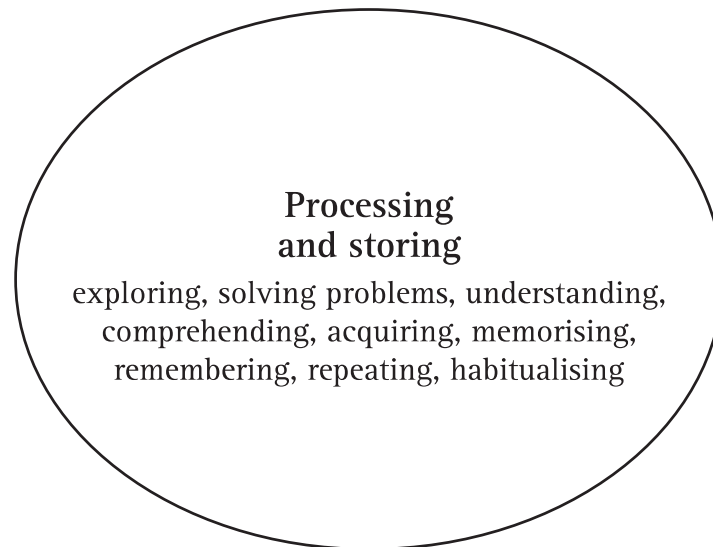
Can the students use their different senses to acquire new information?

Do the students learn by seeing, looking, perceiving, hearing, listening, feeling and emotion, touching, tasting, smelling, etc?

Illustrating (adding appeal and colour to a topic)

Are illustrations, models or replicas used?

Processing and storing of information



Questions on processing and storing of information

Structure

Are the contents organised in a way that the preceding steps of learning facilitate the following ones?

Points of reference

Can the students link new information to their previous knowledge?

Level of attainment

Are the tasks set for the individual student – male and female – demanding and challenging, but still within their reach?

Deepening of understanding

Are the assigned tasks and settings suitable for the students to reinforce and deepen what they have learnt?

Record

Do the students produce a record of their results (report, poster, notes, drawing, diagram, rough sketch, etc.)?

Practice

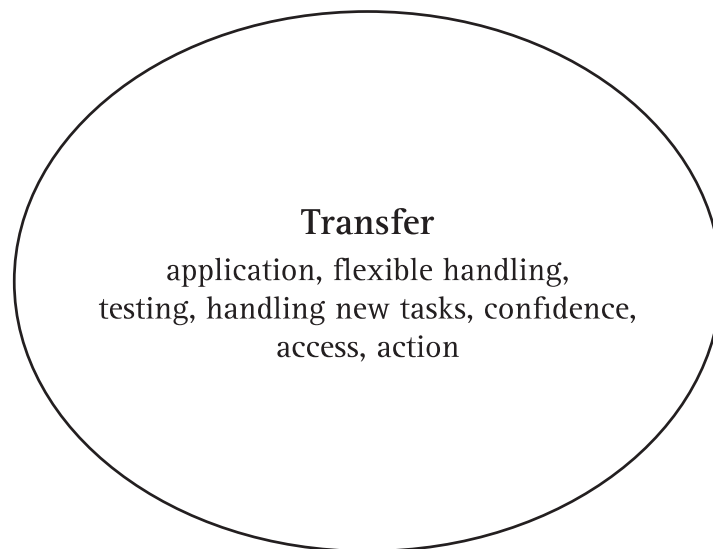
Do the students have the opportunity to practise their newly acquired abilities and skills in as wide a variety of contexts as possible?

Intensity

Have the students been given sufficient time and opportunity to thoroughly work their way through new information and experiences?

Do we spend sufficient time on a subject to allow the students to probe its depths?

Transfer of information



Learning must always include transfer opportunities for the students – to avoid assessments like “learned, but already forgotten”, or “known, but not understood or reflected”, “accomplished yesterday, already lost today”, or “learned, but not used”.

Questions on the transfer of information

Usefulness

Do the students appreciate and experience the usefulness of what they have learned?

Experience of efficiency (motivation)

Have the students directly experienced the relation between their effort and their progress in learning? Do the students realise that they themselves are responsible for their extension of knowledge, understanding and skills, that is, that they can achieve something by their learning efforts and activities?

Controlling

Are conclusions reviewed and reconsidered?

Further and more advanced studies

Does the learning sequence which the students have completed stimulate their interest to engage in further and/or more advanced studies?

Do the students remain emotionally involved?

Application

Are the students, both boys and girls, offered a wide variety of opportunities to apply what they have learned? Do the students know in what ways their abilities may be applied and if there are limits to the application of their knowledge and skills?

Guiding processes of learning and choosing forms of teaching

Work file 2: Why chalk and talk is not enough, or “taught ≠ learned” and “learned ≠ applied in real life”

Teachers who have been trained along traditional lines of teaching tend to overestimate the impact of spoken instruction on their students – “taught is learned”. This view is particularly common at secondary level, where teachers often face curricula packed with large amounts of complex knowledge. Then it seems tempting to teach the way that seems fastest and most effective – the teacher lectures, the students listen, and a history teacher may think, “Now I have finished the 20th century.”

But do students learn by listening to lectures? And have they all learned what the teacher had in mind – what he or she wanted them to learn?

“Taught ≠ learned”

From a constructivist perspective, the answer to these questions is no. “Taught ≠ learned.” Learning is an individual process. The students literally construct their individual systems of knowledge. They link what they already know and have understood to new information, using concepts, creating ideas, judging in the light of their experience, etc. They seek for meaning and logic in what they learn, they define what is relevant and worth remembering, and what is not, and can therefore be forgotten.

And they also make some mistakes.

A teacher lecturing to an audience of 30 students should therefore be aware that in the students’ minds, 30 versions of the lecture are being produced and integrated into the students’ systems of meaning – cognitive structures, as Jerome Bruner, a noted professor of psychology, called them.

But learning is not only construction of meaning, but also deconstruction of errors. Young students, for example, may believe that night comes because the sun sets, because that is what they see. Of course teachers are right in attempting to correct this way of thinking. From the learner’s point of view, it is a difficult, and sometimes unpleasant effort of deconstruction. The teacher’s lecture therefore may be a piece of new information for one learner, while another becomes aware of an error or misunderstanding that needs to be corrected.

From a constructivist point of view, we must therefore expect faults of logic and thinking and misunderstanding of information to be the rule, not the exception – not only in our students’ minds, but also our own.

A revision of our cognitive structures is therefore more complex than merely substituting “old knowledge” by “new knowledge” that a teacher can bring about by “telling the students”. Rather, it is a process continuing for a longer period of time, in which contradicting sets of ideas and notions compete with one another – and the students undertake the effort of deconstruction, not the teacher.

“Learned ≠ applied in real life”

Teachers who attempt to correct students’ mistakes will therefore find that “telling” them what is “right” is often not enough. They face the following problems:

- Students do not seem to “listen”: how do I deal with the problem that students often do not change their wrong ideas after they have been taught the correct facts, concepts, etc?
- “Students learn like parrots”: how can I deal with the problem that school knowledge coexists alongside a sphere of naive thinking – including errors in logic and thinking, opinions drawing on incorrect information, reference to everyday experience – that the students do not link together? They memorise their school knowledge for tests “like parrots”, and then forget it.

Every teacher knows these problems. To overcome them, even constructivist learning is not enough. Students must do something with what they have learned – they must apply it. For a teacher this means, for example:

- no teacher’s lecture without a follow-up task;
- listen to student inputs, for example presentations, to assess their learning process and achievement;
- make students responsible for their development, for example in settings of task-based learning;
- listen to student feedback: what I found particularly important was ... I learn best when...

