

What is Peer Review in QIBB?

Peer Review in QIBB is a voluntary external evaluation tool for Austrian VET schools and colleges in the framework of the Quality Initiative VET (QIBB), which aims to foster quality assurance and quality development at schools. Being a formative evaluation instrument, Peer Review in QIBB is not a control instrument, but an instrument for school development.

In the preparation phase, schools draft a self-evaluation report that contains self-evaluation results on specific quality areas and questions which have been selected beforehand. The external evaluation is carried out by a group of external experts (peers). Peers are people who do not belong to the school, which is undergoing the review, but who are familiar with the practice field “vocational school/college” and who possess professional expertise in this field, such as teachers, consultants, researchers, business representatives etc. They are invited by the school in order to give critical, yet friendly feedback to the quality areas chosen by the school, as well as to give tips concerning strengths and improvement areas. At the end of the Peer Review, the school gets oral feedback as well as a written report.



Phases of Peer Review in QIBB

Important Principles of Peer Review in QIBB

- 1. Voluntarism:** The school decides if it wants to take part in Peer Review in QIBB. Schools that are interested undergo an application process for which certain criteria have been defined.
- 2. Confidentiality:** All information which is, within Peer Review in QIBB, forwarded to other groups involved in the process (e.g. peers, Contact Point) is to be treated confidentially and not to be given to third parties. All people involved in the process contractually agree to act confidentially.
- 3. Objectivity and Impartiality of the Peers:** Peers must not be in a “close relationship” to the school which is being reviewed. Both sides, the school and the peers, have to take possible incompatibilities into consideration.
- 4. The School’s Responsibility for the Process and for the Results:** First and foremost, Peer Review in QIBB serves the interests and needs of the involved schools. The schools decide on the quality areas, the questions, and the choice of peers. They are solely responsible for the communication and the further work and implementation of the results (follow-up).

Roles, Tasks, and Responsibilities in Peer Review in QIBB

In order to guarantee a unified, high-quality, and optimised process (regarding resources), a clear division of roles and tasks between two levels and the Peer Review schools has been established: The **Evaluation Working Group (AG Evaluation)** at the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education and Women's Affairs (BMBWF) is, as the strategic decision body, responsible for the planning, funding, and the selection decisions in the whole process. **ARQA-VET** is responsible for the quality assurance and the further development of the evaluation tool as well as the organisation and administration of the process. Support and advising of the Peer Review schools is fulfilled by individual Peer Review consultants.

Information and Support Offers for Peer Review in QIBB

The Peer Review in QIBB website (www.peer-review-in-qibb.at) contains all information about the process and provides all the necessary documents for download. Extensive support for schools is offered by ARQA-VET. In the Austrian **Peer Database** all profiles of the deployable peers are listed. Moreover, **Peer Review “Ambassadors”** will be happy to inform interested schools about Peer Review in QIBB.