

**MINISTRY OF LABOUR,
WAR INVALIDS AND
SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

No.: 28/2017/TT-BLDTBXH

SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
Independence – Freedom – Happiness

Hanoi, December 15, 2017

CIRCULAR

PROVIDING FOR EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ASSUARANCE SYSTEM FOR VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

Pursuant to the Law on Vocational Education and Training dated November 27, 2014;

Pursuant to the Government’s Decree No. 14/2017/ND-CP dated February 17, 2017 defining the Functions, Tasks, Powers and Organizational Structure of Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs;

Pursuant to the Government’s Decree No. 48/2015/ND-CP dated May 15, 2015 on guidelines for the Law on Vocational Education and Training;

At the request of the General Director of the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training;

Minister of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs promulgates a Circular to provide for the educational quality assurance system for vocational schools.

Chapter I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1. Scope and regulated entities

1. This Circular deals with principles, requirements, and procedures for establishment, operation, assessment and improvement of quality assurance system and internal quality assessment of vocational schools.
2. This Circular applies to public, private and foreign-invested vocational colleges, vocational secondary schools and career centers.
3. This Circular does not apply to colleges and secondary schools providing training courses in and training programs in the group for teacher training disciplines under the state management by Ministry of Education and Training.

Article 2. Principles and requirements for the quality assurance system

1. The quality assurance system must comply with applicable regulations, conform to training objectives and may show visions, missions, strategies and plans for development of a vocational school in each period.
2. School manager's roles are emphasized in association with the autonomy and accountability of vocational school, and learner-centered teaching method.
3. All managerial officials, teachers, employees and learners are encouraged to participate in the quality assurance system.
4. Access to the quality assurance system must follow systematic procedures, conform to criteria and standards for inspection of vocational education quality and ensure the application of information technology to management.
5. The quality assurance system must be conformable with existing conditions of a specific vocational school and easily operated; quality assurance procedures must be continuously improved and simplified in scientific, efficient and economic ways.

Article 3. Interpretation of terms

For the purpose of this Circular, terms herein shall be construed as follows:

1. "*vocational school's quality assurance system*" means set of policies, procedures and tools for management contents and sectors of a vocational school so as to maintain and improve vocational education quality and achieve expected objectives.
2. "*quality policies*" means general orientations towards quality. Quality policies must be consistent with general policies of a vocational school and used as the basis for determining quality objectives.
3. "*quality objectives*" means specific expectations concerning education quality which a vocational school sets up according to quality policies and requests its affiliated units to try to achieve.
4. "*quality assurance documentation*" includes quality policies, quality assurance manual, quality assurance procedures and tools for each managed sector.
5. "*quality assurance procedures and tools*" means ways to perform a specific activity, which include procedures, methods and requirements for achieving announced quality objectives.
6. "*quality assurance manual*" means the document providing information about the quality assurance system for managerial officials, teachers, employees and relevant parties.
7. "*assessment of quality assurance system of a vocational school*" means the vocational school's information collection and processing, and evaluation of operating results of its quality assurance system.

8. “*internal assessment of vocational education quality*” means the vocational school's assessment which is conducted to determine its or its training programs' level of satisfaction of standards for inspection of vocational training quality in accordance with regulations of the Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs.

Chapter II

QUALITY ASSUARANCE SYSTEM OF A VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

Section 1. ESTABLISHMENT, OPERATION, ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY ASSUARANCE SYSTEM

Article 4. Process of establishment, operation, assessment and improvement of quality assurance system

1. Preparation.
2. Preparation of quality assurance documentation.
3. Establishment of quality assurance information system.
4. Approval and operation of the quality assurance system.
5. Assessment and improvement of the quality assurance system.

Article 5. Preparation works

1. Improve the unit and personnel in charge of quality assurance in accordance with regulations in Article 6 herein.
2. Evaluate the existing status of organizational structure, personnel and conditions for quality assurance of the vocational school.
3. Plan the establishment of quality assurance system.
4. Give instructions about establishment, operation, assessment and improvement of quality assurance system for managerial officials, teachers and employees of the vocational school.

