

I. Providers of environmental education: improving quality

Provider

Area	Indicator	relevant		rating				need for action			measures/comments
		yes	no	++	+	-	--	high	medium	low	
1. Organisations in environmental education											
1.1 Information about the institution											
<p><i>The information contains details about the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims and areas of activities of the organisation. • Target groups. • Contact and responsibilities. • Terms and conditions. 											
1.2 Mission statement of institution											
<p><i>The mission statement contains details about the following points:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandate, services and activities • Organisational culture, values, guiding ideas. • Customer orientation. • Standards, aims, future perspectives. • Understanding of quality and quality goals. 											
1.3 Organisation within the team											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes and responsibilities are clarified • There are regular meetings for discussion • The flow of information within the institution is clear. 											
1.4 Staff (staff requirements and continuous professional development)											
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provider has the necessary staff resources (number of employees) to provide their services in a timely and professional manner. • The employees are up-to-date within their professional area and area of responsibility (e.g. for educators: subject matter, methods, didactics). • The employees have the appropriate qualifications (e.g. vocational qualifications, BSc, MSc, etc.). • The employees have professional experience, are involved in continuous professional development and also have social and other soft skills. • Volunteers, community service personnel and self-employed practitioners receive an introduction to their duties. If they are involved in educational work without the presence of permanent staff, there is a written agreement about this and materials are provided for the work. • Continuous professional development activities for staff members improve their professional, educational and social skills. • Professional development courses should take place regularly (at least once a year) and be tailored to the educational background and the subject area of the members of staff. 											

1.5 The institution within environmental education networks							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a regular exchange of information and experiences with other organisations within environmental education. 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synergies with other organisations are made use of (e.g. professional exchange) 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other providers complement and supplement the institution's services and activities 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The market is expanded by exploiting synergies with other providers (positive competition). 							
1.6 Funding							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a suitable strategy and there are defined channels for securing funding if the services and offers cannot be purely financed on the open market. 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A broad customer and/or client base reduces dependencies on single clients or customers. 							
1.7 Customer satisfaction (regular reviews, handling of complaints etc.)							
<p><i>There is a policy document in which the following questions are answered:</i></p>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who does the quality assessment? How often? Who monitors the assessments? 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the organisation collect data? --> measurement tools used (questionnaires etc.). 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who analyses the data collected? 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the results be communicated to the customers? How? By whom? 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the results lead to improvements? Which? 							
<p><i>Data is specifically collected on these topics:</i></p>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction with organisational aspects: administration, information, quality of the infrastructure (course rooms, provisions etc.), suitability of the terrain. 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall satisfaction with the services and offers. 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall satisfaction with the educators / members of staff. 							
1.8 Safety policy and emergency communication							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a safety concept and appropriate documentation for emergency communication. 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities with regards to security and emergency communication are clearly defined (who does what in which order?). 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legal situation for the institution and its employees is clarified (liability, insurance etc.). 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a plan for conflict management in difficult situations (escalation levels, measures, sanctions etc.). 							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a training plan for first aid, safety in open country (recognising dangers) etc. for members of staff. 							
2. Educational policy							
2.1 Approach to education							
<p>The approach to education is derived from the mission statement. It is oriented towards contemporary environmental education and education for sustainable development (ESD).</p>							

