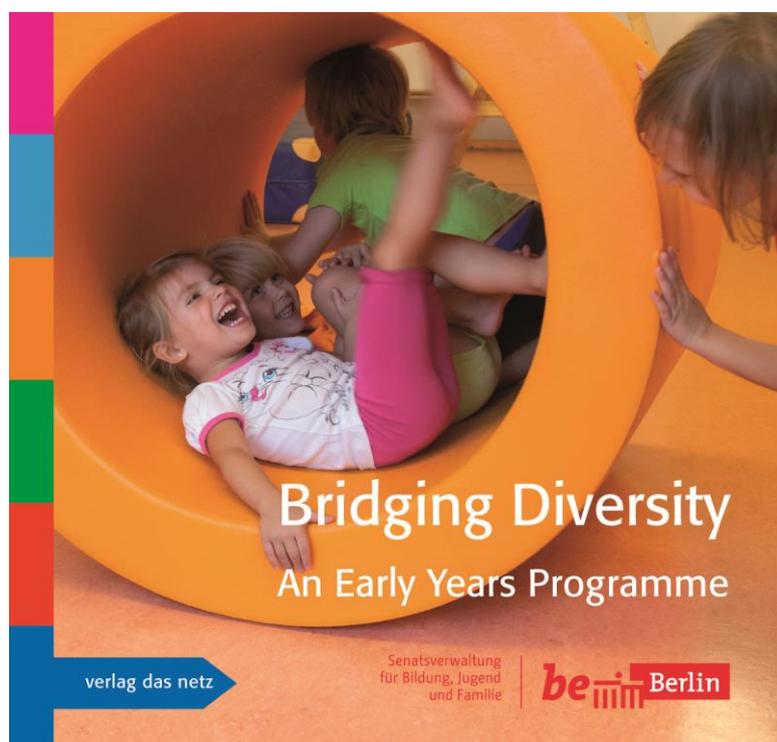


Materials for conducting internal evaluations in accordance with the requirements set out in Bridging Diversity



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Introduction

The *Materials for Conducting Internal Evaluations*¹ have been drawn up in accordance with the quality requirements and criteria set out in Berlin's state-approved mandatory Early Years Programme *Bridging Diversity*.² They provide the basis for early years practitioners to reflect on their daily routines, plan and assess their pedagogical work with children, interactions with parents and work within a team of professionals. The Materials form the backbone for implementing Berlin's Early Years Framework on Quality (QVTAG), which has been in place since 2006. The Framework consists of a series of measures – the key features of which are mandatory internal and external evaluations – to anchor the principles set out in *Bridging Diversity* into the day-to-day work of some 35,000 professionals serving 170,000 children aged between one and six in approximately 2,700 centres in Berlin.³

We recommend evaluating at least one field of activity each year, except for Focus Area A and C. The fields A2 and A3 in Focus Area A can be dealt with in one internal evaluation, if needed. We recommend to work on the field C2 over a period of two to three days in two separate intervals.

In the following, we present the structure of the Materials, its methods and tools – structured self-assessments and structured group discussions – and the different steps that comprise the whole process.⁴

¹ In the following referred to as 'the Materials'. The German version: Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Wissenschaft (ed.) 2015: Materialien für die Interne Evaluation zum Berliner Bildungsprogramm für Kitas. https://beki-qualitaet.de/images/beki/Materialien_IE/IE-Materialien2014_Onlineversion.pdf (last accessed 24 August 2020).

² In 2019, the *Materials for Conducting Internal Evaluations* for early years centres acquired a 'twin sister' – the *Materials for Conducting Internal Evaluations in Family Day Care Settings* https://beki-qualitaet.de/images/Kindertagespflege/Materialien-IE_KTP_SenBJF_Mai_2019.pdf (last accessed 24 August 2020).