Article 6. Unit and personnel in charge of quality assurance

1. Rector or director of the vocational school (hereinafter referred to as “the head of vocational school”) shall establish or assign a unit to perform functions and tasks of educational quality assurance and assessment for the vocational school (hereinafter referred to as “the quality assurance unit”). The vocational school may also establish advisory council or team to give advice about establishment, operation, assessment and improvement of the quality assurance system to the head of vocational school, where necessary.

2. Duties of the quality assurance unit:

- a) Take charge and cooperate with other units of the vocational school in making the plan for the establishment, operation, assessment and improvement of the quality assurance system and submit it to the head of vocational school for approval;
- b) Take charge and cooperate with relevant units in establishing, operating, assessing and improving the quality assurance system;
- c) Expedite, inspect and propose measures for establishing, operating, assessing and improving the quality assurance system according to the expected progress with efficiency and quality guaranteed;
- d) Submit reports on establishment, operation, assessment and improvement of the quality assurance system at the request of the head of vocational school.

Article 7. Preparation of quality assurance documentation

1. Formulation of quality policies:

a) The quality assurance unit shall take charge of formulating quality policies for the vocational school and submitting them to the head of vocational school for approval.

b) Quality policies of a vocational school must:

- Conform to general development policies of the vocational school in each period and relevant rules;
- Elaborate general policies and orientations of the vocational school towards the assurance of training quality;
- Be commented by managerial officials, teachers, employees, union representatives, learners and enterprises that receive learners for practice or working;
- Be expressed in a condensed, clear and easily understandable manner;
- Be reviewed, modified, amended and updated in conformity with the actual development of the vocational school and changes in development orientations and strategies or relevant regulations.

2. Establishment of quality objectives:

a) The quality assurance unit shall take charge of establishing quality objectives for the vocational school and submitting them to the head of vocational school for approval.

b) Quality objectives of a vocational school must:

- Conform to its quality policies;
- Be expressed according to the order of priority so as to clearly determine quality policies in each period;
- Be commented by managerial officials, teachers, employees, union representatives, learners and enterprises that receive learners for practice or working;
- Be reviewed, modified, amended and updated in conformity with the actual development of the vocational school and changes in development orientations and strategies or relevant regulations;
- Be expressed in a condensed, clear, easily understandable and assessable manner.

c) Quality objectives of units of a vocational school must ensure the requirements specified in Point b Clause 2 of this Article and be conformable with announced quality policies and objectives of the vocational school.

3. Preparation of quality assurance manual:

a) The quality assurance unit shall prepare the quality assurance manual according to the template stated in the Appendix No. 01 enclosed herewith and submit it to the head of vocational school for approval.

b) The quality assurance manual must:

- Truthfully and accurately reflect regulations on the quality assurance system of the vocational school;
- Be reviewed, modified, amended and updated in conformity with the actual development of the vocational school and changes in development orientations and strategies or relevant regulations.

4. Preparation of quality assurance procedures and tools:

a) The quality assurance unit shall take charge and cooperate with relevant units of the vocational school to prepare quality assurance procedures and tools according to the following ways:

- Determine sectors in which quality is controlled on the basis of the criteria for quality inspection applicable to vocational schools. The vocational school may, depending on its specific conditions, determine different sectors for quality control, where necessary;
- Study and elaborate specific contents for each quality control sector determined by the vocational school.

b) Quality assurance procedures and tools shall be prepared for specific contents of the quality control sectors and submitted to the head of vocational school for approval. Quality assurance

procedures and tools are compulsory for the following activities: Formulation, selection, modification and addition of training programs and curricula; enrolment; organization of testing, examination and recognition of graduation results; evaluation of training results for learners, issuance of diplomas and certificates to learners; recruitment, planning, training and drilling, evaluation and ranking of teachers and managerial officials; management, use and maintenance of equipment; management of factories; after-graduation surveys; employer surveys;

Article 8. Establishment of quality assurance information system

1. The quality assurance information system comprises the quality assurance database and information infrastructure:

a) The quality assurance database comprises the input and output of each quality assurance procedure or each step of a procedures and other information concerning the quality assurance system;

b) The information infrastructure includes machinery, equipment, software and technologies in service of the establishment and operation of the quality assurance system.

