

PROPOSED PROCEDURES FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT

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Abstract. The quality of education plays an important role in determining the level of human resources as well as enhancing national competitiveness. One of the most decisional factors in the mission of the country management agency, governing system, and every school is maintaining an appropriate standard of high school education. *The study objective* Identify the necessity and feasibility of the process of assessing the quality of high school education. *The research used* questionnaires designed on Google Forms and a combined online and face-to-face survey collected 120 subjects who are education administrators and teachers (at Xuan Giang high school, Hanoi; Chu Van An high school, Hanoi; Le Quy Don high school, Hanoi; and some schools in Thanh Hoa province, Tuyen Quang province; Thai Nguyen province; Dong Nai province, Da Nang city, and Vinh city), from February 2020 to November 2021. In addition, in-depth interviews with some educational managers participating in the ETEP program in the period of 2020-2021 were conducted on the content of assessing the quality of high school education. *The research results* finalized that: According to different perspectives, the summary reveals that the majority agreed with the two types of assessing approaches with the high school's teaching value. Furthermore, many educators believe that if schools seriously implement the evaluation process, continuously improve the lesson to meet the requirements, the quality of high school education will be upgraded.

Keywords: educational quality, quality assessment process, general education.

1. Introduction

The quality of education plays a considerable position in predestining the quality of human resources and enhancing national competitiveness (Brooks, C. 2021 [6]; Kemmis, S., Wilkinson, J., Edwards-Groves, C., Hardy, I., Grootenboer, P., & Bristol, L. 2014 [20]; Chau N.H., etc. 2008 [8]). For high schools, the standard of education can reflect the brand image, reputation, and investment opportunities (Adamson, B. 2012 [1]; Ellis, V., Steadman, S., & Trippestad, T. A. 2018 [14]). Therefore, ensuring the condition of education in general and high school teaching is not only the responsibility of the State management agency, the governing body but also a direct concern of each training institution (Mayer, D. 2017 [21]; Schleicher, A. 2012 [24]; European Commission/Eacea/Eurydice 2015 [16]). To affirm an accomplished level, upper secondary schools tend to go through a complicated process, from changing people's awareness to formulating regulations and realizing those into specific activities (Hammerness, K., & Klette, K. 2015 [19]; Asadullah, M. N., Perera, L. D., & Xiao, S. 2020 [2]).

Currently, in Vietnam, the construction of a quality assurance system for high schools has

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faced many shortcomings, and the implementation activities have not been highly effective (McGuinness, S., Kelly, E., Pham, T. T. P., Ha, T. T. T., & Whelan, A. 2021 [22]). As a consequence, along with innovating methods and teaching forms of different organizations, capacity building for managers, teachers, and employees; synchronous investment in facilities, equipment, etc should be necessarily promoted to warrant the core value of the school's educational quality management.

In this way, creating an internal quality assurance system is a fundamental duty to complete the management mechanisms, regulations, processes, and methods, which can renovate the teaching system in high school due to the publicity direction. Moreover, this improvement may also build the cultural quality, develop the sense of responsibility of all members of the school to participate in quality improvement, contributing to ensuring and constantly improving the training standard in any institution (Ha D.T.T. 2019 [18]; Pham, T. T. P., Ha, T. T. T., & Whelan, A. 2021 [22]).

This study aims to build a theoretical framework for assessing the quality of high school education, in which, the process of assessing the quality of high school education is proposed. At the same time, it aims to survey the necessity and feasibility of this assessment process in the current situation of high school education in Vietnam today.

2. Content

2.1. Theoretical framework for assessing the quality of high school education

2.2.1. The self-assessment process of the high school education quality

Self-assessment is the measure by which a high school relies on the evaluation criteria promulgated by the Ministry of Education and Training to self-examine and assess the current status of educational activities, facilities, and other related issues of the school. Thus, the leader can adjust the various resources and implementation process to meet the standards for a standard quality of high school education (Circular No. 18/2018/TT-BGDDT, 22 March 2018, the Minister of Education and Training [9]).