³ Statistics from 01.03.2019 (Statistisches Bundesamt 2020, (Federal Office for Statistics) Destatis: https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Gesellschaft-Umwelt/Soziales/Kindertagesbetreuung/Publikationen/Downloads-Kindertagesbetreuung/tageseinrichtungen-kindertagespflege-5225402197004.pdf?__blob=publicationFile)

⁴ Teams in Berlin are encouraged to consult the introductory sections of the German version for further information.

The Structure of the Materials

Materials for Conducting Internal Evaluations are divided into three **focus areas**.

Focus Area A: Quality of **professional guidance**: the concept of *Bildung*, objectives, professional identity

Focus Area B: Quality of **interaction**: pedagogical methodological tasks

Focus Area C: Quality of **cooperation**: working with parents, teamwork and the responsibilities of the principal

Each of these three focus areas is subdivided into **fields of activity** describing the work and tasks of early childhood professionals as set out in *Bridging Diversity*. **Quality requirements** structure the content of the fields of activity while **quality criteria** specify each quality requirement.

Bridging Diversity* and the fields of activity in *Materials for Conducting Internal Evaluations

Bridging Diversity	Content	Materials for Conducting Internal Evaluations
Chapter 1	The concept of Bildung	Field of Activity A1
Chapter 2	The objectives of pedagogical practice	Field of Activity A2
Chapter 3	Creating pedagogical processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • professional identity • observing and documenting • structuring daily routines • encouraging play • designing project work • providing space and materials 	Field of Activity A3 Field of Activity B1 Field of Activity B2 Field of Activity B3 Field of Activity B4 Field of Activity B5
Chapter 4	Integrating children with disabilities	Field of Activity B6
Chapter 5	Educational partnerships with parents	Field of Activity C1
Chapter 6	Fostering transitions	Field of Activity B7
Chapter 8	Democratic participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cooperation and communication within the team • the responsibility of the principal 	Field of Activity C2

Methods and Tools for conducting internal evaluations: an overview

The structured self-assessment

During structured self-assessments, each early childhood practitioner in the team reflects on and assesses their work in the selected field of activity using the specified quality requirements and criteria. Examples from own daily practice are used to answer the evaluation question at the end of each quality requirement section.

Structured self-assessments should apply the following principles:

- **Individual:** early childhood professionals complete the structured self-assessment by themselves.
- **Discreet:** the structured self-assessment belongs to the individual in question and is not to be shared with or shown to other people.
- **Current:** the assessment includes examples from current pedagogical practice.
- **Concrete:** examples are described as clearly as possible.
- **Subjective:** assessments of pedagogical practice are made from a person's individual vantage point.

After conducting a self-assessment of a specific requirement, early childhood professionals rate their work using a four-step scale:

Completely agree **Mainly agree** **Partly agree** **Do not agree**

The individual scores are then entered anonymously on the **evaluation form** and the emerging team profile forms the basis of the structured group discussion/assessment.

Note: The **principal** reflects and assesses the quality requirements and criteria from the perspective of a principal: How do I view the work of the team and what is my role in meeting the requirements and criteria? How can I support the team in orientating their practice towards the quality requirements?

The structured group discussion

The structured group discussion is based on the same quality requirements and criteria as the structured self-assessment. At this stage of the internal evaluation, requirements and criteria serve as a guide for discussion in the entire team or sub-teams depending on group size. If the team is divided into sub-teams, each sub-team presents its results in the plenary and thus contributes to the emerging assessment of the entire centre.

The results of the structured group discussion are marked under the respective quality requirement and on the same evaluation form as the self-assessment results (using a different colour coding) once the structured group discussion has been conducted.

It is interesting to see whether members of a team come to the same conclusions or if assessments and opinions differ. Differences should not be brushed over, but provide the momentum to discuss an issue and – often – underlying convictions and perceptions. Finding and defining common ground is the main goal and long-term asset of team discussions around quality of pedagogical practice. These discussions form the basis for defining goals and next steps in the ongoing process of

developing and assuring quality in early years centres. Teams are encouraged to invite representatives from the provider to the group discussion.