2. Principles for establishing the quality assurance database:

a) It must be open database which may be improved and updated in case of needs;

b) It must sufficiently, timely and accurately information to serve the vocational school's management and operation of its quality assurance system;

c) It must apply information technology so as to ensure its connection with IT systems of vocational training authorities at all levels;

d) Access rights must be set according to management levels so as to serve making of decisions on management of quality assurance activities.

3. The quality assurance information system must be periodically reviewed and updated.

4. The vocational school shall formulate and promulgate regulations on management and operation of its quality assurance information system.

Article 9. Approval and operation of the quality assurance system

1. The head of a vocational school shall consider approving contents of the quality assurance system before it is operated.

2. The quality assurance system must be publicly announced so that the vocational school's managerial officials, teachers, employees and relevant entities know and follow it.

Article 10. Assessment of the quality assurance system

1. Process of internal assessment of the quality assurance system:

- a) Making assessment plan;
- b) Conducting assessment activities;
- c) Approving, publishing and retaining reports on assessment results.

2. Assessment plan:

- a) The quality assurance unit shall annually make the plan for assessment of the quality assurance system of the vocational school and submitting it to the head of vocational school for approval. The plan must specify assessed units, assessing contents and period.
- b) Based on the plan for assessment of the quality assurance system approved by the head of vocational school, units of the vocational school shall make detailed plans within the ambit of assigned functions and duties.

3. Requirements to be satisfied during the assessment of the quality assurance system:

- a) Ensure the integrity, objectiveness, sufficiency and validity of information and evidence;
- b) Evaluate all contents of each quality control sector of the vocational school and its units;
- c) Mobilize the participation by managerial officials, teachers, employees and enterprises in assessment activities;
- d) Results of assessing the performance of quality assurance of each unit and the quality assurance system of the vocational school must be publicly disclosed;
- dd) All documents and evidences concerning the assessment must be properly retained.

4. Assessment and reporting:

a) Assessment by units of the vocational school:

Each unit of the vocational school shall evaluate the following contents:

- The conformity and achievement of quality objectives by the unit as regulated in Point c Clause 2 Article 7 herein;
- The conformity and operating results of quality assurance procedures and tools within the functions and tasks of the assessing unit and relevant ones;
- The unit's implementation of regulations on management and operation of the quality assurance information system.

Each assessing unit shall make and send report on assessment results to the quality assurance unit for consolidation and reporting.

b) Assessment of the entire quality assurance system of the vocational school:

The quality assurance unit shall take charge and cooperate with relevant units of the vocational school to carry out the assessment according to the following contents:

- The conformity of quality policies of the vocational school as regulated in Point b Clause 1 Article 7 herein;
- The conformity and achievement of quality objectives by the vocational school as regulated in Point b Clause 2 Article 7 herein;
- The conformity and operating results of quality assurance procedures and tools for quality control sectors by the vocational school;
- The regulations on management and operation of the quality assurance information system.

c) Based on reports on assessment results submitted by units and assessment results of the entire quality assurance system, the quality assurance unit shall prepare reports on assessment of the quality assurance system of the vocational school according to each quality control sector, each assessment period or the entire system, if necessary. The quality assurance unit shall take opinions from units of the vocational school, its managerial officials, teachers, employees, representatives for learners and representatives for the Communist Party committees and/or unions in the vocational school about assessed contents; consolidate and complete the report on assessment of the entire quality assurance system and submit it to the head of vocational school for approval.

d) The quality assurance unit shall regularly monitor and inspect the plan for assessment of quality assurance performance by units of the vocational school, detect and rectify errors of quality assurance procedures and tools. The quality assurance unit may request the head of vocational school to conduct an independent assessment if it deems necessary.

5. Approval and announcement of assessment results:

a) The quality assurance unit shall publicly disclose the report on assessment of the quality assurance system within the vocational school within 30 working days.

b) Reports on assessment of quality assurance performance by units, the report on assessment of the quality assurance system of the vocational school and relevant evidence/documents must be retained in accordance with regulations.

