



AuditedED

Empowering Vocational Education and Training Excellence
through an Innovative Online Auditing Platform

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Written by: SGS

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Digital Transformation and Sustainability in VET Quality Assurance: The Role of Online Auditing Tools

1. Introduction – The Current Challenge

Quality assurance (QA) in Vocational Education and Training (VET) remains largely document-intensive, time-consuming, and dependent on physical audits. Traditional auditing processes often involve extensive paperwork, fragmented evidence management, and significant travel requirements for auditors and institutions.

These practices create operational inefficiencies and generate avoidable environmental impact. Furthermore, many VET providers struggle to align simultaneously with European frameworks such as EQAVET and international standards like ISO 21001, often managing them through parallel, disconnected processes.

The need for a streamlined, digital and sustainability-oriented auditing model has become increasingly urgent.

2. The Need for Digital Transformation in QA

Digital transformation is no longer optional in education systems. The European Commission has emphasized digital readiness and green transition as core priorities (European Commission, 2020; 2021). In QA processes, digital tools enable structured workflows, real-time documentation, and data-driven decision-making.

Aligning EQAVET with ISO 21001 within a digital environment enhances coherence and reduces duplication. Moreover, digital auditing supports the European Green Deal objectives by minimizing travel-related emissions and reducing paper-based processes.

Digital QA systems therefore contribute simultaneously to effectiveness, compliance, and sustainability.

3. The AuditED Solution

The AuditED project introduces an EQAVET–ISO 21001 Online Auditing Tool designed to modernize QA practices in VET.

The solution includes:

- A structured preparatory checklist aligned with EQAVET indicators
- A core audit workflow integrating ISO 21001 requirements
- Centralized digital evidence management
- Transparent documentation and traceability mechanisms

Through the AuditED-AI extension, the platform integrates AI-supported evidence analysis. The AI prototype assists auditors by identifying patterns, generating structured improvement suggestions, and supporting consistency in evaluation processes. Importantly, the AI model follows a responsible AI approach, ensuring transparency, human oversight, and alignment with emerging EU AI governance principles.

4. Expected Impact

The digitalization of auditing is expected to generate measurable improvements:

- Efficiency gains: Reduced administrative burden and streamlined audit preparation
- Inclusiveness: Remote auditing capabilities expand access to auditing roles and reduce geographical barriers
- Digital readiness: Strengthened capacity of VET providers to operate within digital QA environments
- Transparency and accountability: Clear documentation and structured reporting
- Environmental impact: Reduced travel and paper consumption, contributing to lower carbon footprints

Digital auditing becomes not only a technological upgrade but also a sustainability strategy.

5. Looking Ahead

The AuditED tool is currently undergoing internal validation to ensure full alignment with EQAVET and ISO 21001. The next steps include public testing phases, refinement of the AI model, and the development of training materials to support VET providers in adopting the system.

Stakeholders—including VET providers, certification bodies, auditors, and policy makers—will be invited to engage in testing, feedback, and dissemination activities.

6. Conclusion

Digital transformation and sustainability are converging priorities in European education policy. By integrating EQAVET and ISO 21001 into an online auditing platform, AuditED contributes to a more efficient, transparent and environmentally responsible QA system in VET.

The project demonstrates how digital innovation can simultaneously strengthen compliance, inclusiveness, and green transition objectives. As Europe advances toward a twin digital and green transformation, digital auditing tools represent a strategic step forward for VET quality assurance.

References

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