The first step in the educational quality accreditation process is self-assessment, which delivers research based on high school quality assessment standards issued by the Ministry of Education and Training to report on the status of education quality and effectiveness, organizational structure, and personnel, facilities as well as other related issues. Hence several solutions can be proposed to improve the internal resources and operating process to meet the quality standards of high school education (Garira, E. 2020 [17]; Barrett, P., Treves, A., Shmis, T., Ambasz, D., & Ustinova, M. 2019 [4]). Self-assessment demonstrates the high school's autonomy and self-responsibility in all educational activities according to its assigned functions and tasks.

Self-assessment is a continuous flow that is carried out according to a plan, with a lot of effort and time, with the participation of many units and individuals in the school. Moreover, self-assessment requires objectivity, honesty, and openness. However, in the self-assessment process, explanations, judgments, and conclusions must be based on specific and clear information and evidence, ensuring reliability. The finalized report has to cover all the criteria in the high school education quality assessment standard (Bowers, J. A., & White, R. B. 2014 [5]; Bush, T., & Glover, D. 2014 [7]; Modules 4,5 in ETEP 2020, 2021 [15]).

The process of self-assessment for upper secondary school education quality consists of 7 steps as specified in Article 23, Circular No. 18/2018/TT-BGDDT [9].

Step 1. Establishing a self-assessment council

The Self-Assessment Council is established by the decision of the school principal. The

number of members, participants, responsibilities, and powers of the Self-Evaluation Council are specified in Articles 24 and 25 of Circular No. 18/2018/TT-BGDDT by the Minister of Education and Training.

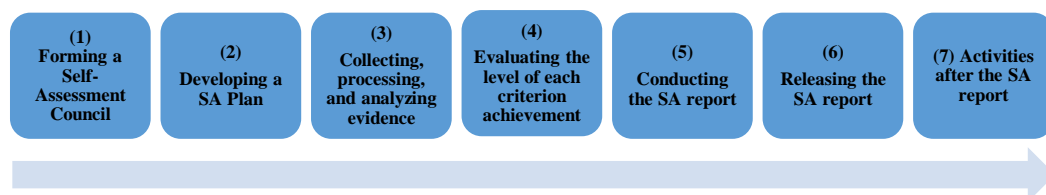


Diagram 1. Process of self-assessment of the high school education quality

Step 2. Planning a Self-Assessment

This step is guided by (Point 2, Section I, Part I of Official Letter No. 5932/BGDDT-QLCL 2018) of the Ministry of Education and Training, specifically:

The self-judgment plan is developed by the Assessment Council and approved by the Chairman position.

The plan needs to include the following contents:

- + Target and scope of self-assessment;
- + Assigned tasks to each member of the self-assessment council;
- + Professional training in self-assessment for the self-assessment council and teachers and staff;
- + Anticipating resources and time to mobilize;
- + Expected evidence collected for each criterion;
- + Determine the implementation time for each activity (including the time required to activate the self-assessment process and the schedule for the activity's performance), etc.

The self-assessment plan should be developed with specific, and detail, which is suitable for the conditions of each high school. One of the most necessary objectives is to clearly define the work, completion time, avoid generalities and formalities. Periodically, the plan should evaluate the implementation status to adjust and supplement.

Step 3. Collecting, processing, and analyzing the evidence

This step is following (Point 3, Section I, Part I of Official Letter No. 5932/BGDDT-QLCL 2018) of the Ministry of Education and Training:

In examining the educational quality, people usually use documents, records, books, tapes, video discs, and existing artifacts of high schools as practical evidence to compare with the requirements of the indicators. That evidence is used to support the analysis and interpretation, thereby drawing comments and conclusions in the self-assessment report.

- Evidence collection:

Evidence is collected from the following sources: High school archives, relevant agencies, surveys, investigations, interviews, and observations of the school's educational activities, etc. Those witnesses must have a clear citation and credibility; depending on the requirements of each indicator in the criteria under the educational quality assessment standards, researchers work in groups or individuals to collect evidence.

- Processing and analyzing evidence:

Collected evidence needs to be processed and analyzed before being used as a basis for illustrating statements and conclusions in the self-assessment report. The researcher needs to select and arrange the evidence by the requirements of each category. Therefore, appropriate examples can be applied in the status description section of the self-assessment report.

- Evidence usage:

Each instance is encrypted only once. The proof used for more than one criterion in a standard or many topics carries the proof code of the criterion used for the first time.