Article 11. Improvement

1. Based on the reports on assessment results by units and the report on assessment of the entire quality assurance system of the vocational school, the quality assurance unit shall consolidate, analyze and work out the improvement plan.
2. The quality assurance unit shall take opinions about the improvement plan from units, representatives of the Communist Party committees/unions of the vocational school and relevant enterprises; consolidate and modify the improvement plan and submit the completed one to the head of vocational school for approval.
3. Units of the vocational school shall implement the improvement plan approved by the head of vocational school.

Article 12. Reporting to competent authorities

1. Based on the results of establishment, operation, assessment and improvement of the quality assurance system of the vocational school, the quality assurance unit shall make the report on the quality assurance system of the vocational school according to the template stated in the Appendix No. 02 enclosed herewith, and submit it to the head of vocational school for approval.
2. The quality assurance unit shall update the quality assurance database of IT system of the vocational training authority; submit the report on the vocational school's quality assurance system to the supervisory authority (if any), the Department of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs of the province where the vocational school is located, the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training (via the Vietnam Vocational Training Accreditation Agency) by December 31 every year.

Section 2. INTERNAL ASSESSMENT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING QUALITY

Article 13. Contents and period of internal quality assessment

1. Vocational colleges, vocational secondary schools and career centers are required to conduct the internal assessment of vocational training quality every year.
2. Internal quality assessment of training programs in nationally, regionally and internationally key vocations, and training programs meeting standards for inspection of vocational training quality shall be also conducted every year.

Article 14. Internal quality assessment requirements

1. It must ensure that all activities of the vocational school and all training programs organized at its campuses and branches shall be properly assessed.
2. All units and relevant individuals of the vocational school must participate in the assessment.
3. The assessment shall be conducted according to current criteria and standards for quality inspection for vocational schools and relevant guidelines.

4. The assessment must be conducted in an honest and objective way; there is valid evidence for quality assessment results.

5. Results of the internal quality assessment must be publicly announced within the vocational school, updated on the quality assurance database of the IT system of the vocational training authority, and properly retained with all relevant documents and evidences.

Article 15. Internal quality assessment procedure

1. Establish the internal quality assessment Council.

2. Conduct the internal quality assessment activities.

3. Prepare and approve the report on internal quality assessment.

4. Publish and send the report on internal quality assessment to competent authorities.

Article 16. Establishing the internal quality assessment Council

1. The internal quality assessment Council is established to assist the head of vocational school in conducting the internal assessment of quality of the vocational school and its training programs. The internal quality assessment Council shall be established according to the decision issued by the head of vocational school. The Council must have an odd number of members, at least 11 members if it is a vocational college or vocational secondary school, and at least 07 members if it is a career center.

2. When conducting assessment of training programs, the head of vocational school may establish the internal quality assessment Council for each training program. In such case, the Council shall have an odd number of members and at least 07 members to take charge of duties prescribed in Clause 4 of this Article.

3. The internal quality assessment Council is comprised of a Chairman, a Deputy Chairman (if applicable), a Secretary and other members.

a) The Council's Chairman shall be the head of the vocational school;

b) The Council's Deputy Chairman shall be the deputy head of the vocational school, who takes charge of quality assurance and assessment tasks. If the internal quality assessment Council for a training program is established, the Council's Deputy Chairman shall be the head of the unit in charge of organizing such training program;

c) The Council's Secretary shall be the head of the quality assurance unit if it is a vocational college or vocational secondary school, or the head of training department if it is a career center. If the internal quality assessment Council for a training program is established, the Council's Council shall be a representative of the unit in charge of organizing such training program;

d) Other members of the Council shall be heads of units, reputable officials and teachers, representatives of unions in the vocational school, experienced and reputable specialists and at least 02 representatives of relevant enterprises.

4. The internal quality assessment Council shall perform the following duties:

- a) Expedite and supervise the implementation of the plan for internal quality assessment;
- b) Consider approving the internal quality assessment report and measures for improving and enhancing quality;
- c) Cooperate with and assist external quality assessment teams in conducting quality inspection at the vocational school (if any).