The teacher’s task is to provide adequate opportunities for the students to learn, and to assess and communicate with the students what works well and what doesn’t. Constructivist learning, including deconstruction, and follow-up application tasks take time. Therefore the teacher – perhaps together with the students – must make a choice what topics are worth devoting time to. “Do less, but do it well.”

Guiding processes of learning and choosing forms of teaching

Work file 3: Selecting adequate forms of teaching and learning

In choosing a certain form of teaching you make decisions on how the sequences of teaching and the learning environment are to be created and organised. This raises the question which different forms of teaching, learning, and social interaction are to be included and combined with each other, which timing of learning steps and which selection of materials is appropriate. A list of questions supports the selecting process:

- What forms of teaching will support the intended processes of learning?
- What forms of social interaction do I choose?
- What structure and rhythm do I choose for the course?
- To what extent can the students participate in planning the lessons and the form of teaching?
- Given the existing framework of external conditions, which teaching approaches are feasible?
- Which methods and teaching style am I particularly good at?
- What else can I do to create a good learning atmosphere together with the students?
- Does the teaching approach do justice to both boys and girls?
- Do the lessons encourage co-operation in the class?
- Have free spaces (areas, corners) been left to which individual students or groups may withdraw?
- Is the classroom always the best place for learning? Must the classroom be altered or restructured? Are special-purpose rooms available? Might excursions or explorations be useful?
- How much liberty do I grant my students; how do I assess their abilities?
- Should all students learn according to one predetermined path? Is my teaching approach individualised and flexible enough to meet differing learning needs, speeds and abilities?
- Can the students be offered a choice of different procedures?
- Which piece of homework do I have in mind?
- Which forms of social interaction are appropriate, considering conditions, objectives, contents and learning processes (individual work, work in pairs, small or large groups)?

Guiding processes of learning and choosing forms of teaching

Work file 4: Five basic forms of teaching and learning

The five methodical approaches describe, as it were, five ideal types of settings for interaction between teachers and students.

Each of these approaches allows, or requires, teachers and students to react to and co-operate with one another in different ways.

The approaches are arranged on a scale beginning with a classic form of teacher-centred work (teaching by presentation), and then move on to increasingly student-centred forms.

We do not propose that teacher-centred forms be completely substituted by student-centred forms. Rather, we would argue that a mixture of these forms is adequate, and that, in the long run, a shift towards more student-centred forms of teaching and learning should take place.

A superficial viewer might come away with the impression that student-centred work means increasing idleness on the teacher's side. This, however, is not the case. The teacher's role changes, as will be explained in detail, but his or her role shifts from direct action in the classroom to careful preparation, assistance and supervision, rather increasing in the process than diminishing.

Students who are to learn how to learn should ideally be supported by all their teachers in all their subjects. A project of this magnitude must fall short if it were confined to an island of, say, project work in an ocean of methodical monotony endlessly repeating "teaching by presentation", condemning students to rote learning.

Basic forms of teaching and learning shown here are:

- teaching by presentation;
- guided exploratory learning (class discussion);
- open learning;
- individual teaching;
- learning in projects.

Form of teaching and learning	Activities	Typical features
Teaching by presentation	Narration, lecture, reading to the class, report, exposition, showing, displaying, teaching by example, demonstrating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I (the teacher) can teach the subject-matter directly, according to the given situation in class, and the students' reactions are immediately evident. - All students are to achieve the same objective - in the same period of time, in the same room and setting, by the same method, and by the same means. - Pre-set subject-matter is passed on to the students.
Guided exploratory learning (class discussion)	Dialogue, questions, impetus, stimuli, guidance, support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interplay of expositions and stimuli by the teacher and contributions by the students.

Open learning	<p>Teacher: advice, mediation, support</p> <p>Students: selection, planning, asking questions, discovering, research, drafting, designing, analysing, thinking, checking, controlling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students may participate in decisions. - Interests, needs and initiatives on behalf of the students have high priority. - Learning environment encourages students' activities (flexible allocation of room and space, a wide variety of learning materials, a corner for experimenting, painting, etc.). - Open arrangement of settings for learning. - Students are offered a variety of topics and materials for their personal choice. - External settings for learning are included. - Free choice of learning activities. - Individual work, or with a partner or in groups. - Open learning involves and encourages self-determination, personal responsibility, research, spontaneity, context-orientation.
Individual teaching	<p>Teacher: diagnosis, guidance, instruction, support, advice, information, controlling, supervision, motivation</p> <p>Students: selection, modification and development of working programme, reading, achievement, review and evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The setting for teaching and learning is specified to meet the student's needs (as defined by the student's previous knowledge, abilities (skills and talents), interest, social and family background, etc.). - Optimal adjustment of all the elements in the learning process to the individual student's needs and abilities, that is, of requirements, objectives, procedures, methods, time, media, and aids (multi-dimensional specification). - Didactic materials, support by media (computers, learning software, video clips, worksheets, models, pictures for learners, textbooks, etc.). - Individual learning encourages efficiency, economy of time and effort, a systematic approach, independence of mind and personal responsibility.

<p>Learning in projects</p>	<p>Teacher: mediation, observation, advice, stimulation, support, organisation, co-ordination</p> <p>Students: setting objectives, co-operation, planning, discussion, mutual agreement, collection of data and information, asking questions, application, studies, experiments, tests, modification, design, creativity, production, controlling, evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The students' shared interests, concerns and objectives are decisive for the choice of topic, approach, and tasks. - A (complex) genuine problem, taken from real life as perceived by the students, both male and female, serves as a starting point. - Priority is given to the production of results, and an interdisciplinary (cross-curricular) approach. - Students are encouraged to draw on their personal experience, learning is linked to practice in real life. - Long-term enterprise which runs through a typical order of stages and phases (initiative – assessment of interests and needs – decision on objectives – definition of limits, that is, exclusion of objectives which cannot be achieved – draft of project; planning – final schedule; execution; review and outlook on forthcoming activities after the project, controlling and perfection, evaluation). - Division and assignment of tasks: individual work, with partners, in small and large groups; co-operation. - Students visit sites outside school, and consult their parents and/or experts. - Project work encourages independence of mind and learning by discovery, personal and practical experience, and social interaction with others. - Teaching and learning encourage students to take action.
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Unit 5

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

1. Introduction

For EDC/HRE accounts, what is true for all learning and teaching? How and why do students have to be assessed? Is assessment fair? Does assessment support learning and the process of learning? In EDC/HRE these questions have to be asked in detail for different reasons. Which competences can be assessed? What kind of knowledge is of central importance? Is it important to know the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by heart or to know about the building up of the system of justice in their country? We cannot answer these questions here because we are all – internationally – in the middle of the discussion and nobody has got a definite solution (yet). Because every kind of learning has to be evaluated according to its success we would like to discuss this aspect carefully. One of the solutions to this question is which form of assessment we choose! If the teachers and students assess the achievement during and not after a learning process (formative assessment), assessment will function as a facilitator of learning and will lead to better achievement. We want to contribute to a wider understanding of learning in this article by presenting different approaches in a non-judgmental way. It is not the question whether we have to assess, but which form of assessment will be used at what point of time and what the specific goals of this assessment are. Therefore, we ask the questions just like asking the question of right choice of learning method: it is not the question of the right method that is important, but which one is used when. EDC/HRE are – as mentioned quite often already – not subjects. They are much more. They are concepts that co-determine the atmosphere of teaching and learning. When assessing the students' achievement and performance in EDC/HRE it is not only the acquired knowledge, the trained competences and the know-how within a subject area that is tested. Assessment also includes dynamic features such as attitudes, insights, cross-curricular abilities like flexibility, communication, interaction skills, argumentation, etc. Assessment therefore takes place in different dimensions. This is valid for all subjects. There are also certain elements of EDC/HRE that we simply may not be able to, or want to, assess, such as values and attitudes, even if we consider these as part of the set of competences that we would like to impress upon students.