- Storage and preservation

Evidence can be collected and arranged in boxes (pairs) in order of encryption. Invalid evidence will be replaced by evidence that is still effective and relevant. The replacement proof shall be marked with the symbol of the replaced code and clearly state the example establishing date, month, and year.

Step 4. Evaluating the achieved levels according to each criterion

This step is led by (Point 4, Section I, Part I of Official Letter No. 5932/BGDDT-QLCL 2018) of the Ministry of Education and Training, details:

According to the Criteria Assessment Sheet (Dispatch No. 5932/BGDDT-QLCL, 28 December 2018, the Ministry of Education and Training), the evaluation reveals the achievement level of the given instruction. The process is overtaken when all indicators of the criterion are satisfied. In particular, only reaching pass certification when all the requirements of the indicator are determined to be passed; criteria assessment sheets would be written by groups or individuals, each of which has a certain rating sheet.

The criteria evaluation sheet includes the following contents: Description of the current status, strengths, weaknesses, quality improvement plan, and self-assessment of the criteria satisfaction.

The process of writing and completing the criteria evaluation sheet is carried out as follows: Groups or individuals write down the observation as prescribed in the criteria evaluation sheet; The working group discusses the content of the judging sheet to supplement; the Self-Assessment Council considers and argues each criterion in the evaluation paper. The quality improvement plan of each criterion is the priority to accurately determine the measures, solutions, conditions (human, financial), completion time, and feasibility. After that, people in group work and personal study need to complete the evaluating paper based on the opinions of the self-assessment council and send it to the secretary of that organization. Lastly, the results of each category will be summarized in a table of self-assessment outcomes.

Step 5. Completing a self-assessment report

This step is delivered due to (Point 5, Section I, Part I of Official Letter No. 5932/BGDDT-QLCL 2018) of the Ministry of Education and Training, specifically:

A self-assessment report is a document that reflects the current state of the school's quality and its commitment to future improvements. The final results are presented in the form of a report with a consistent structure and format (ETEP 2020, 2021).

Self-assessment reports are presented in order of arranged criteria. There should be enough topic content: description of the current situation, strengths, and weaknesses, quality improvement plan, judgment. The paper must follow the format and structure of the instructions (Module 4, 5 in Enhancing Teacher Education Program, Vietnam, 2021 [15]).

The draft consideration report must be forwarded to working groups and individuals to provide evidence verifying the example used and the accuracy of the statements and conclusions included in the paper. The final draft of the self-assessment report is published to solicit comments from officials, teachers, and school staff. The Council will receive comments and

suggestions to complete the report, sign and confirm the self-assessment after reading and agreeing with the researched content of the protocol. The original report is kept at the school and sent to the authority to notice or register for an external evaluation.

Step 6. Result publishment

This step is guided by Point 6, Section I, Part I of Official Letter No. 5932/BGDDT-QLCL (2018) of the Ministry of Education and Training, within:

The completed self-assessment report is published in the scope of the school; the publication of self-assessment results is encouraged to be posted on the school's website.

Step 7. Implementing activities after completing the self-assessment report

This step is instructed by (Point 7, Section I, Part I of Official Letter No. 5932/BGDDT-QLCL 2018) of the Ministry of Education and Training:

After completing the self-assessment report, the upper secondary school can operate the quality improvement plan outlined in the previous suggestion to maintain and level up the condition of the school's activities. Moreover, the manager should send a self-assessment report to the Department of Education and Training enclosed with a written request for interest and support in the process of developing and improving quality;

Annually, the self-assessment report must be updated (in the form of a supplementary report) and archived at the data storage; The school must fulfill its responsibilities as prescribed in Article 43 of Circular No. 18/2018/TT-BGDDT [9].

Records of self-assessment of high school education quality should be preserved, stored, and used by the Law on Archives and Circular No. 27/2016/TT-BGDDT on 30 December 2016 of the Government. The Minister of Education and Training has promulgated specialized regulations on the preservation period of professional documents of the education sector.

2.2.2. Evaluation process beyond the quality of high school education

External assessment is the process of surveying and evaluating by State management agencies for upper secondary schools to determine the level of achievement standards as prescribed by the Ministry of Education and Training (Circular No. 18/2018/TT-BGDDT, 22 March 2018, the Minister of Education and Training [9]).