Article 17. Conducting internal quality assessment activities

1. Choosing the unit in charge of internal quality assessment:

- a) For the internal quality assessment of a vocational school: The unit in charge of internal quality assessment of a vocational college or vocational secondary school shall be its quality assurance unit. The unit in charge of internal quality assessment of a career center shall be its training department;
- b) For the internal quality assessment of training programs: The unit in charge of internal quality assessment shall be the unit in charge of organizing such training program or the unit in charge of internal quality assessment of the vocational school.

2. Contents of the internal quality assessment include:

- a) Make a plan for internal quality assessment and submit it to the head of vocational school for approval;
- b) Collect, analyze and process information and evidence, and evaluate the satisfaction by the vocational school of criteria and standards for inspection of vocational training quality and relevant guidelines of the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training;
- c) Consolidate and make the report on internal quality assessment according to the template stated in the Appendix No. 03 and the Appendix No. 04 enclosed herewith;
- d) Take opinions from relevant units of the vocational school about the report, consolidate such opinions and modify the report.

Article 18. Approving the report on internal quality assessment

1. The internal quality assessment Council shall organize a meeting to consider approving the report on internal quality assessment. The report on internal quality assessment must be approved by affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the Council's members.

2. Based on voting results at the meeting of the internal quality assessment Council, the head of vocational school shall give approval for the report on internal quality assessment.

Article 19. Publishing and sending the report on internal quality assessment to competent authorities

1. Within 10 working days from the day on which the report on internal quality assessment is given approval, the head of vocational school shall convene a meeting to announce the report within the vocational school. The meeting is organized with the attendance of members of the internal quality assessment Council, heads of relevant units, representatives for learners and representatives of the Communist Party committees and unions of the vocational school.

2. By December 25 every year, the vocational school shall submit the report on internal quality assessment, using the template stated in the Appendix No. 05 enclosed herewith, to the supervisory authority (if any), the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training (via the Vietnam Vocational Training Accreditation Agency) and the Department of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs of province or city where the vocational school is located, and update the quality assurance database of IT system of the vocational training authority with relevant information.

Chapter III

IMPLEMENTATION PROVISIONS

Article 20. Responsibility of Directorate of Vocational Education and Training

1. Assist the Minister of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs in instructing and organizing the implementation of this Circular.

2. Formulate training programs and materials, and organize training courses for managerial officials, teachers and employees in charge of quality assurance tasks of vocational schools in establishment, operation, assessment and improvement of their quality assurance systems and internal quality assessment.

3. Monitor and inspect the implementation of this Circular.

Article 21. Responsibility of Provincial Departments of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs

Each Provincial Department of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs shall:

1. Assist the People's Committee of that province or central-affiliated city in expediting and inspecting the compliance with regulations on quality assurance systems by vocational schools operating in that province.

2. Consolidate and submit periodical and ad hoc reports on implementation of regulations herein by vocational schools in the province to regulatory authority.

Article 22. Responsibility of supervisory authority of a vocational school

1. Facilitate such vocational school and consider making investments in such vocational school so that it can implement regulations on quality assurance system.
2. Instruct, expedite and inspect the compliance with regulations on quality assurance system by vocational schools under its management.
3. Consolidate and submit periodical and ad hoc reports on implementation of regulations herein by vocational schools under its management.

Article 23. Responsibility of vocational schools

1. Vocational colleges and vocational secondary schools shall organize the implementation of regulations herein. Career centers may follow guidelines in Section 1 Chapter II herein depending on their existing conditions.
2. Provide guidance for their managerial officials, teachers and employees about relevant contents prescribed in this Circular.
3. Submit periodical and ad hoc reports at the request of regulatory authorities. Regularly update information on the quality assurance database of IT system of vocational training authority.
4. Cooperate with international organizations in assessing and certifying quality assurance systems, where appropriate.

Article 24. Entry into force

1. This Circular shall come into force as from February 01, 2018.
2. Difficulties that arise during the implementation of this Circular should be reported to the Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs (via the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training) for consideration.

**PP. MINISTER
DEPUTY MINISTER**

Le Quan