2. Task and key questions for assessment of students, teachers and schools

2.1 Task

In the course of planning your lessons and teaching units, one aspect which deserves attention is the question of how to control and ensure the students' progress in learning, how to identify the progress they have made, and how to evaluate the results of the students' learning and your teaching activities. Before the lessons take place, therefore, you must plan how to establish or estimate, and improve the effect and quality of your teaching, and how to record, analyse, improve and judge the students' work and learning activities. In doing so, you will consider by what measures and instruments you will be able to find out to what extent the class as a whole or individual students have achieved the set objectives and, if required, on what criteria you will base your grading system.

In this chapter you will find out about assessment of students, of teachers and of the school as a whole.

2.2 Key questions

Learning process of students:

- How is successful learning identified and assessed?
- In what way is self-assessment and assessment by others applied?
- How do I ensure that the students have achieved the objectives?
- Did the students regularly experience success while they were learning?
- Are they aware of the progress they have made?
- Does my teaching give boys and girls an equal chance of success?
- Do the students consciously watch, control and improve their learning and working behaviour?
- Were the students given any guidelines to assist them while learning?
- Can the students control and assess their learning behaviour and their results themselves?
- Can the students identify the learning behaviour of other colleagues through peer evaluation?
- In their self-assessment, do the students also refer to their own objectives, standards, criteria or needs?
- Do I perceive individual students' progress?
- How do I identify learning problems of individual students?
- How do I observe social interaction in the class?
- How do I keep a record of my observations and assessments of individual students and the class as a whole?

Learning process of teachers:

- How is successful learning identified and assessed?
- In what way is self-assessment and assessment by others applied?
- How, when and with whom do I reflect on my teaching?
- How do I let my students participate?
- How do I relate my students' success or failure to my teaching?
- How do I recognise my progress in teaching, and how do I learn as a teacher?

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

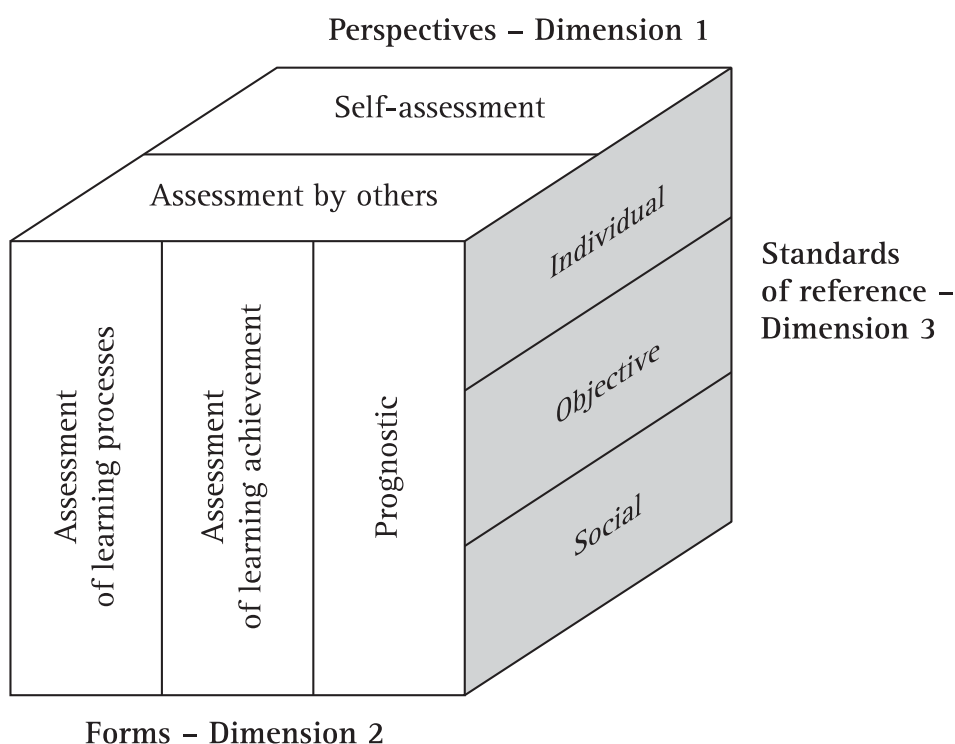
Work file 1: Different dimensions of assessment

The different dimensions of students' assessment include three levels. By using this cube model, the interdependence of the three dimensions can be explained.

Dimension 1 – perspectives: students can assess themselves (self-assessment) or they can be assessed by others (assessment by others).

Dimension 2 – forms: assessment can have three different forms – assessment of learning processes, assessment of learning achievements and prognostic. Each form has advantages and disadvantages.

Dimension 3 – standards of reference: for assessment a teacher can orient himself/herself on an individual standard (the student), on an objective standard (learning goal) or on a social standard (position of student in class). It depends very much on the standard of reference what impact assessment has on the future learning of the student.



Before we start reflecting upon the different dimensions we have to ask ourselves what competences we assess. In EDC/HRE this question is answered by the three competences already discussed: competence of analysis, competence of political reasoning and action competence.

In this respect we can also raise the following questions which revolve around the aspect of setting clear and objective criteria for evaluating and assessing:

- Is it the essentials which are tested in the assessment of students' performance (permanently stored information, facts of exemplary importance, and in excess of mere knowledge of facts, “the tools of thought and action”, skills and abilities)?
- In marking the students' work, are the marks defined by unbiased criteria?
- Do the standards of performance in the test correspond to those of the syllabus?

- Have all the requirements which have to be met to achieve a certain mark been determined beforehand (different levels of achievement)?
- Does the test also enable the students to understand which parts of a learning objective they have achieved?
- Have different types of testing been developed for students with different starting conditions?
- Can the students carry out the tests individually where this seems appropriate (for example, can they choose the exact point in time)?

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

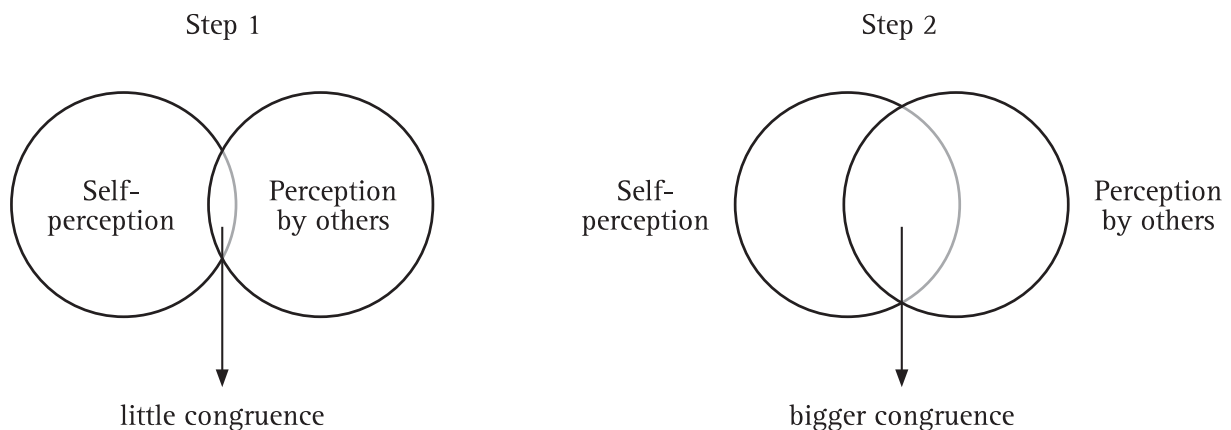
Work file 2: Perspectives of assessment

Internal and external assessments enable a person to get a picture about his/her own status of learning and to develop further steps on the way. Both kinds of assessment also help to set new goals.