Evaluation activities from the different organizations out of the high school are carried out after the school has completed the self-assessment and the application for external assessment registration. The registration form for recognition of educational quality standards is approved by the Department of Education and Training.

The external judge team is responsible for examining, evaluating, and considering the degree of criteria satisfaction in the high school quality standards. Therefore, they would propose to recognize or not to recognize high schools meeting educational level classification.

The outside - assessment process for the high school includes the following steps:

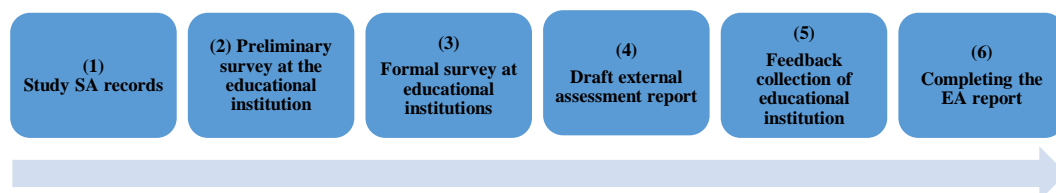


Diagram 2. Process of external assessment of high school education quality

Step 1. Examining the review profile

This step accords to (Point 1, Section II, Part II Official Letter No. 5932/BGDDT-QLCL 2018) of the Ministry of Education and Training, in specific: 1) individual work, research, self-reports assessment, and related documents to write the preliminary report; 2) group work to exchange and discuss the preliminary reports of the delegation members; delivering task for each member to study in-depth several criteria; the external assessment team start to argue and create the report on the results of the study; lastly, assigning relevant mission to each member contributes to the preparation of the official high school survey.

Step 2. Preliminary survey at high schools

This movement is guided by (Point 2, Section II, Part II Official Dispatch No. 5932/BGDDT-QLCL, 2018) of the Ministry of Education and Training: The delegation leader and secretary work with the Self-assessment Council of the high school to inform the results of the evaluation records; therefore, they will instruct and request the school to prepare for the original version to get the consolidation on the official survey plan of the external assessment team for the research object.

Step 3. Formal High School Survey

This step is guided by (Point 2, Section II, Part II Official Dispatch No. 5932/BGDĐT-QLCL 2018) of the Ministry of Education and Training, including discussing with school leaders and the Education Council of the school's self-assessment; studying the records, documents and evidence provided by the object; reviewing the school's facilities and equipment; observing normal lesson and extracurricular (if any); debating and interviewing administrators, teachers, staff and students; writing a report based on official survey results, external assessment, and other related content, etc.

Step 4. Draft external assessment report

In terms of (Point 3, Section II, Part II Official Letter No. 5932/BGDĐT-QLCL 2018) of the Ministry of Education and Training, this step is conducted through: each member of the delegation writes a report according to the criteria assigned and sent to the head of the group; the team leader and secretary edit and finalize the draft external assessment report together; the draft external assessment report is sent to every team member to collect comments for editing, supplementing and completing the final report version;

Step 5. Feedback collection from the high school on the draft external assessment report

The draft assessment report, which is unanimously approved by the members, must be sent to the selected high school being evaluated externally for comments as prescribed in Article 33 of Circular No. 18/2018/TT-BGDDT.

Step 6. Complement

Within 10 working days, after meeting and reaching consensus, the external assessment team would complete the external assessment report and send it to the Department of Education and Training as well as the research high school.

2.2. Research methodology

Research objective: Identify the necessity and feasibility of the process of assessing the quality of high school education

Data source: Data-driven research from the ETEP program is being carried out by the Ministry of Education and Training and the process of training and fostering key staff of high schools (Modules 4, 5, and 6 of the ETEP Program 2021 [15]).

The training process includes: teachers and school administrators; practicing through stages (from 2020 to 2021).

Survey tool: We rely on a questionnaire designed online and a combined online and face-to-face survey, in consultation with administrators and teachers.

Survey subjects: 120 (administrators, teachers) were randomly selected by the research team, including trained and untrained subjects in the ETEP program in modules 4, 5, 6.

Data collection and interpretation: Data obtained through a survey by questionnaire and consultations are synthesized by the research team, using mathematical-statistical methods to provide levels and ratios. Based on those data, we analyze and make judgments.

