

## Peer Review as an external evaluation procedure for schools – Definition and quality criteria

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### Abstract

After a verbal definition of the term ‚peer review‘, which is known primarily from the higher education sector, the different contexts and levels of its use as well as procedural variations are illustrated. Based on this description, peer review is defined as an external evaluation within a professional context. If used for the evaluation of the operation of organisations or programmes, it usually encompasses a preceding self-evaluation thus representing a three-step evaluation model. Subsequently, the possibilities of transfer and adaptation of peer review as an evaluation procedure on the level of organisations to the school sector are discussed. It is argued that due to the specific characteristics of evaluation in this sector the full potential of peer review can only take effect if peer review is carried out as a formative procedure. Finally, the quality of the peer review procedure proposed for the evaluation of schools is scrutinised with reference to the evaluation standards and issues for further discussion are delineated.



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