Guiding questions for the structured group discussion:

- What kind of examples have the professionals used to describe their current pedagogical work?
- Are there differences between the self-assessment and daily practice of different team members?
- What works well for the whole centre and not just for different sections/groups?
- What does not work well?
- How are the quality requirements of *Bridging Diversity* taken into account in the work of the entire centre?
- Which goals and measures can foster quality development in the centre?

The procedures outlined here are identical for all fields of activity except for three. (1) **Encouraging play** contains a questionnaire for collegial observation. If practitioners decide to be observed by a colleague during small intervals during a day, they should choose the respective colleague. Comments and feed-back are at the discretion of the colleagues involved. (2) **Educational partnerships with parents** contains a questionnaire for parents that contributes to the transparency of pedagogical practice and builds understanding and trust between parents and professionals. (3) **Democratic participation** uses two distinct questionnaires, one for the team and one for the principal.

Conducting internal evaluation: the different steps

In Berlin, a large number of principals, freelance trainers or practitioners have been and are being trained to assist teams in conducting internal evaluations.⁵ Research⁶ has shown that about half of all internal evaluations taking place during a given year are facilitated by the principal and the rest by a trained facilitator. We strongly recommend hiring an outside facilitator for the assessment of **democratic participation**.

Step 1: **Exploring** the situation in the team: special circumstances or burdens on the team, main issues in current pedagogical practice that need attention etc.

Note: As the principal, find out who is already familiar with internal evaluations, consider the current atmosphere in the team, refer to the 'double' role of the principal as a member of the team and its leader and decide whether an outside facilitator is needed.

Step 2: **Selecting** the field of activity to be assessed on the basis of the exploration undertaken in step 1.

Step 3: **Introducing** the field of activity by reading and reviewing the respective chapters in *Bridging Diversity* and by explaining quality requirements and criteria. In this step various methods can be used to introduce the content of the evaluation theme.⁷

Step 4: **Structured self-assessment** undertaken by each member of the team directly working with children (including assistants, trainees, students etc.). Auxiliary staff (cooks, cleaners, caretakers etc.) should also be encouraged to take part in the process in selected fields of activity.

Step 5: The **individual scores** are entered anonymously on the evaluation form.

Step 6: During the **structured group discussion** professionals use personal examples to portray their work and enter their group assessment on the evaluation form. Then **goals and practical steps** to achieve these goals are developed that will guide the ongoing process of developing and assuring quality in early years centres. Key questions in defining the next steps are: **WHAT needs to be done? WHO is going to do it? WHO is going to help? WHEN should it be done by? WHO is going to check that it has been done?**

Step 7: **Documenting results** of the internal evaluation for the team, children, parents and the provider. Over a period of time, the team then proceeds to implement the specific steps agreed upon under step 6.

Step 8: **Review the process of implementation** and further develop the pedagogical concept paper.⁸ During ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the internal evaluation's results, adaptation might be needed to reflect current needs and developments in the centre. The whole process of quality development should be followed up by the principal, the staff and the provider.

⁵ This is an eleven-day training session funded by the Senate Department for Education, Youth and Family that is delivered by the Berlin Institute for Quality Development in the Early Years (BeKi). Information on planned training courses can be found at www.beki-qualitaet.de

⁶ BeKi regularly conducts research on the implementation and benefits of internal evaluation.

⁷ Additional materials are available for this step of the process: Senatsverwaltung für Bildung, Jugend und Familie Berlin (Hrsg.) (2020): *Werkzeugkiste 2.0. Interne Evaluation*. Berlin, Weimar: verlag das netz. Please note: the steps have been slightly modified in this updated version.

⁸ Each early years centre is required to draft a pedagogical concept paper (in line with QVTAG) based on *Bridging Diversity* and to review it periodically following internal evaluations.