2.2 Definition of educational aims				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content (topics, knowledge, skills, abilities, values) to be learned are defined. • Behaviours to be trained are defined. • The depth of knowledge/level of ability aimed for is defined. • The institution has defined educational aims to work towards. • The educational aims are compatible with education for sustainable development. • The educational aims of all offers or services are focusing on skills for action. They are meaningful and achievable. 				
2.3 Topics, content and areas of activities				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The offers and services reflect the thematic focus of the organisation • Clear definition of topics and content: As well as traditional topics such as ecosystems, conservation and environmental protection, topics such as biodiversity, Agenda 21, resource and energy use, transport and mobility, leisure activities, construction and sustainable living, methods of environmental education, genetic engineering, biotechnology, environmental history and philosophy, consumption, lifestyle, culture and art, rural development and regional planning etc. can be addressed. • The services and offers enhance skills (as recommended in established ESD concepts). 				
2.4 Infrastructure (for learning activities)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facilities in the course rooms or the outdoor learning environment (e.g. in nature) ensure that modern, target group specific teaching and learning can take place. Accessibility is strived for. • If called for by the offer / service, modern technologies are used. • A healthy and balanced choice of food products is aimed for where appropriate. Ecologically sound, fairly traded and regional products are used whenever possible. • The learning locations are reachable on foot or public transport whenever possible. • Resources are conserved in the areas of energy, rubbish, water and acquisition. Whenever possible, environmentally friendly and fair (socially responsible) business and production conditions are favoured and the appropriate products used. 				
3. Portfolio of offers				
3.1 Information about offers and services				
<p><i>The following points are clearly explained in handouts or on the website:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content, aims. • Target group(s), necessary prerequisites (previous knowledge, physical condition etc.). • Dates and times when offers take place. • Costs. 				
3.2 Market orientation, needs assessment				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The customer base and similar providers (competitors) are clearly understood. • The market or needs analysis is carried out systematically and the customer base and similar providers/competitors are taken into account. 						
3.3 Choice of participants/target groups						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of education, school stage and/or the age of the participants are defined for all offers and services. • There is information about the minimum and maximum group size. • The background knowledge and experiences of the participants are clarified. 						
3.4 Overview of content						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content is structured into topics using and reflecting the aims of the offers and services. • Contents (topics, knowledge, skills, abilities, values) are derived consistently from the aims and objectives of the offers and services. 						
3.5 Yearly and quarterly planning						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The yearly and quarterly planning are determined by the aims and content guidelines. • A timely yearly and quarterly planning is carried out well in advance of regular events with groups. 						
4. Assessment of offers and services and further development						
4.1 Evaluation policy						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A policy paper describes which evaluations are carried out and what (offers, members of staff), how and how often is assessed. • The methods of evaluation are defined and it is ensured that the results will be taken into account throughout the organisation and in any future offer / service. 						
4.2 Assessment of offers /services						
<p><i>The entire portfolio of offers is regularly evaluated and the following points are examined:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conformity with the market (supply/demand). • Accuracy and topicality of the content. • Methods/didactics. 						
4.3 Feedback/assessment of staff (visits, to offers surveys of participants, feedback etc.)						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The commitment of members of staff as well as their subject-specific, methodic, didactic and social skills are regularly reviewed. <p>Suitable methods for this assessment are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual observation and assessment by members of staff, • Assessment by/feedback from external specialists, • Assessment by/feedback from management, • Participant surveys (oral/written). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback is given regularly (at least once per offer, for training courses not just at the end) and in a suitable and consistent manner. • Any necessary measures are identified through feedback and steps to rectify problems are taken. 						

4.4 Lessons learnt: Transfer to planning/further development

- The findings from the evaluations are consistently implemented and in this way the offers / services are continuously improved and/or adjusted to changing conditions.
- The offers / services are further developed with regard to topics, content, didactics and methods are further developed in a manner consistent with the institution's own target group(s).

5. Reflection and quality awareness

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5.1 Awareness of quality improvement

- The institution and its staff are conscious with regard to quality issues.
- The organisation has defined which criteria are important for continuous improvement of quality.
- Quality standards are defined (e.g. quality aims derived from the mission statement).
- Tools for quality improvement have been selected and are used.
- The quality improvement process is transparent and it is clear which measures will be taken to enable externals to gain insight into it.
- Relevant processes are defined in order to guarantee that the quality of the work is continually developed.

II. Requirements for a contemporary environmental education

Programme 1

Area	Indicator	relevant		rating				need for action			measures/comments
		yes	no	++	+	-	--	high	medium	low	
1. Planning and objectives of offers / services											
1.1 Detailed planning											
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives, content and methods are adjusted to the age and previous knowledge of the participants and are appropriate for the skills to be promoted. There is a detailed analysis of the participants (group size, gender, special needs etc.). Content and objectives are clearly communicated to the participants. For all activities / services for schools, the link to the school curriculum is made evident. 										
1.2 Objectives											
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The objectives are derived from the overall aims (educational policy of the institution). The competences promoted (knowledge, skills, behaviours) are transferable to daily life. 										
1.3 Environmental education competencies (skills?)											
	<p>The programme promotes environmental education skills for sustainable development in several of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaining knowledge systemic / systems thinking Future-oriented thinking Cooperation Participation Developing empathy Critical reflection about values Planning and action Taking on responsibility 										
2. Choice and quality of content											
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The detailed content is developed consistently from the topics and areas of activities of the institution. The content is linked to the participants' lives and are relevant to them. A key local and/or global problem or question is examined. The content is presented in a nuanced, balanced and factually correct manner. Examples serve as models. The content is presented in an interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary fashion and from different perspectives. Connections and interactions between social (socio-cultural), ecological and economic dimensions are recognisable. The interests and values of different stakeholders are recognisable. 										