2.3. Results and discussion

Table 1. The necessity of two processes (Process of self-assessment and Process of external assessment of high school education quality) N=120

Assessment Content	Quantity/ Ratio	Level		
		<i>Very necessary</i>	<i>Necessary</i>	<i>Unnecessary</i>
Process of self-assessment of the high school education quality	Quantity	75	42	3
	Ratio	62.50	35.00	2.50
Process of external assessment of high school education quality	Quantity	69	49	2
	Ratio	57.50	40.83	1.67

Table 2. Feasibility of two processes (Process of self-assessment and Process of external assessment of high school education quality) N=120

Assessment Content	Quantity/ Ratio	Level		
		<i>Very feasible</i>	<i>feasible</i>	<i>Not feasible</i>
Process of self-assessment of the high school education quality	Quantity	57	59	4
	Ratio	47.50	49.17	3.33
Process of external assessment of high school education quality	Quantity	55	63	2
	Ratio	45.83	52.50	1.67

Through an in-depth interview, the research team received the opinion that the above two educational quality assessment processes are necessary, because there are legal requirements for the implementation of the evaluation of high school education, therefore, the tool is the evaluation procedure described above as appropriate. The legal grounds should be mentioned such as Education Law No. 43/2019/QH14, approved by the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the 7th session on 14 June 2019; Decree No. 60/2021/ND-CP, 21 June 2021 of the Government, stipulating the financial autonomy mechanism of public non-business units; Circular No. 18/2018/TT-BGDĐT 22 August 2018 of the Ministry of Education and Training on regulations in terms of educational quality accreditation and recognition of national standards for junior high schools and high schools high schools and high schools have many levels of education; Circular No. 32/2018/BGDĐT 26 December 2018 of the Ministry of Education and Training on the General Education Program Publishment; Circular No. 22/2021/BGDĐT 20 July 2021 of the Ministry of Education and Training, the assessment of secondary school students and high school students; Official Dispatch No. 5932/BGDĐT-QLCL 28 December 2018 of the Ministry of Education and Training on Guidelines for self-assessment and judgement outside general education institutions.

Working more with the staffs from some departments of education and training, managers in high schools, we get a general opinion that:

Annually and periodically, the Department of Education and Training advises the People's Committees of provinces and districts to prepare a project for education quality verification in local high schools. Based on this accreditation plan, high schools leaders conduct self-assessment of the school's educational quality, register for external judgment and carry out educational level improvement activities.

The actual quality level of a school is based on the real degree of educational quality, that high school's administrators register for external assessment recognized as acceptable higher education quality accreditation, or implementing practical activities to develop the quality performance.

Education quality accreditation requirements for upper secondary schools: Following the Education Law 2019, education quality accreditation is a mandatory requirement for general education institutions and high schools. Therefore, high schools need to actively self-assess, ask for an external assessment to be recognized for achieving higher education quality accreditation or a national standard education establishment.

However, the survey results also showed that a small number of respondents thought that it was not necessary and not feasible with the process proposed in the study. Deep learning from these subjects, they said, now that activities in high schools are numerous, schools may ignore self-assessment or not participate in evaluation activities other than the quality of education of the school. But they still want the school to assess the quality of school education.

Thus, we still assert that two processes, "Process of self-assessment of high school education quality" and "Process of external assessment of high school education quality" are necessary and feasible in Vietnamese educational practice.

Therefore, if school education quality assessment activities are conducted regularly and reliably, it will promote school development and improve the quality of general education.

3. Conclusions

This study proposes two methods of quality assessment of high school education, including the operating stages of the self-assessment process and the external assessment process.

During the training period of the ETET Program, this process was discussed with teachers and key staff, and educational managers, I found that this operation is dramatically relevant to the actual conditions in Vietnam.

One of the greatest benefits for high schools in self-assessment and external assessment is that the strengths and weaknesses of the school in educational activities will be highlighted, so that the organization can have a basis to make specific action plans to improve and overcome those shortcomings, thereby building a school development roadmap towards reaching the international standards. At the same time, students and teachers can take advantage of the upgraded teaching condition, learning environment, and guaranteed quality. The outcomes of educational programs will be improved; students with good output quality will have more opportunities to integrate with a wide range of study after high school or vocational training. In addition, thanks to self-assessment and external assessment in education quality assessment, universities have a reliable qualification of students' backgrounds.

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