All people are used to assessment by other people. By being assessed by other people one receives feedback from students, teachers or parents.

Self-assessment describes the ability to estimate oneself and to draw the consequences thereof. It is an essential instrument to support learners in their autonomy and to guide them out of the pure dependence on teachers' feedback. Students who are able to estimate themselves realistically develop a better picture of their own self and will be less endangered to feel insecure. They will be less dependent on feedback and praise and can interpret reactions of teachers more adequately.

Self-assessment and assessment by others do not have to be congruent completely but should be heard in joint meetings, thought over and discussed. A student does not see herself/himself automatically in the same way the teacher does. Different viewpoints have to be laid out and discussed. Thereby, blind spots, narrowed perspectives or fixed pictures can be corrected. Students have to learn step by step how to estimate their own competences and abilities as well as how to give feedback to other students, how to accept feedback and discuss it. Through this step-by-step approach self-assessment and assessment by others become more congruent.



Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 3: Perspectives and forms of assessment

Assessment of learning processes (formative)

This perspective serves to improve, control and check on a student's learning process, or the student's and teacher's activities to achieve a certain objective.

Assessment of learning achievements (summative)

At a certain point in time, a conclusive assessment sums up the knowledge and skills that a student has acquired. Its main purpose is to inform, for example, the student or parents about the student's level of performance.

Prognostic assessment

This type looks at a student's future development. At different stages during a student's school career, people involved in a student's education process (students, teachers, parents, in some cases school psychologists and authorities) recommend how a student should continue his or her school career.

Assessment of learning processes

The main goal in the assessment of learning processes (or formative assessment) is to support the individual student. Thus, efficiency of teaching is improved. Instead of fighting the symptoms the underlying reasons for learning difficulties are being investigated and are being tackled (these reasons can be cognitive as well as emotional). Mistakes are not corrected but analysed. In this way the ideas and mindset of a student can be understood and supported in a goal-oriented way. Difficulties have to be discussed together with the student and can be dealt with by using special support measures or tasks. By analysing the source of mistakes, students do not have to adapt superficially. By analysing these sources of mistakes, students do not feel at the mercy of their difficulties. Instead, they learn how to develop individual strategies for facing their problems.

In this respect successful learning means a continuous steering of the learning process and working on mistakes by both – teacher and student – and not merely the search for the best methods.

Possibilities of assessment of learning processes:

- observations;
- small, everyday tests;
- tests after a long working phase.

Tests that assess learning processes act as an indicator for the teaching and learning process. They enable the students as well as the teachers to check the level of achievement. Gaps and insecurities can be filled with additional tasks.

Possibilities of testing:

- observing students while solving a task;
- accurate viewing and analysis of the completed tasks;
- individual conversations about completed tasks;
- asking questions about the way a problem was resolved;
- short tests.

Out of observations and conversations about the way of working on tasks and about the sources of mistakes individual goals arise that the students set themselves, that they work out together with the teacher or that the teacher can set for them.

When applying this kind of assessment in our teaching, the logical consequence is also a shift towards:

- goal-oriented learning instead of purely content-oriented learning;
- individualised teaching instead of teaching where everybody works on the same task.

Assessment of learning achievements

Assessment of learning achievements (or summative assessment) gives an evaluation of a student's achievement in a nutshell. It sums up all acquired knowledge and competences. It acts as an instrument of feedback to the parents, the students and the teachers. It can be the basis of a goal-oriented support.

These kinds of assessments are used after long sequences of teaching and learning through observation and tests. They inform the different addressees to what degree the students have reached the different goals. Examples of assessment of learning achievements are all kinds of tests that ask for the students' accumulated knowledge or competences of a certain subject area over a certain period of time (for example, democracy quizzes, maths tests, vocabulary tests, social studies tests). Assessment of learning achievements is commonly used in schools in all subjects. Even though they are necessary for grading the students and give the teacher selective information about the students' overall performance, they bear various problems.

As a means of feedback grades are used. In connection with grades there are several unsolved problems:

- Different teachers evaluate the same student's product differently. Assessment is not objective. In this respect it is not relevant which subject it is. A maths test will be evaluated as differently by different teachers as a written story. Thus, assessment is strongly influenced by the teacher who evaluates. It can be a question of faith for a student and his or her individual future school career in which class and with which teacher he or she spends his/her school time. It can be stated that objectivity is not fulfilled as a criterion.
- A teacher tends to evaluate the same work of a student differently at different points in time. Assessment is not reliable. No matter which subject is the object of assessment, a teacher will evaluate differently at different points in time. It can be stated that the criterion of reliability is not fulfilled.
- It is not clearly defined what is expressed through a grade (skills, competences, knowledge, attitudes?). When teachers use grades in their assessment of achievements they integrate various aspects into the given grade, such as effective achievement in the past semester, estimated achievement ability, learning progress or deterioration in comparison to the class average and motivational, as well as disciplinary aspects. It is very difficult for the student to really find out what the given grade stands for. Usually, students do not know about the different assessment strategies of their teachers. Contents can be multidimensional and the space for interpretation can be big. Bearing in mind the different functions of grades in our society such as qualification, selection and allocation, interpreting given grades gets even more complex. It can be stated that the criterion of validity is not fulfilled. For most of the above functions grades according to an assessment of learning achievements are not usable indicators for future school, study or professional success.
- The common practice of grading according to an assessment of learning achievements has got a very important undesired effect: giving grades within a class according to a normal distribution leads to even more experiences of failure for the academically weaker students. Because the few places in a normal distribution for the very good and good ones are reserved for the same students, the same students will always remain on the other end of the scale. Even if they improve their academic achievement they will still remain at that end. Therefore, ranking the students according to their measured performance within the class will only lead to demotivation and loss of interest as situations remain unchangeable, especially for the weaker ones.

- Grades are not applicable to certain situations or phenomena: it may be simpler in subjects like mathematics to come to a right or wrong answer but it becomes more difficult in arts subjects or any other creative area of learning as well as language. This is due to missing or unclear criteria for evaluation and due to the fact that different subjects trigger different competences or skills. In EDC/HRE the discussion of different forms of solving a problem may lead to very creative or innovative ideas whereas in other subjects only one answer can be viewed as the correct one. So, there is the danger that grades, and the wish to be able to grade everything in an assessment of learning achievements method, can lead to uniformity. A creative search for new ways of solving the task cannot take place.
- Grading arithmetic is mathematically not valid: ideally, grades can be not more than rough estimates for an approximate rank of a student within his or her class. In this respect, even very accurate mathematical methods cannot serve as a means for improving this situation. Calculating the average of a grade by adding different grades and dividing again by the number of grades given can only serve as an additional source of security in a superficial way. It also depends on the time a grade was given. A student who started off the semester with a rather low grade and improved during the time should be evaluated differently from a student whose grades deteriorated during the semester. Even though the calculated average might be the same, the status of achievement and learning progress of these two students are not.

Following the above-mentioned problems, assessment of learning achievements should not be the only way of collecting information about the students' performance in EDC/HRE. Competences and skills that have been acquired by the students should also be measured by applying methods of formative assessment.

Prognostic assessment

Prognostic assessments act as a means of estimation and prediction of the future career. Prognostic assessment combines basic aspects taken from an assessment of learning processes and an assessment of learning achievements and tries to formulate a diagnosis for the student's future. It asks questions like: how can we support the individual development and the positive learning processes? Prognostic assessments become very important at different stages in a student's academic life:

- school enrolment;
- repetition of a year;
- switching classes/schools;
- transfer to a different type of school (for example, special education);
- transfer to a higher school.