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The links between individual, local, regional, national and global levels are visible. • The time dimension (past, present, future) is included. • Possibilities for taking action, either for individuals or collectively, towards sustainable development are shown. • There is no advertising or fundraising in educational activities / services for schools. 				
3. Didactics/Methods				
3.1 Sequence and rhythm				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The activity / the activity has a logical order und structure. • The learning contents are divided into suitable chunks. • Presentational and active forms of teaching and learning are alternated. • Individualisation and differentiation of teaching and learning is possible. 				
3.2 Didactic principles				
<p><i>The following didactic principles of contemporary environmental education are used:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situated, experiential learning: Real experiences take place in suitable learning environments (e.g. in nature) as well as direct and authentic encounters (e.g. with experts or concerned parties); learning takes place in real situations. • Action-orientation: the participants are active themselves. Learning takes place by doing and taking action. • Multiple perspectives, interdisciplinarity: topics are examined and experienced from different perspectives. The complexity and multifacetedness of topics can thus be understood. • Holistic: Many different senses are explored and varied experiences using "head, heart and hand" are facilitated. A personal frame of reference is created through sensual and emotional examination of topics. • Investigative and discovery learning: Starting from real problems and issues, participants can make their own discoveries and suggest and implement solutions. • Cooperative: Cooperation and social learning are enabled. • Participative: The participants are involved in the planning process. They can take on responsibility, co-determine and co-create the activities. • Reflective: The experiences and insights from the active phases as well as values, feelings and lifestyles which motivate actions are reflected upon. • Future orientation: The participants have the possibility to try out a new way of thinking or looking at an issue and can develop a vision for the future. Consequences for the future are taken into account in the planning of projects and in daily activities. 				
3.3 Methods for social interaction				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The methods used are appropriate for the aims and objectives of the activities and the target group. • A variety of methods is used. A good mixture of presentational, active, communicative and cooperative as well as creative, meditative and playful methods is important. • Different forms of social interaction are used (independent, peer learning, workshops, small group work, whole group work). • Different learning styles and approaches are taken account of: cognitive, emotional, social, action oriented. 				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovative approaches to learning and teaching are used (e.g. workshop lessons, cooperative and self- guided learning, project based learning, case studies, simulation games, planning for real etc.). 				
<p>3.4 Assessment of learning success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The learning success of the participants is assessed in an appropriate way (depending on the duration, the target group, the aims and objectives of the activities / services) Possible assessment methods are, e.g., discussions, project work with documentation, tests (verbal/written) etc. (Note for offers for schools: the learning assessment from the provider is not a replacement for assessment by the teacher.) 				
<p>4. Supporting materials</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are suitable materials for preparation, during the activities implementation and for the follow up work. For offers for schools: There are materials/handouts for teachers to work with before and after the activity which are easy to adapt. Materials are designed/chosen using the criteria and recommendations for "Media for environmental education" from the Swiss Foundation for Environmental Education. 				
<p>5. Preparation and follow-up work</p>				
<p>5.1 Preparation and follow-up work</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives/content, structure, roles/functions and rules are clarified in advance with the group leaders, teachers, youth workers etc. Group leaders, teachers, youth workers etc. are assisted with the preparation and follow-up of the activity. 				
<p>5.2 Reconnaissance</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The educators choose the learning place (course rooms/area) in order to enable optimal learning for the participants. Course rooms/location are suitable for the programme. Course rooms/location are suitable for the number of participants. The learning locations can be reached by foot, bicycle or public transport (for schools: in a radius of 15-60 minutes). Factors such as danger areas, sensitive regions, weather (and the possible repercussions, e.g. at a stream) etc. are taken account of. If necessary someone who knows the area well is consulted (forester, game warden)- 				
<p>6. Implementation</p>				
<p>6.1 Skills of the educators</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The educators have the necessary professional, subject-specific, methodic, didactic and social skills and also are experienced with the target group. The educators can share their enthusiasm for their specialist field. The educators behave in a way that is consistent with conservation and environmental protection. 				
<p>6.2 Implementation in accordance with planning (logical order and structure)</p>				

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The educators assess whether the event can be carried out as planned shortly before it is due to take place or whether it needs to be adapted to reflect changed conditions (weather, number of participants etc.). • The educators adhere to the plan (content and timing) which has been agreed with the participants in advance. 				
<p>6.3 Learning and group climate</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The educators promote a comfortable learning and group climate. • Communication between educators and learners is based on mutual respect, cooperation, acceptance and on the basis that everyone has a say in what happens. 				
<p>6.4 Conflict management</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The educators are able to address and solve common problems and conflicts which occur in groups. • The provider has a policy for conflict management in difficult situations (escalation levels, measures, sanctions etc.). There are relevant rules for dealing with conflicts. 				
<p>6.5 Behaviour in an emergency (weather, accidents etc.)</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The educators are able to act appropriately if an unexpected situation occurs. • The safety policy is adhered to and rules for emergency communication are used. 				
<p>7. Evaluation</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The offers / services are regularly evaluated in line with the evaluation policy (at least once per activity, for training courses not just at the end). • The findings from the evaluations are consistently implemented and in this way the activity is continuously improved and/or adjusted to changing conditions. 				