
Preface

Quality is not a new issue in vocational training, but the use of international standards within institutions in order to create new institutional cultures is. In the framework of the implementation of total quality management strategies, more and more Latin American and Caribbean vocational training institutions are using international standards, quite successfully, to certify the quality of their training processes.

Cinterfor/ILO has always been interested in the dissemination of new tendencies and routes as well as in the dissemination of good practices, which provide better results to users. Along these lines, this document seeks to disseminate this new phenomenon. It intends to reveal what is going on and to call the attention on the characteristics that quality management trends are showing regarding training.

This document does not intend to be a technical reader for the application of standards. Instead, it seeks to reflect the experiences and motivations of those who both inside and outside the institutions have been in touch with these processes. Theoretical references regarding standardization as the philosophical basis of quality centred on continual improvement have been included in this document. Also, various training institution experiences regarding quality certification are reported and there is a final section where the substantial part of a number of standards regarding institutional work is presented.

Far from making a closure on the multiple interests, initiatives, debates and statements regarding the issue, this work presents various subjects, which probably open interesting controversies. In this sense, it is expected that this document will contribute to the initial steps towards conceptual advance regarding this significant trend towards total quality management. As usual, Cinterfor/ILO will be watchful of reactions and demands for more information in order to achieve continual improvement of this line of work, which is only another part of the reality of the rich institutional arena of training in the region.