In this respect discussions have been going on for the past decades as to whether prognostic assessment can really be described as a form of assessment or can rather be viewed as a function of assessment.

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 4: Standards of reference

There are three different basic standards of reference for the assessment and marking of students' performance:

1. Individual criterion: the student's present performance is compared with his or her previous work.
2. Objective criterion: the student's performance is compared with the learning objectives that have been defined.
3. Social criterion: a student's performance is compared with that of the students within the same class or the same age group.

Type of criterion	Individual criterion	Objective criterion	Social criterion
Reference figure	Learning progress	Learning objective	Normal curve of distribution, arithmetic average, deviation
Information	How much has been learned between time 1 and time 2?	To what extent has the student approached the learning objective?	How big is the deviation of the individual progress from the average?
Type of assessment	Tests, verbal assessment, learning progress report, structured form of observation	Goal-oriented test, learning progress report, structured form of observation	Test including a grade oriented on the average of the class
Pedagogical implication	Very high	Very high	Is often used for selection; is not important for orientation towards support for students

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 5: Assessment of students – the influence of assessment on self-concepts

Assessment in school is a wide-open field. It not only has influence on explicit things that can be observed such as students' qualifications, their positioning in society because of grades and thus their academic career. Assessment in school also has influence on other aspects within the individual such as self-image, self-esteem and the general concept one has about his or her own competences and abilities. School has got enormous influence on the self-concept of competences. Its direct influence depends on the way assessment is chosen and carried out in school.

Social criterion

Because of the social context in which learning in school takes place, using the social criterion as a measure can give essential information about competences in comparison to other students. At the same time estimates about competences in a comparative social perspective strongly influence the self-image and self-concept of students.

Individual criterion

Using the individual criterion for assessment means comparing intra-individual differences with each other. What is the difference between the student's achievement in EDC/HRE last month and now? It is a temporary comparison that is used here. Young students especially tend to prefer this criterion as a tool for assessment. The amount of "added value" is being recorded over a certain amount of time. This makes it possible to give feedback to the student about the range of his or her achievement as well as the way in which it has increased or decreased. Achievement is not compared to the achievement of other students. It is the progress which is in the focus. This way of assessment also corresponds with the informal learning processes that take place out of school where the student evaluates his or her own competences autonomously.

Objective criterion

Academic achievement is being compared with a learning objective. An individually achieved learning progress is being compared with a realistically reachable goal. This way of assessment is an objective-based norm and informs about the approach to a goal which is defined as the perfect achievement. Comparing the student's achievement with other students' learning progress is not of importance. Criteria-based tests are oriented towards clearly defined goals. They measure the achievement with reference to a certain characteristic decided by the teacher. This also means that the teacher has to set and present the goals the students have to approach in their achievement. Thus, achievements of the student will not be compared to the ones of other students. According to various studies in this field, social processes of comparisons between students only start when there is no objective criterion used in assessment.

What are the results of this discussion? If a teacher wants to strengthen the self-image and self-concept of his or her students, assessment should happen following an objective criterion. Goals given by the teacher have to be clear and have to be communicated to the students.

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 6: Checklist "How do I assess my students?"

When assessing students teachers should bear in mind the key principles in the following checklist:

- Assessment should be a means of support: help for individual defining of position, hints for further work, strengthening the self-concept and self-image of students.
- Assessment should help students and enable them to evaluate themselves.
- Assessment has to be transparent: students have to know the basis of assessment, the criteria of assessment as well as the norms used.
- Assessment has to be adequate to the contents and goals. Knowledge has to be evaluated differently from competences and skills.
- Teachers have to bear in mind the function of selection they fulfil when grading. Instead of only summary assessment, conversations and reports should become the future methods and tools of assessment. Only by doing so can permeability within the school system be improved.
- Tests should be designed in a way that they test the approach towards the set goals. (Tests also give information about the quality of the teaching which was used for approaching these goals: test results therefore not only give information about the students' performance but also about the quality of the teacher's teaching.)

Questions for self-evaluation

Learning process of the students:

- How do I ensure that the students have achieved the objectives?
- Did the students regularly experience success while they were learning?
- Are they aware of the progress they have made?
- Does my teaching give boys and girls an equal chance of success?
- Do the students consciously watch, control and improve their learning and working behaviour?
- Were the students given any guidelines to assist them while learning?
- Can the students control and assess their learning behaviour and their results themselves?
- In their self-assessment, do the students also refer to their own objectives, standards, criteria or needs?
- Do I perceive individual students' progress?
- How do I identify learning problems of individual students?
- How do I observe social interaction in the class?
- How do I keep a record of my observations and assessments of individual students and the class as a whole?

Some questions about the teacher's learning process:

- How, when and with whom do I reflect on my teaching?
- How do I let my students participate?
- How do I relate my students' success or failure to my teaching?
- How do I recognise my progress in teaching, and how do I learn as a teacher?

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 7: Assessment of teachers

Getting feedback about achievement of students is one of the central principles of school.³⁴ Getting feedback about the quality of teaching is part of professional training. In the same way as we evaluate the learning process and the acquisition of competences, skills and knowledge of our students it is of high importance to get teachers to evaluate their own EDC/HRE teaching.

Without a solid basis of understanding the current situation of teaching it will not be possible to make any recommendations for future improvements or any steps into a further development of teachers' skills, methods and practices. But how good are teachers in evaluating their own teaching? In fact, the majority of teachers tend to underestimate their students' forthcoming achievement. Furthermore, they are often not able to shift their methods and style of teaching into a different direction if the need arises. It gets even more interesting when different perspectives of assessment are taken into account: in comparison to all other groups of school assessment (students, parents, school administrators, etc.) teachers' estimation of their own teaching differs to a great extent from all other formulated opinions.³⁵ Do we have to strengthen teachers in their own beliefs? Or do they have to acquire any new competences in order to take a step back and evaluate their own teaching critically but also realistically?

34. Helmke A. (2003), "Unterrichtsevaluation: Verfahren und Instrumente", *Schulmanagement*, 1, 8-11.

35. Clausen M. and Schnabel K. U. (2002), "Konstrukte der Unterrichtsqualität im Expertenurteil", *Unterrichtswissenschaft*, 30 (3), 246-60.

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 8: Self-assessment of teachers

For daily school practice, self-assessment of teaching is the most pragmatic and easiest method of assessment. Usually, these kinds of assessment take place automatically among teachers, though not systematically. In most cases, teachers reflect on their teaching whenever they feel it is necessary or according to their own intuition, mostly in cases where they were not satisfied with the outcomes. In order to facilitate these self-reflective processes checklists like the following one could be of some help:

- How have I stimulated the learning process?
- How could I keep up the content interest of the students?
- Were the students led to central problems or tasks?
- Is a focus visible in the taught lesson?
- How many questions did I ask?
- What kind of questions did I ask?
- What kind of questions did the students ask?
- Were the questions related to the problems or the tasks?
- Which contributions triggered which questions?
- Did I listen to the students?
- Were the agreed rules of communication in the class kept?
- How did I react to the students' contributions?
- Did I repeat students' contributions word for word?
- Did I use stereotypical forms of reinforcement?
- Was interaction between students stimulated?
- What was the approximate percentage of my contributions?
- What was the approximate percentage of the students' contributions?
- Were there any students with an extremely high percentage of contributions?
- What was the participation of girls in comparison to boys like?
- What kind of contributions did so-called "difficult" students deliver?
- Did I concentrate on certain students?
- How did situations of conflict arise?
- What was the course of conflicts?
- How were the conflicts dealt with?
- Were the given tasks understood by the students?
- How were the tasks integrated into the process?
- What kind of means of support did I provide?
- How were the results presented?
- How was knowledge, how were insights or findings recorded?
- Other questions?

