APPRAISER

4th webinar on 360° assessment practices in the training field
Collective notes from the webinar

This is the 4th webinar in a series that is proudly brought to you by the International Youth Work Trainers Guild (IYWT Guild) in the frame of the KA2 strategic partnership project 'AppRaiser: 360° professional development appraisal service for trainers' with the co-funding of Erasmus+. The recordings and results of the previous webinar can be found on the blog of Guild of trainers.

APPRAISER AND WEBINARS

The International Youth Work Trainers Guild together with partners are developing an online service for professional development and appraisal of trainers. Find out more at: http://iywt.org/trainers-appraisal/

WIthin AppRaiser, we organise a series of webinars to dive deeper into the topic and get to know some exciting practices of using 360º assessment, as we are planning to use this approach in our online service for trainers.

FOCUS AND EXPERT SPEAKER OF THE 4th WEBINAR

Our expert speaker this time was Rita Bergstein. In this current edition of the webinar, there was a focus on the competence development and appraisal based on the European Training Strategy (ETS), and especially the role of self-assessment.

Rita Bergstein has been working for the SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre since 2005, focusing on Youthpass and the recognition of non-formal learning, since 2012 she is also working on competence development of trainers, youth workers and institutional staff. She has a background as trainer, facilitator, social worker and

project manager at national and international levels. She is interested in systemic thinking, in nature, books and learning and education issues.

COLLECTIVE NOTES TAKEN BY PARTICIPANTS OF THE WEBINAR

About Rita:

I have been a trainer in European context - I can therefore have different hats at times. I will talk about self-assessment and how SALTO's experience is and what I will recommend. I have prepared 6 areas to talk about and I'll start from:

1. Youthpass - this is where the story begins

This is where self assessment is starting to get more developed. What to do with the learning experience in international projects? Decision was made to base youthpass on LLL strategy - the key competences. Linking learning processes connected with international activities - how to best document and describe these experiences.

Most of us have experience in assessment processes, in particular in the formal education environment- mainly assessed and recognised by someone from outside. Reflection existed in youth field, but it was important to give the word to the young people themselves - being able to describe yourself is a strong aspect of self assessment.

Youth work is very different everywhere, the learning process is one dimension, there is also the content assessment - how do we link these aspects? How do we link the learning with the topics? Training and guidance was needed. These were the questions we tried to answer developing Youthpass.

2012/2013 Youthpass impact study - it was clear that focussing on learning process was very much valued - this was quite unexpected - questions that came up: do we change youth work with all this focus on learning?

2. Developing the ETS competences model

We started to look at trainers - trainers are not a protected profession - no conflict with other professional profiles - this gave freedom to the development of the ETS competences. We decided to focus on the individual - this came from the experience with youthpass - we continued this focus: reflection and self assessment - all connected to the individual context.

We started developing the model but how to use self assessment? Some trainers

already implement self assessment but it was also clear that some trainers have very little experience in self assessment for self and for others. Self assessment is part of a development process - it looks back to a period in life and reflect back, or you plan ahead and observe yourself over a period of time. We strongly believe it creates an opportunity for recognition, it provides recognition and possibilities for the occupation/profession.

Questions from participants:

Snezana: what were some of the basis about self assessment when you started?

Rita: We did not research, it was a natural process to focus on the person. We did not decide that this was the term, we used self reflection first, but this was misleading. Maybe, appraisal is a better word than assessment - anyway, I have no clever answer, self assessment comes from the business world. Also, at least in Germany there are also roots in the religious history/context of youth work.

3. Experience and reaction of trainers to ETS competences and self-assessment

- Shock! Do i now have to develop all these competences? Do I have to become a super trainer?
- There are different personalities = some people are intimidated by looking at the list, others are easy about this.
- The model is easy to understand - there is some conceptional language, but we expect from trainers to be able to handle this.

4. What do we think is happening with self assessment in Erasmus+

Questions to ask are: why should I self assess? What for? Maybe in order to apply for next job, for a career change? Or is it a long term process to self develop?

Feedback received so far:

- it is hard to put self assessment in words
- when formulating self assessment this is very hard
- not to use native language is difficult
- limited capacity of people to describe themself - maybe painting/photos could help, but these could be open to interpretation

We assume that self assessment should not stand on its own - in the best scenario we do have a critical friend to give feedback and to talk to. We try to get international teams to start using it but it needs to be motivated somehow.

5. Application procedures and self assessment

Presenting yourself through a self-assessment is becoming more and more relevant. Promoting oneself is now more important, confidence, honesty and integrity from a person are an important part of this. Critical reflection is seen as a quality. When you invite it in application - you always have to be aware that this is self assessment - it gives a lot of information about the person and is seen as a sign of quality.

6. Recommendations based on what is going on in the field

- Numbers (as in schools) in self assessment, descriptions, but we need to elaborate.
- Some people are good with school numbers, but to tick boxes only I do not see as so positive
- Where does self assessment start? How do i see myself, what do Ii experience here?
- It is important is to communicate about it, especially in the community of trainers: "try it out!"
- Strengthen trainers self recognition: what are the competences, how to provide quality?
- Learning by practicing

Questions:

Nerijus: Can we access feedback collected so far from using the ETS model in various contexts?

Rita: Not really. We have started to collect where the competence model is used: KA1 and KA2 projects: we could send you a first list that we have (not public).

Mark: In your experience of the past years, do you see any cultural difference in the practice of self-assessment? Do people feel open to it? Do they need more training, or less training - attitudes towards it?

Rita: I will not answer from cultural context: I beleive it is more personal than cultural. it is connected where you were schooled or formed. So far I have not seen differences also because in context people are not often asked: think about yourself - in modern societies - take it from person, or from group to group.

Mark: I wonder if the experience of the CoE Youth Portfolio had any influence, as it was based on self-assessment?

Rita: The word self assessment was used there - so yes, it might have. Maybe yes, we were both working on the idea. The practise of self assessment was there, and then it had to be given a name - appraisal might be a more positive word than assessment.

MarCus: Did you observe different types or categories of users, eg based on the purpose or motivation they have, or their preferences for depth/details versus quickfix, or preferences verbal versus visual?

Rita: Questions to ask - when will they use it? When do they need it? Do you want to be open for different purposes? Some might want an easy process - maybe one competence only. For people with a longer process (more months) the process will be different. It might be important to ensure these different processes are incorporated.

Snezana: what happens to the things (criteria) that people don't find useful in the model and maybe skip them?

Rita: what we learned is: training of trainers: people wrote very long descriptions, and people were not ready to separate it into competences. It might depend on how much people are used to key competences. Concerning other competences: entrepreneural one for example is not in trainers competences - we are looking for ways to connect the competences - I recommend the appraiser leaves this open - allow people to reflect on competences specific for their work. This is for them future development.

Update by Snezana on next steps in Guild's AppRaiser project

We are in the phase of thinking about self assessment and research is going on. There will be interviews with trainers - what do they want, do they want to have the other categories. Development on how the self assessment will be done, if interested in joining us, or interested in helping us to test, contact us. Most of the steps are taken with the community, we keep asking for feedback.