

Assessment of students, teachers and schools

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.).