When using checklists like this, it has to be noted that its use only makes sense if it takes place on the basis of a solid, scientifically founded and empirically secured knowledge about teaching and its effects. In all other cases the mere answering of the questions will lead to an obligatory act and nothing else. Secondly, most of the used checklists are something like a medley of different aspects, but do not represent a full collection of all aspects that could arise in the given lesson. Therefore, when using checklists it is of high importance always to leave them incomplete or to reserve some space for aspects that cannot be foreseen.³⁶

36. Becker G. E. (1998), *Unterricht auswerten und beurteilen*, Beltz, Weinheim.

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 9: Working with journals, logbooks, portfolios³⁷

Reflecting on one's own teaching with the use of journals, logbooks or portfolios can be an ideal method for self-assessment and a good basis for starting didactical and pedagogical discussions.

Journals

Usually, a journal is constructed in a way that allows some kind of dialogue (with a peer teacher, a colleague from another school, etc.). In a journal the teacher writes about his or her experiences in a diary-like way also expressing his or her personal interpretations and feelings about a certain lesson or a certain behaviour or way of interaction that he or she showed. A journal leaves room for personal remarks and is open to another person's remarks. The act of going into a dialogue with somebody else and reading another person's remarks, interpretations and thoughts about something one has already thought about creates a high level of reflection about teaching and learning processes and gives further room for discussion. For reflecting on EDC/HRE lessons it is recommended that the peer-teacher or colleague herself or himself is familiar with EDC/HRE.

Logbook

A logbook is a description of a process without any comments or personal remarks. In a logbook pure facts find their place and can be read again by the teacher and thus create a degree of reflection. In this sense, a logbook can be compared to a diary or a journal without the element of personal interpretation and dialogue. Using logbooks only makes sense when the teacher really goes through them again relatively soon. As a logbook does not include any kind of remarks or interpretation it can become rather difficult recalling certain elements of a lesson which took place a long time ago.

Portfolio

A portfolio for teachers is a collection of materials that have been created and put together by the teacher. It is meant to show the strengths of his or her EDC/HRE lessons as well as his or her identified fields of further development. A portfolio is meant to be an instrument that shows the competences of a teacher in a certain field. In modern teacher training and in-service training portfolios have become a common instrument for qualification. In a second sense, a portfolio is an instrument of reflection. It gives room for criticism and evaluates the effect of lessons, methods, interaction with students, etc. Things that can be included in a portfolio:

- short biography of the teacher;
- description of the class;
- chosen lessons (including worksheets, students' materials);
- evaluated products of students;
- test results (if there are any);
- personal statements about the teacher's philosophy of EDC/HRE teaching;
- products such as videos or photos from certain EDC/HRE lessons;
- peer feedback of colleagues who visited EDC/HRE lessons;
- project documentation if the teacher has conducted any in relation to EDC/HRE.

³⁷ The suggested methods in this work file can also be used for students and are common tools in the teaching and learning culture of various European countries.

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 10: Co-operative teaching and peer feedback

Without a doubt, co-operative planning of EDC/HRE lessons together with a fellow teacher can be a useful tool for mutual information and co-ordination as well as for the development of class including the evaluation of effectiveness of such processes.³⁸ Co-operative planning can be restricted only to mere preparation of a lesson (as it is done in the majority of countries) or can lead to joint teaching of the lesson (together through team teaching). Initiating co-operative measures for planning and teaching lessons still has a minor priority in teacher training institutions in a lot of European countries. The culture of leaving each other's doors open is a process that takes a long time to develop.

It remains an interesting phenomenon that a lot of teachers are hesitant about working closely together with another colleague.³⁹ Is this the case because good practice models are missing? Is this the case because teachers fear they would have to spend even more time in school? Is this the case because teachers are afraid of being evaluated by colleagues?

As one form of co-operative planning and teaching, collegial group sit-ins in EDC/HRE lessons could be one solution to saving precious time. The following suggestion could act as a guideline:⁴⁰

Group size:	Three teachers visit each other twice every half year (everybody receives two visits and makes four visits – they always go in twos).
Organisation:	The three teachers plan the visits together according to the actual timetable in a decentralised way.
Subject relevance:	Teachers observe each other's EDC/HRE lessons. What their core subjects are (or the subjects they used to teach) is not relevant.
Compilation of group:	Coming together into a group can happen because of sympathy. This secures a minimum amount of trust.
Task of principal:	The principal's role is to keep track of the minimum amount of visits between them. The principal should not get involved in content questions about teaching issues.
Thematic focus:	The questions that can be the focus points of these peer sit-ins can arise out of different interests or relations: a) a teacher wishes to receive feedback to a certain question, b) a new method/activity has been decided or introduced and should be evaluated now or c) pedagogical principles (for example, formulated in the school's programme or profile) should be evaluated.

There are several reasons for adding the element of peer feedback and joint lesson observation and analysis to co-operative planning of teaching. Observing colleagues teach EDC/HRE will add positively to gain more insight into one's own teaching of this subject. Not only does it act as a tool for diagnosis, but also as a tool for improving one's own styles and methods.

38. Helmke A. (2003), "Unterrichtsevaluation: Verfahren und Instrumente", *Schulmanagement*, 1, 8-11.

39. Ibid.

40. Klippert H. (2000), *Pädagogische Schulentwicklung. Planungs- und Arbeitshilfen zur Förderung einer neuen Lernkultur*, Beltz, Weinheim.

These are the reasons for this:⁴¹

- Learning how to teach is more effective in a real-life class than in joint reflection or a hypothetical, real but not experienced class.
- There are many details which cannot be easily explained when talking about a lesson such as action routines, body language, mimics, behaviour of communication, etc.
- Changing the perspective and taking a more distanced view on a lesson allows viewing of one's own teaching.
- Observing a lesson unburdens oneself from taking action. It is possible to perceive more details and to receive more space for reflection.
- It is possible to take a number of suggestions out of every lesson viewed for one's own teaching. The variety of personalities and teaching styles can be an interesting source for impulses which a teacher does not receive on the job after pre-service teaching was completed.
- Observing class and all elements of planning and reflection involve the discussion of didactical and methodical questions and are part of school development which has its starting point at the level of the teacher.

41. Leuders T. (2001), *Qualität im Mathematikunterricht der Sekundarstufe I und II*, Cornelsen, Berlin.

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 11: Assessment of EDC/HRE in schools

Democracy is not an automatic mechanism. Democracy is on the one hand a historical achievement in old democracies and on the other hand a result of a long-lasting process which depends on the specific situation in a country. Democratic attitudes are not given by nature but have to be acquired by every single person through experiences in social contexts, in family and in school. Democracy cannot only be learned in EDC/HRE lessons. Democracy has to unfold itself in the various informal and formal structures of a school. Therefore, school has a key role for a stable democratic society. Furthermore, “a democratically structured and functioning school will not only promote EDC/HRE and prepare its students to take their place in society as engaged democratic citizens: it will also become a happier, more creative and more effective institution”.⁴²

Schools can be assessed using certain criteria to identify the quality of EDC/HRE teaching as well as the degree of lived and practised human rights values and democracy in the school. This can be done using self-evaluation practices.

For evaluating EDC/HRE in schools one needs indicators which reflect different areas of expression. These three main areas are:⁴³

- curriculum, teaching and learning;
- school climate and ethos;
- management and development.

Furthermore, these indicators present EDC/HRE as a principle of school policy and school organisation, and as a pedagogical process.

In this volume we suggest instruments and tools for the self-evaluation of a school, involving all participants of school, not only external evaluators. Self-evaluation in this context also means viewing evaluation as the starting point in a process of improvement, not as an end to something that has happened.

For a more detailed description of measuring a school in terms of democratic school governance please see work files 12 to 18.

42. Council of Europe (2007), *Democratic Governance of Schools*, Strasbourg, p. 6.

43. Council of Europe (2005), *Democratic Governance of Schools*, Strasbourg.

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 12: Quality indicators of EDC/HRE in a school

The Council of Europe tool “Quality Assurance of Education for Democratic Citizenship in Schools” includes a set of these indicators divided into subthemes and descriptors which reflect a desired quality of EDC/HRE in a school. These criteria can be used for judgment and evaluation. Applying this will deliver a comparison between the status quo of a school in terms of EDC/HRE and the desired goals.

The table below – part of the above-mentioned tool – can be used for assessing the status quo of EDC/HRE in a school according to quality indicators.⁴⁴

Areas	Quality indicators	Subthemes
Curriculum, teaching and learning	Indicator 1 Is there evidence of an adequate place for EDC/HRE in the school's goals, policies and curriculum plans?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School policies • School development planning in EDC/HRE • EDC/HRE and the school curriculum • Co-ordinating EDC/HRE
	Indicator 2 Is there evidence of students and teachers acquiring understanding of EDC/HRE and applying these principles to their everyday practice in schools and classrooms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDC /HRE learning outcomes • Teaching and learning methods and processes • Monitoring EDC/HRE
	Indicator 3 Are the design and practice of assessment within the school consonant with EDC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency • Fairness • Improvement
School ethos and climate	Indicator 4 Does the school ethos adequately reflect EDC/HRE principles?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of EDC/HRE principles and values in everyday life • Relationship and patterns of authority • Opportunities for participation and self-expression • Procedures for resolving conflicts and dealing with violence, bullying and discrimination, including discipline policies
Management and development	Indicator 5 Is there evidence of effective school leadership based on EDC/HRE principles?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership style • Decision making • Shared responsibility, collaboration and teamwork • Responsiveness
	Indicator 6 Does the school have a sound development plan reflecting EDC/HRE principles?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation and inclusiveness • Professional and organisational development • Management of resources • Self-evaluation, monitoring and accountability

(Council of Europe, *Democratic Governance of Schools*, 2005, p. 58)

44. When the tool was developed in 2005, indicators in the table above were only described as EDC indicators. The extension to EDC/HRE was added to the table for this volume.

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 13: General principles for evaluating EDC/HRE

“EDC/HRE is a dynamic, all-inclusive and forward-oriented concept. It promotes the idea of school as a community of learning and teaching for life in a democracy, which goes far beyond any particular school subject, classroom teaching or traditional teacher–student relationship” (Council of Europe, *Democratic Governance of Schools*, 2005, p. 80).

Values, attitudes and behaviour

As pointed out in Part 1 of this volume, EDC/HRE is primarily concerned with changes of values and attitudes – and behaviour. As in all evaluations – be it students, teachers or schools – assessing dimensions like values and attitudes is extremely difficult as it bears the risk of a very subjective interpretation. Moreover, values and attitudes not only express themselves explicitly through direct behaviour but are included implicitly in the way a school works, communicates and organises itself.

How to collect data

Evaluating EDC/HRE in a school can be done in various ways. The EDC/HRE indicators only provide the general framework for developing the different ways of collecting data or for defining the different methods to be used for getting information.

For this, the following questions can be helpful (ibid., p. 81):

- **What:** What information and evidence is to be looked for?
 - organisation of the school
 - dominant values in the classroom
 - understanding of key concepts
 - relationships of authority, etc.
- **Where:** Which EDC/HRE learning setting does the relevant indicator/subtheme refer to and where can evidence be found?
 - class teaching
 - morning assembly
 - group work within EDC/HRE class
 - school celebration
 - project week, etc.
- **Material:** Which documents will provide the necessary information?
 - school policy document
 - school curricula
 - school statute
 - students’ charter
 - teachers’ code of ethics, etc.
- **Who:** Which persons/groups of stakeholders will provide the necessary information?
 - students
 - teachers
 - parents
 - local administration
 - NGOs, etc.

- **How:** How are data to be collected, which method is going to be used?
 - questionnaire
 - focus group
 - discussion
 - individual interviews
 - observation, etc.

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 14: Guidelines for self-evaluation of schools

When a school decides to go through a self-evaluation in terms of EDC/HRE it has to be aware of the fact that this will take a longer period of time, maybe even a school year. This may also be a challenging period which involves many different steps and activities.

The following list, taken from the tool “Quality Assurance of Education for Democratic Citizenship in Schools” (Council of Europe, *Democratic Governance of Schools*, 2005, p. 73) might be of help in order to remember the main guidelines:⁴⁵

- raising awareness of all stakeholders about the need for and process of self-evaluation of EDC/HRE as a means for personal, professional and school improvement;
- making sure that all stakeholders are informed about the evaluative framework in EDC/HRE and its purpose;
- selecting the most appropriate approach for self-evaluation in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders and experts;
- designing valid and reliable evaluative tools (such as questionnaires, interview questions) with the assistance of experts from education research institutes or teacher-training facilities;
- preparing school staff and other stakeholders for evaluation, including their training in the use of evaluation tools; and
- creating a climate of truthfulness, honest reflection, trust, inclusion, accountability and responsibility for outcomes.



- Recognise and diminish threatening connotations of evaluation.
- Understand the challenge of self-evaluation as a learning process.
- Develop evaluation knowledge and skills.
- Strengthen the commitment of all to school improvement.

45. When the tool was developed in 2005, the guidelines were only described as EDC guidelines. The extension to EDC/HRE was added for this volume.

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Work file 15: Involving the different stakeholders in evaluating EDC/HRE in a school

When a school decides to go through a self-evaluation, good organisation is needed. Ideally, there should be one person responsible for steering and keeping the overview of the whole process. In most cases this will be the school principal or another person clearly appointed for this task. The responsible person has to be aware that guiding this process will need a high degree of co-ordination and facilitating, rather than top-down leadership. As pointed out in the guidelines for self-evaluation of schools (Work file 14) a self-evaluation process should not be hindered by threatening teachers or students with aspects of power or control.

Therefore, a participatory and collaborative approach has to take place (Council of Europe, *Democratic Governance of Schools*, 2005, p. 74).

The following recommendations conclude the most important facts when involving the different stakeholders.

Setting up an evaluation team

Seven to nine people form the evaluation team. This could include the school principal, one or two teachers, one or two student representatives, a school-based adviser (in some countries this is a pedagogue or a school psychologist), one parent, one local community representative (or NGO representative) and one representative from a research institute or a teacher training institution.

The tasks of the evaluation team are as follows (ibid., p. 75f):

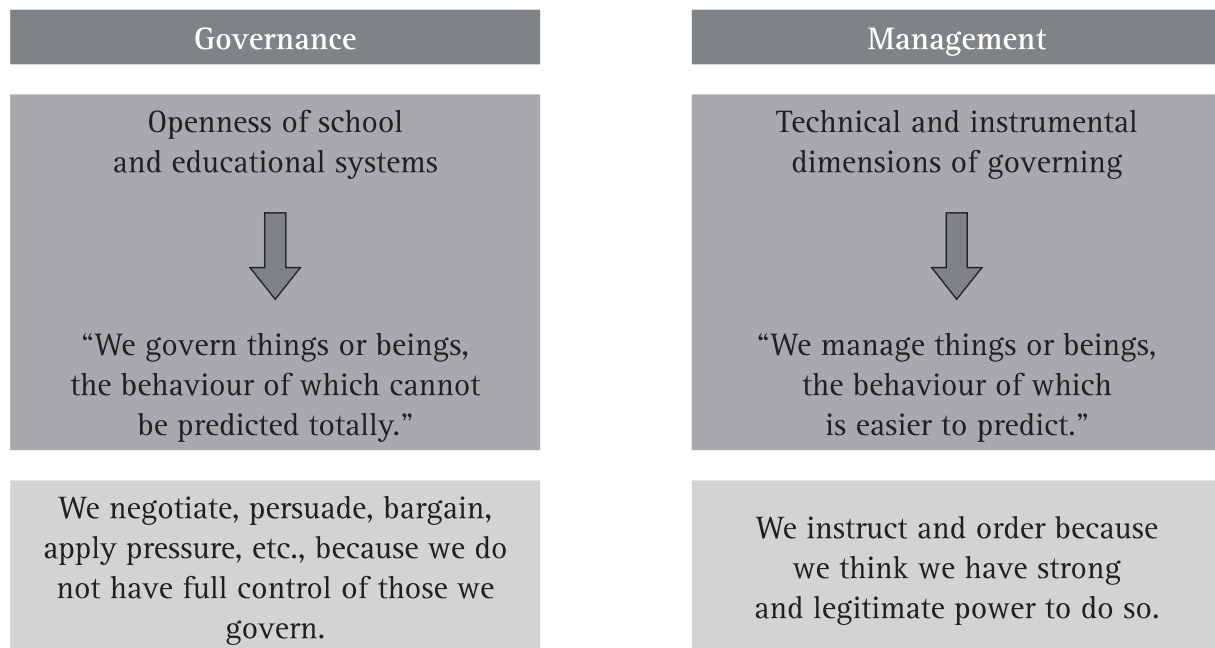
- prepare evaluation tools;
- provide training of school staff in evaluation techniques and the use of evaluation instruments in EDC/HRE;
- provide information and counselling for evaluators and stakeholders throughout the process;
- monitor the implementation of evaluation tools;
- analyse and interpret the findings in co-operation and consultation with a broad range of stakeholder groups and outside experts;
- prepare different forms of reports for different groups of stakeholders;
- receive and analyse the stakeholders' comments and suggestions upon their review of the reports.

Important note: generally, the opinions of the different stakeholders should be sought and compared (for example, through parallel questionnaires). Essential in this context are the views of the students in terms of acquisition of EDC/HRE competences such as self-reflection, critical thinking, responsibility for improvement and change (ibid., p. 77). What has to be considered by the evaluation team is the phenomenon of “politically correct” answers given by students in the teaching and school context. Through clearly defining the methods used, this can be somewhat reduced (peer-interviews, very open questionnaires, undisclosed names, confidentiality, etc.).

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Work file 16: Governance and management in a school⁴⁶

A school can also be measured by looking at the way EDC/HRE processes are reflected in the way it is governed. In this respect the term “democratic school governance” is used. In this context two kinds of processes are relevant and have to be distinguished from one another:



Management, therefore, describes the organisational aspects and technical as well as instrumental dimension in a school or educational system. Through introducing more and more open processes in schools which are characterised by different needs and interests, the term “governance” is used (Council of Europe, *Democratic Governance of Schools*, 2007, p. 9).

The benefits of democratic school governance can be summarised in the following points (ibid., p. 9):

- to improve discipline;
- to reduce conflict;
- to make school more competitive;
- to secure the future existence of sustainable democracies.

⁴⁶ For evaluating a school in terms of EDC/HRE we have presented indicators in Work file 11.

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Work file 17: Focus on democratic school governance

For assessing the status quo of a school with regard to EDC/HRE practice and its relation between theory and practice or between policy and lived democracy we suggest the following matrix (Council of Europe, *Democratic Governance of Schools*, 2007).

Every school encompasses three main principles in connection with EDC/HRE. These are:

- rights and responsibilities;
- active participation;
- valuing diversity.

In every school there are also key areas where these principles are shown. These are:

- governance, leadership and public accountability;
- value-centred education;
- co-operation, communication and involvement: competitiveness;
- student discipline.

As the following matrix shows, in all key areas different levels of expression of the key principles can be looked at.

	Rights and responsibilities	Active participation	Valuing diversity
Governance, leadership, management and public accountability			
Value-centred education			
Co-operation, communication and involvement			
Student discipline			

For detailed understanding and use of this matrix the tool “Democratic school governance” will give further information (www.coe.int/edc).

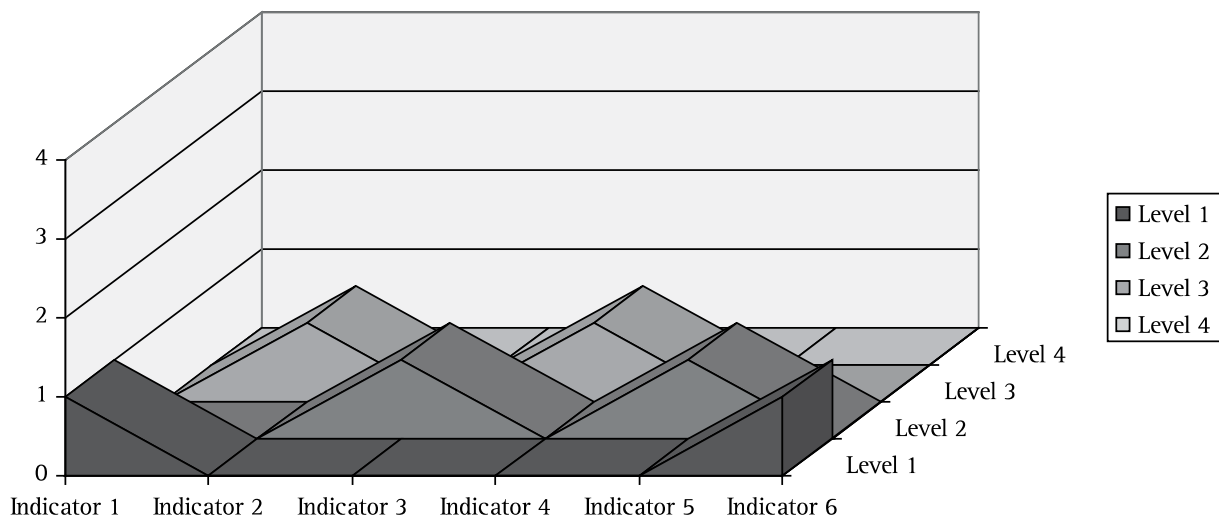
Assessment of students, teachers and schools

Work file 18: How to analyse and interpret EDC/HRE evaluation results

There are many ways to analyse, categorise and interpret evaluation results. When using the set of quality indicators for EDC/HRE suggested in Work file 12, one of the most effective and easiest ways is to start identifying strengths and weaknesses in EDC/HRE. The Council of Europe suggests using a four-level scale for this purpose and thus basing each indicator according to this scale (Council of Europe, *Democratic Governance of Schools*, 2005, p. 88):

- Level 1 – significant weakness in most or all areas;
- Level 2 – more weaknesses than strengths;
- Level 3 – more strengths than weaknesses;
- Level 4 – strengths in most or all areas and no significant weaknesses.

One possible way to present the results out of such an analysis is using diagrams which show the overall performance in EDC/HRE but also list the different indicators. The example below of a fictional school illustrates this:



When trying to come to a conclusion, this should cover four basic areas (ibid., p. 91):

- the school's achievement in EDC/HRE in general;
- the school's position on each quality indicator;
- the most successful and the weakest aspects of EDC/HRE in the school;
- the most critical points that may threaten further development of EDC/HRE in a school.